USEFUL TECHNOLOGY IN REMOTE PLACES

Posted on November 25, 2010 by Sue

Category: Observations

Technology is changing so fast I'm finding it hard to keep up! I don't yet have an Android or IPhone type mobile, but it's amazing what you can do with a fairly basic model. One innovation I heard about recently is that mobile phones are being used in Africa to send money from A to B. You do this by buying phone credit and texting that credit to the person you want to send money to. They can then cash in the credit from their phone! This is so useful in places where the only other method would be for you or someone else to physically take money and give it to the person. In Ivory Coast we occasionally sent cash via national bus companies. But sending money direct to someone's mobile phone is so much faster, easier and more secure, and the person can text you straight back that they've received it OK.

There is a translation workshop being held in southern Madagascar at the moment, and our colleagues there have been able to send funds to the teams so they can pay for their travel to the workshop. In the past they've had to do this by means of cash at the end of the previous workshop for the next. But now they can text the money just before the teams travel. This works for many areas, though of course not all parts of the country have network coverage.

Mobile phones are also increasingly being used by people to access the Bible. Lots of versions and study aids are available to download for free (try this site for instance). Translations into minority languages are now becoming more readily available to download, too. This is great news, especially for Christians in countries where printed Bibles cannot easily be bought or where it is difficult to be open about their faith. What a brilliant tool!