



A4AI-GHANA EXPERT WORKSHOPS

11th February 2015

Speaker Bios

Infrastructure Sharing & Open Access Workshop

Steve Song, Founder of Village Telco

Steve is an advocate for comprehensive low-cost access to communication infrastructure in Africa. He is the founder of Village Telco, a social enterprise that builds inexpensive WiFi mesh VoIP technologies to deliver affordable voice and Internet options in under-served regions. He is a well-known speaker on affordable access issues, most recently at TED Global 2014.



Steve also works with the Network Startup Resource Center to expand the use of wireless technologies through shared spectrum strategies and to enable greater Internet access throughout Africa and other emerging markets.

Previously, Steve worked at the International Development Resource Centre, where he led the organization's ICT for Development program in Africa and funded research into the transformational potential of ICTs across the continent.

Taxation Workshop

Kwaku Sakyi-Addo, CEO, Ghana Chamber of Telecommunications

Kwaku leads the A4AI-Ghana Coalition Working Group on Taxation and was appointed the first CEO of the Ghana Chamber of Telecommunications in May 2011. The Chamber, comprising six international mobile operators, seeks to influence policy and advance the development of the telecoms industry in Ghana. Before agreeing to head the Chamber, Kwaku managed communications for Aqua Vitens Rand, a Dutch-South African company that managed the state-owned Ghana Water Company.



The Government of Ghana awarded him the Order of the Volta, one of the country's highest honours in 2007. As a broadcaster and writer worked for the BBC, Reuters, and Joy FM, winning over a dozen media and leadership awards, including Journalist of the Year twice. He's a Chevening Scholar, Fellow of the Aspen Institute Global Leadership Network, and of the prestigious Salzburg Seminar in Austria. Kwaku holds an Executive Masters of Governance and Leadership from GIMPA, Graduate Diploma in Communications from the University of Ghana, and Advanced Diplomas in Communications from the International Institute for Journalism in Berlin, University of Wales in Cardiff, and another in American Studies from Macalester College, St. Paul, Minnesota.



Mercy K. Ndegwa, Policy Advisor – Africa, GSMA

Mercy is the GSMA Policy Advisor for Africa based in the Kenya office. She is responsible for supporting GSMA's advocacy and regulation programmes in the African region in areas such as Digital Inclusion – to improve accessibility and affordability of telecommunication services to users, Network Economics in regards to infrastructure sharing and wholesale networks, Quality of Service and Universal Service Funds. She also leads the Taxation and Infrastructure sharing working groups for both Sub-Saharan Africa and the Arab States, as well as the taskforces on taxation for GSMA's tax advocacy markets in Africa.



She has worked in the Telecommunications Industry for over twelve years, during which period she has held roles spanning Finance, International Relations, Compliance, Economic Regulation, and Public Policy.

Mercy holds a Bachelor of Education (Accounting & Economics) degree, and an MBA in International Business Management from the University of Nairobi.

Jessica Bruce, Business Manager – Government & Regulatory Affairs, GSMA

Jessica leads the GSMA's tax analysis and advocacy work stream as part of the Digital Inclusion programme based in the London office. She has worked extensively on ICT public policy and regulatory issues in developing countries. Prior to joining the GSMA, she worked as an economic consultant focussing on the economics of the TMT sector.



She previously worked for two years in Benin as a small enterprise development advisor. Jessica has an MSc in Economics from the University of Nottingham (UK) and a BSc in Economics and International Political Economy from the University of Puget Sound (USA), with a focus on public policy in developing markets.