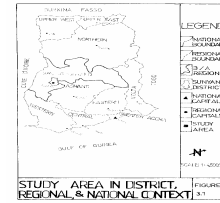


PARTNERING THE TRADITIONAL SOCIETIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN SOCIETY- THE CASE OF GHANA

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Managing societies demand a conceptual collaboration between and including traditional authorities and societies, local and national leaderships. The millennium Development Goals (MDGs) constituted an unprecedented promise by world leaders to address, as a single package, peace, security, development, human rights and fundamental freedoms to which traditional societies have very key roles. Most countries have committed to the principles of sustainable development. But this has not resulted in sufficient progress to reverse the loss of the world's environmental resources.

The links between governance and sustainable development are multiple, complex and important. Its effects on the environment and development in fact depend on the extent to which environment and political goals can be made complementary and mutually supportive. A positive outcome requires appropriate supporting political, economic and environmental policies at the national and international levels.

The paper examines the complexities between traditional and political leadership and sustainable development in the context of developing countries. Particular resource information was drawn from Ghana's experience. Available literature was also reviewed.

It was identified that both traditional and national politics have marginal roles to play in ensuring sustainable development. Chiefs, Queenmothers and elders of Ghana's traditional societies are actively contributing to sustainable development through best practices, education and drives towards a safe and productive environment and its resources. Adopting a closer bottom-to-top approach to development was identified as a pragmatic step to ensuring an environment safe and productive to both the present and future generations.

It was therefore recommended that achieving sustainable development should see political leadership adopting an all inclusive governance system that intergrades all including but not limited to traditional leadership and societies, civil societies and development partners. More so, development should factor into account recommendations and demands of local authorities. This obviously would lead to development by, for and with the people.

In view of complexities of environmental issues, wider experience should be shared globally to tap richer experience from far and wide since they are dynamic and cross-cutting issues that cannot be handled by individual countries

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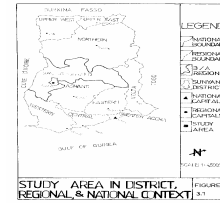
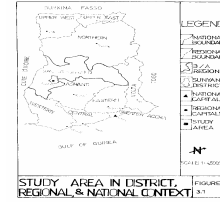


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INTRODUCTION

Different societies have their distinctive view of nature, society, human and history. While sustainability is a global issue requiring bilateral and multilateral cooperation the basic framework of sustainable development must embrace the distinctive social and cultural setting, with special attention to the local economic and social conditions (for example, poverty, inequality and inefficient use of resources). The issue of governance and sustainable development therefore demands a multiple, complex and important interface.

United Nations (2005) Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 8 prescribes the need for nations to develop a global partnership for development. The United Nations Millennium Declaration represents a global social compact: developing countries will do more to ensure their own development, and developed countries will support them through aid, debt relief and better opportunities for trade.

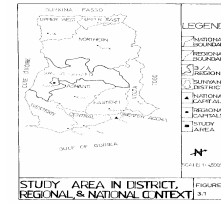
Indigenous knowledge, leadership and biodiversity are complementary phenomena essential to human development. Global awareness of the crisis concerning the conservation of biodiversity is assured following the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in June 1992 in Rio de Janeiro. Of equal concern to many world citizens is the uncertain status of the indigenous knowledge that reflects many generations of experience and problem-solving by thousands of ethnic groups across the globe. Very little of this knowledge is being acknowledged and recorded, yet it represents an immensely valuable data base that provides humankind with insights on how numerous communities have interacted with their changing environment including its floral and faunal resources.

Sustainable development as captured by *'Our Common Future'* emphasizes the idea of 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to satisfy their needs' (WCED, 1987).

Environment, governance and development are not separate challenges. Development cannot subsist on a deteriorating environmental resource base; the environment cannot be protected when growth leaves out of account the costs of environmental destruction; environment and development cannot also thrive under inappropriate governance. These problems cannot be treated separately by fragmented institutions and policies. They are linked in a complex system of cause and effect.

Wherever sustainable development decisions are taken, impacts on economic well-being, quality of life, governance and the natural environment depend on good decision support. Wrong decisions, or decisions which are blocked because of lack of public acceptability and effective collaboration with institutions including traditional societies, can have major impacts on the achievement of development goals. Sustainable development decision-making raises a wide range of environmental, social, political and economic issues apart from holding implications for the goals, objectives and

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development of the society concerned. Poor decisions which lack public acceptability or are not based on proper analysis can have serious impacts on the environment as well as economic and social well-being. Decision support is therefore absolutely critical.

Partnering traditional societies for effective governance and sustainable development is an emerging concept. Apart from the claim that traditional societies have intended purposes of promoting development, it performs to ensure the conservation and preservation of the environment for both present and future uses.

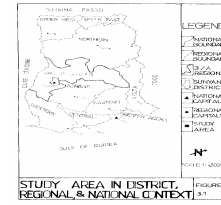
In some of Africa's most ecologically fragile and marginalized regions, knowledge of the local ecosystem simply means survival. As so much is at stake in changing traditional natural resource management practices, any proposed change is usually based on an informal evaluation and consultation process among key community members (usually a peer group involving elders). By sharing and comparing knowledge of key indicators that describe ecological responses to change or the prediction of environmental trends, the community can weigh the long and short-term costs and benefits of change related to any new innovation or application of local ecological management systems (Lalonde, 2006).

Ghana has taken remarkable strides towards consolidating democratic development in recent years, with successive and successful national elections. This spans across nearly 50 years of democratic and military periods of state governance. The country faces a significant challenge, however. The rapid pace of development has led to numerous local tensions over land, resources, and chieftaincy succession, especially where traditional groups and communities have grappled with modern politics and jurisprudence. While the chieftaincy system has served as a mainstay for social cohesion in Ghana even in modern times, the politicization of some aspects of the system has contributed to these tensions. In the recent past, an absence of new mechanisms to complement traditional means for managing these tensions has led to violent conflict.

The nation practices a dual system of governance. The first is the modern state system with its institutions. The second is the traditional systems that date back to pre-colonial times. The evolution of the modern system is traceable to British colonial rule that started in the early nineteenth century through gradual and subtle methods of encroachment on the sovereignty that was vested in the indigenous people led by their local rulers (Donkor W.J., 2006).

Among the methods used were the gradual introduction of principles of English Common Law in deciding cases and the introduction of tax systems aimed at raising revenue to cover the cost of administration. As the new system evolved, it did not obliterate the earlier indigenous systems by which the people had governed themselves. However, colonial rule halted the evolutionary processes of the traditional administrative structures and undermined the basis of traditional rule that was rooted in moral authority and consultation by making organized physical force the primary locus of authority. On another level, traditional rulers took another revolution as a new basis

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for their existence, sometimes referred to as natural rulers. In Botswana, chiefs play a central role in the legal system. Around 70 - 80 % of all legal cases are heard in chiefs' courts. "Customary law is codified in Botswana, so people have confidence in the system (Eberlee 2001).

Indigenous leadership and knowledge, though sometimes undermined, has led to various proactive ways of environmental practice. The strategy implies the science and art of employing traditional know-how through effective leadership to creating and adopting local technology that positively imparts on the environment.

Some positive practices of indigenous traditional knowledge are based on symbolism, and involve spiritual rituals, religious practices, social taboos, and sacred animal totems. Other positive practices are based on the experiential, involving travel in order to learn from the experiences of other farmers, hunters, gatherers, fishermen, herbal medicine healers, and artisans. The traditional keepers and users of local ecological knowledge and wisdom are typically the key elders from rural African communities.

Natural Resources Institute of Britain's Overseas Development Administration (NRI) provided a forum for African farmers to exchange views on ways of reducing crop losses due to pests. The NRI, working on the Mali Millet Project, described how indigenous farmers in north-western Mali placed leaves of the neem tree under the millet heads when they lay them on the ground to dry. This practice discourages insect infestation. This obviously could be a better alternative to the use of harmful chemicals as insecticides and pesticides that tend to destroy the environment.

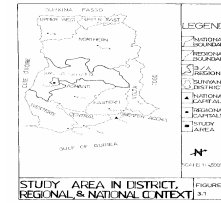
Ghana is no exception in the use of traditionally influenced local technology. The use of the leaves of neem tree prevents insect infestation of many plants. Such attempts are environmentally friendly since the mode itself replenishes the nutrient content of the soil. Though, fertilizer application is very useful, it tends to degrade the soil in the long run hence the appropriateness of the neem and cow dung solution technologies. The use of traditional modes of addressing disputes is also very high in most societies of Ghana.

Statement of the Problem

Achieving sustainable development (S.D) is still being addressed worldwide as well as Ghana. Many attempts have been made at promoting development, with the aim of satisfying the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to satisfy their own needs. Institutions including the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Forestry Commission, and The Ghana Chamber of Mines have been tasked to ensuring sustainable development in their areas of focus but with minimal success.

Institutional support for sustainable development has been inadequate. Government policies have also achieved minimal success. The sole role of government in governance therefore has called for a re-evaluation of the policy hence the need for the study. Traditional authorities can and have valuable contributions they can offer to

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ensuring sustainable development and it is in the bane of such that the study was carried to identify how best they could be partnered in the quest at ensuring sustainable development.

Ghana continues to lose large tracts of forest cover to environmental degradation. Domestic and industrial waste continues to pose problems to biodiversity and human health. Refuse continue to pile up in major cities in Ghana such as Sekondi-Takoradi, Accra, Tema and Tamale. The issue arising is whether there aren't any effective policies towards waste management and conservation of natural resources or whether government directives and guidelines are not in consonance with traditional objectives and core values.

The study therefore attempts to answer the following questions:

- Are there any effective government policies towards Sustainable Development (S.D)?
- To what extent is traditional leadership actively involved in the quest for S.D?
- What are the roles of traditional leadership in state governance?
- Can government alone champion the course of S.D.?
- How best can government collaborate with traditional authorities in ensuring S.D.?

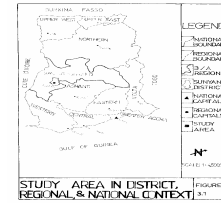
Objectives of the Study

Specific objectives are to:

- Evaluate the level and effectiveness of collaboration between State and Traditional leadership in the governance of Ghana.
- Provide effective tools for collaboration between state and traditional authorities to ensuring development that provides for the needs of both the present and future generations.
- Identify effective tools for collaboration between traditional leadership in promoting sustainable development in Ghana.
- Provide suggestions and recommendations.

Significance of the Study

The study will help to identify various strengths and weaknesses of development that integrates the contributions of all including traditional leadership. It would provide first hand insight into some of the problems faced by the government in its quest at ensuring sustainable development. This would determine and provide effective tools as well as guidelines to making Ghana have an appreciable social and economic development that satisfies the needs of all including the present and future generations. It would also assist in creating an effective interface between development that integrates traditional leadership and sustainable development of human societies.



COMPLEXITIES OF TRADITIONAL SOCIETIES IN GHANA

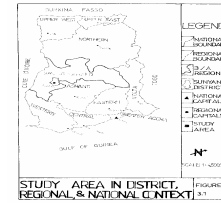
Traditional rule in Ghana finds expression in forms such as religious leadership, lineage headship, leadership in extended families, and chieftaincy. Chieftaincy is, however, the fullest expression of traditional rule in its institutionalized form. It embodies: the cardinal characteristics of prescribed kinship and lineage succession to office; awe and sacredness of office and office holders; specific forms of contractual relationships between chiefs and their subjects; and institutionalized procedures for decision-taking and implementation at the levels of local community and local participation.

Ghana's traditional leadership structure is a hierarchy. At the base is the clan head (Abusuapannin). Next and above the clan head is the village or town chief, also known in some of the Akan dialects as the "Odikuro", literally the owner of the village or the town. The next in the hierarchy is the "Omanhene" or the paramount chief, usually the traditional leader at the district level. At the apex is the head of a tribal group such as the King of Asantes or the Ga Mantse of the Gas.

Social anthropologists who have studied the governmental structure of traditional communities have usually divided the pattern of such governments into centralized societies and stateless or segmentary lineage societies. In centralized societies, there is an administrative organization which serves as the framework of the political structure and its functioning. Such a centralized administration or organization is lacking in societies that we identify as having minimal government. Centralized societies are properly called "states" and are characterized by following a clearly demarcated authority, administrative machinery and judicial institutions. These go to indicate the existence and working of a government. Here we do find cleavages of wealth, privileges, and social and political statuses corresponding to the distribution of wealth and authority (Radcliffe-Brown, 1961).

Stateless societies do not have the above mentioned structures in any sharply demarcated forms, but this does not imply the absence of mechanisms that ensure order and stability and regulate relations amongst individuals and social groups. Nonetheless, the extremely minimal nature of power; and the diffusion of such power among several virtually autonomous segments of the entire community – has led to the characterization of stateless societies. These "tribes without rulers" include the iKung Bushmen of the Kalahari desert in Namibia, the Tiv of mid-southern Nigeria, and the Tallensi and Kokomba of Ghana. This characterization, however, initially appears misconceived; it creates the impression of the existence of anarchy and chaos in such communities (Radcliffe-Brown, 1961).

The Asante dynasty is one of the well constituted traditional bodies in Ghana. Apart from the rather unique role of the *Asantehene*, and of the Golden Stool in welding



virtually autonomous traditional states and *amanhene* together, there is very little in which the Ashanti differ from other Akans in their political set-up. Such roles are also performed by the Akyem and Ga dynasties in Ghana. More so the Asante dynastic have clearly demarcated hierarchy of authority that transcends from the head of the clans to the Abusapanin thus supporting the claims of Radcliffe-Brown, 1961.

Qualities and Features Traditional Leadership

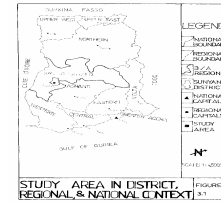
“The kingly office springs from a period in native history when there was continual warfare among the different tribes inhabiting the country. The choice of a king was most probably determined by the personal valour, intelligence and capability of the individual to lead the forces of the community in times of war. Such an individual was undoubtedly the best man the community could produce.” For example, under the kingship of his royal majesty Nana Wiafe Akenten III, the Offinso traditional council has been working to prove the quality traditional leadership offers, restoring the pride once lost and reforming into its true status.

Contributing to the debate, Casely Hayford had noted that:

“At the head of the native state stands prominently the chief (king) who is the chief magistrate and the chief military leader of the state. He is first in the councils of the country, and the first executive officer. His influence is only measured by the strength of his character.”

A *second* feature is that in the political system of the traditional order, recruitment to office has been by ascription. The process of recruitment has been on the basis or pattern of clan and lineage relationship. Nevertheless, even among the matrilineal Akan, for instance, we have examples of stools that are succeeded to patrilineally. These are known as *Maama Dwa*, and are occupied only by sons and grandsons of the stool. Examples are the stools of Ashanti Akropong (near Kumasi), and Adum (Kumasi). Such stools would have histories peculiar to them.

The *third* feature of traditional rule is the sacredness of office, and for that matter, the person of office bearers. Thus offices (and personages) are set apart from ordinary mundane phenomena. A *fourth* feature is that the behaviour pattern of any such chief was hemmed throughout in tradition, myths and taboos. These in turn served to validate that the exercise of his authority was mainly through myths and tradition; and owing to the religious-secular nature of political office, the incumbent was seen as more than human. In Ghana, this was particularly so in the cases of the *Awoamefia* of Anlo, and the *Yagbonwura* of the Gonja state. A *fifth* characteristic of traditional political rule was the significance of age which was regarded as being related to the level of wisdom that had been attained by an individual. *Finally*, while incumbents of office could be questioned about the way the system was manipulated, rarely did people question the structure of the society and its institutions as such. In other words, one experienced enough rebellion but scarcely revolutions. The foregoing features have been enumerated because they have a bearing on the democratic nature of traditional rule, as we shall examine later in this paper (Casely-Hayford J.E., 1903).



The traditional governance system, on the other hand is the age-old method by which the indigenous people administered their affairs prior to and after the advent of Europeans into the region of modern Ghana around 1471. Traditional governance systems varied considerably among the different peoples that occupied the region of modern Ghana. While some groups developed very complex hierarchical structures, others had simple kin-based types. The matrilineal Akan-speaking people, for example, seemed to have evolved once of the highest forms of the complex system of governance. The Akan political system ensured socially acceptable conduct backed by general good-will that in turn ensured social cohesion. Other groups like their Guan-speaking neighbors and the Ga-Adangme groups who originally practiced a religion-based system of government seem to have adopted and adapted the Akan model as could be inferred from the titles used for their political leaders. In the northern regions, although there are such centralized states as Mamprussi, Dagbon, Gonja and Wa that have hierarchical structures with clearly defined rules of succession and titles for their officeholders, there are many others like the Tallensi, Konkomba and Gurunsi who until fairly recently did not have such systems. It is important to note that the history of the chieftaincy institution differs among the different ethnic groups and even in the various administrative regions into which the country is divided.

ROLE OF TRADITIONAL SOCIETIES IN STATE GOVERNANCE

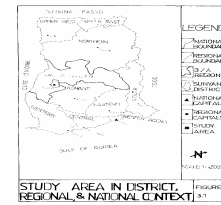
Good governance and sound public management are preconditions for the implementation of sustainable development policies. These preconditions include efforts to ensure an ethical and more transparent government process, as well as decision-making practices sufficiently open to citizens. Good governance therefore seeks to satisfy economic, political and administrative demands of a society.

Traditional leaders play both statutory and non-Statutory Functions. They are seen contributing effectively to state governance through effective economic, political and administrative policies.

The statutory functions among other things are:

- Collection, refinement, codification and the unification of customary laws,
- Adjudication in chieftaincy disputes,
- Compilation of lines of succession to offices in the various traditional areas,
- Appointment of representations to various government statutory bodies including the Council of State, Prisons Council, National and Regional Lands Commissions and Regional Co-ordination Councils and constitutionally too, traditional rulers are barred from active partisan politics.

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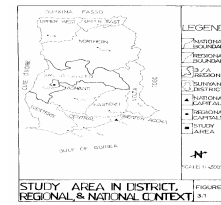
The non-statutory functions of traditional rulers are derived from their positions as moral/natural leaders of their respective communities. As influential members of their communities, they undertake the under-listed functions:

- Settlement of disputes through arbitration, Mobilization of their people for development purposes.
- They act as linkages between their communities and development agencies including central government departments, local government organs, NGOs, diplomatic missions, religious bodies and welfare associations and use of the agency of annual festivals when traditional rulers mobilize their people for the purpose of planning and seeking avenues and opportunities for executing development projects.

On close examination of the historical development of local government in the country, one can discern two basic orientations. From 1951 to 1959, local government was conceived largely in terms of the democratic right of the local people to run their own affairs. This right consisted in the people's ability to select their own representatives who then became the policy-makers or law-givers as far as the affairs of the local areas were concerned. The right also consisted in the people's capacity to determine what services to provide, what taxes to impose, and how the proceeds of these taxes should be used. The type of local government that obtained then was akin to the British local government system with its emphasis on the principles of democracy, representation, devolution and responsibility. This was not surprising since it was from the British that Ghanaians took their cue for most of the country's political and constitutional development.

Although the traditional manners of government look awesome and fearful when seen from outside, and although the pomp and pageantry around the leaders make them look impregnable, a closer study reveals otherwise. Indeed, in many regards traditional rulers appear as loving slaves to their office. There is no movement of theirs which is not controlled by custom, tradition and taboo. In palace deliberations, for instance, the chief talks last – and what he says is usually a summary of what has been said by other elders and counselors. Besides, the traditional leader only speaks through a linguist, a titled palace official versed in customary usages and oratory. In such regards, any tendency to depart from consensus decisions will be straightened out by the linguist in the course of his presentations.

Creating the enabling functional environment for traditional leadership would result in an effective collaboration between the state and the local societies. The outflow is a society that enjoys peace, economic growth and human development. The negative impact of defective governance on economic and social development, as well as on the environment, is clear. In addition to these basic preconditions, the importance for sustainable development of key management tools such as performance measurement, mechanisms for citizen engagement, specific policy and implementation processes, and continuous strategic assessment is crucial. This obviously is inclusive of traditional leadership.



Conflicting roles of Traditional Leadership and Local Government

Notwithstanding the functional roles of traditional leadership in state governance, it should also be noted that, in executing such duties many conflicts have resulted between them and state machinery.

Decalo S. (1989) argues that in hoping to "modernize" their usual mono-economies, the new African leaders often espoused an "African Socialism" where the state controlled the economy. Insisting upon the need for "national integration," in the face of a plethora of ethnic collectivities, African leaders imposed a single party system, claiming that this was close to the African "palaver."

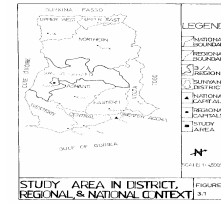
Kwame Nkrumah had a bitter conflict with the Asantehene and other traditional leaders in Ghana who objected to being excluded from government. In Ouagadougou, a frustrated traditional emperor, the Mogho Naba of the Mossi people, attempted to use his traditional army in a quixotic attempt to dissolve an embattled Territorial Assembly. Sir Edward Mutesa II of the Baganda quarreled with Sir Andrew Cohen, Britain's last colonial governor, about the future government of Uganda and was exiled to England where he died in poverty.

Democratic governance has also not succeeded in eroding such tendencies for tension between state and traditional administration. 1992 saw the swearing in into office in Ghana of an elected government. This brought into its wake the District Assemblies (DA) concept. DAs are accorded wide-ranging *powers* by the 1992 Constitution and the Local Government Act of 1993. Within its designated geographical area each District Assembly is the: highest political and administrative authority; planning authority; development authority; budgeting authority; and rating authority (Ayee, 2003). The District Assembly also has an overall responsibility to "co-ordinate , integrate and harmonize" the activities of all development agencies in the District inclusive of central government ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) and non-government organisations [Article 10 (5)].

Ensuing an effective DA and traditional leadership therefore create an interface that sometimes result in duplication of functions as well as undesirable frictions. Such complexities do mainly result from the intersecting roles and boundaries of operation, including managing waste and executing executive functions, for both state and traditional machinery of leadership.

In April 2000, religious and traditional leaders agreed to modify the ban in drumming and noise-making, an annual event prior to celebrating "Homowo" a festival of a large section of traditional enclave in the Greater Accra region (Capital of Ghana) of Ghana. The agreement was for drumming to be subdued and confined to the churches. On May

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7, 2001, the first day of the 2001 ban, the Ga Traditional Council (GTC) announced that the agreement it had previously reached with local churches in 2000, which dealt on moderate and permissible noise making levels, was not applicable for 2001 and that the ban would apply to all drumming and noise-making. Christian churches claimed then that the ban was unconstitutional and that they would not observe it. Several incidents of violence were reported during the ensuing 2001 ban on drumming. Meanwhile, political leadership stayed a further 'distance' away from the issue whilst those unfortunate developments occurred. The resultant conflict that ensued between the traditional leadership and religious groups led to massive destruction to property worth hundreds of millions of Ghanaian cedis. Clearly if there was a meaningful collaboration between these traditional societies and state governance the stalemate would not had manifested itself.

However, coherence and effective mobilization of such human resource, in terms of empowering traditional leadership, had led to many strides in effective governance, hence sustainable development. Traditional Societies are actively represented in the general assembly of the District Assemblies (D.As). Policy decisions are taken with the keen input and contributions of local authorities.

Creating an enabling interface between traditional and state leadership has not been without challenges. Leadership styles and ideologies do and have in many instances created friction in governance at both national and local levels. What confounded many western theorists on the issue were whether African leaders espoused Marxism-Leninism, African and non-African socialism, capitalism or mixed capitalism and so on, their efforts failed. A critical scenario was the situation when Dr Kwame Nkrumah rejected compromises and ignored the advice of Sir Arthur Lewis to him, that the political-economy of the new African states should use agriculture to build their economies and should employ ethnic-based coalitions for government (Lewis, 1967). The result was that confusion reigned about how African leaders could and should deal with their economies and regimes.

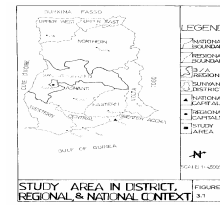
Those anthropologists who kept abreast of conditions in Africa were not surprised by the chaos. Surprised when asked by some political scientist to deal with traditional leaders in a book dealing with political parties and national integration, Peter C. Lloyd, a specialist on the Yoruba kingdom, observed that while "the chiefs have not been in the van of the national movement, at least in recent decades ... the picture so often painted of a straight fight between elderly illiterate chiefs, living in the past, and modern Western-educated politicians is not in accord with the facts" (Lloyd et al, 1970).

PARTNERING TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP FOR S.D. IN GHANA

The Concept of Partnership for Sustainable Development

Partnering the traditional leadership in state governance is a vital and necessary tool for sustainable development. Traditional leadership, state government and traditional

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societies have functional inter and intra-relationships that impact on both local and global environmental variables (Fig 1).

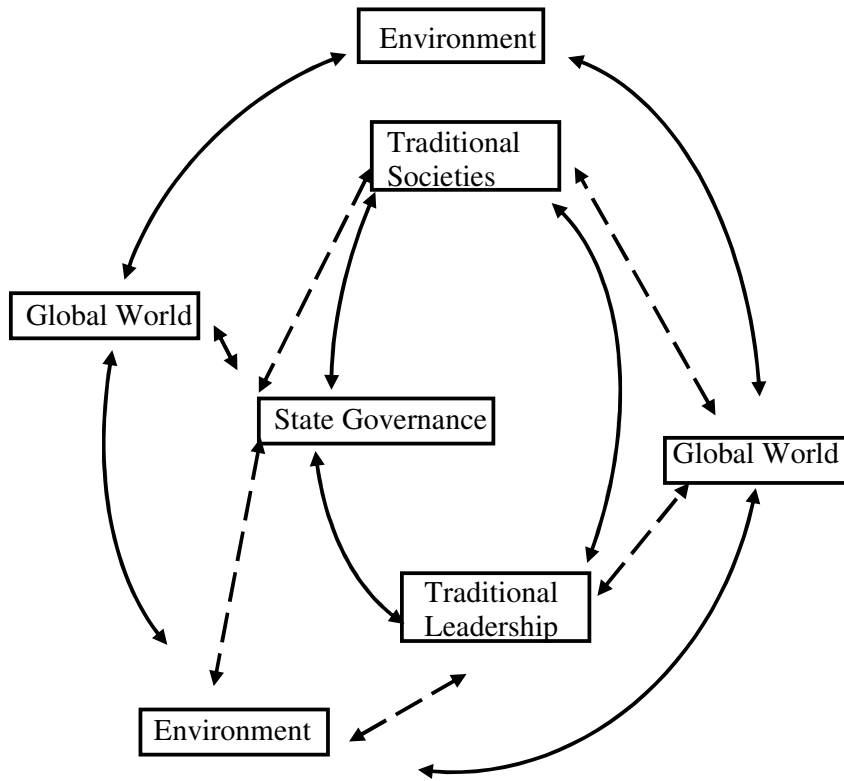


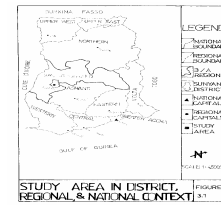
Figure: 1 Conceptual Framework for Partnering Traditional Leadership in State Governance for Sustainable Development of Human Societies

The state, traditional leadership and societies exist in a globalized world to which there exists a close knitted collaboration. It is therefore necessary that all parties to sustainable development of human societies are integrated towards growth and development that satisfies *al*. (Fig 1). Governance, though complex becomes easy to coordinate if considered in an integrative manner. Rooting indigenous knowledge in state governance is therefore a necessary impetus for growth and development.

Achieving sustainable development therefore requires an effective use of both traditional leadership and state governance since communities are mostly controlled by elders and clan heads, answerable to chiefs and kings that pay allegiance to state authority.

Chiefs and Kings are accorded extreme respect due to the power and authority they wield. In recent past their authority was considered way above that of colonial administrative power as well as contemporary state authority. Using Chiefs for

Partnering The Traditional Societies For Sustainable Development Of Human Society The Case Of Ghana

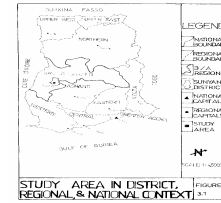


development therefore, is an active ingredient for achieving one's objective of sustainable development. Since the Chief lives with his subjects in the community he is able to monitor and ensure that his decisions are carried out since such directives are not different from decrees. Using them therefore, to make and monitor laws of the environment, would ensure maximum co-operation and observance of such directives. In many traditional societies, large areas of land are reserved as grooves or abodes of gods. Observance of such directives is non-negotiable, and this ensures that the land with its resources is conserved. The belief behind the scenario is that, if such laws are not respected, one would incur the displeasure of the gods, which is mainly fatality. Death as seen is much feared by people than the punishments associated with the laws of the state. Laws are sometimes flouted with impunity, since they are not too punitive.

Totems, use of objects as symbols of worship and reverence, are prevalent in many communities in Ghana. Animals including but not limited to the crow, deer (aboakyer festivals) are considered sacred in certain communities. Failing to protect such animals becomes a crime against the gods. Such a practice has led to the increase in the population of such animals in many communities. An interface of such idea and practice would ensure the protection of the environment and its resources.

Ghana practices a Presidential system of government, that seeks to execute power from a central point with representatives in both the regional and district administrative zones. State authority which is mainly centrally based makes it difficult for effective monitoring and coordination of national agenda. Making Chiefs responsive in state governance would ensure that government policies are easily accepted and observed by the various communities in Ghana. In such dimensions, an effective scenario that seeks to promote good governance and development would be created. Communities would also gladly accept government policies whilst working hard to ensure that they are achieved. The success story of government's massive cocoa spraying exercise for the past 4 years had been mainly due to the active and effective participation of tradition leadership and societies.

A bottom-to-up governance strategy involving local authority and central government would also encourage communities to own policies developed since they would be part of the planning and implementation of such projects. Studies have shown that community projects that infuse the suggestions and contributions of indigenes have culminated into the success of these developments. Chiefs in Ghana, though not to engage in active politics, can help better explain policies of the government whilst mobilising resources for its completion. In doing so, such Chief would earn the trust and support of his people which will further enhance and promote the needed governmental support for their communities. The introduction of a Kumasi Ventilated Improved Pit (KVIP) facility in most coastal communities met little support from such communities. The underlining cause was identified to be the non-involvement of such communities in the planning and execution of such project. The people therefore avoided using such facilities. Through a collaborative agreement between such communities and government the people have return to the use of these toilets since it



has now been constructed at sites and in conditions accepted and approved by the communities. Sanitation and health has consequently improved in such communities. This obviously is the success story of involving state and traditional leadership in governance.

THE WAY FORWARD

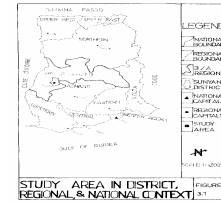
International and national development agencies have recognized the value of participatory approaches to decision-making for sustainable approaches to development. During the past decade a rapidly growing set of evidence indicates a strong relationship between indigenous knowledge and sustainable development (Posey, 1985). Meeting the challenges of governance in contemporary Africa is to recognize and satisfy the goals and aspirations of different groups and their leaders. Different African societies necessitated types of governance based on compromises between types of groups and individuals. It is therefore in the right perspective for state governance to actively pursue an all inclusive state governance that recognizes traditional leaders, societies and their contributions.

One of the longest-lasting violent conflicts in Ghana has afflicted the Dagbon traditional area of the Northern region, where each of the two major clans claims affiliation to different and opposing national political parties that is, New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic congress (NDC). In 2003, the traditional ruler of the area and a number of his followers numbering about 40 were killed. Law enforcement agencies provided only a tepid response. Perceptions by the aggrieved clan of national authorities' ineptitude or compliance significantly ratcheted political tensions at the national level. This threatened to create instability and violence during national elections in December 2004. The scenario is an inducement for an effective collaboration between state and traditional leadership since its omission will mean a possible chaos. The state should recognize traditional leadership whilst providing for such their legitimate state support.

Traditional leadership should not meddle in politics but rather in effective governance of their communities and the state. Chiefs and their council of elders should not be seen in party paraphernalia as well as partaking in party political campaigns. By respecting their boundaries in politics would prevent situations where they fall into the *dark side* of parties in power. Meddling in state politics may result in some of the unfortunate events that led to the Dagbon crisis that occurred in Ghana. The Chief's authority is primarily vested in his people and he should therefore be primarily responsive to the needs of his subjects. When such a desirable interface between traditional leadership and state machinery is created, it would further enhance strides for cooperation, growth and development of human societies.

Sustainable development that seeks to provide the need of the present generation without compromising that of the future generations should be an integral component of the aspirations of societies at the community level. Chiefs, Queenmothers, though

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actively working towards community development, can be made more effective if given the necessary legal backing as well as state support.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Achieving sustainable development should see political leadership adopting an all inclusive governance system that intergrades all including and not limited to traditional leadership and societies, civil societies and development partners.

Government should strengthen traditional leadership through the regional and national houses of chiefs to ensure the promotion of peace and settlement of chieftaincy disputes. The judiciary can also be tasked to deal effectively and quickly with chieftaincy disputes in order to safeguard the chieftaincy institution. This would facilitate the existence and effectiveness of the institution. The Asantehene has instituted a policy that ensures that most chieftaincy disputes in the Ashanti kingdom are settled out of court. The current Asatehene has also requested and personally requested and ensured the withdrawal out of court of such disputes that relate to his kingdom and his sub-chiefs. This is a clear manifestation of the quest to ensure the effective participation and function of his chiefs to promote effective governance and development.

Further, development should factor into account recommendations and demands of local authorities. The inputs of traditional societies should be sought before development projects are institutionalized as this would ensure a fuller corporation of the communities. This obviously would lead to development by, for and with the people.

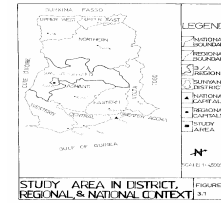
Effective growth and development should also seek to include the empowerment of organizations that work at the local level. Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Civic groups and Community Based Organizations (CBOs) should be given adequate support to ensure their effective participation in community development. As these groups are supported, they can effectively collaborate financially with traditional leadership to execute community project that include the conservation and protection of the environment.

Governments should not create the environment for division, by aligning themselves with particular chieftain or people, in the societies. This would ensure that successive governments continue to work effectively with all communities.

CONCLUSION

Through the 50 years of Ghana's independence the nation has transcended through a mirage of leadership ideologies both at local and national levels. This has passed through stages of colonial leadership that exploited traditional leadership to the present

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where the district assembly concept has co-habited traditional leadership and state governance. In all such developments, the benefactors or losers have been the societies and the environment. Given the evolution of both traditional and state governance available to the societies, new strategies are needed to extend sustainable development to all societies.

State support and indigenous knowledge is recognized as a basic right that is vital to the society. Yet, governments have not been able to promote effective bottom-to-up governance that integrates the contributions of traditional leadership. With a high level of forest resource depletion, pollution of water bodies and low level of consciousness to environmental issues, it is proper relevant that Chiefs, Queenmother and local opinion leaders are recognized and integrated into state governance. This obviously would lead to appropriate modes of conserving and preserving the environment, hence human societies.

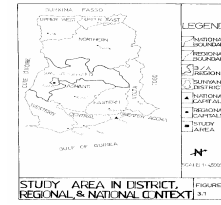
It must be noted that it is absolutely impossible to promote sustainable development of human societies without ensuring a partnership that seeks to draw traditional leadership into state governance, hence sustainable development.

The study also resolved that, Ghana has laudable policies towards dealing with environmental conservation and preservation. Such policies deal with issues including forest stock depletion, pollution and best practices. Such policies through effectively coordinated, has left much to be desired. Ghana Standards Board (GSB), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Chamber of Mines has been active in the front to comprehensive and effective environmental protection and consciousness. However, their functions and policies are not effectively coordinated due to the minimal involvement of traditional leadership and indigenous knowledge.

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