



# POST EVENT REPORT



*Panel Moderator*

**Thelma Quaye**

Head, Digital Infrastructure,  
Smart Africa



*Special Guest*

**Ursula Owusu - Ekuful**

Minister for Comm &  
Digitilization



*Special Guest of Honour*

**H.E Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia**

Vice President of Ghana



*Special Guest*

**Ernest Addison**

Governor, Bank of Ghana



*Guest Speaker*

**Sopnendu Mohanty**

Chief Fintech Officer, Monetary  
Authority of Singapore

*Theme*

***The Rise of Africa: Promoting Africa's  
Sustainable Digital Ecosystem***

**TUE.20TH - WED.21ST APRIL, 2021**

**VIRTUAL CONFERENCE**



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# SUMMARY



**Panel Moderator**  
**Thelma Quaye**

Head, Digital Infrastructure,  
Smart Africa



**Special Guest**  
**Ursula Owusu - Ekuful**

Minister for Comm &  
Digitalization



**Special Guest of Honour**  
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**Guest Speaker**  
**Sopnendu Mohanty**

Chief Fintech Officer, Monetary  
Authority of Singapore

The 2021 Mobile Technology for Development (MT4D) conference was held on the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> April in Accra.

Now in its second edition, the annual gathering, put together by the Ghana Chamber of Communications and Financial Inclusion Forum, Africa (FIFA) under the auspices of the office of the H.E the Vice-President and in partnership with the Bank of Ghana, sought to address key issues relating to mobile technology as a driving force for development across core sectors of Ghana and on the African continent. The event ran under the theme, ***The Rise of Africa: Promoting Africa's Sustainable Digital Ecosystem.***

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this year's edition unfolded as a 100% digital and virtual event. It included presentations, trade exhibitions, and panel discussions on subjects across telecommunications, banking, cyber security as well as new technologies. It brought into one cyberspace, three (3) keynote speakers, nine (9) panels, five (5) fireside discussions and sixty-one (61) professional speakers from across the world.

Compered by broadcaster Francis Abban, the summit was attended by government representatives, regulators, services providers, non-governmental organisations, and multinational organisations from Ghana and across the world, including Ghana's Vice-President, H.E Dr Mahamudu Bawumia, as the keynote speaker, as well as other top government officials like Hon. Minister of Communications and Digitalisation, Mrs. Ursula Owusu-Ekuful, and the First Deputy Governor of the Bank of Ghana, Dr

Maxwell Opoku-Afari, among others.

The conference sought to meet the following objectives:

- To bring stakeholders (customers, service providers, policymakers and regulators) together in discussing the role of a digital ecosystem in expanding and promoting a digital economy.
- To enable participants, discuss what it will take to increase the number of people accessing and using a broader range of financial products through mobile technology in Ghana: regulation, technology and innovation, digital/financial literacy, consumer protection.
- To showcase new ideas and innovations that exist in the country (and across Africa) and how to harness their potentials.
- To formulate clear action points that will be taken by stakeholders to ensure that financial inclusion objectives are achieved.

The virtual event saw an impressive participation, which is outlined as follows:

Activity	Turnout
Exhibition	17
Views of On-Demand Videos	2,300
Registered Attendees	1,300
Turnout via Virtual Platform	82 0
Booths Visits	635
Minutes of Booth Traffic	5,800
Views of Sessions (Virtual Platform)	1,100
Views on social media	76,600

## DAY ONE



SPEAKER

DR. KENNETH ASHIGBEY

GHANA CHAMBER OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS



SPEAKER

DR. WILLIAM DERBAN

CHAIR, FIF AFRICA

*theme*

***The Rise of Africa: Promoting Africa's Sustainable Digital Ecosystem***

**TUE.20TH - WED.21ST APRIL 2021**

**VIRTUAL CONFERENCE**

Day 1 commenced with opening remarks from Dr Ing. Kenneth Ashigbey, CEO of the Ghana Chamber of Communications, and Dr William Derban, Co-Founder, Financial Inclusion Forum Africa. They observed that despite the limitations that COVID-19 had imposed on MT4D's format this year, it provided a bigger platform for increased participation and a wide berth.

Noting that this year's event was a global one not only in terms of participation but also in terms of resource persons. The conference's framework is action-oriented, with the cardinal interest of making Ghana a hub for discussions surrounding the deployment of mobile technology in innovative ways — especially in the sub-region — to harness potentials that exist within the ecosystem.

# KEYNOTE ADDRESS

## 1ST KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia



GUEST OF HONOR

**H.E ALHAJI MAHAMUDU BAWUMIA**  
(VICE PRESIDENT OF GHANA)



GHANA CHAMBER OF  
TELECOMMUNICATIONS



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2ND EDITION

*Theme*

***The Rise of Africa: Promoting Africa's  
Sustainable Digital Ecosystem***

**TUE.20TH - WED.21ST APRIL, 2021**

**VIRTUAL CONFERENCE**

For the second successive year, Dr Mahamudu Bawumia's keynote address saw him touch on Ghana's remarkable strides in digitalisation while asserting the country's growing reputation as a major destination for global digital investors.

He also envisioned how Ghana will use the digital ecosystem in solving real-life problems and the approach to doing this is for the government to partner with the private sector in accomplishing the digital goals through technology.

Another highlight of Dr Bawumia's speech was his announcement of the launch of the Fraud Control Dashboard, an industry initiative that seeks to tackle the rising incidence of fraudulent activities related to the mobile industry.

Additionally, he enumerated some other government initiatives, such as linking the National ID card to the major databases to create an ecosystem within the space where all IDs will be consolidated to make provision of government service easier.





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## 2ND KEYNOTE ADDRESS

DR. ERNEST ADDISON



SPECIAL GUEST

ERNEST ADDISON

(GOVERNOR, BANK OF GHANA)

## 3RD KEYNOTE ADDRESS

MRS. URSULA OWUSU-EKUFUL



GUEST SPEAKER

URSULA OWUSU-EKUFUL

(COMM. & DIGITIZATION MINISTER)

Speaking on behalf of the governor of the Central Bank of Ghana, **Dr Maxwell Opoku-Afari** outlined the policies the Bank of Ghana had implemented to cushion the financial sector and the vulnerable sectors of the society during the COVID-19 pandemic.

These include the reduction of primary reserves for banks from 10% to 8%, reduction of Capital Conservation Buffer from 3% to 1.5% and provisioning for loans in the other loans especially mentioned (OLEM) category from 10% to 5%.

He also enumerated new interventions implemented by the Bank of Ghana (BoG) to accelerate digital inclusion to reduce the impact of the pandemic on individuals, businesses and government which include;

- The Tiered Licence Category
- Merchant Account Categorization
- GH QR Payment Solution
- Crowdfund Policy

Finally, Dr Opoku-Afari urged stakeholder collaborations to advance financial inclusion.

Speaking on the role of communication in driving a digital ecosystem, Mrs. Ursula Owusu-Ekuful endorsed the FCD platform launched, describing it as a step in the right direction. She highlighted some government initiatives under the purview of the Ministry of Communications and Digitalisation, such as the rural telephony projects which seek to extend broadband connectivity and telephony to rural Ghana, the National and ECOWAS roaming services, revision of Ghana's ICT for Accelerated Development Policy, the development of Ghana's Digital Economy Policy (which will be subjected to stakeholder consultation before it is finalized), as well as a collaboration between her ministry and the Ministry of Education in institutionalizing the study of ICT from basic school level to tertiary.

She also hinted at the government's plan to engage stakeholders in the telecom sector, especially mobile network operators (MNOs), on how the government can shore up its revenue by taxing over-the-top (OTT) services.

# PRESENTATIONS

The first day of proceedings also saw presentations by representatives from the Bank of Ghana, telecoms giants AirtelTigo and Vodafone, and Huawei.

## AirtelTigo

During his presentation, AirtelTigo CEO Mr. Sreerama Murthy Chaganti offered a historical analogy using the development of the railway system, of how societies are connected. He observed that today, telecom service providers such as his network, as well as mobile financial services (MFS) are in a pivotal position to drive the digital financial inclusion vision.

He also likened digital financial inclusion to the human body and called for stakeholders such as policymakers and regulatory agencies to expedite its implementation. The ease with which money flows across an economy makes it strong or weak.



MR. SREERAMA MURTHY CHAGANTI  
AirtelTigo CEO

## Vodafone



MRS. GETA STRIGGNER-QUARTEY  
Vodafone GH. Legal & External Affairs Dir.

Vodafone Ghana's legal and external affairs director Mrs. Geta Striggner-Quarthey called for government intervention in reducing the cost of mobile handsets to drive usage and adoption while bridging the digital gap. She suggested the wavering of value-added taxes (VAT) on such devices as an avenue to achieve this.

She also pushed for the introduction of a universal wallet system to allow mobile money customers across all networks to have access to their funds from any agent.

Next, she emphasised the need for the liberalization of the mobile money platform to broaden financial inclusion, increase volumes and frequency of monetary movement across all networks, and called on government and policymakers to engineer policies to attract more customers to embrace mobile money as a key driver towards achieving a cash lite economy.

Geta acknowledged the widening digital gap triggered by the current global health crisis, a situation her company sought to address via its Pan-African initiative and admonished the industry and partners to leverage creative ways to bridge the said gap.



HOU TAO

Huawei Global Vice-President

### Huawei

Huawei Global Vice-President Hou Tao emphasised his outfit's commitment to the digitalisation drive and lauded the government's digitisation transformation agenda, which has borne itself across all sectors of the economy. He also called for robust fibre infrastructure to accelerate digital development as it is the future-proof technology constituting the foundation of all technologies. A unified, resilient, scalable cloud and fibre infrastructure, he noted, would enable the delivery of transformative public services that will enhance operational efficiencies, improve data protection and cybersecurity as well as engender smart innovative solutions.

Additionally, he assured of Huawei's preparedness to partner with the government to achieve its goals in this area.



DEREK LARYEA

GHANA CHAMBER OF TELCOMMUNICATION



SPEAKER

ARIANNA GASPARRI

UNCDF FIN. INCLUSION SPECIALIST, GHANA



# PANEL DISCUSSIONS

Day 1 saw five panel discussions between policymakers, regulators, financial institutions, FinTechs among other industry players across the following thematic areas: Ghana's digital future, creating the right policy and regulatory environment, driving the payments digital ecosystem through FinTechs. The rest are Enhancing Greater Financial Inclusion through ID systems and Ghana's digital strategy and digital infrastructure.

The sessions were moderated by William Derban, Elly Ohene Adu, Owureku Asare, Estelle Akofio-Sowah and Jacqueline Mpare, with resource persons ranging from government, financial institutions, telecoms, FinTechs, among others.



Mobile  
TECHNOLOGY for  
Development

*Theme*  
The Rise of Africa: Promoting Africa's Sustainable Digital Ecosystem

## DAY 1 | PANEL 1 TOPIC FOR DISCUSSION

**"Ghana's digital future: Leaving no one behind"**



Julian Opuni  
MD, Fidelity Bank



Archie Hesse  
CEO, GhIPSS



Thompson Sakyi  
Dir, MFS, AirtelTigo



Arnold Kavaarpuo  
Country Dir, Jumo



*moderator*  
Dr. William Derban  
Chair, Fin. Inclusion  
Forum, Africa

**Panel 1**, centred on the role banks play in providing financial services and why digitisation matters. It featured contributions from Julian Opuni (MD, Fidelity Bank), Thompson Sakyi (Director, MFS, AirtelTigo), Arnold Kavaarpuo (Country Director, JUMO) and Archie Hesse (CEO, GhIPSS).

It was agreed that digitisation helps banks to meet customers across a plethora of platforms. Banking services and products are delivered in a way customers prefer and where they are more comfortable. Statistics from Fidelity bank, for instance, suggest that customers are becoming more digitally savvy as there has been an increase in preference for accessing digital services post-COVID from 49% to 57%.

Again, all panellists spoke on the efforts of their respective organisations to ensure inclusion in the digital and financial terrain. Currently, the efforts of AirtelTigo in the MFS space cut across the distribution network, increasing the organisation's footprints across the country. Jumo on their part, touched on their partnerships with banks to provide financial services in the form of loans to customers, whilst GhIPSS is working on providing all forms of payment settlements within the financial sector.

Finally, the panel also exposed measures taken to include the marginalised in the digital migration, such as Fidelity Bank's Smart Account targeted at the masses.



Mobile  
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*Theme*

**The Rise of Africa: Promoting Africa's Sustainable Digital Ecosystem**

## DAY 1 | PANEL 2 TOPIC FOR DISCUSSION

**“Creating the right policy and regulatory environment”**



**Dr. Max Opoku-Afari**  
Deputy Governor,  
Bank of Ghana



**Hayford Atta Krufi**  
CEO, Nat. Pensions  
Regulatory Auth.



**Seth Eshun**  
Head of Supervision  
NIC



**Sampson Akligo**  
MOFA, Acting Dir.,  
Fin. Sector Division



*moderator*  
**Elly Ohene Adu**  
DFS Consultant

**Panel 2** discussed creating the right policy and regulatory environment. It featured Kwame Oppong (Head of FinTech and Innovation Unit, BoG), representing the deputy Governor of BoG Dr. Maxwell Opoku-Afari, Hayford Atta Krufi (CEO, NPRA), Sampson Akligoh (Ag Director, Finance Sector Division, MOFA) and Seth Eshun (Head of Supervision, NIC).

A key highlight of the session was the acknowledgement of regulatory reforms geared towards driving innovation in the digital, financial and insurance space, some of which include the digitisation of rural banks to promote the use of mobile money and other FinTech platforms and the digitisation of the microfinance space.

The panel also acknowledged the significant role of technology in roping in customers in rural centres into the formal sector through appropriate and targeted policy directives.

It was also agreed that the mobile money system catalysed achieving the government's agenda of reaching a cash lite economy.



Mobile  
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*Theme*

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## DAY 1 | PANEL 3 TOPIC FOR DISCUSSION

**“Driving the payments digital ecosystem through Fintechs”**



**Meghan McCornick**

Co-Founder/CEO,  
Oze



**Carl Ashie**

Head of Mobile  
Fin. Serv., GCB



**Sebastian Yalley**

CEO, Global Acelerex



**Kodjo Hesse**

ExpressPay



*moderator*

**Owureku E. Asare**

Head, Digital  
Solutions Ecobank

**Panel 3** featured Meghan McCornick (Co-Founder/CEO, Oze), Carl Ashie (Head of Mobile Financial Services, GCB Bank), Sebastian Yalley (CEO, Global Acelerex), and Kodjo Hesse (Director, Expresspay)

The session sought to explore the achievements and challenges within the FinTech sector and how FinTechs can drive the digital ecosystem. It was agreed that FinTechs must collaborate with other financial institutions to have the required impacts. It was disclosed that although there were challenges with partnering with bigger organisations such as bureaucracy and long procurement time, the positives far outweigh the negatives. Some of these advantages include leveraging on the organisations' legacy, networks, experience, etc., to create a win-win situation for the start-up, FinTech and the bank.

The panellists also acknowledged the challenges with marketing timing and the need for start-ups to exercise patience and not to renege. They

also underscored the need for continuous collaboration among emerging start-ups with established ones to drive pace within the digital ecosystem. The licensing of the FinTech operators by the BoG has strengthened investor confidence and streamlined FinTech service. Knowledge sharing is vital to scaling up business within the space, specifically the medium, small scale and micro enterprise (MSME). Traditional banks need to re-evaluate their business models to meet the needs of FinTechs. The panel also emphasised the need for synergy between the traditional financial institutions to invest more in technology to offer services to FinTechs.

Additionally, banks must partner with FinTechs to create a robust security system and there was a call for policy directives to regulate the FinTech ecosystem to boost investor confidence.



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The Rise of Africa: Promoting Africa's Sustainable Digital Ecosystem

## DAY 1 | PANEL 4 TOPIC FOR DISCUSSION

### "Ghana's Digital Strategy and Digital infrastructure – Enhancing connectivity and accessibility "



**Victor Dodoo**  
Head Network  
Planning, MTN



**Chen Kuan - Hang**  
Chief Consultant  
Huawei



**Kwaku Kyei Ofori**  
MTN, Dep. Director



*moderator*  
**Estelle Akufio - Sowah**  
Country Mng,  
C-Squared

**Panel 4** explored Ghana's digital strategy and digital infrastructure and enhancing connectivity and accessibility. It was moderated by Estelle Akofio-Sowah and joining her to delve into this discussion were Victor Dodoo (Head, Network planning, MTN), Chen Kuan-Hung (Chief Consultant, Huawei) and Kwame Kyei Ofori (Deputy Director, NITA).

This discussion sought to look at how to better improve Ghana's digital strategy and infrastructure to enhance connectivity and accessibility to ensure that none is left behind in our quest for digitalisation.

The panel noted that digitalisation is customer-centric and without an encompassing national digital infrastructure system we cannot ensure the last mile connectivity and accessibility.

Additionally, the panel established that digital infrastructure provides the avenue for individuals, businesses and governments to get online and connect with the global digital economy.

Touching on the barriers to enhancing connectivity and accessibility confronting the deployment of telecommunications services to the unserved and underserved, the panel acknowledged the infrastructure deficit in the country as a critical one to bringing everyone on board and leaving none behind. It was revealed that to connect all of Africa, the continent would require an estimated \$100bn to deploy connectivity to the last mile. A figure which is quite huge and requires collaboration between the government and all players within the ecosystem to achieve this feat.

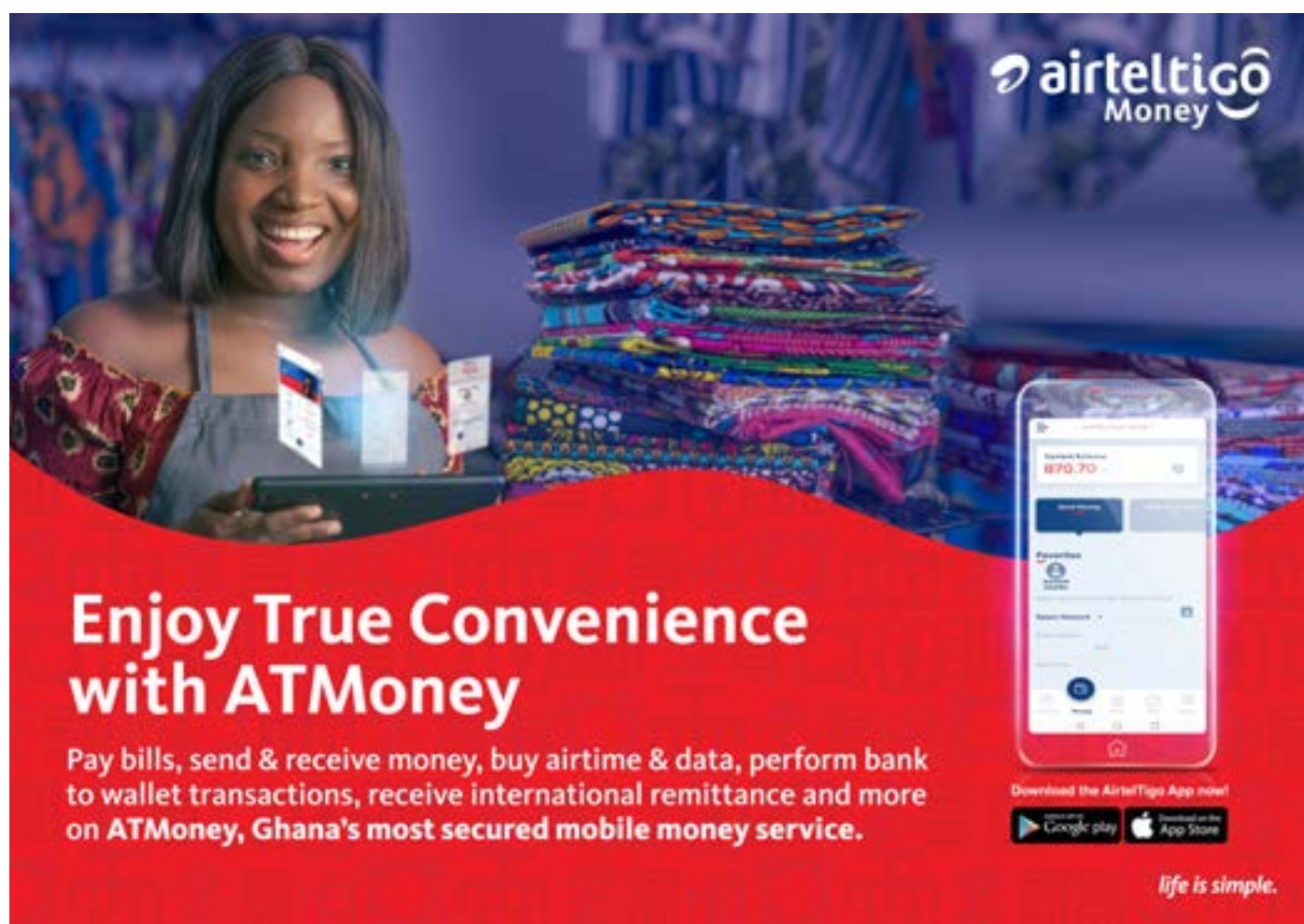
The issue of the high cost of maintaining digital infrastructure is also a barrier to enhancing connectivity and accessibility especially with the incessant cuts to digital infrastructure as a result of road construction and real estate projects. These costs incurred in restoring fibre cuts and relocation could be used to deploy connectivity to the remotest areas in the country to bring all on board the journey towards digitalisation.

The panel also bemoaned the bureaucracy surrounding the acquisition of permit and licensing which largely takes up time ultimately affecting the deployment of digital technology to the underserved and unserved. The panel were of the view that if the time spent to acquire the aforementioned is reduced it will encourage digital service providers to extend their services to all.

Another challenge is the insufficient data centres and internet exchange points in the country. That notwithstanding, the panel acknowledged there are regulatory policies that are in place to ensure that connectivity and accessibility are enhanced to bring all aboard the digital journey. However, they assert that regulations alone are not enough. It must be in tandem with an actionable national digital strategy plan spelling out how the policies can and should be implemented.

### ***Recommendations***

- The need for collaboration among all stakeholders especially in infrastructure sharing to enhance connectivity and accessibility.
- The need for a clear national digital strategy plan.
- Protection of digital infrastructure by all players within the digital ecosystem.
- The need to optimise the right of way to mitigate damage to digital infrastructure and cost of repairs.
- The reduction in the cost of digital handsets.
- The need to build the digital skills and promotion of local content in innovative solutions to increase usage.



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# PANEL DISCUSSIONS



Mobile  
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*Theme*

The Rise of Africa: Promoting Africa's Sustainable Digital Ecosystem

## DAY 1 | PANEL 5 TOPIC FOR DISCUSSION

**"Enhancing greater financial inclusion through ID systems"**



**Paul Damalie**

CEO, Appruve



**Margaret Nettey**

Head of Technology  
BSystems



**Kobi Bekoe**

Head of Corp  
Comms, Ghana Post



**Ruth Badoo**

Snr. Manager, MFS,  
Mobile Money Ltd



*moderator*  
**Jacqueline D. Mpare**

Head Agency Banking  
Ecobank Group

**Panel 5** comprised Paul Damalie (CEO, Appruve), Margaret Nettey (Head of Technology, BSystems), Kobi Hema (Head of Corporate Communications, Ghana Post), Ruth Badoo (Senior Manager, MFS, Mobile Money Ltd).

The panel discussion sought to address the role of the ID system in enhancing greater financial inclusion. The discussants established that plans are far advanced to establish digital identities that fully mirror the real-life identities of individuals, and this has in the long run, helped in KYC compliance.

Furthermore, the panel noted that ID verification played a crucial role in identifying customers and helping to combat fraud as well as respond effectively to emergency situations, especially in the case of the Ghana Post address system.

The panel drummed home the need for a centralised ID system to run better and effective identification and validation and mitigate fraud.

Day one's recommendations include the following

- The need for FinTechs to leverage on a partner organisations' legacy, networks, experience, etc., to create a win-win situation

- The need for continuous collaboration among emerging start-ups with established ones to drive growth within the digital ecosystem
- The need for traditional banks to reevaluate their business models to meet the needs of FinTechs.
- The need for synergy between the traditional financial institutions to invest more in technology to offer services to FinTechs.
- The need for policy directives to regulate the FinTech ecosystem to boost investor confidence.
- Banks to partner with FinTechs to create a robust security system
- The need for a centralised ID system to run better and effective identification and validation and mitigate fraud.

The second and final day of MT4D 2021 saw a packed itinerary that included keynote addresses, presentations, panel discussions, and fireside chats.

Francis Abban, MC for the event gave a recap of the previous day's talking points, and highlighted the discussion points for the day, whilst Mr Dulip Kumar Modi, Chairman and founder of DIGISPICE Technologies and Spice Money, opened day 2 with a presentation highlighting the company's portfolio as the preferred choice to providing tech solutions for enterprise digital transformation, digital entertainment, digital financial services and digital government services globally.

Day 2's panel discussions revolved around building and growing an inclusive digital ecosystem, and Ghana's future in the digital finance ecosystem.



**GUEST SPEAKER**  
**SOPNENDU MOHANTY**  
 (CHIEF FINTECH OFFICER,  
 MONETARY AUTHORITY OF SINGAPORE)

GHANA CHAMBER OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS  
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Mr Sopnendu Mohanty, Chief FinTech Officer of the Monetary Authority of Singapore and Thelma Quaye of Smart Africa who were discussants during the first panel discussion, spoke on the Building of the Digital Ecosystem: Evidence from Singapore, lauding the African continent for embracing mobile financial services and dominating the FinTech arena. The discussion also exposed the gaps that need to be bridged in clear directives and policy regulations to build a robust digital ecosystem and draw learnings from the digital landscape in Singapore in terms of policy, regulations and directives to ensure rapid technological advancement.

## Recommendations

Some recommendations emerged from the dialogue. They are as follows:

- Building a conducive regulatory environment for all players to be fair to both emerging and existing companies.
- Building a digitally ready talent pool.
- Enabling digital adoption.
- The need for continuous collaboration among all stakeholders.
- Create an environment that enables and ensures the best services for consumers.



**SPEAKER**  
**CLARA ARTHUR**  
DFS CONSULTANT, ADVISOR, FIF AFRICA

The second panel discussion of the day saw a prognosis of Ghana's future in digital finance. Moderated by Carol Arthur of CGAP, it revealed a categorical sense of optimism about the potential of digital finance in the country, especially regarding digital innovations. The panel also acknowledged the need for convergence to drive said innovations.

The supervisory role of the central bank was also highlighted, with panellists calling for a relaxation of regulations governing payment systems to allow test trials of the latest innovations at the back of technology.

## Recommendations

- Recommendations that arose from this session include:
- Standardisation across the spectrum.
- Open Application Programming interfaces) APIs to assist innovators tailor products to meet consumers' growing needs.
- Convergence among various stakeholders
- Digitisation of government portals



## “The State of the Mobile Money Report 2020”



Edmund Barwuah, head of MFS, Ooredoo Myanmar led a fireside chat with GSMAs mobile money regulatory expert Kennedy Kipkemboi on the state of the mobile money report for 2020 following a detailed presentation from the GSMA official.

The document, which took stock of the global trends in the use and adoption of the service, revealed that registered mobile money accounts grew by 13%, to reach a total of 1.2 billion users worldwide.

The report also noted that the value of daily transactions saw an increase to 2 billion, a situation that industry watchers attribute to regulatory reforms and measures, such as the complete waiver of transaction fees, the restriction of access to cash and in-person banking, among others.

It also emerged from the discussion that interoperability is key to the adoption and growth of mobile money service. Additionally, a collaboration between government and mobile network operators is critical to sustaining the adoption and growth of the service.

More banks are now embracing mobile money partnerships; however, mobile money service providers underscored the barriers that new entrants face due to the competitive nature of the ecosystem.

## Recommendations:

- The need for a regulatory sandbox to help new entrants thrive in the space.
- Start-ups must seize the opportunities provided by the regulatory sandbox to grow.

## “Growing an inclusive Digital Ecosystem: Lessons from Ghana”



The next fireside chat was between Augustine Blay, who is the executive secretary to the Vice-President of Ghana, and Ernest Osei-Poku, regulatory, policy and compliance manager at Vodafone Ghana.

The session evaluated the government's vision of building an inclusive digital economy, highlighting some of the achievements and challenges.

Augustine submitted that rural areas are embracing digitisation, despite connectivity challenges in these areas. He also stressed the adoption of mobile money for transactions across peer-to-peer, government-to-people, among others.

Furthermore, he enumerated government initiatives such as the digital address system, mobile money interoperability, the GH QR code and how government will integrate it into the digital payment ecosystem, government's partnership with the Ghana Investment Fund for Electronic Communications (GIFEC) and mobile operators to deploy connectivity to rural areas in line with government efforts to bring everyone on board, and the ghana.gov digital platform that seeks to harmonise and cut out leakages with payments to the government of Ghana.

Augustine added that the government is in the process of initiating a policy directive to integrate merchant wallets across networks and underscored the need to prioritise artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning in the digital financial inclusion quest.

## ***"Role of a Pan African Digital payment infrastructure promoting the aims of the AfCFTA"***



**Selasi Koffi Ackom**  
CEO, Africa Int'l Trade & Fin.  
Conference



**Samuel Bartels**  
Snr. Mgr. Regulatory,  
MTN Ghana

The third fireside chat featuring MTN Ghana's senior manager, regulatory, Sammy Bartels and Selasi Koffi Ackom, who heads the Africa

International Trade and Finance Conference focused on the role of Pan-African digital payments, the pros of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), and how the continent can leverage cross-border payments to grow AfCFTA.

The discussants explored the challenges to cross-border digital payments, including regulatory divergence, which suggests that regulators do not fully grasp the role of digital payments, and oppressive domestic inhibitions such as the absence of regulatory frameworks.

### **Recommendations:**

- The need for the private sector to work in tandem with regulators in designing solutions.
- Regulators must be involved at the onset of every digital payment innovation to fully grasp the role of digital payment and develop appropriate frameworks to support its growth.
- Government must support the private sector to grow the digital payment system as the private sector is the engine of growth in facilitating the digital payment agenda of every economy.
- The need to build digital literacy, which is key to the adoption and growth of the ecosystem.
- The need for deeper concession and collaboration to develop policies to create an enabling environment for the private sector to thrive.



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*Theme*

The Rise of Africa: Promoting Africa's Sustainable Digital Ecosystem

## DAY 2 | PANEL 6 TOPIC FOR DISCUSSION

**"Reaching the marginalized: Engaging the marginalized & vulnerable in digital solutions. Bridging last mile gap"**



**Jeremiah Seidu**  
Founder  
Jaksally Dev't Org.



**Leona Abban**  
Country Director  
MicroEnsure



**Maxwell Antwi**  
Country Dir., Pharm  
Access Foundation



**Chris Czerwanka**  
Founder & CEO  
Masabi



*moderator*  
**Ophelia Ama Oni**  
Fin. Inclusion Expert,  
Fin. Incl. Forum Africa

The first panel discussion for Day 2 looked at engaging the marginalised and vulnerable in digital solutions by bridging the last-mile gap. Moderated by financial inclusion expert Ophelia Oni, the session featured Jeremiah Seidu (Founder, Jaksally Development Organisation), Leona Abban (Country Director, MicroEnsure), Maxwell Antwi (Country Director, Pharm Access Foundation) and Chris Czerwanka (Founder and CEO, Mosabi).

The panel looked at innovative solutions developed by a public-private partnership to bridge the digital divide. Examples include migrating Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) beneficiaries unto the Ezwich platform, the introduction of a USSD application (\*767#), a pull-and-push system to transfer funds, purchase and receive remittances, the Ghana Inter-Bank Payments and Settlements Systems (GhIPSS) and GH-Link platform.

### Recommendations:

- The need for the government to provide capital support to FinTechs to develop solutions targeted at the vulnerable and marginalised with key focus on local content.
- The need to provide digital and financial literacy skills to the vulnerable and marginalised.
- The need for FinTechs to deliver innovative solutions in tandem with high touch (relating to a business characterised by a very close relationship with its customers or clients).
- The need for partnership within the ecosystem to create a consolidated unit.





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## DAY 2 | PANEL 7 TOPIC FOR DISCUSSION

### "The Fintech Landscape: Funding a healthy fintech society"



**Evi Muco**

Investment Mng,  
AHL Ventures



**Nnennia Ejebe**

Partner,



**Antoine Welter**

MD, Matuca Sarl



**Johan Bosini**

Partner,  
Quona Capital



*moderator*  
**Saqib Nazir**

CEO, Emergent  
Technologies

The second panel discussion of the day looked at funding a healthy FinTech society. It was moderated by Saqib Nazir (CEO, Emergent Technologies) and featured experts including Evi Muco (Investment Manager, AHL Ventures), Nnennia Ejebe (Partner, Adenia Partners), Antoine Welter (MD, Matuca Sarl), Johan Bosini (Partner, Quona Capital).

Key points that emerged from the session include the worry that the continent is behind time in driving FinTech innovations because local investors don't quite understand start-ups, for which reason they are not being adequately funded.

The panel also lamented the absence of tax incentives, regulatory sandboxes, and an overall enabling environment for FinTechs to thrive.

### Recommendations:

Discussants doubled down on recommendations made at last year's event, including:

- Provision of regulatory sandboxes.
- Tax incentives for start-ups.
- Beefing up architecture.
- Collaboration between stakeholders.
- Standardisation of the digital financial sector.
- Stimulation of progress culture.
- Government/public adoption of digital financial services.
- Market segmentation.
- Harmonisation of regulations geared towards streamlining digital financial operations to become innovator friendly.



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## DAY 2 | PANEL 8 TOPIC FOR DISCUSSION

### "Women in Tech"



**Sarah Oppan**

Head, Data & Analytics, Ecobank



**Sandra Abrokwa**

Country Director, Viamo



**Jacqueline Hanson-Kotei**  
Info Security, MTN



**Regina Honu**

CEO, Soronko Academy



*moderator*

**Charlotte Baidoo**

Head SMF, UMB Ghana

The panel discussion that followed spotlighted the role of women in technology, a highly male-dominated terrain. Here, an all-female panel of experts including Sarah Oppan (Head, Data and Analytics, Ecobank), Sandra Abrokwa (Country Director, Viamo), Jacqueline Hanson-Kotei (SM, InfoSec, MTN) and Regina Honu (CEO, Soronko Academy) shared their experiences, challenges and opportunities to inspire others aspiring to enter the field. The panel was moderated by UMB Ghana Head of SME, Charlotte Baidoo).

The discussants acknowledged the inadequate representation of women in the technology space. Falling on their experiences, the resource persons emphasised that ICT can be rewarding. They underscored the need for mentorship, commitment, self-determination and embracing opportunities. They also called for institutions to put structures in place to allow them to reintegrate after pregnancy and maternity leave.

### Recommendations:

- The educational curriculum should be revised to incorporate practical and critical thinking at basic and advanced levels.
- The need for academic partnerships with technology institutions to improve digital literacy and offer work experience to women to make them industry-ready and employable.
- The need to encourage the formation of ICT clubs in schools and partnerships to offer hands-on training for girls to correct the gender imbalance and inequality.

# PANEL DISCUSSIONS



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## DAY 2 | PANEL 9 TOPIC FOR DISCUSSION

**"Looking into the crystal ball: the future of Africa's digital finance ecosystem"**



**Estelle Akofio-Sowah**

Google Country  
Lead



**Kwame Oppong**

BOG, Head, FinTech &  
Innovation



**James Agada**

Founder, IXDORE  
Laboratories



**Brian Richardson**

Co-Founder/CEO  
WIZZIT Int'l.



*moderator*  
**Ajetunmobi Mayowa**

Dir. of Programs,  
Fin Incl Africa

This session which capped the panel discussions sought to project the future of the digital financial ecosystem. Drawing from success stories from Nigeria, South Africa and Ghana, the panel moderated by Ajetunmobi Mayowa and featuring Estelle Akofio-Sowah (CSquared Country Lead), Kwame Oppong (Head, FinTech and Innovative Office-BoG), James Agada (Founder, IXDORE Laboratories and Brian Richardson (Co-Founder/CEO, WIZZIT int'l) acknowledged that the future is digital if the lives of citizens would be improved. Innovative solutions would be paramount in adding value and solving the different layers of challenges with various target markets.

Kwame Oppong, Head, FinTech and Innovation at the Bank of Ghana, highlighted Ghana's stride in positioning itself as a digitally ready market. He cited the Payment Systems and Settlement Act (PSSA, 2019) that lays the legal framework for transactions within the digital payment space and set the tone for the financial digital future.

### Recommendations:

This session was attended by a deluge of recommendations that include the following:

- The willingness by all parties within the

ecosystem to learn from each other and harness expertise around innovation.

- Extensive education and awareness-raising, as well as a deepening of literacy education.
- An open-minded approach to activate the right framework without compromising growth.
- The need to protect telecommunications infrastructure as they are critical to digitalisation.
- The subsidisation of handsets and the promotion of local assembling of handsets to reduce cost.
- Strategic investment in non-technical skills to combat fraud and safeguard the digital financial ecosystem.
- Enhancing risk management to guard against money laundering.
- Enhancing customer service.
- Policy harmonisation among regulators within the financial digital chain to accommodate innovation as well as existing instruments.
- The need to develop a regulatory policy around cryptocurrency, spearheaded by the Bank of Ghana to anticipate the impending presence of cryptocurrency.



Ghana remains committed to remaining a bastion of hope and a key reference in the digitalisation agenda across Africa. Despite the wake of COVID-19, which has severely affected many sectors of society, the country has swiftly adapted to the new normal, activating bold and ground-breaking innovations to support an inclusive digitisation drive.

In line with its vision, this year's MT4D conference, described by patrons as an exciting and insightful learning experience and opportunity to interface and network, built upon the strides made at last year's edition, which concentrated on leveraging mobile technology to drive financial inclusion.

Again, the forum assembled industry stakeholders in Ghana and Africa, but in other parts of the world for crucial discourse to promote Africa's sustainable digital ecosystem. Indeed, the forum's fully digital format this year is a demonstration of the country's preparedness to embrace a digital future.

The conference saw government reiterate its commitment to this sector by launching flagship solutions to position Ghana as a digital hub in the sub-region through the introduction of timely policies and technological platforms. As usual, the conference highlighted industry innovations, notable among them this year being the fraud control dashboard announced by the Vice-President.

By the end of the programme, there was a unanimous sense among patrons that so many opportunities exist on the back of the pandemic. Additionally, Africa's rise will depend on a robust and dynamic digital infrastructure and policy framework.

#MT4D2021

## EXHIBITIONS



# EXHIBITIONS



# STATISTICS







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IN COLLABORATION WITH THE BANK OF GHANA



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**Patricia Obo-Nai**  
CEO, Vodafone Ghana



**Dr. John Kofi Mensah**  
MD, Agricultural Dev't Bank Plc



**Serlorm Adadevoh**  
CEO, MTN Ghana



**Abena Osei-Poku**  
MD, Absa Bank Ghana



**Julian Opuni**  
MD, Fidelity Bank



**Murthy Chaganti**  
CEO, AirtelTigo Ghana



**Archie Hesse**  
CEO, GnipSS



**Edward Hou**  
Global Vice President,  
Huawei Corporation



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