

Importance and Relevance of External Accountability Agencies in Improving Police Performance and Service Delivery

By

‘Kemi OKENYODO

Executive Director

Partners West Africa – Nigeria

Team Lead, CSSF National Policing Program

Definition of Police Accountability

It is a system of internal and external checks and balances aimed at ensuring that police can carry out their duties properly and are held responsible if they fail to do so.

It is meant to uphold police integrity, deter misconduct and to restore or enhance public confidence in policing.

Why Police Accountability?

They need to receive proper direction;

ii. They need to be prepared and equipped to carry out their functions in a professional manner;

iii. They need to be assured of proper working conditions;

iv. Line managers must supervise their staff;

v. Police actions and operations need to be reviewed and evaluated.

Critical Stakeholders

- External

Government Agencies;

Parliament;

Judiciary;

Civil Society Organisations;

Communities;

Independent Oversight Bodies
such as National Human Rights
Institutes

Internal

Nigeria Police Force

- Public Complaints Bureau

- Provost

- Nigeria Police Rapid Response
Unit

Key Elements of Police Accountability

- . Legislation (in line with international human rights law) specifying the functions and powers of the police;
- ii. Practical instructions based on the legislations that reflect both the spirit of the law and the letter of the
- iii. Opportunities for the public to raise their concerns;
- iv. Policies that set priorities on how to deploy police capacity;
- v. Adequate police training, both basic and ongoing

Key Elements of Police Accountability

- vi. Equipment that is adequate for prescribed police functions;
- vii. Proper reporting procedures and facilities;
- viii. A working culture that promotes transparency and evaluation
- ix. Adequate training and professional development for police officers;
- x. Monitoring of police actions and operations by both police leadership and external organs
- xi. Adequate supervision that supports officers in carrying out their duties professionally and reporting these correctly

Key Elements of Police Accountability

- xi. Scrutiny and oversight involving feedback to the police in order to improve future activities and prevent future wrongdoings;
- xii Reliable statistics on police performance related both to effectiveness in dealing with crime and public order, as well as to their integrity and public confidence.
- xiii. Evaluation and complaints procedures that contribute to the development of new policies, procedures and instructions
- xiv. Procedures for overseeing the feedback, evaluation and complaints procedures and statistics

Ensuring Effective Police Accountability



Summary

Effective Police Accountability requires:

- A system in which police, the State, the public and independent bodies are represented;
- A system involving monitoring before, during and after police operations and actions;
- A system allowing for corrective actions; and
- A system that targets individual police officers, their supervisors and the institutions as a whole.

Summary

ALL 4 MUST be present for a police accountability system to be effective.

- It provides multiple levels of police criticisms and scrutiny, which is key to maintaining integrity.
- It develops institutional frameworks, which is important in a democratic state.

THANK YOU