ICT4D REPORT ON WEB 2.0 TOOLS

Participants seated at the ICT4D Series in Tamale

The April edition of the monthly ICT4D forum organized by Savana Signatures in Tamale was on Web 2.0 tools. The Director of Savana Signatures, Mr. Agbenyo John Stephen leading the session said, the topic for discussion was very useful in carrying out daily task either in the office or at the school level. He was therefore excited to see so many teachers and development workers in attendance.

The term **Web 2.0** was coined in 1999 to describe web sites that use technology beyond the static pages of earlier web sites. Web 2.0 technologies provide people with new ways to engage with others and even allow participation on a global level. However, children raised exclusively in the era of new media technologies are less patient with activities such as completion of worksheets and classroom lectures. Decreased participation in a traditional classroom may be due to better feedback received online.

He was therefore happy about the participation of teachers because the Web has the potential to radically change what we assume about teaching and learning, and it presents us with important questions to ponder what needs to change about our curriculum when our students have the ability to reach audiences far beyond our classroom walls? **Will Richardson**. Web 2.0 tools are needed in the classroom to prepare both students and teachers for the shift in learning, **Collins and Halverson** describe. What then are these web 2.0 tools?

Google Drive

Mr. Agbenyo explained that Google drive is one safe place that allows individuals to upload documents, photos, videos and other files that are important to them. They can be accessed by the individual any time any where once there is internet connectivity and that it saves people the hustle of having to carry their PC with them any where they go. He added that, all that is needed is to get a Google account and down load the Google drive for free on your computer. This would allow you to drag hundreds of files into the drive folder on your computer.

Google Hangout

Google Hangouts is a free video chat service from Google that enables both one-on-one chats and group chats with up to ten people at a time.   While somewhat similar to Skype and Facebook Video Chat, Google Hangouts focuses more on face-to-face group interaction as opposed to one-on-one video chats, and utilizes sophisticated technology to seamlessly switch the focus to the person currently chatting. Google Hangouts can be accessed via laptop and desktop computers as well as with Android mobile devices and it allows users to share documents, scratchpads, images and YouTube videos with other users.

Blogs

It is a typical Web page that serves as a publicly accessible personal journal for an individual. They are created by individuals to share with others about what they do. Most blogs are primarily textual, although some focus on art. A blog combines text, images and links to other blogs, Web pages, and other media related to its topic.

 "Why bother about having a website when you cannot afford it, create your own blog for free" said Mr. Agbenyo. He added that blogs allow visitors to leave comments about post on the blog.

You Tube

Mr. Agbenyo described **YouTube** as a video-sharing website which allow users to upload videos to share with other users. He said that most of the content on YouTube has been uploaded by individuals, although media corporations including CBS, the BBC, Vevo, Hulu and other organizations offer some of their material via the site, as part of the YouTube partnership program. Unregistered users can watch videos, while registered users can upload an unlimited number of videos. He urged development workers to use You Tube to share what they do as a way of marketing their intervention areas.

Picasa and Flickr

He said, they are online albums that allow users to upload pictures for safe keeping and use online. He added that gone were the days when PC owners scramble for space to keep their pictures and that they can spare their PC.this trouble by uploading their pictures on either Picasa or Flickr.

Mr. Agbenyo John Stephen said Savana Signatures would soon roll out a program to train interesting individuals on Web 2.0 tools and urged interested participants to be on a look out for the training. He also commended for coming to attend and further urged them to inform their friends and family about the monthly ICT4D and to invite and encourage them to attend as it is free of charge.