

## **REPORT ON THE GINKS NORTHERN ICT4D FORUM ON “MOBILE NUMBER PORTABILITY”**

The May 2011 session of the Northern ICT4D Forum on the topic “Mobile Number Portability” (MNP) came off successfully at the Northern Regional Library, Tamale on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2011.

Speaking at the Forum, Mr. Yaw Boamah Baafi, a deputy Manager in charge of Regulations and Licensing of the National Communications thanked GINKS and its Northern Partner, Savana Signature for providing such a platform for knowledge to be shared on such an important topic.

He explained that from July 2011 when Mobile Number Portability (MNP) becomes operational in Ghana, Mobile phone users will have the luxury of switching to other mobile networks while maintaining their original numbers. He added that, the purpose of mobile number portability was to provide alternatives in terms of choice to the Ghanaian mobile user. He explained that with MNP, users need to be familiar with three jargons - The Porting, Donor network and the Recipient network. He explained that the process of moving the number is called “Porting”; the original network is the ‘Donor’ of the number; and the new network is the ‘recipient’.

Mr. Baafi explained that Porting Access Ghana is providing the centralised system and shall regulate the number porting. He mentioned that MNP will promote competition among network providers there by ensuring good services to mobile phone users. He was quick to add that, NCA had developed a charge system to ensure that network providers do not burden mobile phone users with unnecessary charges during porting.

Speaking on how the system will work, he explained that, a mobile user who wishes to port his number need only to visit the network office he wants to port to and submit his number for authentication. The process of porting would take 24 hours which is the maximum time set by NCA. He added that instances where porting could be rejected includes the number not being active on the donor network, fraud having been reported, phone reported stolen, and when there is not enough of ID items matching with the request. However, the port may not be rejected in the case of debt still owed to the donor network (in the case of post paid). He added that a number once ported, would take 30 days after which a customer can port again to another network.

Mr. Baafi opined that the NCA in the past had under taken a lot of steps to promote the interest of the Ghanaian mobile user including, bringing the termination rate down and making the interconnection rate moderate and now their focus is on ensuring that the MNP comes into

operation to further give the Ghanaian mobile user more freedom in terms of choice. He said the NCA had studied the way the program has been implemented in other countries and has therefore put in place measures to avoid likely challenges that may arise.