

Opening Remarks

By

**Dr. Alhassan Iddrisu
Government Statistician**

World Bank Implementation Support Mission on HISWAP

Virtual Meeting

3rd & 7th July 2025

1. Good morning to you all.
2. Let me begin by warmly welcoming everyone to this Implementation Support Mission under the Harmonising and Improving Statistics in West Africa Project, dubbed HISWAP.
3. A special acknowledgment to the World Bank team, Chief Directors, heads of MDAs and MMDAs, my colleagues at the Ghana Statistical Service, and all those on the call who contribute daily to the statistical work that underpins development in our country.
4. It is a real privilege to engage with you today, especially given the critical juncture we are at with the project.
5. Let me express my deep appreciation to the World Bank for its continued support and collaboration, not only with GSS but across Ghana's National Statistical System. That partnership has been instrumental in helping us push the boundaries of what's possible with data in this country.

6. As we know by now, the HISWA Project is more than just another development project. It is a cornerstone for how we reimagine the role of statistics in shaping public policy, driving inclusive development, and meeting our obligations to regional and global data protocols.
7. Through HISWAP, we have made tangible progress:
 - i. Improved availability and quality of core statistics;
 - ii. Strengthened coordination across MDAs and the broader NSS;
 - iii. Modernised data systems that now support real-time, disaggregated, and geospatial data;
 - iv. And crucially, we are seeing more active use of data in decision-making, from central government to the district level.
8. Through World Bank's support, we have strengthened core statistics, modernized our data systems, and produced timelier, more granular, and more usable data for every level of government. This really means that we are building a statistical system that can confront Ghana's challenges with clarity and confidence. The HISWA project is, therefore, helping us turn better data into better decisions for inclusive growth and better lives for our people.
9. The results speak for themselves. The successful implementation of the 2021 Population and Housing Census, and the recent 2024 Business and Establishment Census, are no small feats. These major undertakings, along with numerous social and economic surveys, have deepened our statistical foundations.
10. That said, we are also navigating headwinds.

11. We have seen delays in executing our 2025 workplan, driven partly by policy shifts on donor funding including the capping of funds and the implementation of Treasurer Single Account or the cash management arrangement of Government. Adding this to the recent appreciation of the cedi, we are looking at real value erosion that challenges our ability to deliver at pace.
12. So, what does this mean for us? It means we must recalibrate. We will need to revisit our priorities, some activities may be phased into outer years, some suspended, and a few possibly redesigned. But the goal remains unchanged: to sustain the momentum and lock in the gains we have made so far to achieve programme development objectives.
13. This is precisely why this Implementation Support Mission is so important.
14. Your technical expertise, strategic oversight, and honest feedback are critical to keeping us aligned with the Project Development Objective. This is not just a checkpoint, it is a chance to sharpen our execution, close gaps, and co-design a path forward that reflects the realities on the ground.
15. Since assuming the role of Government Statistician, I have made a firm commitment to HISWAP's success. But it is not a one-person job. It requires all of us, producers and users of data alike, to stay engaged, stay adaptive, and stay focused.
16. Let me close by thanking the World Bank, the Ministry of Finance, and every stakeholder who has kept faith with this vision. To the mission team, we value your dedication and look forward to a productive and solutions-oriented engagement.
17. Together, we are not just building systems. We are shaping the future of evidence-based development in Ghana and, I believe, setting an example for the sub-region.

18. Thank you and I look forward to a productive engagement.