

POLICE STATION VISITORS' WEEK 2012
Report of Results in Benin

Summary

The sixth edition of the Police Station Visitors' Week (PSVW) was conducted from 3rd to 9th of December 2012 in Benin. 36 visitors participated in the visit which took place in twelve police stations in the country; 12 of the visitors were female while 24 were male. The visitors were sent in groups or teams; each team made up of an average of three persons. The team leader was responsible for coordinating the visit including writing narrative reports in line with the narrative report guideline by Altus.

The PSVW promotes accountability and transparency. It also enhances accessibility of the police stations by the public in which their interactions aid in finding a lasting solution to the relationship issue between the police and the public. The visit is a mechanism aimed to achieve community policing, building and fostering police community interactions, identifying good practices that can be shared and replicated by other police formations in the country and the region.

The 2012 PSVW was conducted like the other editions with the same kit designed by Altus. The kit consists of 20 questions addressing the five categories of assessing the police stations and the services they render to the public. The categories are as follow:

- Community orientation
- Physical conditions
- Equal treatment of the public
- Transparency and accountability
- Detention conditions

The leader of each team coordinates the visit to the police station and thereafter uploads the scores with the narrative report of their findings to Altus website specially designed for the purpose. He/she will then send the kits and the narrative report to the Altus regional representative which is the CLEEN Foundation based in Nigeria.

Why a global event?

The PSVW is a global event because it is an event that takes place across the five continents with different police organizations and community members visiting their local police stations and making use of the same kits to score their local police stations within the same period. The PSVW contributes to awareness raising on the part of the police of the need to be accountable to the members of their local communities. The

PSVW aims to link local realities with global standards. Police institutions across the world have the same objective which is promotion of public safety and security of the citizens.

2012 participation across the world are as follows

Countries	Number of Participating Police organizations	Number of Visitors
Benin	12	36
Brazil	107	421
Cameroon	28	86
Chile	72	288
El Salvador	8	33
Ghana	12	42
Guatemala	5	26
Honduras	9	36
India	399	3646
Kenya	19	60
Liberia	10	32
Maldives	12	26
Nicaragua	8	32
Nigeria	262	897
Pakistan	8	59
Peru	10	30
United states	19	92
Total	1000	5842

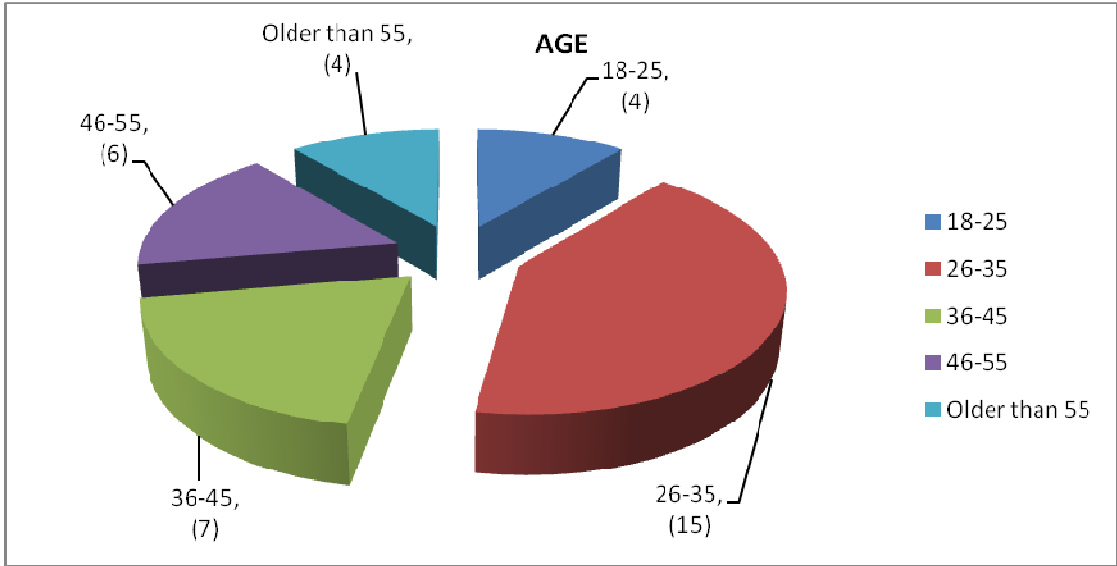
List of Police Stations that participated in Benin

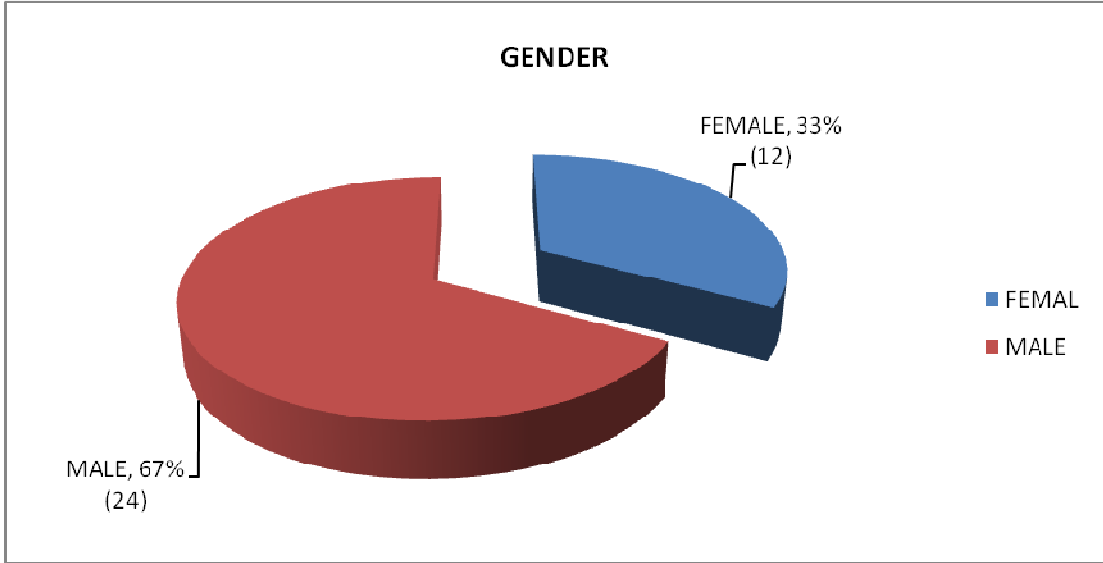
S/N	BENIN
1.	Commissariat de Aïdjedo
2.	Commissariat de Cadjehoun
3	Commissariat de GODOMEY
4	Commissariat de Kpondehou
5	Commissariat de SEGBEYA
6	Commissariat de Sodjeatinme
7	Commissariat de Vodjè
8	Commissariat de Xwladodji
9	Gendarmerie d'Agla
10	Gendarmerie d'Avotrou
11	Gendarmerie de SEME-KPOJI
12	Gendarmerie de Zinvié

Graphical Representation for Participants in the PSVW 2012 in Benin

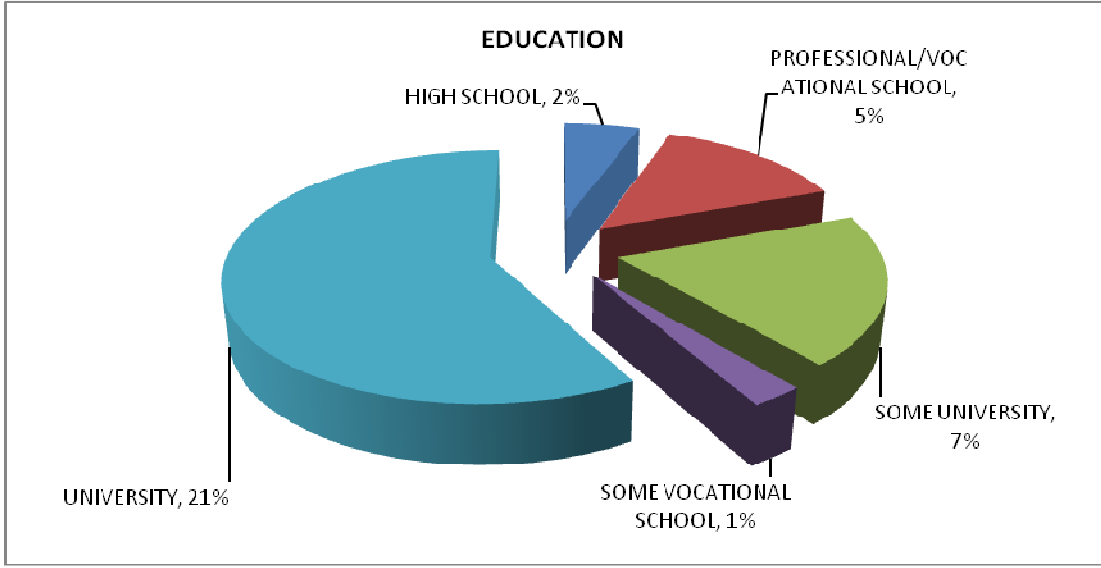
Below are the breakdowns of demographics for participants in the PSVW 2012 in Benin

In Benin, a total number of thirty six (36) visitors participated in the visit which took place in twelve police stations in the county. The graphs shown below are breakdown of demographics of the participants.





Sixty seven percent (67) of the visitors who participated in the 2012 Altus police station visitors' week in the republic of Benin are Male while the remaining thirty-three percent (33) are women. See the chart above.

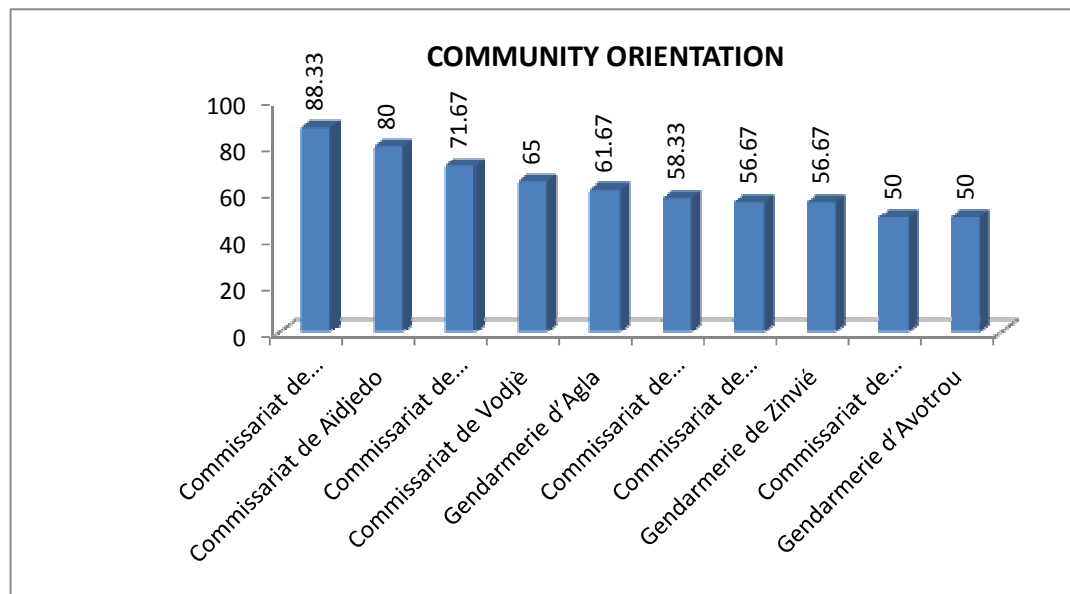


Twenty-one percent of the visitor had university education, seven percent had some university education, five percent had a professional/vocational educational background; two percent had a high school education while only one percent had some vocational education.

THE ASSESSMENT INDICATORS

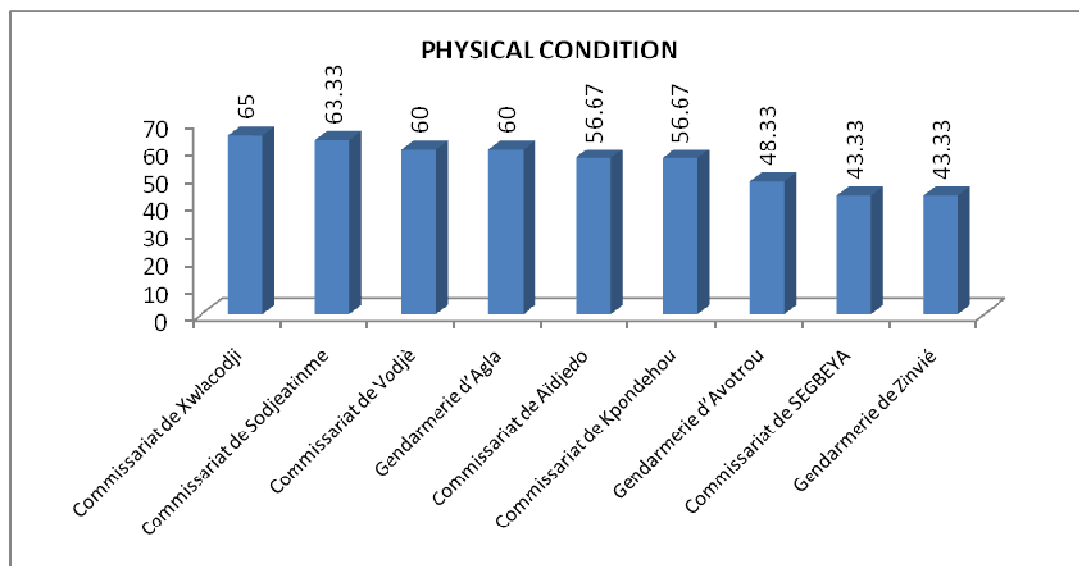
The various police stations that participated were assessed using indicators that are fundamentals of what makes a good police station. The assessments of the top ten participating police stations in each indicator area are shown below.

Community Orientation: Every police station is expected to interact with the general public seeking assistance or wishing to report a crime in their vicinity. The ability of police stations to make community members feel comfortable during their visit will make them more willing to work with the police on crime prevention and also in giving out useful information to the police to enable them track down criminals in the community.



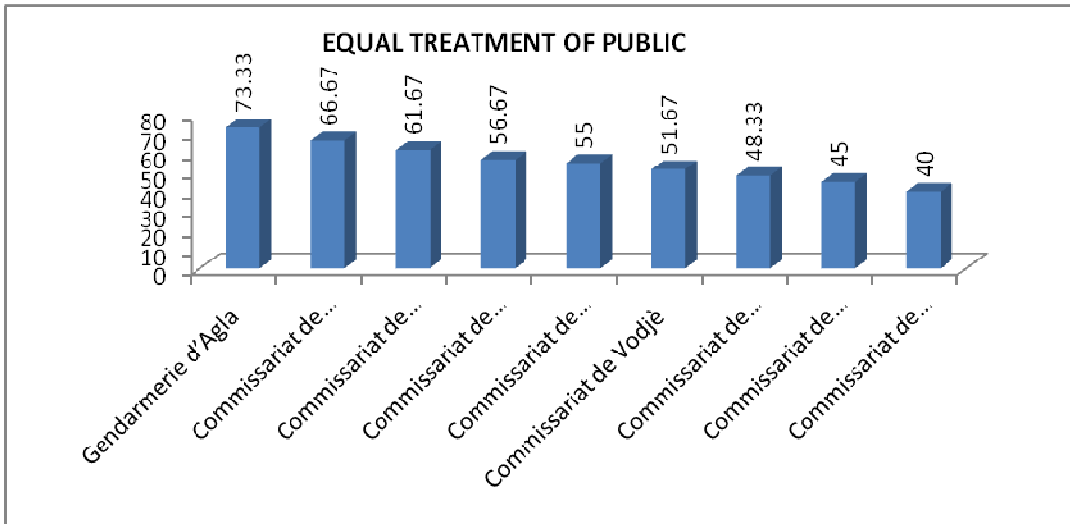
In the area of community orientation, Commissariat de kpondehou scored 88.33% to emerge first; Commissariat de Aidjedo came second with 80% and Commissariat de Xwlacodji scored 71.67% to emerge third position.

Physical Conditions: This comprises the facilities, spaces and equipment available in the police stations. The buildings of police stations are in varieties from big to small structures. However, the size of the buildings does not necessarily affect the orderliness and cleanliness of the station. The visitors' assessments therefore, were based on the physical condition of the structures of the stations. It is assumed that police personnel working in a disorganized and dirty police station exhibits hostility towards the general public.



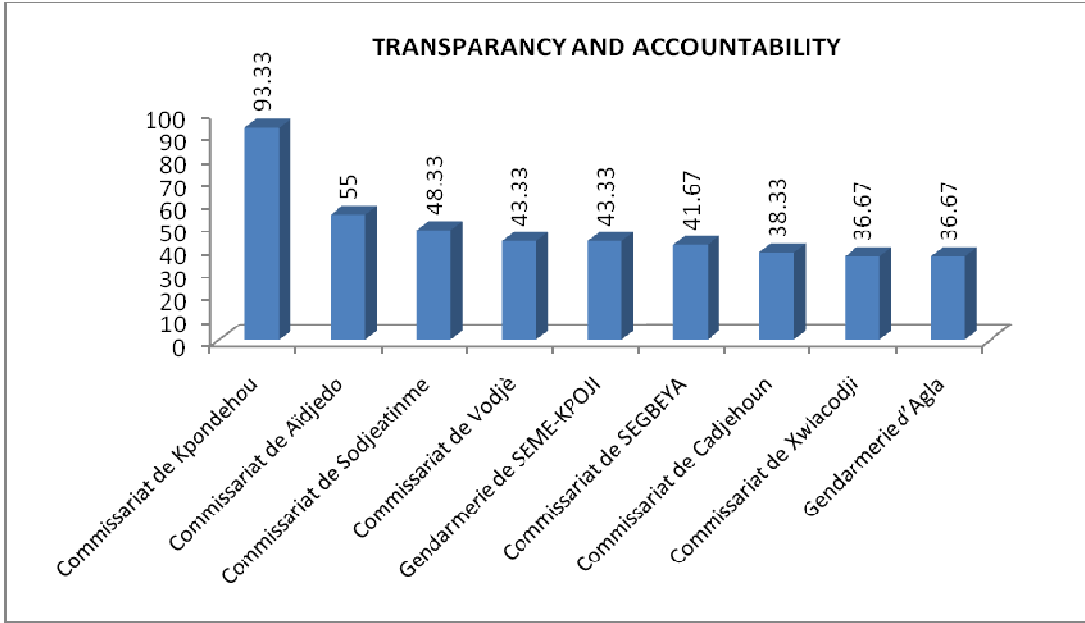
In the area of physical condition, Commissariat de Xwlaodji scored 65% to emerge first; Commissariat de Sodjeatinme came second with 63.33% and Commissariat de Vodje scored 60% to emerge third position.

Equal Treatment of the Public: In treating the public, the police are expected to be sensitive in terms of gender, ethnicity, and religion and give equal treatment bearing all these in mind. Also allowance should be made for the less privileged and physically challenged members of the public by providing services such as translation services, Braille services for the blind etc.



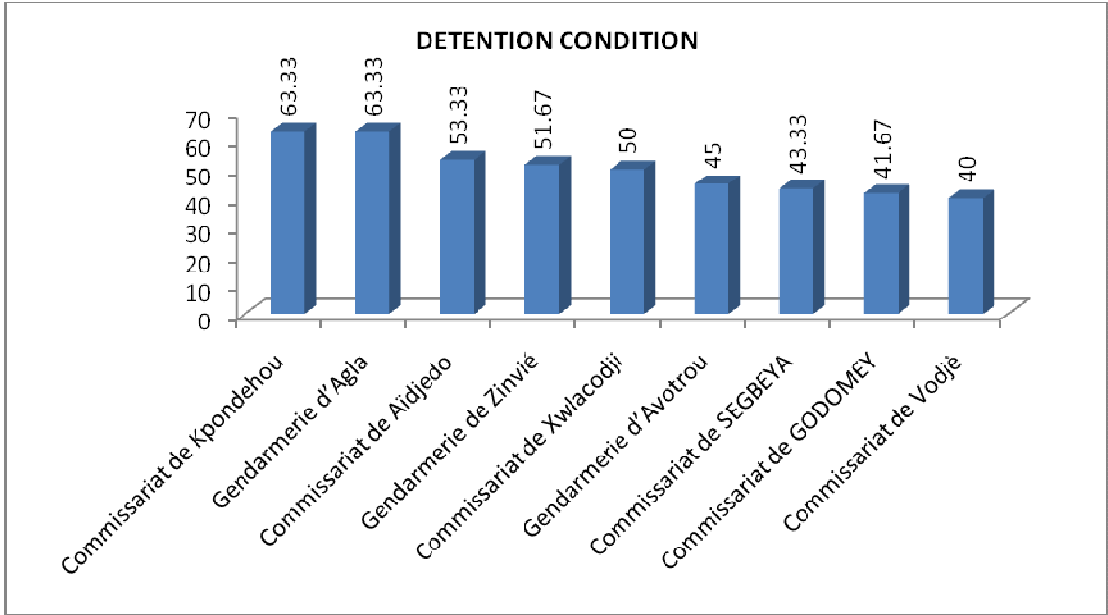
In the area of Equal Treatment of Public, Gendarmerie d'Agla – (73.33%) - first; Commissariat de Kpondehou – (66.67%)- second and Commissariat de Aïdjedo – (61.67%)- Third

Transparency and Accountability: This comprises the ability of the public to easily obtain information on the measures of police performance in combating crime in the area of the police station. Providing means of easy identification of police officers in the police stations and providing clear information to the public on how to file complaint against police officers misconduct while on duty and how to commend police officers who performed excellently in their duty. Also there should be information to inform the public about other civilian bodies where necessary.



In the area of Transparency and Accountability, Commissariat de Kpondehou - (93.33%) - first; Commissariat de Aïdjedo - (55%) - second and Commissariat de Sodjeatinme (48.33%) - Third

Detention Conditions: This comprises the ability of the police stations to inform relatives or a third party of one's arrest, access to a lawyer, a reasonable cell size (adequate lighting and ventilation, not overcrowded); equipment for rest (bed, mattress and blankets); accessible toilet under decent and clean conditions; provision of food to include one full meal every day. Good police detention conditions in terms of hygiene and sanitation should equal with local standards. It is fundamental for everyone including detainees to have a clean, well lit and livable condition.



In the area of Detention Condition, Commissariat de Kpondehou and Gendarmerie d'Agla - both scored (63.33%) - first; Commissariat de Aidjedou - (53.33%) – second and Gendarmerie de Zinvié scored (51.67%) - Third

WHICH POLICE STATIONS SCORED HIGHEST?

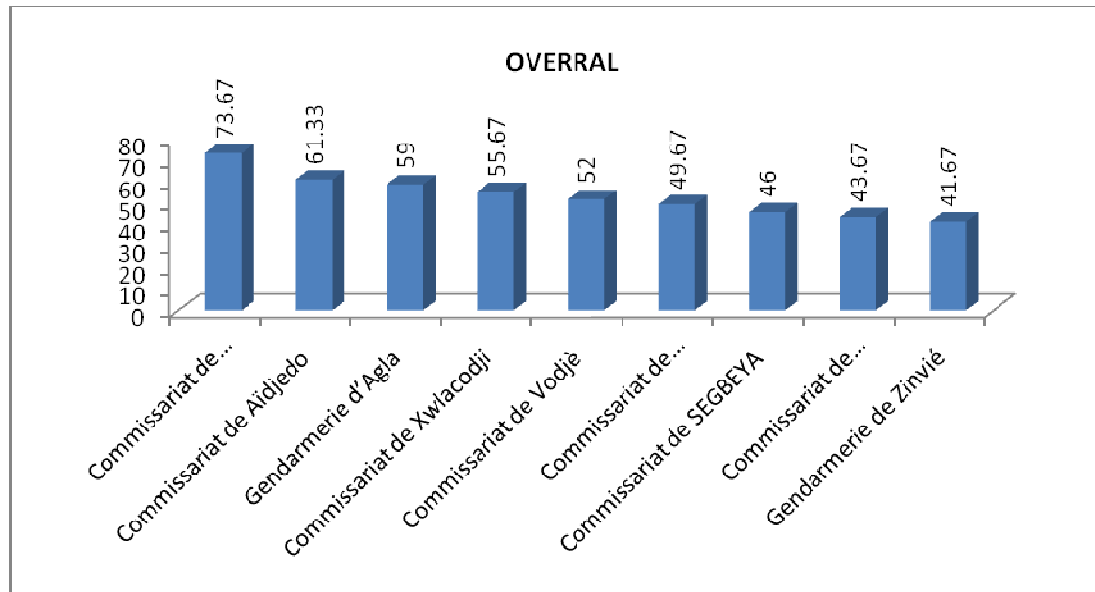
Overall Assessment

Overall assessment of a good police station is as follows:

- A good police station is oriented to the community
- Remarkable police station present adequate physical conditions

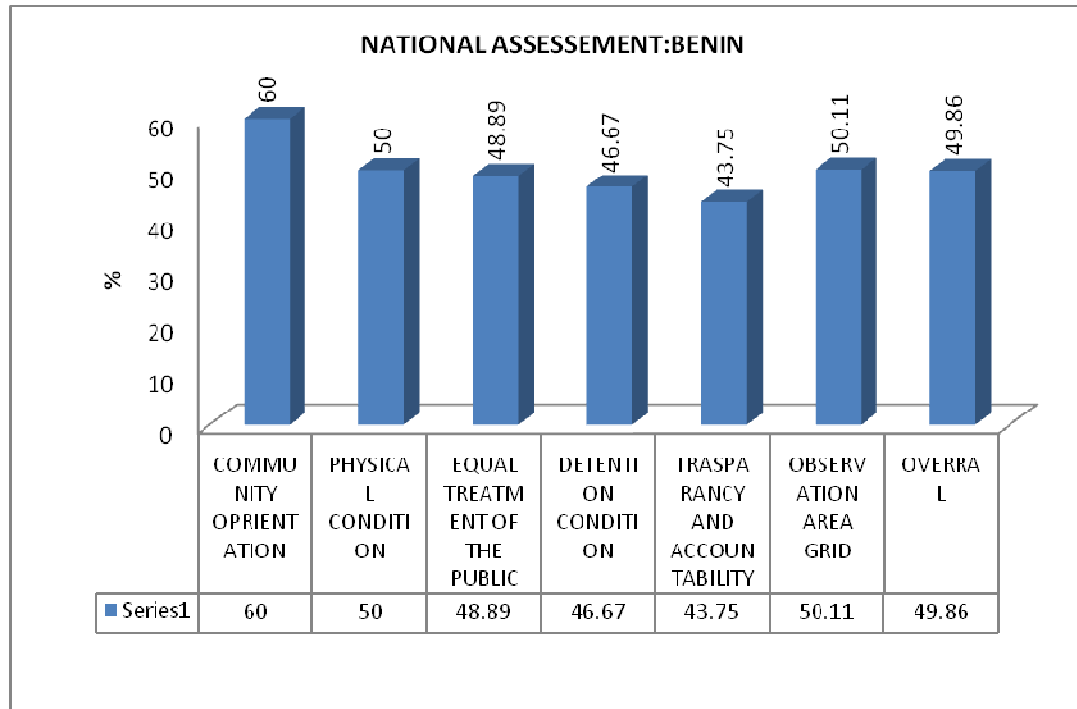
- The station personnel have to know its public and treat them equally by providing trained staff and sources of information to attend to different community needs.
- Transparency and Accountability are two major aspects of a good police station
- A good police station respects detainees rights and provides good detention conditions

In view of the above assessment, the chart below shows the overall observation areas indicating the top 10 police stations in Benin.



- Commissariat de Kpondehou (73.67%)
- Commissariat de Aidjedo (61.33%)
- Gendarmerie d'Agla (59%)
- Commissariat de Xwlacodji (55.67%)
- Commissariat de Vodje (52%)
- Commissariat de Sodjeatinme (49.67%)
- Commissariat de Segbeya (46%)

- Commissariat de Cadjehoun (43.67%)
- Gendarmerie de Zinvie (41.67%)
- Gendarmerie d'Avotrou (40.67%)



The chart above represents the national assessment for Benin in all the indicator areas.

Overall assessment of performance of the police stations in Benin in 2012 compared to 2011 according to the Altus indicators are as follows:

S/N	Indicator Area	Score (2012)	Score (2011)	Comments (2012)	Comments (2011)
1.	Community Orientation	60	51.5	Adequate	Inadequate
2.	Physical Conditions	50	48.17	Inadequate	Inadequate
3.	Equal Treatment of the Public	48.89	40.33	Inadequate	Wholly Inadequate
4.	Transparency and Accountability	43.75	38.17	Wholly Inadequate	Wholly Inadequate
5.	Detention Conditions	46.67	48.83	Inadequate	Inadequate
	Overall National Average	49.86	45.4	Inadequate	Inadequate

**GOOD PRACTICES / AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT/ COMMANDERS' THAT DESERVE COMMENDATIONS IDENTIFIED BY VISITORS IN THE 2012
PSVW IN BENIN**

This section provides information about certain key areas: good practices; areas that police stations have improved since the last visit; stations or Police Commanders that deserve commendations based on observers' impressions. One of the reasons why PSVW is conducted is for visitors to identify certain good practices that have been evolved by police stations in their local communities and probably identify the impact of those good practices in the service delivery being generated by the police to member of the public. The visitors were also required to identify improvement areas which the police has design to ensure effective services to the public. The visitors are also required to note down if any exist, Police Commanders' that deserve commendations who have been able to distinguish themselves from others in terms of performance and innovation.

Good practices

- Visitors noted the dedication of officers who worked even after working hours. However, visitors were of the view that flexibility in police schedule could help to improve their working conditions in the long run.
- Partnership with local authorities, NGOs and Community in general: Visitors noted a good working relationship with other local authorities and NGOs in the discharge of law enforcement duties. For example Commissariat de Kpondehou work with NGOs that deal with the recovery of vagrant children. Also because of the good partnership with the community, citizens have assisted some police stations in the area of provision of air conditioners, computers and painting of the office of the Commissioner and his Assistant.
- Respect and proper management of persons in police custody: At Commissariat de SEGBEYA, visitors observed that persons in custody are properly treated and respected and also a practice where by the Commissioner conducts daily checks of the custody registers.
- At Commissariat de Aïdjedo, visitors noted that GLO Benin, a GSM company provides weekly, cleaning agents to ensure cleanliness and safety at the police station. It was also observed that the Commissioner has an established system where officers without discrimination of ranks meet on a weekly basis to discuss and share ideas on ways to improve the performance of the police station, handling of complaints and overall management of the police station. This system creates a climate of trust and transparency which makes it difficult for information or any situation to go unnoticed.

- Customer Satisfaction a top priority: Visitors also observed at Commissariat de Aïdjedo a facility which allows any user to meet the Commissioner to complain where they not are satisfied. A message is largely displayed in at the reception hall “If you are not satisfied, ask to see the Commissioner.”
- At Commissariat de Xwlacodji, visitors observed the effort of the police to create awareness and provide support to victims who come to the police station. They also noted the promptness with which police procedures are initiated so that suspects do not exceed the days of custody as stipulated by law.

Commendations

- Visitors commended Commissariat de Segbeya for the discipline, courtesy and dedication of the Commissioner and his officers. The visitors reported, “Discipline because despite the meager resources they have, they manage to somehow ensure the safety of users. It is also characterized by the cleanliness that we observed at the station in general. Courtesy is linked to the welcome everyone receives without exception and the availability of the Commissioner to listen to everyone without exception.”
- The station Commissioner in charge of Commissariat de Aïdjedo deserve commendation for the innovative system she has introduced where officers irrespective of their ranks meet on a weekly basis to discuss and share ideas on ways to improve the performance of the police station, handling of complaints and overall management of the police station. This system creates a climate of trust and transparency which makes it difficult for information or any situation to go unnoticed.

Areas of Commendation

- Visitors reported better police partnership with local authorities, NGOs and Community in general. For example Commissariat de Kpondehou working with NGOs to recover vagrant children; Commissariat de Aïdjedo, partnering with GLO Benin to improve the safety and cleanliness of the police station
- Visitors also noted the general cleanliness of most of the police stations was commendable.

Changes visitors would like to see

- More female police officers at police stations
- Provision of office facilities and equipments at police stations
- Improved system of complaints and evidence management
- Construction of separate bath and toilet facilities for female detainees.