

ICT4D REPORT ON SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM SECURITY

The Northern ICT4D forum for the month of February, 2014 was organized on the topic, **Social Network Platforms for security and privacy considerations.**

Social media plat forms such as Facebook, Twitter, Whatsup to mentioned but a few, offer opportunity for users of common interest to connect and share information or ideas.

Facilitating the session, Mr. Kennedy Kubuga, Country Capacity Support officer of IICD in Ghana, asked the participants if they have used any social media platform before. He continued to say that he was impressed to see the many hands of participants who have used either of the social media.

He asked again if any one of them considered the portion about the terms and conditions of the platform that requested them to agree or disagree. Only a few could remember that part. He then went on to say, that, the when people sign on to social media platforms, they hardly read through some of these conditions which most of the time tell you that the service provider will not be responsible for any mishap that may arise due to information that you will post or share on your time line. But most people just agree or click yes or accept without even looking at what is written and for that matter what they agree to.

He further stated that, online postings are like making a report of one's self to the general public which could be read positively or negatively depending on individual interpretation. He said, mobile phones have now become a means of identification, exposure on location etc especially with the new application on some phones called **Trucaller.**

Once a person's contact details is entered into any of these social media plat forms, trucaller can be used to provides the name of a person when the phone number is dialed. Though this makes identification very easy, it has also increased the vulnerability of people. There were a few people in the group who testified about their experience with this application and how they were amazed at the information they got about themselves.

Mr. Kennedy also stated that some pictures that people upload onto their accounts can be downloaded by others and used for various purposes. He therefore advised the participants to be cautious of themselves and the kind of information they put out on social media platforms. He said that all these various social networks have something

like a central bull system that put together all the bits and pieces of information people put out or post on their time lines. For this reason, one can just Google a person's name and every information the person may have put out in any social media plat form can be retrieved.

In conclusion, he advised participants to be more discrete about information they put out on social media platforms and also to be more careful about the way they dispose off old gadgets like Personal Computers (PC), pen drives and hard disk since information on them can easily be retrieved.