# FIELD SURVEY REPORT ON COMMUNITY FACILITIES IN ABLEKUMA

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Study Area: Ablekuma, Greater Accra Region, Ghana

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# Introduction

The growth of urban communities such as Ablekuma has resulted in an increase in commercial, educational, health, and industrial facilities. However, the availability of safety measures within these facilities remains an important public health and disaster management concern.  
  
This survey aimed to identify and map selected facility types: health facilities, educational institutions, filling stations, and mechanic workshops, and to assess their safety preparedness levels. The study provides baseline data to guide urban safety planning, emergency response, and local government decision-making.

# Objectives

1. To collect the GPS coordinates of health facilities, educational institutions, filling stations, and mechanic workshops in Ablekuma.
2. To categorize each facility as public or private.
3. To determine their years in operation, working hours, and working days.
4. To assess the presence and adequacy of safety tools such as fire extinguishers, fire alarms, first aid kits, and signage.
5. To generate a facility inventory for integration into a GIS database.

# Methodology

Data Collection Tool:

Survey123 for ArcGIS, a mobile data collection application that allowed real-time capture of GPS coordinates, photographs, and questionnaire responses.

Data Collection Process:  
1. Identification of facility categories and pre-survey mapping using Google Earth and field reconnaissance.  
2. Physical visits to each facility within the study boundaries.  
3. Administration of a structured questionnaire capturing facility details, ownership, years in operation, working hours/days, and safety measures.  
4. GPS coordinate capture using Survey123's geolocation tool.  
  
Limitations:  
 1. Some facilities were closed at the time of the visit and required return trips.  
2. GPS accuracy was occasionally reduced in built-up areas.  
3. Some owners were reluctant to disclose full operational details.

# 4. Study Area Description

Ablekuma is a rapidly developing peri-urban area in the Ga Central Municipality of the Greater Accra Region. It lies approximately 15 km northwest of central Accra and is characterized by mixed land use: residential clusters, commercial corridors, and industrial/service facilities. The area experiences moderate traffic congestion and has limited organized emergency service points. Given its density and facility distribution, safety preparedness is critical for disaster risk reduction.

# 5. Facilities Surveyed

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Category | Number Surveyed | Examples |
| Health Facilities | 19 | Jennifer Amaako Pharmacy, Collireg Pharmacy, Samaritan Pharmacy, etc |
| Educational Institutions | 28 | Mercy Seat Academy, Holy Innocents Anglican Basic School, Villot Heaven’s Way School, Bejess Fashion & Training Center,etc |
| Mechanic Workshops | 14 | Erico Mental & Body Works, Akushey Mechanics, Boateng Auto Mechanic |
| Filling/Gas Stations | 3 | Oilfast Filling Station, Mambah Gas Station,etc |

Note: i*t is not all the facilities that are mention in the examples section*

# 6. Safety Preparedness Findings

Health Facilities: Many of the medium-to-large pharmacies had at least one fire extinguisher and a first aid kit, while smaller OTC sellers generally had no safety tools. No facility had a fire alarm system.  
  
Educational Institutions: Few schools had fire extinguishers, mostly private ones. No school had a fire alarm.  
  
Mechanic Workshops: many of the mechanic shops don’t have fire extinguishers, fire kit or fire alarm  
  
Filling/Gas Stations: Many had multiple fire extinguishers, sand buckets, 'No Smoking' signs, and staff trained in fire safety.

# 7. Ownership Analysis

Private: 80% of facilities (including almost all pharmacies, workshops, and private schools).  
Public: 20% of facilities (mostly government schools).  
Private facilities tended to have more safety equipment than public facilities, especially in the education sector.

# 8. Key Observations from Research Context

Fire alarms and fire extinguishers, and others were rare in most of the small-scale facilities due to cost and low enforcement.  
Pharmacies and fuel stations are more likely to comply with fire extinguisher requirements than schools and workshops.  
Mechanic workshops present a high fire risk due to welding, open flames, and fuel storage, but typically lack safety measures.  
Schools, especially public ones, often rely on their gates as their safety measure.

# 9. Recommendations

1. Enforce municipal by-laws requiring at least one functional fire extinguisher per facility.

1. Organize fire safety training for facility staff, especially in schools and workshops.
2. Conduct routine inspections to ensure compliance.
3. Launch public awareness campaigns on fire safety.
4. Create a digital, publicly accessible GIS map of facilities and their safety status.

# 10. Conclusion

The Ablekuma field survey provided a comprehensive inventory of key community facilities and their safety preparedness levels. While health facilities and filling stations showed relatively better safety compliance, mechanic workshops and schools(especially the public facilities) remain vulnerable to fire risks. The results highlight the urgent need for policy enforcement, safety education, and infrastructure upgrades to improve public safety in Ablekuma.