Local governance, civil society and partnerships: community action in neighbourhood service upgrading in Kumasi, Ghana, final report on an exploratory study
Post, J.; Inkoom, D.; Baffoe-Twum, M.

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Local governance, civil society, and Partnerships: community action in neighbourhood service upgrading in Kumasi, Ghana.

Johan Post, Dan Inkoom, Maxwell Baffoe-Twum and Tawiah Nerquaye-Tetteh,

Dr Daniel Inkoom is lecturer at the Department of Planning, University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, Ghana. Maxwell and Tawiah are teaching assistants at the Department of Planning, University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, Ghana. Dr Johan Post is associate professor, department of Geography and Planning, University of Amsterdam,

Daniel can be contacted on: dininkoom@hotmail.com, Tawiah can be contacted on: tawiah_taz@yahoo.com, Maxwell can be contacted on maxwelltwum@yahoo.com and Johan on: J.Post@frw.uva.nl

1 The authors are attached to the Department of Planning, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi and Amsterdam Research Institute for Global Issues and Development Studies (AGIDS), University of Amsterdam.
Introduction

Background to the study

In the debates on making urban management and local governance more effective in the developing world, a major hallmark is the realignment between government, the private sector and civil society. Governments should concentrate on creating the institutional framework that enables private sector actors, both commercial and non-profit actors, to directly provide housing and urban services. Within these debates, much attention is paid to the process of enablement, encompassing market enablement, political enablement and community enablement. In the literature, market enablement has probably received most attention (c.f. neo-liberal reforms, privatisation and public-private partnerships), while discussions on political enablement are also extensive (c.f. decentralisation, good governance). Community enablement has been least discussed, although there is an increasing literature on community participation in urban management and participatory planning (Helmsing, 2000; Stoker, 2000). It refers to a strategy adopted by central and local government to co-ordinate and facilitate the efforts of community based organisations to initiate, plan and implement their own projects according to principles of self-determination, self-organisation and self-management (Burgess et al, 1997: 57). However, national governments show a variable commitment to implementing policies that promote the idea of community enablement, such as increased popular participation and decentralisation towards local level substructures. A major reason is the realignment it brings about in local community empowerment, and reducing the power of political leaders and government officials.

One of the major conclusions drawn from the urban habitat literature is that local communities in the developing world have done much more to improve the liveability of cities than any other actor, including the government (UNCHS, 1996). Communities can mobilise a wealth of resources through their own organisations, based on existing social networks, as is apparent in the many examples of what organised people have been able to achieve by themselves (UNCHS, 1996). However, the existence of inclusive communities, altruistic community leaders and high levels of community organisation cannot be taken for granted (Putnam, 1993; Moser, 1998). Community diversity (along gender, age and social divides), heterogeneity of interests, and lack of ‘civil society’ organisations make it less likely that communities can effectively engage in common activities to improve their habitat. Processes of organisation also change radically over time as neighbourhoods are built up (Hordijk, 2000).

Although collective action by local communities is less common and less inclusive than often suggested in documents on urban habitat in the developing world, effective progress has often come about through collective action involving various actors working together. However, CBOs – e.g. neighbourhood organisations, women’s groups, church groups - usually have to link up with external actors (notably local government, private enterprises and NGOs), in order to increase the scale of their activities (Lee, 1998). To improve service levels requires legal recognition, permits, connections to trunk networks, and/or financial and technical support. Such partnerships or co-management arrangements have become key elements in new forms of local governance (Baud, 2000; Stoker, 2000; Rakodi, 1999). They are important tools in the promoting processes of effective community enable-
ment. Therefore, it is essential to investigate how such arrangements, both formal and informal, have evolved, who participates in them, how the collaboration is shaped by organisation exists in differing degrees. This is expected to better reveal the obstacles in building partnerships.

So far comparatively little is known about the extent of co-operation and conflict in partnership arrangements, nor how these processes can be managed to ensure both wider participation (inclusion of marginal groups) and more effectiveness (in providing basic services). Several authors have suggested that differences in social capital lead to different degrees of synergy in the outcome of partnerships (Orstrom, 1996; Baud, 2000; Helmsing, 2000; Johnson and Wilson, 2000: 1893). The importance of social capital, i.e. of relations of trust, reciprocity and exchange between local actor networks, as well as with meso-level institutions (such as local governments) is increasingly acknowledged (Putnam, 1993). Evans states that complementarities between governments and citizens create the potential for synergy but is only realised when interaction over time builds up norms of trust (Evans, 1996: 1130). A major research question is what conditions need to be fulfilled in order to build up more inclusive, co-operative and effective partnerships? Effectiveness in this context is defined as contributing to poverty reduction, improving conditions for growth, and protecting the environment (i.e. sustainable development).

In view of the gaps in our understanding on the dynamics of partnering a study has been designed that seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. How does in and exclusion processes operate in partnership arrangements?
2. How can the processes of working together in partnerships build up trust and co-operation (i.e. social capital), minimise conflict, and increase accountability? and processes of internal and external conflict, and what they have managed to achieve. In the proposed pilot study, these processes are studied in contexts where community or-
3. How can partnerships become more effective in contributing to urban poverty reduction, conditions for economic growth, and protecting the environment (i.e. sustainable development in urban areas)?

Exploratory study in Kumasi

This current report presents the findings of the exploratory phase of the project in Kumasi, Ghana’s second largest city with approximately 1 million inhabitants. It aims to discover the importance of community action and community partnering in this specific context, and to discover some of the basic factors determining the problems and potentials of community action and community partnerships.

During the first phase of the Ghana project, three research activities were carried out. First of all, about ten open interviews were conducted with key informants from within the local administration or working in local NGOs. These persons were selected on the basis of their assumed knowledge of and experience with community action. The interviews were expected to provide some first clues with regard to factors facilitating or frustrating such collective efforts. Secondly, an inventory of community action was made in a sizeable section of the entire city. The reason for this recording was to find out what has actually been achieved on the ground in various residential areas in terms of neighbourhood improvement.

The inventory covered a wide range of services/utilities: water, electricity, sanitation, waste, roads, drainage, health and education. The inventory’s basic goal was to test the widely held view that in the age of neoliberalism the role of (local) authorities in neighbourhood upgrading has been trimmed down while other actors, notably communities themselves or in partnership with others,
have become key players. In addition to that, the inventory was supposed to enable us to select cases for the second phase of the pilot study. The inventory is representative of the entire city as it encompasses:

- Low, middle and high income areas,
- Different neighbourhoods in terms of ethnic/regional/religious backgrounds, and
- Central and outlying residential areas.

Finally, a series of open interviews was held with local leaders in three neighbourhoods. The basic criterion for selecting these areas was the level of community action. Therefore, one neighbourhood was taken where (virtually) nothing had materialized over the last five years, one where several (community) initiatives could be discerned albeit with disappointing results, and one where community action and partnerships have been comparatively successful. The aim of this activity is to trace the factors that help to explain the level of activity and its success. Furthermore, these interviews were expected to give us some ideas on the dynamics of community action and partnering.

The report consists of three sections each summarizing the major results of the research activities outlined above.

Methodological note

Before starting the inventory a decision had to be taken on what constitutes a community. We have used the concept to refer to a territorially demarcated entity. The administrative division of the city (District Assembly electoral areas) will be taken as a point of entry. However, local informants have subsequently been asked to help us delineate ‘living’ local communities in the field. This was done by asking them if and how they could further subdivide the area into smaller subsections. The assumption was that these smaller units would be locally known by their own name. Such a subdivision could indeed be made in most constituent areas. However, it was impossible to clearly and consistently separate the two spatial entities. In the subsequent analysis, therefore, the local sub-communities will only play a subordinate role.

Data for the inventory were collected through documentary sources and field visits. Unfortunately, only few written sources were available that could provide us with relevant data on the areas selected for investigation. Therefore, we mostly had to rely on the field visits and information provided by the city authorities. During the field trips we questioned various people including, chiefs and elders, service providers and representatives of unit committees and CBOs. The data they provided were usually not based on detailed investigations and, therefore, merely provide an indication (for example regarding the ethnic and religious composition of the neighbourhood). Sometimes we could directly observe what services had been installed.

The inventory, in principle, took a five-year time horizon (going back to early 1997). However, it proved very difficult to precisely stick to this year as many initiatives took many years to materialize and the date of inception was not always easy to trace. Furthermore, many activities require some kind of follow-up (maintenance; solving problems that arise after its inception). In actual fact, therefore, the time horizon of the community actions mentioned in the report is wider and less precise.

The following items were taken into consideration:

- Description of the type of activity and its scope
- Initiator
- Key actors involved (both individuals and organisations)
- Does the activity qualify as a partnership? (definition: see below)
- Type of partnership, e.g. community-private sector-local government; com-
munity-local government; community-NGO-local government etc.
- Has the activity been completed, is it in progress, or can it be seen as ongoing?
- What has been achieved on the ground?
- Who have benefited (in terms of approximate number of people; specific groups of the population)

In addition, the major characteristics of the areas (at the level of the electoral area) were indicated on the basis of direct observation, albeit with checks through the informants listed above. Special attention was given to:

- Location
- Ethnic composition (approximation on the basis of information by local leaders)
- Religious background (ibid)
- Dominant type of housing (tenement; indigenous; high cost private sector; government estate housing)
- Level of water service (private connections, community taps or both)
- Type of waste collection (house-to-house or central communal container)
- Sanitary facilities (private septic tanks; private KVIP or bucket latrine; public latrine)

We have used the definition of partnerships as given by Hordijk (2001: 113):

- A partnership involves two or more actors
- Each partner is a principal, i.e., each is capable of bargaining on its own behalf, rather than having to consult with other forms of authority.

A partnership is an enduring relationship between these actors (based on a written or verbal agreement, informal or formal in nature, with some continuing interaction).

- Each of the participants brings something to the partnership. Each of the partners has to transfer some resources – material or immaterial – to the partnership. The partnership is mutually beneficial (without assuming equality between the actors).
- A partnership finds it expression in concrete activities.
- A partnership implies a shared responsibility for the outcomes of the activities.
- Partnerships are meant to serve a public interest (Baud et al., 2001; Peters, 1998). To distinguish them from commercial partnerships, they are now sometimes called public interest partnerships (PIPs).

In the third part of this pilot study three areas were chosen for further inquiries. A series of open interviews was organized involving local leaders engaged one way or another in collective action or community partnerships (whether or not successful) or expected to be able to explain the absence of such action and partnerships. Discussions were held with assembly members for the areas concerned, local chiefs, and representatives of unit committees or local CBOs.

A checklist for questioning was designed including the following topics:

- Assessment of the level of community action
- Assessment of civic responsibility/adherence to civic rules
- Assessment of the trustworthiness of the local administration
- Types of collective action and levels of participation
- Beneficiaries of collective action

2 To check the general observation two randomly selected streets in the electoral area will be walked to register the last four items on a house to house basis. If more than 10% of the houses register a different type of accommodation or level of facilities than a note will be made on the appropriate sheet.
(Mis) trust among partners
- In and exclusion in partnering
- Decision-making and accountability
- Role of leadership
- Conflicts and conflict resolution
- Success or failure of collective action

It serves to mention a few limitations of the interviewing of local leaders. First of all, these persons belong to the busiest category of the society leaving early for work and returning home late in the evening. This has set a limit on the time duration of the interviews, which were usually carried out early in the morning. Secondly, interviewing took place in a period prior to district level elections, which kept assembly members and unit committee members very busy. Furthermore, they may have presented a somewhat more favorable picture than is justified due to the ‘election bias’. As a matter of fact, it proved very difficult – given the time constraints of the study and the requirement of appropriate conduct on the part of the (young) interviewers – to persuade respondents to move beyond what is deemed socially and politically correct or expedient. Nevertheless, quite a sizable proportion of the interviewees were not election candidates whose responses acted as verification on the information gathered and we believe that the results are instrumental towards achieving the modest goals of this exploratory study.
Part II
Exploring community action in Kumasi

At the start of the investigations several key informants were interviewed in order to get a good impression on the scale of community action in Kumasi. The informants also pointed us in the direction of factors that help to explain the dynamics of such action. In the subsequent section the major results of this exploration are given. Obviously, the findings merely provide indications that still need to be put to the test. Sometimes arguments seemed very convincing, but their validity can nevertheless not be taken for granted. The reader should bear this in mind while going over the subsequent text.

Variations in community action

Many informants are convinced of the demise of community action in the urban setting. They claim that such collaboration continues to be very important in the countryside but suffers from several drawbacks in cities and towns. The level of social cohesion in urban neighborhoods is usually much less than in the villages. Although rural communities are also divided along social lines (indigenous inhabitants versus newcomers from other areas, for example) most urban residential areas are far more heterogeneous. The major exceptions to this overall picture are perhaps the living quarters of various particular ethnic/regional groupings such as the Ewe and the Fante or the people that came from the North (Mossi Zongo being the most well-known quarter). Partly as a result of the ethnic/regional diversity there is no longer an unquestioned loyalty towards the local (Ashanti) chiefs who traditionally play a key role in community mobilization. However, there is more to it than sociocultural heterogeneity. In the urban setting people are claimed to be more individualistic and focused on their own livelihoods. For the majority of urban households eking out a living implies that most of their members are full-time engaged. This explains, according to several informants, the apparent reluctance among many residents to share in community labor exercises. Furthermore, many inhabitants are believed not to be emotionally oriented towards their current living quarters, especially those who rent their place. Many urbanites continue to hope that one day they will have a house of their own in their village of birth. This also explains why they are poorly motivated to spend time and money in collective neighborhood upgrading activities. Finally, the communities most relevant to urban citizens – unlike most rural communities – may very well not have a narrow territorial basis. Networks of ethnic or religious groups may span the entire city or even more. Sometimes these communities can be very active, but do not result in neighborhood upgrading in a

In the recent past community action in Kumasi was allegedly better than it is today. In the early 1980s the mayor was enthusiastically trying to entice people to organize themselves to improve their quarters and offered them a helping hand by matching funds. At that time the so-called Committees for the Defense of the Revolution (CDRs) were rallying to take local development action in their own hands. In various quarters they were very successful. However, when the government withdrew its political support for these local revolutionary cells most of them withered away. Many ordinary residents disliked the politicizing of these local organizations and the methods they applied for pushing people to participate in community labor campaigns and to raise money for community projects. At the same time the traditional leadership considered the CDRs as a direct threat to their authority and tried to discredit them in the eyes
of their ranks. In fact, these experiences seem to have demotivated people for a long time to engage in community projects.

Many informants argue that politics are important in explaining the fate of community action. Community projects often require external inputs such as funds, technical assistance and legal permits many of which have to come from the government. The dependence on governmental resources makes community action sensitive to political manipulation in particular in a country such as Ghana where the political system is heavily controlled by clientelism and partisan loyalty. Local politicians, members of parliament and key government administrators are keen to bring development to ‘their’ areas because it will buy them popular support. In the process, however, projects are often imposed upon communities on the assumption that the leaders know what is good for the people. In fact, they reflect priorities set in the political circuit rather than local priorities. The District Assemblies Commun Fun (DACF), for example, is often utilized for building schools which may or may not reflect felt needs. In cases where projects are brought to the community one cannot automatically assume that residents will welcome the idea and willingly contribute their time and effort to help it materialize and be sustained. They do not feel the project is theirs. At the same time several informants stated that citizens (notably urbanites) have come to expect the government to provide and deliver simply because they are paying their dues. The fact that urban relations are more monetarist and impersonal makes it easier for people to skirt civic responsibility especially in the absence of strong social control or public sector sanctioning.

In view of the unfavorable conditions it is amazing to see that community action is still happening in cities such as Kumasi. The interviewees indicated that community action in Kumasi is especially a low and middle-income phenomenon. People in high-income residential areas are more individualistic and self-sufficient. They usually live in areas that are well provided in terms of utilities and public services. And when they want to be connected to the water or electricity grid they will arrange for it individually (with other inhabitants benefiting from their investment by branching to the newly established line). In situations where such investments are beyond the financial capacity of individual households a need to work together arises. This is particularly apparent in the peri-urban extensions where landlords organize themselves to bring water and electricity to their homes. In most centrally located quarters these basic utilities are already in place (albeit sometimes of very low standard), which implies that the urge to unite is felt less.

The benefits of water and electricity connections directly accrue to households. This quality facilitates collective action. It becomes more difficult when people are called upon to contribute to activities whose benefits are less immediate or when consumption is collective rather than individual. Both CEDEP and CAGA – two Kumasi NGOs - have experienced great difficulty in helping to get urban communities organize for collective action. Much depends on leadership and the loyalty to these leaders (see below). Several informants indicated that contributions may vary substantially. Community labor is usually provided by poorer sections of the community, especially young and unemployed men. More affluent inhabitants may deliver their share financially or by providing food to the workers. However, it is uncertain how many people actually participate and in what way. It is likely that many inhabitants will find ways to evade their obligations.

Role of leaders and local organizations

Access to scarce government resources is obtained through the mediation of political brokers. In the current local government system assembly members are the key play-
ers in this respect. Several interviewees were rather critical towards these elected representatives of the community accusing them of incompetence. Apparently, many assembly members are poorly educated and frowned upon by most political leaders and senior officials. They do not succeed in meeting the high expectations bestowed on them because they fail to deliver their communities any meaningful improvements in services. Furthermore, many assembly members are believed to (ab)use their position to enrich themselves. The former DCE, for example, helped several assembly members to become managers of public latrines thereby providing them with a significant source of income. There was also a claim that assembly members favor private sector realization of community projects because this enables them to either compete for the project themselves or to receive bribes. This should also explain why they prefer projects that involve building works (schools; latrines) rather than projects that require mobilizing and organizing residents (cleanup campaigns, solid waste collection).

Occasionally, traditional chiefs fulfill important roles in mediating between their people and the local administration. However, their importance as brokers largely seems to depend on their personal qualities and their position within the traditionally hierarchy (which partly determines the strength of their networks). Furthermore, loyalty to the chiefs cannot be taken for granted. Once people have received land rights and have managed to pass through the official title registration process their dealing is no longer with the chiefs but with the Lands Commission. Although the chief’s ceremonial position is usually widely acknowledged, his authority may in fact be limited. When he summons residents to take active part in a particular project only his own people (the Ashanti) will feel socially compelled to do so.

The importance of local chiefs in community upgrading is said to be much greater in peri-urban communities. The simple reason is that chiefs in these areas still have control over significant portions of communal land while ‘downtown’ chiefs no longer have free land at their disposal. The peri-urban chiefs can use their allocation rights either to provide site to community projects or to sell land in order to generate funds for projects. One well-informed government official told us that chiefs can help to persuade the ECG or the WSC to speed-up or facilitate the installation of certain utilities in exchange for a few plots of land. Their control over land makes their involvement in and support to community project virtually indispensable.

A favorable condition to collective action within urban neighborhoods is benevolent collaboration between chiefs and assembly members. However, this is certainly not self evident. Sometimes, there is an undeniable tension between these two leaders both trying to convince their followers of their vital role in getting projects of the ground simultaneously downplaying the contribution of the other. Such competition can have negative impacts both by frustrating project planning and implementation, and undermining community harmony.

The lack of community organization was often mentioned by the respondents. The most common types of local organizations seem to be youth clubs and landlord associations. However, they will certainly not be found everywhere. Landlord associations, for example, arise in response to a collective desire to improve levels of service in the area. They are driven by self-interest of house owners hoping to enhance the value of their properties. The recently establishes unit committees – the lowest level within the official administrative system – still seem to be rather weak in performing their duties. Activism among the unit committee members is exception rather than rule. Besides, people do not seem to have much trust in these organs of the state and tend to ignore them.
Role of local government

Several respondents indicated that the overall public does not have much faith in the KMA. This is apparent, for example, in low turnout figures in the local elections. The people have been confronted with a steady decline in levels of public service provision for which they blame the authorities. The local administration is perceived to be bureaucratic, unresponsive, and self-serving. Most officials still consider themselves to be the experts and find it difficult to really appreciate wider community involvement in planning and decision-making, despite the emphasis on decentralization. This assessment translates in general reluctance to pay taxes and dues. In fact, many citizens seem to avoid dealing with the authorities and try to seek other (informal) ways to have their needs served. The level of mistrust has certainly increased under the previous Kumasi MCE whose divide and rule tactics and controversial behavior has turned many people against the KMA. As a result, the political climate for engaging in community-KMA partnerships is not favorable at the moment. The new administration will have to do a lot to restore public confidence and regain legitimacy in the eyes of the public. Several respondents thought the new mayor was capable of doing this job.
Part III
Prevalence of community action in Kumasi

Scope of the inventory

The area was selected in such a way that it would encompass various types of neighbourhoods, including both high and low-income areas, ethnically homogeneous and mixed areas, and centrally located and outlying areas. A slice in the Eastern section of the metropolitan area was taken out for the inventory. It is bordered by the Kumasi-Accra trunk road to the South and the Kejetia-Airport roundabout-Asokore Mampong road to the North. Figure 3.1 illustrates the geographical limits of the study area.

Characteristics of the study communities

The profile of the study area gives the status of the area in terms of major characteristics most of which are indicated mainly on the basis of direct observation and with the help of informants. However, information on some of the parameters used such as: population and level of education were got from secondary sources. Table 3.1 illustrates the major characteristics of the communities studied.

Asawasi

Asawasi is located within the transitional zone and at about 1.8 km from the city center (Kejetia; and occupies a 31 acre land (Ansah, 2001). It is bounded to the north by Dicchemso, east by Aboabo, south by the Kumasi-Accra railway line, and to the west by New Zongo. It is a heterogeneous community in terms of ethnicity and religion. Low-income estate housing dominates the existing housing stock.

The estate was intended for low-income workers, labourers and junior officers of the colonial administration. Asawasi estate originally had about 1,300 dwellings, accommodating some 20,000 people (Ansah, 2001). Today, the number of dwellings has increased to 2,525 (2000 Population and Housing Census) due to the drastic housing transformation in the community.

In the original plan of the area dwellings were served by external kitchens and bathrooms, and public latrines. However, in the course of time several houses (15%) have obtained their own private toilet facility (Tipple, 1991).

Ayigya

Ayigya is located within the periphery in the eastern portion, some 6.1 km from the centre of Kumasi. It is bounded to the North by Asokore Mampong, East by Kentinkrono, and to the South by the Kumasi-Accra highway. It is an indigenous Akan community (Adarkwa and Post, 2001). However, it houses other migrants such as Gas, Ewes, and others from Northern Ghana. In 1990, Ayigya’s population stood at about 10,000 with a mean growth rate of slightly more than 4 percent per annum (Edmundson, 1996). Two-fifths of the population is illiterate or at best primary school dropouts. There are about 327 houses at Ayigya with less than 10 percent of these houses connected to pipe borne water supply (Edmundson, 1996). Currently, the only existing public stand pipe is not functional. Hence, most people are compelled to use water from hand-dug wells as well as buy water from the few houses with direct water connection. Only three public latrines with thirty squat holes exist in the community. This is to serve 600 persons out of the about 10,000 needing the service. Fifty-two of the houses at Ayigya have private bucket latrines in the houses, but its use was banned by the city authorities in 1995 which forced about 90 percent
of the population to use public toilets (Edmundson, 1996).

Ayigya generates about 30 cubic metres of domestic refuse daily. However, refuse management at Ayigya is not effective. There is no proper refuse collection system. The only disposal method is the use of landfill, which is not well organized.

Figure 3.1
Aboabo No. 1
Aboabo No.1 is a sub-community within Aboabo, located within the transitional zone of Kumasi. It is bounded to the North by Dichemso, the South by Aboabo No. 2, the West by Asawasi, and to the East by the Eastern By-Pass. As an indigenous community (Adarkwa and Post, 2001), it is predominantly low-income area with a majority of its inhabitants originating from the northern parts of Ghana. Though the community has some basic infrastructure—good roads, street lights, public toilets, and public standpipes—these have not been realized as a result of community action but rather because of government intervention through the World Bank sponsored Urban IV Infrastructure Upgrading project. This project is still on-going and currently, two transfer stations for refuse are being constructed in the community.

Aboabo No. 2
Aboabo No. 2 is another sub-community within Aboabo with characteristics very much like that of Aboabo No. 1. It is bounded to the North by Aboabo No. 2, the South by the Kumasi-Accra railway line, the West by Asawasi, and to the East by the Eastern By-Pass. The community is fortunate enough to be also under the Urban IV Infrastructure Upgrading Project and thus has benefited from neighbourhood upgrading in terms of good roads, street lights,
drains and toilets. Currently a transfer station for refuse is being constructed and is almost complete.

**Asokore-Mampong**

Asokore Mampong is located on the outskirts of Kumasi. It is bounded to the North by Buokrom, the South by the Kumasi-Accra railway line, to the West by Sepetimpon. It is made up of a low income indigeneous area, that is, the original village, with pockets of middle to high income areas surrounding it. The community seems to have become a hub of developmental activities ever since the present chief was enstooled as Asokore Mampong hene in 1986.

The chief has also, as an individual, contributed towards many other development projects in the community over the years such as construction of hand dug wells (three in 1998), repairing of public and school toilets (1996-1998) and has been instrumental in the construction and rehabilitation of roads in the area.

**New Zongo**

We have confined ourselves to the Ghana legion Unit within New Zongo. However, this section occupies about 85% of the entire area and therefore deemed representative enough of the entire community. New Zongo is situated in the core of the Kumasi Metropolis, bounded to the North by Manhyia, south by the Kumasi central market, to the west by Kumasi Zongo, and on the east by Asawasi. The area is dominated with government-built housing estates (Adarkwa and Post, 2001). These housing units were built to house veterans of the Ghana army after World War II. This is even especially so for the sub-community studied - the Ghana Legion Unit within the New Zongo area.

**Zongo**

Kumasi Zongo is situated in the core of the Metropolis. It is bounded to the north by Manhyia and Zabon Zongo, west by the Anfoa road, to the south by the central market, and on the east by Akwatia Line. Zongo, “the stranger quarters”, is the name given to migrant settlements originating from Northern Ghana as well as migrants from neighbouring African countries (Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Togo, Mali and Niger). It is almost exclusively a Moslem community with almost everyone in the low income range. In 1970, the area’s population stood at 29,000.

The Zongo accommodates a range of small communities based on kinship and common ethnicity. Many relationships are formed on a neighbourhood basis. They are culturally united through the Hausa language which is the major medium of communication.

The labour force is mostly unskilled as the majority of the working population has little or no education nor technical training for any profession. Many are self-employed (tailors, butchers, traders; Diko, 1980).

Housing condition in the Zongo is very bad. Most houses are in poor condition with 70% of them built with mud. Room occupancy rates were as high as 6 persons per room and are likely to be even higher today (Diko, 1980).

Sanitation level is generally very poor. There is also a poor drainage system with many houses lacking well-channeled gutters to carry away waste water. Even the few existing gutters are open and are choked with refuse and sand.

**Amakom**

This area is part of the Asokwa Sub-Metropolitan area within the Kumasi Metropolitan Area. It is bounded to the North by Asawasi, the South by the Kumasi-Accra highway the West by Fanti New Town and to the East by Oforikrom. Amakrom is fairly well drained by the Aboabo River and its tributaries. In the rainy season, occasional flooding is experienced in areas where people have built very close to the river course.

In the early 19th century, the study area was made up of two separate communities, Amakrom and Asokwa, occupied by Akans who
were pepper growers (agriculturalists). However, when development sprung up in the 1950s, many migrants from Ashanti region moved in together with people from elsewhere including Ewes and Fantis. Their major economic activity used to be farming, but due to the reduction in size of agricultural lands in the study area people have moved into urban professions.

According to a recent study by the Department of Planning, KNUST (2001) the area is primarily residential (72% of the land use) and can be considered a low-income settlement. The study area’s growth rate of 2.5 percent in 2001 was equal to that of the KMA and the nation. The dominant ethnic group in the study area is still the Akans (89%), while the rest of the ethnic groupings is: Ewes (3 percent), Gas (3 percent) and Northerners (5 percent). The composition of religion is: Christians (95 percent), Moslems (4 percent), and others (1 percent) (Department of Planning, 2001).

Quantitatively the housing data reveals that the housing situation is good. The room occupancy rate of 1.8 shows clearly that congestion is virtually absent in the study area (ibid). Generally, the composition of housing type is: compound (43 percent), detached (31 percent), semi-detached (26 percent). Access to potable water in the study area is generally high (94 percent well over the national average of 57 percent). Only a few households depend on water from hand-dug well, wells with pump and boreholes.

The main methods of solid waste disposal in the entire area are surface dumping and vehicle collection. Most of the surface dumping sites are not organized and, hence, not included in haulage.

The toilet facilities in use are water closets (47%), KVIP (41%) and pit latrine (12%). Due to the prevalence of private toilet facilities few people patronize the public toilet facilities (ibid).
### Table 3.1 Major Characteristics of Study Communities

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ASOKWA SUB-METRO</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Asawasi</td>
<td>1.8 km</td>
<td>Low and Middle</td>
<td>46,253 (census)</td>
<td>Akan (63%), Northerners (25%), Fantis (7%), Gas (5%)</td>
<td>Christian (75%), Moslem (25%)</td>
<td>Low cost government estates</td>
<td>Private connection, public standpipes</td>
<td>Six public toilets</td>
<td>Communal container system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Ayigya</td>
<td>6.1 km</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>30,283 (census)</td>
<td>Akan (75%), Ewe (3%), Ga (3%), Northerners (19%)</td>
<td>Christian (70%), Moslem (25%), Others (5%)</td>
<td>Indigenous</td>
<td>Private connection, public standpipes</td>
<td>Three public toilet</td>
<td>Two landfills (uncontrolled), no container system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Aboabo No. 1</td>
<td>2.6 km</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>13,720 (census)</td>
<td>Akan (25%), Fantis (5%), Ga (5%), Northerners (65%-95%)</td>
<td>Christian (25%), Moslem (75%)</td>
<td>Indigenous</td>
<td>Public standpipes</td>
<td>Three Public toilet</td>
<td>Three communal containers, one transfer station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Aboabo No. 2</td>
<td>2.6 km</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>20,486 (census)</td>
<td>Northerners (60%), Akan (40%)</td>
<td>Christian (30%), Moslem (65%), Traditional (5%)</td>
<td>Indigenous</td>
<td>Public standpipes, private connection</td>
<td>Public KVIP</td>
<td>Two communal containers, one transfer station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Asokore Mampong</td>
<td>6.6 km</td>
<td>Low and High</td>
<td>16,391 (estimated)</td>
<td>Akan (85%), Ewe (5%), Northerners (10%)</td>
<td>Christian (90%), Moslem (10%)</td>
<td>Indigenous</td>
<td>Public standpipes, private connection</td>
<td>Private KVIP, two public KVIP</td>
<td>One communal container, two landfills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. New Zongo</td>
<td>1.2 km</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>11,832 (estimated)</td>
<td>Akan (30%), Ewe (5%), Northerners (5%)</td>
<td>Christian (40%), Moslem (60%)</td>
<td>Government estate</td>
<td>Public standpipe, private connection</td>
<td>Private WC, private KVIP</td>
<td>No refuse dump in community, house to house pan collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MANHYIA SUB-METRO</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Zongo</td>
<td>0.9 km</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>12,406 (estimated)</td>
<td>Akan (40%), Northerners (60%)</td>
<td>Christian (30%), Moslem (70%)</td>
<td>Indigenous</td>
<td>Public standpipe, private connection</td>
<td>One public toilet</td>
<td>No waste disposal point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUBIN SUB-METRO</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Amakom</td>
<td>2.8 km</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>39,060 (census)</td>
<td>Akan (70%), Ewe (10%), Ga (7%), Northerners (13%)</td>
<td>Christian (75%), Moslem (25%)</td>
<td>Tenement</td>
<td>Public standpipe, private connection</td>
<td>Two public toilets</td>
<td>Refuse container system</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Inventory of Community Action

The inventory of community action is a recording of activities or projects which have taken place in the selected communities for study in terms of neighbourhood improvement. This inventory covers the provision of a wide range of services including water, electricity, sanitation, waste, roads, drainage and education.

For each of the communities studied, the following items were taken into consideration:
- Description of the type of activity
- The initiator of the activity
- Whether the activity qualified as a partnership
- The key actors involved (both individuals and organizations)
- Whether the activity has been completed or not
- What has been achieved on the ground
- Who have benefited from the activity

Asawasi

Several people within this community including assemblymen (past and present), and youth leaders were interviewed in order to obtain the information required as shown in table 3.2.

The main activities in terms of neighbourhood upgrading that have taken place in Asawasi have been concerned with improving sanitation and electricity. About five activities were identified as having taken place over the past five to seven years. These activities, the construction of toilet, a refuse dump and provision of street lights, all involved the local government authority, which is the KMA. Some were in partnership with the community while others were not.

In the provision of the street lights (in 1999) the assemblyman was the initiator. With his help, the KMA provided cables and poles, etc for installation. The community contributed labour.

In 1993, a toilet was constructed with the help of the KMA and initiated by the assemblyman. Once again, the community contributed labour. Since then, more toilets have been constructed in Asawasi. Two are on-going in one area of the community but construction has been at a halt since the change in government. This project was being undertaken by the KMA with no contribution from the community. Two teachers’ toilets were also completed about two years ago. A refuse dump site was also created for the community by the KMA in 2001.

Ayigya

As mentioned earlier, Ayigya is located just off the main Accra-Kumasi road, to the north. The community seems to have a somewhat high sense of community spirit, which is evident in the high rate of participation during communal clean-up campaigns and communal labour, as well as in the presence of several community-based organizations and groups. Through this, the community has taken action, over the past five years, on issues concerning the provision of water, electricity and sanitation. Several activities came about as a result of such actions.

The first of these is the construction of a 20-seater toilet (water closet) for the community. The project, which was initiated by the unit committee for the area, began about four years ago and is currently on going. The community in partnership with the local churches is providing the funds for the project. The community has also provided labour for the construction work. The building is almost complete and has been roofed.

With the provision of water, three public standpipes have been provided within the community. The unit committee also initiated this project, which was completed about two years ago, in partnership with the Ghana Water Company Limited (GWCL), which installed the pipes. Currently, however, only
one of these pipes is working implying poor maintenance, which seems to be a normal phenomenon in this society.

The unit committee also initiated the third project identified, which is the provision of streetlights. This activity involved the installation of streetlights by the Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG). It also involves the replacement of burnt out bulbs by the unit committee as and when is necessary. The community contributed a sum of €60,000 per house towards this project.

**Aboabo No. 1**

Aboabo is a predominantly low income area with majority of its inhabitants originating from the northern parts of Ghana, as mentioned earlier. Though the community has some basic infrastructure—good roads, street lights, public toilets, and public standpipes—these have been not as a result of community action but rather because of government intervention through the World Bank sponsored Urban IV Infrastructure Upgrading project. This project is still on-going and currently, two transfer stations for refuse are being constructed in the community.

Community action in general, is practically non-existent in this community. From the point of view of the assemblyman, people are very reluctant to participate in developmental activities or communal labour and clean-up campaigns in the community. The only activities that could be identified were initiated as far back as 1989/1990 when the present assemblyman was a Zonal Assistant in the erstwhile CDR of the PNDC era. Soon after this came the implementation of the decentralization policy of the government and he was elected assemblyman for the area. The projects which he then initiated were the construction of a market and a post office.

The construction of the market was pre-financed by some people in the community, that is, those who were interested in obtaining stalls/stores in the market paid some money for work to begin. According to the assemblyman, this however delayed the start of the project as initially not too many people were interested. Therefore, the contractor pre-financed the project and began work after which other people started paying. The market is still under construction as it expands as demand for stalls increases. The market has now been handed over to the sub-metro council who collect rates and fees from the sellers.

The construction of the post office, which is a container office, was done in partnership with the Ghana Post. The community contributed by providing land for the post office to be sited on. This was as a result of the assemblyman’s initiative in consultation with the chief and the people. The post office currently has about 300 boxes with the capacity to expand.

**Aboabo No. 2**

Aboabo No. 2 is another sub-community within Aboabo with characteristics very much like that of Aboabo No. 1 and like the latter fore mentioned, community action within Aboabo No. 2 is practically non-existent. The community is fortunate enough to be also under the Urban IV Infrastructure Upgrading Project and thus has benefited from neighbourhood upgrading in terms of good roads, street lights, drains and toilets. Currently a transfer station for refuse is being constructed and is almost complete.

No activities arising from community or individual initiative could be identified, neither could any reason for the apparent lack of community initiative or community unity, be assigned by those interviewed.

**Asokore-Mampong**

Asokore Mampong, which is located on the outskirts of Kumasi, seems to have become a hub of developmental activities ever since the present chief was enstooled as Asokore Mamponghene in 1986. Many activities have since taken place, with both individuals and community-based organizations as the initiators.
Asokore Mampong is made up of a low income indigenous area, that is, the original town, with pockets of middle to high income areas surrounding it. Majority of the projects implemented within the indigenous area were initiated by the chief in partnership with other individuals and groups whereas community-based groups such as landlords association initiated action within the other higher income level areas.

The rehabilitation of an access road (from Asabi to Mampong) and the provision of a container for refuse are two activities which were initiated by the Landlords Association which has majority of its members residing in Asabi, a sub-community in Asokore Mampong. These projects were done in partnership with the KMA and the assemblyman. Landlords paid an amount of about €60,000 each as contributions towards the rehabilitation of the road. Consultations with the assemblyman also facilitated the provision of a container for refuse disposal as the refuse was formally being dumped near a member’s house. The group is still holding consultations with GWCL to help in provision of pipe-borne water to the sub-community.

Extension of electricity to the Asabi community is also another activity arising from community action. Some members of the community who work with the Electricity Company helped to extend light to the area.

Other activities have also taken place as a result of the initiative of the chief. The construction of a daycare center which was completed in 1994 at a cost of €35 million is one such project. This was done by the community in partnership with a lady from Belgium who wished to contribute to the development efforts in the community. The community contributed in terms of providing communal labour for the construction.

The construction of a biogas toilet is by the community in partnership with the Friends for Mentally Handicapped Children, a German group linked to the Garden City Special School for the Mentally Handicapped located in Asokore-Mampong. This project, another initiative of the chief, was begun in 2000, costs €60 million and is almost complete. The chief offered the land for the location of the Special School free of charge to the foreign group, who are now constructing this toilet for free to the community to show their appreciation. Gas produced from the toilet would be tapped and made use of by the school.

OTECA Fan Club a CBO in the Asokore-Mampong, in partnership with the chief, also constructed a hand dug well in 2000. This was an initiative of the group in a bid to help solve the problem of low access to water in the community. The well was constructed in the old, indigenous part of the community.

Other projects are the construction of the chiefs palace and the construction of single unit KVIPs in each household in the indigenous area (a total of about 50). The former was initiated by the chief and elders and was begun in 1992. It is now almost complete. The community provided labour for the work, that is, masonry work and clearing of the site. Funds for both projects came from monies obtained from the sale of land in the community.

The community has also begun a construction on a 6-class room block complex which includes a library, offices and a staff room. The project is currently at the foundation level and this has been at the cost of about €400 million. The entire project is to cost about another €400 million and so the chief has called upon the Otumfuo Education Fund to assist in this project.

The chief has also, as an individual, contributed towards many other development projects in the community over the years such as construction of hand dug wells (three in 1998), repairing of public and school toilets (1996-1998) and has been instrumental in the construction and rehabilitation of roads in the area.
From interviews conducted, it was identified that, as in New Zongo, allegations are being made that because the Assemblyman does not live in the community, he does not concentrate on development activities in the area. However, more investigations must be done so as to ascertain the exact reasons for the apparent absenteeism. The Unit Committee, whose chairman lives in the community, is however working hand-in-hand with the Chief and elders to ensure development.

**New Zongo**
The sub-community studied in the New Zongo area is the Ghana Legion Unit. Activities that have taken place in this community are few; only two were identified. For both of these activities - the construction of a wooden bridge and the provision of streetlights - action was initiated and implemented by the community. The construction of a wooden bridge over a wide gully in the community was initiated by the unit committee chairman and completed about five years ago. A high level of erosion which has led to the formation of big holes and gullies into which household refuse and water collects, has not only created environmental problems but also hindered free movement. The bridge was constructed by hired carpenters with resources, such as the wood, being provided by the community.

Identifying the problem of some areas being very dark in the night and thus being dangerous, the unit committee initiated the provision of street lights along some alleys in the area. This was done in 2001. Funds for this project were obtained from payments made by store owners who had built stores in the area (a total of about $1.6 million). Some of this money was also used to purchase wheelbarrows, rakes, shovels, pickaxes and cutlasses to be used by the community during clean-up campaigns, which are done regularly. This was another initiative of the unit committee.

Interviews with members of the community indicated that people felt that because the assemblyman does not live in their community, he is not very much concerned with development in the area but rather tends to concentrate on development in other areas closer to him. This allegation however, calls for more investigation as the physical location of an assemblyman in a locality is not necessarily directly proportional to development in that locality.

**Zongo**
The Afua Kobi electoral area in the Zongo is made up predominantly of migrant settlers from the northern tribes of Ghana and foreign countries with almost everyone in the low-income range.

Community action has led to improvement in electricity to the community. The Assemblyman initiated an action that led to the installation of a transformer by the ECG. This project, which is now complete (1999) was done in conjunction with the community who provided labour. In the provision of street lights which was done in 2000, the Assemblyman was once again instrumental in lobbying for this project. All the funds came from the KMA, with some of the light being provided out of the Member of Parliament’s (MP’s) share of the Common Fund.

Two wells have also been constructed in the community; one was done four years ago and the other two years ago, by a Kuwait NGO. The community, however, was not involved in this project.

**Amakom**
The sub-community of Amakom, which falls within the study area, is the Afful Nkwanta community. Development activities in the community have mainly been as a result of the initiative of the Assemblyman, who incidentally also serves as the chairman of the sub-metropolitan council under which Amakom falls.

Through his initiative, the Department of Urban Roads is constructing a bridge in the community at an estimated cost
of about €45 million. This project began in January 2002 and construction is currently under way. Apart from the initial contribution of the Assemblyman in lobbying for this project however, the community is playing no other role; the Department of Urban Roads is the sole actor.

For the construction of drains, there has been a partnership between the community and local government. The project, which is in its planning stage, is to begin in May 2002. It was initiated by the assemblyman and is one of the projects under sponsorship from the Social Investment Fund (SIF), an initiative of the government to help in poverty reduction.

Under this initiative, the SIF contributes 75 percent of the total cost of a project identified by the community whilst the KMA contributes 15 percent and the community itself 10 percent. Projects under the SIF are meant to be implemented in partnership with a community-based organization, which would handle funds for the project. Therefore, at Afful Nkwanta, though the assemblyman initiated the project, it is a CBO, the Afful Nkwanta People’s Organisation, a landlords association, now working hand-in-hand with the KMA and the SIF to implement this project.

### Table 3.2 Inventory of community action in Asawasi

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community/Sub-Community</th>
<th>Type of Activity</th>
<th>Initiator</th>
<th>Type of partnership</th>
<th>Level of completion of activity</th>
<th>Beneficiaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Table 3.3 Inventory of community action in Ayigya

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community/Sub-Community</th>
<th>Type of Activity</th>
<th>Initiator</th>
<th>Type of partnership</th>
<th>Level of completion of activity</th>
<th>Beneficiaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ayigya</td>
<td>1. Construction of 20-seater WC</td>
<td>Unit committee</td>
<td>Community-churches</td>
<td>On-going (started 4 years ago)</td>
<td>Ayigya Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Provision of public stand-pipes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Community--GWCL</td>
<td>Completed (4 years ago)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Provision of streetlights</td>
<td>Unit committee</td>
<td>Community--ECG</td>
<td>Completed</td>
<td>Ayigya Community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3.4 Inventory of community action in Aboabo No.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community/Sub-Community</th>
<th>Type of Activity</th>
<th>Initiator</th>
<th>Type of partnership</th>
<th>Level of completion of activity</th>
<th>Beneficiaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aboabo no. 1</td>
<td>1. Construction of a market</td>
<td>Assemblyman</td>
<td>Solely community</td>
<td>On-going (market is still expanding though work began in 1990)</td>
<td>Aboabo community</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Construction of a post office</td>
<td>Assemblyman</td>
<td>Community-Ghana Post</td>
<td>Completed (4 years ago)</td>
<td>Aboabo community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.5 Inventory of community action in Asokore-Mampong

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community/Sub-Community</th>
<th>Type of Activity</th>
<th>Initiator</th>
<th>Type of partnership</th>
<th>Level of completion of activity</th>
<th>Beneficiaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asokore-Mampong - Asabi</td>
<td>1. Extension of electricity</td>
<td>Community members</td>
<td>Community-ECG</td>
<td>Completed</td>
<td>Asabi sub-community</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Rehabilitation of access road (Asabi-Asokore Mampong)</td>
<td>Landlords Association</td>
<td>Landlords Association-local government (KMA)</td>
<td>Completed</td>
<td>Asabi sub-community</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Provision of container for refuse</td>
<td>Landlords Association</td>
<td>Landlords Association-assemblyman-KMA</td>
<td>Completed</td>
<td>Asabi sub-community</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Construction of Biogas toilet</td>
<td>Chief</td>
<td>Community-Friends for mentally Handicapped Children (German)</td>
<td>On-going (2000)</td>
<td>Asokore Mampong</td>
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Table 3.6 Inventory of community action in New Zongo

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community/Sub-Community</th>
<th>Type of Activity</th>
<th>Initiator</th>
<th>Type of partnership</th>
<th>Level of completion of activity</th>
<th>Beneficiaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Provision of street lights</td>
<td>Unit committee</td>
<td>Solely community</td>
<td>Completed (2001)</td>
<td>Sub-community - Ghana Legion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.7 Inventory of community action in Zongo

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community/Sub-Community</th>
<th>Type of Activity</th>
<th>Initiator</th>
<th>Type of partnership</th>
<th>Level of completion of activity</th>
<th>Beneficiaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Table 3.8 Inventory of community action in Amakom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community/Sub-Community</th>
<th>Type of Activity</th>
<th>Initiator</th>
<th>Type of partnership</th>
<th>Level of completion of activity</th>
<th>Beneficiaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Construction of drains</td>
<td>Assemblyman</td>
<td>Community-local government (KMA, SIF)</td>
<td>In its planning stages (project to begin in May)</td>
<td>Afful Nkwanta community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Inventory of Community Based Organizations

An inventory of community based organizations (CBOs) that were identified in the various communities was also conducted with the results shown in the tables below. Several of the communities such as Aboabo No. 1 and No. 2 and Zongo did not have any community groups, whilst that of Amakom was newly formed and obtaining information on the group was difficult. Information was obtained pertaining to the groups’ objectives, membership and activities amongst others.
Table 3.9 Inventory of community-based organisations in the study area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community/ Organisation</th>
<th>Date of formation</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Objectives of groups</th>
<th>Activities/Achievements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Asawasi</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 1. Asawasi Youngsters’ Club | 1999            | 30   | 70     | -to foster unity amongst the youth in the area  
-to contribute to development in the area  
-organise clean-ups in the community |
| **Ayigya**              |                  |      |        |                      |                         |
| 2. Ayigya Youngsters’ Club | 1997            | 35   | 10     | -to bring together members of the community to contribute towards development  
-paid school fees for about 22 pupils(≈25,000) in 2001  
purchased school uniforms for about 4 pupils in 2001  
-visit schools to bargain on quality of service(teaching)  
-organise clean-ups regularly  
-organise clean-ups and weeding of unkempt areas  
give loans to help members starting businesses  
purchased plastic chairs to hire out for income generation  
-organise clean-ups in community and other areas, e.g. Manhyia Polyclinic  
-donated some items to the Kumasi Children’s Home  
-organise cleanups in the community and Manhyia |
| 3. Ahenebrono Fun Club | 1992            | 24   | 6      | -                      |                         |
| 4. Kasanipaho Jan, 1998 | 2060            |      |        | -to help the township in terms of sanitation and environmental issues  
purchased plastic chairs to hire out for income generation  
-organise clean-ups in community and other areas, e.g. Manhyia Polyclinic  
-donated some items to the Kumasi Children’s Home  
-organise cleanups in the community and Manhyia |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community/Organisation</th>
<th>Date of formation</th>
<th>Membership</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Objectives of groups</th>
<th>Activities/Achievements</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>development of the area</td>
<td>provision of bulbs for street lights</td>
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<td>-to foster greater solidarity among members of the community</td>
<td>consulting with GWCL to help with water provision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-consulting with GWCL to help with water provision</td>
<td>provision of a refuse container</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-provision of a refuse container</td>
<td>construction of a hand-dug well in the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Otec Fun Club</td>
<td>Nov, 2000</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>120</td>
<td></td>
<td>-to improve upon environmental conditions in the community</td>
<td>-planting of trees (120 seedlings)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-to contribute to the solution of community problems</td>
<td>-organise communal labour on regular basis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-to see to the welfare of members</td>
<td>-contribute towards weddings, funerals, etc. of members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Drivers Union (Tipper Trucks)</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1(secreta-ry)</td>
<td>-to see to the welfare of members</td>
<td>-organise members for clean-up campaigns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-to provide a strong front to tackle problems of members</td>
<td>-contribute labour for the construction of a 4 classroom block (1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Asokore-Mampong Youth Association</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td>-to get people involved in community activities</td>
<td>-still collecting funds to be able to purchase furniture for Asokore Mampong R/C Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-to see to the welfare of members</td>
<td>-organise clean-up campaigns every month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. 1984 Leaver’s Association</td>
<td>Nov, 2001</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
<td>-to see to the welfare of members</td>
<td>-organise clean-up campaigns every month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-to provide furniture to school children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Kotoko Fun Club (Fast Track Circle 70)</td>
<td>Sept, 2001</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td>-to bring together supporters of Kotoko football club</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-to contribute to development of the community</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>New Zongo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Ghana Legion Unity Club</td>
<td>Gestation stage</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>52</td>
<td></td>
<td>-to contribute towards development of the community</td>
<td>-organise clean-ups in the community every month</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary of Findings

Eight communities were selected for study, with six being in the Asokwa Sub-Metropolitan area, one in the Manhyia Sub-Metropolitan area and one in the Subin Sub-Metropolitan area of the KMA.

General findings for each of the communities are as follows:

**Asawasi**
In Asawasi, which is a heterogeneous community in terms of ethnicity and religion, it was identified that action by the community, in partnership with the KMA, has led to an improvement of some sort in terms of sanitation and electricity. Projects done in the community were initiated by the Assemblyman. There is a moderately high level of community participation in communal labour and other communal activities, however, not many community-based groups or organisations exist apart from a youth group, the Asawasi Youngsters Club.

**Ayigya**
Ayigya, an indigenous Akan community, seems to have a somewhat high sense of community spirit, evident in a high rate of participation in communal labour and clean-up campaigns, as well as the presence of several community based organisations (CBOs) and groups. This has led to the implementation of activities aimed at improving electricity and water provision as well as sanitation in the community. Projects in this community were initiated mainly by the Unit Committee.

**Aboabo No. 1 and No. 2**
These communities are generally low-income areas with majority of the inhabitants being migrant settlers. Community action is virtually non-existent in both communities, however, basic infrastructure – roads, streetlights, public toilets and refuse dumping sites and public standpipes- have been provided as result of the communities being beneficiaries to the World Bank sponsored urban IV Infrastructure Upgrading Project. There are also no identified CBOs in any of these communities where there is an apparent lack of community action, initiative or participation in any activities.

**Asokore Mampong**
This is a peri-urban community, which seems to be a hub of development activities, which have been undertaken as a result of community action. Many activities, in terms of improving water, electricity, roads, education and sanitation, have taken place over the past five to seven years and even more. There is also a high sense of community spirit with the presence of about six identified CBOs and a high rate of participation in communal labour. Many of the projects were initiated by the chief; others by CBOs such as the landlords association. From this preliminary study, community action has been seen to be quite successful in this community.

**New Zongo**
The Ghana Legion unit in the New Zongo has experienced some community action as a result of the initiative of the Unit Committee. However, these activities were implemented solely by the community, with no partnership with any other group or agency. Only one organised group, the Ghana Legion Unity Club, was identified, which was still in the process of formation.
Zongo
This community, the Afua Kobi electoral area, which is a predominantly migrant settlers’ community, has, through community action, implemented about two projects to improve upon electricity in the area. However, no community groups could be identified.

Amakom
Development activities in the Afful Nkwanta unit, a sub-community of Amakom, have been mainly as a result of the initiative of the assembly man. This has led to improvement in sanitation and education in the community. However, apart from a recently formed landlords’ association, CBOs are generally absent in the community, with little community participation in activities.
Main results of interviews with local leaders

The inventory was used to select three areas (communities) for further investigation. The areas were chosen on the basis of observed differences in the prevalence and nature of initiatives to improve service levels in the community. Asokore Mampong was taken to represent an area with a hub of development activities – improving water, electricity, roads, education and sanitation - undertaken as a result of community action. This peri-urban community consists of an indigenous part with compound houses accommodating predominantly low income households and new extensions with modern houses for more affluent families. There is a comparatively high community spirit as apparent in the high rate of participation in communal labour and the large number of CBOs. The local society seems rather closely knit which might be related to the homogeneity in terms of ethnic and religious composition. Many projects were initiated by the chief whom people seem to respect and trust. In addition, the landlord associations in the new extensions were zealously trying to develop their area (also benefiting residents in the indigenous settlement).

The second area chosen for further inquiry was Asawasi. This is a heterogeneous, low-income neighbourhood with a moderate level of community action and organization. Initiatives largely came from the assemblyman and involved collaboration between the KMA and the local community. This has led to an improvement of some sort in terms of sanitation and electricity. The level of participation in communal labour is rather low and seems to be waning. Only few CBOs are active in the community.

Finally, Zongo was selected as an area dominated by migrant settlers. Despite the fact that the area is inhabited almost exclusively by Muslims and most speak the Hausa language these shared characteristics have not spurred community organization (no community groups could be identified). The community seems to keep aloof from the local government. Some projects have materialized – improvement of electricity, street lighting, and sanitation, and construction of two wells – largely as a result of actions by politicians (assemblymen and an MP). Although the community contributed in such projects by putting in labour and finance, leaders complain about the lack community spirit.

In the subsequent analysis the major impressions arising from the interviews in these three areas will be presented. However, they should be seen as ideas that still require further and more rigorous testing. We will briefly comment on all the topics that were taken up in the discussions with the local leaders.

4. Traditional leadership continues to play an important role in community action either by initiating neighborhood improvements or by fostering community participation in such initiatives. The local chiefs are generally highly respected and, consequently, are able to create at least some degree of social cohesion, which is beneficial to collective action. They can use their authority to overcome differences of opinion concerning desirable courses of action. Active support by the chiefs helps to mobilise community labour and financial participation. However, there are marked differences in leadership capacities and opportunities to utilise these capacities. The Asokore
Mampong chief is very enterprising which seems to be related to the fact that he is well educated and ranks high in the Ashanti hierarchy. Furthermore, he is rather wealthy enabling him to set community projects in motion, either by allocating land to the project or by using revenues from the sale of land to this end. In Asawasi, on the other hand, the chief remained very much aloof from community action, while in Zongo the sheer number of tribal chiefs (totaling 32) seems to have frustrated a more pro-active role on their part.

5. Assemblymen definitely play a crucial role in most community projects. Usually, high expectations are bestowed on these elected representatives for bringing development to their areas. They are the major liaison of the community to the local administration both for getting projects started and for sustaining them through regular maintenance. The interviews showed that the role of the assembly members in services upgrading and maintenance seldom goes undisputed. They are considered the ones that provide access to KMA resources, but simultaneously they are calling upon the residents to match these funds with their own resources (labour and/or money). Many projects involving the KMA suffer from tremendous delay, which is (rightly or wrongly) partly attributed to the assemblymen. Their success in mobilising government funds seems to depend on their personal capacities (especially if they are knowledgeable and well educated) and on the strength of their links to the top of the local administration, notably to the DCE (see below). Assemblymen were frequently accused of being too passive or of favouring the specific areas where they themselves reside.

6. Decision-making on community projects is largely top-down and monopolized by the community leadership (chiefs and elders, assemblymen, chairpersons of CBOs and unit committees). However, the persons involved predominantly perceive the decision-making process as being participatory, probably while indeed a wide range of people is included one way or the other. The community at large is ‘consulted’ through its representatives. The people are being informed on plans and their expected contributions by way of public meetings (community durbars) and through the ‘gong-gong’.

Most leaders claim to operate in a transparent manner and that they publicly account for their plans and actions. These claims, however, still need to be put to the test. Both in Asawasi and in Zongo several respondents (notably those representing unit committees) argued that the image of transparency and accountability did not correspond with their own perceptions. This suggests that consultation among the leadership is perhaps a little less inclusive than the most powerful leaders in the community portray. Although leaders may consult women and youngsters before taking decisions, they do not have a vote themselves. In case youth clubs exist, for example, their participation is usually restricted to the provision of labour, e.g. in the execution phase of community projects.

7. Leaders used to trivialize conflicts and tension with respect to community projects. There was an undeniable tendency to display harmony and consensus. Projects were usually claimed to benefit the entire community without exception. However, the scope of many projects is spatially restricted (for example in case of wells, refuse dumping grounds or public latrines). Therefore,

\[\text{3 The beating of drums for public announcements and to gather people for communal labour.}\]
people living close to the facility will benefit (more), rather than the entire community. Sometimes this bias is attributed to favouritism on the part of the assemblyman. In general the mechanisms to solve conflicts on the sitting of projects were said to be very efficient with the chiefs and elders successfully mitigating possible tensions. It is unclear, however, whether popular feelings of resentment still carry through to the present.

8. Indiscriminate dumping of household waste and defecation in open spaces or drains still occurs frequently, especially where services are lacking or inadequate. Obviously, such problems are more acute in high density downtown areas such as Zongo. Still, it would be too easy to claim that these practices attest to a low level of civic responsibility. According to most leaders, people are keen to keep their houses and direct surroundings clean and tidy. Furthermore, there are regular clean-up campaigns carried out by community members on the initiative of their leaders.

9. It was striking to observe that communal labour was still a very common practice in all three urban communities. However, a few qualifying remarks need to be made. First of all, participation in such exercises was not general. Manual work is usually carried out by able bodied (younger) men, or, in the case of clean-up campaigns children, elderly women, and youngsters. Wealthier households seem to prefer paying tokens rather than having their members providing labour to such projects. Secondly, several times respondents indicated that the level of participation in community labour had decreased in the course of time. People were said to be too much engaged in efforts to sustain the livelihood of their families to be able to free time for community labour. As a matter of fact – and probably partly related to this development – when projects are externally financed the work is usually done by hired labour these days. Thirdly, contributing labour is much more self-evident when the project directly benefits the household, for example in case of connections to the water main or electricity network. In those instances the participation is not primarily an expression of civic responsibility but rather one of self-interest. Fourthly, there seems to be a difference in the level of participation in communal labour between areas with powerful and active chiefs (Asokore Mampong) and those where chiefs are much less assertive (Asawasi and Zongo). Finally, the presence of CBOs (especially youth clubs) seems favourable because leaders can utilise these existing organisational structures to mobilise community labour.

10. The role of politics is somewhat played down in the interviews with community leaders, probably while respondents are reluctant to openly talk about its importance. It is a public secret that access to scarce governmental resources is often arranged informally between and among ‘friends’. Despite the sensitivity of the issue, however, several sayings point to the selective nature of local politics. In Asokore Mampong the local elite claims to have good access to the metropolitan and regional administration and that this has facilitated technical and financial support by the authorities. On the other hand various leaders in Asawasi and, especially, Zongo complained about the apparent indifference on the part of the local administration towards the needs in their areas. Although it is hard to draw any firm conclusions on the basis of these statements it does seem to suggest that socio-cultural affinity
matters in the allocation of public funds. More specific ‘evidence’ of the importance of clientelism came from several respondents who asserted that ‘friendly’ relationships between the assemblyman and the former DCE explained why a particular project materialised. Despite the non-partisan nature of local elections, it certainly seems to help if the political affiliation of the assembly member is to the ruling party. Both in Asawasi and in Zongo KMA-financing of community projects that were started by NDC-oriented assemblymen were terminated or frozen after the 2001 change of government (leading to the replacement of a NDC by a NPP mayor). Finally, various respondents mentioned the fact that concrete promises of assistance were made by candidates campaigning for their election (for the district assembly or the national parliament), which were subsequently not kept. This has reduced the confidence of the electorate, leading to a reduction in their level of participation in developmental processes.

11. The issue of trust was touched upon during the interviews and suggests several things. First of all, collective action seems to be easier in case the community is ‘culturally’ homogeneous as in the case of Asokore Mampong. Here the widespread prevalence of CBOs attests to a comparatively high level of social capital within the community. The Zongo case, on the other hand, demonstrates that a social schism – in this case the cleavage between the Nipa and the Sika factions⁴ – reduces the chances of mobilising the entire community for common ends. Secondly, the respondents suggest that there is a high level of trust when it comes to the traditional and modern leaders of the community. However, this picture is probably somewhat too gloomy. Leaders are unlikely to question their own loyalty and reliability, but sometimes they do challenge that of other community leaders. Assemblymen were sometimes blamed for favouring the areas where they themselves lived rather than the entire community, or for abusing their position for personal gain (for example, through the management of public latrines in their areas). With respect to agents outside the community we could observe some misgivings towards the KMA either because if failed to deliver the necessary funds (in time), or because KMA personnel were reluctant to collaborate with the community. Relationships across the public-private divide did certainly not display a high level of mutual understanding and trust.

12. Financing of public service projects within the community comes from various sources. Sometimes all the required financing is generated externally, through the KMA or a foreign gift. In those cases commitment (ownership) on the part of the community seems to be limited. Furthermore, KMA financing is often erratic leading to extensive implementation periods which is also likely to affect community engagement negatively. Other projects depend on internally generated funds or on the matching of external and internal means. Enthusiasm for and participation in such community or co-financed projects seems to be greater if they generate direct positive effects on the individual household level (c.f. access to water or electricity). It is much harder to mobilise community money for the realisation of services with a

⁴ Nipa and Sika are factions which emerged in the community after an ethnic conflict within the Moshie tribe some 5 years ago. The two tribal divides are in opposition to each other.
high public good nature (refuse collection, drainage, road construction etc.). They usually depend on gifts (by wealthy residents) or external transfers.

A major source of community finance capital is land, but the availability of this asset is restricted. Only in Asokore Mampong the chief is still in a position to allocate land for a project or to sell land to the benefit of the community. This is probably an important additional reason for the comparatively high level of community action observed in this neighbourhood. The more centrally located and fully occupied Asawasi and Zongo districts can no longer avail of this asset. Furthermore, in an almost exclusively low-income area such as Zongo, the scarcity of finance capital within the community frustrates possible initiatives.
Part V
Conclusion

Community action continues to be an important instrument for neighbourhood service upgrading in Kumasi. Although several developments inhibit widespread participation in such collective action – rising individualism, lack of social cohesion, the perceived transience of urban living, the preoccupation with household livelihoods – these have certainly not marginalized the phenomenon. However, our findings do display considerable variance in the nature and occurrence of community action. First of all, community action seems to manifest itself primarily in low and middle-income areas, partly because these areas suffer from higher levels of deprivation, partly because access to certain essential services can only be achieved when people join forces (wealthy people have better opportunities to arrange things individually). Secondly, the willingness to engage in collective action seems to increase when households will directly benefit from improvements (individual connection to water and electricity grid, access to a public latrine nearby). Levels of participation seem to shrink when services have a high collective good nature (street cleansing; refuse collection). Thirdly, community action comes off more easily with comparatively high levels of social cohesion. This social capital becomes apparent in high levels of (in this case territorially oriented) community organisation (prevalence of CBOs such as youth clubs, women organisations and landlord associations, cf. Asokore Mampong). Contrary to what we expected from the outset migrant communities (cf. Zongo, Aboabo) displayed rather weak social cohesion and a lack of community-wide organisation. Although the majority of residents share the same religious affiliation (Islam), they are divided along other lines (ethnic, sects) which hampers joint action. Finally, active leadership is a precondition for successful community action. This may be offered by modern leaders (assembly members; chairmen of landlord associations) or by traditional chiefs or both. Their ability to mobilise residents depends on their personal reputation (trustworthy, unbiased) and qualities (education), but especially on the strengths of their ties with dominant political forces that control government resources (their political capital).

Obviously, several critical notes can be raised with respect to the nature of community action. To begin with participation in such exercises is certainly not general. Although no hard data can be provided, the interviews do allow us to say that many residents turn away from community projects because they do not feel responsible (pointing their finger in the direction of the authorities), doubt that they will benefit (when the fruits of actions are very localized), or do not (feel to) have time or money to contribute. Very often community labour falls on the shoulders of a selective group young, un(der)employed men loyal to the local leader (chief, chairman) that appealed to them. It is likely that part of the explanation for low levels of participation must be attributed to lack of responsiveness and top-down decision-making. Not seldom projects are imposed on communities by local leaders or external agencies both with their own agenda. Decision-making is controlled by a few key persons who believe they know what residents really want and take their commitment for granted. However, the authoritarian nature of planning and decision-making reduces people’s sense of ownership. The top-down procedure invokes a feeling of indifference and avoidance of responsibility on the part of ordinary citizens.
One of the most important factors frustrating community action is its dependence on the KMA. Even for clean-up campaigns communities depend on the equipment of the municipality. However, there is much resentment towards the KMA. Many communities share a history of disappointment when it comes to dealing with the local authorities. The KMA is accused of being bureaucratic, slow and unstable. Many officials are not really open to inhabitants nor ready to involve ‘laymen’ in planning and decision-making. In the eyes of the public a further complicating factor stems from the politicising of community projects. These are felt to serve primarily the interests of politicians (re-election; enrichment) and their clientele rather than the community at large. Besides, it annoys people to see that official support to particular initiatives may wane when the political tide turns (cf. the recent change of government from NDC to NPP). This politicising is probably an important reason why the unit committees – that evoke associations with the former CDRs - have not yet managed to gain a firm footing among the general public. Anyway, in Kumasi conditions for synergetic development across the public-private divide are still rather poor because mutual trust and respect is sadly missing.

The feeble legitimacy of the (local) state is probably a major reason for the continued importance of chieftancy, even in the urban setting. The general respect for chiefs and elders enables them to play a leading role in community action. Whether traditional leaders actually do act as catalyst obviously depends on their personal qualities (which is also true for modern leaders). However, an important additional asset they can bring in is land (or the revenues from its sale), at least in those areas where land is still at their disposal (towards the outskirts of town). Policymakers could/should benefit from these qualities of the chieftaincy institution in their efforts to spur local development.
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