

OVERVIEW OF GLSS3

Background and Objectives

Following the pattern set in the first two rounds of the Ghana Living Standards Survey (GLSS), the questionnaire used for the third round again covered a wide spectrum of topics, such as education, health, housing, employment, income and expenditure, which affect the living standards of households. GLSS3 thus provides data on various aspects of Ghanaian household economic and social activities, which are of help for monitoring the impact of the Government's Economic Recovery Programme.

GLSS3 differed from the two previous rounds, however, in concentrating particularly on the income, consumption and expenditure of households at a much more disaggregated level than previously. As a result, GLSS3 should provide much more accurate estimates of income and expenditure, including the imputed value of home produced food which is consumed by households. The data on household expenditure are also being used to derive the weights needed for rebasing the Consumer Price Index. The GLSS data on income, consumption and expenditure, together with other individual, household and community level data collected in GLSS3, will also provide a valuable database for national and regional planning purposes.

In GLSS1 and GLSS2 only two visits, two weeks apart, had been made to each selected household, and the expenditure data on food and non-food items were collected on the second visit, with a recall period of two weeks. Obviously this has a recall lapse problem. An attempt was also made to obtain annual estimates of household expenditure on food and non-food items, as well as annual estimates of consumption of home produced food items.

To reduce the recall error in GLSS3, much more detailed information was collected by means of frequent visits to each household. Households were visited eight times at two-day intervals in rural areas, and 11 times at three-day intervals in urban areas. By reducing the recall period from two weeks to two or three days, much improved estimates of household consumption and expenditure should be obtained.

Sample design

A multi-stage sampling technique was used in selecting the GLSS3 sample. Technical details of the sample design are given in Appendix 1 of the main report. Initially, 4565 households were selected for GLSS3, spread around the country in 407 EAs; in general, 15 households were taken in an urban EA and 10 households in a rural EA. The actual achieved sample was 4552 households. The sample designed used for the GLSS3, and with the very high response rate achieved, the sample can be considered as being self-weighting, though in the case of expenditure data (as discussed below) weighting of the expenditure values should be done.

Questionnaires

Three types of questionnaires were used for GLSS3: a household questionnaire, a community questionnaire and a price questionnaire. Appendix 2 of the main report contains a detailed description of the contents of each questionnaire.

The household questionnaire was in two parts. Part A collected information on household composition, education, health and fertility, employment and time use, migration, and housing characteristics, and it was also used to identify the respondents for Part B. Part B covered agricultural activities, including the consumption of home produce, household expenditure, non-farm enterprises, other income and expenditure, and credit, assets, and savings.

Details of infrastructure and other facilities available to rural communities were recorded in the community questionnaire. This questionnaire was usually administered at a meeting with the community chief, along with his elders and other knowledgeable people in the community.

The price questionnaire was used to collect information on prices in the local market. This information is needed for comparing prices in different parts of the country, which would allow the construction of regional price indexes and the adjustment of household expenditures to a common base so as to take account of regional variations in purchasing power.

Fieldwork

GLSS3 fieldwork commenced on 30 September 1991 in both rural and urban clusters, and finished in September 1992. In all, 11 teams each made up of 7 personnel were involved in the data collection and data entry exercise. Seven of these were rural teams, three were urban, and the eleventh team was a relieving team.

Data processing

The data collected in this survey were entered directly onto microcomputers, which had been installed in the eight regional capitals. Kumasi and Accra had two PCs each, while Tamale, Sunyani, Koforidua, Ho, Cape Coast and Sekondi/Takoradi had one each. Special interactive software programs had been prepared for data entry and consistency checks, using the software package Rode-PC.