Embracing Intelligence-Led Policing in the Republic of Zimbabwe

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Abstract:
The rise in crime in the year 2000 necessitated the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) to realise that a reactive traditional approach was increasingly becoming outdated in the prevention and disruption of future incidents of crime. The Zimbabwe Republic Police introduced intelligence-led policing (ILP), as a key proactive measure to combat crime and its effects to the society. Despite this noble initiative, however, crimes have generally continued to rise. It is against this background that this study investigated the extent to which the ZRP has adopted the ILP, as well as the factors affecting the adoption of ILP in fighting crime. A descriptive survey method was used on a sample of 73 police officers, together with a documentary review of key policy documents. The study established that the ZRP has embraced the concept of intelligence-led policing through the establishment of the Criminal Intelligence Unit, which is manned by the District Intelligence Officer (DCIO), intelligence analysts and field intelligence officers. Availability of resource, adequate training, adequate manpower and a conducive organisational culture were cited as the key factors in the successful adoption of ILP. In order to realise maximum fruits of intelligence-led policing, the study recommends that the Zimbabwe Republic Police should consider acquiring more resources like computers, vehicles and recruit more manpower. Furthermore members should receive I.L.P training at initial training in their profession to develop their intelligence skills base early.

Keywords: Intelligence led policing, criminal intelligence, intelligence analysis

1. Introduction

The increase in crime is the most feared threat, whether real or perceived, and often causes discomfort in the society by reducing people's quality of life due to loss of property through crimes such as theft and unlawful entry, not only in Zimbabwe but globally. Hence the relevant step taken by the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) in implementing intelligence-led policing so as to minimize incidences of crime in the society (ZRP Crime Strategy, 2000) was a noble idea. However, the rise in crime continues to impact every part of the community. It is against this background that prompted this research to investigate the extent to which the ZRP has adopted the concept of intelligence-led policing in fighting crime.

In an endeavour to combat the growing level of criminality in the society, the Zimbabwe Republic Police launched intelligence-led policing in the year 2000 in all policing districts of the country, as an effective contemporary policing panacea to crime in the society (ZRP CPC, 2000). The implementation of intelligence-led policing is being spearheaded by the Criminal Intelligence Unit. Its beginning can be traced back from the year 2000 when Criminal Intelligence Unit was established in the force in partial fulfillment of the regional policy requirements of the Southern Africa Development Cooperation through its policing wing which is the Council of Police Chiefs for Southern Africa Police Chiefs Cooperation Organisation (SAPCCO). The Council of Police Chiefs for SAPCCO requires every member state to have Criminal Intelligence Unit in their Police Services in order to have a more coordinated framework of intelligence-led policing as a pro-active approach to fight crime (ZRP CPC, 2000).

1.1. The Zimbabwe Republic Police

The Zimbabwe Republic Police is a centrally controlled police service which is headed by the Commissioner General of Police and is headquartered at the Police General Headquarters in the capital city, Harare. Section 219 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe provides that;

"There is a Police Service which is responsible for-
Detecting, investigating and preventing crime;

Preserving the internal security of Zimbabwe;
Protecting and securing the lives and property of the people;
Maintaining law and order; and
Upholding this constitution and enforcing the law without fear or favour."

To ensure the proper discharge of its mandate, the Z.R.P is divided into specialized units, namely: Regular Force (Commonly known as the Duty Uniform Branch), The Traffic Branch, the Police Protection Unit (PPU), The Support Unit (a paramilitary branch of the organisation, and The Criminal Investigations Department (CID) (Makwerere et al, 2012). The Criminal Intelligence Unit falls under the Criminal Investigations Department.

1.2. Research Questions
This research was guided by the following questions:
- How does the Zimbabwe Republic Police implement intelligence-led policing?
- Which factors affect the implementation of intelligence-led policing in fighting crime?
- Which strategies can be adopted by the Zimbabwe Republic Police to improve the effectiveness of intelligence-led policing?

2. Literature Review

2.1. The Evolution of Intelligence-Led Policing
Intelligence Led Policing emerged in the 1990s as a strategic innovation in response to the call for more business- like policing models (John & Maguire, 2003, 2004; Maguire & John, 2006). According to Anderson (1997), the origin of intelligence-led policing can be traced back in early 1990s in Kent, United Kingdom (UK) where crime levels had risen sharply, particularly the property-related offences of burglary and automobile theft. The Kent Constabulary Police (KCP), with limited resources due to economic recession that had hurt the country, was expected to address this problem regardless of the policing gap. Anderson further asserts that a 1993 audit commission report recommended the use of intelligence from informants as well as other sources in order to prevent and detect crime in ways that would be effective and efficient with the police resources available. Hence a national intelligence model was launched that facilitated the introduction of the intelligence-led policing thereby providing a policing tool to the KCP to curb crime in its policing area and it was reported to be a successful story. Ratcliffe (2008) highlights that in the UK, the concept is enshrined in the legislation that demanded all forces adopt the National Intelligence Model by April 2004.

This early development of intelligence-led policing in the UK was successful because the KCP shifted their efforts by focusing on prolific offenders rather than on reported crime as a way of utilising police resources more effectively (Ratcliffe, 2008). Therefore, reports by the Audit Commission in 1993 and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in 1997 advocated for increased use of effective intelligence, surveillance and information gathering through informants to target recidivism offenders so that police could be more effective in fighting crime.

Alberto et al (2005) homologate that, United States of America, after 11 September 2001 terrorists attack, adopted a global perspective of the intelligence-led policing from a close examination of the UK's national intelligence model. In March 2002, the Investigative Operations Committee of the International Association of Chiefs of Police convened an Intelligence Sharing Summit and created the Global Intelligence Group that developed criminal intelligence sharing plan. The plan provided a mechanism to promote intelligence-led policing, a blueprint for law enforcement administrators to follow when building intelligence system and a model for intelligence process principles and policies. The plan also called every law enforcement agency and every state to immediately establish and maintain the capacity to gather and evaluate information and to disseminate intelligence in a manner that protects every individual's right to privacy while it curtails organised crime and public disorder. Hence the intelligence-led policing philosophy sprouted to other countries across the globe.

2.2. What Is Intelligence-Led Policing?
Ratcliff (2003: 3) defined ILP as the application of criminal intelligence analysis as an objective decision making tool in order to facilitate crime reduction and prevention through effective policing strategies and external partnership projects drawn from an evidential base. According to the International Association of Law Enforcement Intelligence Analysts (2005), "Intelligence –Led Policing is the model that brings intelligence and analysts to the forefront of police operations. It promotes the efficient use of resources, the production of workable crime prevention strategies, and the successful completion of investigations and prosecution."

Bureau of Justice Assistance in Carter (2009) homologated dual meaning of intelligence-led policing and articulated critical components of intelligence-led policing. Firstly, intelligence-led policing can be defined as a collaborative law enforcement approach combining problem solving policing, information sharing and police accountability with enhanced intelligence operations. Precisely, intelligence-led policing according to Bureau of Justice Assistance, is the executive implementation of the intelligence cycle to support the proactive decision making for resource allocation and crime prevention. It was emphasised that police executives must have clearly defined priorities as part of their policing strategies. This definition provided logical parameters to the current study for the need to assess clearly defined priorities in the implementation of intelligence-led policing in the district under review.

Secondly, Bureau of Justice Assistance proposed an operational definition of intelligence-led policing as "The collection and analysis of information related to crime condition that contribute to crime, resulting in an actionable intelligence product intended to aid law enforcement in developing responses to threats and strategic planning related to emerging or changing threats"(Carter, 2009). In order

to provide a better understanding of what is intelligence-led policing, this logical definition is divided into two critical components and these are collection and analysis.

The definitions of intelligence-led policing point to the importance of analysis of crime related information and information sharing if ever the war against crime is to be won. Analysts, who are influential in the ILP philosophy, are primarily responsible for developing intelligence products which coordinate information needs of internal and external customers (Barker, 2011). Intelligence products, which are the results of careful analysis, will assist the law enforcement agents in meeting tactical, operational, and logistical requirements.

In justifying the concept of ILP, Barker (2011:4) opines that, "criminals demonstrate considerable cleverness, operational strategies and planning. Therefore, intelligence data and analysis admirably serve the law enforcement mission". It is without doubt that law enforcement should always be above the criminals in terms of tactics; hence intelligence- led policing is arguably one of the recent innovative reforms in policing to match the increasingly sophisticated criminals. Intelligence-led policing seeks to use modern information management tools and management techniques to achieve the goals of policing (Tilley in Daroch & Mazerolle, 2012). Intelligence- led policing has thus become a significant latest wave in modern policing (Wood & Shearing, 2007). Ratcliffe (2008) asserted that intelligence-led policing is among other policing initiatives, adopted globally designed to curb organized and transnational crimes by reducing the increasing gap between the rise in crime and the resources available to address the problem.

2.3. The Intelligence Process
Baker (2009) asserts that the intelligence process comprises of the intelligence cycle and six-step process required in the production of criminal intelligence. The intelligence process provides a foundation of intelligence-led policing framework that can be implemented to fight crime.

2.3.1. The Intelligence Cycle
According to Carter (2009), the intelligence cycle is a function of intelligence-led policing that permeates all activities and provides mechanisms to ensure the consistent management of information that will be used to create intelligence. In an attempt to explain the importance of the cycle, Carter (2009) asserts that, "it is crucial to have a systematic, scientific and logical methodology to comprehensively process information to ensure that the most accurate, actionable intelligence is produced and disseminated to the people who provide an operational resource to prevent a criminal threat from reaching fruition". Baker calls this series of stages the intelligence cycle, shown conceptually on figure 1.
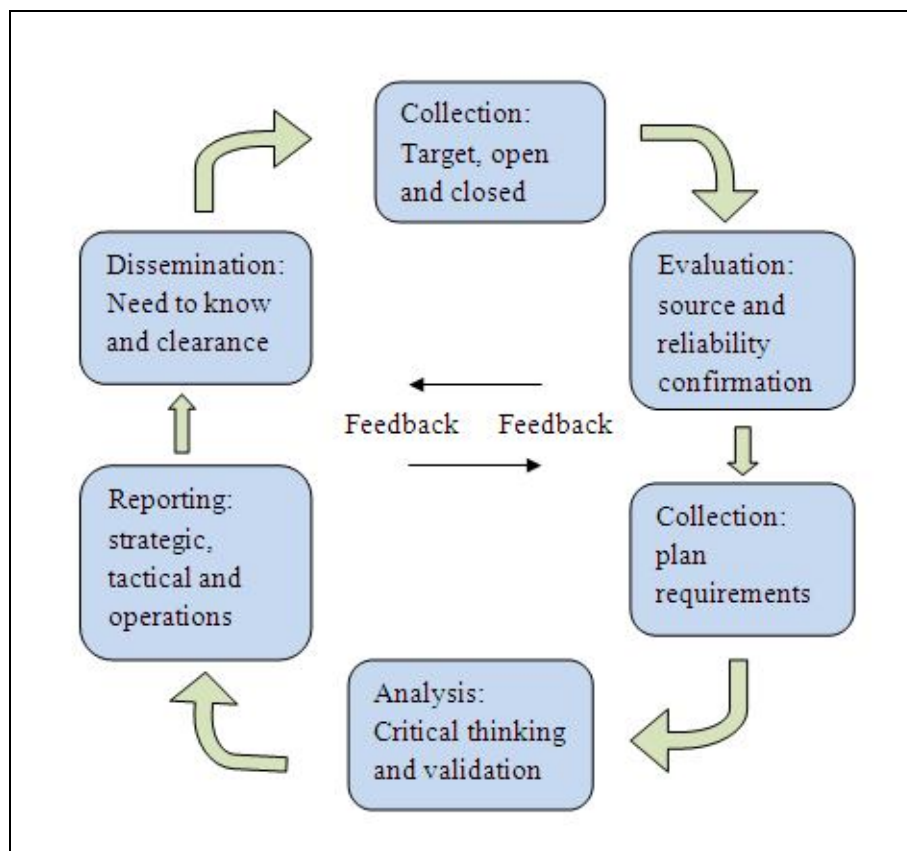

Figure 1: Intelligence cycle
Source: Secondary data, Baker T.E (2009)

Figure 1 shows a cycle model with complementary stages that provide the means for collecting, evaluating, collation, analysing, reporting and dissemination that provide precise criminal intelligence. The intelligence cycle provides a blueprint that can guide police officers attached to the Criminal Intelligence Unit in the gathering of criminal information and processing of intelligence to produce strategic intelligence product that can be utilised for decision making in the fighting of crime.

The intelligence cycle is of paramount importance to the current study because it gives an insight concerning the activities that can be carried out by the police officers starting from collection of information, analysis of crime intelligence and dissemination of crime intelligence which are pivotal in intelligence-led policing. This model also acts as an eye opener to the understanding of the six-step process with similar related stages.

2.3.2. The Scanning, Analysis, Response and Assessment intelligence (SARA) model

Raticliffe (2008), postulated that the Scanning, Analysis, Response and Assessment intelligence model is a fundamental theoretical approach to the analytical process which requires the police analysts to scan for repeating crime problems and patterns, analyse the problems to identify the underlying causes, decided on a suitable response to alleviate the problems and then assess the results of chosen responses. Baker (2009) asserts that the Scanning, Analysis, Response and Assessment intelligence model is an acronym that represents Scanning, Analysis, Response and Assessment which he examines below.

- Scanning

This is the identification of a cluster of similar, related or recurring incidents through a preliminary review of information and the collection of this crime or disorder problem among competing priorities for future examination.

- Analysis

The use of several sources of information to determine why a problem is occurring, who is responsible, who is affected, where the problem is located, when it occurs and what form the problem takes. Analysis requires identifying problems that explain the conditions that facilitate the crime or disorder problems, Sources of information include police data.

- Response

The execution of a tailored set of actions that address the most important findings of the problem analysis phase and focus on preventing future occurrences by deflecting offenders, protecting likely victims or making crime locations less conducive to problem behaviours.

- Assessment

The impacts of responses on the targeted crime or disorder problem using information collected from multiple sources both before and after responses have been implemented.

In order for the intelligence-led policing to be effective there is need for scanning of information concerning crimes affecting the society, analysing of information to produce intelligence which will be employed to fight crime, checking response to determine whether the intelligence-led policing protects the likely victims or making crime locations less conducive. It shall be established in the current study that the model fits in the Zimbabwean context as it requires the DCIO and crime analyst to scan for repeating crimes identify the underlying causes and decide crime management strategies necessary in fighting crime which will be used by the operation stations to detect and prevent crime in the society.

Darroch & Mazerolle sum up the intelligence process when they assert that;

"The ideal model of intelligence- led policing thus includes features such as clearly defined intelligence structures, sound intelligence process (including collection and analysis of intelligence, the development of options, and communication of these two decision makers), a well – developed problem solving process (persistent problems identified and a systematic problem solving approach such as Scanning Analysis Response and is followed), clearly defined evidence- based products (intelligence products that utilise crime sciences and evidence of effective police practice) with unambiguous recommendations for decision makers, and use of a broad variety of tactics..." (2012:7)

3. Research Methodology

A descriptive social survey method was used as appropriate research design for the study. A stratified random sample of 73 heterogeneous police officers was extracted from a target population of 693 police officers in the Bindura police district. The respondents were drawn from the seven police stations within Bindura policing district. Questionnaires and in-depth interview guide were the key research instruments. Interview respondents were selected using the purposive sampling technique and were chosen based on their vast knowledge pertaining to the subject of intelligence led policing. Secondary data was also found in key policy documents. Statistical Package for Social Science version 16.0 software was used to analyse data quantitative data. Qualitative data was analysed using content analysis and was used to complement quantitative data.

4. Research Findings

4.1. Mechanisms Employed by the ZRP in Implementing Intelligence-Led Policing

In 2000, the ZRP made some great strides by introducing Criminal Intelligence Unit in the organisation as a chief mechanism in the implementation of the intelligence-led policing which viewed criminal intelligence and intelligence analysis as the life-blood of the police in fighting crime in the society (ZRP CPC, 2000). The Criminal Intelligence Unit was established to create a data bank that

captures analyses and disseminates information on criminal activities complementing efforts by other policing initiatives (ZRP NSPG, 2012).

4.1.1. The Role of Criminal Intelligence Unit in the ZRP
The Criminal Intelligence Unit is mandated to carry out the following roles in order to implement intelligence-led policing:
- Integrate crime management strategies (a combination of prevention and investigation methods).
- Predict the future of crime, which allows resources to be deployed to best advantage, effectiveness in profiling of known criminals and targeting the criminal.
- Make the most efficient use of resources.
- Docket analysis, determining how and why cases at court fail, and why cases are not being processed thus provide crime information to identify common modus operandi in group, or serial offenders, which shapes the focus of crime investigation, detection and prevention strategies (Criminal Intelligence Unit Manual, 2013).

It therefore, follows that the Criminal Intelligence Unit is charged with the general duty of analysing crime related data and storage of habitual or known criminals' records and such records would also include information on syndicates and organised crime activities. The Criminal Intelligence Unit is also charged with the general duty to act as a spearhead and advisory office of intelligence-led policing to the operational sections, that is, DUB and CID. The unit thus provides intelligence on criminal related matters to these operational sections through meetings, workshops, memoranda, radio messages and any other information dissemination apparatus. To this end, the following instruments were initiated to enhance the mechanism; informers' file, detection register, crime reports and data collation file, field officers' report file, research-based intelligence report file, modus operandi index, field intelligence officers monthly report file, criminal records management officers monthly report file, criminal intelligence analysts monthly report file, arrest of wanted persons chart, stolen property register and profiling of known criminals file (ZRP NSPG, 2012).

4.1.2. Criminal Intelligence Personnel
The ZRP NSPG (2012) maintains that the activities of the following criminal intelligence personnel aid to the adoption of the mechanisms employed by the ZRP in implementing intelligence-led policing in the district:
1. District Criminal Intelligence Officers (DCIO).
2. Field Intelligence Officers (FIO).
3. Criminal Intelligence Analysts (CIA).
- The DCIOs

It was established that the DCIO spearheads intelligence-led policing in Bindura District as one of the mechanisms adopted by the police in implementing intelligence-led policing in the district. The DCIO gives directives on operational matters concerning intelligence-led policing and crafts crime management strategies targeted to reduce crime within the district acting on criminal intelligence from the CIA. The officer is also responsible for supervisory and advisory role to the Criminal Intelligence Unit as well as ensuring that the unit is adequately staffed and fully equipped with material and technical resources (Criminal Intelligence Unit Manual, 2013).
- The Criminal Intelligence Analysts

The CIA integrates all information from the FIOs to prepare linkage diagram, accused profile and commodity flow charts which are essential in the processing of criminal intelligence. The crime analyst also identifies new subjects involved in criminal activities, interpret the results to develop ideas about the nature and scope of criminal activity suspected to be, or taking place, and identify new trends of crime by collating and analysing information. The crime analyst advises the DCIO on the formulation of crime management strategies to be used by operation stations to reduce crime in the district (Criminal Intelligence Unit Manual, 2013).
- Field Intelligence Officers

The FIOs are responsible for capturing criminal information for analysis. They undertake follow-up enquiries in the development of operational information from whatever source. They also cultivate informers for the purpose of obtaining criminal information and verify the information to build criminal profiles which are required by the CIA to process criminal intelligence (Criminal Intelligence Unit Manual, 2013). It shall be established in the current study that these mechanisms are applicable as they were tailor made for the area under study.

4.2. Factors Affecting the Effectiveness of Intelligence-Led Policing in Fighting Crime
Figure 2 shows the frequency of the respondents' sentiments regarding factors affecting the effectiveness of intelligence-led policing in fighting crime.
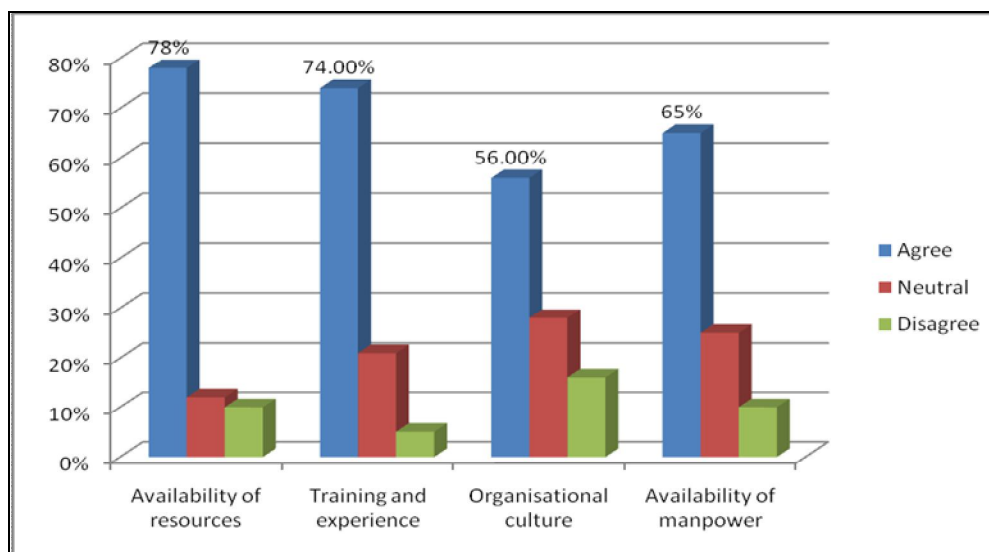
Figure 2: Frequency on factors affecting the effectiveness of intelligence-led policing
n=68
Source: Primary data

The majority respondents (78%) highlighted that availability of resources has a bearing on the effectiveness of intelligence-led policing. The views of the respondents might resemble the fact that resources such as computers for analysis and police vehicles for increasing mobility in gathering criminal information, investigating and detecting crimes impede the effectiveness of intelligence-led policing in fighting crime. The challenge of inadequate resources has been exacerbated by a meagre allocation of funds to the organisation due to the prevailing economic challenges in the country. In tandem with the findings of the current study, Scott & Phillips (2012) empirical research found that lack of resources such as computers restricted crime analysis and rendered intelligence-led policing ineffective to curb the incidents of crime in the society of Quantico, USA. However, some of respondents (10%) seem to disagree with this factor and this might reflect that some respondents could not articulate the extent of resources required to implement intelligence-led policing in order to fight crime effectively.

Majority respondents (74%) affirmed that lack of training jeopardizes the effectiveness of intelligence-led policing. The sentiments of respondents might reflect that there was inadequate crime analysis training, if any, offered by the police to its members regarding how to effectively implement intelligence-led policing. The respondents' views might further denote the fact that the selection of the DCIO might not be as a result of skills and competence, hence this might point to lack of training on the part of the DCIO. This is in line with the research of Scott and Phillips (2012) on crime analysis training which conclusively deduced that crime analysis training was essential at middle-level-management to increase intelligence-led policing support. Some of the interviewees also questioned the recruitment procedure of other lower level personnel in the CIU. Most of them are recruited from the mainstream DUB, hence they lack the requisite skills needed for effective performance of their duties. Whilst it is noble to recruit from within the organisation, training becomes imperative if ever the organisation is to get the best results from the CIU.

Almost two thirds of the respondents cited availability of manpower as a key factor in the successful implementation of intelligence-led policing. Most of the interviewees concurred to the fact that the CIU is currently understaffed. This is supported by the fact that the unit is only found at district levels, sometimes with a total staff establishment of less than 15 members. Some of the junior members were not even aware of the specific functions of the unit hence they cannot derive value from this important section of the organisation.

Slightly above half (56%) of the respondents concurred that organisational culture is a militating factor affecting the effectiveness of intelligence-led policing in fighting crime. The sentiments of the respondents might emanate from the inherent organisational inertia to change, which is a characteristic of most military style organisations. Most of the respondents concurred that intelligence –led policing is the new innovative policing philosophy which calls for a change from the rigid traditional policing methods.

5. Conclusions

The Z.R.P took an early initiative to adopt the concept of intelligence- led policing through the creation of the Criminal Intelligence Unit in the early 2000s. The unit, which is found in all the policing districts within the country, is manned by criminal intelligence analysts, field intelligence officers and the District Criminal Intelligence Officer. The roles of these office bearers are well articulated. Though the ZRP should be commended for embracing intelligence- led policing, there are some impediments, some of which are beyond the control of the organisation, which militate against the smooth implementation of the programme. The success of intelligence- led policing largely depends on the availability of resources such as computers and vehicles, a challenge which the whole organisation has had to grapple with over the years. There are indications that the criminal Intelligence Unit is understaffed, whilst those who occupy various positions in the unit lack the requisite skills and knowledge required for the execution of their roles.

6. Recommendations

The ZRP might consider training its members about intelligence-led policing especially at initial training so that everyone will acquire adequate knowledge concerning how to implement the philosophy at an early stage of their profession. 'Catch them young', is a phrase that can put more emphasis on this recommendation. The concept should not be a preserve for the CIU but all other police officers should have an idea about intelligence-led policing. However those who are seconded to the Criminal Intelligence Unit will require further training on important issues such as intelligence analysis.

In addition, the ZRP may also acquire more resources such as computers and vehicles. The government should allocate more funds to the organisations and relevant stakeholders should lobby for allocation of adequate funds to the police during pre-budget consultations. Acquiring more computers, for instance, can help the organisation to improve analysis and processing of criminal intelligence and can enhance capability in curbing cybercrimes which are escaping the net. In order to be more effective in apprehending moving criminals such as perpetrators of organized crime, the ZRP might acquire more vehicles since such offenders are always mobile.

Furthermore, the ZRP may also change the traditional police culture which may be an impediment for the adoption of innovative strategies such as ILP. Top management should show commitment to intelligence-led policing and this will send a strong message to junior police officers about the importance of intelligence-led policing.

7. Abbreviations

- CIA   Criminal Intelligence Analyst
- CID   Criminal Investigation Department
- CIU   Criminal Intelligence Unit
- CPC   Central Planning Committee
- DCIO   District Criminal Investigating Officer
- DUB   Duty uniform Branch
- FIO   Field Intelligence Officer
- ILP   Intelligence-Led Policing
- NSPG   National Service Plan Guide
- ZRP   Zimbabwe Republic Police

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