

REPORT ON ICT4D SERIES – AUGUST 2009

THE NORTHERN YOUTH AND MOBILE TELEPHONY

Mr. Aziz Ibn Shiraz, President of Youth Action Movement has bemoaned the way the Northern youth perceive and use of cell phones. This came to light during the August session of the Northern ICT4D Series held in Tamale on 27th August 2009.

He traced the history of cell phone penetration into the Northern Ghana and mentioned that youth of today go in for fashionable designer cell phones with very sophisticated ring tones instead of first pondering over why they need to even use cell phones. He mentioned that while youth elsewhere brainstorm on daily basis, how to use cell phones for development, the youth of the north only see it as an entertainment tool.

Mr. Aziz mentioned that some of the basic use of cell phones includes voice calls, text messages, radio and Internet. On what it can be used for, he mentioned that sending text messages reduces cost, minimizes time and saves energy. He added that in an era where the youth has become so obsessed in “Ghana Man Time”, using cell phones to set reminders will help the youth over come the issue of responding to appointments late.

He ended his presentation by charging the youth to, at the end of the expiration of their talk time, ask themselves of what value the talk time had added to their lives. His concluding words were, “Technology was intended to make our lives better, to save cost and energy. Let us make the most use of it”

When he took his turn, A Doctor in Alternative medicine, Dr/Alt. Amomba Bruno gave a presentation on the use of cell phones and their health implications. He compared cell phones to microwave devices and disclosed that cell phones have thermal effects. He further mentioned that other effects of the use of cell phones include reproductive effects, cataract, nerve degeneration, brain tumor and headache.

He urged all who make use of cell phones to alternate the ears when receiving and making calls. He also asked all who make use of cell phones to decrease the length of time used and rather send text messages, use hands free cell phones. He also advised all to receive and make calls under trees as trees block and absorb the radiations and gives proper oxygen.