ICT4D FORUM

GINKS ICT4D FORUM ON EDUCATION

The Ghana Information Network for Knowledge Sharing (GINKS), in collaboration with the African University College of Communications on November 18, 2011, held an Information Communication Technology (ICT) forum for the first year students to educate the students on the uses of ICT and the need to take the course seriously.

Chairperson of the forum, Nana Essilfie Conduah, in his opening remarks commended GINKS and the University for organizing the forum as it would serve as an eye opener to the many functions of ICT. He urged the students to pay attention to enable them find the forum useful.

According to him, the younger generation of today is exposed to a plethora of information for which when they avail themselves to they would achieve a lot. He compared today's generation to his generation stating that, if his generation had been exposed to information as it were today, Africa would have been a much better place.

He therefore encouraged students to use ICT profitably to reflect in their outward appearance and influence on the society.

Welcoming the participants, the co-ordinator of GINKS Mr. Ibrahim Inusah said that a forum like this, being held in a university environment is a direct implication of the pursuit of the use of ICT and ICT tools in the advancement of education in Ghana. He also introduced the participants to GINKS and its vision, and welcomed them to join the GINKS family, by becoming members of the network.

Head of IT Department of AUCC, Nicholas Donkor, educated the students on some terminologies in the field of ICT and its uses. He said several soft wares were available for easy studies adding that these software would also help lecturers to mark and grade students.

He stated that the ICT is a powerful tool for which the United Kingdom has decided to incorporate ICT in their courses offered in school. United States of America has also introduced the MIT, which is open software for learning. Korea has also introduced the Edunet which is used in learning and acquisition of knowledge.

Several soft ware components were introduced to the students. These include the E-Library, LMS and SIMS.

- ❖ The E-Library is an electronic version of traditional library. It contains all kinds of books for learning for which students can access wherever they are at any time. E-Library does not require an edifice to store books but only a computer and software.
- ❖ Learning Management System (LMS) is a tool that enables students to learn, access notes and submits their assignments through the internet without necessarily being present. With this lecturers are able to mark the assignments on the net.
- ❖ Students Information Management System ((SIMS) is a soft ware that allows students to access their grades on the internet irrespective of their geographical location. It also allows students to access their transcripts.

At question time some concerns raised include:

- ❖ The availability of information to people who can not read English and hence the need to configure the laptops in local languages that can be read and understood by all.
- ❖ Also there was the concern of the soft ware functioning very well in the manufactured environments whereas they don't function well when imported to Africa probably in the process of manufacturing, the climatic conditions of Africa was not taken into consideration.
- ❖ Contracting local developers to develop the laptops and their soft wares by which they are well abreast with the climatic conditions of Africa and develop to suit the climatic condition of Africa was also a source of concern. It was however interesting to note that most local developers are looked down upon and relegated to the background. At the end of the day, when the imported soft wares develop problems it becomes difficult and expensive to maintain.
- ❖ It was however noted that the school is in talks with computer companies to provide students with laptops on hire purchase. Although the school has two computer laboratories, the increasing rate in terms of numerical strength requires more computers. In the actualization of this deal, students would not have to worry about getting abreast with the usage of computers after being taught in the lecture halls and would also cushion students from the stress of not owning laptops for assignments and other uses of ICT.