

Nkujua



This note is based on an interview with the community in February 2023.

Nkujua is a village of some six hundred people, divided into fifty households. It is situated on the main north-south road in Sekyere Central District, some 30 kms north of Gyetiae.

The people of Nkujua are subsistence farmers and grow maize, yam, groundnuts, vegetables, plantain, cashew and cocoa. They once grew large amounts of cocoa but today the land is too dry and now cocoa only grows along watercourses. Further the quality is poor, so farmers have to transport the beans themselves to the Cocoa Board in Nsuta rather than the Cocoa Board collecting them.

The village is included in Ashanti Development's farm support scheme and so the community is aware of its work, though they haven't yet received water, household latrines and hygiene training. Nor does the village have electricity.



Water and Sanitation

There are two boreholes in Nkujua, but one is reserved for the clinic, see below. To supplement the other, the community draws water from the Ayiwaye and Kyerenfu streams.

Education

Nkujua has a primary school with six classrooms and a junior high school with three. There is also a kindergarten. The schools have been here for over thirty years and as a result a lot of children go to senior secondary school and some even get to university.

Health



The most common sicknesses are malaria, typhoid, diarrhoea and body and waist pains, these last probably due to carrying heavy loads. Nkujua has its own clinic and we were told that about three people from each extended family need to visit it each month.

Institutions

The Chief and Elders Committee includes leaders from each of the larger tribes. They are nominated by their tribesmen and are automatically accepted unless there are ten objections. The Committee consists of four men and one woman.

There is also a Parent-Teachers Association, a School Management Committee, and a Women's Co-operative. If a woman turns to the Co-operative, perhaps for help with a funeral, wedding or possibly an abusive husband, they will support her. In this last case, we were told that if the fault was the woman's, she would ask a member of the Co-operative to apologise on her behalf.

Miscellaneous

This was once an Ashanti village and owned a lot of land. The community today includes Dagombas, Fra-fra, Sisala, Dagati, Mosi, Komba and Kusassi. Most of them were able to travel here by bus but the Fulanis had to walk since they brought their own cattle.

Because of the influx of migrants in recent years, most villages have a Zongo suburb, where the migrants live. Many of the newcomers have not arrived directly from Northern Ghana but by way of two or three interim places where they have stayed years rather than months.

Religions: Islam, Christianity and traditional. The majority of the community are Moslems.

Wish List

Above all, the village wishes for teachers' accommodation. This is because, it knows that if there were a proper building for teachers to live in their children would get a better quality of education. At present the teachers commute from Nsuta and so school doesn't start until 10am. Secondly, the village would like to have latrines. Thirdly, it wishes it had another borehole.

The village was aware that the reason we were asking all these questions was in the hope their answers would persuade someone to sponsor their village. They ended by saying that they were going to pray hard that someone picked their village.

We also did three one-to-one interviews with members of the community.

First we talked to Mr and Mrs Jacouba, who have lived in the village for 36 years. Mrs Jacouba is an Ashanti, but became Moslem when she married. Mr Jacouba is the Zongo Chief – Zongo being a general term for foreigners or migrants, regardless of tribe. Mr Jacouba came to Nkujua with his father when he was a child. His father was looking for good farm land. They have seven children, of whom four are twins.



Mr & Mrs Jacouba

Mr Jacouba told us that his main work was to promote peace. If a bad man entered the village, Mr Jacouba would ask him to move away. Another job was to promote the welfare of Zongos, so he would let new arrivals sleep in his guest room and suggest places where they could live comfortably.

As a chief, he also judged disputes. He told us that a lot of issues were brought to him mainly marital, land disputes or debts, but he could always sort them out.

Next we talked to Georgina, who is half Ashanti and half Bono, a Northern Ghana tribe. She once lived in Beposo but came here with her father, a dressmaker, and stayed. Georgina felt there was more money in this village than in Beposo.

Abiba Galiba is 30 years old, unmarried with one child. Her father was the founder of Galiba village but when he died she came to live in Nkujua to be with her mother.

Abiba travels to Takwa to carry out (illegal) gold mining. It's about six hours away by bus. She was only in the village at the time because her daughter was ill. In Takwa, Abiba shares a room with other young women. She is saving her money and has a target – to get enough money to set herself up as a trader. One problem, she said, is that in Takwa you're not always paid but you can't complain.



