

SEMINAR REPORT ON

**MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND TRADITIONAL
AUTHORITIES**

**THEME: THE ROLE OF CHIEFS AND THE ACHIEVEMENT
OF THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

**HELD AT
ELMINA BEACH RESORT, ELMINA**

17TH – 19TH APRIL 2007

**ORGANIZED BY THE NATIONAL HOUSE OF CHIEFS
SPONSOR: KONRAD ADENAUER STIFTUNG (KAS)**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

At the September 2000 United Nations Millennium Summit, one hundred and eighty nine (189) Heads of State and Government adopted the Millennium Declaration which was aimed at eliciting national responses through initiatives and strategies geared towards reducing poverty and improving the standard of living of the poor in society. The summit came out with 8 goals which are to be achieved by the year 2015. Chiefs who have been in the forefront of community development all over the country have been acknowledged as integral part of this development process. It is in this regard that a tripartite seminar was organized to brainstorm and assess the roles that the Traditional Authorities can play to make the objectives of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) achievable.

Composition and topics discussed

About 26 participants drawn from the National House of Chiefs, Ministers of State, Members of Parliament, the Chieftaincy Secretariat, Ministry of Chieftaincy and Culture, Centre for National Culture and Konrad Adenauer Stiftung attended the seminar. In all, three papers were presented on the topics: The Millennium Development Goals and the Chieftaincy Institution in Ghana; Culture and Millennium Development Goals – Role of Chiefs; Fifty Years of Chieftaincy in Ghana – the Way Forward

Recommendations

As part of their roles in the achievement of the MDGs, Nananom should:

- Lead continuing tripartite dialogue on development issues with government & Development Partners (MDAs, MMDAs, Civil Society etc)
- Review and update traditional ethics, cultural norms, practices and standards e.g. reviewing expensive funeral celebrations and reinstituting traditional practices that are beneficial to their communities like the puberty rites.
- Mobilize constituents to participate more actively in decision making
- Disseminate policy information of the government
- Sensitize the citizenry and create awareness on strategic developmental issues
- Promote the indigenous craft industry in their communities.

Furthermore, the administrative structure and human resource base at all levels, including equipment, funding and related issues all need serious attention. It is again requested that counsels should be provided to assist the judicial committees to resolve chieftaincy cases pending before the houses of chiefs. Again, for participation of all the people in government, serious consideration should be given to the establishment of “District Houses of Chiefs”.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

At the September 2000 United Nations Millennium Summit, one hundred and eighty nine (189) Heads of State and Government including Ghana unanimously adopted the Millennium Declaration. During the summit, the leaders agreed on development outcomes intended to elicit national responses through initiatives and strategies geared towards reducing poverty and improving the standard of living of the poor in society. The summit came out with 8 goals, 18 targets and 48 indicators. The first six goals seek to reduce poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, and discrimination against women whereas the seventh spotlights on ensuring environmental sustainability. The eighth goal targets international partnerships and how the developed countries could assist the developing ones to realize the other seven Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

It is acknowledged that Chiefs are integral part of the nation’s development process and are very crucial partners in this direction. This is because culture forms the basis of almost all our development policies and since chiefs (Nananom) are the custodians of our culture, it behooves on every policy maker to involve them in the formulation of development policies.

There is no doubt that all the eight thematic areas of the MDGs have linkages to our everyday development objectives as well as our way of life. Therefore, if Nananom who have been in the forefront of community development all over the country are able to develop effective strategies for its implementation, the objectives of the MDGs are most likely to be achieved.

It is in this regard that a tripartite seminar involving Chiefs, Hon. Parliamentarians and Hon. Ministers of State, with sponsorship from Konrad Adenauer Stiftung was organized from 17th -19th April, 2007 at the Elmina Beach Resort in Elmina, Central Region with the theme: **“The Role of Traditional Authorities in achieving the Millennium Development Goals”**. As the theme

presupposes, the objective of the seminar was to brainstorm and assess the roles that Nananom can play to make the objectives of the MDGs achievable.

About 26 participants drawn from the National House of Chiefs, Ministers of State, Members of Parliament, the Chieftaincy Secretariat, Ministry of Chieftaincy and Culture, Centre for National Culture and Konrad Adenauer Stiftung attended the seminar.

The seminar was structured in two main sessions. There was the opening session which concentrated on addresses delivered by the President of the National House of Chiefs and invited guests. The second session focused on papers that were presented by resource persons.

In all, three papers were presented on the topics:

1. The Millennium Development Goals and the Chieftaincy Institution in Ghana
2. Culture and Millennium Development Goals – Role of Chiefs
3. Fifty Years of Chieftaincy in Ghana – the Way Forward

This report therefore highlights the addresses and the papers that were presented at the seminar.

1.1 Opening Ceremony

The opening ceremony started at 9:08 am. The President of the National House of Chiefs (NHC), Odenho Gyapong Ababio, who was the chairman for the occasion asked for a minute silence to be observed for the late Chief Justice of Ghana, Justice Kingsley George Acquah. The opening prayer, which was said by Mr. F. E. Nuamah, Registrar of the National House of Chiefs, followed after the minute silence. Addresses were delivered by the President of the House, followed by the invited guests namely: the Representative of Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS), Mr. Isaac Owusu-Mensah, the Central Regional Minister, Nana Ato Arthur, and the keynote address was delivered by the Minister of State in charge of Chieftaincy Affairs, Hon. Sampson Kwaku Boafo. Self-introduction of all participants present was done after the address by the KAS representative.

1.2 Welcome address by Odenho Gyapong Ababio, President of the National House of Chiefs

In his welcome address, Odenho Gyapong Ababio (II) expressed his appreciation to all those who were present and said that the idea of tripartite seminar for Chiefs, Hon. Parliamentarians and Hon. Ministers of State has become part of our national life. He confirmed that ever since he became the president of the National House of Chiefs, a tripartite seminar has been held almost every year. He

therefore expressed the House's gratitude to the organizers particularly Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, and the indefatigable Chairman of the Research Committee of National House of Chiefs.

He mentioned the importance of the theme for the seminar i.e. "The role of Traditional Authorities in achieving the Millennium Development Goals" as very important and observed the uniqueness of this year's tripartite seminar considering the fact that the country is celebrating its 50 years of nationhood.

1.3 Central Regional Minister's Address

Hon. Ato Arthur thanked the organizers for bringing such an important workshop to Elmina, which is in his region. He stressed that the Central Region has increasingly become a home away from home and that's why many programmes such as this is being held in the region. He welcomed everybody present at the seminar to Elmina.

He remarked that Ghana's mission is to achieve sustainable development and enquired whether the mission could be achieved without peace. He cited some communities in Central Region where there are two chiefs e.g. Duaso in the Upper Denkyira District. He expressed the hope that such an important workshop will be able to identify the bottlenecks, what we all need to do and then do it as quickly as possible. It was his belief that it is only through a programme like this that the MDGs can be achieved.

The Regional Minister revealed that there exist a cordial relationship between the Central Regional Coordinating Council (RCC) and the Central Regional House of Chiefs. He pointed out that the RCC has set up a seven member eminent citizens committee which is chaired by his Eminence Peter Appiah Turkson to look into some of the chieftaincy issues in the Region that litigant parties will willingly want to be resolved. He stated that the committee is going to be inaugurated at the end of the month of April 2007.

1.4 Address by Mr. Isaac Owusu-Mensah, Senior Programme Officer of Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS)

Mr. Owusu-Mensah who was grateful to be part of the seminar first apologized on behalf of the Resident Representative of KAS who had to travel outside the country that morning. He explained the reason why the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAF) that everybody knew has changed its name to Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS). According to him, Stiftung is a German word, which

means Foundation, and that they want maintain one corporate identity world-wide all over the world, no matter the language that one speaks thus the word “Stiftung”.

He stated that KAF is one of the five German Political Foundations that seeks to promote the ideals of good governance across the globe. According to him, the Foundation believes in harnessing of indigenous knowledge to confront challenges of development. He added that KAS has been operating in Ghana in the last forty-one years on this core mandate.

He gave the background to the birth of the MDGs as the targets that Heads of States consented to at the end of the last century during the September 2000 Millennium Summit. He proceeded to quote Prof. K. A. Busia when he was writing on the position of chiefs and development to buttress the role of Nananom in socio-economic development in Ghana. According to Prof. Busia, the Chief is “he who sits upon the stool of the ancestors, he is accorded reverence as successor of his royal ancestors, to whom he performs sacrifices on behalf of the tribe ... He prayed for things which they consider essential for the community – health, food and fecundity”

According to Mr. Owusu-Mensah, all the eight goals contained in the MDGs, which the Central Government is striving very hard to achieve are issues that Nananom have over the centuries engaged themselves with i.e. issues such as health, provision of food, poverty reduction or promotion of gender mainstreaming which are already household names.

He expressed KAS’ recognition of the role that indigenous institutions and bodies play in the socio-economic development of the country. He threw the challenge that Ghana will not be able to achieve the MDGs if our traditional authorities who are the frontline development agents are not part of the process towards the achievement. He urged stakeholders in the MDGs’ implementations to involve traditional leaders at all levels, from the community to the National House of Chiefs and at every part of the country. He once again urged all to bring their candid knowledge, experiences and ideas to support the government to meet the 2015 target for Ghanaians. He concluded by expressing the hope that even if the country is not able to meet the threshold by 2015 as expected, but the current programmes and projects by the government, which are directed towards the MDGs, are sustained, the quality of life of the ordinary Ghanaian would be significantly improved.

1.5 Keynote Address by the Minister for Chieftaincy and Culture, Hon. S. K. Bofo

The Hon. Minister who began by showing his appreciation for the organizers of this seminar admitted that the theme for this year’s Tripartite Seminar is not only apt and appropriate but also

very commendable. He expressed the hope that the idea of the tripartite seminar has come to stay on an annual basis since the year 2000. According to him, this lends credence to the fact that chiefs are integral part of the nation's development process and are very crucial partners in this direction. It is for the recognition of this that His Excellency the President in his wisdom established the Ministry of Chieftaincy and Culture to facilitate the institution of Chieftaincy to enable our traditional rulers partner government to successfully develop our nation. According to him, it is for this reason that government increased the allowances of chiefs by 150% this year and again has granted approval to the acquisition of cross-country vehicles for the National House of Chiefs as well as all the ten Regional Houses of Chiefs.

He was of the opinion that our culture forms the basis of almost all our development policies and since Nananom are the custodians of our culture, it behooves on all to involve them in the formulation of our development policies. He observed that all the eight thematic areas of the MDGs have linkages to our everyday development objectives as well as our way of life. He mentioned the thematic areas as:

- Eradicate extreme hunger and poverty
- Achieve universal primary education
- Promote gender equality and empower women
- Reduce child mortality
- Improve maternal health
- Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- Ensure environmental sustainability and
- Develop a global partnership for development

Therefore, if Nananom who have been in the forefront of community development all over the country are able to develop effective strategies for its implementation, the status of Ghana will change from a developing country into a middle-income country by the year 2015. He therefore entreated Nananom to embrace the concept and give it their total support.

He praised the organizers of the seminar for the theme chosen and added that government cannot bypass Nananom in any way to achieve the goals considering their capabilities in the mobilization of their communities for development, their adjudicating roles in dispute management, their roles in the conservation of the environment, preservation of our cultural heritage and many more that

have direct linkage to the eight goals. He expressed the hope that the organizers and the facilitators will elaborate on the various areas that Nananom could support and pool their resources to partner government to successfully achieve these goals and added that the seminar is a welcome one to the government.

The Hon. Minister assured participants that any resolution or communiqué that will be issued at the end of the seminar cannot and will not be overlooked by government. He threw the question of “what can be done next after this seminar” to KAS. He, at this juncture, declared the seminar formally open.

1.6 Chairman’s Remarks

The Chairman used the occasion to express his sincere appreciation to His Excellency the President of the Republic of Ghana for increasing their allowance by 150%. He again showed appreciation to the government for voting money, since last year, for a new office complex to be built for the National House of Chiefs in Kumasi. He stated that ₵1.5billion was released last year and in this year’s budget, another ₵2billion is being released. He confirmed that ₵5billion has been voted for the acquisition of 13 cross country vehicles for all Regional Houses of Chiefs, National as well as the Ministry.

He ended by assuring the Minister that they are not going to relax on the roles that they, Nananom, are expected to play.

2.0 THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE TECHNICAL PRESENTATION

2.1 LECTURE 1

TOPIC: THE ROLE OF TRADITIONAL AUTHORITIES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGs) IN GHANA

PRESENTER: J. E. ODOTEI, NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING COMMISSION (NDPC)

2.1.0 Introduction

Mr. J. E. Odotei began his presentation with a confession that his Commission has experienced some problems/lapses in the past when it came to implementation of government policies and development programmes. According to him the Commission has therefore observed that the failure of these programmes lead to the fact that most of them i.e. the programmes did not have ownership. This means that most of the plans were thrown overboard, some were not implemented, and others were partially implemented. It was all because the people did not own it. It was owned by a specific entity i.e. the executive, so once those people are out of the executive power, the programme becomes of paper to the people. It is therefore believed that leadership of programmes of development should be in the hands of the Traditional Authorities who are always with the people. So, the role of Traditional Authorities should be seen as critical in achieving the goals of programmes.

2.1.1 The MDGs: An Overview

Mr. Odotei explained that the MDGs are internationally agreed development outcomes intended to elicit national responses through initiatives and strategies geared towards reducing poverty and improving the standard of living of the poor in society. They were developed as the operational interpretations of the millennium declaration of 2000. He stated that there are 8 goals, 18 targets and 48 indicators. According to him, the first six seeks to reduce poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, and discrimination against women whereas the seventh focuses on ensuring environmental sustainability whereas the eighth advocates international partnerships and how the developed countries could assist the developing countries to realize the other seven MDGs.

Some Observations

According to him, the adoption of the UN Millennium Declaration reinforces the growing global awareness of the deteriorating human welfare standards for the larger majority of the world's population especially among the developing economies. It also demonstrates the commitment of the developed economies to support the pursuance of an agenda to up-grade existing global human welfare standards. These are indications of whatever was foreseen at the time. To him, MDGs are

not new and that they have some historical antecedents pursued in diverse ways over the last few decades. For instance, the role of the traditional authorities in the past included looking at issues that bothered on hunger, illiteracy, community development, etc. The only difference today is that we are trying to bring into a more structured form where we will be able to identify activities, resources, implementing agencies, and to make sure that they are implemented to the latter. He emphasised that the MDGs essentially prescribe minimum standards that has to be attained globally for human welfare by 2015. The targets and goals are not the end in them but are just the minimum, which is expected to be achieved by 2015. He observed that the MDGs are synergistic and mutually reinforcing – from goal 1 to goal 7 e.g. gender discrimination. He continued that the MDGs are broad and that no specific strategies or plans of action are prescribed for any particular country to achieve the goals. It is something that needs to be developed based on one's culture etc.

Some Efforts made

Even before the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS) 1 which started from 2003, documentation of Ghana's progress towards the achievement of the MDGs had begun with the compilation of the 2002 MDG report. Secondly, it ensured that national plans, programmes and policy frameworks are in harmony with each other and consistent with the MDGs e.g. integration of the MDGs into GPRS II (2006-2009). Furthermore, the Annual Progress Reports give status information on the achievement of the MDGs.

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MDGS

2.1.2 Goal 1.Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger

Target: Halve the proportion of people below the national poverty line

Halve the proportion of people who suffer from hunger

Indicators: Reduce the proportion of population below national basic needs and poverty line

Reduce the prevalence of underweight children (children under-five)

Supportive Environment

What has the government done so far to be able to tackle these issues?

According to him, so far, there has been a consistent average GDP growth rate of 5.2%. That is quite an enviable growth compared to the growth rate of some developed countries. Furthermore, arable land under irrigation increased from 0.08% in 2004 to 0.10% in 2005. Again, dugouts constructed increased from 999 in 2004 to 1069 in 2005- 7% increased.

He emphasized that in the past, the budget was separate and the agenda was also separate so whatever was done by way of budget did not provide a good reflection of the agenda that we have as a nation. However, the linkage between the GPRS and the national budget has now been strengthened through the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF).

The Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) funds have been utilized to support expenditures in health, water, sanitation, education and employment generation projects at the district level. The share of budgetary allocation to finance the provision of rural infrastructure has also been increased.

Mr. Odotei again declared that there is now direct funding of district assemblies by government to implement projects that impact directly on the poor. More so, about 123 District Mutual Health Insurance Schemes have been implemented across the country and there has been strengthening of Safe Motherhood Programmes (breastfeeding, family planning, de-worming, reducing micro-nutrient deficiencies). For instance, Vitamin A supplement (VAS) achieved a national coverage of 98.6%. These are all parts of the initiatives that are coming from the budget allocations.

PROGRESS SO FAR

According to him, statistics indicate that poverty declined from 52% in 1992 to 40% in 1999 representing a decline of 1.8% per annum. Based on a linear projection, the proportion of the population below the poverty line will be around 9.2 – 12% by 2015, compared to a target of 20%. He mentioned that extreme poverty declined from 36.5% in 1992 to 27% in 1998. Similarly based on linear projection, the proportion below the extreme poverty level will be 4% by 2015 compared with target of 18%. This is an indication that our national ambitions and desires are going to go above that level which has been set by the United Nations. This points to the fact that Ghana has been working on eradicating poverty since time immemorial and we are determined to achieve it.

Mr. Odotei however indicated that trends in child nutrition status since the 1990's have yielded mixed results. While incidence of both underweight and wasted declined marginally, those categorized as stunted experienced the reverse. The proportion of children underweight which was 27% in 1992, declined to 25% in 1999 and 23.3% in 2003. Furthermore, the proportion of children under five categorized as stunted increased from 26% in 1998 to 30% in 2003. According to him, using a linear projection to 2015, the prevalence of underweight children will be 21% as against the MDG's target value of 14%. This clearly indicates that the country may not be able to reach the

target. He was however quick to explain that these indicators take a long time to be assessed e.g. if you want to look at the development of a child, you will have to study the age that you target. If you miss the age then all kinds of things are likely to happen and you may not be able to get the results. Again, if you start implementing a child's nutrition programme today, maybe the best time to assess your results will be after five or six years later and for that reason you will get mixed results. Nonetheless, he urged Nananom to join in the sensitization and awareness creation on nutritional needs of children especially on the belief that children are not supposed to take in some nutritional foods like meat and eggs.

Some Challenges

- Maintaining macro-economic stability
- Addressing long term population growth rate through reduction in fertility
- Ensuring timely release of funds for implementation
- Improving household food security and minimizing incidence of inappropriate dietary intake

2.1.3 GOAL 2: ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION

- ***Target 3: Achieve Universal access to primary education***
- ***Indicator: Net Primary Enrolment Ratio***

Some challenges

Primary schools increased from 12,326 in 1998 to 16,046 by 2003/04- an estimated 31.4 % of primary schools need rehabilitation. Secondly, geographical disparities in access to education also need to be addressed. Measures should also be introduced to ensure teacher deployment and retention in favor of deprived districts and rural areas. According to him, in spite of the impressive outcomes in the enrolment of children as a result of the capitation grant and the school feeding programme, there is the issue of retention. In some communities, children after taking the meals go back to their homes. This calls for the involvement of chiefs, the community and the parents in solving this problem.

Prospects

- Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) will probably be achieved.
- Enrolment increased from 58.8 % in 2002 to 65% by 2004. Net enrolments need to grow at approximately by 3.5 % to achieve goal 3. So, by and large, everyone has a role to play.

2.1.4 GOAL 3: PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER WOMEN

- **Target: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary school**
- *Indicator: Ratio of females to males in primary, junior and secondary schools*
- **Target: Achieve equal access for boys and girls to senior secondary school by 2015**
- *Indicator: Ratio of females to males in senior secondary schools*

Status and Trends

Gender Parity Index: there was an improvement in the Primary Level from 82 to 93 females to 100 males from 2003 to 2004. However, in the Northern and Upper East Regions it was below the national average. That is: Primary Level 1990-(62 females to 100 males) and 2003-(88 females to 100 males).

Policy Action

Scholarship schemes for girls in primary schools have been initiated. There has also been an appointment of a minister responsible for girl-child education. Furthermore, there is now a policy of mainstreaming preschool education in all basic schools. This has been given prominence in the new educational reforms.

Status -2004

Capitation grant for girls was introduced in 2004 by the Ministry of Education with a first installment of ₵30,000 per female pupil being paid for first term of 2004 / 2005 academic year.

Some Challenges

- Sensitizing parents and communities about the importance of girls' education
- Implementing strategies for gender equality in education that take into account the need for changes in attitudes, values and cultural practices

2.1.5 GOAL 4: REDUCE CHILD MORTALITY

- **Target: Reduce by two thirds, between 1990-2015, the under-five mortality rate.**
- *Indicator: Under five mortality rate per 1000*

Status and Trend

According to him, the Under 5 Mortality Rate (U5MR) increased from 108 per 1000 in 1998 to 111 per 1000 in 2003 with one in every 9 children dying before age 5. Again, the rural U5MR is 118 and Urban 93 with ranges from 75 for Greater Accra to 208 in Upper West Region.

Some Measures

- Non wage recurrent expenditure has increased in 4 years from 5.7% of GDP in 2000 to 11.8% in 2003
- Integrated management of childhood illness
- Expanded programme on Immunization
- Enhance Access to Health Services
- The programme for the accelerated control of measles, maternal and neonatal tetanus

Some Challenges

- Relocation and retention of health professionals in most deprived areas
- Prevention of mother to child HIV transmission particularly through breastfeeding
- Improving household and community practices
 - Sanitation, water supply and environmental issues
 - Nutrition
 - Immunization
 - Counterproductive cultural practices

Prospects: Target is unlikely to be met. Mortality rate must decline from a base figure of 155 per 1000 in 1988 to approx 53 per 1000 by 2015 (current trends 80 by 2015.)

2.1.6 GOAL 5: IMPROVE MATERNAL HEALTH

- **Target: Reduce maternal mortality Ratio by three-quarters by 2015**
- ***Indicator: Maternal Mortality per 100,000***

Status and Trends

- 1999-210 per 100,000 live births
- 2001-586 per 100,000 live births
- Northern region about 800 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births
- 88% of health facilities in Ghana currently offering antenatal services

- 98% of urban women and 89% of rural women received antenatal care from trained health professionals

Some Measures

- Safe Motherhood programme under the Primary Health Care System
 - Enhancing access to basic and comprehensive essential obstetric care
 - Provision and post abortion care services
 - Increasing average antenatal care
 - Reducing unmet need in family planning

Some Challenges

- Insufficient data
- Prevention and management of unsafe abortion
- Improving nutritional status of women of child bearing age
- Improving availability and retention of trained health personnel

Prospects: Target unlikely to be met

2.1.7 GOAL 6: COMBAT HIV/AIDS AND MALARIA

Target: Halt and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS by 2015

- Indicator: National HIV prevalence rate

Target: Halt and reverse the spread of Malaria by 2015

HIV/AIDS: Status and Trends

- Slight reduction from 3.6% in 2003 to 3.1% in 2004 yet prevalence rate doubled from 1.55 in 1999 to 3.1% in 2004, 2005 prevalence is about 2.7%
- 6 out of 34 sentinel sites have HIV prevalence rates of 5 % or more
- Estimates show that almost 400,000 infected and 200,000 orphaned
- Prevalence rate could increase to 8.2% by 2009 and 9.5% by 2014

Some Challenges

- Effectively target high risk and vulnerable groups
- Promulgate relevant policies and guidelines
- Provide universal access to treatment e.g. (ART)
- Scale-up District Response Initiative to all districts and improve capacities at all levels

Some Measures

- National HIV/AIDS and STI Policy promulgated in 2004
- Mainstream HIV/AIDS in MDAs and District Assemblies Development Plan

Malaria: Status and Trends

- Accounts for 44.5% of all outpatient illnesses, 39% of all admissions and 13.2% of all deaths in health facilities
- 800,000 children under age five die from malaria annually

Some Challenges

- Limited geographic and financial access to basic health services
- Low use of bed nets, particularly for children
- Managing community environmental sanitation
- Managing the potential impact of irrigation projects on malaria control
- Insufficient data

Some Measures

- Various Policies and programmes put in place e.g. Roll back Malaria

2.1.8 GOAL 7: ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Targets: 1. Integrate the principle of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources

Indicators: 1. Proportion of land area covered by forests

2. Land area protected to maintain biological diversity

3. Energy use per unit of GDP

4. Per capita carbon-dioxide emissions and consumption of ozone depleting substances

5. Proportion of population using solid fuel

2. Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to drinking water and basic sanitation

Indicators: 1. Proportion of population with sustainable access to improved to improved water source – urban and rural

2. Proportion of population with access to improved sanitation, urban and rural

Status and trends

- Strategic Environment Assessment of the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy done in 2003 & in GPRS II
- Annual rate of deforestation decreased from 65,000 to 50,000 hectares

National Priorities

- Forests and Wildlife Resources
 - Conversion of land into agriculture
 - Increased fuel wood extraction
 - Excessive Ineffective surface mining
- Land Management
 - General indiscipline in the land market
- Energy Resources and Utilization.
 - Low public awareness of Renewable Energy Technologies.
 - Low level of water in the Volta Lake thus threatening Hydro generations
 - Uncompetitive price of LPG to solid fuel.
- Climate Change
 - Inadequate appreciation of climate change issues
 - Economy dependent on climate sensitive sectors
- Water and Sanitation
 - Poor drinking water
 - Poor sanitation
- Environmental Management/Governance
 - Environmental legislation – enactment and enforcement
 - Environmental policies – formulation and implementation
 - Environmental institutions – structure and capacity
 - Mainstreaming of environment in Sectoral and district policies, plans and programmes
 - Environmental information/data
- Fisheries Resources
 - Harmful Fishing Practices
 - Use of undersized mesh nets to harvest juvenile fish
 - Light fishing

According to him, all these things go on in our communities so if we are aware of them, we should institute measures to curb them and educate the people why they should avoid doing that. Most people think they are just harvesting but it is important for them to think about the future generation. They are to harvest and not to destroy.

Some Measures

- Land reforms-Land Administration Project
- Environmental Planning-SEA of GPRS and sectors
- Community Involvement in the management of forests and wildlife

Some Challenges

- Ability to balance environmental issues with economic imperatives of stakeholders i.e. people should not just think about how much they are going to make today. They should rather think about the future as well
- Adopting sustainable population measures so as to reduce pressure on natural resources and minimize environmental degradation.

Water: Status and Trend

- 51.7 % of the population have access to safe water 2004
- Proportion of rural population with access to safe water increased from 40% to 46.4% over 2000-2003
- Reported cases of guinea worm increased from 5,545 in 2002 to 8,000 in 2003 suggesting deterioration in water quality. According to him, recent research on guinea worm infestation indicates that it is not because there is no provision of potable water but it bothers on the maintenance of the pumping machine. Once the machines break down, the people go back to the streams for water. So, the people need to protect their water bodies.
- Level of access to safe sanitation is 55%

Some Measures: Access to safe water & sanitation in rural areas

Policy Action

- Increase percentage of rural population with access to safe water
- Reduce incidence of Guinea worms infestation

Status -2004

- 2,345 water facilities delivered

- Rehabilitation and expansion of two major water treatment plants Weija and Ichaban
- 246 boreholes in guinea-worm endemic area constructed

Improving Slum Upgrading: Status

- 70% of Ghana urban population live in slum conditions
- Urban settlement increased from 189 in 1984 to 364 in 2000
- Number of slum dwellers is expected to reach 5.8 million by 2010

Some Challenges

- Improving access to decent and affordable housing
- Encouraging the use of local building materials and appropriate technologies in housing provision
- Enhancement of development control

2.1.9 Goal 8: DEVELOP A GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR DEVELOPMENT

Target: Deal comprehensively with LDC debt and make debt sustainable in the long-term

- Indicator: Debt Service as a percentage of exports

Measures

- Debt relief under HIPC-20% of savings from HIPC
- Tax Identification Number potentially minimized incidence of income and corporate tax evasion
- Passage of the banking law restricted govt. borrowing to 10% of expected revenues. According to him, in the past the government was borrowing so much from the banks that treasury bills became attractive but now, it is least attractive. This has contributed to the stabilization of the cedi.
- Passage of procurement ACT. He observed that all these are initiatives that are geared towards improving the efficiency in the use of resources to ensure that we meet most of the targets.

Summary and Conclusions

- The challenge confronting us goes simply beyond the point of integrating MDGs at the national level or into the GPRS.
- Tendency that attention will be skewed towards the *end* (what should be achieved) rather than the *means* or the *process* (how to achieve).
- Evidence of consistency of the GPRS and the MDGs might not work in consonance with the attainment of the MDGs
- Assumption that meeting the GPRS targets will automatically realise the MDGs
- Insufficient attention to the practical realities on the ground (local level) could result in mere numerical success which may not be harmonious with locally generated needs and priorities
- Attaining the goals is not the ultimate, the challenge is achieving them in a sustainable manner.
- How do we ensure a careful and collective action by all stakeholders given synergistic nature of the MDGs?
- The key to success rests with country specific mechanisms, which aim to align the linkages and mutually reinforce the MDGs and harmonise them in relation to national goals and aspirations.

The Role of Traditional Authorities

The role of Nananom is crosscutting in nature. This means that their roles cut across every aspect from our community development to national development. As part of their roles in the achievement of the MDGs, they should:

- Lead continuing tripartite dialogue on development issues with government & Development Partners (MDAs, MMDAs, Civil Society etc)
- Lead and strengthen traditional governance processes and structures at community level:
- Review and update traditional ethics, cultural norms, practices and standards
- Review related legislative instruments and formulation of policies
- Mobilize constituents to participate more actively in decision making
- Disseminate policy information of the government
- Sensitize and create awareness on strategic developmental issues

He concluded that since traditional authorities are the point of contact in every community, it behooves on Nananom to play a role to ensure that the chieftaincy institution becomes more and stronger and relevant in directing the national agenda.

2.2 LECTURE 2

TOPIC: CULTURE AND MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS – THE ROLE OF CHIEFS

PRESENTER: PROF. GEORGE HAGAN, CHAIRMAN, NATIONAL COMMISSION ON CULTURE

Prof. Hagan indicated in the initial stages that the first presenter, Mr. Odotei, has already done his work for him. Nevertheless, too much fish never spoils anyone's soup so he had to add his voice to the topic. He began with an observation that chiefs can never define the role that they can play in achieving the MDGs if we do not come to appreciate the cultural dimensions of the MDGs. The millennium goals, he stated, have certain cultural challenges. As was earlier indicated, the MDGs are broad and do not prescribe any specific plans and strategies for a country and requires that each country devises its own strategies and actions in achieving them. This means that we have to look at our own situation and device our own strategies. He pointed out that at his own instigation, about two years ago, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung assisted the National Commission on Culture to stage a national workshop as well as a series of regional workshops on culture and NEPAD. It was at the end of the workshops that they asked for a follow up activity, which led him to suggest that this year there should be look at the culture and the MDGs. In the preliminary he suggested that we should have a brainstorming session which will enable them harvest ideas so that countrywide workshops can be organized with a clear focus on how culture relates with the MDGs. According to him, a workshop was organized to this effect a few weeks ago and many ideas cropped up. He confirmed that his paper is the outcome of that workshop.

Prof. Hagan opined that the MDGs seek to address critical challenges in human development that are to a large extent, if not entirely, of cultural origin. According to him, they call for action to change thought patterns, social values, gender attitudes, priorities in life and choices in the use of material resources and the environment. Thus, interventions and programmes of action cannot succeed if:

1. They do not spring from the cultural context in which people live,
2. They do not identify the obstacles and opportunities that the people's culture offers and
3. They do not utilize the resources of the community and employ the initiatives and active participation of cultural actors, especially, community leaders and traditional authorities and bodies.

He added that in respect of each and every MDG, the cultural context reveals many issues that need to be pondered about. According to him, the aim of his presentation was to present some of the critical issues, with the hope that Nananom will be able to determine their own role in the quest for actions to address them. Furthermore, his view was that through culture, a people can be made to:

1. understand the nature of the challenges that are embodied in the MDGs
2. help evolve strategies at individual and community levels to address the issues
3. identify cultural agencies and actors to act
4. mobilize resources to make a positive contribution in the processes of change

He observed that in raising cultural issues and its relationship with the MDGs, one needs to have in mind that the issues should enable us to define and determine:

- appropriate actions
- partners and collaborators to help achieve the MDGs
- resources that are held in the communities that need to be mobilized
- expected outcomes and
- time frame for the action

He outlined all the 8 MDGs and discussed them one after the other with culture in perspective.

2.2.1 Goal 1: Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger

Definition of wealth: according to him, studies around the world prove that the concept of wealth is culturally derived. People's perception of poverty differs from culture to culture. In some places, people consider themselves wealthy if they own land or cattle. Their wealth is not based on how much money one has but how many cattle one has (capital) so that they can marry and perform certain rituals. To others, possession of ordinary beads means wealth to them. It therefore becomes a problem when you want to convince one to sell his e.g. cattle to cater for his children's education because the cattle represent his wealth. Therefore, poverty alleviation often has to address the people's perception of poverty. For example some people argued why the President should declare the nation as a Highly Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) because to them they are able to afford three meals a day, they are able to clothe themselves, etc. That is their understanding of wealth. So in every culture, the idea of poverty has to be addressed through the people's own cultural conceptions. According to Prof. Hagan, this is not easy so their leaders should be well educated on

the priorities of the people and how to build human capital, for as the world is changing, the concept of wealth is also changing.

He commented that at times the problem with a lot of people is resource allocation – they have the wealth but they don't even see it. Some have the wealth but they will put it into a use that does not bring any benefit to either the family or to the community. In some cultures in Ghana, e.g. among the Ashantis, people believe that if one puts one's money in the bank, it doesn't mean one is rich. According to them, money must be spent for people to see and admire the person. This makes it difficult for them to build capital for investment that will go a long way to help other generations.

Cultural order of priorities – Certain times, talking of wealth in terms of material things creates certain distortions in the minds of the people. According to him, in Akan tradition for example, they have a saying that “if you call money, money doesn't come, if you call personal adornments, they don't come but if you call human being, human being comes. So for them the fundamental wealth as a people is human being. That is why in the olden days, people especially chiefs, just gave birth to so many children. In relation to this, one other thing about wealth is that culture also has some priorities. In most societies in Africa, the fundamental issue in life is the spiritual followed by social things or communal activities. Economic activities can therefore be suspended for weeks. He lamented that people are confronted with the situation where they may want to have wealth but may not know how to use the wealth to improve their own quality of life.

Family size management – Prof Hagan hinted that we are confronted with a very big challenge when it comes to family size management. Whereas in Europe a man doesn't care about an issue in a marriage whether it is a boy or a girl, in the matrilineal system, the priority in the marriage is to have girls to keep the lineage going and for purposes of inheritance. If on the other hand the couple keeps on getting boys in the marriage, they will keep on having children until they get girls. In the patrilineal system too, their priority is boys so if they get girls, they will keep on having children until they get a boy. This, he advised, calls for a change of attitude towards the gender combination in our families. So our traditional authorities should be aware of these challenges confronting us so that they can develop appropriate strategies to tackle them.

Expensive funerals - One other major setback in capital formation is expensive funerals, he opined. Funerals have lately become an utter waste of money and have now become a very

primitive way of display of wealth where one wants to show off that one's family member is in abroad, etc. According to him, he, with support from KAS, is going to organize series of workshops on the harmful effects on expensive funerals.

Gender inequality – He intimated that there are other causes of poverty and this includes gender inequality, gender base discrimination in terms of access to capital. Secondly, there also exist unjust social structures which are almost caste-like where people think once they are born into it there is nothing they can do about it to improve their lot. He lamented that at times the way people look at our women suggest that they (women) are also of separate caste or second-class citizens.

These notwithstanding, he emphasized that it does not in any way mean that culture creates only impediments or negative challenges. In fact, the major challenge that culture poses are the challenges in respect of positively contributing to culture to make the achievement of wealth and indeed all the MDGs. For example if one looks at the resources that the country has, one will ask why are we poor, he asked? Indeed the world market is now open through the AGOA system and there are indigenous economic activities and crafts that can be developed to enable people acquire wealth e.g. snail farming, crab farming, stool carving, kente weaving, etc. According to him, it his belief that Nananom as well as the government can help to develop these indigenous crafts to enable people to be self employed to generate wealth for themselves and for their community.

2.2.2 Goal 2: Provide Basic Universal Education

Prof. Hagan underscored the available statistics indicating that we are improving. However, he bemoaned that there are certain fundamental issues that need to be addressed from the cultural dimensions. First of all, in some communities, because of their traditional occupations such as animal rearing, farming and so on, some boys are not allowed to go school. In addition, because of domestic roles assigned to girls, some girls do not also go to school. According to him, in the olden days the first-born girl would not go to school because they took over from their mothers in the house chores as well as tending for the other younger siblings. A girl was also expected to keep the family lineage by giving birth to children thereby compelling her to get into early marriage. All these hampered their education as well as their future progression.

He continued that there is also the contribution of children to the family's revenue where stronger boys and girls are made to work or trade. He warned that this could be very disincentive to the

child's education. This is because the children are extra-burdened and are not able to study after school and do their assignments from school.

Practice of fostering in Ghana – He observed that at times people think they are helping their children by asking them to go and stay with somebody else. Most of them don't get the same love and attention as they get when they live with their parents. Although the person that the children are staying with will make sure they go to school but when they come back, they will have to do house work and all sorts of things which at the end of the day make them very tired and are unable to be by their books. According to him, these are some of the things that Nananom together with other leaders will have to look at. He advised that we are looking forward to see every child get not just access to education but quality education.

2.2.3 Goal 3: Gender Equality and Empowerment

Gender equality and empowerment leading to human rights is a major cultural issue in our part of the world. He entertained the fear that anybody who wants to address women's issues without looking at the cultural dimension will definitely encounter difficulties. First of all, if one wants to look at the way women are treated in Africa, one needs to start to look at the concept of womanhood. The world is made up of male/female, positive/negative, sacred/profane and the woman is always on the side of profane, and on the negative. If one looks at traditional mix and traditional stories, one will find these attributes. All these impair the ability of women to enjoy equality with men. According to him, some of these ideas emanate from religious ideas of pollution. For example, a girl is free to go anywhere and play with boys but as soon as she begins her menstruation, from that point on, she is virtually filthy or has the capacity to pollute so immediately there is segregation.

Again, according to him, there are also some mystical ideas associated with women. People think women have mystical powers, they are witches, they can dominate their men, they can change their men's mind, etc. All these lead to the negative treatment of women and they are denied from playing leadership roles in communities.

He lamented that women again often suffer serious abuses in terms of their domestic roles. Most of the time, they work like slaves whereas their men will be somewhere drinking.

On his stand on polygamy, Prof. Hagan stated that polygamy served a purpose in the olden days when men were going to wars and dying and leaving the women behind. This decimated their numbers so men had to take more than one wife. However, now situation is not so. According to the Professor, his own research in Winneba proved that second marriage means that the man is “taking away something” from the first wife. In view of this the man has to seek permission from the first wife and compensate her. This means that polygamy in even our tradition was not considered the ideal because it led to situations where women were abused.

He observed that there are so many rituals that are very beneficial to individuals and to society. He stated that rituals of passage are there to enable us transit from one status to another and they are very important. However, in many rituals relating to women, one finds a lot of human rights abuses e.g. funeral rites, widowhood rites, etc. This calls for Nananom’s attention and action to avoid the abuses.

System of inheritance and descent – he mentioned that in patrilineal and matrilineal systems of inheritance women are not given access to wealth, particularly in patrilineal societies. Even in matrilineal societies, men are the property/children of the women but when it comes to wealth distribution, most of the men pounce on the property and leave the women unattended to. In his opinion that is the reason why in some places the queen mothers are aggressive and are fighting with the men. He asked that how do we say we want to empower women when we don’t give them access to capital, education, when they have to be in seclusion during certain periods and so on. He added that this is where our traditional leaders who are the custodians of our culture have a greater task on their hands to revert these anomalies.

2.2.4 Goal 4: Reduce Infant Mortality

Although much is being done in this aspect to reduce the prevalence **infant mortality**, there are several things that people should be mindful of. He stated the first as pregnancy care. It is widely known in Ghana that most women rely on the pieces of advice from their mothers and the old ladies. Some even refuse to go for medical checks and rely on usage of herbs for enigma from traditional healers.

According to him the second, is **child delivery practices**. There is a belief in some societies (especially among Akans) that if a woman doesn’t deliver readily, it means she committed adultery

and the husband's spirit is haunting her. They hence bring the old women to convince the woman to confess if she has done anything wrong. All these prolong the labor, which can result in deaths.

More seriously, he added that there also exists **ritual infanticide**. The traditional African idea is that God gives children as gifts and they are spiritual so they must be borne whole. As a result of this if there is any deformity on the baby, it is considered an animal or a strange being that has appeared so the parents must find a way to dispose the baby off. He proposed that there should be a check and education on this practice. He therefore recommended that Nananom should be made recorders of births and deaths in remote villages so that one will not go and burry someone when the chief is not aware of it.

Decision-making in respect of children's health: He revealed that in many societies, a woman is not allowed to take a sick child to the hospital without the father's consent. This is because, traditionally, among the Akans for instance, it is considered the child to be under the protection of the father's spirit so the health of the child is dependent on the father. He advised that these are some of the practices that the women should be educated on that when they see signs of convulsion and ailments, they should first take the child to the hospital.

2.2.5 Goal 5: Improve maternal Health

According to him, although a lot has been said about improved maternal health, we are still confronted with our culture with regard to taboos, poverty, ignorance about certain health conditions and then domestic violence. He observe that there are a lot of men who particularly become aggressive and hostile on their wives when the wives become pregnant. At times a man will say, "now that you have become pregnant I am going to the other woman". However, he said that women in pregnancy need as much sex as they can have for their composure and their peace of mind. They need to be given love. So the idea that my wife is pregnant so she is no more attractive, and that she should go to the mother can create psychological problems so should be discouraged in no uncertain terms, he added.

He revealed that there is also reported case of some charlatans who claim they are traditional healers who use their penis to insert herbs in the vagina of women with the claim that they are administering fertility healing practices. All these denigrate the dignity of women and put them at risk with diseases such as HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases.

2.2.6 Goal 6: Combating HIV/AIDS and Communicable Diseases

According to him, the National Commission on Culture was privileged to receive funding to do a series of workshops on culture and HIV/AIDS. He said that what emerged from the workshop is that in almost every culture in Ghana, there are certain sexual practices imposed by custom that endangered women or facilitate the spread of sexually transmitted diseases. Among Akans, Gas, Ewes, etc the idea or approach to funeral observance was that the widow should go and have sex with a total stranger – i.e. have it just once, so as to separate the deceased's ghost from the woman.

There is also a practice of wake-keeping camps. He lamented that a lot of sexual activities take place during wake keepings in general and wake keeping camps among a particular tribe in the Upper West Region. A married man or woman can go into any of these tents/camps and have sex without any alarm being raised by anyone – be you the husband or the wife. This can also bring about the spread of HIV/AIDS. He mentioned that there are some of these practices that at times we pretend they are not there but they exist up to date. He opined that it is only our chiefs who can come out and stamp such things out.

2.2.7 Goal 7: Environmental sustainability

According to him, Africa is said to be the cradle of civilization but one of our greatest heritage practices is care of the environment. We always believe that there must be a balance between the environment and human life therefore we attribute spirituality to non-human entities. He observed that in the past one couldn't go to the bush and hunt just any animal or cut down just any tree. He believed that these things are in danger of passing away because of economic uses of our environment and we must do something about it. According to him cultures depend on the environment in which they are – for food, water, medicine, building, industrial material, etc. It has been said that when the last tree dies the last man dies but according to him, before that the last culture will die. According to him, some of the religious beliefs that helped us to maintain the regime of obedience are now being frowned upon. He threw the challenge that there is now therefore the need to look at the environment and look at the cultural practices that helped us to sustain the environment and embody them in our new regimes for the protection of the environment. Strategies for the protection of the environment must also take into account the culture of the people. For instance, how do we provide substitutes for some of the things that we are deriving from the forest if we are now going to destroy it? Some of the strategies for resource management include taboos on fishing, seasonal opening and closure of water bodies for fishing, regulation of human activities on natural resources or bank of rivers (sacred rivers).

2.2.8 Goal 8: Global Partnership

Prof. Hagan observed that most often when people talk about global partnership, what they really mean is the IMF, The World Bank, etc but looking at it critically, global partnership should be seen as a relationship that has invaluable cultural dimensions. First of all, global partnership should involve recognition of the values of other cultures and respecting them. To him, this is what has become the source of trouble between the Western World and the Islamic World. This is because the Islamic World is beginning to see the world along the Western model as something that is undermining their religious beliefs and moral tenets.

Secondly, in his view, we must begin to recognize certain traditional institutions of ours as agencies for change. For him, global partnership means partnership that is developing between governments and intergovernmental institutions. That partnership must help at its foundation – first a partnership between the government and traditional communities through their institutions, so that whatever the development objectives, should be seen as something that should come from discussions between our traditional leaders. The development objectives should come out with the needs that are pursued by communities, strategies that can be fashioned out in cultural terms otherwise, as he put it, we will be wasting our time. He stated that a lot of things go into our communities and the people don't patronize them because they were not involved in it at the initial stages.

Again there is the need for respecting indigenous knowledge and ownership of such knowledge. In his opinion, indigenous knowledge represent a capital that will give Africa a certain push. Example knowledge of our herbs – people come here and pick our herbs, go and process them, begin to sell them and we go there to buy them at a much higher price than being sold in Europe. He therefore proposed that we should inventorize our cultural assets district by district. He explained that inventorizing our cultural assets means recording our geographical features, the medicinal plants, the nature of the animals there, the number of historical features that can be exploited for tourism, even the stories that are told to children. All these represent wealth and will be one of the plans in the building of any structures for global partnership.

He further emphasized that local and traditional leaders should be recognized and supported as partners. For example, the Asantehene, Okyehene and some other chiefs who are building

partnerships have established a model. These things were done through the eminence of stools occupied by these individuals. However, it must become an established thing.

Furthermore, the cultural impact of change programmes and agencies must be estimated. What this means is that quite often we say we are changing the community by bringing in certain programmes. The question is, do we estimate the gains against the losses? Perhaps the gains that one thinks one is bringing may have negative impact on the culture of the people.

He gave the advice that there is the need to give ownership to local communities to make change processes sustainable. According to him, you can only give ownership to communities when the ideas, needs and the objectives are defined in terms that are meaningful to the people. You can again give ownership to them when you use strategies that bring in their traditional institutions. You can give ownership to them by getting them to mobilize their own resources as a contribution to the resources coming from outside. This is because it is only when you put something into an ongoing process that you develop an attitude of ownership and care for the success of the thing.

He ended with the hope that he has been able to provoke the minds of Nananom to discuss the paper thoroughly and deliberate on actions that need to be taken in respect of the topics discussed. He added that in taking the actions, there is the need to have queen mothers and the youth leadership in mind because they are very important stakeholders in our traditional settings.

2.3 LECTURE: 3

TOPIC: FIFTY YEARS OF CHIEFTAINCY IN GHANA – THE WAY FORWARD

PRESENTER: NAA PROF. JOHN S. NABILA, WULUGUNABA AND CHAIRMAN OF THE RESEARCH COMMITTEE ON THE NATIONAL HOUSE OF CHIEFS

2.3.1 INTRODUCTION

Prof. Nabila began his presentation by thanking all present for their collective efforts for bringing this workshop into reality. He continued that his paper is a follow up to the workshop on Chieftaincy in Ghana held at Alisa Hotel in February 2007 on the theme: Ghana @ 50 – Resolving the Duality in Governance: The Future of Chieftaincy Institution.

According to him, there is no gainsaying that it is of paramount importance for the institution of chieftaincy to be forward looking to have constructive visionary planning to ensure that the institution of chieftaincy continues to play its rightful role in the current democratic dispensation towards the promotion of good governance and sustainable socio economic development in the country. Citing Nana Arhin Brempong, 2006, Prof Nabila stated that there have been many changes and perspectives of the role of chiefs throughout the political development of the country and that before the colonial era, the chief performed political, administrative, executive, judicial, military, cultural and spiritual functions or exercised what may be called diffused differential authority. However, throughout the colonial era to present, various authorities or governments, civilian and military alike have in diverse ways tried to influence the role of chiefs in Ghana to the extent that today the institution is basically a nominal one and restricted to traditional issues.

2.3.2 Fifty Years of Chieftaincy in Ghana: Independence and Post Independence Eras

Prof. Nabila observed that throughout its development, the chieftaincy institution has evolved its own structure or hierarchy of authority with a village chief at the lowest level and the paramount chief or a king at the highest level with divisional and sub divisional chiefs between them. According to him, this inbuilt hierarchy of traditional authority is the cornerstone of its strength in the socio political system of the nation. As a result, with the advent of independence, the institution of chieftaincy was still recognized and institutionalized in almost all our national constitutions, especially those of 1969, 1979, and 1992. With a republican constitution, today there is a dualism of traditional authorities co-existing with modern machinery of government. According to him, the

selection of a chief is still based on royal lineage as has been enshrined in the 1992. He cited countries such as Botswana, Nigeria, Swaziland, South Africa, Lesotho, Namibia, Mozambique and Zambia as examples of countries in the same practice.

He went on to explain who a chief is as is stated in the 1992 constitution as someone hailing from the appropriate family and has been validly nominated, elected or selected, and enstooled or enskinned as a chief or queen-mother in accordance with the prevalent customary law and usage. He however cautioned that a distinction must be drawn clearly between royal and lineage chieftaincies on one hand and honorary chieftaincies often granted to political or educational elites in the society or even at times to foreigners who help in development at the community level on the other hand. He conceived that the resilience of the institution and the strong degree of cultural bondage with local communities have made it possible for the institution to stand the test of time. According to him, it had been frequently suggested by some researchers and observers in the past that chieftaincy in Africa will wither and eventually die a natural death. It was also felt that modernization in its many facets would create an entirely new kind of citizenry in Africa for whom these ancient forms of government would have less and less relevance. These assumptions and suggestions have been proven wrong as clearly demonstrated throughout sub-Saharan Africa if one undertakes a critical examination of current governance at the local, regional and national levels. He said that if anything, many well educated Africans, current or retired politicians, and professionals are all aspiring to be chiefs. He elaborated that so, instead of losing its importance, the chieftaincy institution has become a pillar and cornerstone of national development in almost all African countries. He cited countries like Namibia, Mozambique and South Africa where the institution is well entrenched in their constitution so they are very much endowed and supported.

According to Prof. Nabila, of crucial importance for the institution in Ghana is the provision of Article 270(1) of the 1992 Constitution, which guarantees the institution of Chieftaincy together with its traditional councils as established by customary law usage. It further states that parliament shall have no power to enact any law, which confers on any person or authority the right to accord or withdraw recognition to or from a chief for any purpose whatsoever or in any way detracts or derogates from honor and dignity of the institution of chieftaincy. He lamented that now that chiefs are shooting themselves in the foot perhaps the institution may benefit from the common proverb “a house divided against itself shall not stand”. He advised that the survival of the institution therefore depends on chiefs themselves and all those who are or claim to be royals throughout the

country. He added that Chiefs have been given the mandate and it is left to them to prove that they are equal to the task.

According to him, apart from the major advisory function, the National House of Chiefs in Ghana has the following functions:

- a. Authority to say what is the customary law of inheritance of property, marriage and divorce in order to help courts of Ghana.
- b. Regulation about succession and removal of chiefs and consequently determine the various levels of chiefs and the entry of their names into the national register of chiefs for subsequent public notification.
- c. Elimination of harmful cultural practices.
- d. Liaison between chieftaincy and central government and parliament, judiciary, etc.
- e. Appellate jurisdiction in chieftaincy matters, namely Traditional, Regional, National Judicial Committees after which any dissatisfied persons can go to the Supreme Court (however, other courts can be used)

He added that the President of the National House of Chiefs is an automatic member of the Council of State, a 25-member Council provided by the 1992 Constitution to advise the President or any other authority in the performance of their duties.

Traditional authorities and district assemblies according to him are grass root based and therefore continue to collaborate at various levels. He mentioned that apart from metropolitan assemblies, the majority of districts are rural based where the role of chiefs is very relevant. It is however unfortunate that the role of chiefs in the decentralized system of local government continues to be in a state of confusion.

Naa Prof. Nabila argued that although chiefs do not own their courts of jurisdiction, they continue to play the important role of mediation and arbitration at various levels, which helps to promote peace and reconciliation in communities. It may also be noted that the national integrative function of the National House of Chiefs in bringing together traditional rulers from all parts of the country in order to bring uniformity in the country's disintegrated customary laws and also collectively offering advice to the government and its agencies from the national perspective has played a major role throughout the years in promoting national unity and good governance. He was quick to add that but for chiefs there wouldn't be as much peace in our communities as we are experiencing

in the country today. According to him, Chiefs in their own right continue to serve on various national boards and institutions in order to contribute their quota to national development.

He proceeded to say that many Traditional Councils over the years have contributed to the socio-economic development in many respects. These include provision of leadership and sustainable management of the environment, fight against HIV/AIDS, mobilization of people for communal labor and the direct and indirect use of royalties where applicable for development. He mentioned the Asantehene and Okyehene who have, for instance, established Education Funds to provide financial assistance to brilliant but needy students to buttress his point.

On gender issues, he elaborated that issues such as gender parity, equality and mainstreaming are given serious attention by queen mothers or by females who are themselves chiefs as it is in the Northern Region.

2.3.3 THE WAY FORWARD

2.3.4 Discharging Constitutional Responsibilities by the National Houses of Chiefs:

a) Codification of lines of succession: According to him, although some progress has been made in the area of research into the compilation of customary laws and lines of succession applicable to each stool or skin to forestall succession disputes, there are still many areas to be covered. He pleaded with Nananom that the Research Committee needs their concerted support so as to enable them achieve this objective in areas such as rapid response to queries and verification of prepared Legislative Instruments (LIs) for subsequent publication. According to him, if there is no transparency in the execution of this noble objective, that is, the involvement of all chieftaincy gates and stakeholders it could turn out to be sources of “codification of lines of succession disputes” which to him could be worse than the status quo. On this note, he expressed the National House of Chief’s appreciation to Konrad Adenauer Stiftung for its commitment and support for the research project into the codification of lines of succession of paramount stools and skins throughout the country.

b) Traditional customs and usages: He cited Article 270(2c) of the Constitution which requires the National House of Chiefs to undertake an evaluation of traditional customs and usages with a view to eliminating those customs and usages that are outmoded and socially harmful but he decried the financial capability of the House.

c) Ascertainment of Customary Law on the Family and Land: He expressed his gratification of the sponsorship from GTZ on the joint project of the National House of Chiefs and the Law Reform Commission for the ascertainment of customary law on the family and land which is progressing well.

d) Research Responsibilities: According to him, as far as the mandate of the National House of Chiefs is concerned, research responsibilities are quite extensive and expressed worry that but for the support of development partners, little would have been realized. For instance, the administrative structure and human resource base at all levels, including equipment, funding and related issues all need serious attention and reform (NHC, Sept. 2001). He stressed that chiefs as custodians of culture have a duty to ensure that customary practices are modernized or tailored to suit the modern day world and society but without compromising the cultural dignity and foundation of the society's very existence.

2. Local government administration

He emphasized that if we are going to think about participation of all the people in government, then there is the need to amend the Local Government Act (Act 462) of the 1992 constitution with regards to the role that chiefs are expected to play in the decentralization process. This is to forestall the disharmony that sometimes exists between District Chief Executives and Nananom and to ensure that Nananom continue to contribute meaningfully to national development. According to him, it has even been suggested in certain quarters that serious consideration should be given to the establishment of "District Houses of Chiefs" as is being piloted in Brong Ahafo and Volta Regions.

2.3.4 The New Chieftaincy Bill

He reiterated the call for the speeding up of processes of enacting into law the new chieftaincy bill which will replace the chieftaincy act of 1972 so as to bring the institution's activities and mandate in tune with the 1992 constitution. At this juncture, he proposed that a Parliamentary Select Committee should be established for chieftaincy matters. Daasebre Osei Bonsu II, Mamponghe, interjected and suggested that there should be about 3 or 4-man delegation to go the Speaker of Parliament to discuss with him a letter that the President of the House wrote some time ago.

2.3.5 Human Resource Base of the National and Regional Houses of Chiefs

According to Naa Prof. Nabila, unlike in the past, the current crop of Chiefs are very well educated and have professions such as Accountancy, Law, Medicine, Engineering, University Professors, Surveyors, Diplomats, etc. In his view, this has been amply demonstrated by the quality of discussions in traditional councils, regional and national houses of chiefs as well as the progressive developmental programmes being implemented by many chiefs. He therefore called for strategies of tapping this pool of knowledge by the House and establish committees to produce papers for the House and to engage in development dialogue with development partners for the betterment of the institution and also to make the institution survive.

2.3.6 Transparency and Accountability – Code of Ethics/Moral Authority of the Institution

He elaborated that by traditional constitutional requirements, a person who can become a chief or a queen mother should be above reproach. He buttressed his point with Article 275 of the 1992 Constitution which stipulates that “a person shall not be qualified as a chief if he has been convicted for high treason, treason, high crime or for any offence involving fraud, dishonesty or moral turpitude”.

He argued that although it may be true that in a few instances, the institution has been plagued by corruption, intrigues, chieftaincy disputes, politicking, etc. as some political commentators would want one to believe, it is by and large led by many men and women of integrity who will ensure its survival and positive contribution in society.

2.3.7 Funding and Logistics Support for the National House of Chiefs

He confessed that although the institution is now fortunate to have a new Ministry of Chieftaincy and Culture, not much can be achieved without adequate funding and resources of all types from the central government and development partners. He therefore expressed the hope that the government will resource the houses of chiefs and the traditional councils to enable them undertake their constitutional obligations. He further requested for counsels to assist the judicial committees to resolve chieftaincy cases pending before the houses of chiefs thereby compounding lack of peace and stability in the country.

2.3.8 Conclusion: Naa Prof. Nabila concluded by emphasizing that there is no doubt that chieftaincy has played and continues to play a major role in contributing to national development and good governance in the country. He however admitted that there is still lot of work to be done

so as to minimize or eliminate the numerous chieftaincy and land disputes in the country. He ended by reiterating his call for Nananom's collective effort to ensure the survival of the institution.

2.4 CLOSING REMARKS

The President of the House once again thanked all the participants for once again attending to this important call. He once again appreciated KAS' unflinching support to the House. A suggestion was made that a drafting committee be formed to write a communiqué based on the papers presented at a later date. After the draft, copies would be sent to Nananom for their inputs before the final communiqué will be issued. All participants unanimously agreed this.

END OF REPORT

APPENDIX

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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23	Hon. S. K. Bofo	Ministry of Chieftaincy and Culture	
24	Hon. Ato Arthur	Central Regional Coordinating Council	
25	Emmanuel Quao	Centre for National Culture	