Ghana: The Partnership Between The Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) And Producers (Holders) Of Administrative Data

The Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) partnership with producers of administrative data is supported by the Statistical Service Act, 2019 (Act 1003) which establishes the Ghana Statistical Service as the central statistics producing and co-ordinating institution for the National Statistical System and to strengthen the production of quality, relevant, accurate and timely statistical information for the purpose of national development. The Act enjoins the GSS to:

1. Determine the manner in which the Ministries, Departments, Agencies, District Assemblies (producers of administrative data) and statutory bodies collaborate with the GSS in the collection, compilation and publication of statistical information, including statistics derived from the activities of those entities;
2. Review, assess, classify and designate as official statistics, data produced by the GSS, Ministries, Departments and Agencies; Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (producers of administrative data); and other institutions within the country and report regularly on the state of official statistics to the Government and the people.

Administrative Data Collection

In Ghana, the broad areas such as health, education, agriculture, trade and industry, crime and justice, vital statistics, GDP, tourism and others, the administrative records form the primary data source. The relevant sector Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) have the unique responsibility for generating the data from their respective administrative activities. The Regional Offices of the Ghana Statistical Service work closely with these MDAs to collect, collate and analyse the data generated by them for the consumption of the general public.

Since the value of these data extends beyond the immediate needs of the producing ministry, it is necessary that the instruments used to collect the basic information are designed considering the needs of other potential users. In this regard, the Ghana Statistical Service periodically conducts training programmes for the MDAs to equip them with the needed skills and knowledge to develop templates to collect their data. The MDAs are also trained by the Service in the use of statistical package to analyse data. The GSS supported a number of the MDAs to develop templates to collect data being used to monitor the progress of the SDGs indicators. Indeed, the demand for data in addressing the SDG indicators creates enormous opportunity for GSS as an institution to provide statistical data that meets government, development partners, businesses, civil society organizations, and researchers data needs. Some of the key SDG indicators are earmarked as follows:

- Proportion of population below the international poverty line by sex, age, employment status and geographical location (urban/rural).
- Proportion of population living below the national poverty line by sex and age.
- Prevalence of undernourishment.
- Prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in the population, based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES).

The Ghana Statistical Service partnership with the MDAs led to the development of Statistical Compendium on concepts, definitions and classifications adopted for the compilation of statistics. This exercise created the needed framework for standardization and harmonization of official statistics produced from administrative and other sources within the National Statistical System. The Ghana Statistical Service needs to step up its efforts in this direction to ensure standardization of administrative data collection instruments of the various areas of statistics in the country.

Implementation Arrangements (Figure 1)
Coordination and Program Management Directorate

Cooperation between administrative data suppliers and the official data producers is crucial to ensure timely production and release of statistical information. In the Ghana Statistical Service, the Coordination and Programme Management Directorate (CPMD) is responsible for promoting statistical coordination, monitoring and supervision of the National Statistical System as shown in Figure 1. Coordination of the National Statistical System is done by the Ghana Statistical Service to ensure adherence to national and international standards and best practices. This is needed to (i) prevent duplication of effort and generation of inconsistent data, (ii) achieve cost-effectiveness in utilization of scarce resources, (iii) avoid working at cross-purposes, and (iv) produce quality data. The function is implemented through the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics which is the framework for strengthening statistical capacity in Ghana, and establishing structures as well as institutional frameworks and arrangements that bridge producers and users of statistics in the National Statistical System.