

Government looks for additional funds for 2010 census

The government is sourcing additional funds from private the sector and development partners to finance the 2010 population and housing census.

The country needs more than US\$49 million to organize the census. Already the government has set aside GH¢37million towards the implementation of the census programme.

At a press conference in Accra on 5 January, 2010 to throw light on the census programme, the Minister of Finance, Dr Kwabena Duffour, said the government was hopeful that needed resources would be obtained for the conduct of the census.

He also confirmed that the 2010 national census would not be held in March as anticipated.

Although a firm date has not been settled on yet, the minister said undertaking the census exercise was one of the government's priority programmes for 2010.

The minister was supported by the Government's statistician, Dr Mrs Grace Bediako and a member of the census steering committee, Mr. David Kangah, as well as other officials and directors from the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning and the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS).

Dr Duffour commended developing partners such as the, UNFPA, DFID, UNDP, DANIDA, UNICEF, the Swiss government and the People's Republic of China for their contribution and pledges, which so far amounted to US\$5 million.

He said the budgetary provisions from the government for the census programme to date had enabled GSS and collaborating institutions and partners to make significant progress in the planning and implementation of the programme.

He said by the end of March 2010, all materials including the instruments, maps, publicity among others would be available, and procedures and organizational structures for the main census would have been developed.

The minister said "there is no doubt that the population and housing census was a unique data source that provides bench mark information for effective planning and good governance at all levels of government."

Dr Mrs Bediako, who assisted the minister to answer some of the questions from the media, said it had become necessary for the 2010 exercise to be delayed for lessons learnt from the trail census organized late last year to be incorporated into the trail census.

According to her, several issues such as the weather, holidays, migration and religious pilgrims such as hajj were being considered before a date was fixed for the census.

She was, however, definite that the census would come off this year.

Last Monday January 4, 2010, The Daily Graphic reported that the National Census Secretariat under the Ghana Statistical Service was still in process of capturing and collating data from the trail census organized in November, last year.

Enough time is required to elapse after trail before a national census can be organized so that lessons learnt could be built upon to enhance the quality of the exercise.

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