# **Data Quality Performance Indicators for Achieving the Vision of the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS)**

The Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) has articulated a vision to be recognized as a world-class provider of high-quality official statistics that inform policy formulation, socio-economic planning, and national development. To achieve this vision, the Service must ensure that the statistics it produces meet internationally accepted quality benchmarks. This paper discusses six key data quality performance indicators essential for aligning the operations of the GSS with its institutional vision, drawing on principles outlined in global statistical frameworks, such as the United Nations National Quality Assurance Framework (UN NQAF).

Accuracy and Reliability

In the context of official statistics, accuracy and reliability are critical dimensions of data quality. The policy focus for this dimension is to ensure statistical data correctly represent real-world conditions and yield consistent results. Accuracy eliminates errors, while reliability guarantees consistency when measurements are repeated under similar conditions. This can be achieved through robust sampling techniques, rigorous training of field officers, and systematic verification against authoritative sources. Empirical evidence from international best practices demonstrates that sustained investment in this area improves not only the credibility of statistical products but also their utility for evidence-based decision-making. (United Nations, 2019; IMF, 2016)

Relevance

In the context of official statistics, relevance is a critical dimension of data quality. The policy focus for this dimension is to align statistical outputs with the evolving needs of stakeholders. Relevance ensures data supports national priorities and global commitments such as the SDGs. Continuous consultation with policymakers, researchers, and civil society ensures that the statistics produced remain fit for purpose and address emerging socio-economic trends. Empirical evidence from international best practices demonstrates that sustained investment in this area improves not only the credibility of statistical products but also their utility for evidence-based decision-making. (Ghana Statistical Service, 2020; OECD, 2011)

Timeliness and Readiness

In the context of official statistics, timeliness and punctuality are critical dimensions of data quality. The policy focus for this dimension is to deliver statistical products promptly and pre-announce release dates. Timely statistics enable swift policy responses to socio-economic changes, while punctuality fosters trust in GSS’s reliability. The integration of real-time data processing technologies and strict adherence to publication calendars will enhance this performance area. Empirical evidence from international best practices demonstrates that sustained investment in this area improves not only the credibility of statistical products but also their utility for evidence-based decision-making. (United Nations, 2019; World Bank, 2022)

Coherence and Comparability

In the context of official statistics, coherence and comparability are dimensions of data quality. The policy focus for this dimension is to maintain internal consistency and align with international statistical standards. Coherence ensures that datasets from different sources can be integrated without contradiction, while comparability allows meaningful analysis over time and across countries. This requires adherence to internationally recognized classifications and coding systems (e.g., UN and IMF standards). Empirical evidence from international best practices demonstrates that sustained investment in this area improves not only the credibility of statistical products but also their utility for evidence-based decision-making. (OECD, 2011; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2017)

Accessibility and Clarity

In the context of official statistics, accessibility and clarity are critical dimensions of data quality. The policy focus for this dimension is to provide statistical data in formats that are easy to access, interpret, and use. GSS can enhance accessibility through user-friendly online portals, interactive dashboards, and downloadable datasets. Clarity is achieved by presenting statistics alongside metadata, explanatory notes, and visual aids to cater to both technical and non-technical audiences. Empirical evidence from international best practices demonstrates that sustained investment in this area improves not only the credibility of statistical products but also their utility for evidence-based decision-making. (World Bank, 2022; Ghana Statistical Service, 2020)

Integrity and Transparency

In the context of official statistics, integrity and transparency is a critical dimension of data quality. The policy focus for this dimension is to safeguard the independence of statistical processes and openly communicate methodologies. Integrity protects statistics from undue influence, while transparency builds public trust. Publishing methodological notes, acknowledging limitations, and clearly communicating any revisions reinforce GSS’s credibility. Empirical evidence from international best practices demonstrates that sustained investment in this area improves not only the credibility of statistical products but also their utility for evidence-based decision-making. (United Nations, 2019; Ghana Statistical Service, 2020)

Collectively, these six data quality performance indicators provide a robust framework for enhancing the institutional capacity of the GSS to deliver on its vision. By embedding these indicators into its operational processes, the Service can ensure that its statistical outputs are credible, relevant, and comparable at both the national and international levels, thereby strengthening the evidence base for Ghana’s development agenda.

Summary of Recommended Data Quality Performance Indicators

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| Indicator | Core Focus | Relevance to GSS Vision |
| Accuracy & Reliability | Correctness & consistency of data | Ensure credible and dependable statistics |
| Relevance | Stakeholder-driven content | Align with national priorities & SDGs |
| Timeliness & Punctuality | Promptness & schedule adherence | Enable timely decision-making |
| Coherence & Comparability | Consistency & alignment with standards | Facilitate integration & global comparison |
| Accessibility & Clarity | Ease of access & understanding | Improve data use by diverse audiences |
| Integrity & Transparency | Independence & openness | Build public trust in statistics |

**Identification and Justification of Five Administrative Data Points the Ghana Statistical Service Should Prioritize for Archiving (2025–2030)**

The Ghana Statistical Service (GSS), as the central agency responsible for the collection, compilation, and dissemination of official statistics, must strategically determine which administrative data points to preserve for long-term archiving. Administrative data, derived primarily from the routine operations of government ministries, departments, and agencies, offers a cost-effective, continuous, and comprehensive source of information for policy monitoring and evaluation (United Nations, 2019). For the next five years, the following five administrative data points are recommended for priority archiving, based on their policy relevance, potential for longitudinal analysis, and alignment with national development frameworks.

**1. Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) Data**

Civil registration data, including births, deaths, marriages, and divorces, is fundamental for population statistics and demographic analysis (United Nations, 2019). Prioritising CRVS aligns with both the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG Target 16.9) and the African Programme on Accelerated Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics. Archiving this data enables GSS to produce accurate population estimates, monitor mortality trends, and inform resource allocation in health, education, and social protection. Historical CRVS archives are also critical for legal identity verification and disaster response planning (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa [UNECA], 2017).

**2. Education Management Information System (EMIS) Records**

Education administrative data, including enrolment rates, teacher deployment, infrastructure availability, and examination results, directly supports SDG 4 (Quality Education) and the Education Strategic Plan (ESP 2018–2030) (Ghana Statistical Service, 2020). Archiving EMIS data will allow GSS to conduct trend analyses on school participation, learning outcomes, and gender parity over time. This will facilitate evidence-based educational reforms and ensure the ability to retrospectively evaluate policy interventions, such as Free Senior High School (FSHS) and STEM education initiatives (World Bank, 2022).

**3. Health Information Management System (HIMS) Data**

Data from the District Health Information Management System (DHIMS2), including morbidity, mortality, immunization coverage, and health facility utilization, is indispensable for tracking public health outcomes (World Bank, 2022). The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the strategic value of timely and accessible health archives for rapid policy response. Preserving HIMS data will enable GSS to analyze disease trends, evaluate health sector performance, and support Ghana’s Universal Health Coverage (UHC) agenda (United Nations, 2019).

**4. Tax and Customs Records**

Administrative data from the Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA) on income tax, corporate tax, VAT, and customs duties provides critical insights into domestic resource mobilisation, economic activity, and trade patterns (International Monetary Fund [IMF], 2016). Long-term archiving of tax and customs records enhances the capacity for economic forecasting, tax policy analysis, and illicit financial flow monitoring. Furthermore, harmonising these archives with business register data will improve national accounts estimates and the measurement of the informal economy (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2011).

**5. Labour and Employment Administrative Records**

Employment-related administrative data, including social security contributions, workplace injuries, and unemployment benefit claims, provides an essential basis for labour market statistics (OECD, 2011). Archiving this data over multiple years allows for the analysis of employment dynamics, wage trends, and the impact of labour market interventions. This is particularly important for monitoring SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and evaluating the effects of industrial policies (United Nations, 2019).

**Conclusion**

Archiving these five administrative data points over the next five years would provide GSS with a strong foundation for producing high-quality longitudinal statistics across population, health, education, economic, and labour domains. This strategy not only aligns with international statistical quality frameworks, such as the United Nations National Quality Assurance Framework (UN NQAF), but also supports Ghana’s Medium-Term National Development Policy Framework. By ensuring systematic archiving, GSS can improve data accessibility, comparability, and integrity, thereby strengthening the evidence base for national development.

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