



2018 HIGH LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM

LAUNCHING

INCLUSIVE DATA CHARTER

Keynote Speech by

Professor George Gyan-Baffour, Minister for Planning

Republic of Ghana

17th July 2018

Millennium Hilton Hotel, One UN Plaza, New York

7:30-9:00 AM

(Protocols)

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. Today's event marks a significant moment in our quest to sustainably transform our economies and the lives of all our people and to better provide for the needs of all girls and boys; women and men in whichever communities they may be found, particularly the underserved segments of our societies.

2. There is no doubt of the appreciation of the value of data by many of us here and increasingly more people are becoming advocates for data. Without data, we are certain to miss our goals and targets and more critically, to take decisions that may not be supported by the facts of the situation we seek to influence. It is apparent that unless we collect and present the data expressly to depict the realities of the range of categories of people—identifiable and unidentifiable—we cannot be fully successful at intervening in the lives of those most likely to be left behind.

3. The "yet-to-be-identified", are people who may only be distinguished by the painstaking analysis of data, cross-classified by a range of characteristics. This often highly vulnerable group, can only come into focus when we exploit data to its fullest potential. Indeed, the principles espoused by the Charter we are launching today, should help us in our strive to achieve sustainable development within and across our various countries.

4. Our governments, having committed to pursuing inclusive development must find ways to identify the most disadvantaged and those most likely to be left behind.

5. The launch of the Inclusive Data Charter has brought together the official statistics community, policy makers, civil society and other stakeholders of data, to collectively discuss and agree on a common direction that ensures that data in the desired forms are produced and made available to all. Indeed, this is a historic moment where communities of data producers and users are taking steps to consciously or unconsciously ensure that we are leaving no one behind.

6. In tandem with this objective, in Ghana, the Directive Principles of State Policy of the 1992 Constitution, outlines clear provisions to guide the nation towards a more equitable, inclusive and socially just society, in which every citizen's rights will be realised. This underpins all Government's development efforts. The recent introduction of the free Senior High School Programme by government aims to ensure that financing does not limit any child in Ghana from accessing secondary education. This could not have been possible without the data telling us who are the neediest, where they are located, and how different they are from others.

7. Another important initiative Government is embarking on, is the establishment of a National Identification System, which ultimately will culminate in the creation of a Population Register. Again, ensuring that all

persons are properly documented and reached with necessary services for equitable and sustainable development. For us, therefore, the principles underlying the Inclusive Data Charter is helping to re-enforce our resolve, as a country to produce the right data with the required disaggregation that will help us achieve the SDGs.

9. As member countries committed to attaining the goals and targets of the SDGs, we must strengthen our statistical institutions and commit resources - human technical and financial to producing inclusive data that will enable us mitigate our development challenges. Data that points us to where attention is most needed, thus helping to develop the most relevant and effective strategies, inform policies and programmes and bolster our efforts to make a difference in achieving the SDGs for all.

10. **Distinguished guests**, I must congratulate the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data, for spearheading this initiative; providing the policy space and convening the various constituencies of data producers and users to develop the charter and commit to its principles.

11. We also commend the founding countries and institutions for the bold step they have each taken and for developing action plans to operationalise the principles of the charter.

12. Committing to the tenets of this Charter will ensure that we achieve the overarching aim of the SDGs which is "to leave no one behind". I

therefore call on all stakeholders - governments, private sector, civil society, multi-lateral institutions, philanthropic organisations, and all development partners to join hands in unison and subscribe to the Inclusive Data Charter to drive the achievement of the SDGs for ALL.

13. Thank You.