

Lisa Mensah

President and CEO

Opportunity Finance Network

As President and CEO of Opportunity Finance Network (OFN), the nation's leading network of Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs), Lisa Afua Serwah Mensah expands sources of capital and provides greater visibility for CDFIs. Under her leadership, OFN helps CDFIs leverage public funding with private investment from mainstream financial institutions, socially responsible investors, and philanthropic partners in distressed communities across America. Mensah joined OFN in March 2017 bringing private and public sector expertise in using financial tools to improve the economic security of the working poor.

In 2014 Mensah was nominated by President Obama and confirmed by the US Senate for the position of Under Secretary of Agriculture for Rural Development. In this role, she managed a loan portfolio of \$215 billion, directing annual investments of \$30 billion in critical infrastructure for rural America. Mensah achieved record levels of productivity and developed new partnerships with private and philanthropic partners to generate \$120 million in private grants and loan guarantees for persistently poor rural communities.

Before her appointment as Under Secretary, Mensah was the founding Executive Director of the Initiative on Financial Security at The Aspen Institute where she led a national bi-partisan effort with leaders of financial institutions, non-profit executives and experts to promote savings, homeownership, and retirement policies and products. Mensah began her career in commercial banking at Citibank before joining the Ford Foundation where she was responsible for the country's largest philanthropic grant and loan portfolio of investments in rural America.

Mensah, who divides her time between OFN's Philadelphia headquarters and Washington D.C. office, holds an M.A. from the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies of The Johns Hopkins University and a B.A. from Harvard University. Born in Oregon, she is the daughter of an immigrant from Ghana and a former Iowa farm girl. She resides in Maryland with her husband and two children.