



UNITED NATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

STATISTICS DIVISION
INTERNATIONAL TRADE STATISTICS BRANCH

WORKSHOP ON THE COMPILATION OF INTERNATIONAL MERCHANDISE TRADE STATISTICS
Addis Ababa, 8-11 November 2004

Country Presentation

Statistics - Ghana

Presentation by the Ghana Statistical Service

WORKSHOP ON IMTS COMPILERS MANUAL
Addis Ababa, 8-11 November 2004.

Compilation of Merchandise Trade Statistics in Ghana

Introduction

The Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) was established by the Provisional National Defence Council Law 135 (P.N.D.C Law 135) in 1985. Until then, the organization was known as the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) and operated under the supervision of the Ministry of Finance. The law establishing the Service, empowers the Government Statistician (Chief Executive) to conduct statistical surveys and any census to collect, compile, analyze, publish such data and advice government on all matters relating to statistics in the country.

In addition, the GSS is required to collect, compile, analyze, abstract and publish statistical information relating to the commercial, industrial, agricultural, social, financial, economic and other activities for decision-making for the development of the country. This mandate of the GSS includes the collection, compilation, processing and publication of External Trade Statistics. The External Trade Statistics Section of the GSS is responsible for the compilation of External Trade Statistics.

Sources of Data

The main source of data for the compilation of External Trade Statistics by the GSS is the Customs Declarations. This source provides data on imports through the seaports of Tema and Takoradi, the Kotoka International Airport and major overland entry points. Data is also obtained from the Ministry of Trade and Industry on exports, the Tema Oil Refinery (crude oil imports) and the Volta River Authority (import and export of electricity).

The data from the Customs Declarations and the Ministry of Trade and Industry are obtained in electronic formats while those from Tema Oil Refinery and the Volta River Authority are printouts which are keyed-in manually.

Data Processing

The GSS uses the EUROTRACE software developed by EUROSTAT for the transfer and processing of the customs declarations. The customs declaration files are checked in Microsoft Excel or a database to ensure that all the required fields have been provided. The data are then transferred into EUROTRACE. During data transfer and update, some

validation checks are carried to ensure that the mandatory fields are not blank, and that some item values do not exceed or fall below required values. The HS Codes, importer and declarant codes and other codes are also checked to ensure their validity. The system generates an error file and assigns reasons for these errors.

Any errors detected are corrected if they relate to the use of wrong codes or undefined codes. When the errors have to do with customs values, these are referred to the Customs office for the necessary corrections. After the necessary corrections have been effected, the databanks are updated and the data are ready for the generation of the needed statistics.

Time Schedule for Data Processing

Processing of customs declarations and other data is done as soon as data is obtained from the customs office and other agencies. Delays in the delivery of data have been encountered when data have to be extracted from entry points that are far from the customs headquarters. Data from these ports could delay for up to 3 months before delivery to the GSS for processing.

Customs Data Capture

A new system of data capture was developed and introduced for customs data capture under the Ghana Community Network (GCNet) and the Ghana Customs Management System (GCMS). This system replaced ASYCUDA which was previously used by Ghana Customs for trade data capture. The system was first introduced at the Kotoka International Airport in November 2002 was extended to the other major entry points in 2003. This system provides for customs declarations to be submitted electronically through the GCNet to the GCMS for vetting.

Major trade data users including the GSS have been targeted for connection to the GCNet. When the connections become fully operational, the GSS would be able to access the customs declarations directly from the system. In this way, the time schedule for processing declarations would be drastically reduced.

Publication of Trade Statistics

There is no official meeting with customs and other agencies before the official publication of the data. Some concerns have been expressed by some international agencies regarding differences in the data published by the GSS, Customs and other agencies.

The GSS reports data on all imports into the country and exports out of the country. This has been based on the General Trade System since January 2000. Customs reports on imports for which revenue has been collected and does not report on warehoused goods until these have been cleared. Customs may even carry-over imports of the previous year into the following year. When this happens, it would not be possible for the GSS and Customs to report the same values of imports for the year.