A REPORT ON THE VISIT OF THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS TO INSPECT WORKS AT THE HEALTH INFORMATION ACCESS CENTER (HIAC) PROJECT AT THE COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES (CHS), KORLE-BU ON MONDAY 28TH APRIL, 2014

Prepared by

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5th May 2014
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1.0 Introduction

The Ministry of Communications under the e-Ghana project is sponsoring a project at the College of Health Sciences (CHS), University of Ghana, Korle-Bu which seeks to refurbish the existing computer laboratory to support teaching and learning through ICT as well as bringing information access to the door-step of faculty, students, researchers and staff.

The contractor working on the project has reached various stages of completion. To acquaint himself with progress of work, the Minister of Communications, Dr. Edward Omane Boamah visited the project site on Monday, 28th April, 2014 at the College Administration at Korle-Bu to meet the management, staff and the contractor.

1.1 Venue

The first meeting was held at the Charles Mensah Conference Room located in the Charles Easmon Building of the College Administration after which an inspection tour was conducted at the refurbished computer laboratory, also within the Charles Easmon Building.

1.2 Participation

The Minister, staff of the Ministry of Communications, staff of National Information Technology Agency (NITA), e-Ghana Project, Ghana Multimedia Incubator Centre and Management of CHS, University of Ghana Medical School, University of Ghana Dental School and School of Allied Health Sciences as well as the press, attended the meeting (List of key participants attached to report – Appendix II).

2.0 Welcome Address

The welcome address was given by the College Registrar, Mrs. Amma Kwaa. She thanked everyone for coming, most especially with that of the Minister.
3.0 Presentation on Information Access Centers (IAC)

The Head of IT, Mr. Barfi-Adomako Owusu gave general background information on Information Access Centers (IACs). He noted that the IAC is a Korean government technical cooperation aimed at bridging the digital divide. He mentioned that, in early 2011, the Republic of Korea made an offer to the University of Ghana to establish IACs under the auspices of Korean Official Development Agency (ODA). The facility is made up of Internet Lounge, Computer Laboratory, Seminar Room and an Administrative Office equipped with computers, LCD projector, printers, video conference equipment and CCTV, among others. The first of such center is at Legon and was jointly inaugurated by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ghana, Prof. John Gyapong, the Korean Ambassador to Ghana, His Excellency Kyun Jaemin, and the then Deputy Minister of Communications in April 2012.

Recounting some of the benefits to be derived from the Center, Mr. Barfi-Adomako said that it is expected to help raise information technology literacy and awareness in the developing world as well as promote cooperation in the field of information technology.

4.0 Progress Report on Health Information Access Center

Relating to the construction of the HIAC it was noted that work has almost been completed and it consists of the following;

- Internet Lounge
- Seminar Room
- IT Training Lab
- Server Room
- IT Staff Offices

He said that the completion of the facility will improve access to information and e-resources by faculty, researchers, staff and students. He was however; of the view that funds would be released to the contractor on time to enable the project to be completed on schedule as well as the provision of additional resource for the IT staff offices, computers, etc.

Touching on other projects on the Korle-Bu Campus of the College, he mentioned the extension of University of Ghana Fibre Optic Backbone to Hostels and Departments. He noted that this is part of Phase II of the University of Ghana ICT-based Distance Learning
Project which seeks to enhance distance and continuing education using Information and Communication Technologies. This also involves the University-wide computer and networking upgrade and expansion.

The project he noted further is being funded by the Chinese Government and Government of Ghana through the Ministry of Education. He continued that one of the targets of the project is to bring all the departments under the College of Health Sciences to be connected to the Network Operating Center (NOC) at the CHS Central Administration Block through a Vodafone link to the University of Ghana main campus and that of the National Information Technology Agency (NITA) backbone terminating at the Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital. This, Mr. Barfi-Adomako noted, will greatly enhance the efficient use of network resources on the Korle-Bu Campus and the Internet in general. The Units/Departments to be connected under the Phase I & II of the project is shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Node 1: CHS Building</th>
<th>Node 2: Hostels</th>
<th>Node 3: Red Building Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Upgrading of Datacenter and Provision of Servers, Routers and Switches</td>
<td>• Block R, B and D UGMS BQ SAHS Hostel</td>
<td>• Setting up of Data rooms at Block R, B, D and BQ Extension of Local Area Network to hostels floors Wi-Fi Deployment Provision of additional Access Points Community Health Chemical Pathology Pathology SAHS Hematology Virology Maintenance Unit SAHS Library Diet Lab Physiology SAHS Lecture Hall Basic Sciences Building UGMS Morgue Occupational Therapy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 1: Extension of Korle-Bu Campus Fibre-Optic Backbone*
5.0 Other Remarks by Personalities

5.1 Deputy Provost, CHS

The Deputy Provost, Prof. Joseph D. Seffah in his remarks noted that there were outstanding items that needed to be supplied. These, he said were necessary to ensure that when the project is completed, it will be able to provide the services required to justify the purpose for which the project was undertaken. He mentioned some of the outstanding items as; 20 Desktop computers, furniture for IT staff, and air-conditioners. The Deputy Provost also appealed to the Ministry to provide the College with Wireless Access Points (APs) to be deployed in the Students’ Hostels which have been connected to the campus internet backbone by fiber-optic cables.

5.2 Mr. Nelson Osae

Mr. Osae from the e-Ghana Project, Ministry of Communications, providing further background information on the project mentioned that the project was situated at the CHS because the space was already available. He further noted that the HIAC was modelled after the IAC at Legon.

Figure 2: Mr. Nelson Osae, e-Ghana Project
Regarding funding, he said there was no problem and that the necessary funds could be accessed by the contractor if he only satisfied the requirements for the release of the funds.

5.3 The Minister of Communications

According to the Minister, Dr. Edward Omane-Boamah the government is dedicated to improving access to information in the country and that is the reason why NITA had been given the necessary support to undertake projects such as the Health Information Access Centers.

Figure 3: Dr. Omane Boamah, Minister of Communications

He said that similar IACs and Community Information Centers (CICs) will be constructed in the various regions in Ghana, especially areas close to the national fiber optic backbone. According to him, when these are completed, they will make it easy for government initiatives such as e-Health, e-Learning to be implemented. Doctors, nurses, health
professionals, etc. will also benefit from the store of knowledge that will be created as a result without necessarily travelling to well-developed health facilities to access information. This, he also said will drive development in the rural communities.

He reiterated that he looks forward to the day when the University of Ghana could collaborate with other schools through the fiber optic links and the IACs to train and provide services to schools and other health facilities outside the capital.

Touching on outstanding issues concerning the project, the Minister said that he had taken note of them and would ensure that the project is completed on schedule. He promised that the 20 computers, furniture for IT staff and the provision of access points in the students’ hostel would be provided on time.

The Minister continued that the government is willing to support projects of the University and mentioned that the e-learning Center established at the University of Ghana Medical School by the 1983 Year Group is an example of the assistance provided by the Ministry.

6.0 Tour of the Information Access Center

From the Charles Mensah Conference Room, the Minister and his entourage and Management of the College toured the HIAC to inspect the facilities. During the tour, the minister suggested that plans should be made to backup the data that will be generated from the Center and the College on the NITA’s servers in Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), Kumasi. This, he said, will provide a safe backup in a different geographical area in case there is disaster in Accra.

At the Seminar room of the HIAC, the contractor said that all the items for the videoconferencing had been procured but were yet to be delivered and installed. He added that the videoconferencing facility will allow collaboration between the various campuses and also between the IACs and CICs that will be constructed.

The contractor assured the gathering that the project will be completed on time.
7.0 Conclusion

The Minister as well as management of the College expressed satisfaction of progress made so far at the facility. The Minister commended the contractor for the good work done and also delivering according to specifications. Regarding the request made by the Deputy Provost, the Minister assured the College that the Ministry of Communications will take steps to assist with their delivery.

The Health Information Access Center (HIAC) at Korle-Bu Campus when completed will use ICT to support teaching and learning and also encourage the attitude of research and the use of e-resources available on the internet to improve the quality of health professionals needed to oversee the health needs of our people.
### Appendix I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Office/Room</th>
<th>Items Supplied</th>
<th>Items Outstanding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Internet Lounge</strong></td>
<td>• twelve (12) dual tables&lt;br&gt;• twenty (20) desktop computers&lt;br&gt;• Local Area Network built&lt;br&gt;• a wireless access point&lt;br&gt;• window blinds&lt;br&gt;• Three (3) ceiling fans.</td>
<td>• Settees/Sofas (10 singles)&lt;br&gt;• air-conditioners (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Seminar Room</strong></td>
<td>• nine (9) dual tables&lt;br&gt;• eighteen (18) swivel chairs&lt;br&gt;• one (1) ceiling mount projector&lt;br&gt;• one (1) electronic wall mount screen&lt;br&gt;• four (4) ceiling fans&lt;br&gt;• four (4) speakers&lt;br&gt;• one (1) fixed amplifier with one (1) cabled microphone&lt;br&gt;• one (1) mobile loud speaker with two (2) cordless microphones</td>
<td>• two air-conditioners&lt;br&gt;• the entire video conferencing devices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IT Training Laboratory</strong></td>
<td>• eighteen (18) dual tables&lt;br&gt;• thirty-six (36) swivel chairs&lt;br&gt;• one (1) ceiling mount projector&lt;br&gt;• one (1) wall projector screen&lt;br&gt;• six (6) ceiling fans&lt;br&gt;• three (3) doors&lt;br&gt;• two (2) sliding windows&lt;br&gt;• two (2) air conditioners</td>
<td>• Thirty-six desktop computers&lt;br&gt;• One desk/table for tutor&lt;br&gt;• One swivel chair for tutor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Server Room</strong></td>
<td>• Server (1)&lt;br&gt;• 42U Data rack (1)&lt;br&gt;• One (1) air conditioner&lt;br&gt;• one (1) ceiling fan</td>
<td>• UPS to support the server&lt;br&gt;• an electrical switch box&lt;br&gt;• One (1) air conditioner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Desktop Computers</strong></td>
<td>• Twenty (20)</td>
<td>• Thirty (30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Laptops</strong></td>
<td>• Zero (0)</td>
<td>• Three (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Projectors</strong></td>
<td>• two (2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Public Address System</strong></td>
<td>• cabled microphone&lt;br&gt;• mobile sound system&lt;br&gt;• two cordless microphones</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Video Conferencing equipment</strong></td>
<td>• Accessories Installed</td>
<td>• Video Conferencing Equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Print Management System</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Not installed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staff Office Furniture</strong></td>
<td>• None</td>
<td>• All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Training of Staff</strong></td>
<td>• This should commerce before the handing over.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix II

Key Officers Present

1. Dr. Edward Omane-Boamah - Minister for Communications
2. Professor Joseph D. Seffah - Deputy Provost, CHS
3. Mr. Nelson Osae - Ministry of Communications
4. Mr. William Tevie - National Information Technology Agency
5. Mrs. Amma Kwaa - Registrar, CHS
6. Professor E A Nyarko - Vice Dean, University of Ghana Dental School
7. Professor Jennifer Welbeck - Dean, University of Ghana Medical School
8. Mr. Barfi-Adomako Owusu - Head of IT Unit, CHS
9. Ms. Sitsofe Dzansi - Ag. College Librarian
10. Mr. Solomon Sulemani - Senior Assistant Librarian
11. Mr. K. Amponsah - Assistant Registrar, General
12. Mr. Emmanuel Adu-Sarkodie - Senior Assistant Registrar, UGDS
13. Mr. Augustine Ammissari - Assistant Registrar, Public Affairs/SAHS
14. Mr. Samuel Bentil Aggrey - Assistant Librarian (ICT/CHS)
15. Dr. Mawia Zakaria - Ecstasy Ltd (Contractor)
16. Mr. Victor Kwarko - Design Warehouse (Consultant)

Groups

1. Ministry of Communications
2. National Information Technology Agency
3. e-Ghana Project. Min. of Communications
4. Ghana Multimedia Incubator Centre
5. Staff of College Administration
6. Staff of University of Ghana Dental School
7. Staff of University of Ghana Medical School
8. Press Houses