

Santaso



We visited Santaso on 8 December 2016. There was no Chief or Unit Committee member available, so we talked to community members including Morro Tahiti and Mohammed Osman, pictured above.

We were told that there are around 320 people divided into 45 households living in the village. They are all farmers, growing crops including beans, cassava, plantain and other vegetables and tomatoes. They rarely suffer hunger, and occasionally produced a small surplus to sell at Ejura market.

Water and Sanitation

The village has two boreholes which produce good water, but one has been broken for at least three months. The villagers also draw water from the Santa Stream, which becomes stagnant in the dry season.

There are no latrines in the village. The people practise open defecation which will eventually serve to pollute the stream, if it has not already done so.



Health

The nearest clinic is at Asubuasu. We were told that the most widespread sicknesses include malaria and stomach or chest pains. The villagers suffer diarrhoea for several days a week during the dry season and one baby in every five dies before age ten of water-related disease.



We noticed that a few of the young children appear to be suffering from worms, but far less than we have seen in similar villages. They had all been vaccinated and were using government mosquito nets.

Education

The village shares a primary and junior high school with a nearby village. Only one or two can read and write, but all the community can count to 300.

Institutions

There is a nine-member village Development Committee, which is responsible, for example, for keeping the footpaths clear of weeds, keeping the rubbish tip tidy etc. A larger, government appointed Unit Committee covers Santaso and several nearby villages, but Santaso has no representative on it.

Miscellaneous

The villagers are all Muslim and are from the Dagomba Tribe and speak Dagbani. They sometimes return to their original homes in December, when their main festival, the Damba, takes place with dancing and feasting. They also return sometimes in September for the Fire Festival, when men seek to demonstrate their strength by resisting fire or surviving machete cuts or bullets.

There is one small shop in Santaso. For transporting people, including taking people to hospital when necessary, the community use motor bikes, tricycles or tractors. A minibus runs on market days.

History

The village was founded by Imam Issa from Yendi in Northern Ghana, who settled at Santaso over sixty years ago. He first settled in nearby Ejura and then realised how fertile the land was here. He was allowed to settle rent free but must pay tribute to the local king or chief after each harvest.

The name Santaso means 'near the river Santo.'

Village Wish List

- a. latrines
- b. to have the borehole repaired
- c. farm support
- d. food storage facility.

