



The University of Utah

Office of Global Health

The Sustainable Village Project – 5 years later

As we look at the past 5 years, the Sustainable Village Program in Ghana has had many successes. Consistent with our mission, we have:

1. *Produced positive, measurable improvements:*
 - Completion and inauguration of two primary schools, which now accommodate 240 school children and now has six full-time teachers with long term commitment
 - Near completion of state-of-the-art 10 seat toilet facility that is sustainable within these settings and provides a new approach to waste management in rural developing world settings
 - In progress – construction of a Community Health Program (CHiP) compound that links to the district health program and will serve as the primary source of clinical health care for more than 5000 rural village residents
 - Transition of use of river and uncovered well water to predominant use of treated and covered well water in partnering communities
 - Comprehensive assessment and treatment of malaria, schistosomiasis, and other parasitic and infectious diseases.
 - Increased community awareness of prevention and early intervention as strategies for improving health.
2. *Developed key partnerships:*
 - Established a multi-partner relationship between academic institutions, healthcare facilities and rural Ghanaian villages by bringing together collaborators from the following:
 - Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital
 - Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology
 - School of Medicine
 - Barakese District Health
 - Barakese District Education
 - Barakese District Assembly
 - Community agriculture cooperative business
 - Ashante Bantama regional leadership
 - Community leaders in the Barakese district
 - Ghana Ministry of Health
 - Leaders and community members from all villages within the Barekese subdistrict, with full initiation of program efforts in Barekuma, Barekese, Kumi, Anikruma, Marban, and Adamkwame.
3. *Increased community capacity:*
 - Developing partner model for capital improvement within participating communities (including for school, health compound and sanitation facility development)
 - By organizing a community business agriculture cooperative
 - Ongoing leadership development at the local, subdistrict, district and institutional levels for all collaborating groups
 - Created sustainable outcomes:
 - Increased capacity and focus on education – addition of school facilities and integration of educational groups into the program is raising the level of education for this subdistrict
 - Trained health care and public health leaders who can expand their capacity to teach and develop ongoing programs

- Training of community volunteers to perform community assessments, develop cooperative programs, organize for community-level projects, work with local government and health care infrastructures to efficiently expand their access to local services
- Established the foundation and outline for a collaborative model that will persist beyond the involvement of the University of Utah

Over the course of the Sustainable Village Program, research has been an integral part of the efforts. We believe that engaging in research as part of the service and education components of this program allows the efforts by all collaborators to extend well beyond the scope of this program. To date, research has included work in the following example areas:

- Malaria etiology, treatment and prevention
- Nutrition, including breastfeeding and safe food / food security
- Schistosomiasis epidemiology and interventions
- Agricultural cooperative economic impact
- Gastrointestinal parasitic epidemiology and intervention
- Immunization coverage and intervention
- Geographic Information System (GIS) based infectious epidemiology
- Operational research in collaborative approaches to development
- Respiratory disease epidemiology and approaches to differential diagnosis