

Ghana's District League Table 2014

Strengthening
Social Accountability
for National
Development

REPORT



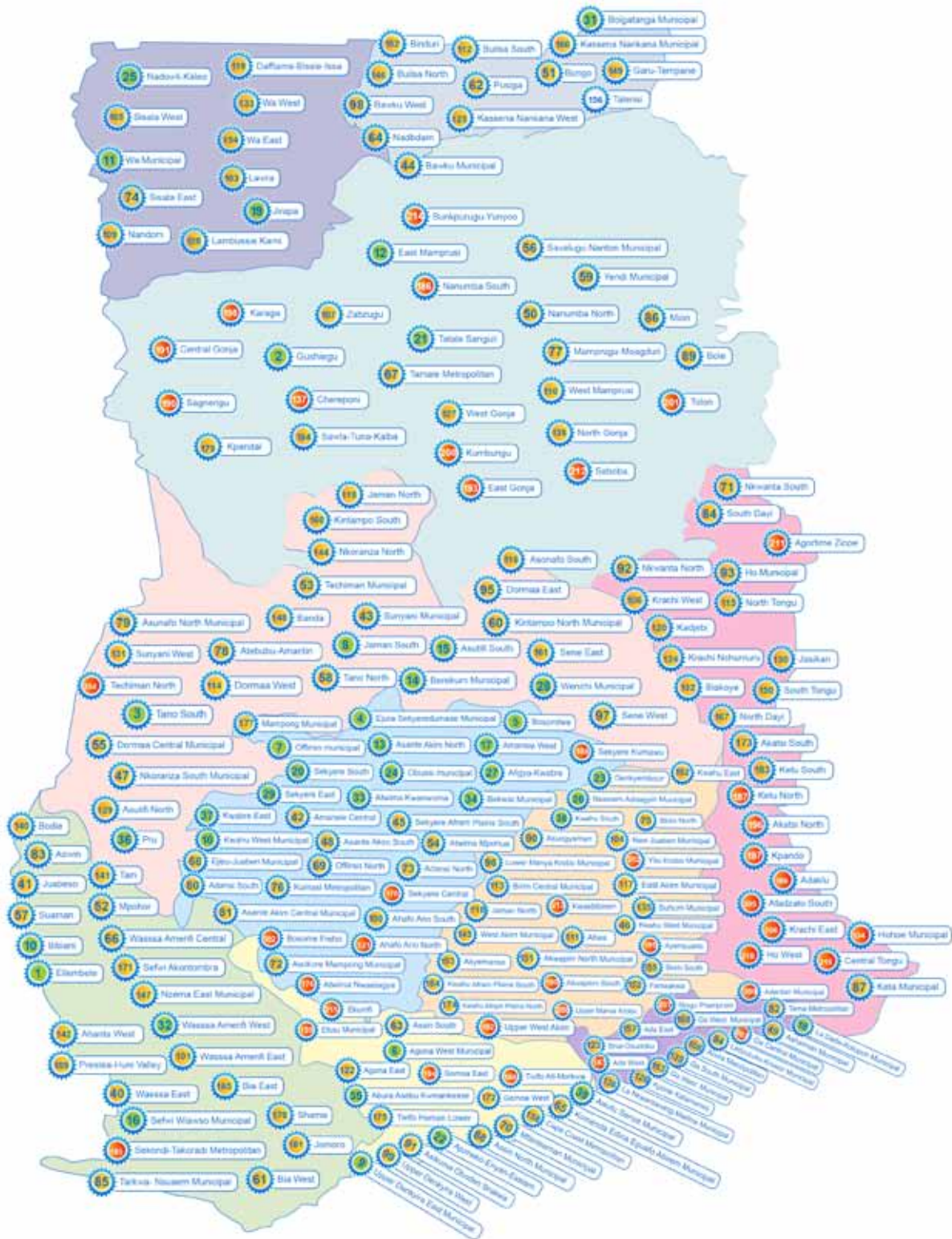
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Ghana's District League Table 2014
Strengthening Social Accountability for National Development

December 2014





RANK	DISTRICT	REGION	SCORE	RANK	DISTRICT	REGION	SCORE
1	Tano South	B A	76	36	Bongo	U E	67
2	Nsawam-Adoagyiri Municipal	E R	75	37	Offinso North	A R	67
3	Denkyembour	E R	74	38	Juabeso	W R	67
4	Jaman South	B A	73	39	Nabdam	U E	67
5	Bibiiani Anhwiaso Bekwai	W R	73	40	Ashaiman Municipal	G R	66
6	Berekum Municipal	B A	72	41	Asunafo North Municipal	B A	66
7	Offinso municipal	A R	71	42	Sefwi Wiawso Municipal	W R	66
8	Awutu Senya	C R	71	43	Nkoranza South Municipal	B A	66
9	Kwabre East	A R	71	44	Ellembele	W R	66
10	Atwima Kwanwoma	A R	71	45	Lower Manya Krobo Municipal	E R	66
11	Mpohor	W R	71	46	Shai-Osudoku	G A	66
12	Ejura Sekyeredumase Municipal	A R	71	47	Bole	N R	65
13	Obuasi municipal	A R	70	48	Bawku West	U E	65
14	Bosomtwe	A R	70	49	Asuogyaman	E R	65
15	Bolgatanga Municipal	U E	70	50	Keta Municipal	V R	65
16	Sekyere East	A R	69	51	Bia West	W R	65
17	Dormaa Central Municipal	B A	69	52	Tamale Metropolitan	N R	65
18	Kwahu West Municipal	E R	69	53	Asante Akim South	A R	64
19	Sekyere South	A R	69	54	Ejisu-Juaben Municipal	A R	64
20	Tema Metropolitan	G A	69	55	Wenchi Municipal	B A	64
21	Bawku Municipal	U E	69	56	Kintampo North Municipal	B A	64
22	Sunyani Municipal	B A	69	57	Sissala East	U W	64
23	Upper Denkyira East Municipal	C R	68	58	Amansie West	A R	64
24	Tano North	B A	68	59	Upper Denkyira West	C R	63
25	La Dade-Kotopon Municipal	G A	68	60	New Juaben Municipal	E R	63
26	Techiman Municipal	B A	68	61	East Mamprusi	N R	63
27	Asante Akim North	A R	68	62	Kassena Nankana West	U E	63
28	Bekwai Municipal	A R	68	63	Pru	B A	63
29	Asutifi South	B A	68	64	Builsa North	U E	63
30	South Dayi	V R	68	65	Asutifi North	B A	63
31	Awutu Senya East Municipal	C R	68	66	Kwahu South	E R	62
32	Tarkwa- Nsuaem Municipal	W R	67	67	Kadjebi	V R	62
33	Wa Municipal	U W	67	68	Yendi Municipal	N R	62
34	Asante Akim Central Municipal	A R	67	69	Sene West	B A	62
35	Accra Metropolitan	G A	67	70	Wassa Amenfi West	W R	62

RANK	DISTRICT	REGION	SCORE	RANK	DISTRICT	REGION	SCORE
71	East Akim Municipal	E R	62	107	Aowin	W R	59
72	Asikuma Odoben Brakwa	C R	62	108	Ajumako-Enyan-Essiam	C R	59
73	West Gonja	N R	62	109	Akwapim North Municipal	E R	58
74	Sunyani West	B A	62	110	Adansi North	A R	58
75	Talensi	U E	62	111	Sefwi Akontombra	W R	58
76	Krachi West	V R	62	112	Nkoranza North	B A	58
77	Asunafo South	B A	62	113	Mfantseman Municipal	C R	58
78	Pusiga	U E	62	114	Komenda Edina Eguafo Abirem Municipal	C R	58
79	Suhum Municipal	E R	61	115	Zabzugu	N R	58
80	Jaman North	B A	61	116	Shama	W R	58
81	Birim Central Municipal	E R	61	117	Builsa South	U E	58
82	Asokore Mampong Municipal	A R	61	118	Sekyere Kumawu	A R	58
83	Atwima Mponua	A R	61	119	Suaman	W R	58
84	Jasikan	V R	61	120	Kintampo South	B A	58
85	Nadowli-Kaleo	U W	61	121	Tain	B A	57
86	Birim North	E R	61	122	Dormaa West	B A	57
87	Assin North Municipal	C R	60	123	Atiwa	E R	57
88	Lawra	U W	60	124	West Mamprusi	N R	57
89	Ahafo Ano North	A R	60	125	Nanumba North	N R	57
90	Ho Municipal	V R	60	126	Wa West	U W	57
91	Kpone Katamanso	G A	60	127	Bosome Freho	A R	57
92	Ga East Municipal	G A	60	128	West Akim Municipal	E R	57
93	Ga West Municipal	G A	60	129	Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolitan	W R	56
94	Akwapim South	E R	60	130	Ketu South	V R	56
95	Nzema East Municipal	W R	60	131	Kpando	V R	56
96	Efutu Municipal	C R	60	132	Adansi South	A R	56
97	Jirapa	U W	60	133	North Gonja	N R	56
98	Sissala West	U W	60	134	Central Gonja	N R	56
99	Kassena Nankana Municipal	U E	60	135	North Dayi	V R	56
100	La Nkwantanang-Madina Municipal	G A	59	136	Garu-Tempene	U E	55
101	Biakoye	V R	59	137	Wassa Amenfi Central	W R	55
102	Wassa Amenfi East	W R	59	138	Savelugu Nanton Municipal	N R	55
103	Ahafo Ano South	A R	59	139	Amansie Central	A R	55
104	Atwima Nwabiagya	A R	59	140	Ga Central Municipal	G A	55
105	Ada East	G A	59	141	Bodie	W R	55
106	South Tongu	V R	59	142	Ada West	G A	55

RANK	DISTRICT	REGION	SCORE
143	Jomoro	W R	55
144	Atebubu-Amantin	B A	55
145	Fanteakwa	E R	55
146	Mion	N R	55
147	Wassa East	W R	54
148	Ketu North	V R	54
149	Tatale Sanguli	N R	54
150	Agona West Municipal	C R	54
151	Nkwanta South	V R	54
152	North Tongu	V R	54
153	Mampong Municipal	A R	54
154	Banda	B A	54
155	Bia East	W R	54
156	Ledzokuku-Krowor Municipal	G A	54
157	Adentan Municipal	G A	54
158	Birim South	E R	54
159	Mamprugu-Moagduri	N R	53
160	Kumasi Metropolitan	A R	53
161	Ahanta West	W R	53
162	Afigya-Kwabre	A R	53
163	Akatsi North	V R	53
164	Kwahu East	E R	53
165	Hohoe Municipal	V R	53
166	Cape Coast Metropolitan	C R	53
167	Ningo-Prampram	GR	53
168	Kwahu Afram Plains North	E R	53
169	Agortime Ziope	V R	53
170	Nkwanta North	VR	53
171	Techiman North	B A	53
172	Prestea-Huni Valley	W R	52
173	Abura Asebu Kwamankesse	C R	52
174	Dormaa East	B A	52
175	Sekyere Central	A R	52
176	Nandom	U W	52
177	Ho West	V R	52
178	Binduri	U E	52
179	Sawla-Tuna-Kalba	N R	52
180	Twifo Ati-Morkwa	C R	52

RANK	DISTRICT	REGION	SCORE
179	Sawla-Tuna-Kalba	N R	52
180	Twifo Ati-Morkwa	C R	52
181	Ayensuano	E R	51
182	Lambussie Karni	U W	51
183	Akyemansa	E R	51
184	Tolon	N R	51
185	Agona East	C R	50
186	Akatsi South	V R	50
187	Ga South Municipal	G A	50
188	Upper West Akim	E R	50
189	Sagnerigu	N R	49
190	Sene East	B A	49
191	Assin South	C R	48
192	Krachi Nchumuru	V R	48
193	Kwahu Afram Plains South	E R	48
194	Yilo Krobo Municipal	E R	48
195	Gomoa East	C R	48
196	Kumbungu	N R	47
197	Kpandai	N R	47
198	Upper Manya Krobo	E R	46
199	Krachi East	V R	46
200	Daffiama-Bissie-Issa	U W	46
201	Twifo Hemang Lower Denkyira	C R	45
202	East Gonja	N R	45
203	Chereponi	N R	45
204	Nanumba South	N R	44
205	Afadzato South	V R	44
206	Kwaebibirem	E R	43
207	Adaklu	V R	42
208	Gomoa West	C R	41
209	Wa East	U W	40
210	Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo	N R	39
211	Central Tongu	V R	36
212	Gushiegu	N R	32
213	Saboba	N R	31
214	Sekyere Afram Plains South	A R	28
215	Ekumfi	C R	26
216	Karaga	N R	15

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1. Introduction

In democratic countries around the world, the provision of public services is founded upon an implicit **social compact** between citizens and their government representatives. This means that citizens have the right to demand accountability for the delivery of basic services and public actors have, in turn, the obligation to be accountable for such provision in an effective, efficient and fair manner. Accountability and feedback between citizens and the state can be powerful in supporting Government to deliver services and can be substantially strengthened by the use of social accountability mechanisms.

Social accountability means that effective communication channels between the state and its people are opened up. Citizens gain information on their rights and on service provision and are empowered to connect with service providers. In turn, Government actors benefit from feedback from citizens, recognition, increased credibility, and ultimate improvements in government programmes and services. Social accountability mechanisms include initiatives such as rights awareness campaigns, participatory planning forums, citizen satisfaction surveys, or citizen charters¹.

Clearly, creating a state in which public actors are accountable for delivering quality services is a foundation of good governance. However, in many countries including Ghana, social accountability mechanisms have been limited in their use and impact. The challenges faced by civil society and government actors to strengthen such accountability channels include poor access to data and information (especially at the District level), limited capacity to take on new initiatives, and a low level of coordination between actors working in the area. A significant challenge is presented in Ghana by the limited progress in implementing decentralisation in the country.

In Ghana, several notable projects designed to strengthen social accountability have been initiated in recent years in spite of the challenges listed above². The majority of these initiatives are specific to a few individual Districts or service providers. Some other initiatives focus on accountability in a single sector, such as education. Initiatives focused only at the local

level in one or two Districts face the limitations of a still centralised system as much service provision continues to be directed from Accra. Initiatives focused only on a single sector miss the interrelations between services and the responsibility of Government to provide a holistic package.

As a result of the role that social accountability can play in development and its still limited use in Ghana, this document outlines a new national social accountability tool – the Ghana District League Table (DLT). The DLT was conceived and designed by UNICEF Ghana and the Ghana Centre for Democratic Development (CDD Ghana). The DLT is explained in the following section of this report. In section 3 the results are presented, before lessons learnt and conclusions drawn in sections 4 and 5 respectively.

2. What is the District League Table?

This report launches the first year's results of a new social accountability tool for Ghana – the District League Table (DLT). The DLT is a simple ranking tool of progress toward delivering development and key basic services in each of Ghana's Districts. It is based on global practice of developing indices for measuring and monitoring progress³. This report, the District League Table, and all the data that was used to compile it is available on the websites: <http://www.unicef.org/ghana/> and <http://www.cddgh.org/>.

While reporting is in place to monitor District compliance with their administrative and statutory requirements or procedures, the DLT focuses rather on Ghana's actual performance in delivering in six key sectors that are crucial for people's wellbeing. It looks at progress in achieving key outputs in sectors such as health or water and then aggregates this information into a single index. With this single index, each District in the country can then be ranked alongside its counterparts to see which Districts are doing well and which need more support.

2.1 The Objective

The ultimate objective of the District League Table is to increase social accountability in Ghana that will lead to improving development for the country's population. As stated above, increased

¹ For more information on social accountability, see The Social Accountability Sourcebook, World Bank, 2005.

² In early 2014, UNICEF held a consultation meeting with around 10 organisations implementing Social Accountability initiatives, including the Ministry of Local Government's unit on Social Accountability

³ For example, see the Child Development Index and the Human Development Index among others.

accountability between decision-makers and citizens is crucial in Ghana for improving both the demand for and the supply of public services. The DLT aims to help open up the space for dialogue between the state and the population. The DLT does this by providing essential information on wellbeing at the District level as well as a mechanism through which improvements can be monitored.

The DLT therefore has the following aims:

1. To support central and local Government to better understand progress in development across the country.
2. To increase transparency of information on development at the District level and raise the populace's awareness on their fundamental rights;
3. To support debate and dialogue on the issues that emerge; and
4. To increase state responsiveness in the provision and delivery of key public goods and services.

Through using the results of the DLT for active communications and advocacy work, it is expected that citizens will become increasingly informed and empowered to understand how development is progressing in their District. It is also expected that the Ghanaian Government and other stakeholders will be empowered to use the DLT results to identify gaps in service delivery, target support better, and monitor progress year on year. Such transparency and monitoring of progress will help strengthen local Government, providing them with the information they need to make a case for change. In other experiences, greater accountability of service delivery at the local level has even been shown to increase local revenue generation, as people become increasingly confident that money is being spent well⁴. However, it is crucial to note that the services provided are not only the responsibility of the District Assembly – indeed in many cases it is the central government agency which largely commands expenditure planning and disbursement at District level. This means that the District League Table must also be used to raise accountability for performance and service

delivery at the central level as well. It is also important to underline that the District League Table aims to empower – it does not intend to 'name and shame' those Districts that are facing challenges or to punish poor performing ones – quite the reverse. The DLT will help highlight inequities in local development where more support is required.

2.2 The Methodology used in the District League Table

Process Undertaken

The District League Table is similar to other such initiatives around the world,

The conception, design and execution of the District League Table involved a number of important steps to ensure a robust, credible and transparent index. The process is briefly summarised below.

1. Detailed literature and data review;
2. Stakeholder consultations of all agencies engaged in producing and using the data at the central level⁵;
3. Briefing of stakeholders on the District League Table concept and results from District level up;
4. Accessing and assessing the data;
5. Calculating the index and ranking of the Districts in the District League Table;
6. Publication, dissemination and communications.

The design of the DLT itself involved two main stages: (i) the selection of the most appropriate and available District indicators, and (ii) the aggregation of the indicators into a simple index.

These are both described below.

Selecting the indicators:

As the DLT seeks to examine the average state of development in Districts across the country, the indicators selected needed to represent a sufficiently wide range of social and economic sectors crucial to people's welfare. Several key sectors were considered at the outset, and the process of selecting the indicators for the DLT

⁴ World Bank. 2005. As above.

⁵ The agencies that contributed to the District League Table are gratefully recognised as: The Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, Ministry of Education, Ghana Education Service, Ministry of Health, Ghana Health Services, Community Water and Sanitation Agency, Ghana Water Company Ltd, Ghana Police Service, Ghana Statistical Service.

index was lengthy and iterative. Key criteria for indicator selection was agreed in advance⁶. Proposed indicators were then discussed with the service provider or relevant agency in Government. All the indicators are officially established national indicators available in national Government databases - the DLT did not involve any surveys or estimation of indicators. It is important to note that the DLT uses indicators to compile one single index, with a single score for each District. This means that the DLT provides a holistic overview of development in a District and does not provide a measure of how each District is doing in individual sectors.

Various pros and cons were then taken into account before agreement with the relevant MDA on each indicator was arrived at. As mentioned elsewhere, access to the data was a tremendous obstacle. In some cases, key indicators that had

only mention whether a District held a minimum of 1 meeting per year and not whether they held the full recommended number. For the area of child protection, no indicator met the criteria at all. Data on District level water supply coverage in urban areas is also not available. The final list of indicators is presented in the table below. They cover access to quality education, healthcare, rural water, sanitation, security and governance.

It is important to note that the responsibility to improve each of these indicators lies with a wide range of stakeholders. It is not appropriate to assume that the District Assembly is the main responsible agency. In Ghana, the vast majority of the country's budget is still planned and disbursed from the central level. Likewise, private sector, civil society, community-based organisations, faith groups and development partners all have a role to play in promoting development for all in Ghana.

Table 1: Indicators Used to Compile the District League

Sector	District Indicator	Measurement	Source	Year	Ultimate Target
Education	BECE pass rate	%, average of the District 4 subjects pass rates	EMIS (GES)	2012	100%
Sanitation	District certification as Open Defecation Free	Whether District is ODF or not ODF	Environmental Health and Sanitation, MLGRD	2013	District is certified ODF
Rural Water	Coverage of rural water supply	% of rural population covered by a rural water supply system	CWSA	2013	100%
Health	Skilled attendant at delivery	% of expected deliveries attended by skilled personnel	DHIMS (GHS)	2013	100%
Security	Coverage of police services	Number of population per police officer	Ghana Police	2013	1 per 500 people
Governance	Minimum conditions for District Administration	Minimum conditions are fulfilled or unfulfilled	DDF/FOAT	2012	Fulfilled

been proposed were found to be impossible to include as they did not meet the basic criteria of being available and robust at the District level. For example, average distance to a health centre was seen as an important indicator for healthcare, but it is not routinely available at the District level. Likewise, in discussion with the Ministry of Local Government the index was to include an indicator on the convening of District Assembly meetings with citizens, however the FOAT/DDF conditions

Calculating the Index:

Once the indicators were established and the data for each accessed, the information was compiled into the DLT's index. This was done in two basic steps:

- (i) Ensuring that all indicators sat on a standard 0 to 100 percentage scale, where 0 is the worst (minimum) score and 100 is the best (maximum)⁷;

⁶ The indicator had to be a key priority for people's wellbeing and District development; it had to be available at the District level in an annually produced national database for every District in Ghana; it had to be representative of the output or outcome level – i.e. not percentage of budget spent etc.

⁷ Most of the indicators are already expressed as a percentage, with 100% as their ultimate target. However, a couple of the indicators such as police coverages are different and had to be converted to a 0-100 scale. Details are provided in the data sheet available on our websites.

- (ii) Aggregating all the indicators for each District without any weighting. This simply means that the final score for each District was achieved by adding up the 6 indicator values and dividing the total by 6 to provide a simple average.

This provides us with one single score for each individual District by which all 216 can then be ranked, from the District in 1st place with the best level of development, to the District in 216th place with the most challenges. The simple methodology, similarly applied in other such indices around the world including the Human Development Index, enables us to quickly compare development at a glance across all 216 Districts. It provides us with a multi-sectoral overview of how Districts are doing, which are lagging behind and which are doing better than others. It is not to be used to assess Districts on their performance in specific sectors but rather as a collective, holistic measurement on District development as a whole. Clearly, the ultimate aim is to see all Districts each score 100% in the DLT – this would mean that the District's population have full access to core basic services as represented by the index – however, we are some way from this target.

In future years, we will also be able to comment on progress made from one year to the next, highlighting those Districts that have made the most progress. In order to do this, this year's DLT largely uses 2013 data, however there are some unfortunate exceptions to this, where MDAs were unable to provide data for the previous year and 2012 data was used instead.

Tano South in BA Region comes in 1st place in the District League Table

Karaga in Northern Region finds itself in bottom place in the District League Table

95 Districts of Ghana's 216 score below the current average score of 58%

Role of key actors

As a tool for promoting social accountability, the District League Table will play a key role in enhancing dialogue, transparency and responsiveness between citizens and Government. As such, multiple actors can use the DLT to their advantage. District Assemblies can use the DLT to provide them with valuable information on where they stand in their region or in the country as a whole. They can also use the annual publications of the DLT to demonstrate positive progress made year on year – this can help build trust and support among the District's population toward local decision-makers. Citizens can use the DLT to also inform them on their District's national ranking and to call stakeholders (at local *and* central level) to address poor performance so as to move up the ranking next year.

Central Government would be interested to use the DLT as a framework to understand the national picture on inequities in local development and how to help improve development through more targeted and efficient resource allocation. Donors can also use the DLT to support planning decisions and to call for greater accountability. Media and civil society have a central role to play in using the DLT to disseminate and question the resulting ranking, and to support the creation of a national dialogue around local development issues.

3. The District League Table results

3.1 Overall analysis

The table on the inside cover presents Ghana's District League Table for 2014. It shows all the Districts in the country, and their score, ranked in order of their development level. As such, it provides a holistic picture of Ghana's development at the District level.

Examining this table, there is clearly a wide range of development levels between Ghana's Districts: from a score of 76% in Tano South in Brong Ahafo Region which sits in first place, to a score of just 15% in Karaga District in Northern Region which finds itself in 216th place. The national average score is 58%, meaning that 95 Districts sit below the national average. With an eventual target of a score of 100% in the DLT, it is clear that the majority of Districts are still far from this goal.

The map on page 3 gives us an impression of the disparities in District development levels across the country geographically. We see concentrations of Districts doing poorly and grouped Districts that are doing considerably better. However, as we'll explore in section 3.4, we also see how some higher achieving Districts that stand out in deprived regions.



3.2 Top 20 and Bottom 20 Districts

The most deprived Districts in Ghana include Ekumfi in Central Region, Saboba in Northern Region, and Krachi East in Volta. Those that are doing the best include Jaman South in Brong Ahafo, Kwabre East in Ashanti and Tema Metropolitan in Greater Accra Region. In the table below, we present the top and bottom 20 in the index.

Table 2: Top 20 and Bottom 20 Districts in the District League Table

Top 20 Districts		
1	Tano South	B. Ahafo
2	Nsawam-Adoagyiri Municipal	Eastern
3	Denkyembour	Eastern
4	Jaman South	B. Ahafo
5	Bibiani Anhwiaso Bekwai	Western
6	Berekum Municipal	B. Ahafo
7	Offinso municipal	Ashanti
8	Awutu Senya	Central
9	Kwabre East	Ashanti
10	Atwima Kwanwoma	Ashanti
11	Mpohor	Western
12	Ejura Sekyeredumase Muni.	Ashanti
13	Obuasi municipal	Ashanti
14	Bosomtwe	Ashanti
15	Bolgatanga Municipal	U. East
16	Sekyere East	Ashanti
17	Dormaa Central Municipal	B. Ahafo
18	Kwahu West Municipal	Eastern
19	Sekyere South	Ashanti
20	Tema Metropolitan	G. Accra

Bottom 20 Districts		
197	Kpandai	Northern
198	Upper Manya Krobo	Eastern
199	Krachi East	Volta
200	Kumbungu	U. West
201	Twifo Hemang Lower Denkyira	Central
202	East Gonja	Northern
203	Chereponi	Northern
204	Nanumba South	Northern
205	Afadzato South	Volta
206	Kwaebibirem	Eastern
207	Adaklu	Volta
208	Gomoa West	Central
209	Wa East	U. West
210	Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo	Northern
211	Central Tongu	Volta
212	Gushiegu	Northern
213	Saboba	Northern
214	Sekyere Afram Plains South	Ashanti
215	Ekumfi	Central
216	Karaga	Northern

Looking at these two groups, some factors emerge. Among the top 20 Districts, a couple of regions stand out, particularly Ashanti Region with 8 of the 20 top Districts. On the whole there is likely to be a correlation between the level of poverty in a region and a District's level of development – i.e. the Ashanti region has one of Ghana's lowest levels of poverty at just 15% (GLSS6). However, some Districts from less well-off Regions have made it into the top 20, such as Bolgatanga Municipal in the Upper East. This means that wealth levels are important but not sufficient to determine a District's development level. Having said this, these well-performing Districts from poorer regions can often be located at the region's capital, like Bolgatanga Municipal, where they benefit from greater networks and resources.

Among the bottom 20 Districts, a couple of different regions are equally evident. Again, here we see some correlation between the level of poverty in a region and a District's level of development – i.e. Districts in Volta and the Northern Regions together have 12 of the bottom 20 Districts. Both regions have above average poverty levels (34% and 50% respectively). But again, we see that comparative wealth may not be an overriding factor driving development, as Districts from less

poor Regions appear in the bottom 20, such as Sekyere Afram Plains South in Ashanti Region.

Numerous factors drive a District's level of development. While we have seen that the poverty level of the Region can be a key factor, it is not the only determinant and others such as equitability of resource allocation from central government, ability to raise Internally Generated Revenue (IGR), or issues such as good leadership are crucial. While we comment on some of these issues in brief in this report, separate analysis would be needed to understand what the core factors are and how Districts can learn from each other.

“Ashanti Region with 8 of the 20 top Districts”

3.3 Regional analysis

In considering the Regions themselves by their average District score, we can compile the following Regional ranking. The top regions are Brong Ahafo, Upper East and Ashanti, and the bottom regions are Central, Volta and Northern. It might be surprising that a region like Greater Accra is not a top ranking region, or that Upper East is placed so highly. However, the regional rankings do not take into account any weighting for population size. This means that Upper East, though ranking higher, accounts for a very small proportion of the country's population, and regions like Greater Accra and Northern with poorer performance actually account for much larger numbers of people.

“Districts in Volta and the Northern Regions together have 12 of the bottom 20 Districts”

Table 3: Ranking of Ghana's Regions by average DLT score

Rank	Region	Score
1	Brong Ahafo	63
2	Upper East	62
3	Ashanti	62
4	Western	60
5	Greater Accra	60
6	Eastern	58
7	Upper West	56
8	Central	55
9	Volta	54
10	Northern	51

3.4 Learning across Districts

In this section we focus on a few Districts which seem to be achieving quite different levels of development from what we might expect. In the boxes below we briefly present some facts on the profile of two highlighted Districts.

Box 1: Focus on Bongo - the potential to rise

Bongo District is located in Upper East Region which has one of Ghana's highest level of poverty at just over 44%, yet it ranks in 36th position out of Ghana's 216 Districts. It is doing better than the majority of the other Districts in the same region. This shows that a region's poverty levels need not be the overriding factor in determining its development destiny.

In Bongo, its education indicator is on a par with the national average and, like other Districts, it is not certified Open Defecation Free. However, it reports a higher than average water indicator, and a higher than average health indicator. Furthermore it also has a higher than average security indicator and has a positive governance indicator. These combine to push Bongo up the national District ranking.

Likewise, Districts such as Ga South District appear to have far poorer indicators than one might imagine given that it is located in Greater Accra. Other Districts such as Central Tongu in 211th place are clearly facing tremendous structural and immediate causes of poverty which require specific attention.

Box 2: Focus on Central Tongu - facing up to challenges

Central Tongu in the Volta region is beset by poor indicators in a range of areas that combine to give it a poor score and Ghana's worst District ranking. It has well a below average education indicator, well below average health indicator, and poor performance in both the security and governance indicators.

Likewise, Karaga, in last place, in Northern Region while it has an above average water indicator, it has below average education and health indicators. In addition, its governance indicator is negative and its security indicator is one of the worst.

4. Lessons Learnt

Access to data:

The experience of accessing the basic indicators required for the compilation of the DLT was highly challenging.

The indicators agreed upon for the DLT are commonly calculated and referred to at the national level and they are estimated for the District level within standard sectoral databases (such as the EMIS and DHIMS). However, gaining access to these databases, held in different agencies at the central level in Accra was far from straightforward. Standard indicators for each District are not posted online.

Key District indicators are not disseminated in annual publications. In other countries around the world local level indicators can be more easily accessed through public documents, websites or even posters and notice boards in communities.

The implication of this challenge is that it is far from easy for policy-makers or civil society to have any idea of the level of development in Ghana at the District level. Without access to such basic information, citizens cannot check indicators to monitor progress of their own District, politicians cannot be held accountable for progress made in Districts they are responsible for, and both central and local Government cannot effectively target resources to where they are most needed. Furthermore, if such District indicators are hard to come by in Accra, they would be even harder to access at the District level – thereby impeding the planning and monitoring work of District Assemblies.



We also note that for several important areas for human development, annual indicators at the District level simply do not exist. Issues such as sanitation facilities, violence, child labour, quality of education, and social protection do not feature comprehensively in administrative data collection systems.

Substantial inequity between Districts:

According to the DLT scores, there are substantial differences in development levels between Districts, both across the country and within regions. Across the country as a whole, the highest ranked District is doing 5 times better than the lowest ranked District. And these are not entirely outliers – the top ranking 10 Districts have an average score (73) that is more twice that of the bottom 10 Districts (33).

While there are important exceptions, regions with lower levels of poverty and better infrastructure and services such as Ashanti can do better than regions which suffer from isolation, higher poverty rates and weak infrastructure and services, such as the Volta and Northern Regions.

However, this is not merely a question of unequal performance on a level playing field. The Districts that face the most substantial challenges, with the most limited infrastructure and services, should receive significantly higher proportions of resources and support in order to counteract their situations and enable them to exit deprivation. Such action might take the form of additional financial resources, infrastructure, personnel, and service coverage to the most deprived Districts.

Accountability across the whole of Government

Improvements in District development levels should not be expected to be driven entirely by District Assemblies. In many cases the majority of service provision is delivered and managed from central authorities such as GES and GHS, with DAs receiving only marginal proportions of responsibility and funding for service delivery. For DAs to be able to increase their responsiveness to citizens for service delivery, they need to be further empowered to receive clear assignments, budget allocations and autonomy from the central level. In the meantime, agencies with central level responsibility for service delivery should scale-up efforts for support to target those Districts that rank the lowest in the District League Table.

Furthermore, the frequent creation of new Districts in Ghana presents a challenge in terms

of coordination, efficient resource use, and effective administration. By late 2014 it has not been possible to obtain a map of all Ghana's 216 Districts, as maps still represent the previous 170. Naturally, this situation has further complicated the challenge of obtaining data for the new Districts created in 2012.

Annual Ranking to Assess Progress

The District League Table for 2014 presents a snapshot of the state of development, as related to the index's 6 sectors, in each of Ghana's 216 Districts as compared to one another. As the first issue, it does not tell us in which Districts progress is being made, which are falling behind or where progress is stagnating.

To monitor the progress Districts are making, we aim to repeat the DLT's publication on an annual basis. In doing so, it will be possible to assess which Districts have made the biggest improvements in their score and ranking each year, and which have made the least improvements (or even suffered the biggest deteriorations). As a result, in future years the Districts which witness the biggest improvement will be nationally recognised and rewarded.



Opportunity for cross-District learning

In some instances of our analysis of the DLT, we have noted that certain Districts are performing better than might be expected given the District's situation. Perhaps a District in a poor and isolated region is performing significantly better than its neighbours. As mentioned in section 3.2, there will be District specific factors to explain the difference in development levels in each individual District. Some may be able to raise greater amounts of sustainable Internally Generated Revenue (IGF), some may have been the beneficiaries of greater allocations from central budgets, and others may have simply more able and motivated District Assembly personnel. Whatever the factors, we can use the DLT to identify and learn from those Districts that are doing better than expected and apply that learning elsewhere.

Conclusion

A society's development must be founded upon a social compact between its citizens and their Government. The Ghana District League Table aims to strengthen this compact by reinforcing accountability in Ghana by opening up the dialogue between the state and the population. It will help to provide citizens with fundamental information on the state of wellbeing and development in all Districts across the country, and support decision-makers to respond to their needs.

In Ghana, where accountability between the general public and policy-makers is limited, the DLT is Ghana's first and only nationwide tool for social accountability. To maximise the impact of this new tool, the DLT will be extensively communicated through channels such as national and local media, stakeholder forums, and information packs. As the DLT is revised annually and the new ranking for Districts is broadcast, we will be able to highlight those Districts that have made the most progress in improving their score.

The first issue this year of the District League Table raises some fundamental points relating to Ghana's development which all stakeholders can use to improve the cycle of accountability in supplying and demanding services in the country.

First, the DLT provides solid evidence to illustrate the disparity in development levels between Districts. The highest ranked District is doing 5 times better than the lowest ranked District. While many issues of structural poverty and

other immediate causes may affect a District's score, there is much that Government and other stakeholders can do to address these inequities by better targeting resources. Citizens and civil society can also use the results of the DLT to raise debate over why their District ranks as it does. As Ghana's development has rapidly accelerated in recent years, why should some Districts be left so far behind? In future annual publications of the DLT, those Districts that have made the most progress can be given the recognition they deserve, thereby creating incentive for stakeholders to improve District development. The DLT should never be used to 'name and shame' those Districts that are struggling.

Secondly, the construction of the District League Table highlights Ghana's substantial weaknesses in the production and use of key indicators. Even with the time and knowledge at our disposal, gaining access to basic development indicators in the different Districts across Ghana was far from straightforward. No sector provides its annual data in public documents or online. While GSS publishes the results of all the main national surveys on its website, sector databases such as the EMIS for education and the DHIMS for health are all held within separate agencies at the Accra level and are not routinely shared. As a result, this

means that the vast majority of stakeholders in Ghana have no knowledge of annual indicators, particularly those at the District level – including on fundamental issues such as healthcare, water supply, or education. This lack of transparency is a central obstacle in keeping citizens informed on what Government is doing to improve their situation. Likewise, it is a major hindrance to national development planning, preventing Government at all levels from understanding where progress is being made across the country and where it is not. In addition, some important issues are not monitored at the District level at all – for example no routine District data is collected across the country on physical access to healthcare, child protection, urban water coverage.

Lastly, it is clear that for District development to rapidly advance, local actors including District Assembly officials, local service providers, civil society, and community groups need to be further empowered to tackle their own development. Resources such as information, capacity, finances, personnel and infrastructure as well as the authority to use them need to be further delegated to those on the frontline of national development.

