



• Vice-President Dr Bawumia (8th from right), Rev. John Ntim-Fordjour (6th from left), Deputy Minister of Education; Dr Hilda Hagggar Ampadu (7th from right), Inspector-General, NaSIA, with some students after the launch of the SLIMS programme in Accra. Picture: SAMUEL TEI ADANO

Bawumia launches digitalised school licensing system

By Chris Nunoo

A DIGITALISED system to revolutionise the licensing, inspection and evaluation of pre-tertiary schools across the country has been launched in Accra.

The School Licensing and Inspections Management Systems (SLIMS), developed by the National Schools Inspectorate Authority (NaSIA), is an innovative technological solution system which attests to the nation's commitment to educational excellence and digital innovation.

Its key features are risk-based inspection planning, electronic working papers, real time analytics and reporting, as well as integration with government services.

The Vice-President, Dr Mahamudu Bawumia, who launched the system, said in 2017, preparations for the enactment of the Education Regulatory Bodies Act, 2020 (Act 1023) began, leading to the change of name of the then National Inspectorate Board (NIB) to NaSIA.

The Act, he explained, empowered, strengthened and equipped the authority as an independent body to fully discharge its mandate.

Challenges

Dr Bawumia said NaSIA identified several challenges as it undertook its work of issuing licences to private schools.

He said data entry, processing and analysis usually took weeks, with collection of cash for services also taking an average of four months, among other bottlenecks.

He said it was in the light of this that a digitalisation system was initiated in 2019, resulting in the development of SLIMS.

SLIMS, Dr Bawumia explained, had streamlined the inspection and licensing processes to facilitate customised interventions and support to all schools.

He said the database could be accessed by all school stakeholders through a password-controlled login.

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“Each school will also have a mini dashboard populated with reports and other information needed to improve learning outcomes. The system is also integrated with the Ministry of Education's dashboard, ensuring seamless data submission,” the Vice-President added.

Ghana.gov platform

Dr Bawumia said that with the advent of SLIMS, proprietors could sit in the comfort of their offices, log in to their school's portal, request inspection, apply for a licence, and make payment through the Ghana.gov platform.

He said the SLIMS was accessible even in the remotest areas of the country and possessed offline capabilities for data collection anytime, anywhere with or without internet connectivity.

Considering the numbers, Dr Bawumia said the authority would be the repository of data for over

80,000 pre-tertiary schools across the country.

He, however, said that a number of private schools were yet to register with the authority and “I am reliably informed that the effort to register them is currently ongoing.”

NaSIA

Currently, the Vice-President said NaSIA provided data of private schools to the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS), demonstrating its vital role in educational data management.

He said the data equipped policy and decision-makers with insights needed to make informed decisions and also identify gaps in the education system to guide resource allocation.

Dr Bawumia commended NaSIA, USAID, the World Bank and other development partners for their support, which he said had led to such a remarkable achievement.

He further called on all to rally behind SLIMS and the ideals it represented, saying, “our collective efforts will undoubtedly make a significant impact, transform our educational landscape and set our nation on a path to greater achievements.”

Collaboration

The Board Chairman of the NaSIA, Prof. Eugene Darteh, urged staff of NaSIA to work closely with stakeholders to get their buy-in to ensure a successful implementation of the system.

He said they must also ensure they had a team of dedicated staff who would be able to respond quickly to challenges that would be identified.

Prof. Darteh said the system that had been developed was solving a lot of challenges and presented a number of opportunities in the pre-tertiary education space.