

## **What you Should Know About the Ghana Census of Agriculture**

Agriculture makes up a large proportion of economic activities in most developing economies, including Ghana as it creates jobs and improves livelihoods of the rural populations. To inform national policy on the sector, the Ghana Statistical Service is embarking on Ghana Census of Agriculture fieldwork this year, 2018.

Data collection is expected to cover every part of the country and involves the complete enumeration of all agriculture holders and the types of agriculture activities they are engaged in.

In the 2018 Census of Agriculture, the interest will be to enumerate all holders engaged in the production of all types of food crops, livestock, aquaculture (fishing) as well as tree planting activities.

Fishing is not agricultural activity by Food and Agriculture Organization's definition. However, Ghana has added it as a key related activity that will provide information for the estimation of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

This year's Census of Agriculture is a collaborative effort between Ghana Statistical Service and MoFA with technical support from the FAO of the United Nations.

Weeks ago, regional level training of trainers was held concurrently in all the 10 regions of the country. The training equipped trainees with the requisite knowledge that will enable them effectively train field personnel for the data collection exercise. Training of field personnel was equally carried out concurrently in all 216 Districts across the country.

The main data collection for the census started on the 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2018 and spans over a period of 80 days preceded by a listing exercise during which field personnel would visit all households and institutions to assign numbers to all structures and identify all households for the actual collection exercise.

The reference period for which information will be collected is from 1st March, 2017 to 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2018.

Under the law establishing the Ghana Statistical Service, PNDC Law 135, information collected by GSS is to be kept confidential and used only for statistical purposes. To this end, field officers are under an oath of secrecy. The Law also makes it obligatory for all persons of institutions to provide data to GSS on request.

### **Why is Census of Agriculture Important?**

The last time Census of Agriculture was conducted in Ghana was in 1985, 33 years ago.

FAO, (1999) recommended that Census of Agriculture should be taken every ten years but for the lack of funding it has taken so long a time to conduct the next Census of Agriculture since the last one.

Census of Agriculture is to update information on agricultural activities of the country and make results available to policy makers and other users to facilitate research and planning.

The activity is deemed to provide policy makers with information to better identify, prepare, implement and evaluate development projects and to further develop agriculture in rural areas.

More so, Census of Agriculture will strengthen the National Agricultural Statistics System and provide agricultural information to meet the ever increasing needs of users and to serve as benchmark data for assessing the results of future statistical enquiries/surveys.

In addition, Census of Agriculture will provide information that will facilitate the rebasing of the national accounts (Gross Domestic Product) on a sound basis that will enable us know the true size of agriculture sector's contribution to the economy.

Above all, Census of Agriculture will provide an update sampling frame needed to facilitate the conduct of Annual Agricultural Surveys that will provide basis for the establishment of an Integrated Permanent System of Agricultural Statistics (IPSAS) production in the country.

### **Who will be involved in the Census of Agriculture?**

Census of Agriculture is a major national exercise and the entire population of Ghana is expected to participate, everybody residing in Ghana – both citizens and non-citizens will be called upon to help identify agriculture holders in the country.

It is refreshing to note that, logistics required for the Census operation have been made available by Government of Ghana.

Monitors from Ghana Statistical Service, Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Food and Agriculture Organization, Steering Committee members and Independent monitors will go round to ensure that quality work is being done.

Census of Agriculture is a huge Statistical operation that requires the active co-operation of the general public, every Ghanaian, in particular households engaged in agriculture or related activities.

It is therefore expected that, the media will assist in this national exercise by creating the needed public awareness and urging respondents to cooperate fully with field officers.