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**ICT IN SUPPORT OF TRADITIONAL GOVERNANCE:
A CASE STUDY OF CHIEFTAINCY, GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT
IN GHANA**

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A major challenge facing Ghana and indeed most parts of Africa today is the quest for good governance to manage national resources for sustainable development. Ghana is faced with a dual system of authority within which good governance could be achieved. On one hand is the western (European) model of institutions for good governance. On the other are the traditional forms of governance, which evolved out of the history, tradition and culture of the people. These are defined by and linked with the diverse ethnic identities, and by the perceptions of governance held by the various ethnic groupings. The institution of chieftaincy typifies the systems of traditional governance.

The institution of chieftaincy is so important that its protection is guaranteed by the constitution of Ghana. It is becoming increasingly clear that there is a need to integrate traditional authority into the main stream of the democratisation process blowing through Africa.

It is the position of this paper that any attempts to infuse aspects of the tenets of traditional governance into constitutional rule (modern framework of governance) would require some preparation, some capacity building for the incumbents and other stakeholders of traditional governance. The focus of this paper therefore is a particular aspect of the issue of building capacity in traditional governance to fit into the modern governance of Ghana. That is, the use of ICT to build the necessary capacities within the chieftaincy institution.

Several current challenges confronting traditional governance have influenced this choice. These revolve around the issue of record keeping, management, accessibility, as well as the appropriate coding, packaging and dissemination of indigenous knowledge. It involves also networking and connectivity for the purpose of monitoring and counselling, sharing experiences, information, knowledge and expertise.

Because traditional knowledge is based on oral transmission, personal observation and experience there is always room for arguments and disputes, leading sometime to litigation, armed conflict, death and destruction. The paper would propose that the application of ICT in the preparation of traditional governance to participate in modern governance would help assuage the intensity of the conflicts and thus work towards stable and unified societies.

Indeed, the ground-work in the direction of repositioning traditional governance in preparation toward integrating it into modern forms of governance has already begun with University of Ghana's **Chieftaincy, Governance and Development Project** aimed at advancing and promoting research and scholarship, and premised on the fact that Chieftaincy is one of Ghana's most enduring cultural heritage and institutions. The project has now been expanded **into Governance, Culture and Development** to take care of the interface between the broader framework of traditional institution and issues of governance, culture and development.