Geographic Information Systems: Indispensable Ingredient for Good Governance in Ghana

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Outline:

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+ GIS and Good Governance
+ Why is GIS Special ?
+ Ghana Office of GIS (GhOGIS)
+ Conclusions

Introduction…

+ Developing countries are being admonished to practice Good Governance as a means to alleviating poverty, and sustaining development

+ Governance has been defined as the exercise of political, economic, and administrative authority in the management of a country's affair

+ Good governance is the implementation of government policies and practices in the most efficient and effective way to benefit the public

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Characteristics..

+ effectiveness and efficiency
+ accountability
+ the rule of law
+ public participation
+ consensus orientation
+ responsiveness
+ equity
+ strategic vision

+ comprise organizations, mechanisms, and procedures that afford the citizens ability to exercise their legal rights, access to state resources, access opportunities and information that will enable public participation in the decision making process.

By its nature, Geographic Information Systems, can synthesize all data government requires to guide public decision

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GIS and Good Governance…

+ Government exists to make decisions in the interest of the public it serves
+ 70-80% of local government work involves land or geographically related issues or tasks. Hence local governments depend on GIS to provide a very efficient tool for organizing and managing spatial data.
+ GIS is being used for infrastructure inventory, plan transportation routing, improve public service delivery, manage land development to generate revenue
+ GIS being used in unique ways for long-term health, safety and welfare of citizens (Table A, exhaustive list)

GIS is Special

+ Involves a number interrelated technologies
+ computer-based system that links spatial data and other attribute data to generate reports and maps
+ consists of six main components – hardware, software, the database, management system, trained personnel, and internet
+ Spatial data is special -includes
    high resolution satellite imagery,
    aerial photography,
    topographic and planimetric maps,
    cadastral maps,
    street network,
    census data,
    GPS data, etc - largely produced by government organizations
+ working with spatial data involves very difficult choices

Ghana of GIS (GhOGIS)…

- ICT/GIT/GIS is being used widely to access more information valuable in decision making process
- Spatial information is relevant to good governance
- GIS is special case of IT essential for all aspects of national administration
- Need for Ghana Office of GIS – national repository of vital datasets that be only provided by government
- Starting with Cadastral and Land Information Systems other areas –tourism, investment, trade etc will benefit from a Ghana GIS

Conclusions

- concept of Good governance is a high quality idea for Ghana to pursue
- accurate spatial data uniquely organized with GIS is needed to support government decisions to manage our resources efficiently and effectively
- Need for a GhOGIS – a committee should look into the possibility in light of LAP (cadastral maps will be available)
- Other relevant benefits will be derived from GhOGIS