



National Communications Authority

- Press Release

PANELISTS CALL FOR INCREASED PUBLIC-PRIVATE COLLABORATION TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATIONS CONNECTIVITY IN GHANA

- *Panel discussion was organised as part of the 2023 World Telecommunications and Information Society Day (WTISD)*
- *Panel included CEOs of MTN, MainOne and GIFEC with a rep from NITA*

Accra, Wednesday, 24th May, 2023: Panellists at a forum organised by the National Communications Authority (NCA) have called for increased collaboration between the public and private sectors to improve communication connectivity in Ghana. The panel discussion was held as part of the World Telecommunications and Information Society Day (WTISD-23) celebration which was commemorated globally on May 17th, 2023. The event which was held at the NCA Tower in Accra centered on the adopted theme, "Public-Private Partnership to Improve Connectivity" and brought together key stakeholders to explore collaborative efforts in enhancing connectivity.

The panellists included the Chief Executive Officer of MTN, Mr. Selorm Adadevoh, Mr. Prince Ofori Sefah, the Administrator of the Ghana Investment Fund for Electronic Communications (GIFEC), Mr. Emmanuel Kwarteng, Country Manager for MainOne and Solomon Richardson from the National Information Technology Agency (NITA). The Deputy Director General in charge of Technical Operations at the NCA, Prof. Ezer Osei Yeboah-Boateng, moderated the discussion.



The Panellists sharing knowledge on the theme

MTN



CEO of MTN, Mr. Selorm Adadevoh speaking at the event

Sharing valuable insights on connectivity, Mr. Selorm Adadevoh of MTN emphasised the significant growth in connectivity through both inland and undersea infrastructure. He however highlighted that lack of connectivity infrastructure in some areas is a major obstacle preventing Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) from being competitive in Ghana's telecoms market. Mr. Adadevoh mentioned that MTN Ghana has partnered with the government, particularly the Ministry of Communications and Digitalisation, to bridge the digital divide and provide access to essential communication services to all. He also asserted that, as part of this collaboration, MTN has committed to investing \$25 million in an ICT hub. This investment, which has been discussed with the Honourable Ursula Owusu-Ekufu, aims to provide digital skills education, particularly for youth and girls and enhance ICT literacy.

Mr. Adadevoh also highlighted MTN Ghana's collaboration with GIFEC in the Ghana Rural Telephony and Digital Inclusion Project (GRT&DIP). Through this project, he said MTN is involved in building 2016 rural sites to improve telephony and digital access in rural areas.

GIFEC



*Mr. Prince Ofosu Sefah, Administrator of GIFEC,
speaking at the event*

On the side of GIFEC, Mr. Prince Ofosu Sefah discussed the Fund's primary programmes focused on rural connectivity, cyber labs, and ICT capacity-building. These programmes, he said, serve as the foundation for achieving meaningful connectivity. He said GIFEC's commitment is to ensure that underserved and unserved communities have access to connectivity. Mr. Sefah also reiterated the challenges they face in providing devices to facilitate access and connectivity citing that this underscores the importance of capacity-building initiatives to empower users in utilising these devices and making the most of the available access.

Further, he expressed GIFEC's intention to collaborate with investors in line with their vision of expanding connectivity to unserved and underserved communities. They recognise the necessity of making infrastructure available to accomplish this goal.

NITA



Mr. Solomon Richardson, the Director for Technical Services at NITA, sharing his view on the theme

Solomon Richardson, the Director for Technical Services at NITA, highlighted the digital divide within Government establishments during the discussions. He underscored NITA's focus on providing the necessary infrastructure to connect all Government Institutions in supporting the government's digital agenda.

Mr. Richardson mentioned the e-government connectivity project which ensures that every district has a minimum capacity of one Gigabyte (1GB). Additionally, he hinted that NITA is establishing last-mile connectivity within Districts where infrastructure is available, enabling health facilities, police stations, and other government Agencies to connect with the district population. He also said that the government, in collaboration with GIFEC, Kofi Annan Centre of Excellence in ICT, NITA, and partner Agencies, has initiated various programmes to equip the public with essential skills for utilising these technologies.

MainOne



*Country Manager for MainOne, Mr. Emmanuel Kwarteng,
speaking at the event*

According to Mr. Emmanuel Kwarteng from MainOne, the challenge of fibre cuts remains significant in the Industry. MainOne, for instance, spends at least six (6) million dollars to repair the fibre whenever there is a cut. To address this issue, he said, the company has implemented an Automatic Identification System (AIS) to monitor the country's shores, covering approximately 120 kilometers. The terrestrial aspect, on the other hand, involves multiple licensed players engaged in metro operations whose costs increase due to frequent fibre cuts. Mr. Kwarteng also indicated that MainOne has been proactively collaborating with Industry Regulators to educate road contractors and engineers, ensuring that they are aware of the importance of protecting fibre infrastructure.

Participants at this year's WTISD event included the Ministry of Communications and Digitalisation (MoCD), various Agencies operating under MoCD, Service Providers, Consumer Protection Agencies, and the media.



A group photograph of some participants with the Deputy Minister for Communications and Digitalisation

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Date – 24th May, 2023

About NCA

The National Communications Authority, (NCA), was established by an Act of Parliament, Act 524 in December 1996, which has been repealed and replaced by the National Communications Authority Act, 2008, Act 769.