



PRESS RELEASE

Government of Liberia, CSquared and USAID announce connectivity investments for Liberia

Monrovia, Liberia, July 24, 2017 -- Today as part of Liberia's 170th Independence Celebrations, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf announced that Liberia is partnering with infrastructure company, CSquared and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to bring best-in-class, reliable, affordable broadband infrastructure to Liberia's capital city, Monrovia. Today, Liberia is one of the least connected countries in the world, with only 5% of citizens able to access the internet. This partnership is a \$12M investment that will serve to strengthen essential health, education and government systems, as well as help unlock the potential of the digital economy for Liberian citizens and private enterprise.

Quote from President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf:

"ICT is an integral part of economic development that is often overlooked and undervalued. By expanding our connectivity through this initiative, we will strengthen the support for more ICT based projects and programs in Education, Health and Infrastructure."

In 2014 and 2015, an outbreak of the Ebola virus cost Liberia thousands of lives and hard-earned development and economic gains. The Government of Liberia identified increasing fiber infrastructure as a vital part of its Economic Stabilization and Recovery plan. USAID is proud to support Liberia in advancing access to digital infrastructure, and has committed an additional \$10M to support connected programs in the areas of eGovernment, health information systems and digital financial inclusion. USAID is also supporting the expansion of the digital economy in Liberia by providing access to a loan guarantee program for qualified, local, digital businesses and entrepreneurs.

Quote from USAID Ambassador:

Speaking today during the official launch of CSquared in Monrovia, the United States Ambassador to Liberia, Christine Elder, said "the United States is committed to helping Liberia provide all of its people increased access to the Internet." Ambassador Elder added that "expanding connectivity in Liberia was crucial to helping USAID fulfill its mission to help Liberia end extreme poverty and build resilient democratic institutions."

This partnership builds on CSquared's proven experience in designing and building shared metropolitan fiber infrastructure in the African cities of Kampala and Entebbe in Uganda, and the cities of Accra, Tema, and Kumasi in Ghana. To date, CSquared has built more than 800 km of fibre in Uganda; and more than 840 km of fibre in Ghana. Collectively over 25 ISPs and MNOs now use these metro fibre networks to offer broadband services and 4G data to end users, with over 1,200 tower and commercial building sites connected directly to CSquared's fibre infrastructure.

Quote from Estelle Akofio-Sowah, CSquared West Africa Regional Manager:

"We are excited to be expanding into Monrovia, Liberia, our 3rd country after Uganda and Ghana. CSquared is committed to working with partners like the Government of Liberia and USAID to expand the ways people around Africa can reliably and affordably connect to the Internet. With 60% of the population of Liberia under the age of 24, we anticipate unprecedented growth in data consumption."

More information:

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CSquared: www.CSquared.com

USAID: www.USAID.gov

History of Liberia:

As the oldest republic in Africa, Liberia was influential as a model for other African countries seeking independence. In 2005, Liberia elected the first female Head of State in Africa. Saddled with the aftermath of civil unrest and an Ebola outbreak, Liberia has made some significant economic progress in its 14 years of peace.

CSquared:

On May 16, 2017, Google, Convergence Partners, International Finance Corporation (“IFC”), and Mitsui & Co., Ltd. (“Mitsui”) signed an agreement to invest in CSquared, a technology company making commercially-driven investments into broadband-enabling infrastructure throughout Africa. CSquared will operate as an independent company based in Nairobi. Closing of the transaction is subject to customary closing conditions.

While a basic connection is useful when it comes to Internet access, abundant, affordable broadband can transform communities and help people make the most of opportunities online. By investing in a shared internet infrastructure and making it available to local ISPs and mobile operators, CSquared helps bring high-quality broadband access to Africa’s major cities.

USAID:

USAID partners with the Government and people of Liberia to help end extreme poverty and build resilient, democratic institutions that advance the security and prosperity of both Liberia and the United States. In this connection, USAID’s development strategy in Liberia seeks to promote more effective, accountable, and inclusive governance; sustained market driven growth; and increased access to education and health care for all Liberians.

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