

**Mpant u ase
Sekyere Central District**



Baseline Report

BRIEF HISTORY OF MPANTUASE

According to oral historian, the people of Mpantuase originated from Ashanti Bekwai traditional area in the Ashanti region. They first settled at Abonkosu village near Nsuta. They were led by Nana Kumwaa. After leaving in Abonkosu for sometime, Nana Kumwaa and her group decided to move into the forest to do farming. Here they started growing plantain and the fertile land in the area attracted many people to come and settle in the new village. The community was named Mpantuase because the plantains they harvest were very big in size. "Mpantu" means big fingers of plantain and Mpantuase means the village located under big fingers of plantain (*story by Nana Agyen*)

DEMOGRAPHY OF MPANTUASE

The Project team employed head counting through household-to-household method to effectively collect the information. This enabled the Project team to ascertain the number of houses and the total population of the community. At the end of the process it was gathered that there are **52** houses/households in the community and a population of **546**. The total population exclude citizens or natives who live outside the village. The data collected on the population revealed that the female population constitutes 52% of the population and males constitute 48%. The table below captures the population breakdown.

Age	Male	Female	Total
Above 18 years	150	145	295
Below 18 years	112	139	251
Total	262	284	546

Population distribution in Mpantuase

This provided:

1. A reliable data on community members qualified to pay levy and this would enable them make projections and also track defaulters
2. The number of community members who are supposed to attend communal labour in the community
3. Help to make projections in terms of development projects since they have the breakdown of the various age groups
4. The data would also enable them to ascertain whether the facilities in the community are sufficient or not and this also applies to organizations who are interested in assisting the community

Language

The people of Mpantuase are predominantly Akans and they speak Twi. There are a couple of other tribes mostly settler farmers from northern Ghana but they all speak Twi. As a result, Twi is the widely spoken language in the community.

ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

According to the community members, the people of Mpantuase are predominantly farmers. They indicated that farmers in the community constitute about 99% of the working population. Some of the food crops grown include plantain, cassava, corn, yam, cocoyam, vegetables and groundnut. The farmers sell their surplus food stuff in Nsuta and Mampong markets. According to them money realized from the sale of the farm produce is used for paying their children school fees, levies in the community, taking care of their health needs and other family needs.

Some of the challenges they face as far as farming is concerned include the following:

- Lack of funds to support large scale farming
- Lack of market for their farm produce especially during the bumper season
- Land tenure system which does not encourage large scale farming
- Lack of irrigation facilities for dry season farming

EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE

•• **Road**

Mpantuase is about 4.5 kilometres from the district capital Nsuta and it is located between Nsuta and Afranso road. The road is dusty and difficult to drive on during the raining season.

•• **Electricity**

The community is connected to the national electricity grid and most of the houses are connected. The community contributed to the project through communal labour by digging hole for the electric poles and lying of wires. They also contributed money for the buying of street bulbs and fixing of electric reading metres.

•• **Educational Facilities**

It was gathered during the survey that the Mpantuase do not have it own school and the children in the village attend school at sister village of Nkwabirim which is about 0.5 kilometres.

•• **Religious Bodies**

The Project team also gathered that there are four religious bodies in the village; they include the Church of Pentecost, Methodist, mosque (Islam) and a Fetish shrine (Witch doctor)

•• Existing Water Sources

It was gathered during the survey that there are two Boreholes in the community and these were constructed by Government in 1990s. There is no major stream in the village and so the residents go to nearby villages such as Achiase or Nkwabirim to fetch water any time their boreholes break down

•• Management of Water facilities

During a visit to the two boreholes by the project team, it was observe that the two boreholes are not properly maintained. The community members have agree to pay 5 pesewas for a big pan of water they fetch from the borehole. According to the community members, their only problem is the distance they have to walk from the community to the site of the borehole which is more than a kilometre.



Two borehole in the village

•• Quality of water

During community discussion and a visit to the site of the borehole, the project team discovered that the quality and the taste of the water are good. The only problem identified were the cleanliness around the site of the borehole and breaking of the platform walls.

SANITATION AND HYGIENE SITUATION

The community has the following sanitation facilities:

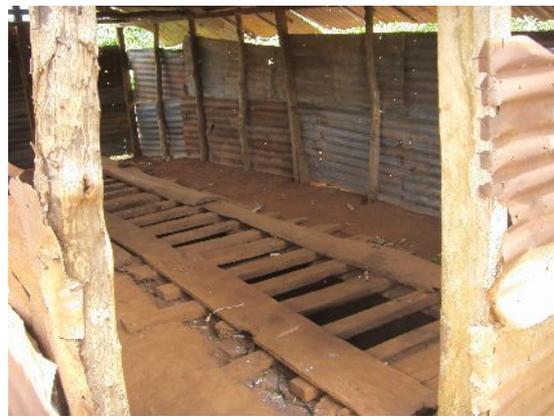
- Two traditional pit latrines
- Four household latrines
- Two refuse dump site

Two traditional pit latrines

The community have two traditional pit communal latrines which were constructed by the community members. These traditional pit latrine facilities are poorly maintained and almost full. This was also mentioned during the community meetings. According to the community members, the children in the community are responsible for the cleaning of the facility but because some parents refuse to allow the children to attend such activities the rest of the children have also decided not to do it any longer. Many community members also complained about the location of the latrines which is at the one section of the village. This situation has compared many of the people to resort to open defecation.



Existing traditional pit-latrine (building)



Existing traditional pit-latrine (seats)

Existing Household Latrine facilities

It was also gathered through a transect walk and also community meeting that there are only four household latrines in the community. These latrines according to the community members were constructed through the initiative of those households' owners.

Refuse Dump Site

With regard to the refuse dump site, it was observed that there are two dump sites but are poorly managed as depicts in the pictures below. During a meeting with the women, it was gathered that the women in the community are supposed to clean the dump site. However for some time now they have not organized communal labour to undertake any such activity. The women further indicated that in most instances children are sent to dump refuse and they do not do it at the right portion of the demarcated area making the refuse to spill over the places and making the management of the site difficult. Again the project team observed that some households keep satellite dump sites around their houses and so such households do not take interest in helping to clean communal dump site



Refuse dumping site

Sanitation and Hygiene Practices

Through focus group discussion with men, women and children, risk related sanitation and hygiene practices were identified. The following were the risk hygiene practices identified:

- ○ Poor management of refuse dump site
- ○ Open defecation
- ○ Weedy environment
- ○ Stray animals
- ○ Hand washing without soap

○ ○ **Analysis of Risky Hygiene Practices**

Poor Management of Refuse dump site

A transect walk to the dump site in the community revealed that the facility is poorly managed. According to the community members, for some time now the community have not organized communal labour to clean the site. This is because the people are not willing to clean the sites. They mentioned that even if the Unit committee beat 'gong gong' for communal labour, the women do not turn up. They indicated women who fail to attend communal labour are not fine or prosecuted hence the refusal of others to attend such activities.

Open defecation

Open defecation is a common practiced at Mpantuase. They attributed the situation to the poor state of the traditional communal pit latrines which is not clean and unsafe to use. They also complained of the location of the community latrine which is far away from one section of the community. There are only 4 household latrines in the community and even in those households, only adult and important visitors are allow to use such latrines.

Weedy Environment

It was observed that some portions of the community are weedy and the community members during a community meeting also mentioned it as one of

the risk hygiene practices in the community. According to the community members, some persons are yet to develop their lands and that accounts for some weedy portions in the community. They also indicated that the Unit committee need ensure that such people clear their land but they are yet to do so. Other portions which do not belong to anybody are always sprayed with weedicide to control the weeds. They however mentioned that for some time now the Unit committee have not done or organise communal labour to undertake such activity and so they attributed the situation to poor mobilization on the part of the Unit committee.

Stray Animals

During the community meetings, the issue of stray animals came to light. They complained about the incidence of stray animals contributing to the unhygienic condition in the community. This situation is blamed on the inability of animal owners to control their animals in the community. The stray animals such as cattle, sheep and goats litter the street of the community with faeces creating disgusting scene on the street. The community members admitted this as a risk hygiene practice and therefore a solution need to be found to improve sanitation in the village.

Hand washing without soap

Through discussion and observation, it came to light that hand washing is usually practiced but not with soap in most cases. They stated that soap is usually used after eating. Awareness of the need and effects of washing hands with soap is quite high in the community but in most instances, the people are busy or do not care about the consequences. It was also observed that many of the children in the village are aware of hand washing with soap.

HEALTH ISSUES

During a community meeting, it was gathered from the community members that malaria, diarrhoea, and eye problems are the prevalent diseases in the community. They attributed the prevalence of these diseases to the risky hygiene practices that pertain in the village. The eye problems were blamed on insets which occasionally come to the village especially during the evenings or night. According to them when they fall ill, they visit Nsuta clinic or Mampong hospital, which are about 4.5 and 6km respectively from village.

COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS

The survey revealed that there are a number of community institutions in Mpantuaase and they include the Traditional leaders (chief and elders), Unit committee, and WATSAN committee.

It was gathered that the Unit committee has five members and out of that two of them are Government appointees. They indicated that the committee do hold regular meetings. Some of the recent activities the Unit committee have undertaken include the following:

- Numbering of household for electricity connection
- Organizing communal labour
- Collection of dues for electricity metre fixing

They also indicated that low cooperation from the community members and ineffective traditional authority are their greatest challenge since assuming office.

On the Water and Sanitation Committee (WATSAN), it was gathered that, they have received training on water management and book keeping from Ashanti Development agents. According to them, they have been able to get the community to agree to the 'pay as you fetch' strategy which is helping them raise funds for operation and maintenance of their two boreholes.

Working Relationship among the Institutions

The survey revealed that there is some working relationship between some of the institutions in the community. For instance Unit committee and the WATSAN are currently working together to improve sanitation in the village. They have also worked together on number of problems facing the community especially the pay as you fetch policy being implemented.

Relationship between Community Institutions and other Stakeholders

The survey gathered that the relationship between the community institutions Mpantuaase and other stakeholders is not the best. According to them, the Unit committee only occasionally goes to the Assembly to present their challenges to them for support. This is so because the Assembly member for the area lives in Achiase and do not meet them regularly to discuss their developmental problems

DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS/NEEDS

As part of the survey, the Project team facilitated the process of ascertaining from the community their projects needs. The community members during a community meeting came up with the following projects base on priority:

- Construction of improved household latrines
- Drilling of new borehole in the village or close to the village
- Construction of nursery (KG)
- Micro Credit and Livelihood support.
- Construction of Health Post
- Construction of community center

After coming out with these needs or projects, the Project team assisted them to rank them base on priority. The one with a highest vote come first and continue in that order

AVAILABILITY OF LOCAL RESOURCES

Natural Resource

It was gathered from the community members that there are some natural resource in the community which they normally harnessed to facilitate smooth implementation of their projects. The resources they mentioned include water, wood and sand

Human Resource

The human resource available in the community includes labour from both unskilled and skilled such as masons, seamstress, weavers, hairdresser, painters and carpenters.

Financial Resource

According to the community members they have adopted a number of fund raising strategies in the past. They include communal levy, community harvest and pay as you fetch at the water point. However they are comfortable with fund-raising following the community harvest which they normally organise during Christmas or Easter.

LESSONS LEARNT

The following lessons were learnt from the survey carried out at Mpantause:

- For a community to develop there is the need for the community members to have high community participation spirit
- Effective working relationship among community institution helps to bring about development.
- Effective training help ensure efficiency among community institutions

CHALLENGES

- The Water and Sanitation committee in the community are only working on water related issues to the neglect of sanitation
- The leadership of the community are to a large extend unable to enforce the bye laws in the community and this can pose a serious challenge to the smooth implementation of the Water and sanitation as well as development programmes
- The absence of chief or traditional leader is negatively affecting the authority and the capacity of the other community institutions

RECOMMENDATIONS

Bases on the findings from the survey, the following recommendations are made.

- The Unit and the WATSAN committee members must be trained especially on community mobilization to ensure efficiency and effectiveness
- Support the community in the construction of 52 improved household latrines

- Hygiene education should be integral part of water and sanitation projects and programmes in the community to ensure effective usage and impact realization
- Support the community to drill a new borehole in or close to the village as the existence borehole is far from the village.
- Community should be supported to construct a kindergarten or nursery School for children less than five years.
- Livelihood support programmes should be provide to the community members especially in the area of farming and petty trading to boost their incomes

CONCLUSION

The survey has revealed that the current water and sanitation situation in Mpantuse is not the best and the community urgently needs to put in place appropriate strategies to improve the situation. Looking at the enormity of the situation, it is important that external assistance is provided to help solve the problem once for all. It is hope that development partners and friends of Mpantuse will consider the recommendations made in this survey in their planning and decision making process to solve the water and sanitation problems in the community.