

Govt to set up Fintech Innovation Fund — Dr Bawumia

By Chris Nunoo

THE Government is to set up a FinTech Innovation Fund to support Start-ups to drive Ghana's digital revolution.

The initiative is to ensure that the country leverages on the power of technology to improve productivity and connectivity to empower individuals through fintech startups, as well as small and medium-scale businesses to increase innovation, and efficiency in the operations of institutions.

Media launch

The Vice-President, Dr Mahamudu Bawumia, announced this in Accra yesterday at the official press launch of the maiden 3i Africa Summit.

The three-day summit, to be held in Accra, is scheduled for May 13-15, 2024, on the theme: "Unleashing Africa's FinTech and Digital Economic Potential".

The event, being organised by the Bank of Ghana (BoG) and the Development Bank Ghana (DBG), in partnership with Elevandi, a subsidiary of the Monetary Authority of Singapore, would attract governments, businesses, policy-makers, academia, investors and thought leaders.

Participants are expected to discuss and collaborate on unlocking Africa's full potential on fintech and digital economy, especially innovation.



• Dr Mahamudu Bawumia (2nd from right) and Dr Ernest Addison, Governor, Bank of Ghana, at the event

Vice-President Bawumia, who has championed the government's national digitalisation agenda, over the past seven years, said the path to Ghana's digital revolution was through fintech, hence, it was imperative to support them financially to thrive.

Join forces

He, therefore, encouraged all stakeholders in the fintech and digital industry to join forces in improving the legislative and regulatory environment in order to enhance the payments ecosystem and position Ghana on the path of sustained financial inclusion.

He said it was against that background, therefore, that the government, in the past seven years, had focused on pursuing a digital transformation agenda as part of its economic strategy at the individual and institutional levels.

"The objective is to ensure

digital empowerment for a prosperous future in this accelerated digital era, where the use of modern and emerging technologies have become commonplace and a catalyst for growth, progress, and prosperity," Dr Bawumia stated.

Collectively, he said: "Our presence here also underscores the belief in the power of technology to enhance productivity and connectivity to empower individuals through fintechs, startups as well as small and medium-scale enterprises that increase innovation with potential to improve efficiency in the operations of institutions and businesses.

He said it was against that background that the government had over the past seven years focused on pursuing a digital transformation agenda as part of its economic strategy at the

individual and institutional levels, in all sectors.

Digital empowerment

That agenda, he explained, was to ensure digital empowerment for a prosperous future in this digital era where, he said, the use of modern and emerging technology had become common place and a catalyst for growth, progress and prosperity.

For instance, he mentioned the issuing of the national identity cards (Ghana Card) to provide unique and centralised identification system for all Ghanaians and the leveraging of the GPS technology to implement a digital address system resulting in a unique address for all property in Ghana.

The Vice-President, who is also the flag bearer of the ruling New Patriotic Party (NPP), said to promote financial inclusion and the dominance of cash for payment, the mobile money payment interoperability system was instituted leading to the seamless transfer of money across different mobile money networks and from mobile money wallets to bank accounts and vice versa.

To that end, he announced that mobile money transactions had increased multiple folds from GH¢78.5 billion in 2016 to GH¢1.9 trillion by 2023.

Supporting startups

The Minister of Finance, Dr Amin Adam, who was also present at the occasion, reiterated the importance of

supporting startups and local businesses as they had become key contributors to the Ghanaian economy.

According to him, the government is committed to implementing programmes that generate growth from within with a focus on the growth of small businesses.

It is in this regard that the Bank of Ghana in collaboration with the Development Bank Ghana (DBG) and the University of Ghana Business School (UGBS) launched the MSME Innovative Finance Project, a research study to determine the current and emerging challenges of SME financing in Ghana, Dr Adam said.

In all these DBG has been a catalyst and glue, by bringing key players such as the Bank of Ghana, the University of Ghana and a host of other government agencies and commercial banks together and driving the agenda in line with their mandate of supporting SMEs in order to secure a transformation of the economy.

3i Africa Summit

3i Africa Summit is a fintech festival to drive Innovation, Investment and Impact for Africa's Fintech and Financial Services sectors.

The initiative is jointly developed by the Bank of Ghana, the Monetary Authority of Singapore, Development Bank Ghana, and supported by Elevandi.

It is to spearhead transformative discussions, address key growth and investment opportunities, and explore how market players in the financial ecosystem are leapfrogging in digital transformation and pioneer the much-needed dialogues and actions to drive Africa's fintech growth.