The data puzzle in Ghana’s WASH sector:
causes and recommendations

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Outline

1. The data puzzle in the WASH sector – overview
2. Causes of data puzzle
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5. Data on sanitation
6. MDGs, Global monitoring and the JMP
7. Recommendations
8. Discussion questions
About WSMP

- The Water and Sanitation Monitoring Platform assembles, analyses, re-packages and disseminates available WASH data to relevant stakeholders.

- WSMP is also engaged in WASH sector monitoring.
1. The data puzzle in the WASH sector - overview

- Is Ghana on-track for MDGs?
- Is Ghana off-track?
- Is sanitation coverage really about 13%?
- Why is there such a wide gap between GSS/JMP/UN data and CWSA/GWCL data?
- Is somebody doing something wrong?
2. Causes of data puzzle

- Different definitions and indicators
- Different types of data
- Different agencies generating data
- Different data collection objectives
- Different data collection/analyses methodologies
- Wrong selection of available data for various uses
3. Types of data: User-based

- Data generated through periodic representative surveys and censuses
- Uniform definitions and indicators globally
- Usually based on actual use of facilities and user perceptions
- Access is measured by the **type of facility people say they use** at a given period
4. Types of data: Provider-based

- Data generated by service providers
- Data usually covers only operational areas of provider
- Data sometimes for administrative purposes
- Access is usually measured by the type of facility provided and the estimated number of people it can adequately serve
- Definitions and methodologies may differ between providers and countries
5. Ghana Statistical Service and WASH data

- GSS conducts several surveys and census
  - Population and Housing Census, DHS, MICS, CWIQ, GLSS etc
- Questionnaire for these surveys usually include the type of water and sanitation facilities that people use
- WASH-related questions in GSS surveys are usually based on international (MDG-related) definitions/indicators
Ghana Statistical Service and WASH data

• Currently, only GSS provides nationally representative user-based data on drinking water and basic sanitation

• GSS does not currently provide any report specifically on WASH

• GSS data may not provide all WASH sector information/data needs
5. Data on sanitation

- Sanitation here refers to toilet facilities
- There is currently no provider-based national coverage data on sanitation
- Only GSS provides user-based national coverage data on use of toilet facilities
Definitions

- Improved / unimproved water facilities
- Definition of Access
6. MDGs, Global Monitoring and JMP

- MDG target for water and sanitation is to reduce by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation by 2015.

- The base year for MDG monitoring is 1990.
MDGs, Global Monitoring and JMP

• Progress indicators for this target are:
  
  – The proportion of population **USING** an improved drinking water source
  – The proportion of population **USING** an improved sanitation facility

• The JMP is simply WHO and UNICEF, mandated by the UN to monitor global MDG progress on WASH
MDGs, Global Monitoring and JMP

• The proportion of the population with access to safe drinking water is an indicator expressed as the percentage of people **USING** improved drinking water sources

• The proportion of the population with access to basic sanitation is an indicator expressed as the percentage of the population **USING** an improved sanitation facility
7. Recommendations

- Understand the **types** of data, their **sources** and their **objectives**

- Sustain efforts at **harmonizing** sector definitions

- Do not confuse **UN MDGs** with **Local or national targets**

- Only **user-based** data can be used to report on UN MDGs and compare countries
For general discussion

- What gaps have you discovered with user-based data?
- When should user-based data be used?
- What gaps have you discovered with provider-based data?
- When should provider-based data be used?
- How do you think the gap between user/provider-based data can be reduced?
- Can the proposed multi-agency harmonized definition of access be adopted by all data collection agencies?
- Do you have any other recommendations?