

# **Intelligence Sharing: The Challenges among the Nigerian Security Agencies and Government**

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## **Abstract**

Nigeria is a pluralistic society with diverse culture and with the antecedent of criminal and insecurity activities. However, Nigeria's government with a view to promoting national security has established many security outfits to cater for national security. For security to thrive in such situation there is need for intelligence sharing among these security agencies. Surprisingly, the multiple security outfits instead of achieving the utmost security among all odds have had to struggle with lack of cooperation, ego boosting, favouritism, and marginalisation. Individual outfit keeps its intelligence gathered within itself with a view to promoting unnecessary relevance and competition among other outfits rather than sharing intelligence to achieve common purpose. The study therefore examines the challenges of intelligence sharing among the Nigerian security agencies and the government that ought to execute intelligence report shared with it. Ironically, the politicisation of intelligence shared with government itself makes a mockery of intelligence sharing among the security outfits. The study also rests on

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observation and literature on intelligence and security highlighting the challenges of security outfits in Nigeria with their overlapping functions. The paper therefore recommends collaborative effort in intelligence sharing between the security agencies and government, depoliticising intelligence and more provision of security facilities to help gather information timely in order to forestall impending dangers.

**Key words:** Intelligence, intelligence gathering, security, intelligence sharing, challenges.

### **Introduction**

From independence, Nigeria has been experiencing various insecurity arising from political and election riots, criminal activities like kidnapping, armed robbery, child trafficking, insurgency and terrorism. Other human insecurities bordering on poverty, unemployment environmental depredation to mention a few have also been experienced. However, one of the cardinal principles of the government within the constitutional provision is to protect citizens' lives and properties. The agencies saddled with these responsibilities in Nigeria are numerous. They include: Nigeria Police, Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps, Nigeria Immigration Services, Nigeria Prison Services, Nigeria Custom Services, Nigeria Road Safety Corps, Nigeria Fire Services, State Peace Corps, The Nigeria Army and National Intelligence Agencies. Security has to do with the management of threat and the promotion of peace without let or hindrance. Security is the desire of individuals and the state. The level of promotion of national security portends the image of a country internationally as a peaceful or failed state. To support this Bodunde *et. al.* (2014), opined that security is about freedom from threat and ability of state and society to maintain independent identity and their functional integrity against forces of changes which they see as hostile while the bottom line is survival. For security to survive against forces of change, intelligence sharing between the security agencies and the government is of paramount importance.

This intelligence from experts is to be shared among the security agencies. Intelligence sharing concerns a wide range of issues including

terrorism, human trafficking, insurgency, war, poverty, and unemployment that can affect or promote national security adversely. The formal requirements of intelligence sharing among the Nigerian security outfit are: to be able to direct their intelligence into specific direction without missing the target, to identify and prioritise the central problems and elements within those problems on which the security community shared and focused their attention. Therefore the core vehicle that moves security is intelligence sharing. This paper is centred on objectives such as to study the role of the Nigerian security agencies generally under the National Security Act, to examine how they maintain these security roles through intelligence gathering and sharing among themselves, to examine the challenges of intelligence sharing among themselves, and finally to proffer possible solution to this challenges.

Since independence, scarcely do our leaders understand what national security entails. They see security of the nation only in terms of territorial protection, curbing terrorism and insurgencies. They fail to realise that security goes beyond securing a nation geographically. However, the thing to realise is that security aggregates and concerns all aspect of human lives. Security includes the survival of citizen in areas of source security, food security, psychological security, water security, environmental security, regime security, economic security and many more.

Moreover the neglect of information as a pivotal ingredient of intelligence sharing among the security agencies and the government poses another problem. The world is a world of information and globalisation has also reduced the world into scientific microscopic village where a farmer in Canada will be relating what happens there to a Nigerian or an insurgent in Syria will be relating live to a shoemaker in Uganda. Nigeria's security agencies are not information sensitive hence they witness protracted efforts in defeating insurgents, terrorists, and traffickers along the borders. Also, the question of individualism, ego boosting syndrome among agencies and government reduces information shared into interparty tussle in decision-making and makes mockery of efforts of the whole intelligence sharing system among the security agencies.

### **Conceptual Clarification**

***Intelligence/Intelligence Sharing:*** It is difficult to define intelligence because of the various perceptions individual scholars have on this subject. Supporting this statement Stephen Marrin opined that intelligence means many things to many peoples and boiling it down to a single definition is difficult. However, this fact notwithstanding, Warner (2002), applying Hoover Commission of 1995, defined intelligence as dealing with “all the things which could be known in advance of initiating a course of action.” Carl and Bancroft (1990) defines intelligence as the product resulting from the collecting and processing of information concerning activities and potential situations relating to domestic and foreign activities. Again the 2007 Joint Intelligence (JP 2-0) provided another definition with military undertone as: the product resulting from collecting, processing, integrating, evaluating, analysing and interpreting available information concerning foreign nations, hostile or potential hostile forces of element or areas of actual or potential operation (Joint Chief of staff 2009GH:11) Another definition from Alex and Schmid (2000) stated that “intelligence is a knowledge resulting from detection, collection, integration, evaluation, analysis and interpretation of information used for decision making for diplomats, military and other operations.”

Intelligence sharing, on its part, is the ability to exchange intelligence information data or knowledge among federal, state, local and private sector entities. This intelligence from experts are to be shared among the security agencies. Intelligence sharing touches diverse issues of terrorism, human trafficking, insurgency, war, poverty, and unemployment that can affect or promote national security adversely. The formal requirements of intelligence sharing among the Nigerian security outfit are: to be able to direct their intelligence into specific direction without missing the target, to identify and prioritise the central problems and elements within those problems on which the security community shared and focused their attention. Therefore, the core vehicle that moves security is intelligence sharing. Sharing of intelligence from what happens in the society among the Nigerian security agencies means that intelligence gathering should not be limited to one sector of security alone.

Former Nigerian president, Olusegun Obasanjo, conceives national security as the security of interest of individuals, communities, ethnic groups and entire political entity, (Abolurin 2011). This portends that intelligence sharing is not an isolated issues, it requires communities, ethnics groups, and all Nigerian citizen to render useful information to the security agencies of which it will be processed to intelligence later shared by the security agents. Intelligence sharing has the advantage of promoting security of a nation and its unity. In the word of Prunckun (2012:23), “it is a means of preventing an adversary into a nation’s confidential information or protecting against inadvertent leakage of one’s confidential information, and to make secure its installation and material against espionage, subversion, sabotage, and other forms of politically motivated violence, and the transfer of key technologies and or equipment.” The significance of intelligence sharing has warranted modern states to make heavy investment in intelligence gathering on virtually all aspect of human endeavours, including sectors such as military, security, business/economy, technology and so on.

**Security:** Security is a significant concept that connotes many meanings. To practitioners its meaning is ambiguous with its scope expanding every day. Security is diversified into many issues such as economic security, environmental security, health security, human security, food security, national security, personal security, and so on. Security must centre on human beings and without making reference to human security, security therefore makes no sense. Hughes (2006) reiterated the importance of environmental security which should be based on agenda rather than concerning one issue. The agenda are multifarious ranging from threat, H.I.V., economic development, health, war, to peace. He believed that security can be achieved through conscious effort of some particular actors who can shape the world in a desired way. Ogaba (2010:35-36) states that:

security has to do with freedom from danger or threats to a nation’s ability to protect and develop itself, promote its cherished values and legitimate interest and enhance the well-being of its people. Thus internal security could be seen as the freedom from or the absence of those tendencies, which could undermine internal cohesion, and the corporate existence of a country and its ability to maintain its vital

institution for the promotion of its core values and sociopolitical and economic objectives as well as meeting the legitimate aspirations of the people.

A nation should be more concerned with its internal security against external threat. Hence Bodunde *et. al.* (2014) opined that internal security could be seen as the freedom or absence of those tendencies which could undermine internal cohesion and corporate existence of a country and its ability to maintain its vital institution for the promotion of its core value. Galtung (1975:25) argues that security as a concept goes beyond political realism which advocated for military might when he opined thus that security is found not in terms of nation's might but in terms of holistic understanding that moves beyond the currency of military power with state as a key actor (1975:25). This means that other factors such as political factors which call for good leadership, environmental protection, respect for human rights and others are the parameters which must be considered in order to attain security.

#### **Levels of Intelligence Collection and Sharing**

Alex and Schmid had carefully highlighted the processes which intelligence should take before sharing it among the military, diplomats and other agencies in the following terms: intelligence is a knowledge resulting from detection, collection, integration, evaluation, analyses and interpretation of information used for decision making for diplomats, military and other operations. Intelligence is shared among various security agencies that are concerned with national security and with other decision makers and government functionaries who are mostly concerned with national security.

#### ***Intelligence Collection Sources***

Before intelligence sharing, there must be intelligence gathering. Good intelligence gathering begins with proper determination of what ought to be known. Intelligence is gathered from two main sources namely open (overt) source and secret (covert) source. Information obtained from the first source constitutes more than four-fifth of the input to most intelligence systems. Open source is a source of intelligence collection management system that involves finding, selecting and acquiring information from publicly available sources. Information gathered through this source are then analysed to

produce actionable intelligence. Open source may include the following: Intelligence personnel, defence attaché, personnel on courses, military liaison offices, prisoners, defectors, and refugees. The secret (covert) source refer to intelligence collected through clandestine collection through espionage, aerial and space reconnaissance, enigma machine, electromagnetic spectrum and other acoustical instruments. All these are unauthorised and can attract death penalty.

The two sources are meant to pass through intelligence circle processes which sees to it that raw information or data are scrutinised. The information is analysed in detail with the application of psychology and scientific models. Doubtful information are subjected to rigorous analysis with competing hypotheses. Final accepted analysed information becomes intelligence and is documented for the policy makers for decision-making.

#### **Level of Sharing Intelligence**

Intelligence is conducted and shared at various levels namely: Strategic level, Operational level, Tactical level and Counter Intelligence level. Strategic level of intelligence sharing is the broadest among the level of intelligence from which both national and international agencies can share intelligence. It is concerned with broad issues such as economic, political, military capabilities, non-state actors, scientific, population and so on. This covers intelligence gathered on national or international activities that covers issues of national security and capabilities. Tactical Level of Intelligence gathering focusses on supporting operation at the tactical level and is attached to the battle group. At the tactical level, briefings are delivered and intelligence shared to the patrol on current threat and collection priorities. These patrols are then debriefed to elicit information for analyses and communication through the reporting chains. The processed information may range from operational tactical intelligence to higher level strategic intelligence or national intelligence. However distinction fades between tactical intelligence and operational intelligence as the speed of transportation communication and weapons delivery increases.

Operational Intelligence, on its part, is focused on providing support to an expeditionary force commander and is attached to the formation headquarters. Counter Intelligence Level is next. Counter Intelligence

information is shared to protect and maintain the secret of a country's intelligence operations by preventing spies from penetrating the country's government, armed services or intelligence community. Counter intelligence operation sometimes involves the manipulation of an adversary's intelligence services by placing moles' or double agents in sensitive areas (Harry 1997:246).

### **Intelligence Sharing as a Synergy between the Security Agencies and the Government**

The purpose of intelligence gathering is to aid security. It helps the security agencies to collect and analyse information before application. The information collected may be raw but they are carefully integrated and analysed in order to know the basic facts in the information. Intelligence forestalls misleading the policy makers or the agencies with which the intelligence is to be shared by passing through the crucible of intelligence processes or cycles. Intelligence sharing is important in order to assist both the security agencies and policy-makers, especially by ensuring that they know the intention and capabilities of other nations and adversaries. In addition it aids detection of crime, protection of national sovereignty, and assistance of the policy-makers in taking crucial decisions. In addition, it supplies objective intelligence to other agencies and government for sharing through early warning by briefing or debriefing in order to be aware of the impending dangers so that those dangers can be nullified.

### **The Nigerian Security Agencies and the Challenges of Intelligence Sharing**

#### ***The Nigeria Police***

Various security agencies in Nigeria are vested with powers under several statutes to aid the security of the Nigerian state. The Nigeria Police Force is under Police Act Criminal Procedure Code, Criminal Procedure Act and Public Order Act with broad power to investigate crimes, serve summons and pursue seizure of illegal properties. It is empowered to prosecute offenders and maintain peace, law and order. In addition to these, the national Security Agencies Act of 1986 empowers the Defence Intelligence Agency,



National Intelligence Agency and State Security Service to perform the some functions, identified and discussed below.

***Defence Intelligence Agency***

1. The prevention and detection of crimes of a military nature against the security of Nigeria.
2. The protection and preservation of all military classified matters concerning the security of Nigeria both within and outside Nigeria.
3. Such other responsibilities affecting defence intelligence of a military nature, both within and outside Nigeria

***National Intelligence Agency***

1. The general maintenance of the security of Nigeria outside Nigeria concerning matters that are related to military issues and;
2. Such other responsibilities affecting national intelligence outside Nigeria as the Nation's Defence councillor.

***The State Security Service***

1. The prevention and detection within Nigeria of any crime against the internal security of Nigeria.
2. The protection and preservation of all non-military classified matters concerning the internal security of Nigeria and;
3. Such other responsibilities affecting internal security within Nigeria as the National Assembly or the president, as the case may be.

With these provisions there is a presumption that other security agencies combined are to be responsible for National Security and intelligence sharing. Despite this fact that agencies are under the same umbrella of security and intelligence gathering and sharing, there are serious challenges facing this responsibility of sharing intelligence.

There are myriad of security challenges in Nigeria which need the attention of security monitoring through intelligence gathering and sharing. Some of the security challenges are: kidnapping and hostage taking, hired and political assassination, ethno-religious violence, smuggling and trans-border crimes, robbery, human trafficking, drug business and others which

undermine national security. According to Bodunde *et. al.* (2014), "...internal security could be seen as the freedom or absence of those tendencies which could undermine internal cohesion and corporate existence of a country and its ability to maintain its vital institution for the promotion of its core value..." Contrary to this assertion, Nigeria's security agencies still face challenges in intelligence sharing due to the reasons listed and discussed below.

***Uncooperative Attitude:*** This is one of the cogent factors that impede intelligence sharing among our security agencies. This has to do with the fact that certain individuals within the agencies prefer doing things singlehandedly and this does not help intelligence co-ordination. This is the reason why terrorism refuses to yield to national intelligence operation.

***Lack of Motivation:*** Motivation is one of the cardinal factors that increase efficiency and productivity. Motivation is lacking among the agencies. Poor and decadent infrastructures, poor salary, lack of life insurance in case of unexpected death, refusal to reward the security officers who carries out best intelligence operation are factors that have contributed to lack of motivation of the officials of Nigeria's security agencies.

***Mistrust among Agencies:*** The Nigerian security agencies believe that each individual agency needs to keep intelligence secret within itself without sharing in order not to suffer leakage to the public or adversaries which can be detrimental to the security of the Nigerian state.

***Principle of Individualism:*** The belief that each individual agency has its own nomenclature with responsibilities to be performed under the act that establishes it promotes individualism which makes sharing of intelligence difficult.

***Ego-Boosting Syndrome:*** Ego-boosting and sense of supremacy among these agencies impedes intelligence sharing. The military believes it is superior to the police in intelligence. The military believes that when it comes to military affairs other agencies are below expectation. Other agencies also believe that the police is corrupt and may risk the sanctity intelligence gathered

***Unhealthy Rivalry:*** Unhealthy rivalry plays a decisive role in intelligence sharing. Individual agencies want to be seen as the best when talking about

national security. They believe that intelligence used without sharing with sister-security organisations will earn such organisations respect before the public and the government.

***Overlapping Functions between the Agencies:*** both the act that established these agencies and the function they are to perform are overlapping. Sometimes police will claim responsibility for certain functions and the Nigerian security agencies will claim the same functions backed with its act. This gives room to disagreement sometimes and breeds hatred which may upset intelligence sharing.

***Obsolete Technology:*** In this modern time when terrorism is widespread, having timely information is important and this can only be achieved through the use technology. Nigeria's Security Agencies do not possess necessary latest equipment to perform this, unlike their counterparts that have better application of intelligence technology for intelligence sharing.

***Lack of Requisite Expertise:*** Lack of expertise impedes intelligence sharing. Intelligence gathering involves critical analysis of information before it is share. Most of the information called intelligence by security agencies are mere information that raise alarm without foundation. However, a major reason why this is so is because of the way recruitment of personnel into this agencies is done. It is often carried out with consideration for quota system, favouritism, ethnicity, affiliation with ruling political party among others unnecessary factors.

***Politicisation of Intelligence:*** Intelligence is expected to be shared with the government with a view to influencing national policy or making government to take immediate action if the danger is alarming. Today the availability of intelligence shared with them makes them debate and even distort intelligence reports that do not confirm with their previous knowledge, assessment, beliefs and judgment. And once, intelligence does not conform to their political influence it can be jettisoned. And sometimes this can be catastrophic.

### **Conclusion**

In a globalised world in which insecurity, threat, fear and mistrust pervade the earth, nations such as Nigeria and its security agencies are not keenly

sensitive to intelligence gathering and sharing. It is a pity that terrorists, transnational criminals, insurgents have their ways easily in Nigeria today. However, incessant terrorism, insurgency, trafficking and kidnapping which now trouble Nigeria cannot be properly addressed except due diligence is given to intelligence sharing among the Nigerian security Agencies. Also, factors affecting intelligence gathering and sharing will have to be paid attention to. Such factors include: lack of motivation, government insensitivity, and ego boosting. Finding solutions to these issues will go a long way to improving the relationship between Nigeria's security agencies and how they share intelligence among themselves.

### **Recommendation**

Nigerian Security organisations must be overhauled with educated personnel trained on intelligence gathering and sharing. Recruitment of Intelligence personnel must not be based on issues that reduce professionalism on the part of the recruited personnel. What this does is that it gives room for mediocrity. There is also the need to motivate these agencies through the payment of enhanced salaries, having insurance cover them, and using up-to-date technology. In addition, seminars which have in attendance all the security agencies must regularly be organised in order to impart the knowledge of the essence of joint intelligence community information sharing. Finally, a major problem of intelligence sharing is that government politicise gathered intelligence and by so doing set such intelligence aside.

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