



UNODC

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The Doha Declaration:
**PROMOTING A
CULTURE OF
LAWFULNESS**

Handbook on **THE CLASSIFICATION OF PRISONERS**



CRIMINAL JUSTICE HANDBOOK SERIES

UNITED NATIONS OFFICE ON DRUGS AND CRIME
Vienna

Handbook on THE CLASSIFICATION OF PRISONERS

CRIMINAL JUSTICE HANDBOOK SERIES



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Contents

Acknowledgements	iii
Summary of key principles and recommendations	vii
Introduction	1
1. Who is the handbook for?	1
2. What does the handbook cover?	1
I. Importance of prisoner classification	3
1. Safety and security of prisoners, prison staff and the public	5
2. Humane custody of prisoners	6
3. Individualized case and sentence planning	7
4. Cost-effectiveness of operating prisons	8
II. Key issues for the classification of prisoners	9
1. Prisoner separation versus prisoner classification	9
2. Legislative frameworks	10
3. Infrastructure requirements	14
4. Centralized versus decentralized assessment and classification	22
5. External versus internal prisoner classification	23
6. Regular classification reviews	24
7. Gender, age and culturally informed approaches	25
8. Prisoners with special needs	28
9. Other placement considerations	33
III. Research on approaches to the assessment of prisoners	35
1. Four generations of assessment tools	35
2. Risk-needs-responsivity model	38
3. Good lives model	39
IV. Overall principles and components of prisoner classification systems	41
1. Prisoner classification upon admission to the prison service	42
2. Reclassification during a custodial sentence	60
3. Release planning and community supervision	61
V. Development and implementation of a prisoner classification system	65
1. Project planning phases	65
2. Importance of ongoing monitoring and evaluation	68
Glossary of key terms	73

Annexes: Additional resources	75
I. Example of basic prisoner intake assessment template: admission and immediate needs	75
II. Other resources: prisoner classification and assessment approaches, instruments and policies and guidelines	81
III. Examples of factors to assess for classification purposes at intake to a correctional system	82
IV. Example outline of case and sentence management plan (convicted prisoners)	84
V. Example outline of assessment for reclassification purposes	86
VI. Example outline of standard operating procedures for prisoner assessment and classification activities	89

Summary of key principles and recommendations

Chapter I. Importance of prisoner classification

“Classification” refers to the placement or allocation of prisoners to one of several custody or supervision levels in order to match the prisoners’ individual risks and needs to correctional resources and the appropriate supervision regime.

A well-designed and managed classification process is a cornerstone of an effective prison system, fundamental to the protection of human rights, the ability to individualize case and sentence planning and the efficient use of limited correctional resources.

Classification has a direct impact on many aspects of prison management, including the safety and security of prisoners, prison staff and the general public, the humane custody of prisoners and the ability to individualize case and sentence planning. It also increases the cost-effectiveness of operating a prison system by minimizing overclassification and therefore preventing resources from being expended on high-security prisons, restrictive conditions and other measures that may not be warranted.

Chapter II. Key issues for the classification of prisoners

“Classification” is distinct from the “separation” of prisoners based on the core factors of age, gender and the legal reason for their detention. Specifically, separation according to such defined groupings does not in itself constitute a classification process. Classification entails a structured and individualized assessment of the risks and needs of each prisoner to assist in decision-making regarding the most appropriate placement and interventions.

The legislative framework of a country plays a determining role in decision-making regarding the security classification of prisoners. In some jurisdictions, it is the responsibility of judges to decide on the security regime for a prisoner on the basis of the crime that they have committed; in others, it is the responsibility of the prison service. The recommended practice is for prison authorities to determine the security level of a prisoner after an individualized assessment of risks and needs.¹

Classification is required for both pretrial detainees and sentenced prisoners. For those remanded into custody, the presence of a transparent assessment and classification system with regular periods of review is a critical element to assist decision makers in determining the minimum security requirements necessary to manage individuals awaiting trial. Similarly, for those who have been convicted and sentenced, such a system ensures that prisoners are managed in the lowest security category or level consistent with ensuring the protection of prisoners, prison officers and the public, as well as with the promotion of social reintegration efforts.

The successful development, implementation and management of a prisoner classification system are dependent on several infrastructural requirements, in particular those related to the physical infrastructure of prisons, policies and guidelines, staff resources and an established system of documentation and record-keeping. In addition, the approach adopted will be influenced by whether assessment and classification activities are centralized at one location or decentralized across multiple sites.

¹United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), *Custodial and Non-Custodial Measures: The Prison System – Criminal Justice Assessment Toolkit* (Vienna, 2006).

The process of initially classifying prisoners upon admission is separate from the process of reassessing their classification at regular intervals during a sentence for the purposes of determining whether a reclassification of security level or facility is required. By focusing on the prisoner's conduct and progress in need areas while incarcerated, the reclassification process acknowledges that prisoners' risks and needs are not static and may change over time. Typically, the goal of a reassessment is to allow for a progression through the prison system towards a less restrictive regime in order to foster the rehabilitation of prisoners. The absence of a reclassification process or of one that does not allow prisoners to work their way to lower-custody levels typically results in the overclassification of many prisoners and seriously hinders social reintegration efforts.

Classification tools and approaches need to consider such factors as gender and cultural background for the assessment of risks and needs, as well as appropriate interventions. Historically, most assessment instruments for prisoner classification have been developed for and validated on adult men, and it cannot be assumed that those instruments are equally valid for women. In fact, they may result in overclassification by ignoring the different background and profile of women offenders, as well as their gender-specific needs in prison.

While safety, security and access to appropriate interventions need to be taken into account for assessment and placement decisions, issues such as the proximity of the setting to the prisoner's home, community, family and places of social reintegration, as well as any linguistic or cultural needs, also need to be considered for the assignment of prisoners to specific facilities.

Chapter III. Research on approaches to the assessment of prisoners

Approaches to the assessment of prisoners to assist in classification decisions have evolved over time. Initial efforts focused on unstructured clinical judgment, which was demonstrated to lack accuracy and consistency. Current methods typically use research-based actuarial or structured professional judgment approaches to inform the classification of prisoners and case management from the beginning of a sentence to its completion, with regular reassessments all along and the identification of key individual factors to allow for the most adequate matching of interventions to prisoners.

The evolution of approaches to prisoner classification has been strongly influenced by the risk-need-responsivity model of prisoner assessment and rehabilitation (developed by Andrews, Bonta and Hoge in 1990).² More recently, the good lives model³ has also gained prominence. This approach is aimed at augmenting the risk, need and responsivity principles of effective correctional intervention by focusing it on assisting clients in developing and implementing meaningful life plans that are incompatible with offending.

Tools and approaches developed to assess a prisoner's risk to the public upon release are not necessarily suitable in themselves to make security classification decisions. Specifically, not all of the factors that are predictive of the risk of reoffending are relevant for predicting prison adjustment and conduct.

²Donald A. Andrews, James Bonta and R. D. Hoge, "Classification for effective rehabilitation: Rediscovering psychology", *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, vol. 17, No. 1 (March 1990), pp. 19–52.

³Tony Ward, "Good lives and the rehabilitation of offenders: promises and problems", *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, vol. 7, No. 5, (October 2002), pp. 513–528; Tony Ward, Ruth E. Mann and Theresa A. Gannon, "The good lives model of offender rehabilitation: clinical implications", *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, vol. 12, No. 1 (January/February 2007), pp. 87–107.

Chapter IV. Overall principles and components of prisoner classification systems

A prisoner classification system should include the following sequence and elements:

- *Step 1: assessment of immediate needs and provision of information to the prisoner.* This step should occur as soon as possible upon admission (within 24 hours) and before any cell or accommodation assignment within the general prison population. The aim is to identify any immediate concerns related to safety and security, as well as physical and mental health-care needs.
- *Step 2: collection of information.* This step refers to the gathering of reliable information regarding the prisoner's (alleged) offence, criminal history and personal background to conduct a more complete assessment of risks and needs to determine classification and longer-term placement. This includes, where possible, official documentation related to the confirmation of identity, the (alleged) offence, criminal history and previous incarcerations, as well as an interview with, and self-reported information from, the prisoner. It can also benefit from interviews with family members and other people affiliated with the prisoner, including from civil society organizations, where appropriate, as well as information provided by prison intelligence services, in particular in the cases where affiliation with a security threat group is suspected (e.g., a gang, an organized crime group or a terrorist organization).
- *Step 3: determination of initial security level required: assessment of risk, need and responsivity factors.* This step is typically achieved through the administration of tools (preferably actuarial or structured professional judgment) by appropriately trained staff.
 - Risk assessments should focus on factors related to the safety and security of prisoners and staff in a prison setting, the risk of escape and the safety of the public in the event of an escape.
 - Needs assessments should focus on criminogenic need areas, specifically those identified as being related to criminal behaviour and changeable with intervention.
 - Responsivity issues are those that may have an impact on the prisoner's participation in interventions, as well as overall prison adjustment, such as language barriers, literacy deficits, intellectual or physical disabilities and mental health issues. Factors such as the prisoner's motivation and willingness to participate in interventions should also be evaluated.

Supplementary assessments can also assist in obtaining additional information regarding a prisoner's risk and programming needs to facilitate decisions regarding placement and required interventions. Cases that involve crimes related to sexual offences, domestic violence and violent extremism should benefit from additional exploration, including through more targeted assessments. In addition, detailed information regarding such individual factors as substance use disorders, mental health issues and educational and vocational background can also be very useful for case planning and placement decisions.

The selection of assessment tools and methods ultimately depends on the nature of the decision to be made. For example, approaches to determine longer-term security placement in a prison setting will not necessarily be the same as those aimed at assisting in making decisions about community supervision or non-custodial options. Similarly, methods for assessing individuals for reclassification purposes will differ from those for making initial security classification decisions.

- *Step 4: using assessment results for prison placement decisions and case or sentence management planning.* The results of risk and needs assessments should be used to develop a case or sentence management plan for each prisoner, including his or her classification and placement. The results of the assessment should be discussed with the prisoner, who should have the opportunity to participate in the development of his or her case plan.

Case or sentence plans that are concise, concrete and realistic are likely to be the most useful. Objectives identified in the plan should be directly related to assessment results and follow “SMART” principles, that is, be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound. Reassessment and reclassification activities are aided by a clear and well-structured case or sentence plan.

It should be noted that the policy on prisoner classification of a jurisdiction should clearly articulate how classification decisions are communicated to the prisoner and the process involved if the prisoner questions or would like to appeal the classification decision.

Chapter V. Development and implementation of a prisoner classification system

The implementation and modification of a prisoner classification system require extensive planning and broad support within a prison system, including at the political level, from senior government officials and from front-line officers. Four phases of project management are important when undertaking such a task: (a) mobilization or preparation; (b) an appraisal of the current system; (c) planning for the new or revised system; and (d) implementation. Each phase includes steps that are critical to ensure the success of the endeavour.

- Mobilization involves a clear articulation of the classification issues to be addressed and the identification of clear objectives and expected outcomes. During this phase, a project leadership and steering committee (including broad representation within the prison service and any relevant external agencies) should be identified, including a senior management champion, together with the resources required to support the initiative.
- Appraisal involves a comprehensive review of the current assessment and classification system to identify both opportunities and challenges. It is essentially the process of establishing the starting point of the project. It includes such activities as a review of existing legislation and policies and procedures regarding the admission and processing of prisoners, obtaining and reviewing any data and information available on the characteristics of the existing prison population, and identifying the impact that the current physical infrastructure, staff resources and method of documentation and record-keeping will have on the implementation of a prisoner classification system.
- During the planning phase, promising and evidence-based systems, models, approaches and best practices are reviewed through, inter alia, literature reviews, exchanges with other jurisdictions and technical assistance from experts, with a focus on those that may be applicable to the national prison context. In addition, a pilot approach and prototype tools are developed and tested in a limited number of prisons. The feedback and findings of the pilot testing are used to make improvements to the assessment and classification approach and to develop an action plan for the broader implementation of the classification system. The action plan should address such issues as policy changes (if required), prison staff training, communication strategy, proposed budget, potential automation, data collection, documentation and record management and a description of how the system will be monitored and evaluated.

- Implementation is the final stage of the process and should follow the approved action plan with ongoing monitoring to ensure that the roll-out is on schedule and within budget, that any challenges are being identified and addressed and that the original objectives identified during the mobilization phase are met.

While it is recognized that full adherence to such a model may not be possible in all jurisdictions, owing to resource, infrastructure and contextual factors, an understanding of those phases and the completion of as many steps as is practically possible when developing a new or revised prisoner assessment and classification approach will be beneficial to its successful implementation.

Once a prisoner classification system has been piloted and implemented, it is important to implement a process of ongoing monitoring, review and evaluation in order to determine whether the system is working as intended, verify its predictive ability and validity and assess both its intended and unintended consequences.

Introduction

1. Who is the handbook for?

The present handbook is part of the UNODC criminal justice handbook series and is aimed at supporting countries in implementing the rule of law and developing criminal justice reform in general, and prison reform in particular. Although it is primarily designed for prison administrators and prison officers, the handbook is also intended as a useful resource guide for other officials and parties involved in the criminal justice system, such as legislators and policymakers, as well as for non-governmental organizations. It can be used in various contexts, both as a reference document and as a training tool.

It is recognized that some jurisdictions, in particular those in post-conflict environments, may face unique challenges in implementing some elements described in the handbook. However, the content should assist any jurisdiction intending to develop a sound prisoner classification system or improve upon an existing classification regime.

2. What does the handbook cover?

The main objective of the handbook is to provide information and guidelines to assist national prison or corrections administrations with the development of policies and protocols for the implementation and operation of an effective system of prisoner classification that meets international standards and is based on accepted research evidence. Specifically, the focus is on providing practical, evidence-based material regarding the design and implementation of effective systems to classify and reclassify adult prisoners¹ on the basis of the risks that they pose and the needs that they may have, and on how to allocate them to a suitable prison regime that can manage their risks in the least restrictive manner and provide a setting to foster their rehabilitation and social reintegration prospects. Owing to the technical nature of some of the terminology used in the handbook, the reader is directed towards the glossary provided at the end of the document for the definitions of key terms.

The handbook is also intended to assist with putting into practice the guidance provided by international standards and norms related to prison management, in particular the United

¹Issues related to the assessment, categorization and allocation of children are not covered in the present handbook, in view of the specific legal regime applicable to children deprived of their liberty.

Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules) and the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules), and to complement other relevant guidance material developed by UNODC² and other international and regional organizations. The handbook offers a review, grounded in research evidence, international guidelines and the experience of numerous countries that have implemented such systems, of key issues in prison classification and of guiding principles for the development and implementation of classification systems relevant in a variety of contexts, including in transition economies, developing, low- and middle-income countries and post-conflict environments.

²Including, in particular, the *Handbook on Dynamic Security and Prison Intelligence*, the *Handbook on Prisoner File Management*, the *Handbook on Prisoners with Special Needs*, the *Handbook on the Management of High-Risk Prisoners*, the *Handbook on the Management of Violent Extremist Prisoners and the Prevention of Radicalization to Violence in Prisons*, the *Handbook on Anti-Corruption Measures in Prisons* and the *Handbook on Women and Imprisonment*.

I. Importance of prisoner classification

“Classification” refers to the categorization of prisoners into different groupings (e.g., high, medium or low security) based on certain established criteria that is applied to facilitate both their allocation to a suitable custody or supervision regime (e.g., maximum, medium, minimum security) and the matching of their risks and needs to an appropriate prison or correctional setting and resources. This includes the type of facility or unit to which the prisoners are assigned and the services that they will receive once there or, in a community correctional context (e.g., probation or parole), the level of supervision and strategies that are required to safely manage the individuals. The main objective of prisoner classification systems is to differentiate among those prisoners who present different security, custody and treatment needs and therefore have different correctional management and intervention requirements.³

Prisoner classification is closely linked with, and based on, the concept of “individualized assessments”. An individualized assessment in a prison or correctional context refers to a systematic analysis of a prisoner using such techniques as structured tools, a review of available documentation, interviews and observations to determine his or her future risks (including the risk of self-harm or suicide, the risk to prison staff or other prisoners, the risk of destruction of infrastructure, the risk of escape and the risk to the public in the event of an escape), as well as the factors that should be addressed to reduce or manage those risks. Individualized assessments are used throughout the correctional process to aid in decision-making and in effective management and sentence planning.

The reliance on individualized assessments recognizes that common stand-alone factors, such as the crime that someone is accused or convicted of, are not necessarily the best proxies for estimating the risk that a prisoner may pose in a prison setting or to the community and, therefore, are not suitable stand-alone determinants of classification, categorization and allocation decisions. For example, an individual with no history of violence or who poses a low risk of future violence may be convicted of what is defined as a serious or grave offence according to the criminal code of a jurisdiction. Conversely, a prisoner with an extensive history of criminal behaviour, including violence, may be convicted of a non-violent crime for their current custodial sentence. Should the former be automatically sentenced to a high-security regime, while the latter is placed in less restrictive conditions? Furthermore, with respect to interventions, an individualized assessment approach recognizes that the social and situational factors contributing to an individual’s involvement in criminal behaviour are far from being the same for every

³Key Sun, *Correctional Counseling: A Cognitive Growth Perspective*, 2nd ed. (Burlington, Massachusetts, United States, Jones and Barnet Learning, 2013), chap. 2.

person. Therefore, assessments can assist in focusing on the specific factors related to the criminal behaviour of each prisoner, which can then be targeted through evidence-based interventions to reduce the risk of reoffending.

It should be emphasized that a well-designed and managed classification, categorization and allocation process is a cornerstone of an effective prison system, fundamental to ensuring the protection of human rights, the ability to individualize case and sentence planning and the efficient use of limited correctional resources.

The present chapter contains a description of some of the main impacts that an effective prison classification system can have on prisoners, prison administrators and the public.

Importance of individualized assessments of prisoners: hypothetical case examples

Prisoners, even those accused or convicted of the same offence, are not a homogeneous group. As a result, they require an individualized assessment approach able to identify their unique risk and need profile in order to identify the type of prison security regime and interventions that they will require, both to manage safely any risks that they may pose to themselves or others and to promote their social reintegration. The following hypothetical examples, based on actual cases, serve to illustrate this.

Case No. 1 – R.K.

R.K. is a 32-year-old woman who was convicted of drug trafficking and sentenced to 10 years in prison. She was arrested while departing from an international airport after 3 kg of cocaine were found hidden in her suitcase. R.K. stated that she was unaware of the drugs and that her partner had arranged for the trip, telling her that he needed to deliver some important documents and other materials securely to a business associate overseas, but was unable to go himself. Although she was suspicious of the purpose of the trip and did not want to go, she was reluctant to say no, as she was financially dependent on her partner, as were her younger sister and mother who lived with them. R.K. had no previous criminal history and ran a small part-time hairdressing business out of her home before her arrest. Her behaviour while in pretrial custody was without incident, and prison officers reported that she was very respectful and that there were no issues or concerns with her institutional conduct.

Case No. 2 – J.F.

J.F. is a 32-year old woman who was convicted of drug trafficking and given a 10-year sentence. According to official reports, J.F. is a mid-level member of a well-known criminal organization involved in the drug trade, where her role is primarily the recruitment and grooming of young women as international drug couriers. She has a lengthy criminal history that mainly involves drug offences, but also includes one previous conviction of both forcible confinement and assault. With respect to the current conviction, as a result of a tip to the police from an informant, J.F. was apprehended at the airport as she was dropping off one of her couriers for an international flight. Three kilograms of cocaine were seized from a suitcase that she had in her possession. During her pretrial custody, J.F. was accused of assaulting another prisoner during an argument and was twice found in possession of contraband, including a cell phone. She has a history of disruptive behaviour during previous custodial sentences, including one escape attempt.

In the examples above, both prisoners have been convicted of the same offence, but they present very different profiles in terms of their risks and their management and intervention needs. Without individualized assessments and a focus only on such factors as the category or type of crime committed, both cases may end up classified in the same prison regime, when it is clear that they present very different risk and need profiles.

1. Safety and security of prisoners, prison staff and the public

Nelson Mandela Rules

Basic principles

Rule 1

The safety and security of prisoners, staff, service providers and visitors shall be ensured at all times.

A core responsibility of all prison and correctional systems is to maintain the security and safety of prisoners, prison staff, all other persons present in prison facilities and the general public. Given the diverse range of individuals who are placed in prison settings, from those who are accused or convicted of petty or non-violent crimes to those with a lengthy history of violence, this can be a very challenging mandate. Effective prisoner assessments and classification enable the appropriate grouping of individuals for the purposes of management and the delivery of interventions. It is a key element in reducing the likelihood of incidents, such as prisoner and staff assaults, escapes and escape attempts, and maintaining the good order of a prison facility, which is vital to supporting social reintegration efforts. In addition, it serves to identify and protect prisoners who may be vulnerable⁴ to being preyed upon or victimized by other prisoners if not housed in suitable accommodation. Studies have demonstrated that structured tools developed for prisoner classification can predict outcomes of interest, such as the likelihood of institutional misconduct, the level of need, motivation and reintegration potential.⁵

COUNTRY EXAMPLE

Public safety impact of prisoner classification in Singapore

Faced with an unsatisfactory two-year recidivism rate of 44.4 per cent in 1998, the Singapore Prison Service began to look at fundamental shifts in how to prevent reoffending. Two of the strategies were to devote more resources to rehabilitation and to implement an offender classification system aimed at ensuring an efficient and effective use of resources.

The adoption by the Service of an objective and evidence-informed rehabilitation classification system ensured that offenders followed rehabilitation and criminogenic-need programmes in the course of imprisonment that matched their risk, need and responsivity levels.

Remarkably, general recidivism rate dropped by almost half, from 44.4 per cent in 1998 to 23.7 per cent in 2016. Drug relapse rates also dropped significantly to 23.8 per cent (2016 cohort), compared with the 50 to 80 per cent seen in the 1990s.⁶

⁴For example, young or old prisoners, prisoners with disabilities, prisoners with mental health-care needs, foreign prisoners, prisoners belonging to ethnic minorities or indigenous populations, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) prisoners, or those convicted of certain kinds of offences.

⁵Geoffrey Barnum and Renée Gobeil, *Revalidation of the Custody Rating Scale for Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Women Offenders*. Research Report, No. R-273 (Ottawa, Correctional Service of Canada, 2012).

⁶Chin Kuat Chua, *The Making of Captains of Lives: Prison Reform in Singapore 1999 to 2007* (Singapore, World Scientific, 2012).

COUNTRY EXAMPLE (continued)

Rehabilitation and classification remain pivotal to the Singapore Prison Service in ensuring the efficient and effective use of its resources. It has enabled the Service to optimize its rehabilitation efforts by addressing and mitigating the offenders' main risks and needs (for example, by addressing the offenders' drug needs in order to mitigate their risk of relapse and recidivism).

Source: Singapore Prison Service.

2. Humane custody of prisoners

Nelson Mandela Rules

Basic principles

Rule 1

All prisoners shall be treated with the respect due to their inherent dignity and value as human beings.

Rule 3

Imprisonment and other measures that result in cutting off persons from the outside world are afflictive by the very fact of taking from these persons the right of self-determination by depriving them of their liberty. Therefore, the prison system shall not, except as incidental to justifiable separation or the maintenance of discipline, aggravate the suffering inherent in such situation.

A key element for ensuring the humane care and custody of prisoners in prison systems that is consistent with international standards and norms is the use of the lowest security category or level consistent with the requirements of safety and control of the individual for the protection of prisoners, prison officers and the general public. Research findings indicate that subjective approaches to prisoner classification often result in what is called “overclassification”, which exposes individuals to harsher conditions of confinement than necessary and hinders reintegration efforts.⁷ In addition, the lack of a consistent and clearly articulated approach to classification can lead to unfair practices in assigning security level and prison placement and be open to the influence of corruption. Therefore, an objective and evidence-based classification system with clear processes and procedures should be considered as a significant factor in protecting the human rights of prisoners and ensuring transparent and accountable prison management overall.

⁷ See Jack Alexander, “Classification objectives and practices”, *Crime and Delinquency*, vol. 32, No. 3 (July 1986), pp. 323–338 and James Bonta and J. S. Wormith, “Adult offender assessment and classification in custodial settings”, in *The Oxford Handbook of Prisons and Imprisonment*, John Wooldredge and Paula Smith, eds., (New York, Boston University Press, 2018), pp. 397–424.

3. Individualized case and sentence planning

Nelson Mandela Rules

Treatment

Rule 91

The treatment of persons sentenced to imprisonment or a similar measure shall have as its purpose, so far as the length of the sentence permits, to establish in them the will to lead law-abiding and self-supporting lives after their release and to fit them to do so. The treatment shall be such as will encourage their self-respect and develop their sense of responsibility.

Classification and individualization

Rule 94

As soon as possible after admission and after a study of the personality of each prisoner with a sentence of suitable length, a programme of treatment shall be prepared for him or her in the light of the knowledge obtained about his or her individual needs, capacities and dispositions.

An effective prisoner classification system is based on an assessment of the risks and needs that a prisoner presents not only to determine appropriate placement and security regime, but also to identify and address the factors related to the individual's involvement in criminal behaviour. This enables the development of individualized case and sentence plans that place the prisoner in the least restrictive environment required and identify the interventions that will focus on the need areas that are linked to their offending, as well as broader rehabilitative needs, such as those related to mental and physical health. It has been consistently demonstrated that such an approach promotes rehabilitation and social reintegration prospects and reduces reoffending upon release, in keeping with the purpose of imprisonment outlined in rule 4, paragraph 1, of the Nelson Mandela Rules, namely:

The purposes of a sentence of imprisonment or similar measures deprivative of a person's liberty are primarily to protect society against crime and to reduce recidivism. Those purposes can be achieved only if the period of imprisonment is used to ensure, so far as possible, the reintegration of such persons into society upon release so that they can lead a law-abiding and self-supporting life.

COUNTRY EXAMPLE

Federal Bureau of Prisons of the United States of America

The Federal Bureau of Prisons begins focusing on the re-entry of inmates into society upon the individuals' admission. Pursuant to that approach, the Bureau conducts a variety of assessments early in the admission cycle to identify and provide programmes and services to prepare inmates for their eventual re-entry after completion of their sentence. Assessing each inmate's individual needs to improve re-entry outcomes is an integral part of this preparation work.

Sentenced inmates arrive at their Bureau institution in need of some or all of the following services: career and technical education, literacy, mental health treatment, health care and other assistance, such as treatment for substance use disorders, parenting skills and linkages to community resources for continuity of care.

Source: Federal Bureau of Prisons, Department of Justice of the United States.

4. Cost-effectiveness of operating prisons

An additional benefit resulting from an effective classification system that is sometimes overlooked relates to costs. Specifically, as noted in the *Handbook on the Management of High-Risk Prisoners*,⁸ investments made in the development and implementation of evidence-based systems of classification, categorization and allocation can result in significant savings for prison systems by improving the ability to provide rehabilitation and thereby reduce reoffending, while also not expending unnecessary resources on high-security prisons and other measures that may not be warranted. In other words, in addition to having a negative impact on the human rights and social reintegration potential of prisoners, overclassification results in significantly higher costs for countries in terms of running their prison system, not to mention the societal costs of not effectively addressing the individual's risk to reoffend.

Financial costs of high-security prisons

As noted above, subjective approaches to prisoner classification are susceptible to overclassification, which results in more prisoners being placed in high-security settings than required to ensure the safety and security of the individual, other prisoners, prison officers and the public. As noted by Bonta and Wormith,^a not only are the costs of building maximum-security prisons significantly higher than those of lower-security facilities (owing to more extensive infrastructure requirements, such as individual cells, perimeter walls, fences and guard towers), but they are also more expensive to operate owing to such factors as a higher staff-to-prisoner ratio.

For example, a recent report by the Parliamentary Budget Officer of Canada^b found that the 2016–2017 annual estimated cost per Canadian male federal prisoner by security level was Can\$47,370 for a minimum-security prisoner, Can\$75,077 for a medium-security prisoner and Can\$92,740 for a maximum-security prisoner. Similarly, in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, it was noted in an analysis published in 2018 that the annual cost per male prisoner varied by security level,^c with the highest security level, referred to as “male dispersal” (which includes category A prisoners), costing £40,068 per prisoner annually, category B £25,007 and category C £18,818.^d

^aBonta and Wormith, “Adult offender assessment and classification”.

^bCanada, Office of the Parliamentary Budget Officer, “Update on costs of incarceration” (Ottawa, 2018).

^cThe United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland uses four security levels (categories A, B, C and D) for adult male prisoners, category A being the highest security level and category D the least restrictive.

^dUnited Kingdom, Ministry of Justice, – “Costs per place and costs per prisoner by individual prison”, National Offender Management Service, Annual Report and Accounts 2015-16, Management Information Addendum, Information release (London, October 2016).

⁸UNODC, *Handbook on the Management of High-Risk Prisoners*, Criminal Justice Handbook Series (Vienna, 2016), p. 33.

II. Key issues for the classification of prisoners

The proper assessment, classification, categorization and allocation of prisoners has numerous benefits, including in terms of safety and security, rehabilitation and social reintegration opportunities for prisoners and the planning and prioritization of, inter alia, staffing levels, bed space and programming.

There are many factors, however, that need to be considered when developing or modifying a prisoner classification system. The present chapter provides a brief summary of key issues, including:

- The distinction between prisoner separation and prisoner classification
- The impact of the legislative framework of a country on the classification of prisoners
- Infrastructure requirements to support prisoner classification activities
- Centralized versus decentralized assessment and classification
- External versus internal prisoner classification
- Initial classification versus reassessment and reclassification throughout a custodial sentence
- The importance of a gender, age and culturally informed approaches
- Prisoners with special needs or requiring special attention for other reasons
- Other considerations that have an impact on placement decisions

1. Prisoner separation versus prisoner classification

Nelson Mandela Rules

Separation of categories

Rule 11

The different categories of prisoners shall be kept in separate institutions or parts of institutions, taking account of their sex, age, criminal record, the legal reason for their detention and the necessities of their treatment; thus:

Nelson Mandela Rules (continued)

- (a) Men and women shall so far as possible be detained in separate institutions; in an institution which receives both men and women, the whole of the premises allocated to women shall be entirely separate;
- (b) Untried prisoners shall be kept separate from convicted prisoners;
- (c) Persons imprisoned for debt and other civil prisoners shall be kept separate from persons imprisoned by reason of a criminal offence;
- (d) Young prisoners shall be kept separate from adults.

Classification and individualization**Rule 93**

1. The purposes of classification shall be:
 - (a) To separate from others those prisoners who, by reason of their criminal records or characters, are likely to exercise a bad influence;
 - (b) To divide the prisoners into classes in order to facilitate their treatment with a view to their social rehabilitation.
2. So far as possible, separate prisons or separate sections of a prison shall be used for the treatment of different classes of prisoners.

In discussing prisoner classification, it is very important to differentiate between the “separation” of prisoners based on age, gender and legal reason for detention on the one hand, and the “classification” of prisoners on the other hand, the latter being used to determine appropriate placement and case planning. More specifically, the separation of prisoners is based on easily identifiable and static features that only change when a prisoner is sentenced or when a child becomes an adult. In contrast, the classification of prisoners entails a structured assessment of risks and needs, which is a more complex process grounded in research evidence and guided by international standards and norms. While both separation and classification are extremely important elements of sound prison management, it should be recognized that they are different. While constituting a fundamental requirement, the separation of women from men, adults from children and pretrial from sentenced prisoners does not in itself constitute a classification regime.

2. Legislative frameworks

In many cases, the legislative framework of a country plays a determining role in decision-making concerning the security level and allocation of prisoners. In some jurisdictions, it is the responsibility of prison authorities to determine the security level and classification of prisoners after an assessment of risks and needs. For example, in Namibia, the classification of prisoners is regulated by the Correctional Service Act, 2012, which authorizes the Commissioner-General of the Namibian Correctional Service to determine the security levels applicable to correctional facilities and to determine different security levels in respect of different correctional facilities. Furthermore, in accordance with paragraph 259 of the regulations made in terms of the Correctional Service Act of 2012, section 132, a sentenced offender is classified according to the necessary security level and his or her suitability for placement, rehabilitation and training at a correctional facility.

Legislation may also dictate what must be examined in such an assessment for classification. For example, in Canada, paragraphs 17 and 18 of the Corrections and Conditional Release Regulations list the factors to be considered in assigning security classification, which include the seriousness of the offence, the potential for violent behaviour, the behaviour while under sentence, escape risk and public safety risk.

Canada: legislative framework regarding initial security classification

Corrections and condition release regulations^a

Security classification

17. For the purposes of section 30 of the [Corrections and Conditional Release] Act,^b the [Correctional] Service [of Canada] shall consider the following factors in assigning a security classification to each inmate:

- (a) The seriousness of the offence committed by the inmate;
- (b) Any outstanding charges against the inmate;
- (c) The inmate's performance and behaviour while under sentence;
- (d) The inmate's social, criminal and, if available, young offender history and any dangerous offender designation under the Criminal Code;
- (e) Any physical or mental illness or disorder suffered by the inmate;
- (f) The inmate's potential for violent behaviour; and
- (g) The inmate's continued involvement in criminal activities.

18. For the purposes of section 30 of the Act, an inmate shall be classified as:

- (a) Maximum security where the inmate is assessed by the Service as:
 - (i) Presenting a high probability of escape and a high risk to the safety of the public in the event of escape; or
 - (ii) Requiring a high degree of supervision and control within the penitentiary;
- (b) Medium security where the inmate is assessed by the Service as:
 - (i) Presenting a low to moderate probability of escape and a moderate risk to the safety of the public in the event of escape; or
 - (ii) Requiring a moderate degree of supervision and control within the penitentiary; and
- (c) Minimum security where the inmate is assessed by the Service as:
 - (i) Presenting a low probability of escape and a low risk to the safety of the public in the event of escape; and
 - (ii) Requiring a low degree of supervision and control within the penitentiary.

^aCanada, Justice Laws Website, Consolidated Regulations, Corrections and Conditional Release Regulations (SOR-92620), p. 2.

^bCanada, Consolidated Acts, "Corrections and Conditional Release Act", Statutes of Canada, chap. 2 (1992).

In contrast, in other jurisdictions, it may be a judge who decides on the security regime for the prisoner, and the prison system has no meaningful role in the allocation to a specific regime (e.g., low, moderate or high security). Specifically, it may be the case that all prisoners who are charged with, or have been convicted of, certain offences (e.g., homicide) or those sentenced to

long prison terms may be classified at a certain security level without an individualized assessment. This is concerning from a human rights perspective given that, as noted in chapter 1, decisions based on such limited information can often lead to overclassification and (highly) restrictive prison conditions beyond what is necessary to address security and safety concerns.⁹ However, there are examples where the judiciary is the decision maker, but the prison system provides an assessment in the form of a pre-sentence report to assist in decision-making (see example below), which would be a good practice in jurisdictions with this type of legislative framework.

COUNTRY EXAMPLE

Pre-sentencing reports to inform judicial decision-making in Singapore

Reformatory training is a rehabilitative sentencing option which is meted out by the courts for offenders of more than 16 but less than 21 years of age. Reformatory training serves as a rehabilitative sentencing option for young offenders. To inform its decision on whether to sentence an offender to reformatory training or not, the court requests a pre-sentencing report from the commissioner of prisons, or any person authorized to submit it on his or her behalf.

The pre-sentencing report contains details of the young offender's physical and mental condition, his or her suitability for reformatory training and the nature of rehabilitation and intensity of programming (i.e., low, moderate or high) required if sentenced to reformatory training.

The assessment process is structured by evaluating the young offender's risks and needs across the "Central Eight" domains^a through face-to-face interviews, in addition to the corroboration of official information from a variety of sources. The pre-sentencing report is aimed at informing the Courts of the young person's criminogenic needs that can be addressed in a custodial setting within the reformatory training regime.

Source: Singapore Prison Service.

^aThe "Central Eight" refer to the eight major criminogenic factors (or needs) that have been shown to have a consistent positive relationship with recidivism. The "Central Eight" comprise history of antisocial behaviour, antisocial personality pattern, pro-criminal attitudes, social support for crime and pro-criminal associates, substance use disorders, family and marital relationships, school and work, and prosocial recreational and leisure activities (Andrews and Bonta, 2006).

Other countries have adopted a more blended approach to prisoner classification, whereby the security regime is determined by the courts or legislation, but a process of internal or institution-specific classification is undertaken by the prison authorities. For example, in several Central Asian countries (e.g., Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan), a judge decides on the prisoner's assignment to a prison of a specific regime primarily on the basis of the crime committed and the individual's previous criminal record, in keeping with the provisions of the country's criminal code. The main differences among various regimes are often not security considerations in terms of infrastructure or accommodation type (e.g., barrack versus cell-based accommodations), but rather privileges, such as the number of short- and long-term visits, the number of parcels that may be received and the amount of money that prisoners are allowed to spend. Once assigned to a prison of a particular security regime, the prison administration undertakes an internal classification to allocate prisoners to different units or conditions within the prison on

⁹UNODC, *Handbook on the Management of High-Risk Prisoners*.

the basis of an assessment of their behaviour. The decision to move a prisoner from one facility with a certain regime to another is also determined by a judge, although the prison service can support the application of a prisoner to a different level on the basis of an assessment of their behaviour while in custody.

Assuming they have proper capacity, the best practice is for prison authorities, which are ultimately responsible for managing the prisoner on a day-to-day basis, to determine the security level of a prisoner after an individualized assessment of risks and needs, rather than a regime being determined by a judge on the sole basis of, for example, the (alleged) crime committed. Not only does this prevent possible arbitrary overclassification and the potential denial of access to services, but it is also better aligned with core provisions of the Nelson Mandela Rules, in particular rule 36, which states that discipline and order are to be maintained with no more restriction than is necessary to ensure safe custody, the secure operation of the prison and a well-ordered community life. Without a structured, consistent and evidence-based approach to assessment and classification, it is difficult to determine the level of appropriate restriction required not only to maintain security but also to determine the individual's needs and promote reintegration efforts.

Pretrial prisoners

Nelson Mandela Rules

Prisoners under arrest or awaiting trial

Rule 111

1. Persons arrested or imprisoned by reason of a criminal charge against them, who are detained either in police custody or in prison custody (jail) but have not yet been tried and sentenced, will be referred to as "untried prisoners" hereinafter in these rules.
2. Unconvicted prisoners are presumed to be innocent and shall be treated as such.
3. Without prejudice to legal rules for the protection of individual liberty or prescribing the procedure to be observed in respect of untried prisoners, these prisoners shall benefit from a special regime which is described in the following rules in its essential requirements only.

While the focus of the present section is on legislation as it applies to convicted prisoners, the importance of a process to assess, categorize and allocate those in pretrial custody to an appropriate security regime in accordance with their risks and needs must also be specifically highlighted. Again, in some jurisdictions, pretrial detainees may be automatically allocated to a custodial setting or even a high-security regime based on their status or alleged offence, without considering other relevant factors.

Because of its potentially severe and often irreversible negative effects, international law states that pretrial detention should be the exception rather than the rule and that if there is a risk, for example, of a person absconding, then the least intrusive measures possible should be applied. A range of non-custodial measures, including bail, confiscation of travel documents, reporting to police or other authorities and submitting to electronic monitoring or curfews, should be considered, in line with the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for Non-Custodial

Measures. For those remanded into custody, the presence of a transparent assessment and classification system with regular periods of review is a critical element to assist decision makers in determining the minimum security requirements necessary to manage such individuals while awaiting or during trial.

3. Infrastructure requirements

Nelson Mandela Rules

Guiding principles

Rule 89

1. The fulfilment of these principles requires individualization of treatment and for this purpose a flexible system of classifying prisoners in groups. It is therefore desirable that such groups should be distributed in separate prisons suitable for the treatment of each group.
2. These prisons do not need to provide the same degree of security for every group. It is desirable to provide varying degrees of security according to the needs of different groups. Open prisons, by the very fact that they provide no physical security against escape but rely on the self-discipline of the inmates, provide the conditions most favourable to the rehabilitation of carefully selected prisoners.

The successful development, implementation and management of a prisoner classification system are dependent on several infrastructure requirements, specifically those related to physical infrastructure (i.e., prison facilities, including the capacity to house different categories of prisoners separately), policy and guidelines, staff resources and a system for documentation and record-keeping. Each of these are discussed separately below.

Physical infrastructure

As outlined above, the main intent of a classification system is to identify distinct groups of prisoners who require different security infrastructures and potentially different interventions. Again, it should be emphasized that these classification groupings are distinct from the separation of prisoners based on age, gender and legal status.

In general, custody levels are based on the level of security and control that exists within a prison or within different parts of the same facility. A high- or maximum-security prison has significant physical, procedural and dynamic security in place, including barriers, such as walls and fences, towers and armed control posts, as well as often highly restricted prisoner interaction and movement. A low- or minimum-security facility may have no perimeter fencing, no locks on cell or room doors and communal housing for prisoners. However, countries vary in terms of the number of security levels for their prisons, separate wings that have different security levels and regimes within the same facility, and the availability of other placement options (e.g., specialized facilities for individuals with mental or health and physical needs, or those who

require specific interventions). As noted by Bonta and Wormith,¹⁰ security placements are limited by the availability of different levels of custody. It is important to note, however, that in order for a country to implement a “flexible system of classifying prisoners”, as called for under the Nelson Mandela Rules, it must, at a minimum, be able to provide different security regimes supported by variations in infrastructure (e.g., individual versus communal living accommodation, perimeter security and control posts), so that assessment results can be used to separate different categories of prisoners on the basis of the risks that they pose in a prison setting.

Examples of prison security categories

Federal Bureau of Prisons of the United States

Prisons (referred to as institutions) are operated at five security levels:

Minimum-security institutions

Also known as “federal prison camps”, these institutions have dormitory housing, a relatively low staff-to-inmate ratio and limited or no perimeter fencing. These institutions are work- and programme-oriented.

Low-security institutions

Low-security federal correctional institutions have double-fenced perimeters, mostly dormitory or cubicle housing and strong work and programme components. The staff-to-inmate ratio of these institutions is higher than in minimum-security facilities.

Medium-security institutions

Medium-security federal correctional institutions (and United States penitentiaries designated to house medium-security inmates) have strengthened perimeters (often double fences with electronic detection systems), mostly cell-type housing, a wide variety of work and treatment programmes, a higher staff-to-inmate ratio than low-security institutions and greater internal controls.

High-security institutions

Also known as “United States penitentiaries”, these facilities have highly secured perimeters (featuring walls or reinforced fences), multiple- and single-occupant cell housing, the highest staff-to-inmate ratio and close control of inmate movement.

Administrative facilities

These are institutions with special missions, such as the detention of pretrial offenders, the treatment of inmates with serious or chronic medical problems or the containment of extremely dangerous, violent, or escape-prone inmates. Administrative facilities include metropolitan correctional centres, metropolitan detention centres, federal detention centres, federal medical centres, the Federal Transfer Center, the Medical Center for Federal Prisoners and the Administrative-Maximum Security Penitentiary. The majority of administrative facilities, except for the Administrative-Maximum Security Penitentiary, are capable of holding inmates in all security categories.

Source: Federal Bureau of Prisons, Department of Justice of the United States.

¹⁰ Bonta and Wormith, “Adult offender assessment and classification”, p. 399.

Kenya Prisons Service

The Kenya Prisons Service is a department within the Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government. As a uniformed and disciplined entity, the Service is established under the Prisons Act Chapter 90 and Borstal Institutions Act Chapter 92 of Kenya. It is headed by the Commissioner General of Prisons.

The classification of Kenyan prisons is detailed in the Kenya Prison Standing Order Chapter 69, which defines adult prisons as closed and semi-closed, and youth facilities as borstal institutions or youth corrective training centres.

Closed prisons (also known as main prisons) are maximum-security prisons containing prisoners serving long-term imprisonment or convicted of serious subversion or violent offences. The semi-closed prisons contain prisoners serving medium-term imprisonment with less serious offences of subversion and violent nature. Borstal institutions are penal facilities for juvenile offenders found guilty of offences considered of a serious nature, while youth corrective training centres are for young people considered to have a defiant behaviour towards authority and who could not be supervised under probation, and yet do not warrant long-term confinement in a borstal institution.

Prisoners are classified and assessed on the basis of the level of security needs, their age and the length of their sentences. Kenyan correctional institutions are also divided by gender (i.e., men and women prisons). These prisons are further subdivided depending on which dominant rehabilitation programme (farming or industrial) is being administered.

Source: Kenya Prisons Service.

Policies and guidelines

An effective classification system requires clear policies and guidelines so that prison administrators, staff and prisoners understand how classification decisions are made and the impact that they have on placement decisions and case planning. These policies and guidelines should outline responsibilities and procedures for the assessment, classification and allocation of prisoners, including any tools that are provided, with clear instructions for use and training requirements. In addition, there should be a clear articulation of how classification decisions are communicated to the prisoner and the process involved if the prisoner questions or wishes to appeal the classification decision.

COUNTRY EXAMPLES

Canada

Commissioner's Directive 705-7 of the Correctional Service of Canada, entitled "Security classification and penitentiary placement", provides detailed policy direction regarding roles and responsibilities and the process for completing security classification and penitentiary placement, including the scale used for initial security classification (custody rating scale) and a report outline for completing the assessment for decision for a security classification and penitentiary placement.

Source: Correctional Service of Canada.

Namibia

The Namibian Correctional Service has standard operating practices,⁹ including for the Reception and Assessment Unit. According to those practices, the objective, aims and authority of the Unit are:

1. Objective

To provide guidelines on how to manage offenders upon their admission at the Reception and Assessment Unit.

2. Aims

2.1 To provide a smooth and effective introduction of offenders to the correctional system.

2.2 To conduct a timely assessment of their immediate needs, including in terms of physical and mental health and personal safety concerns.

2.3 To provide offenders with an adequate orientation to the rules, conditions and entitlements within the correctional system, the general procedures for risk management that the Namibian Correctional Service follows, the services and programmes that they can access and the expectations for appropriate behaviour that will be enforced by correctional staff (i.e., both correctional officers and staff members).

2.4 To assess offenders objectively and consistently in terms of their criminal and social history in order to determine the most appropriate security level for their initial placement and contribute to their timely preparation for safe reintegration to the community.

2.5 To assess offenders' criminogenic needs, including functional education, in order to prepare their correctional treatment plans.

2.6 To prepare a correctional treatment plan for each offender consistent with his or her risk and needs assessment.

3. Authority

Correctional Service Act, 2012, paragraph 5 (3).

Source: Namibian Correctional Service.

⁹Namibian Correctional Service, Reception and Assessment Unit Standard Operating Practices, Office of the Commissioner-General, 2017.

Staff resources

Nelson Mandela Rules

Institutional personnel

Rule 75

2. Before entering on duty, all prison staff shall be provided with training tailored to their general and specific duties, which shall be reflective of contemporary evidence-based best practice in penal sciences. Only those candidates who successfully pass the theoretical and practical tests at the end of such training shall be allowed to enter the prison service.

Nelson Mandela Rules (continued)

3. The prison administration shall ensure the continuous provision of in-service training courses with a view to maintaining and improving the knowledge and professional capacity of its personnel, after entering on duty and during their career.

Rule 76

2. Prison staff who are in charge of working with certain categories of prisoners, or who are assigned other specialized functions, shall receive training that has a corresponding focus.

Committed and professional prison officers are a critical element of any prison or correctional system. In settings where placement is determined by the prison administration, classification decisions can be made either according to policy directives, professional judgment,¹¹ actuarial assessments¹² or a combination of all three.¹³ Some prison or correctional systems may put case management or parole or probation officers in charge of coordinating or conducting the initial classification and reclassification process, while some jurisdictions may prefer a multidisciplinary or team strategy, including such additional staff as psychologists, social workers, medical practitioners and members of the clergy in classification and allocation decision-making. While it is critical to identify the positions and persons in the prison that are ultimately responsible for ensuring that the assessment and classification of prisoners occur and are documented and that the results are communicated to the prisoner, a multidisciplinary approach involving different officers and professionals within the prison setting has been found to be the most promising practice. Not only does this facilitate a more comprehensive and holistic approach to assessing the prisoners' risks and needs, but it also ensures objectivity and fairness in classification placements, which could be compromised if decision-making rested only with one or a few persons or positions without adequate oversight.

Regardless of the method adopted, it is important to define which staff are responsible for prison classification activities and what their duties are, and then to ensure that an adequate number of those staff have the training required to apply consistently and accurately the policy and practice of the classification scheme used in their jurisdiction.

COUNTRY EXAMPLE**Staff training in Kenya**

In 2015, the Kenya Prisons Service, together with the Kenya Probation and Aftercare Service, partnered with the Swedish Prison and Probation Service and the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law in an attempt to adjust its classification regime. This led to the establishment of a bilateral programme entitled the "Assessment and Classification Project". Under

¹¹Professional judgment can either be unstructured or structured. Unstructured professional judgment is an approach that relies on the judgment that a professional or clinician makes on the basis of his or her training, experience or intuition to make predictions about future behaviour or outcomes. Structured professional judgment considers factors that are theoretically and empirically associated with outcomes to make predictions about future behaviours. In terms of predictive ability, research has clearly demonstrated that structured professional judgment is more accurate than unstructured professional judgment.

¹²Assessments that use a statistical method for estimating the risk of a particular event occurring (e.g., the risk of a prisoner committing a crime in the future).

¹³Bonta and Wormith, "Adult offender assessment and classification".

that programme, a new classification method that borrowed heavily from the Swedish model of classification of prisoners into high-, medium- and low-risk categories but was tailored to the Kenyan context was launched for piloting.

The new approach is being piloted in 15 prisons in the country: 6 prisons in Nairobi Province, 4 in the Coast Province and 5 in the Western Province.

The process involves a nine-day theoretical training for the implementing officers, during which they are taken through the underlying theories (the psychology of criminal conduct, as developed by Bonta and Andrews in 2016)^a and then trained on the use of the classification tools. This is followed by practical sessions that last for five days, during which the trained officers are sent to the nearby prisons to interview and use the classification tools with the support of the trainers.

After the training, the officers conduct assessment and classification in their pilot stations. To ensure that quality and standards are maintained, the trainers conduct follow-ups with and audits of the implementing officers. The officers are expected to submit monthly reports to headquarters in which they indicate the number of classifications done and the outcome of each case, whether the offenders were found to be of high-, medium- or low-risk level.

This method is still in its piloting phase. Once completed, the Kenya Prisons Service will look into ways of fully adopting it and rolling it out to the entire prison system nationwide.

Source: Kenya Prisons Service.

^aBonta, J. and Andrews, D.A. (2016). *The Psychology of Criminal Conduct*, 6th Edition. Routledge: New York.

In addition, training and clear policy guidelines on professional and ethical standards for staff is critical to ensure that classification and placement decisions are not subject to external influence or corruption. As noted in the *Handbook on Anti-Corruption Measures in Prisons*,¹⁴ given the significant risk of corruption to which prison staff are exposed, the subjects of integrity and accountability should be addressed in all prison staff training.

Guidelines regarding Recruitment, Selection, Education, Training and Professional Development of Prison and Probation Staff of the Council of Europe

12. Professional ethics

(a) Prison services and probation agencies should have a publicly available code of ethics for their staff, which should form an integral part of staff induction and in-service training. Adherence to this code should be part of the appraisal procedures.

(b) Prison services and probation agencies shall adhere to this code of ethics and professional conduct, which is a set of standards pertaining to morals and the effective discharge of duties. The overarching goal is to execute penal sanctions and measures with integrity, and within the bounds of the law. The code should serve as the basis of policies and directives, rules and regulations, protocols and procedures, all of which are observed and used in the everyday work of staff. It should embody core values such as judiciousness, truthfulness, vigilance, respect for human rights, to facilitate the reintegration of offenders into society and public protection.

¹⁴UNODC, *Handbook on Anti-Corruption Measures in Prisons*, Criminal Justice Handbook Series (Vienna, 2017), p. 55.

Documentation and record-keeping

Nelson Mandela Rules

Prisoner file management

Rule 8

The following information shall be entered in the prisoner file management system in the course of imprisonment, where applicable:

- (a) Information related to the judicial process, including dates of court hearings and legal representation;
- (b) Initial assessment and classification reports;
- (c) Information related to behaviour and discipline;
- (d) Requests and complaints, including allegations of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, unless they are of a confidential nature;
- (e) Information on the imposition of disciplinary sanctions;
- (f) Information on the circumstances and causes of any injuries or death and, in the case of the latter, the destination of the remains.

Rule 9

All records referred to in rule 7 and 8 shall be kept confidential and made available only to those whose professional responsibilities require access to such records. Every prisoner shall be granted access to the records pertaining to him or her, subject to redactions authorized under domestic legislation, and shall be entitled to receive an official copy of such records upon his or her release.

The rationale behind decisions regarding prisoner classification and placement needs to be well documented and should be communicated to the prisoner, prison officers and others on a need-to-know basis (e.g., legal counsel). Therefore, a key infrastructure requirement of a prison classification system is the ability to create, store and share documentation related to the prisoner. As indicated in the *Handbook on Prisoner File Management*,¹⁵ the classification and placement of prisoners is dependent on accurate and accessible files that record their sex and age, their criminal record, the legal basis for their detention and their programme of rehabilitation. It follows reasonably that reclassification decisions would also need to be recorded on a file as time passes during a sentence.

In addition to those guidelines, it is best practice that each prisoner's file should contain a copy of the completed assessment tools used to determine classification, a record of who was involved in the assessment process and the categorization and allocation decision (including information on where the prisoner will be housed), verification that the results of the assessment and placement decision were discussed with the prisoner and that he or she was given the opportunity to appeal or request a review of the classification decision. All documents should be properly dated and identify and be signed by the prison officer or staff member who completed the forms.

¹⁵UNODC, *Handbook on Prisoner File Management*, Criminal Justice Handbook Series (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.08.IV.3), p. 15.

COUNTRY EXAMPLE**Documentation in Namibia****Namibian Correctional Service: standard operating practices****Unit management and correctional strategy (2016)****4.4 Correctional case management file**

This file contains all of the documents pertaining to the individual offender as they proceed through the phases of the correctional strategy, from the initial reception and assessment phase to eventual release into the community. As it relates to the unit management process in particular, the correctional case management file should include completed documentation regarding the assessment of reintegration concerns and initial risk and needs profile, the correctional plan for the offender, progress reports outlining how well objectives related to the correctional plan are being met and documentation of the reasons for any security reclassification of the offender during his or her period of imprisonment.

Source: Namibian Correctional Service.

Although the sharing of information is facilitated by the use of electronic prisoner file management systems, the widespread use of computer technology is not a realistic or an immediately achievable option in many countries. In the absence of electronic information storage and dissemination, a well-managed paper-based system can certainly suffice, in particular if it is facilitated by clear and structured forms, as well as reporting guidelines and templates that are standardized across different sites. Irrespective of the nature of the prisoner file management system, it is highlighted in rule 6 of the Nelson Mandela Rules that procedures must be in place to ensure a secure audit trail and to prevent unauthorized access to or modification of any information contained in the system.

It should be noted that some jurisdictions may have laws that dictate how prisoner information may be shared, either directly in the legislation that governs the operation of the prison or correctional system or in separate laws that address the privacy of information for all citizens. With respect to classification and any other decision concerning prisoners, adherence to those legal parameters is of utmost importance. This is particularly true of any information that concerns the prisoner's personal health information, which should be administered separately by the health-care service and be accessible only to health-care professionals, in line with rule 26 of the Nelson Mandela Rules.

In general, a good practice in prison settings regarding the sharing of information is to apply the standard of a need-to-know basis. More specifically, it is clarified in rule 9 of the Nelson Mandela Rules that prisoner records are to be kept confidential and made available only to those whose professional responsibilities require access to such records. This means that the information to be shared must be relevant and necessary to the individuals for performing their duties in the context of the prison setting or with respect to public safety. Where this standard is in doubt, it is important to obtain the prisoner's signed consent to share or release the information. In addition, as noted above, information pertaining to a prisoner's case management, including classification and allocation decisions, should be shared with the prisoner unless its disclosure would jeopardize the safety of any person, the security of the prison or the process of an ongoing investigation. In those cases, the general reasons for the non-disclosure should be documented in the prisoner's file.

4. Centralized versus decentralized assessment and classification

In some jurisdictions, assessment and classification activities for prisoners are centralized at one particular site (sometimes referred to as intake assessment units or centres), whereas in others they are decentralized and carried out at multiple prisons or sites.

While there are several advantages to centralized assessment and classification units or facilities, in particular in terms of a consistent approach to the classification process and ease of conduct of activities, such as staff training, this kind of centralization is not always achievable or even desirable in all jurisdictions owing to geography, infrastructure, resources or other factors. Decentralized approaches can function well, but it is important that the approach and tools used to make classification decisions be consistent for the specific population being assessed (e.g., adult men or adult women) across different sites. In addition, in decentralized settings, it is particularly important that there be clear guidelines regarding documentation and file management to ensure consistent record-keeping across sites.

Regardless of the approach used, the requirement to have a proper file management system in line with international standards (i.e., the Nelson Mandela Rules and the Bangkok Rules)¹⁶ and the need to ensure that the appropriate measures are in place to safeguard the confidentiality of prisoner information, including that related to classification decisions, cannot be overemphasized.

COUNTRY EXAMPLES: CENTRALIZED AND DECENTRALIZED ASSESSMENT AND CLASSIFICATION

Sweden

The Swedish Prison and Probation Service includes a centralized evaluation and placement unit in charge of the classification and allocation of all prisoners. The unit is divided into two groups: one that places persons who are in custody, and another that places sentenced persons who are not deprived of their liberty during the legal process or persons who have been released from custody during the legal process and are awaiting the prison sentence to be enforced. By adopting this approach, the Service is aiming for an assessment procedure that is as uniform as possible.

Source: Swedish Prison and Probation Service.

Bavaria, Germany

An example of a jurisdiction with a decentralized approach to assessment and classification is the State of Bavaria, Germany. Its multisite approach is facilitated by the fact that most prisons have different security sections: High-security section, regular section and open regime. Upon initial entry into the custodial setting, an examination is performed by a physician or another qualified health-care professional to identify physical and mental health-care needs. After that, an initial assessment is carried out in the form of interviews. The following people participate in the assessment process: a psychologist, a social worker, the prison director and selected prison officers. After their identity is checked, the prisoners are interviewed to assess their immediate needs (security, mental, physical and social). Questions that the prisoners may have are answered and information is collected.

In the first weeks of imprisonment, further information about the prisoner is collected in the course of interviews with the specialist service (comprising a psychologist, a social worker, a teacher and a pastor) and by means of a study of the prisoner's file. This information is entered into an electronic prisoner file management system. The results are then discussed during a meeting and an individual plan is drawn up, which comprises the following categories: school education, vocational education, work experience, privileges (home leave, short leave and day release),

¹⁶See the *Handbook on Prisoner File Management*.

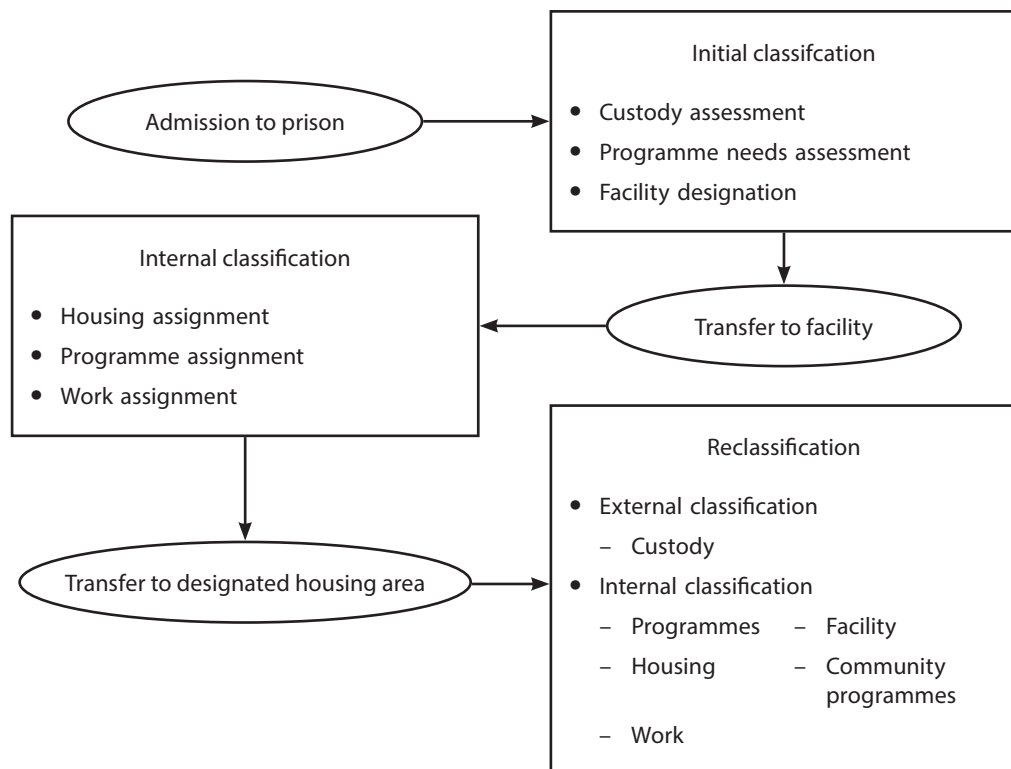
therapeutic education, social education, treatment, documentation and preventive measures. This plan determines the measures and treatment interventions necessary for the prisoner to achieve the identified targets. The plan is discussed with the prisoner and regularly adjusted.

Source: Bavarian State Ministry of Justice.

5. External versus internal prisoner classification

A further distinction in the area of prison classification is made between external and internal classification. External classification focuses on determining a prisoner’s custody or security level and assignment to a facility that meets both the person’s security and programming and intervention needs. Internal classification refers to facility-level decisions, including where in the prison and with whom prisoners will be housed, the specific types and sequence of programmes and interventions to which they will be assigned and the kind of employment and leisure activities that may be suitable. By design, internal classification systems are intended to complement external classification by identifying appropriate housing and interventions at a particular facility for prisoners who share common custody levels (closed or open, and low, medium or high). The following chart provides an overview of external and internal classification systems in a prison setting and how they function in a complementary manner.

Figure I. External and internal classification systems



Source: Patricia Hardyman and others, *Internal Prison Classification Systems: Case Studies in Their Development and Implementation* (Washington D.C., Department of Justice of the United States, National Institute of Corrections, 2002).

6. Regular classification reviews

It is important to note that the process of initially classifying and allocating prisoners when they enter a custodial setting is separate from the process of reviewing or reassessing the classification at regular intervals during the course of a sentence for the purpose of determining whether a reclassification of the security level is required. Specifically, classification reviews should be conducted throughout a prisoner's term of custody and supervision or in instances where a significant event has occurred that may have an impact on security level and placement (e.g., significant misconduct or security issue or, conversely, the successful completion of a programme or intervention). The goal, subject to assessment and classification results, should be to reduce the classification level and placement over time and to provide for a progression towards a less restrictive prison regime in order to better prepare the prisoner for eventual release. Ideally, the frequency and method of classification reviews should be outlined in policy and guidelines. As noted in the *Handbook on Dynamic Security and Prison Intelligence*,¹⁷ review and reassessment are important features of any humane classification system that seeks to balance security and rehabilitation. They should be scheduled and conducted with reasonable frequency and with sensitivity to the individual prisoner's development.

COUNTRY EXAMPLE

Classification and reclassification in Tasmania, Australia

Tasmania Prison Service, Director's standing order on classification and placement

- 6.1. Prisoners are to be assigned a security category based on their individually assessed circumstances upon reception into custody.
- 6.2. Prisoners should be assigned the least restrictive classification level in accordance with their assessed risk, where their security risks and individual needs can be managed.
- 6.3. All prisoners, excluding those classified as minimum security, must have their security category reviewed by the Sentence Management Review Panel at least once in a six-month period.
- 6.4. Prisoners with a security category of minimum will be reviewed once in a twelve-month period ...
- 6.5. Prisoners must be provided with written advice of decisions made regarding their classification; this must include advice regarding their right to appeal.

Source: Tasmania Prison Service.

Reassessment and reclassification procedures, methods and tools should also be distinct from initial classification tools. Specifically, the factors that determine initial security classification are not necessarily the same as those determining reclassification once the prisoner has spent time in a prison setting. At the time of admission, little may be known about the conduct of a prisoner, in particular if the prisoner has no history of incarceration. Therefore, initial classification instruments place a greater emphasis on the prisoner's current (alleged) offence, prior

¹⁷UNODC, *Handbook on Dynamic Security and Prison Intelligence*, Criminal Justice Handbook Series (Vienna, 2015), p. 16.

involvement with the criminal justice system, initial needs and other background characteristics that research has identified as relevant. Reassessment and reclassification methods place more weight on the prisoner's conduct and changing needs during imprisonment. This includes the number and type of misconducts and participation in programmes. Some of the factors assessed at the time of admission may either be deleted or reduced in their importance. Therefore, while reclassification assessments often contain elements of the initial classification instruments, they also consider the behaviour of the prisoners at their current security level, progress towards their individual sentence or case management plan as it relates to their need areas and the amount of time remaining in their sentence. As noted by Bonta and Wormith,¹⁸ a good classification system is dynamic and helps in the preparation of an offender's re-entry and reintegration into the community.

By focusing on the prisoner's conduct and progress in need areas while incarcerated, the reclassification process acknowledges that the prisoner's risks and needs are not static and may change over time. A sound reassessment and reclassification system allows for the recognition of good behaviour and progress towards goals by allowing prisoners to achieve less restrictive custody levels over time.¹⁹ A reclassification process that does not allow prisoners to work their way to lower custody levels can result in the overclassification of prisoners who may have been originally assigned high custody levels. While those prisoners may establish good institutional conduct records and complete identified interventions, in the absence of a reclassification process, they will remain in the custody level to which they were initially assigned, which may be a higher custody level than required to ensure the safety and security of the institution and to promote their social reintegration.²⁰ In addition, the lack of an institutionalized reclassification process may result in prisoners who have completed their sentence being released into the community from high-security levels and restricted settings without going through a pre-release regime preparing them for their social reintegration. Such a practice is strongly discouraged, as it contravenes the spirit of rule 87 of the Nelson Mandela Rules and may have a negative impact on both the prisoners' capacity to readapt to community life and public safety.

7. Gender, age and culturally informed approaches

Prison classification systems should be informed by international standards and norms and evidence based on the use of classification tools and approaches that consider such factors as gender, age and culture for the assessment of risks and needs and for appropriate interventions.

Gender

Bangkok Rules

Classification and individualization

[Supplements rules 67 to 69 of the Nelson Mandela Rules]

¹⁸Bonta and Wormith, "Adult offender assessment and classification", p. 407.

¹⁹Conversely, prisoners who demonstrate behaviour that elevates their risk can be moved to a higher-security regime.

²⁰Hardyman and others, *Internal Prison Classification Systems*.

Bangkok Rules (continued)**Rule 40**

Prison administrators shall develop and implement classification methods addressing the gender-specific needs and circumstances of women prisoners to ensure appropriate and individualized planning and implementation towards those prisoners' early rehabilitation, treatment and reintegration into society.

Rule 41

The gender-sensitive risk assessment and classification of prisoners shall:

- (a) Take into account the generally lower risk posed by women prisoners to others, as well as the particularly harmful effects that high-security measures and increased levels of isolation can have on women prisoners;
- (b) Enable essential information about women's backgrounds, such as violence they may have experienced, history of mental disability and substance abuse, as well as parental and other caretaking responsibilities, to be taken into account in the allocation and sentence planning process;
- (c) Ensure that women's sentence plans include rehabilitative programmes and services that match their gender-specific needs; ...

Historically, most classification tools, including actuarial instruments designed for prisoner classification purposes, have been developed for, and validated on, adult men. However, it has been demonstrated that many of the indicators developed to predict behaviour of adult male prisoners are not applicable to women, and that using such tools or indicators often results in overclassification, thereby subjecting women to higher levels of security than required. As noted in the commentary to Bangkok rules 40 and 41,²¹ women are often discriminated against in the application of this principle, due to one or a combination of a series of factors. Firstly, since the same classification instruments are used for women and men in the vast majority of prisons worldwide, despite women's different needs and circumstances, information about a history of domestic violence, sexual abuse and parental responsibility are areas in which screening is lacking for women. As a result, classification and screening procedures do not provide essential information about the women, which may increase the probability of their placement in a higher security level than appropriate, while reducing possibilities of providing suitable prisoner programmes matching individual needs.

Consequently, when developing and implementing a prisoner classification system, it is critical to draw on available research evidence regarding the salient factors for both male and female prisoners and to design an approach and tools that reflect these differences in order to ensure proper classification at the lowest security level required.

Age

Research has identified some special considerations for young adults and the elderly that have relevance for the assessment, classification and management of people belonging to those age groups in a prison setting.

²¹ UNODC, *The Bangkok Rules: United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-Custodial Measures for Women Offenders with their Commentary* (2011).

With respect to young adults (typically referred as individuals of between 18 and 21 years of age, or sometimes up to 24 years of age), research on the combined effects of the biology of the developing brain, the psychology of emerging adults and the impact of social context has suggested that the phase of development referred to as adolescence extends beyond the age of 18, which in many jurisdictions is the legal age of adulthood. Specifically, research has indicated that the adult brain is not fully developed until the mid twenties, in particular the area of the frontal lobe, which is responsible for judgment and impulse control.²² These findings support a developmentally informed approach to dealing with young adults in the criminal justice system.

COUNTRY EXAMPLE

Sweden

According to the handbook on placement in prison produced by the Government of Sweden, a person who is taken into custody either in a remand prison or prison before his or her twenty-first birthday shall be considered as a young person during the incarceration until the day that he or she turns 24. The policy indicates that these young people should be placed in a youth ward or prison if their needs for rehabilitation and education could be best met there, but can be placed in another ward or prison if it is determined that their needs can be better met in that setting.

Source: Swedish Prison and Probation Service.

At the other end of the age spectrum, older prisoners also require special consideration. As noted by Williams,²³ while there is no global consensus on the age at which a prisoner becomes “older”, several research studies define older prisoners as those over 50 or 55 years of age. Furthermore, many criminal justice systems estimate that many prisoners present a physiological age 10 to 15 years older than their chronological age, owing to a higher prevalence of risk factors for poor health, such as substance use disorders, traumatic brain injury and low socio-economic status.²⁴ Older prisoners are likely to have special needs that pose a challenge for prison management, including with regard to mobility, hearing and cognitive functioning. Those needs may severely restrict the participation of older prisoners in prison life and render them vulnerable to potential abuse by other prisoners. Some steps identified to assist in managing this group of prisoners include the incorporation of functional assessments to determine the best placement aligned with the abilities of the individual, dementia screening and geriatric-informed programming.²⁵

²²Justice Policy Institute, “Improving approaches to serving young adults in the justice system (Washington D.C., December 2016).

²³Brie Williams, “Addressing the ageing dilemma in criminal justice healthcare: using medical evidence to motivate policy change”, in *Ageing and Imprisonment: Summary Report*, International Committee of the Red Cross (Paris, June 2018).

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Ibid.

COUNTRY EXAMPLE**Germany**

Singen prison is located in Baden-Württemberg, Germany, and was established in 1970 as a specialized prison for older prisoners, to promote social contact, medical care and release preparation. The intention is to cater for the needs of older adults that cannot be met in regular prisons, including certain treatment measures and age-appropriate activities.

Source: Lynn Saunders and Harold Egerer, "Creating a suitable environment and regime for older prisoners during and after custody", in *Ageing and Imprisonment: Summary Report*, International Committee of the Red Cross (Paris, June 2018).

Culture

Similarly, it may be important in certain jurisdictions to consider cultural issues in the development and validation of a prisoner classification approach. A prisoner's cultural background can play a significant role in the manifestation of risks as it relates to behavioural norms and expectations, acceptable responses to threat, emotional presentation, modes of communication, goals and motivations. Risk assessment instruments are often developed according to the main cultural group of a country and can thereby ignore variability across different subpopulations. The predictive ability of classification tools and methods can therefore be less accurate for ethnic minority groups. This is particularly concerning for some overrepresented, disadvantaged ethnic minority groups with histories of injustice and mistreatment. Assessment tools and approaches need to be reflective of the population that they are measuring, given the influence that assessment information has on decision-making with an impact on public safety, offender treatment and civil liberties.²⁶

8. Prisoners with special needs

The importance of such issues as gender and culturally informed tools and approaches are described above. In the present section, considerations with respect to the assessment and classification of prisoners with special needs are discussed, including prisoners with mental health conditions, prisoners with disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) prisoners and foreign prisoners.

Prisoners with mental health-care needs**Nelson Mandela Rules****Health-care services****Rule 25**

1. Every prison shall have in place a health-care service tasked with evaluating, promoting, protecting and improving the physical and mental health of prisoners, paying particular attention to prisoners with special health-care needs or with health issues that hamper their rehabilitation.

²⁶Stephane M. Shepherd and Roberto Lewis-Fernández, "Forensic risk assessment and cultural diversity: contemporary challenges and future directions", *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law*, vol. 22, No. 4 (November 2016), pp. 427–438.

2. The health-care service shall consist of an inter-disciplinary team with sufficient qualified personnel acting in full clinical independence and shall encompass sufficient expertise in psychology and psychiatry. ...

Rule 33

The physician shall report to the prison director whenever he or she considers that a prisoner's physical or mental health has been or will be injuriously affected by continued imprisonment or by any condition of imprisonment.

Prisoners with mental disabilities and/or health conditions

Rule 109

1. Persons who are found to be not criminally responsible, or who are later diagnosed with severe mental disabilities and/or health conditions, for whom staying in prison would mean an exacerbation of their condition, shall not be detained in prisons, and arrangements shall be made to transfer them to mental health facilities as soon as possible.
2. If necessary, other prisoners with mental disabilities and/or health conditions can be observed and treated in specialized facilities under the supervision of qualified health-care professionals.
3. The health-care service shall provide for the psychiatric treatment of all other prisoners who are in need of such treatment.

Bangkok Rules

Classification and individualization

Rule 41

The gender-sensitive risk assessment and classification of prisoners shall:

- (d) Ensure that those with mental health-care needs are housed in accommodation which is not restrictive, and at the lowest possible security level, and receive appropriate treatment, rather than being placed in higher security level facilities solely due to their mental health problems.

Data collected at the global level have consistently demonstrated that a high proportion of prisoners suffer from significant mental health problems. According to the World Health Organization,²⁷ prevalence studies in many countries have reported that 10 to 15 per cent of the prison population have severe and enduring mental illnesses, including mental disorders, such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder. Co-morbidity of mental health disorders with other health conditions, such as substance misuse, is common. Issues related to mental health and drug use disorders are even more pronounced among women prisoners, with available data suggesting that rates for such conditions are at least four times higher for this group than in the general population.²⁸ Both North American and European data indicate that approximately 75 per cent of women in prison suffer from substance use disorders.

²⁷ World Health Organization, Health topics, Health determinants, Prison and health, "Data and statistics: HIV/AIDS".

²⁸ Gregory P. Brown and others, *Prevalence of Mental Disorder among Federally Sentenced Women Offenders: Incubation and Intake Samples*, Research Report, No. R-420, (Ottawa, Correctional Service of Canada, October 2018).

The management of prisoners with mental health conditions is challenging for any prison system. However, early identification and the provision of appropriate mental health services are key in addressing the specialized needs of such individuals. Consequently, the assessment and classification of prisoners must include, at a minimum, a process for screening and identifying those with significant mental health issues and those at risk of suicide and self-harm as soon as possible upon admission. These prisoners can be particularly vulnerable to victimization in a traditional prison setting or, conversely, the behaviours associated with their condition can present a risk to prison staff and other prisoners. In case of serious mental health disorders, in particular, the needs of those individuals should therefore, whenever possible, be met in specialized psychiatric or medical units or facilities where qualified health-care practitioners can undertake screening, assessment and treatment.

Prisoners with physical disabilities

Nelson Mandela Rules

Basic principles

Rule 5

2. Prison administrations shall make all reasonable accommodation and adjustments to ensure that prisoners with physical, mental or other disabilities have full and effective access to prison life on an equitable basis.

Handbook on Prisoners with Special Needs^a

4.2.5 Classification, allocation and accommodation

Like all prisoners, prisoners with disabilities should be housed in the minimum security conditions required for their safe and secure custody.

Prisoners with disabilities should be allocated to accommodation suitable to their needs. Adaptations to accommodation should be made, if necessary, to help them to cope with their new environment. For example, handrails can be provided in their cells, steps can be painted in bright colours and marked to make them visible for those with visual disabilities, portable ramps can be used to facilitate the access of those using wheelchairs. Health-care services should be easily accessible.

The risk of abuse by other prisoners should be taken into account when determining the allocation of prisoners with disabilities to ensure their protection.

^aUNODC, *Handbook on Prisoners with Special Needs*, Criminal Justice Handbook Series (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.09.IV.4), p. 51.

Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, intellectual or sensory impairments that, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.²⁹ As noted in the Handbook on Prisoners with

²⁹Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, art. 1.

Special Needs, the challenges that people with disabilities face in society are often magnified in prisons owing to the nature of the closed and restricted environment and to violence resulting from overcrowding and lack of proper prisoner differentiation and supervision. Consequently, any physical or other disabilities need to be considered and accommodated during the intake and assessment process, in classification decisions and in the overall management of the case.

With respect to assessment, impediments to the prisoner's full participation in the assessment process must be identified upon admission where possible and taken into consideration. The identification of those issues should be part of the immediate needs assessment described further below. Moreover, strategies for accommodating those challenges should be in place. For example, if there are forms or questionnaires that the prisoner will be asked to complete, then those with a visual or motor impairment will need assistance by either having the questions provided verbally and having a staff member write down the responses or through a computer-based system that can read questions and record responses. Similarly, if the person has an intellectual impairment, attempts should be made to simplify the questions posed and provide repetition as required.

Regarding classification and allocation, it is critical that prisoners with disabilities be placed in a setting that can accommodate their needs and protect them from victimization from other prisoners. Prisoners should be allowed to keep in their possession any aid relevant to their disability (e.g., wheelchairs and crutches), unless there is an exceptional security reason to not accommodate this. If there is an identified risk involved, a suitable alternative must be provided.³⁰

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex prisoners

Handbook on Prisoners with Special Needs^a

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender prisoners: key messages

The significant vulnerability of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) persons in the criminal justice system in many countries calls for the formulation of policies to address the needs of this group and the development and implementation of strategies that ensure that they are not discriminated against in their access to justice and victimized in the criminal justice system, due to their sexual orientation or gender identity.

International human rights instruments oblige States to protect all prisoners under their supervision and care, as well as to assist with their social reintegration. Taking into account the large number of reports relating to the discrimination, humiliation, sexual abuse and rape of LGBT persons in the prison setting, prison authorities need to develop policies and strategies that ensure the maximum possible protection of such groups, while facilitating their social reintegration in an effective manner.

^aUNODC, *Handbook on Prisoners with Special Needs*, p. 104.

LGBTI individuals represent a particularly vulnerable group in a prison setting with respect to potential victimization. As noted in the *Handbook on Prisoners with Special Needs*,³¹ in prison systems where no proper classification exists, and where overcrowding is the norm, LGBT

³⁰UNODC, *Handbook on Prisoners with Special Needs*.

³¹*Ibid.*, p. 108.

prisoners may be placed in dormitories or cells together with prisoners with a violent background, including with a history of sexual abuse. There are many reports of sexual violence suffered by LGBT prisoners by other prisoners, owing to lack of care taken in their placement, and sometimes because of their deliberate placement with prisoners who pose a risk. Therefore, as part of the assessment process for individuals entering a prison setting, be they in pretrial detention or sentenced, any specific needs or vulnerabilities related to the person's sexual or gender orientation should be explored in a respectful manner, and allocation decisions made in an unbiased way to ensure the safety and security of the prisoner. With respect to transgender individuals in particular, their unique needs should be considered, and decisions regarding their placement and protection while in detention should be taken with their informed consent, prior to allocation.³²

Foreign nationals

Model agreement on the transfer of foreign prisoners and recommendations on the treatment of foreign prisoners^a

Annex II

Recommendations on the treatment of foreign prisoners

1. The allocation of a foreign prisoner to a prison establishment should not be affected on the grounds of his or her nationality alone.
2. Foreign prisoners should have the same access as national prisoners to education, work and vocational training.
3. Foreign prisoners should in principle be eligible for measures alternative to imprisonment, as well as for prison leave and other authorized exits from prison according to the same principle as nationals.
4. Foreign prisoners should be informed promptly after reception into a prison, in a language which they understand and generally in writing, of the main features of the prison regime, including relevant rules and regulations.
5. The religious precepts and customs of foreign prisoners should be respected.
6. Foreign prisoners should be informed without delay of their right to request contacts with their consular authorities, as well as of any other relevant information regarding their status. If a foreign prisoner wishes to receive assistance from a diplomatic or consular authority, the latter should be contacted promptly.
7. Foreign prisoners should be given proper assistance, in a language they can understand, when dealing with medical or programme staff and in such matters as complaints, special accommodations, special diets and religious representation and counselling.

^a*Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, Milan, 26 August–6 September 1985: report prepared by the Secretariat* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.86.IV.1), chap. I, sect. D.1.

³²For further detail, see also Association for the Prevention of Torture and Penal Reform International, *LGBTI Persons Deprived of Their Liberty: A Framework for Preventing Monitoring*, 2nd ed. (London, Penal Reform International, 2015).

The term “foreign national prisoners” refers to prisoners who do not carry the passport of the country in which they are imprisoned. It therefore covers prisoners who have lived for extended periods in the country of imprisonment, but who have not been naturalized, as well as those who have recently arrived.³³

Foreign nationals are a particularly vulnerable group that may be especially disadvantaged with respect to navigating the criminal justice system in a country, owing to both language barriers and a lack of knowledge of how the justice system or imprisonment works in the jurisdiction. In addition, they are likely to be isolated as they are typically cut off from family and their home community. With respect to assessment, classification and allocation, foreign national prisoners should be classified and allocated to an appropriate security level and regime on the basis of an assessment of risks and needs similar to that for all other prisoners.³⁴ Interpretation services may be required to complete the assessment in the case of language barriers, and the opportunity to contact consular support should be provided. With regard to allocation, the prison assignment of foreign national prisoners should not be made on the grounds of their nationality alone and consideration should be given to their special needs with respect to ensuring their safety, reducing their sense of isolation and facilitating meetings and visits with consular representatives and family members who may be travelling to the country from abroad.

COUNTRY EXAMPLE

Philippines

The Philippines has established a jail facility exclusively for foreign persons deprived of liberty, in which they are classified and housed according to their nationality. Jail wardens are required to coordinate with the embassy of foreign prisoners upon their commitment to jail and their release from custody. They are given the same rights and privileges accorded to Philippine prisoners. Their basic rights and privileges include:

1. Informing or notifying concerned consular offices in the area or the embassy of cases of detention of foreign nationals within 24 hours upon commitment in a jail facility or of cases of sickness and other needs involving assistance from their consular officials.
2. Ascertaining the safety, treatment and segregation of foreign nationals.
3. Attending to them with due courtesy and providing timely assistance.

Source: Bureau of Jail Management and Penology, Philippines.

9. Other placement considerations

Nelson Mandela Rules

Contact with the outside world

Rule 59

Prisoners shall be allocated, to the extent possible, to prisons close to their homes or their places of social rehabilitation.

³³ UNODC, *Handbook on Prisoners with Special Needs*.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

Nelson Mandela Rules (*continued*)**Social relations and aftercare****Rule 107**

From the beginning of a prisoner's sentence, consideration shall be given to his or her future after release and he or she shall be encouraged and provided assistance to maintain or establish such relations with persons or agencies outside the prison as may promote the prisoner's rehabilitation and the best interest of his or her family.

While classification and placement decisions for prisoners must focus primarily on the safety and security of both the prisoner and others in the prison setting and on access to appropriate interventions, there are other factors that need to be weighed. In particular, it is very important when assigning a prisoner to a specific facility to take into account such issues as the proximity of the setting to the person's home community, family or place of social reintegration, and, where possible, ensure that the environment is compatible with any cultural or linguistic needs. Those issues also need to also be considered for any decisions relating to the transfer of prisoners to different custodial settings. The maintenance of contact with family and prosocial support systems in the community while in prison is often a significant positive factor in supporting the successful social reintegration of prisoners. Research has found that visits, in particular consistent visits, while incarcerated are associated with less prison misconduct³⁵ and is mentioned in international standards as a key factor in a rehabilitation process.

Bangkok Rules**Rules of general application****Rule 4**

Women prisoners shall be allocated, to the extent possible, to prisons close to their home or place of social rehabilitation, taking account of their caretaking responsibilities, as well as the individual woman's preference and the availability of appropriate programmes and services.

The need for women to keep in contact with their families, in particular when children are involved, and the extremely harmful impact of isolation from families and communities on women prisoners is recognized in the Bangkok Rules. Often, owing to the small number of women prisoners and the correspondingly fewer number of women's prisons in correctional systems worldwide, women prisoners may be placed in prisons far away from their homes. As a result, many women prisoners may receive fewer visits than their male counterparts given the difficulties and costs involved in the long travel that families must undertake to visit them. However, the Bangkok Rules also emphasize the importance of consultation with the woman regarding allocation and placement, recognizing that, if they have been victims of violence perpetrated by their spouses or another member of their family, they may wish to be allocated far away from their place of residence in order to protect their safety and mental well-being.³⁶

³⁵Joshua C. Cochrane, "The ties that bind or the ties that break: examining the relationship between visitation and prisoner misconduct", *Journal of Criminal Justice*, vol. 40, No. 5 (September 2012), pp. 433–440.

³⁶Thailand Institute of Justice, *Training Modules for Correctional Staff on the Management of Women Prisoners in the ASEAN Region* (Bangkok, 2015).

III. Research on approaches to the assessment of prisoners

1. Four generations of assessment tools

For many years, prison administrations relied on unstructured professional or clinical judgment³⁷ to make classification decisions for prisoners. This method, often referred to as “first-generation” risk assessment, had the advantage of not necessitating a detailed assessment process and staff training infrastructure. Rather, it only required the presence of professionals or clinicians with the requisite skill and experience to complete the assessment. Research on the accuracy of such judgment, however, consistently demonstrated that, used alone, it was a poor predictor of behaviour and by far the least accurate method for assessing prisoners’ risks and needs. Furthermore, because it was impossible to guarantee consistency across professionals, the approach was also open to bias and inconsistent decision-making.

Concerns with the reliability of unstructured professional and clinical judgments led to the development of actuarial or evidence-based tools (also referred to as “second-generation” assessment tools), which are now commonly used in prison settings. Instruments based on that approach were developed through follow-up studies of large samples of prisoners conducted to identify factors associated with future misconduct, escapes and reoffending. The data from such samples were then typically used to create a scoring system. The prisoners’ score, based on their characteristics and past behaviour, could then be converted into a risk category, which was a probabilistic estimate of the chances of their engaging in problematic behaviour in the future. Research conducted on actuarial risk tools so developed demonstrated that their consistency and predictive ability were significantly higher than those of unstructured professional and clinical judgments.³⁸ In addition, actuarial assessment tools had the advantage that they could be administered by people trained to use them who, otherwise, did not necessarily have in-depth or specialized professional experience.

Over time, however, shortcomings of the actuarial approach became evident. In particular, the original tools developed from this model tended to rely exclusively on criminal history or non-criminal factors that were static and unchangeable (e.g., age at first offence or prior offence

³⁷ Unstructured professional or clinical judgment refers to an informal and subjective approach based primarily on professional opinion, intuition and clinical experience where assessors have absolute discretion in terms of the selection of the risk factors to be considered and of the interpretation of the collected information to make predictions and render decisions.

³⁸ For a broad review of this issue, see Robyn M. Dawes, David Faust and Paul E. Meehl, “Clinical versus actuarial judgment”, *Science*, vol. 243, No. 4899 (March 1989), pp. 1668–1674.

history). Therefore, there was typically no consideration of any unique or individual issues that may be salient with respect to the prediction of future behaviour. There was also no mechanism for identifying change in prisoners' risk over time, in particular with respect to progress that they may have made to address issues related to their criminal behaviour. In addition, it was observed that, while the ability of actuarial instruments might be optimal for prisoners that had the same characteristics as the sample group on which the tool had been developed, it could not be assumed that this predictive ability would apply to other groups of prisoners. This is particularly relevant in an international context, where the group on which the risk categories and scoring of a tool are based may have very little in common with another prisoner population, in particular if that population is in another country. In recognition of those limitations, research began to focus more on "dynamic" risk factors, also referred to as "criminogenic need" areas. This resulted in the development of tools that, while retaining static criminal and personal history items linked to risk, also incorporated dynamic or changeable predictors that were not only sensitive to alterations in an offender's circumstances (to assist in monitoring change), but also provided prison staff with information regarding the needs of the prisoner that should be targeted through interventions. These are referred to as "risk-need" or "third-generation" instruments in research literature.

In recent years, a fourth generation of assessment tools has emerged. These promote planning and the delivery of services that are used to inform management of cases from the beginning of a period of custody or supervision to when the sentence is completed, with regular reassessments throughout. They also include the identification of key individual factors to better match interventions to prisoners.

In contrast to the actuarial method, third- and fourth-generation risk tools incorporate a "structured professional judgment" approach that takes into consideration factors theoretically and empirically associated with outcomes of interest to create formulations of risk and need areas. Instruments based on structured professional judgment provide guidance to those completing assessments on a set number of factors in order to estimate risk or need level (e.g., low, moderate or high). This allows assessors to consider the relevance of each item for the individual and case-specific factors that may not be included in the tool. Therefore, while this approach remains consistent and transparent owing to the consideration of the same factors for all prisoners according to specific guidelines, there is some professional discretion in that individualized considerations can be incorporated. Disadvantages of structured professional judgment that have been noted are the potential reintroduction of biases in decision-making, thereby reducing predictive accuracy. In addition, these tools may be more time-consuming to administer than actuarial assessments, as ratings are more nuanced.³⁹ Nonetheless, some available research has indicated that the reliability and predictive validity of structured professional judgment may be comparable to that of an actuarial approach.⁴⁰

³⁹ Sarah L. Desmarais and Jay P. Singh, *Risk Assessment Instruments Validated and Implemented in Correctional Settings in the United States* (March 2013).

⁴⁰ Stephen D. Hart, Kevin S. Douglas and Laura S. Guy, "The structured professional judgement approach to violence risk assessment: origins, nature, and advances", in *The Wiley Handbook on the Theories, Assessment, Treatment of Sexual Offending*, vol. II, Leam A. Craig and Martin Rettenberger eds., (New Jersey, Wiley Publishers, 2016), pp. 643–666.

Table 1. Comparison of four generations of risk and needs assessment approaches

<i>Type of risk and needs assessment approach</i>	<i>Key features</i>	<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Weaknesses</i>
First generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Informal and subjective - Decisions based on professional opinion, experience and intuition - Assessors select risk factors to be considered and decide on how to interpret results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does not necessitate a detailed assessment process and staff training infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poor predictor of behaviour and least accurate method for assessing an offender's risks and needs - Lack of consistency open to bias and inconsistent decision-making
Second generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Actuarial or statistical approach to assessing risk - Developed through follow-up studies of large samples of prisoners aimed at identifying factors associated with future misconduct, escapes and reoffending 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consistency and predictive ability significantly higher than that of unstructured professional judgment - Can be administered by those trained to use the instrument, without requiring in-depth or specialized professional experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No mechanism for identifying any change in a prisoner's risk over time or any progress made - Limited, if any, identification of treatment targets - Owing to a reliance on group norms for statistical development, tools may not be generalizable to other prisoner groups
Third generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Incorporates dynamic as well as static factors - Maintains actuarial approach but incorporates structured professional judgment - Integrates risk and needs assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sensitive to alterations in an offender's circumstances (to assist in monitoring change) - Provides prison staff with information regarding the needs of the prisoner that should be targeted through interventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assessment of dynamic factors can add subjectivity and create implementation challenges - Requires repeated administration to detect change - More time-consuming - More training owing to the addition of subjective factors
Fourth generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintains structured professional judgment aspect - Expands the emphasis on dynamic risk and need factors by providing correctional agencies with case management tools that match each prisoner's unique risk and need profile to an identifiable, evidence-based treatment plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Integration of case management planning with risk and needs assessments - Promotes planning and the delivery of services to inform management of cases from the beginning of custody or supervision to when the sentence is complete, with regular reassessments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assessment of dynamic factors can add subjectivity and create implementation challenges - Requires repeated administration to detect change - More time-consuming - Necessitates more training owing to the addition of subjective factors - Smaller research base

2. Risk-needs-responsivity model

It should be noted that the evolution of prisoner assessment from the initial focus on unstructured professional and clinical judgments to the current model of both comprehensive actuarial and structured professional judgment risk and needs assessments has been strongly influenced by the risk-need-responsivity model of prisoner assessment and rehabilitation, originally articulated by Andrews, Bonta and Hoge.⁴¹ According to that model, there are three principles for assessing and intervening with offenders:

- The risk principle holds that supervision and treatment levels should match a prisoner's level of risk. Specifically, low-risk offenders should receive less supervision and services, while higher-risk offenders should receive more intensive supervision and services.
- The need principle maintains that treatment services should target an offender's dynamic risk factors (also referred to as criminogenic needs) to reduce an offender's probability of recidivism and promote social reintegration.
- The responsivity principle states that treatment interventions for offenders should use cognitive social learning strategies and be tailored to an individual offender's specific characteristics (e.g., cognitive abilities or gender) that promote successful programme outcomes.

There is presently a significant body of research evidence supporting the risk-need-responsivity model, in particular as it relates to reducing reoffending.⁴²

With respect to assessments in the course of prisoner classification, tools and methods developed from the risk, need and responsivity perspective result in approaches that are both evidence-based and in line with core provisions of the Nelson Mandela Rules, which emphasize the dual purpose of classification as related to safety and security considerations (i.e., risk) and social rehabilitation efforts (i.e., needs).

It should be highlighted, however, that risk assessments in the risk-need-responsivity model refer primarily to the risk for public safety and not to the risk for prison safety and security. Specifically, public safety risk assessments are concerned with predicting the likelihood of criminal behaviour in the community, whereas prison classification tools are interested in identifying prisoners who may present security and management problems in a prison setting or pose a risk of escape, and represent a risk to the community in the event of an escape. Consequently, public safety risk assessment tools (be they actuarial or based on structured professional judgment) have been created for or based on individuals who were released into the community and either successfully reintegrated or violated the conditions of their release or supervision or reoffended. Although some factors used in this type of risk assessment are the same as those used for the purposes of prisoner classification in a custodial setting (as noted above, public safety in the event of an escape or upon release is of interest), there are some variables that are not predictive of prison conduct. Therefore, tools and approaches developed specifically for a prisoner's risk to the public upon release are not suitable in themselves to make security classification decisions. This is why several jurisdictions have developed risk tools specifically for the purposes of prison classification. On the other hand, as the assessment of needs in the risk-need-responsivity model is focused on areas demonstrated by research to be related to criminal behaviour and therefore

⁴¹ Andrews, Bonta and Hoge, "Classification for effective rehabilitation".

⁴² See, for example, Paula Smith, Paul Gendreau and Kristin Swartz, "Validating the principles of effective intervention: a systematic review of the contributions of meta-analysis in the field of corrections", *Victims and Offenders*, vol. 4, No. 2 (February 2009), pp. 148–169.

important targets for correctional interventions, tools developed to assess need based on that approach are relevant for prison classification and allocation purposes.

3. Good lives model

Over the past decade, another approach to prisoner rehabilitation, the good lives model,⁴³ has become increasingly popular, in particular in the area of sex offender treatment. This model is a strengths-based approach that aims to augment the risk, need and responsivity principles of effective correctional intervention through its focus on assisting clients in developing and implementing meaningful life plans that are incompatible with offending. Key to the good lives model is how criminogenic needs are understood, included and addressed within interventions and the emphasis on the client's goals. Specifically, the focus is on desistance from crime, or the process by which offenders cease offending behaviours. Therefore, intervention plans are aimed at helping prisoners to acquire the capabilities to achieve things and outcomes that are personally meaningful to them. Preliminary research suggests that the good lives model can enhance client engagement in treatment and reduce dropouts from programmes, although it has not been as well researched to date as the risk, need and responsivity approach with respect to its impact on correctional outcomes.

⁴³Ward, "Good lives and the rehabilitation of offenders"; Ward, Mann and Gannon, "The good lives model of offender rehabilitation".

IV. Overall principles and components of prisoner classification systems

Although the importance of prisoner classification has been supported by research, and the purpose and intent clearly articulated in international standards and norms such as the Nelson Mandela Rules, there is very little specific guidance available regarding how to actually develop and implement a prisoner classification system, in particular in transition economies, developing, low- and middle-income countries and post-conflict environments. This can result in prison authorities being left with many unanswered questions, such as: what are the steps to be taken to develop, implement or improve upon a prisoner classification system; what constitutes an evidence-based assessment and classification approach, and what are the elements that need to be included; who should be conducting classification assessments, and how can the results be used to ensure safety and security and promote rehabilitation and social reintegration efforts? While general guidelines and examples of prisoner classification approaches and tools in different settings can be provided, the precise procedures for successfully implementing a prisoner classification and reclassification system in any particular jurisdiction will be significantly determined by internal factors, such as the infrastructure of the prison system and the resources available, as well as the characteristics of the prisoner population. However, some general principles can be followed that provide an important foundation for the development and implementation of a strong, evidence-based prisoner classification system. The primary elements and sequence of an effective prison classification and reclassification regime are described in the present chapter, and a suggested framework is provided to assist in planning and implementing or modifying a prisoner classification system.

While it is recognized that countries with few resources may have difficulties carrying out any type of individualized prisoner assessment, it is critical that, even in such settings, efforts be made to develop and implement at least a rudimentary system of individualized assessments based on a few critical factors in order to, at a minimum, separate offenders who present a high risk from others, including high-risk prisoners who require particular attention or protection within a prison setting.⁴⁴

Elements and sequence of the classification and reclassification process

Historically, individuals were sent to prison as punishment, and little consideration was given to separating prisoners, let alone classifying them. Initial steps towards reform focused on the

⁴⁴UNODC, *Handbook on the Management of High-Risk Prisoners*, p. 36.

separation of core categories of prisoners (e.g., men from women; adults from children; and pretrial from sentenced prisoners). As noted above, more recent prisoner classification approaches aimed at identifying different groupings of prisoners primarily on the basis of their security risks then became more commonplace. Although the assessment of prisoners for security reasons continues to be the primary intent of many classification regimes, in recent decades, through the influence of the risk, need and responsivity approach and the adoption of international standards, such as the Nelson Mandela and Bangkok Rules, the rehabilitation and reintegration of prisoners have also become a prominent aspect of the classification and allocation process.⁴⁵ The increased focus on rehabilitation has also highlighted the importance of regular reassessments of security level, owing to the recognition that the risks that prisoners may pose are not static and can be influenced by interventions and a positive correctional environment aimed at their rehabilitation and social reintegration.

The selection of assessment tools and approaches for decision-making purposes, including classification, ultimately depends on the nature of the decision in question. Specifically, classification decisions at the pretrial stage often require an estimate of the likelihood of the alleged perpetrator committing a violent offence over some short period of time. Similarly, decisions such as those relating to eligibility for pre-charge diversion or pretrial alternative measures may call for general predictions of the likelihood of reoffending. However, any decision requiring longer-term decisions, such as disposition, case planning or management, typically calls for an assessment of the criminogenic needs underlying the risk factors and any strength or protective factors.⁴⁶

As mentioned above, some jurisdictions provide judges rather than the prison system with legislative authority to determine the classification of a prisoner. In those cases, the judiciary may choose to use individualized assessment approaches to inform classification decisions (e.g., the use of pre-sentence reports). The involvement of persons external to the correctional system in classification and allocation determinations will undoubtedly have an impact on the assessment process described below, which is focused on the prison system as the decision-making authority. However, it should be emphasized that, even in settings where the judiciary plays a prominent role in classification, a robust correctional admission process remains extremely important, as it can assist in determining the allocation of prisoners within specific security level regimes, as well as individualized case and sentence planning.

1. Prisoner classification upon admission to the prison service

Upon admission, all prisoners, whether in pretrial detention or convicted and sentenced to a term of imprisonment, should be assessed as soon as possible upon admission in order to determine the risk that they pose, both to themselves and others, as well as their immediate needs. Such individualized assessment is critical in determining the appropriate classification and placement of the prisoners to ensure their safety and security and those of staff and other prisoners and to facilitate efforts to promote their rehabilitation and social reintegration. The following sequence and elements are important for prison or correctional administrations to consider when developing or modifying an assessment process upon admission for classification purposes. Annex I provides an example of a basic prisoner admission and immediate needs assessment template.

⁴⁵Bonta and Wormith, “Adult offender assessment and classification”.

⁴⁶Robert D. Hoge, Gina Vincent and Laura Guy, “Bulletin 4: prediction and risk/needs assessment”, Study Group on the Transitions between Juvenile Delinquency and Adult Crime Series, document No. 242934 (Washington D.C., National Institute of Justice, 2013).

Step 1: assessment of immediate needs and provision of information to the prisoner

Upon initial entry into a custodial setting, it is important that prisoners be interviewed to assess their immediate needs with respect to any critical security and physical or mental health concerns. This should occur within the first 24 hours of admission and prior to any cell or accommodation assignment in the general prison population. This is a critical first step in ensuring the safety and security of the prisoners and those of staff and other prisoners. In addition, it is important that, during the initial contact with the prisoners, they be provided with information regarding, inter alia, the prison regulations and their rights and obligations, in accordance with rule 54 of the Nelson Mandela Rules.

Security and safety needs

Nelson Mandela Rules

Basic principles

Rule 1

The safety and security of prisoner, staff, service providers and visitors shall be ensured at all times.

Immediate admission concerns with respect to security relate to issues that could pose an immediate safety or security risk, including whether the prisoners are affiliated with organized crime, a gang or a terrorist organization, are incompatible with other prisoners within the system and have had previous episodes of violence in a custodial setting or incidents related to institutional adjustment and placement with other prisoners. Consideration should also be given to whether the prisoners themselves may be at risk, owing to such factors as ethnicity, age or sexual orientation. The presence of any of those factors will have an impact on immediate allocation and on longer-term placement decisions.

Physical and mental health needs

Nelson Mandela Rules

Health-care services

Rule 30

A physician or other qualified health-care professionals, whether or not they are required to report to the physician, shall see, talk with and examine every prisoner as soon as possible following his or her admission and thereafter as necessary. Particular attention shall be paid to:

- (a) Identifying health-care needs and taking all necessary measures for treatment;
- (b) Identifying any ill-treatment that arriving prisoners may have been subjected to prior to admission;

Nelson Mandela Rules (continued)

- (c) Identifying any signs of psychological or other stress brought on by the fact of imprisonment, including, but not limited to, the risk of suicide or self-harm and withdrawal symptoms resulting from the use of drugs, medication or alcohol; and undertaking all appropriate individualized measures or treatment;
- (d) In cases where prisoners are suspected of having contagious diseases, providing for the clinical isolation and adequate treatment of those prisoners during the infectious period;
- (e) Determining the fitness of prisoners to work, to exercise and to participate in other activities, as appropriate.

An initial needs assessment for prisoners should include an interview with and examination by a physician or other qualified health-care professional to identify physical and mental health concerns that require immediate attention and may also influence longer-term placement, such as acute or chronic health conditions, signs of recent violence or ill-treatment, indications of substance use disorders or withdrawal symptoms, requirement for medication, contagious diseases and physical accommodation needs. An assessment of the prisoner's risk of suicide and self-harm should also be a part of this immediate health-needs review. This interview should occur as soon as possible after the prisoner is taken into custody (within 24 hours), with follow-up as required.

Other needs

The assessment of immediate needs should also include questions regarding any practical considerations that may need to be taken into account, in particular for pretrial detainees, including whether there are any children in the home without adult supervision and other issues that may require immediate attention.

COUNTRY EXAMPLES: IMMEDIATE NEEDS ASSESSMENT**Correctional Service of Canada**

Commissioner Directive 705-3, entitled "Immediate needs identification and admission interviews", outlines the policy and procedure to identify prisoners' immediate needs on admission and provide standards for admission interviews. The policy states that, within 24 hours of the inmate's arrival at a new institution and prior to cell assignment, responsible staff will conduct an interview with the inmate to review the immediate needs identification for security and critical concerns; document any immediate needs in the Offender Management System; and complete the Immediate Needs Checklist – Suicide Risk, and document this in a casework record. In addition, they must gather information for cell or room assignment taking into account the nature and gravity of the offence; review alerts, flags and needs on file; review and update information regarding co-convicted prisoners; provide a brief orientation to institutional operating procedures; facilitate a telephone call between the newly admitted inmate and his or her lawyer or an individual on the inmate's authorized call list to inform that person of the inmate's admission to the prison; and complete any referral, if required.

Source: Correctional Service of Canada.

Sahel prison reform programme

UNODC supported the prison administrations of Burkina Faso, Mali and the Niger in the development of a risk evaluation tool to better assess the individual security threats posed by prisoners, in particular violent extremist prisoners. The evaluation tool, to be used by thoroughly trained staff, allows a better classification of prisoners for the purpose of their categorization according to their risk to safety and security. The assessment and classification process includes an immediate needs checklist to be completed upon admission. The checklist covers such information as incompatible prisoners, co-accused, previous adjustment problems while in prison, a disability that may exclude certain types of use of force, use of prescription medication, risk of suicide, criminal records criminogenic factors, social history and whether the person is transgender.

Source: UNODC Regional Office for Central and West Africa.

Step 2: collection of information

Following the assessment of immediate needs and the initial cell or dormitory assignment of the prisoner, the next step is to conduct a broader assessment of the prisoner to determine classification and longer-term allocation and placement to an appropriate setting. In order to complete a more detailed assessment of risks and needs to inform classification decisions, it is critical to have reliable information regarding the prisoner's current offence, criminal history and personal background. The following is a minimum list of basic official documentation relevant to the completion of the assessment process upon admission:

- Commitment order
- Documentation to confirm identity
- Official report of the offence (police report, court or judge's decision and comments, prosecutor report)
- History of criminal offending and previous incarcerations
- Affiliation with any security threat groups (e.g., criminal or terrorist organizations or gangs)

While information from official reports is preferable, interviews with family and others affiliated with the prisoner can also provide valuable information, in particular as it relates to the assessment of needs, and should be included in the information collection process, when possible. In addition, in some jurisdictions, the involvement of civil society organizations and religious organizations or experts may be beneficial both as a source of relevant information and if they have a role in providing rehabilitation services in prison settings. In addition, interviews and self-reported information from the prisoners themselves are an important data source for the assessment of risks and needs and provide an opportunity to assess not only the persons' versions of events against official reports but also the factors that they believe contributed to their involvement in crime. Finally, intelligence, both internal prison intelligence and intelligence from other law enforcement agencies, can be a vital part of any risk assessment, as it often provides insight that other sources cannot bring to the assessment.⁴⁷ This is particularly relevant where there are concerns that the prisoner may be involved with a security threat group, such as a criminal gang or a terrorist organization.

⁴⁷ UNODC, *Handbook on Dynamic Security and Prison Intelligence*.

COUNTRY EXAMPLE: COLLECTION OF INFORMATION

Burkina Faso

The collection of information in Burkina Faso is carried out not only by gathering documentation and conducting interviews that assist in providing an overview of the prisoner's background and circumstances, but also through collaboration between the prison service and judicial police officers and magistrates involved in the management, handling and processing of the prisoner's files and sentencing. These various elements are described below.

Relevant documents and registries

- Individual files that include information related to the prisoner's name, address, prison status, photograph, fingerprints, any official reports, a photocopy of identity documentation, excerpts of the judgment of conviction or detention order
- A copy of any decisions imposing sanctions or granting rewards, and acts of notification regarding the prisoner
- Medical record of the prisoner
- Information from the registries established for each group of prisoners (convicted, charged, pre-accused)
- Information from the registry of sanctions and rewards
- Observation notes from prison officers
- Briefing notes from the prison intelligence unit
- Information from the registry of sentence adjustments and the registry of escapes

Data collection through interviews

Interviews are viewed as a process of gathering information to assess the personal needs and security risks presented by the prisoner to facilitate classification or reclassification. In practice, interviews are part of the daily work of the prison social service and security officers. With assistance from UNODC training on the practice of risk assessment, staff have acquired interview techniques to better collect relevant information. These interviews are aimed at understanding the prisoner's personal life, criminal background and personality and at identifying the criminogenic factors that contributed to their involvement in crime.

Collaboration with judicial police officers

The collection of information about a prisoner may have limitations and inadequacies in terms of depth or accuracy. In such cases, other avenues are explored to fill the gaps. This includes collaboration with the judicial police officers who, as part of the judicial process, have knowledge of the prisoner from investigating and drawing up documentation regarding the case. This collaboration assists in cross-referencing information and assessing its credibility.

Contribution from magistrates

Other valuable input can be obtained from the magistrates who either tried and convicted or authorized the incarceration of the prisoner. Excerpts from judgments and the sentences of conviction (for those who have been convicted) are official documents that contain vital information for classification assessment purposes. For pretrial detainees, information sharing is not possible before the trial phase, not only because of the presumption of innocence, but also because the investigation is confidential. Information about pretrial detainees may therefore only be shared once and if they receive a sentence.

Source: Prison and Social Reintegration Service, Burkina Faso.

A word about interviews with prisoners

Assessment instruments typically consist of a series of questions that help to guide an interview with prisoners in order to gather information to better understand and assess their risks and needs. If prisoners are not forthcoming with this information, the interviewer needs to work to overcome the resistance or reluctance that they may have to discuss aspects of their lives or offending behaviour and to motivate them to engage in the assessment. Risk assessment interviews can also provide an opportunity to promote prisoners' engagement in current and future intervention and risk management services, as well as their cooperation in risk management.⁴⁸ Building rapport and trust with prisoners can facilitate this process and is facilitated by respectful dialogue and interaction. Interviews with prisoners should always occur in a private setting (e.g., a closed office). For women prisoners, conditions should include being interviewed by female prison officers, as stereotypes and societal norms and histories of violence can have a negative impact on women's trust and rapport and, therefore, level of comfort in disclosing information.

There is a significant literature on interviewing techniques to promote engagement and change with resistant clients, including prison populations, most notably "motivational interviewing" (see the boxed text below). A detailed overview of that approach, however, is beyond the scope of the present handbook.

Motivational interviewing

Motivational interviewing is a counselling technique that enables people to get beyond their reluctance to change problem behaviours. Motivational interviewing is directive (focused on goals), client-centred, and non-confrontational.

Pre-sentence investigations, intake summaries, periodic assessments, case planning and many other routine corrections tasks rely on an agent's ability to gather accurate information from clients. In general, people disclose information more freely and accurately when they feel that they are being listened to, respected and supported. The active listening skills used in motivational interviewing (open questions, affirmations, reflections and summaries) help agents to create an interpersonal environment that reduces client defensiveness and increases the quality of information gathered.

Source: Bradford Bogue and Anjali Nandi, *Motivational Interviewing in Corrections: A Comprehensive Guide to Implementing MI in Corrections*. (Washington, D.C., National Institute of Corrections, 2012).

⁴⁸ Jo Shingler, Stefanie J. Sonnenberg and Adrian Needs, "Risk assessment interviews: Exploring the perspectives of psychologists and indeterminate sentenced prisoners in the United Kingdom", *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, vol. 62, No. 10 (November 2017), pp. 3201–3224.

Step 3: determination of initial security level required: assessment of risk, need and responsivity factors

Assessment of risks

Council of Europe recommendation CM/Rec(2014)3 of the Committee of Ministers to member States concerning dangerous offenders^a

27. Risk assessments should involve a detailed analysis of previous behaviours and the historical, personal and situational factors that led to and contributed to it. They should be based on the best reliable information.

28. Risk assessments should be conducted in an evidence-based, structured manner, incorporating appropriate validated tools and professional decision-making. Those persons undertaking risk assessments should be aware of and state clearly the limitations of assessing violence risk and of predicting future behaviour, particularly in the long term.

29. Such risk-assessment instruments should be used to develop the most constructive and least restrictive interpretation of a measure or sanction, as well as to an individualized implementation of a sentence. They are not designed to determine the sentence, although their findings may be used constructively to indicate the need for interventions.

30. Assessments undertaken during the implementation of a sentence should be seen as progressive, and be periodically reviewed to allow for a dynamic reassessment of the offender's risk:

(a) Risk assessments should be repeated on a regular basis by appropriately trained staff to meet the requirements of sentence planning or when otherwise necessary, allowing for a revision of the circumstances that change during the execution of the sentence;

(b) Assessment practices should be responsive to the fact that the risk posed by an individual's offending changes over time: such change may be gradual or sudden.

31. Assessments should be coupled with opportunities for offenders to address their special risk related needs and change their attitudes and behaviour.

32. Offenders should be involved in assessment and have information about the process and access to the conclusions of the assessment.

33. A clear distinction should be made between the offender's risks to the outside community and inside prison. These two risks should be evaluated separately.

^aAlthough these recommendations are related specifically to the topic of dangerous offenders, the principles represent general evidence-based practices and are therefore applicable to the risk assessment of all prisoners.

As noted above in the review of research on prisoner classification, tools aimed at assessing only the prisoner's risk to public safety are not necessarily predictive of security risk within a prison setting. Research has identified several factors that are important to consider for an assessment for the purposes of classification decisions. These include:

- Gender
- Age
- Severity of current offence

- Sentence length
- Criminal history, in particular violence
- Security threat group membership or affiliation (e.g., gangs or violent extremist organizations)
- Previous involvement in incidents in prison settings
- Level of functioning in the community prior to admission
- Mental and emotional stability
- History of escape attempts or escape
- Risk to the public in the event of an escape

Several jurisdictions have created classification tools that consider most or all of those factors. Most have been designed specifically for the particular prison population being managed. Examples include the offender assessment and sentence management system⁴⁹ used in Her Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service in the United Kingdom and the custody rating scale of the Correctional Service of Canada.⁵⁰ Annex II includes links to information on some of those tools and additional information on prisoner assessment and classification approaches. Annex III provides a summary of factors that should be explored in initial assessments of risks and needs for classification purposes, including those that have been demonstrated by research to be associated with public safety risk, risk in a prison setting and escape risk, as well as criminogenic need areas and responsivity factors.

COUNTRY EXAMPLES

Canada

Custody rating scale

The custody rating scale is a research-based instrument used as part of the intake assessment process in the Correctional Service of Canada. The tool embodies legislated criteria for security classification for Canadian federal offenders as set out in section 17 of the Corrections and Conditional Release Regulations.^a The custody rating scale consists of two subscales: institutional adjustment and security risk. The institutional adjustment subscale examines five factors associated with institutional misconduct: history of involvement in institutional incidents; escape history; “street stability”; alcohol and drug use; and age at time of sentencing for the current offence. The security risk subscale consists of seven factors shown to be related to potential future reoffending: number of prior convictions; most severe outstanding charge; severity of current offence; sentence length; street stability; prior parole or statutory releases; and age at time of first federal admission. Each scale item is assigned a weight according to policy considerations and empirical data stemming from the development and validation studies, and the weighted items are then summed to produce subscale total scores. Cut-off scores apply to each subscale and correspond to minimum-, medium- or maximum-security classification. Details of the custody rating scale, including definitions, items for all factors and scoring criteria, can be found in annex B of the Commissioner’s Directive on the security classification and penitentiary placement.

Source: Correctional Service of Canada.

^a Canada, Corrections and Conditional Release Regulations (SOR-92620), p. 2.

⁴⁹ See United Kingdom, Prison Service Order, *Offender Assessment and Sentence Management: OASys*, Order No. 2205, Issue No. 228 (April 2005).

⁵⁰ Correctional Service of Canada, Acts, Regulations and Policy, Commissioner’s Directive, “Security Classification and Penitentiary Placement”.

COUNTRY EXAMPLES (*continued*)**Japan****Risk assessment tool based on risk, need and responsivity principles**

The Ministry of Justice of Japan has developed a general risk assessment tool for inmates (called “G-Tool”) to classify prisoners for appropriate treatment in accordance with risk, need and responsivity principles and started to implement it in 2017.

The G-Tool is dedicated to prisoner classification and was developed through large-scale follow-up surveys focusing on predictors that may affect recidivism, such as the “Central Eight”. The G-Tool is used for all prisoners during the assessment at the beginning of a sentence.

The current version of the G-Tool examines the reoffending risk on the basis of such factors as criminal records, the frequency of imprisonment and the nature of crimes, and estimates the probability of reimprisonment (using four grades, ranging from “very low” to “very high”) within two years of release from an institution.

The factors used to estimate the probability of reoffending are different for male and female prisoners. The G-Tool for men comprises 18 factors, while the version for women has 16.

The result of assessment using the G-Tool can be basic data to decide the prisoners’ status of criminality and to select those who can follow specific correctional programmes for their rehabilitation.

The G-Tool is a second-generation assessment tool, and the Ministry of Justice is currently working on the revision towards a third generation.

Source: Correction Bureau, Ministry of Justice, Japan.

With respect to risk assessment for classification purposes, it should be noted that, beyond the assessment of risk for traditional forms of institutional misconduct or adjustment (e.g., aggression towards others or destruction of property) and likelihood of escape, there has recently also been an increased concern regarding the risk of individuals continuing their involvement in criminal activity while incarcerated, with the aid of technology. Specifically, similar to the impact that technology has had with respect to emerging trends in criminal behaviour (e.g., increases in cyberenabled and transnational crimes), these advancements can also enable certain prisoners to continue their involvement in criminal activity while incarcerated through smuggled contraband, such as very small cellular devices that facilitate unauthorized contact with those outside of prison. For example, prisoners can use a mobile phone to continue drug dealing or organized crime operations, threaten public officials, intimidate witnesses and even coordinate murders. There are already jurisdictions that are modifying their approach to risk assessment for classification purposes to ensure that such risk factors are considered in assessment and classification decisions.

Finally, it is important to note that, while well-implemented and evidence-based assessment and classification processes and tools greatly assist prison administrations in increasing the accuracy of correctional decisions related to risk management, there is no tool that provides complete precision or certainty in terms of predicting future behaviour. Specifically, risk tools are aimed at identifying the probability or likelihood of a certain event occurring, for example, a prisoner harming himself or herself or prison staff, or a prisoner attempting to escape.

However, as discussed in chapter III with respect to research into prisoner classification, existing evidence strongly supports the efficacy of such a probabilistic approach in comparison with any unstructured decision-making related to risk.

Assessment of rehabilitation and social reintegration needs

Nelson Mandela Rules

Basic principles

Individual treatment needs

Rule 4.

1. The purposes of a sentence of imprisonment or similar measures deprivative of a person's liberty are primarily to protect society against crime and to reduce recidivism. Those purposes can be achieved only if the period of imprisonment is used to ensure, so far as possible, the reintegration of such persons into society upon release so that they can lead a law-abiding and self-supporting life.

2. To this end, prison administrations and other competent authorities should offer education, vocational training and work, as well as other forms of assistance that are appropriate and available, including those of a remedial, moral, spiritual, social and health- and sports-based nature. All such programmes, activities and services should be delivered in line with the individual treatment needs of prisoners.

Special needs

Rule 2

2. In order for the principle of non-discrimination to be put into practice, prison administrations shall take account of the individual needs of prisoners, in particular the most vulnerable categories in prison settings. Measures to protect and promote the rights of prisoners with special needs are required and shall not be regarded as discriminatory.

Prisoners with mental disabilities and/or health conditions

Rule 109

2. If necessary, other prisoners with mental disabilities and/or health conditions can be observed and treated in specialized facilities under the supervision of qualified health-care professionals.

Decisions regarding prisoner classification and placement should also be informed by the needs of the offender, as they relate to both physical and mental health-care needs and rehabilitation and social reintegration needs.

Physical and mental health-care and other special needs identified during the assessment of immediate needs upon admission should be further explored by qualified health-care professionals to assist in determining the most appropriate placement for the prisoner to address those needs. In addition, as not all physical and mental health-care needs may be apparent shortly after admission, prisoners should have ongoing access to health-care services to identify

any need areas that emerge during the course of a prison sentence in order to ensure that those are addressed in both classification and reclassification decisions.

Rehabilitation and social reintegration needs should be addressed by focusing on those areas that are related to a prisoner's involvement in criminal behaviour. As noted above, the risk-need-responsivity model described by Andrews, Bonta and Hoge establishes that the focus of correctional intervention should be on criminogenic needs and dynamic risk factors that are directly linked to criminal behaviour. Unlike static risk factors, which are beyond the reach of treatment interventions, dynamic risk factors are changeable and may be influenced by the appropriate interventions. Research grounded in the risk-need-responsivity model has identified eight major predictors of criminal behaviour, often referred to as the "Central Eight".⁵¹ Of those factors, one is static (history of antisocial behaviour), but the remaining seven (antisocial personality pattern, pro-criminal attitudes, social support for crime and pro-criminal associates, substance use disorders, family and marital relationships, school and work, and prosocial recreational and leisure activities) are important targets for intervention. In order to identify possible interventions required, the assessment of these need areas should determine whether they represent an asset that will facilitate reintegration or require no immediate need for improvement (i.e., the factor is not necessarily an asset, but is not affecting involvement in criminal activity and functioning in the community), or are a low, moderate or strong need. Areas identified as moderate or strong need are the most appropriate treatment targets. Table 2 below contains a description of the "Central Eight" major criminogenic needs, indicators for each area and intervention targets to address deficits.

Table 2. Major criminogenic risk and needs factors: indicators and intervention goals^a

<i>Major dynamic risk and needs factor</i>	<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Intervention goals</i>
History of antisocial behaviour	Early involvement in antisocial activities. Specific indicators include being arrested at a young age, multiple prior offences and rule violations while on conditional release	As a static factor, past behaviour cannot be changed. However, appropriate targets include the development of new non-criminal goals and behaviours (in particular to address high-risk situations) and building beliefs that support a prosocial lifestyle
Antisocial personality pattern	Impulsive, adventurous, pleasure-seeking, restlessly aggressive, irritable, callous disregard for others	Build self-management, anger management and problem-solving skills
Pro-criminal attitudes	Attitudes, beliefs, values and rationalizations that support involvement in criminal behaviour. Specific indicators include negative attitudes towards the law and justice	Counter rationalizations with prosocial attitudes, reduce antisocial thinking through building and practicing prosocial thoughts and beliefs, build up a prosocial identity

⁵¹James Bonta and Donald A. Andrews, *The Psychology of Criminal Conduct*, 6th ed. (New York, Routledge, 2017).

Pro-criminal attitudes (<i>continued</i>)	system, identification with criminals and criminal organizations, beliefs that crime will yield rewards, and rationalizations that support criminal behaviour (e.g., “the victim deserved it”)	
Social support for crime and pro-criminal associates	Criminal friends and associates, isolation from prosocial influences	Reduce involvement with pro-criminal friends and associates and increase association with anticriminal and prosocial others
Substance use disorders	Abuse of alcohol or drugs (excluding tobacco). Current problems with substance misuse indicate a higher risk and need than past problems	Reduce substance misuse through intervention, reduce the interpersonal supports that promote substance misuse behaviour, enhance alternatives to substance use
Family and marital relationships	Poor-quality marital and family relationships	Reduce conflict, build and practice positive relationship skills
School and work	Poor performance, low levels of reward and satisfaction in education and work domains	Enhance work and study skills, build skills to promote positive interpersonal relationships within the context of work and school, enhance rewards and satisfaction
Prosocial recreational and leisure activities	Lack of involvement in, and satisfaction from, prosocial recreational and leisure activities	Enhance involvement, participation and satisfaction in prosocial recreational and leisure activities, teach prosocial hobbies and sports

^aAdapted from table 2.5 in Donald A. Andrews and James Bonta, *The Psychology of Criminal Conduct*, 5th ed. (New Providence, New Jersey, Anderson Publishing, 2010). See also Nathan James, “Risk needs assessment in the Federal Prison System”, R44087 (Washington D.C., Congressional Research Service, July 2018), pp. 6–7.

The assessment of dynamic risk and criminogenic needs is a key component of the admission process in several jurisdictions. For example, in the Correctional Service of Canada, the Dynamic Factors Identification and Analysis – Revised is a well-researched tool that has been used for prisoner intake assessment since 1994, the current revised version dating back to 2009. A large-scale study of the reliability and validity of the tool was completed in 2017. Using a large sample of Canadian federal prisoners, it was found that both the overall ratings and the individual domain ratings of the Dynamic Factors Identification and Analysis – Revised were significantly associated with outcomes for all prisoner groups, including women and aboriginal men. The results indicated that the tool was useful for case management, to profile the need areas of individual prisoners and federal prisoners as a whole, as well as for the prediction of risk

post-release.⁵² In Norway, a needs and resources assessment tool has been developed for case management in the correctional population. Influenced by both the risk-need-responsivity and good lives models, the tool assesses criminogenic factors as well as others that the individual deems to have been determining in his or her criminal activity. In addition, resources, competencies and possibilities for positive contributions are also assessed.⁵³

Responsivity factors

Responsivity factors in the risk-need-responsivity model refer to specific characteristics of the prisoner that may affect participation in interventions and successful programme outcomes. Some of these characteristics and issues are discussed in the section on prisoners with special needs. In summary, during the initial assessment, it is important to identify and document these considerations, which can include the following issues:

- Language barriers that interfere with communication with staff and other prisoners, as well as participation in education, vocational training, work or other interventions
- Literacy deficits (basic reading and writing skills)
- Problems with attention and concentration
- Intellectual disabilities
- Physical disabilities
- Chronic mental health issues
- Any other issues that would interfere with institutional adjustment or participation in programmes or interventions

Many of these concerns may become apparent through the assessment process upon admission or may be identified through supplementary assessments, which are discussed below.

In addition, it is important to evaluate other personal factors that might have an impact on the prisoners' adjustment, participation in their sentence plan and social reintegration. This includes such issues as their willingness and ability to engage in interventions and their motivation to address their criminogenic need areas.

Supplementary assessments

Supplementary assessments are designed to obtain additional information regarding a prisoner's risk and programming needs to facilitate decisions concerning placement and specific interventions required. These are not intended to replace the risk and needs assessment that should be conducted on all prisoners upon admission, but rather to provide a more complete understanding of the case. The following list identifies some of the main specialized supplementary assessments that can provide valuable information for allocation and programming decisions:

- *Sexual offending.* Sexual aggression is a complex behaviour. Perpetrators of sex crimes often differ in their personal and criminal history, the circumstances around their

⁵²Lynn A. Stewart, and others, *Reliability and Validity of the Dynamic Factors Identification and Analysis: Revised*, Research Report, No. R-395 (Ottawa, Correctional Service of Canada, 2017).

⁵³Gerhard Ploeg "BRIK: Correctional Service of Norway – needs and resources assessment tool", presentation at the European Organization of Prisons and Correctional Services Risk and Needs Assessment Workshop, Brussels, 12–13 October 2017.

offending, the age of their victims, gender preferences, attitudes and beliefs that support their deviant behaviour and the degree to which they use force or cause physical harm to their victims. Different types of sexual offenders also vary in the risk of reoffending and response to treatment.⁵⁴ Several actuarial and structured professional judgment tools have been developed specifically for the assessment of people convicted of sexual offences. Static-99⁵⁵ is a 10-item static risk instrument for use with adult male sexual offenders who are at least 18 years of age at the time of community release, to identify risk of sexual recidivism. It is the most commonly used actuarial tool for sexual offenders. In 2012, the age item for the scale was updated, creating Static-99R.⁵⁶

In contrast to Static-99 and Static-99R, other tools that have been developed for this group, such as STABLE-2007,⁵⁷ focus on dynamic risk factors. These instruments can assist those managing sexual offender cases by identifying the specific risk of sexual reoffending and inform decisions regarding treatment and community supervision. Structured professional judgment tools that have been developed for the assessment and management of individuals considered to pose a risk of sexual violence include the Risk for Sexual Violence Protocol.⁵⁸

- *Domestic and intimate partner violence.* The primary goal of specialized assessments for perpetrators of domestic violence is to prevent future harm against an intimate partner. This is typically accomplished through risk management strategies, including monitoring, treatment and supervision. A number of risk factors for intimate partner violence have been identified in research literature. This includes a history of violent or abusive behaviour towards family members and intimate partners, relationship problems and attitudes that support violence towards women.⁵⁹ Examples of instruments that incorporate such risk factors into their assessments for men include the Spousal Assault Risk Assessment Guide,⁶⁰ the Domestic Violence Screening Inventory,⁶¹ and the Ontario Domestic Assault Risk Assessment.⁶²

Given that most of the research in the forensic field is still devoted to men samples, the theoretical knowledge of factors contributing to domestic and intimate partner violence in men is not directly applicable to women, in particular as research has demonstrated that the nature of violence and violence risk factors differ according to gender. Notably,

⁵⁴See Ralph Serin and others, R “A model for a clinically-informed risk assessment strategy for sex offenders” (Ottawa, Correctional Service of Canada, May 1997); Janice K. Marques and others, “Effects of cognitive-behavioral treatment on sex offender recidivism: preliminary results of a longitudinal study”, *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, vol. 21, No. 1 (March 1994), pp. 28–54.

⁵⁵R. Karl Hanson and David Thornton, “Improving risk assessments for sex offenders: a comparison of three actuarial scales”, *Law and Human Behavior*, vol. 24, No. 1 (February 2000), pp. 119–136.

⁵⁶Amy Phenix and others, *Static-99R Coding Rules*, Research Report, No.R012 (Ottawa, Public Safety Canada, 2016).

⁵⁷R. Karl Hanson and others, *Assessing the Risk of Sexual Offenders on Community Supervision: The Dynamic Supervision Project* (Ottawa, Public Safety Canada, 2007).

⁵⁸Stephen David Hart and others, *The Risk for Sexual Violence Protocol (RSVP): Structured Professional Guidelines for Assessing Risk of Sexual Violence*, (Burnaby, Canada, Mental Health, Law and Policy Institute, Simon Fraser University, 2003).

⁵⁹Melissa Northcott, *Intimate Partner Violence Risk Assessment Tools: A Review* (Ottawa, Research and Statistics Division, Department of Justice Canada, 2012).

⁶⁰P. Randall Kropp and others, *Spousal Assault Risk Assessment Guide* (New York, Multi-Health Systems, 1999).

⁶¹Kirk R. Williams and Stephen R. Grant, “Empirically examining the risk of intimate partner violence: the Revised Domestic Violence Screening Instrument (DVSI-R)”, *Public Health Reports*, vol. 121 (July/August 2006), pp. 400–408.

⁶²N. Zoe Hilton, Grant T. Harris and Marnie E. Rice, *Risk Assessment for Domestically Violent Men. Tools for Criminal Justice, Offender Intervention and Victim Services* (Washington D.C., American Psychological Association, 2010), pp. 151–170.

where women are imprisoned for violent offences, there is very often a background of domestic or sexual abuse, which, in many cases, motivates the crime.⁶³ Consequently, existing structured risk assessment instruments for violence, including domestic and intimate partner violence, are not sufficiently suitable for use with women. This has been the impetus for the development of such tools as the Female Additional Manual,⁶⁴ described in more detail under “Assessment tools for women” below.

- *Educational and vocational assessments.* International research has demonstrated that there is a strong link between education and employment on the one hand, and involvement in criminal behaviour on the other.⁶⁵ As noted above, these factors are included in the “Central Eight” dynamic risk factors in the risk-need-responsivity model.

Prisons should provide an opportunity for individuals to raise their educational level and obtain vocational skills that will assist them in obtaining gainful employment upon release, thereby reducing their risk of reinvolved in criminal activity. In order to identify effectively the prisoner’s current level of educational functioning (including literacy), diagnose any possible learning challenges and determine what kind of vocational training the person may benefit from, specialized assessments to verify educational levels and current employment skills can be very helpful.⁶⁶

- *Substance use disorders.* This is another of the “Central Eight” criminogenic need factors, and the link between substance use disorders and criminal behaviour has been consistently confirmed by research.⁶⁷ In addition to the association with offending, individuals with substance use disorders may have issues adjusting to incarceration and continue drug-seeking behaviour while in prison. The presence of contraband drugs in prison settings worldwide is well established and is linked with adverse health consequences for prisoners and violence related to the underground drug trade.⁶⁸ In planning interventions for prisoners related to substance misuse, it is helpful to have more than a superficial understanding of their issues, including the severity of their problem, the link between their substance use disorders and involvement in crime, their patterns of use and the drugs that they consume. Providing targeted intervention may not only assist in social rehabilitation for release purposes but may also improve health and adjustment outcomes in prison. Numerous prison administrations provide opioid substitution therapy to prisoners assessed as requiring such intervention, which reduces the risk of intravenous drug use, needle-sharing and infectious disease transmission.⁶⁹

⁶³For a detailed discussion of this issue, see Prison Reform International, “Women who kill in response to domestic violence: how do criminal justice systems respond?” (London, 2016).

⁶⁴Vivienne de Vogel and others, *Female Additional Manual: Additional Guidelines to the HCR-20⁰³ for Assessing Risk for Violence in Women* (Utrecht, Netherlands, Van der Hoeven Kliniek: Netherlands, 2014).

⁶⁵Paolo Buonanno and Leone Leonida, “Education and crime: evidence from Italian regions”, *Applied Economics Letters*, vol. 13, No. 11 (2006), pp. 709–713; Caroline Wolf Harlow, “Education and correctional Populations” (Washington D.C., Department of Justice of the United States, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2003); Stephen Machin, Olivier Marie and Sunčica Vujić, “The crime reducing effect of education”, *Economic Journal*, vol. 121, No. 552 (May 2011), pp. 463–484; Steven Raphael, Rudolf Winter-Ebmer, “Identifying the effect of unemployment on crime”, *Journal of Law and Economics*, vol. 44, No. 1 (April 2001), pp. 259–283.

⁶⁶See UNODC, *Roadmap for the Development of Prison-based Rehabilitation Programmes*, Criminal Justice Handbook Series (Vienna, 2017), especially chapters 3 and 4 on educational and vocational programmes in prisons.

⁶⁷Seena Fazel, Isabel A. Yoon and Adrian J. Hayes, “Substance use disorders in prisoners: an updated systematic review and meta-regression analysis in recently incarcerated men and women”, *Addiction*, vol. 112, No. 10 (October 2017), pp. 1725–1739.

⁶⁸Andrew O’Hagan and Rachel Hardwick, “Behind bars: the truth about drugs in prisons”, *Forensic Research and Criminal International Journal*, vol. 5, No. 3 (September 2017).

⁶⁹Sarah Larney, “Does opioid substitution treatment in prisons reduce injecting-related HIV risk behaviours? A systematic review”, *Addiction*, vol. 105, No. 2 (February 2010), p. 216–223.

- *Mental health (psychological or psychiatric)*. As described under “Step 1: assessment of immediate needs and provision of information to the prisoner” above, all prisoners should be screened for mental health issues, including the risk of suicide and self-harm, as soon as possible upon admission. However, in order to properly determine the best setting and course of treatment for those with mental health conditions, it is important that they undergo a more in-depth assessment with a trained mental health professionals such as a psychologist or a psychiatrist, to determine the nature of their condition, including a diagnosis, if possible, the level of functional impairment and an appropriate course of treatment, which may necessitate placement in a mental health unit or facility, the administration of psychotropic medications and psychological interventions.
- *Violent extremist prisoners*. The topic of the assessment, classification and placement of violent extremist prisoners has gained increasing prominence over the past two decades as many countries have faced an increased influx of prisoners considered to be members of, or associated with, violent extremist groups. Furthermore, concerns have been raised regarding the effectiveness of traditional assessment and classification approaches and interventions for violent extremists in prisons. To date, a limited number of tools have been developed to assess violent extremist prisoners. The most prominent among these are the Violent Extremist Risk Assessment – Revised⁷⁰ and the Extremism Risk Guidelines.⁷¹ While both tools may provide useful guidance and information regarding extremist violence, they have only been used with a limited number of prisoners in certain jurisdictions and contexts, and their validity in other jurisdictions may therefore be limited. In addition, in some settings with limited resources and a large number of violent extremist prisoners, it may not be feasible to use instruments that are as comprehensive as those.⁷² Some jurisdictions have developed more basic and simple assessment tools for use with such prisoners.⁷³

COUNTRY EXAMPLE

Supplementary assessments in Singapore

In Singapore, when offenders are admitted to the correctional system, they are administered a range of offender risk and needs assessments, such as the screening of the general risk of committing a criminal offence and specific risk assessments for violence or sexual reoffending. The Singapore Prison Service uses externally developed standardized tools, such as the Level of Service/Case Management Inventory and the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory, the Historical Clinical Risk-20 Version 3 for violent offenders and Static-99 and the Sexual Violence Risk-20 for sex offenders. In addition, specific screening tools have been developed internally by the Service to enhance operations and inform resource allocation for offenders. Offenders’ risks and needs are not only assessed during admission but also updated through regular touchpoints and interviews carried out by prison officers throughout the sentence.

Source: Singapore Prison Service.

⁷⁰ Elaine Pressman and others, “Violence Extremism Risk Assessment: version-2 Revised (VERA-2R): a structured professional judgement approach, Nederlands Instituut voor Forensische Psychiatrie en Psychologie, 2016.

⁷¹ Monica Lloyd and Christopher Dean, C. (“The development of structured guidelines for assessing risk in extremist offenders”, *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management*, vol. 2, No. 1,(2015), pp. 40–52.

⁷² For more information, refer to the UNODC *Handbook on the Management of Violent Extremist Prisoners and the Prevention of Radicalization to Violence in Prisons*, Criminal Justice Handbook Series (Vienna, 2016).

⁷³ Atta Barkindo, Shane and Bryans, “De-radicalising prisoners in Nigeria: developing a basic prison-based deradicalization programme”, *Journal for Deradicalization*, No. 7, (2016).

Assessment tools for women

As described earlier, most prisoner classification tools have been developed using samples of adult male prisoners. Therefore, their applicability to unique groups, such as women, is limited. For example, research has demonstrated that women pose less risk with respect to prison and community security in comparison with men and that many factors that predict risk in men are not necessarily the same for women.⁷⁴ Consequently, they require instruments and approaches that reflect their unique characteristics and prevent overclassification⁷⁵ or the excessive use of overrides.

Examples of tools and approaches designed specifically for women in prison include the Women's Risk Need Assessment.⁷⁶ This tool involves a case file review, semi-structured interviews and a case management treatment plan that are tailored to women at various stages of involvement in the criminal justice system, including probation, custodial settings and pre-release.⁷⁷ The security reclassification scale for women⁷⁸, developed and implemented by the Correctional Service of Canada in 2005, is an actuarial tool used in conjunction with professional judgment to determine security reclassification for women after initial placement. Recent research has demonstrated that the security reclassification scale for women continues to be a generally reliable and valid classification tool for federally sentenced women in Canada.⁷⁹ The Female Additional Manual, developed in the Netherlands, is an addition to the widely used violence risk assessment tools Historical Clinical Risk-20 and Historical Clinical Risk-20 Version 3 for the assessment of violence risk in women. The goal of the Female Additional Manual is to provide a clinically relevant and useful additional tool for the accurate, gender-sensitive assessment of violence risk, and it offers concrete guidelines for risk management in women.⁸⁰

Step 4: using assessment results for prison placement decisions and case or sentence management planning

The link between assessment and decision-making related to classification, allocation and participation in programmes or other reintegration activities is dependent upon the development of an individualized case or sentence management plan that clearly articulates the prisoner's risks and needs, how these will be managed in a correctional environment and what interventions are recommended to promote the prisoner's social reintegration.

⁷⁴Emily M. Wright, Emily J. Salisbury and Patricia Van Voorhis, "Predicting the prison misconducts of women offenders: the importance of gender-responsive needs", *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*, vol. 23, No. 4 (November 2017), pp. 310–340.

⁷⁵Kathryn Ann Farr, „Classification for female inmates: moving forward”, *Crime and Delinquency*, vol. 46, No. 1 (January 2000), pp. 3–17.

⁷⁶For information on these instruments developed by the National Institute of Corrections of the United States and researchers Patricia Van Voorhis, Emily J. Salisbury, Emily M. Wright and Ashley Bauman from the University of Cincinnati, see www.unlv.edu/ccjp/assessment/wrna.

⁷⁷Breanna Boppre and Emily Salisbury, "The women's risk needs assessment: putting gender at the forefront of actuarial risk assessment", *Penal Reform International*, 12 April 2016.

⁷⁸Kelley Blanchette and Kelly Taylor, *Development and Field Test of a Gender-Informed Security Reclassification Scale for Women Offenders*, Research Report, No. R-167 (Ottawa, Correctional Service of Canada, 2005).

⁷⁹Jennie Thompson and Kaitlyn Wardrop, "An assessment of the reliability and validity of the Security Reclassification Scale for Women (SRSW)," Research Report, No. R-412 (Ottawa, Correctional Service of Canada, 2018).

⁸⁰De Vogel and others, *Female Additional Manual*. See also Vivienne de Vogel, Mieke Bruggeman and Marike Lancel, "Gender-sensitive violence risk assessment: predictive validity of six tools in female forensic psychiatric patients", *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, vol. 46, No. 4 (January 2019), pp. 528–549; Vivienne de Vogel, Miriam Wijkman and Michiel de Vries Robbé, "Violence risk assessment in women: the value of the Female Additional Manual", in *Violent and Sexual Offenders: Assessment, Treatment and Management*, 2nd ed., Jane L. Ireland, Carol A. Ireland and Philip Birch, eds. (London Routledge, 2018), pp. 182–200.

In many jurisdictions, decisions regarding security placement will be made through scoring instructions or guidelines for the tools or methods used. For example, actuarial instruments normally have several items and a point or scoring system with cut-off criteria that categorize prisoners into different security levels. For systems that use a structured professional judgment approach, there is typically a checklist and an interview protocol provided with guidelines regarding how the information obtained should be used to determine risk for security classification. In either approach, there may also be discretionary and non-discretionary (mandatory) criteria for overriding or modifying the categorization determined by the tool. In all cases, the rationale for overall risk and security designation should be clearly articulated and any overrides should be justified in writing with additional oversight and approval, in particular if the modification is to a higher level of security.

In addition to a description of the assessment of risks and related recommendations regarding security placement, an analysis of the prisoners' criminogenic need areas should also be summarized and linked to specific programmes and interventions that are recommended for completion during the course of their sentence in order to promote social reintegration. This will obviously depend on the services and resources available in a jurisdiction and may include such recommendations as educational upgrading, employment activities and participation in specific programmes or interventions.

In all but exceptional circumstances, the case or sentence plan should be developed in consultation with the prisoners in order to engage them in the identification of short- and long-term objectives relating to their cases and how to work towards achieving those objectives. The prisoners' cooperation and likelihood of successful completion of their sentence plans and objectives will increase to the extent that they are involved in the development of their plans, as opposed to being merely informed of what their plans will contain.

In general, case or sentence plans that are concise, concrete and realistic are likely to be the most effective in providing prisoners with an opportunity to address factors related to offending and reduce risk. The objectives identified should follow the "SMART"⁸¹ principles, that is, they should be:

- *Specific*: linked directly to the prisoner's assessed criminogenic needs
- *Measurable*: prisoners, case managers and others can easily assess progress against goals
- *Achievable*: prisoners have an opportunity to achieve success in reaching their objectives. Goals that are unattainable will be demotivating and possibly reinforce past failures. For many prisoners, even small steps towards goals can be a notable achievement
- *Realistic*: what is realistically possible for prisoners to accomplish given their abilities and their individual contexts
- *Time-bound*: timelines are established for the accomplishment of each goal

It is important that case or sentence plans do not just contain a list of interventions, programmes or activities that the prisoner may be suitable for or that are available, but that they comprise activities that are directly related to the outcomes or objectives to be achieved, based on the assessment of risks and offending-related needs. Actions and objectives should be prioritized according to the level of risk that the offenders pose and the areas that are most strongly

⁸¹ George T. Doran, "There's a S.M.A.R.T. way to write management's goals and objectives". *Management Review*, vol. 70, No. 11 (November 1981), pp. 35–36.

associated with their offending. They should also balance personal risk factors, such as impulsivity, substance use disorders or pro-criminal attitudes, with social risk factors, such as housing, employment and community ties.⁸²

Furthermore, identified objectives and activities should be sequenced in a logical manner, according to the priorities identified through the assessment upon admission and in consideration of any key dates, such as those for parole eligibility and review. In particular, it may be important to offer services that stabilize and motivate an individual before providing an intervention targeted at reducing their risk of reoffending or causing serious harm. For example, prisoners with a chronic substance use disorder or mental health problem may need to address this before being in a position to address other factors related to their offending behaviour. Appropriate sequencing also involves ensuring sufficient continuity of services and support, in particular with respect to the transition from custody to community.⁸³

Annex IV provides an example outline of a case or sentence management plan appropriate for convicted prisoners.

2. Reclassification during a custodial sentence

Nelson Mandela Rules

Guiding principles

Rule 87

Before the completion of the sentence, it is desirable that the necessary steps be taken to ensure for the prisoner a gradual return to life in society. This may be achieved, depending on the case, by a pre-release regime organized in the same prison or in another appropriate institution, or by release on trial under some kind of supervision which must not be entrusted to the police but should be combined with effective social aid.

European Prison Rules

Security

Rule 51.5

The level of security necessary shall be reviewed at regular intervals throughout a person's imprisonment.

Implementation of the regime for sentenced prisoners

Rule 104.2

There shall be procedures for establishing and regularly reviewing individual sentence plans for prisoners after the consideration of appropriate reports, full consultations among the relevant staff and with the prisoners concerned who shall be involved as far as is practicable.

⁸²United Kingdom, National Offender Management Service, "Sentence planning" (February 2015), sect. 2.8.

⁸³Ibid.

As noted above, the reclassification of prisoners is a process separate from the initial classification and placement and requires an examination of other factors relevant to the individual cases, in particular their behaviour during their current sentence and their progress against the objectives identified in their case or sentence plan, as well as the time remaining in their sentence. The aim should be to move prisoners progressively to less restrictive settings through periodic reassessments of risks and needs, with continued consideration of institutional adjustment factors, escape risks and public safety risks. It is important that the tools and processes used in classification reviews for prisoners be dynamic and sensitive to changes to risk status over time.

The reassessment and reclassification process is aided by a clear and well-structured case or sentence plan developed upon admission to the prison system, as well as policies and procedures that outline the intervals for periodic case reviews and the identification of the person responsible for conducting such reassessments. In addition, it is important that a prisoner's classification and case plan be reviewed whenever there is a significant change or event that has an impact on the risk posed by the individual (e.g., a significant incident in the prison or the identification of incompatible prisoners). An example outline of an assessment for reclassification purposes is provided in annex V.

COUNTRY EXAMPLE: RECLASSIFICATION OF PRISONERS

Correctional Service of Canada

Commissioner's Directive 710-6 of the Correctional Service of Canada outlines the policy and process related to security classification reviews of Canadian federal offenders. It provides that a review is to be completed at least every two years for prisoners classified at maximum- or medium-security level. In the case of aboriginal inmates, a review is to be completed within 30 days of the individual's successful completion of a main programme. The security reclassification scale is used for male prisoners and the security reclassification scale for women for female prisoners. The results of these actuarial tools, as well as factors related to institutional adjustment, escape risk and public safety, are considered in the security reclassification recommendation. A review of the offender's security classification is completed before making a recommendation for any decision, including transfers, temporary absences, work releases or parole.

Source: Correctional Service of Canada.

3. Release planning and community supervision

The ongoing reassessment of prisoners and the updating of their sentence or case management plan with respect to progress against their criminogenic need areas are key elements in determining the readiness of prisoners for early or conditional release and the identification of risk management strategies for those who are supervised in the community for part of their sentence. Whereas assessments for classification and reclassification purposes focus both on risk to safety and security in the prison setting and on risk to the community in the event of an escape, the primary focus of pre-release risk assessments is on public safety with respect to the risk of recidivism. Once the risk of reoffending has been estimated in consideration of the progress that the prisoners have made during the course of their custodial sentence, interventions and monitoring techniques that are required in the community to address any areas associated with

ongoing risk to reoffend are identified. This can include restrictions on the prisoners' movements and actions (e.g., the requirement to live in a certain location or curfews), as well as their commitment to participating in constructive activities, such as jobs and programmes. For example, if a lack of employment opportunities was identified during the assessment and classification process as an area contributing to the prisoner's involvement with criminal activity, strategies and interventions to address this need area would have been identified and, hopefully, as a result, the prisoner would have developed job skills through work programmes while in prison. For release planning purposes, it would be important to determine, with the prisoners, how those skills can be translated into obtaining actual employment upon release and to assist them with this. Consistent with the individualized assessment approach that should be present throughout the sentence, the recognition is that each prisoner has different needs and problems and, therefore, each release plan is different. The plan should focus on the specific issues in each prisoner's life that contributed to his or her involvement in crime and draw on a wide network of community services and support to assist the prisoner in addressing those issues.

COUNTRY EXAMPLE: INITIATIVES TO ASSIST IN THE REINTEGRATION OF PRISONERS INTO THE COMMUNITY

Yellow Ribbon Campaign in Singapore

The Yellow Ribbon Project is a national public engagement campaign in Singapore aimed at changing society's mindset in giving ex-offenders a second chance in life. The community initiative aims to create awareness of the need to give second chances to ex-offenders, generate acceptance of ex-offenders and their families in the community and inspire community action to support their rehabilitation and reintegration into society. The initiative was started in 2004 by the Community Action for the Rehabilitation of Ex-Offenders Network, and the former President of Singapore, the late Sellapan Ramanathan Nathan, launched the campaign at a charity concert.

Since 2004:

- More than 1,200 volunteers have pledged their continued support for aftercare and Yellow Ribbon Project events
- More than 422,664 members of the community have participated in Yellow Ribbon Project events and activities
- More than 2,513 community partners have stepped forward to support the various Yellow Ribbon Project activities and events

A public perception survey conducted in 2018 demonstrated that 86.6 per cent of the 3,014 respondents surveyed were aware of the Yellow Ribbon Project objectives, which indicates that the community is aware of the reintegration challenges faced by ex-offenders and the need to reduce their stigmatization.

Apart from social support, employment assistance is crucial in the ex-offenders' rehabilitation. The Singapore Corporation of Rehabilitative Enterprises works closely with the Singapore Prison Service to enhance employment opportunities for prisoners and ex-offenders. In support of the campaign effectiveness in raising awareness of the importance of giving second chances to ex-offenders, there were 5,307 employers registered with the Singapore Corporation of Rehabilitative Enterprises job bank in 2018, an increase from 5,093 employers in 2016. In addition, 96 per cent of prisoners who sought assistance for employment placement in 2018 secured employment before release.

Source: Singapore Prison Service.

With respect to monitoring an individual's progress in a community setting while on probation or conditional release, a tool that is widely used for community supervision purposes is the Level of Service Inventory – Revised. The Inventory is an actuarial classification system that measures 54 risk and need factors in 10 criminogenic domains identified to inform correctional decisions of custody, supervision and service provision.⁸⁴ There are variants for young people and adult offender populations, self-reporting and screening versions, and adaptations for use in specific settings and jurisdictions, including a case management version. The domains measured by the Inventory include criminal history, education and employment, financial situation, family and marital relationships, accommodation, leisure and recreation, companions, alcohol and drug use, emotional and mental health, and attitudes and orientations. The tool is administered through a structured interview between the assessor and the offender, with the recommendation that supporting documentation be collected from family members, employers, case files and other relevant sources, as needed. Intended for use by a range of criminal justice personnel, including mental health professionals and parole and probation officers, the Inventory scales have become the most frequently used risk assessment tools in the world.⁸⁵ A large-scale research study examining 30 years of research on the Inventory instruments confirmed the reliability and validity of the tool but identified geographic variation, with better results for Canadian and American samples than for those outside North America.⁸⁶ It should be noted that some jurisdictions also use Inventory instruments to assist in making decisions about security classification.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Mark E. Olver, Keira C. Stockdale and Stephen J. Wormith, "Thirty years of research on the Level of Service Scales: a meta-analytic examination of predictive accuracy and sources of variability", *Psychological Assessment*, vol. 26, No. 1 (2014), pp. 156–176.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

V. Development and implementation of a prisoner classification system

1. Project planning phases

In addition to understanding the elements and sequence of an effective prisoner classification system, it is also critical for prison administrations wanting to implement or modify an existing regime to develop a sound and broadly supported plan for how they will achieve that objective.

As described by Austin and Hardyman,⁸⁷ prison administrations aiming to develop or modify a classification system can benefit from following a model that includes four phases, namely, mobilization, appraisal,⁸⁸ planning and implementation. While it is recognized that full adherence to such a model may not be possible in all jurisdictions, owing to resource, infrastructure and contextual factors, an understanding of these phases and the completion of as many steps as practically possible when developing a new or revised prisoner assessment and classification approach will be beneficial and contribute to successful implementation. The present chapter is therefore intended as a guidance for jurisdictions rather than a prescriptive framework in which every step needs to be completed.

Mobilization

Mobilization refers to a clear articulation of the classification issues that need to be addressed, as well as a rationale and expected objectives and outcomes of implementing a new system or modifying an existing one. Before proceeding, it is important that all levels within the organization be committed to the classification initiative. This is especially critical with respect to support both at the political level and at that of the senior levels of management responsible for the prison system, which must clearly communicate their backing for an assessment and classification approach and identify it as a deliverable for the prison service within an identified time frame. It is often very helpful to have a senior manager in the prison service act as the “champion” for the initiative. This also provides those working on the initiative with a direct line of communication to the higher ranks of the organization.

Articulating the rationale and expected objectives and outcomes of a new or modified classification system can be facilitated by the identification of a project leader and, if possible, a steering

⁸⁷James Austin and Patricia L. Hardyman, *Objective Prison Classification: A Guide for Correctional Agencies* (Washington D.C., Department of Justice of the United States, National Institute of Corrections, 2004).

⁸⁸In the model developed by Austin and Hardyman, this phase is referred to as “assessment”. However, to avoid confusion with risk and needs “assessment”, the term “appraisal” is used here instead.

committee that includes representatives from the various areas of the agency (e.g., security, case management, medical, mental health services, research, administration and information systems, training and, as required, additional internal and external stakeholders or experts). The main role of the steering committee is to assist the project leadership in identifying, overseeing and completing tasks associated with the initiative and ensuring that they are completed. This steering committee should include front-line officers and practitioners to ensure that the practicalities of implementing a classification system are considered. It is often helpful for the steering committee to include staff from the sites at which such a system will likely be piloted or tested.

The first objective of the project leadership and steering committee should be to address the following questions, which are key considerations during the mobilization phase:

- What is the goal of the assessment and classification initiative and what are the expected outcomes? This should be documented in writing and endorsed or approved by a representative of the senior management of the prison service.
- What are the roles and responsibilities of the steering committee and who are its members? Once the committee is formed, terms of reference should be drawn up to define clearly, *inter alia*, the purpose of the committee, its membership, its roles and responsibilities, meeting frequency.
- What resources (financial and human resources) are available to support the project?

Appraisal

Appraisal is the second phase and involves a comprehensive review of the current assessment and classification system to identify both opportunities and challenges. It is essentially the process of establishing the starting point of the project. It can be completed internally under the guidance of the project leadership and steering committee or include outside experts in areas where the prison system does not currently have the required expertise. The appraisal process should include a review of existing legislation, policies and procedures regarding the admission and processing of prisoners, how placement decisions are made and documented and who is involved in and responsible for those decisions. It also benefits greatly from an understanding of the profile of the prisoner population that is being managed, in terms of demographics and characteristics that will have an impact on the classification process (e.g., the prevalence of certain kinds of crimes that may necessitate supplementary assessments or the proportion of prisoners who may require mental health assessments and services). The appraisal phase should also include on-site visits by the project leadership or selected steering committee members to various prisons that will be using the classification system and discussions with prison staff who are currently playing a role or are affected by classification decisions, as well as those who may become involved under a new or modified system. Factors described in previous sections relating to physical infrastructure, staff resources and documentation and record-keeping also need to be considered during the appraisal phase. It is important that all of those factors be realistically accounted for to ensure that the classification process developed is suitable for the resources that are available. For jurisdictions with existing classification systems, a detailed review of current classification policies and procedures should be conducted, including the quality of the existing process.

At the conclusion of the appraisal phase, a report should be prepared to summarize the information obtained on each of the issues noted above and to identify the next steps in the project planning, namely:

- How does the country's legislation affect prisoner assessment and classification activities?
- What are the current policies and practices related to prisoner classification? Who is involved in this process, and where and when does it take place?
- What information is available about the profile of the prisoner population and how might this have an impact on the development and implementation of a prisoner classification system?
- What elements are already in place in the prison system with respect to such areas as physical infrastructure, staff resources, documentation and record-keeping that can support the development and implementation of a prisoner classification and reclassification process? What additional elements are required?
- What are the key challenges to the implementation of a classification system? What are some of the potential solutions to those challenges?

Planning

Planning for the piloting and introduction, or revision, of a classification system is the following step and comprises several components. First, it is important to learn about promising and evidence-based systems, models, approaches and best practices, with a focus on those that may be applicable in the target prison context. Such information can be obtained through a review of relevant literature on the topic of classification, including the present handbook, technical assistance from an organization or individual with expertise in prisoner classification and dialogue with other jurisdictions. Regarding the third point, an important strategy for learning about different models, tools and promising approaches is to contact agencies in countries with a similar prison system that have implemented classification regimes, to obtain information not only regarding their current approach and the reason for its adoption, but also what models or tools may have considered and rejected.

The second component of the planning phase is the preparation for piloting the assessment and classification process, which involves a number of tasks, including the design of prototype instruments and a detailed manual and training programme for users, the adoption of policy and standard operating procedures⁸⁹ for how the classification process will work and the development of a pilot project plan. The proposed tools and approach should then be tested at the pilot prison or prisons for a set period of time in order to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the approach. Feedback and findings from the pilot sites should be used to make modifications to the tool and operating procedures as required before any broader implementation.

Following a successful period of piloting and the resolution of any issues that may have arisen, an action plan for a broader implementation of the assessment and classification process and tools should be developed. This plan must consider such issues as:

- Policy changes, if required, and the finalization of standardized operating procedures for the classification approach, including the assessment and classification process, sequence, staff roles and responsibilities and documentation and record-keeping, as well as file storage and security

⁸⁹ See annex VI for an example outline of standard operating procedures for prisoner assessment and classification activities.

- A communication strategy to ensure broad understanding of the initiative at all levels of the organization
- Proposed budget and resource requirements, including staff and financial resources and infrastructure and staff training requirements
- Potential automation of the system
- Ongoing data collection (using the information collected during classification to obtain an ongoing understanding of the profile of the prisoner population and identify trends to assist with such activities as resource planning)
- How the utility and effectiveness of the system will be evaluated over time to ensure long-term viability

The plan should also include goals, objectives and timelines for implementation. The action plan should be prepared in writing and submitted for review and approval by senior management.

Implementation

Implementation is the final stage of the process and should follow the approved action plan with ongoing monitoring to ensure that the roll-out is on schedule and within budget, that any challenges have been identified and addressed and that the original objectives identified during the mobilization phase are being met. In addition, a schedule of periodic reviews should be established to ensure that the classification approach continues to operate in accordance with established policies and procedures and meets the needs of both the prisoners and the prison system, in terms of the original objectives and expected outcomes identified during the planning phase.

2. Importance of ongoing monitoring and evaluation

Prisons administrations that either have existing assessment and classification regimes or have implemented new or modified prison classification systems should implement a process of review, ongoing monitoring and evaluation to determine whether the system is working as intended, confirm its predictive ability and validity and assess both its intended (e.g., improved safety and security of prisons and improved prisoner access to services matched to their needs) and unintended or unforeseen impacts (e.g., increased workloads of prison staff, higher than anticipated demand for certain programmes). In addition, it is important to assess periodically whether all policies and procedures developed to support the classification system are being followed. In the case of settings that use assessment tools, these instruments should be regularly revalidated to ensure continued predictive accuracy for the prisoner population on which it is being used. To facilitate this, a system of even basic data collection is important, as it facilitates the ability to evaluate whether the tools used in classification are achieving the desired results in terms of the appropriate placement of prisoners to minimize security incidents and escapes and, ultimately, reduce reoffending, as well as to identify opportunities for improvement.

COUNTRY EXAMPLE

Development of a new risk assessment tool in Chile to reflect a changing prisoner population

An initial classification instrument was developed by professional sociologists of the Prison Service of Chile in the 1980s with the objective of assessing and classifying the penal population according to their criminogenic characteristics. The instrument was updated in 2007 with a gender-informed approach.

In 2016, work began on a new classification instrument, owing to changes noted in the incarcerated population, including:

- An increasing percentage of young people (of 18 to 29 years of age, representing 41.32 per cent of the population)
- Frequent violent events
- The presence of groups in prisons that wanted to exert control over the penitentiaries in the country

As there was concern that those changes were having an impact on both the personal security of prisoners and institutional security, the assessment tool was modified. Variables were examined and selected through statistical data from the prisoner population, crimes, critical security events and socio-criminal profile, in addition to the experience of professionals and officials working in all the national classification offices. The new instrument shifted the paradigm that focused only on the criminogenic characteristics of the subject to an approach based on risk calculation and degree of adaptation to the prison regime. The new instrument is dynamic and measures the behaviour of the prisoner periodically. It also gives an account of the actual behaviour of prisoners and the interaction among them. The approach uses both qualitative (interviews) and quantitative data (computer-processed statistical data).

Source: Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, Chile.

Four phases in the development and implementation of a prisoner classification regime



	Key tasks and milestones
<input type="checkbox"/>	Commitment of and support at the political level and from senior officials within the prison service for the development or refinement of a prisoner classification system, including through the identification of a senior management “champion”
<input type="checkbox"/>	Clear description of the classification issues that need to be addressed
<input type="checkbox"/>	Identification and articulation of the expected objectives and outcomes of a new classification system
<input type="checkbox"/>	Identification of a project leadership
<input type="checkbox"/>	Creation of a steering committee that provides a broad representation of the organization and development of terms of reference for the committee to define clearly, inter alia, its purpose, membership, roles and responsibilities and meeting frequency
<input type="checkbox"/>	Determination of the resources available to support the project



	Key tasks and milestones
<input type="checkbox"/>	Review of existing legislation, policies and procedures regarding the admission and processing of prisoners, how placement decisions are made, how they are documented and who is involved in and ultimately responsible for classification decisions
<input type="checkbox"/>	If possible, collection of information regarding the demographics and characteristics of the prisoner population that may have an impact on the classification approach and process
<input type="checkbox"/>	Identification of the need for additional internal and external expertise to support assessment and planning activities
<input type="checkbox"/>	Conduct of site visits to prisons that will use the classification system and interview of staff who are currently involved or may become involved in the future
<input type="checkbox"/>	Assessment of how the current physical infrastructure, staff resources and method of documentation and record-keeping will have an impact on the implementation of a prisoner classification system
<input type="checkbox"/>	Preparation of a report to summarize the findings of the appraisal activities and proposed next steps



	Key tasks and milestones
<input type="checkbox"/>	Exploration of promising and evidence-based systems, models, approaches and good practices, with a focus on those that may be applicable to the national prison context (e.g., through literature reviews, contact with other jurisdictions and technical assistance from experts)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Drawing of policy and standard operating procedures required for an assessment and classification system, and development of prototype assessment instruments, including detailed directions for users and the identification of any staff training required
<input type="checkbox"/>	Development of a plan to pilot the classification process and tools, including identification of prison pilot sites and specific staff positions that will be involved in the pilot
<input type="checkbox"/>	Monitoring of the pilot and identification of any issues so that modifications to the process or tools may be made
<input type="checkbox"/>	On the basis of the pilot results, development of an action plan for broader implementation that addresses such issues as policy changes (if required), staff training, communication strategy, proposed budget, potential automation, data collection, documentation and record management, and a description of how the system will be monitored and evaluated
<input type="checkbox"/>	Submission of the action plan for review and approval by senior management



	Key tasks and milestones
<input type="checkbox"/>	Commence work on the key deliverables and milestones in the action plan, meeting established timelines and budgetary requirements
<input type="checkbox"/>	Continuation of monitoring and addressing any issues that arise during the broader roll-out of the assessment and classification system
<input type="checkbox"/>	Establishment of an evaluation framework to determine whether the policies and procedures developed to support the classification system are complied with and whether the system is producing the intended objectives (e.g., improving the safety and security of prisons), and to identify any unintended impacts (e.g., higher than anticipated demand for certain services)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Establishment of a system of ongoing monitoring and evaluation, including through data collection, to facilitate research on the prisoner population and the ongoing validation of the assessment and classification process

Glossary of key terms

Actuarial: relating to a statistical method for estimating the likelihood of a particular event occurring, such as the risk of a prisoner committing a crime in the future.

Allocation: the placement of a prisoner at a certain prison or in a certain living area and regime within a prison.

Assessment: a structured process of evaluating relevant information to assist in decision-making. In the criminal justice context, assessment refers to a systematic analysis of a prisoner using such techniques as structured tools, a review of available documentation, interviews and observations to make decisions on various issues, including classification, prison placement, participation in programmes and interventions and readiness for release into the community.

Case and sentence management plan: an individualized plan for each prisoner that is based on assessment results and clearly describes the prisoner's risks and needs, how these will be managed in a correctional environment and what interventions are recommended to promote his or her social reintegration.

Classification: the placement or allocation of prisoners to one of several custody or supervision levels (e.g., maximum, medium or minimum) in order to match the prisoners' risks and needs with correctional resources and the appropriate supervision regime.

Criminogenic need factor: evidence-based characteristic, trait, problem or issue of an individual that directly relates to his or her likelihood to reoffend.

Desistance: the process by which those who have engaged in criminal activity stop their offending behaviour, with or without interventions.

Dynamic risk factor: factor associated with a prisoner's involvement in criminal activity that is potentially changeable, such as substance misuse and negative peer association.

Overclassification: the imposition of conditions that are more stringent or the placement of prisoners in security settings higher than required to ensure the safety and security of the individual, other prisoners, prison officers and the public.

Override: a departure from the rating provided by an actuarial score when the totality of a prisoner's characteristics suggests that he or she should be supervised at a level that diverges from the recommended risk classification.

Reclassification: the process of assigning a prisoner to a different security classification as a result of a reassessment of the individual's risks and needs.

Reliability: the degree to which an assessment tool produces stable and consistent results.

Responsivity: the characteristics of a prisoner that may have an impact on his or her ability to adjust to a correctional setting or participate in rehabilitation activities.

Separation: the act of placing different categories of prisoners in different settings on the basis of the core characteristics of sex, age, criminal history and legal reason for detention.

Static risk factor: feature of a prisoner's history that predicts reoffending but is not amenable to deliberate intervention, such as age or prior criminal history.

Structured professional judgment: an approach that considers factors theoretically and empirically associated with outcomes of interest to make predictions about future behaviour. Rather than providing a specific scoring and categorization system, assessment instruments based on a structured professional judgment approach provide guidance to those completing assessments on a set number of factors to estimate risk or need levels.

Unstructured professional judgment: an informal and subjective approach based primarily on professional opinion, intuition and clinical experience where assessors have absolute discretion in terms of selecting the risk factors to consider and how to interpret the information collected to make predictions and render decisions.

Validity: in the context of assessment tools, the extent to which an instrument does what it is intended to do. Specifically, a valid prisoner classification tool will accurately assess the risk that the prisoner presents and recommend assignment to the correct security level.

Violent extremist: a person who promotes, supports, facilitates or commits acts of violence to achieve ideological, religious or political goals or social change. In some cases, a prisoner may not be in prison for an offence (or alleged offence) related to violent extremism but may nonetheless be assessed as a violent extremist according to that definition.⁹⁰

⁹⁰UNODC, *Handbook on the Management of Violent Extremist Prisoners*, p. 143.

Annexes: Additional resources

I. Example of basic prisoner intake assessment template: admission and immediate needs

Basic prisoner intake assessment template

Surname: _____ Prisoner's photograph

First name: _____

Date of birth: _____

Sex: _____

Confirmation of identity with official documentation: Yes ___ No ___

Type of official documentation: _____

Prison identification number: _____

Reception date: _____

Offence information

Current offence: _____

Status: Convicted ___ Pretrial detainee ___

For convicted prisoners (attach warrant of committal)

Length of sentence:

Previous sentence: Yes ___ No ___

Details:

For pretrial detainees (attach official documentation authorizing custody)

Charges:

Next court date:

Emergency contact information

Name:

Relationship:

Contact details:

Assessment of immediate needs

**** To be completed within 24 hours of arrival at the prison ****

Part I:-immediate security needs

Details

Risk to staff	Yes ___	No ___
Risk to other prisoners	Yes ___	No ___
Risk of being harmed by other prisoners	Yes ___	No ___
Risk to damage property	Yes ___	No ___
Risk to escape	Yes ___	No ___
Member of a security threat group	Yes ___	No ___
Previous military training	Yes ___	No ___
Foreign national	Yes ___	No ___
Transgender or other needs related to gender or sexuality	Yes ___	No ___
Other concerns	Yes ___	No ___

Sources of information:

Part II: immediate physical and mental health needs

Physical disability or limitations Yes ___ No ___

Language limitations
(requires an interpreter?) Yes ___ No ___

Difficulty with reading or writing Yes ___ No ___

Current medication Yes ___ No ___

History of suicide attempts Yes ___ No ___

History of self-harm Yes ___ No ___

Substance abuse issues Yes ___ No ___

Mental health issues Yes ___ No ___

Contagious illness
Sources of information: Yes ___ No ___

Has the prisoner been referred to
health care services for an assessment? Yes ___ No ___

Part III: other needs (in cases where the person has been taken into custody directly from the community)

1. Dependents

(a) Are there any dependents who need to be notified?

(b) Are any of them children or minors?

(c) Do any of the dependents have special needs?

(d) Have any arrangements been made for the dependents? If yes, with whom:

2. Are any of the following left unattended?

(a) Pet

(b) Motor vehicles or other property

(c) House or accommodation

(d) Other

Details:

3. Does the prisoner identify any other immediate needs? Yes ___ No ___

Details:

4. Has the prisoner been offered a phone call? Yes ___ No ___

5. Has the prisoner made a phone call? Yes ___ No ___

6. Has the prisoner been informed of:

(a) The prison regulations Yes ___ No ___

(b) His or her rights, including authorized methods of seeking information and procedures for making requests or complaints Yes ___ No ___

Prisoner's signature:

Date:

Name and title of prison officer completing the assessment

Name:

Title:

Date of completion:

Signature:

II. Other resources: prisoner classification and assessment approaches, instruments and policies and guidelines

Excellent resource material can be found in the links and references provided in footnotes throughout the handbook. Below are some additional links that may be useful with respect to classification and assessment tools, approaches, policies and guidelines.

Canada

www.csc-scc.gc.ca/acts-and-regulations/705-3-cd-eng.shtml

www.csc-scc.gc.ca/acts-and-regulations/705-7-cd-eng.shtml#annexB

www.csc-scc.gc.ca/acts-and-regulations/705-6-cd-en.shtml

Namibia

www.ncs.gov.na/ormcs

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

www.gov.uk/guidance/risk-assessment-of-offenders

United States of America

https://nij.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh171/files/media/document/the-first-step-act-of-2018-risk-and-needs-assessment-system_1.pdf

European Organization of Prison and Correctional Services

www.europris.org/file/report-risk-and-needs-assessment-workshop-2017/

III. Examples of factors to assess for classification purposes at intake to a correctional system

Below is a list of factors that research has demonstrated to be important to assess for the purposes of prisoner classification and that are often included in risk and needs assessment and classification tools used in various jurisdictions.

Public safety risk

- Number of previous convictions (increases risk)
- Previous convictions involving violence (increases risk)
- Number and severity of current charges or convictions (increases risk)
- Age at first arrest or conviction (younger age increases risk)
- Age at admission (i.e., current age) (younger age increases risk)

Risk in a prison setting and escape risk (institutional adjustment)

- Prior history of involvement in institutional incidents (including number, severity and recency of incidents – a higher number, severity and recency of events increases risk)
- Affiliation with a security threat group (e.g., a gang, a criminal organization or a terrorist organization), including factors such as role in the organization (e.g., status or leadership role) and current versus past involvement (active involvement and a higher status or level of involvement increase risk)
- Any evidence of continued involvement in criminal activity while in prison (increases risk)
- Previous history of escape attempts; violence associated with escape attempts (examine the number and recency – more frequent and recent attempts may increase risk; and violence or threats of violence associated with escape or escape attempts increase risk)
- Previous history of breaches while on probation or parole (increases risk)
- Stability in community prior to incarceration (may decrease risk; relevant domains include stability of accommodation, education and employment, interpersonal relationships and personal functioning)
- Alcohol or drug use in period prior to arrest or incarceration; evidence of serious recent substance misuse (may increase risk)
- Sentence length (important for considering appropriate placement options and for correctional planning purposes)

Criminogenic need areas

Assess domains identified in table 2 on major criminogenic risk and needs factors: indicators and intervention goals (chap. IV, sect. 2). Indicate if the domain is a low, moderate or high need for intervention or, alternatively, if there is no need for intervention or if the area is a strength in terms of the prisoner's social rehabilitation potential. Also assess the prisoner's level of motivation to address each need area identified.

Responsivity factors

Responsivity factors are the characteristics of a prisoner that may have an impact on his or her ability to adjust to a correctional setting or participate in rehabilitation activities.

Domains to explore

- Language barriers
- Limited basic reading or writing skills
- Attention and concentration problems
- Evidence of a learning disability
- Mental health issues that affect functioning
- Intellectual functioning issues
- Suicide or self-injury risk, including suicide attempts and self-injury history
- Physical impairment
- Physical health issues that affect functioning
- Other issues that may interfere with work, education or other interventions

Describe:

- Any other relevant factor

Describe:

IV. Example outline of case and sentence management plan (convicted prisoners)

Introductory comments and case status

Basic information, including the prisoner's age, length of sentence, current offence or offences, court-ordered obligations, outstanding charges or appeals and, if applicable, deportation or extradition status. Identify prison officers and other staff who have completed work on the assessments and the offender's level of participation in the development of the case and sentence plan.

Current offence

Summary of official version and prisoner's version of the offence or offences

Criminal history

Concise summary of the prisoner's previous criminal history

Assessment results

Discuss each of the following subsections:

A. Prisoner management and classification

- Prisoner management rating:
- Criminal history
- Institutional adjustment
- Escape risk
- Stability factors
- Overall assessment:
- Other management issues:

Recommended housing assignment:

B. Criminogenic need areas and recommended interventions

- Dynamic and criminogenic need factors identified:
- Treatment priorities (based on assessment):
- Prisoner motivation:
- Prisoner accountability:
- Recommended treatment intensity (based on assessment):

Management and intervention plan

On the basis of the assessment results, summarize the management strategy to be used to manage any risk that the prisoner represents in the penitentiary setting and treatment interventions to address dynamic risk and need factors and the treatment intensity identified.

Case and sentence plan progress (since previous assessment)			
<i>Need area identified in case and sentence plan (e.g., education and employment)</i>	<i>Work done to date to address need</i>	<i>Progress to date</i>	<i>Next steps</i>

Level of positive institutional adjustment: __ High __ Moderate __ Low

On the basis of the assessment above and any other relevant considerations, prison officers should assign a rating of high, moderate or low, as follows:

High: the prisoner has demonstrated:

- A pattern of satisfactory institutional adjustment; no special management intervention is required
- The ability and motivation to interact effectively and responsibly with others, individually and in groups, with little or no supervision
- Motivation towards self-improvement by actively participating in a case or sentence management plan designed to meet his or her dynamic factors and criminogenic need areas

Moderate: the prisoner has demonstrated:

- Some difficulties causing moderate institutional adjustment problems and requiring some management intervention
- The potential to interact effectively with others, individually and in moderately structured groups, but needs regular and often direct supervision
- Some interest and active participation in a correctional plan designed to meet his or her dynamic factors and criminogenic need areas

Low: the prisoner has demonstrated:

- Frequent or major difficulties causing serious institutional adjustment problems and requiring significant and constant management intervention
- A requirement for a highly structured environment in which individual or group interaction is subject to constant and direct supervision
- An uncooperative attitude towards institutional programmes and staff and presents a potentially serious management problem within an institution

Recommendation: change prisoner supervision level recommendation: __ Yes __ No

Describe the recommended change in supervision level:

Discussed with prisoner: __ Yes __ No

Prisoner's signature:

Date:

Name and title of prison officer(s) completing the assessment

Name:

Title:

Date of completion:

Signature:

VI. Example outline of standard operating procedures for prisoner assessment and classification activities

Title

- For example, “Classification of prisoners” or “Supplementary assessments”

Objective and purpose of the standard operating procedures

Authorities

- Referring to relevant legislation and regulations that guide the standard operating procedures

Cross references

- Link to other related policies and documents

Definition of terms

- To ensure consistency and clarity

Roles and responsibilities

- Roles and responsibilities of management and staff related to prisoner classification activities

Procedures

The longest and most detailed section, describing issues such as:

- Time frames (for the completion of assessments and related reports or documentation)
- Assessment of immediate needs
- Intake assessment process, case and sentence planning
- Reclassification process
- Documentation and record-keeping
- Information-sharing (including with external agencies)
- Prisoner appeal process

Any relevant annexes

For example, relevant forms and tools



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