

A smiling woman with dark skin and short hair is holding a baby in her arms. They are standing in a lush green cornfield. In the background, there are some buildings and a blue sky with white clouds. The woman is wearing a light-colored, short-sleeved shirt and dark pants. The baby is wearing a white shirt and yellow shorts.

Report

Ghana's District League Table 2017

Toward equitable and sustainable development:
A call for central Government to review resource allocation to Districts

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Ghana's District League Table Report 2017

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TOWARD EQUITABLE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

The **District League Table (DLT)** is in its **fourth year of production** and provides Ghana with a holistic overview of the level of development across the entire country. Instead of looking at individual indicators, sectors, or regions, which can only provide us with a single measure of just one aspect of wellbeing, the **District League Table provides a multi-sectoral, integrated assessment of how Ghana is developing across all its 216 Districts.** As a result, the District League Table has become a key tool in national dialogue, providing direction and information on Ghana's overall level of development and highlighting parts of the country that continue to lag behind.

The provision of information on the overall level and progress of Ghana's national development at the local level serves as an important connection between citizens and state and thus strengthens the social contract. The District League Table helps both policy-makers and non-state actors see where progress is being made and which areas are lagging behind. As such, the District League Table helps policy-makers to know where to provide support and to see where impact is being made.

The District League Table is produced on an annual basis by UNICEF Ghana and the Ghana Centre for Democratic Development (CDD Ghana). It is produced with the support of the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development and the Office of the Head of Local Government Services. It is **a useful tool for national monitoring of and planning for development across the 216 districts** and is compiled and shared annually based on in-depth sector discussions across Government.



Since the District League Table was first launched in 2014, it has **undergone some improvements** not only in its actual design, but also in how it is perceived and used in Ghana. Pre-launch briefings as well as post-launch events were again held in all the 10 regions with District level participation, and the central Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) were again consulted.

This note summarises the objectives and methodology of the District League Table, and presents the results and major trends for 2017. It also takes account of the extent to which the District League Table is changing social accountability in Ghana, and concludes with some key messages.

DLT Objectives

The objective of the District League Table is to increase social accountability in Ghana for improved development. It does this by providing and tracking essential information on wellbeing across the entire country at the District level.

The District League Table has the following 4 aims:

1. **To support Central and also Local Government** to better understand progress of development across the country.
2. **To improve transparency of information** on development at the District level and raise citizen awareness.
3. **To encourage debate and dialogue** on accountability and development progress.
4. **To increase state responsiveness** in the provision and delivery of essential services across the country.

It is expected that as the results of the District League Table are used, non-state actors will become increasingly informed on how development is progressing across the country. It is also expected that the Ghanaian Government and other stakeholders at the national, regional and district levels will be empowered to use the results to identify areas lagging behind, better target support, and monitor progress year on year.

How the District League Table is Constructed

The District League Table's simple methodology is based on global practice of index design, including the Human Development Index. It provides a holistic overview of national development – it does not provide information on progress in specific sectors.

Feedback is frequently received on ideas

for new indicators that need to be collected in Ghana. Likewise, ideas on how to better disseminate the District League Table and communicate its findings to all stakeholders, including the media, are received following the launch of each year's report.

In relation to the indicators, **a workshop was held in May 2017 to reflect on the design of and indicators used** in the District League Table. A wide range of indicators was reviewed and considered for possible inclusion based on whether they met the basic criteria – such as being available, and being focused more at the outcome rather than input level of development. A total of 55 indicators were reviewed to ensure that those used in the District League Table are the best possible choices. As a result, a new indicator on health was introduced to sit alongside that of skilled delivery attendant. A new indicator on education and gender and one on sanitation may be introduced next year if possible. The indicators on water and governance were retained. The indicator on security remains the best available option, although efforts are underway to improve the sector's indicators.

The six sectors receive equal weight in the index's construction. Full information on the methodology is available on the websites: www.cddgh.org/publications, www.iamawareghana.com and <http://www.unicef.org/ghana/>. As in previous years, all indicators are officially established national indicators available in national, verified Government databases.



The District League Table's Indicators

SECTOR	INDICATOR	MEASUREMENT	SOURCE	YEAR	TARGET
Education	District BECE pass rate	% of pupils that passed their BECE (average of the 4 subjects pass rates)	EMIS (GES)	2015/16	100%
Sanitation	Community certification for Open Defecation Free	% of communities that are certified ODF	Environmental Health and Sanitation, Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources	2016	100% of communities are certified ODF
Rural Water	Coverage of rural water supply (only in Districts with any rural population)	% of rural population covered by a rural water supply system	CWSA	2016	100%
Health	Skilled attendant at delivery	% of expected deliveries attended by skilled personnel	DHIMS (GHS)	2016	100%
	Institutional newborn mortality at facility	Proportion of newborns (under 28 days old) dying in a health facility (represented as a scale of the percentage of deaths of 1000 live births)	DHIMS (GHS)	2016	100% (the negative of this indicator is used, so that 100% is the target)
Security	Coverage of police services	Number of population per police officer	Ghana Police	2016	1 per 500 people
Governance	FOAT Performance Measures Score	FOAT Performance Measures Score	DDF/FOAT	2014	100%

The Results

The results of the 2017 District League Table are presented in the map, as well as in full in the table, which shows the score for each District, its rank, as well as its rank in 2016.

This year the District in first place is one returning to the top spot. **Tema Metropolitan of Greater Accra sits in 1st place with a score of 80, the highest score ever reached.** It was previously in 1st place in 2015.

The **District in 216th place is now Krachi East in the Volta Region with a score of 50.6.** This means that the top and bottom scores have both improved since last year. The national average is 64.7, below which 102 Districts are found – this compares with an average of 58.9 last year. With an eventual target of a score of 100%, it is clear that the majority of Districts are still far from this goal.

Interestingly there are 9 Districts that are new to the top 20, such as Wa West in the Upper West Region. Furthermore, 12 of the Districts in the bottom 20 are new there too as several featuring there last year have managed to move up. North Tongu, which was the 216th District in 2016, has moved up to 196th place due to improvements such as in their health indicator.

Some Districts have made impressive improvements in their scores. **The most improved District this year is Lambussie Karni in the Upper West region,** which improved its score by 23 percentage points, due to increases in its sanitation and health indicators. Other Districts also showed substantial increases in their scores including Ekumfi in Central Region by 20 percentage points (due to increases in education and health indicators), and Afadzato South in Volta Region by 19 percentage points (due to increases in education, sanitation, health and security indicators).

Considering the Regions by their average District score provides the ranking below. While Greater Accra still ranks high, regions

traditionally considered poorer such as Upper West and Upper East have slightly higher scores than a region such as the Ashanti region. There are clearly important shifts in these regional rankings as lower ranking regions have witnessed improved indicators for Districts in their regions. The progress of districts in the Upper West region is particularly noteworthy.

Regional Average Scores

RANK		REGION	SCORES			
2017	2016		2017	2016	2015	2014
1	6	Upper West	68.9	60	53	56
2	2	G. Accra	67.4	62	61	60
3	3	B. Ahafo	67.1	61	60	63
4	4	Upper East	66.9	61	59	62
5	7	Central	65.1	59	53	55
6	5	Western	64.7	61	59	60
7	9	Northern	63.6	55	50	51
8	1	Ashanti	64.3	63	61	62
9	10	Volta	62.3	54	53	54
10	8	Eastern	61.3	56	55	58

The top Districts in each of the Regions are listed below. This list provides some support to the overall trend that the Municipal Districts are more likely to rank higher in the league table than their rural counterparts. However, at the national level this is not always the case.

Top Districts in each Region

REGION	TOP RANKING DISTRICT IN 2017 DLT	TOP RANKING DISTRICT IN 2016 DLT
Ashanti	Atwima Nwabiagya	Ejura Sekyeredomase Municipal
G. Accra	Tema Metropolitan	La Nkwantanang-Madina Municipal
B. Ahafo	Jaman South	Jaman South
Upper East	Pusiga	Bawku Municipal
Western	Bibiani Anhwiaso Bekwai	Bibiani Anhwiaso Bekwai
Upper West	Nandom	Sissala East
Central	Upper Denkyira East Municipal	Awutu Senya East Municipal
Eastern	Nsawam-Adoagyiri Municipal	Nsawam-Adoagyiri Municipal
Northern	Yendi Municipal	Yendi Municipal
Volta	South Dayi	Kpando

Since 2016, there have been some important shifts in the ranking of Districts due to changes in their level of development. Looking at the table, those Districts that have risen in ranking are shaded green and those that have declined are shaded red.

What is most important is that overall, **190 Districts managed to improve their score as compared to last year.** However, this means that **26 Districts saw their score actually worsen.**

A key area of improvement has again been that of sanitation. While no District in Ghana is still yet certified as Open Defecation Free, eight Districts (Kumbungu, Mion, and Tatale Sanguli in Northern Region, Bawku West and Pusiga in Upper East, and Lambussie Karni, Nandom and Wa East in Upper West Region) have now managed to certify more than a third of their communities as Open Defecation Free.

As noted above, while not always the case, Metropolitans and Municipalities often perform better than more rural Districts. Almost half of the top 20 Districts are Municipalities or Metropolitans. However, several less well-off Districts that ranked much lower in previous years have risen to the top 20, such as Lawra in Upper West and Pusiga in Upper East.

As highlighted in previous years, inequality remains a concerning finding. We continue to see big differences in development levels between Districts, including between Districts in the same region. Although the gap has shown important progress **in narrowing this year, those Districts at the top of the ranking are doing almost 60% better than the lowest ranked Districts.**

While Districts in better-off Regions are likely to rank higher in the District League Table and those from poorer Regions rank lower, this pattern is not a reliable predictor of District ranking. Indeed, Ghana's two poorest Regions, Upper West and Upper East, still do not have the lowest average District scores,

with Districts in the Upper West region now doing particularly well. What remains important to note, is that some Districts are doing better than might be 'expected' given their level of poverty. As we know, differences in development levels within Regions is now greater than inequality between regions, or between the north and the south of the country. In the Northern Region, Yendi Municipal scores 75 while Gushiegu in the same region scores just 50.8. In the Greater Accra region, Tema Metropolitan scores 80 while Ga South scores just 55.7.

As has been the case in previous years, the reasons why some Districts are substantially more developed than others despite facing apparent major challenges, is not completely clear. We all know that numerous factors drive development across different parts of the country – infrastructure, information, leadership, climate, resources etc – but understanding precisely what those factors are remains to be fully analysed.





RANK	DISTRICT	REGION	SCORE 2017	RANK (2016)	RANK	DISTRICT	REGION	SCORE 2017	RANK (2016)	RANK	DISTRICT
1	Tema Metropolitan	GA	80.00	2	43	South Dayi	VR	69.13	56	87	Keta Municipal
2	La Nkwantanang-Madina Municipal	GA	77.61	1	44	Nadowli-Kaleo	UW	69.12	71	88	Ga West Municipal
3	Atwima Nwabiagya	AR	76.45	37	45	Ningo-Prampram	GA	69.11	75	89	East Akim Municipal
4	Upper Denkyira East Municipal	CR	76.12	9	46	Kassena Nankana West	UE	68.91	96	90	Afadzato South
5	Awutu Senya	CR	76.07	4	47	Bosome Freho	AR	68.72	79	91	Ajumako-Enyan-Essiam
6	Awutu Senya East Municipal	CR	75.62	3	48	Asante Akim Central Municipal	AR	68.52	30	92	North Dayi
7	Nandom	UW	75.24	53	49	Accra Metropolitan	GA	68.48	34	93	Biakoye
8	Yendi Municipal	NR	74.98	23	50	Kumasi Metropolitan	AR	68.46	36	94	Hohoe Municipal
9	Jaman South	BA	74.36	13	51	Nanumba South	NR	68.42	185	95	Kumbungu
10	Lawra	WR	74.34	60	52	Sissala East	UW	68.39	32	96	Sekyere South
11	Ashaiman Municipal	GA	74.12	17	53	Ada West	GA	68.27	187	97	Komenda Edina Eguafio Abirem
12	Asutifi South	BA	73.88	19	54	Suaman	WR	68.13	55	98	Tatale Sanguli
13	Pusiga	UE	73.72	70	55	Sissala West	UW	68.06	107	99	Atiwa
14	Sunyani Municipal	BA	73.24	15	56	Asutifi North	BA	68.01	98	100	Nkwanta North
15	Bibiani Anhwiaso Bekwai	WR	73.18	7	57	Kintampo North Municipal	BA	67.99	62	101	Talensi
16	Banda	BA	73.04	109	58	Kwahu West Municipal	ER	67.92	20	102	Techiman North
17	Wa West	UW	73.02	123	59	Amansie West	AR	67.91	38	103	Ho Municipal
18	Upper Denkyira West	CR	72.76	63	60	Birim North	ER	67.81	54	104	Bongo
19	Agona West Municipal	CR	72.22	119	61	Techiman Municipal	BA	67.79	28	105	East Mamprusi
20	Ejura Sekyeredumase Municipal	AR	72.11	5	62	Mampong Municipal	AR	67.71	31	106	Kadjebi
21	Mion	NR	71.93	113	63	Builsa North	UE	67.71	95	107	Wa Municipal
22	Bole	NR	71.32	25	64	Nkoranza North	BA	67.65	106	108	Ga East Municipal
23	Asunafo North Municipal	BA	71.32	16	65	Wassa Amenfi West	WR	67.57	134	109	Asuogyaman
24	Zabzugu	NR	71.24	135	66	Twifo Ati-Morkwa	CR	67.46	73	110	Mfantseman Municipal
25	Nsawam-Adoagyiri Municipal	ER	71.17	10	67	Bodie	WR	67.44	167	111	Atwima Mponua
26	Bawku West	UE	71.09	44	68	Daffiama-Bissie-Issa	UW	67.41	157	112	Suhum Municipal
27	Tano North	BA	71.07	43	69	Wassa Amenfi Central	WR	67.39	117	113	Ejisu-Juaben Municipal
28	Nkoranza South Municipal	BA	70.77	68	70	Mamprugu-Moagduri	NR	67.24	131	114	Kpandai
29	Bawku Municipal	UE	70.76	18	71	Wa East	UW	67.16	49	115	Assin South
30	Tano South	BA	70.66	42	72	Asikuma Odoben Brakwa	CR	67.13	77	116	Savelugu Nanton Municipal
31	Nabdram	UE	70.65	89	73	Tolon	NR	67.05	148	117	Asante Akim South
32	Ellembele	WR	70.63	11	74	Ada East	GA	66.92	127	118	Tain
33	Bekwai Municipal	AR	70.45	12	75	Lambussie Karni	UW	66.88	211	119	Adaklu
34	Berekum Municipal	BA	70.38	14	76	Sefwi Wiawso Municipal	WR	66.85	41	120	Abura Asebu Kwamankesse
35	Kpone Katamanso	GA	70.34	39	77	West Gonja	NR	66.78	84	121	Kassena Nankana Municipal
36	Mpohor	WR	70.23	74	78	Jasikan	VR	66.78	112	122	Ahafo Ano North
37	Offinso municipal	AR	69.91	6	79	Tarkwa Nsuaem Municipal	WR	66.67	22	123	Sekyere East
38	Bolgatanga Municipal	UE	69.69	29	80	Asante Akim North	AR	66.66	8	124	Sunyani West
39	Juabeso	WR	69.58	24	81	Shai-Osudoku	GA	66.63	33	125	Pru
40	Wenchi Municipal	BA	69.57	21	82	Assin North Municipal	CR	66.59	47	126	Kwabre East
41	La Dade-Kotopon Municipal	GA	69.43	35	83	Atwima Kwanwoma	AR	66.57	80	127	Birim Central Municipal
42	Asunafo South	BA	69.31	46	84	Central Gonja	R	66.53	152	128	Denkyembour
					85	Kpando	VR	66.53	52		
					86	Atebubu-Amantin	BA	66.47	177		

 Improved DLT ranking since 2016

“The most improved District ranking in the DLT 2017 is...”

League Table 2017



	REGION	SCORE 2017	RANK (2016)	RANK	DISTRICT	REGION	SCORE 2017	RANK (2016)	RANK	DISTRICT	REGION	SCORE 2017	RANK (2016)
	VR	66.46	61	129	Obuasi municipal	AR	63.72	26	173	Adentan Municipal	GA	59.65	160
	GA	66.44	64	130	Garu-Tempene	UE	63.62	121	174	Dormaa East	BA	59.43	199
	ER	66.43	51	131	Jirapa	UW	63.51	97	175	Ahafo Ano South	AR	59.42	151
	VR	66.40	201	132	Aowin	WR	63.50	137	176	Ayensuano	ER	59.31	154
	CR	66.31	94	133	Agortime Ziope (Adaklu Anyigbe)	VR	63.44	155	177	Sagnerigu	NR	59.28	203
	VR	66.26	164	134	Shama	WR	63.43	100	178	West Mamprusi	R	59.26	186
	VR	66.13	92	135	Adansi North	AR	63.40	124	179	Ga Central Municipal	GA	59.16	132
	VR	66.01	57	136	Binduri	UE	63.36	180	180	New Juaben Municipal	ER	59.02	105
	NR	65.95	136	137	Dormaa Central Municipal	BA	63.29	50	181	Ketu North	VR	58.89	159
	AR	65.77	120	138	Bia West	WR	63.08	58	182	Saboba	NR	58.86	192
Municipal	CR	65.77	72	139	Lower Manya Krobo Municipal	ER	63.07	69	183	Ho West	VR	58.80	156
	NR	65.75	181	140	Wassa East	WR	62.95	173	184	Sene East	BA	58.74	197
	ER	65.63	102	141	South Tongu	VR	62.90	99	185	Offinso North	AR	58.74	108
	VR	65.63	202	142	Sekyere Afram Plains South	AR	62.78	103	186	Akwapim North Municipal	ER	58.60	176
	UE	65.62	116	143	Akwapim South	ER	62.73	126	187	Chereponi	NR	58.51	195
	BA	65.40	179	144	Bia East	WR	62.52	165	188	Krachi West	VR	58.50	110
	VR	65.40	85	145	Ekumfi	CR	62.47	215	189	Efutu Municipal	CR	58.47	104
	UE	65.36	59	146	Wassa Amenfi East	WR	62.32	48	190	Krachi Nchumuru	VR	58.39	205
	NR	65.20	45	147	Kwahu South	ER	62.21	147	191	West Akim Municipal	ER	58.13	182
	VR	65.17	83	148	Nzema East Municipal	WR	62.20	114	192	Upper West Akim	ER	57.77	190
	UW	65.15	130	149	Gomoa East	CR	62.12	146	193	Karaga	NR	57.34	207
	GA	65.14	115	150	Sene West	BA	62.12	93	194	Asokore Mampong Municipal	AR	57.19	81
	ER	65.08	125	151	Jomoro	WR	62.11	138	195	Nkwanta South	VR	56.99	200
	CR	64.98	140	152	Kwaebibirem	ER	62.05	150	196	North Tongu	VR	56.88	216
	AR	64.91	40	153	Ahanta West	WR	62.02	139	197	Fanteakwa	ER	56.40	175
	ER	64.90	91	154	Nanumba North	NR	61.97	142	198	Kwahu Afram Plains South	ER	56.37	188
	AR	64.86	66	155	North Gonja	NR	61.84	183	199	Sekyere Kumawu	AR	56.32	143
	NR	64.80	193	156	Jaman North	BA	61.78	76	200	Central Tongu	VR	56.13	178
	CR	64.70	170	157	Yilo Krobo Municipal	ER	61.68	172	201	Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolitan	WR	55.75	184
	NR	64.67	111	158	Amansie Central	AR	61.37	128	202	Kwahu Afram Plains North	ER	55.74	166
	AR	64.65	88	159	Tamale Metropolitan	NR	61.36	65	203	Ga South Municipal	GA	55.67	191
	BA	64.57	129	160	Sekyere Central	AR	61.30	86	204	Akyemansa	ER	55.60	198
	VR	64.56	194	161	Kintampo South	BA	61.28	145	205	Prestea-Huni Valley	WR	55.17	162
	CR	64.54	168	162	Akatsi North	VR	61.18	171	206	Adansi South	AR	54.87	163
	UE	64.37	101	163	Ledzokuku-Krowor Municipal	GA	61.12	141	207	Builsa South	UE	54.87	196
	AR	64.22	82	164	Sefwi Akontombra	WR	61.10	90	208	Upper Manya Krobo	ER	54.85	213
	AR	64.21	27	165	Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo	NR	60.89	158	209	Afigya-Kwabre	AR	54.45	174
	BA	64.14	87	166	Dormaa West	BA	60.63	204	210	Kwahu East	ER	54.30	209
	BA	64.09	78	167	Ketu South	VR	60.52	144	211	Cape Coast Metropolitan	CR	54.30	153
	AR	64.09	67	168	Akatsi South	VR	60.21	208	212	Agona East	CR	53.71	169
	ER	63.82	122	169	Sawla-Tuna-Kalba	NR	60.12	161	213	East Gonja	NR	52.13	214
	ER	63.81	133	170	Twifo Hemang Lower Denkyira	CR	59.87	189	214	Gomoa West	CR	51.39	212
				171	Birim South	ER	59.84	149	215	Gushiegu	NR	50.77	210
				172	Bosomtwe	AR	59.84	118	216	Krachi East	VR	50.66	206

Declined DLT ranking since 2016

s Lambussie Karni in the Upper West Region.”

Use of the District League Table

Since the launch of last year's District League Table, we have engaged with key stakeholders at national and local levels across the country, talking with policy-makers, central government staff, local government officials, civil society and the media to understand how the District League Table is changing accountability for development in Ghana.

To build awareness of National Development

In a set of targeted stakeholder surveys carried out by UNICEF in 2016 and 2017 of around 150 local and central government officials, civil society and media personnel, awareness of the District League Table appears very high (well over 90%)¹. Media coverage has been particularly high with improved reporting year on year. Other tools, such as the large-scale use of text messages and partnerships with NGOs that work at the local level, help to spread the information. As a result, the District League Table is supporting various groups of actors to be better informed on the progress that Ghana is making in national development. In its 2016 launch, the District League Table was highlighted as “a reliable tool for comparing development among Districts”². However, major challenges remain in more widely informing actors of the league table's results and implications.

To increase accountability

Approximately **90% of respondents to the 2017 UNICEF stakeholder survey believed that the League Table is helping to increase social accountability for development.** As one stakeholder put it “*Citizens now have a basis and some form of evidence on which to demand for accountability from duty bearers. Duty bearers would act more responsibly with resources knowing that the DLT results would be released each year and the citizens would demand answers.*”³

¹ UNICEF DLT Surveys, 2016 and 2017.

² Participant at the 2016 National DLT Launch. Summary Note of DLT Surveys, Sep 2017.

³ UNICEF DLT Survey, 2017.

As in previous years, it is crucial to note that the responsibility for national development sits largely at the central level, given that the majority of resources are held at and allocated from that level. Just because the District League Table has the word ‘District’ in its title and provides information disaggregated to the District level, it would be a mistake to presume that it tracks the efforts or performance of the District Assembly in delivering development. The DLT rather tracks the delivery of public services and development to citizens across the country as provided by government as a whole.

To allocate resources

Given the District League Table's strength in identifying which Districts are developing well and areas of the country that are lagging behind, it is crucial that such information is used to improve resource allocation to Districts from the central level. Engagements with five bottom ranked Districts in the 2016 DLT emphasised the need for an improved and timely allocation of resources, especially for Districts that struggle with raising internally generated funds. As a result, it is **commendable that Parliament's Select Committee on Local Government and Rural Development and other agencies have recognised the need to revisit the DACF's resource allocation through the inclusion of the District League Table in the DACF formula, so as to better address developmental needs across the country.**

Furthermore, partners can use the District League Table to prioritise intervention planning. For example, in mid-2017 the High Commissioner of Canada to Ghana stated that “*Canada welcomes Ghanaian initiatives that promote quality data collection and the use of data to deliver more inclusive, improved public services. Availability of such data and analysis at local and district levels helps support better decision-making. This initiative is an important means for women and men to*



engage and to be engaged, in strengthening their communities”.

At the District level, the District League Table has helped build understanding of progress and to face challenges. The UNICEF stakeholder survey showed that over **70% of District stakeholders indicated using its results to inform public meetings, local planning, and to inspire specific local development initiatives**⁴.

Potential improvements to the District League Table

To increase the power and impact of the District League Table, its design and use can gradually be improved over the years. Ownership of the table can spread further across Government, particularly to support sectoral and national planning. Dissemination and awareness raising can be strengthened through more effective partnerships. Media colleagues can be supported to understand

the aim of the initiative and provide increasingly constructive reporting. As new indicators become available at the national level they can be considered for integration based on the 2017 indicator review. Further emphasis can then be placed on the central aims of the District League Table – those of increasing accountability, and using it to better allocate resources.

Key Messages

Now in its fourth year, the District League Table presents an excellent opportunity to ask whether overall progress in development is being made fast enough across Ghana. Despite the adjustments in the indicators used over time, the results suggest that indeed some important progress is being made, with the gap between the most developed and the least developed Districts starting to close slightly, and regions like Upper West offering a lot to learn from. However, over the years the score of the top ranked District has not

⁴ UNICEF District League Table Stakeholder Survey, 2017.

changed as much as the score of the District in 216th place, suggesting that progress may reach a plateau. In addition, while narrowed slightly, **the gap between the 1st and the 216th District is still substantial and requires concerted and targeted efforts to close.**

In relation to the need to better target resources, we note that while the vast majority of development resources are allocated from the central level, a rapid analysis of the DACF allocations to Districts suggest that they do not align well with the need of Districts – i.e. Districts ranking near the bottom of the DLT do not on average receive greater allocations of DACF to support them and help address the challenges they face⁵. As a result, we continue to recommend the use of the District League Table in the allocation of resources from the centre to local areas.

In furtherance to this, we commend the fact that Parliament’s Select Committee on Local Government and Rural Development and other agencies have recognised the **need to revisit the DACF’s resource allocation through the inclusion of the District League Table in the DACF formula,** so as to better address developmental needs across the country.

In addition to increased funding for deprived Districts, it is **important to also boost District Assembly’s ability to effectively plan for and deliver progress** through increased capacity. There is the need to accelerate Ghana’s process of fiscal decentralization in order to empower adequately District Assemblies. An example of this would be accelerating the establishment of District Statistical Offices as required by the new local governance act which are currently only in existence in 28 out of Ghana’s 216 Districts.

Although mentioned in previous District League Table reports, it is vital to reiterate the fact that **data accessibility remains a**

major challenge in Ghana and a barrier to sustainable development.

While the quality of some data collected has improved – such as through the efforts of the Environmental Health and Sanitation Department and the Community Water and Sanitation Agency of the Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources – major challenges are created by a sheer lack of sharing of national data. In Ghana, almost no administrative databases are available publicly online in an annually updated, accessible format. Without access to basic development indicators, it is almost impossible for policy-makers, technicians and development partners to make informed decisions about policy and programming across the country.

To conclude, we underline that **the development of Ghana’s 216 Districts is a responsibility of Government as a whole,** and that as resources are predominantly held at and allocated from the central level that it is central Government who must particularly look to improve their allocation by using the DLT ranking. However, we cannot ignore the role that Districts, specifically District Assemblies, can play in being responsive and accountable in the management of their resources toward improving service delivery.

Indeed, while central government resource allocation needs to improve and be more targeted, the use of resources allocated to District Assemblies can also improve. To this end, we applaud the efforts of the 70% of District stakeholders who attempted to address the results of the District League Table following the release of last year’s report. We strongly encourage District teams to take their action to the next level - to use data to understand how to best prioritise limited resources and to learn from faster developing Districts.

All related data and documents are available on the website: <http://www.unicef.org/ghana/>, [http://www.iamawareghana.com](http://www.iamawareghana.com;); www.cddgh.org/publications;

⁵ UNICEF Comparison of DLT rankings to DACF allocation, 2017.



