

GHANA STATISTICAL SERVICE

EXPERIENCE WITH 2000 POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUS OF GHANA

Introduction

The 2000 Population and Housing Census (PHC) of Ghana was the fourth post independence Population Census in Ghana. The earlier 3 post independence censuses did not collect detailed information on housing. The 2000 PHC was therefore the first time Ghana collected census information on both population and housing

Implementation strategy

i Formation of Census Committees

For the effective implementation of the Census programme, census committees were formed at the national, regional and district levels. The committee at the national level (National Census Steering Committee) comprised of ministers of ministries that were connected with the Census in one way or the other. Some of these ministries were Finance and Economic Planning, Information, Education and Interior. Personnel from the Census Secretariat also served on this committee. Functions of the committees included the mobilization of resources for the effective implementation of the census, sensitization, and coordination.

The Regional and district level committees were a replicate of the national committee. Their functions were therefore similar to the national committee and comprised of departments of those Ministries, departments and agencies that were represented at the national level. Their main function was to mobilize resource at the local level to support the census field operations.

The Regional Ministers chaired the Regional Committees while the District Coordinating Directors chaired the district level committees

ii Cartographic work

Cartographic work for the census started in 1994. The untimely release of funds delayed the demarcation exercise until 1999 when it was completed. The cartographic work was done using the traditional method which involves map sketching in the field and printing E.A. maps using diazo machines. Field mapping personnel for the exercise were recruited, trained and sent to update the existing geographical file enumeration area maps.

To ensure harmony of the district boundaries and avoid omission and duplication of enumeration areas, all the teams moved together from one region to another to carry out the mapping exercise.

iii *The publicity campaign*

Organizers of the census took publicity seriously if the census programme were to be successful. Consequently a national census publicity team was formed. The team was headed by the honorable Minister for Information at the time. This was replicated at both the Regional and district levels with the Information Services Department spear heading the campaign. Publicity was done by using both the print and electronic media. This involved the use of Jingles, Slogans, posters, pamphlets, mass meetings, etc. Various drama groups were contracted to support the programme. TV talk shows were organized at both the national and regional levels in both English and the various local languages; Radio discussions in English and the local language were also used. The various religious groups also supported in publicizing the census. Mobile vans with public address systems were used in the rural areas. The use of banners, billboards and stickers carrying various messages were also employed. Well designed and colourful promotional materials with the census slogan in the form of brochures, flyers, car stickers with the census logo were printed and distributed. The logo was produced on ID cards and T-shirts for census officials. All these were done with the aim of attracting the public's attention to the census process and officials.

iv *Recruitment and Training of Field Personnel*

Training of field personnel started with a one a week training of Regional and District coordinating Directors who were to act as Regional and District Census Officers respectively. Also included in the training was the Regional Directors of Education because most field personnel were to come from the Ghana Education Service. Participants were taken through the census instruments (Questionnaires, Enumerators and Supervisors manuals, etc) and mode of recruitment of the field personnel, their training and how the field work was going to be undertaken generally.

Field personnel, mainly from the Ghana Education Service were recruited all over the Country and trained at the district level for the field work. The training of Supervisors lasted for 2 weeks whilst that of interviewers lasted for 9 days. Because participants were mainly teachers and because schools were in session, it was not possible to have a continuous training. Training was therefore spread over 3 week ends. Participants reported to their district capitals where the training was being done on Thursday evenings and returned to their stations on Sunday afternoons. Both enumerators and supervisors were taken through the questionnaires and the other census instruments. Assessments were conducted and participants who were found to be lacking in understanding the questionnaire and did not also pass the assessments were dropped at the end of the training. This was possible because in each district more people were trained than was actually required.

v *Field work*

Field work for the 2000 PHC started on midnight of 26th March 2000. 26th March 2000 was therefore the census night. It lasted for 3 weeks. Each enumerator was assigned one enumeration area (E.A)

Since enumeration is the major stage of the census process, as the success of the whole census operation depends on the quality of the data collected from the field. Fieldwork included listing the structures, census night activities and enumeration of different categories of the population.

Before particulars about persons who qualified to be enumerated were recorded, a complete list of all structures /buildings and housing units in the various enumeration areas (E.As) were compiled. This was necessary to help enumerators know the number of structures and housing units in their EAs, and also to serve as a guide in preparing itineraries for the main enumeration. For successful execution of their duties. Enumerators were provided EA maps, EA Description (PHC 2), Enumeration Visitation Record book (EVR), White chalk and note pad.

Enumeration of floating population began immediately after midnight of 26th March 2000. After the successful completion of field enumeration the completed questionnaires were collected and scrutinized by the teams' supervisors and the necessary corrections effected. The enumerators completed EA. enumeration result sheet (PHC 3) for each EA and immediately dispatch them to the census secretariat through their supervisors. Final summary sheet (PHC 4) forms were filled for each EA (for urban and Semi urban) and localities for the rural scattered EAs and added to the completed questionnaires for onward submission to the Census secretariat.

vi *Data capture*

Completed questionnaires were transported from all districts to Accra, the national capital for processing. For the first time in the history of Census taking in Ghana, scanners were used to capture the data.

Following the data collection, questionnaires were checked using automated control system known as CENTRACK to verify that data returned from all EAs have been received. Questionnaires were edited and scanned using Optical Character Reader (OCR) imaging technology. The data was then run through validation programmes.

The problems encountered as a result of the use of this technology were that, apart from the fact that the scanners could not pick some of the bubbles due to poor bubbling by enumerators, the scanners were also inadequate.

vii *Publication and Dissemination of 2000 PHC Results.*

Results of the 2000 PHC of Ghana were released in series. First, with the preliminary results, then a Summary Report of final Results, Special Report on 20 Largest Localities (National, Regional a District), and a Special Report on Urban Localities. The last three were released in March 2002 whilst the first was released in 2000.

Other reports of the 2000 PHC of Ghana that have been released are the Gazetteer (List of all localities with available facilities), Demographic and Economic Characteristics (National, Regional, District) District Profile Report and Special Demographic Analysis Reports.

All these publications have been disseminated at both the National and Regional levels. Releasing the Census results in published form to reach a wider readership and on CD-ROM on request, is an acknowledgement of the vital role dissemination plays in educating and informing the wider public.

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Plans for 2010 Ghana Population and Housing Census

i *Formation of Census Planning Groups.*

Professional staff of the statistical service with responsibility for preparing initial census plans will be constituted by mid-November, 2006. The group will be expected to review the 2010 census project document. A memorandum on the census will also be prepared by the group and submit it to the Government by mid December, 2006.

A National Census Technical Advisory Committee will be formed, comprising of census experts who will serve as a think-tank to advise the government statistician/census coordinator and National census planning committee on the conduct of the 2010 PHC. Census field offices will be set up on the basis of the local administrative structure. The region/district census offices will be established in the respective administrative regional/district capitals with the assistance of the Ministry of Local Government

ii *Determination of topics to be covered and the development of instruments*

The National Census Planning Secretariat will hold consultation with major stakeholders both in the public and private sectors and also review topics investigated in the 1970, 1984 and 2000 censuses.

iii *Census Education and Publicity*

A census Education and Publicity committee will be set up to sensitize the public on the impending census so as to ensure effective cooperation.

iv *Cartographic work*

Cartographic work for the 2010 PHC will involve the updating of the 2000 census enumeration and Supervisory area maps. Production of relevant enumeration area maps have started. The cartography work is based on the administrative structure of the country.

To ensure that all field maps are up-to-date, a list of all enumeration area maps used in the 2000 PHC has been prepared. The stock taking revealed that some areas of the country lacked topographic maps. An order has therefore been placed for the purchase of National maps (scale: 1:50,000) showing major administrative divisions, major physical features and location of cities and towns. Thematic maps that show national road network and plans of cities and towns have also been acquired.

An instructional manual for field mapping staff is being prepared. The manual will contain an outline of the organization of the mapping activities, objective and techniques

of enumeration area mapping, field responsibilities of the mapping staff and other related activities.

An order has also been placed for the purchase of cartographic mapping equipments and stationary.

The re-demarcation of 56 new districts is scheduled to begin in November 2006 and is expected to take three months. It has been decided to increase the number of field teams for the mapping exercise from 3 to 15 to facilitate work and ensure that the exercise is completed on schedule.

v *Field operations*

A field operation unit will be set up to see to the effective implementation of the 2010 Population and Housing Census.

Responsibilities of the unit will include

- the organization and establishment of the necessary institutional framework in the regions and districts
- Develop control procedures and mechanisms to ensure quality control and movement of materials
- Provision of logistical support, particularly the distribution of census materials (questionnaires, EA maps, manuals, stationary, etc).

vi *Data processing*

It is intended that the OCR technology will be used for data capture in the 2010 PHC. Problems encountered with the use of scanners in the 2000 PHC have been identified and efforts will be made to minimize them.

During the 2000 PHC, Optical Character Reader (OCR) technology was used. This was preferred to the Optical Mark Reader (OMR) and computers because the OCR gives images of the scanned questionnaire and can be archived and accessed later without physically handling the questionnaire.

vii *Data dissemination*

The provision of data to users is the ultimate reason behind the conduct of a population census and any survey for which the 2010 PHC is not an exception. Strategies that will be adopted to disseminate data will involve the use of modern information technology including CD-ROM, dissemination of data electronically through the internet and the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) website for the 2010 PHC reports. The dissemination will also be done through publishing hard copies of the reports.

viii *Specialized analysis by the subject*

The National Census secretariat will hold consultation with major data users in both public and private sectors to review topics investigated in 1970, 1984 and 2000 as well as international recommendations regarding the 2010 round of PHC in order to determine the topics to be covered in the 2010 census.

ix *Data editing*

Editing of the census work will be done to correct some of the errors from the field

x *Funding*

Funding is being sought from the government, and donor partners for the conduct of the 2010 PHC in Ghana.

With the current increasing taste for data for planning and policy formulation in Ghana, we do not anticipate any reason that will affect the successful conduct of the 2010 PHC.

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Ease of implementation of the International Guidelines on the 2010 Population and Housing census in Ghana.

Core topics

Selection of topics to be included in the questionnaire for the 2010 population and housing census in Ghana will involve the review and consideration of

- Variables covered in the 2000 population and housing census
- Recommended topics from the UN principles and recommendations for the 2010 round of population and housing censuses.
- Data request based on answers and proposals from users in response to the question which will be sent to them

Decisions on topics for inclusion will be based on the relevance of topics and request to the data needs of the country as well as practical considerations of application of concepts on the ground.

In the 2000 PHC the final questionnaire consisted of 15 questions on housing conditions and 20 population questions covering the following areas

- household characteristics
- geographical location and internal migration
- demographic and social characteristics
- fertility and mortality
- economic characteristics
- literacy and education

The guidelines for the implementation of the above mentioned topics are not too different from that of the previous censuses that have been undertaken in Ghana. There will therefore be no difficulty in implementing the recommended international guidelines for the core topics for the 2010 census in Ghana.

Tabulations

With regards to the recommended tabulations, production of complex tabulations and lots of tables will increase cost and may delay the timely release of publications. This is usually due to the limited data processing resources available to census implementation agencies. For example, in the 2000 census in Ghana, the preferred configuration of data capture equipment could not be provided fully. Out of the 6 scanners that the office requested for, only 3 were brought which contributed to the delay in the release of the census results.

Basic tables on all core topics will be produced early, whilst special tabulations and customized data request will be later upon request.

Census Management

The 2010 Population and housing census will be Ghana's fifth post independence census. The earlier four censuses (1960, 1970, 1984, and 2000) were conducted based on the six phases of census operations as laid down in the UN recommended principles for population and housing censuses. Since recommendations in the revised UN principles and recommendations for population and housing censuses, Revision 2 are not too different from what is contained in the earlier recommendations, its implementation in the case of Ghana will not be difficult. Efforts will be made to maintain the high standards set in implementing the 2010 PHC in Ghana.