



Deon WOODS BELL

Senior Advisor, Global Policy, Financial Services for the Poor, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Deon recently joined the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation as Senior Advisor, Global Policy, Financial Services for the Poor. She leads the Foundation's digital financial services engagement with the U.S. Government, the World Bank and Africa regional regulatory and policy work, all with a gender lens. Deon has expertise in law, policy, and building international coalitions on digital policy issues, such as consumer protection, data privacy, cybersecurity, and competition. Prior to joining the Foundation, Deon was an Attorney Advisor and Senior International Attorney at the Federal Trade Commission, where she represented the U.S. at the United Nations, helped establish a network of African consumer protection/competition regulators, and worked on artificial intelligence - Big Tech policy issues. Prior to being a government official, she worked in private sector law, technology, and communications companies. Deon currently serves on the World Bank, Council of Governors for the Consultative Group to Assist the Poor, the United Nations Development Program, Better than Cash Alliance Executive Committee, American University School of International Service Board of Advisors, American Bar Association's Privacy & Information Security Committee (Antitrust Law Section) and Cybersecurity Legal Task Force. She also serves as a Commissioner on the Washington, DC Special Needs Advisory Panel and on the Smithsonian Women's Committee. Deon has a triple major Bachelor's – International Studies, Economics, Spanish Latin American Affairs (American University) and was a Fulbright Scholar. She has a Master's in Economics (University of Michigan), a Juris Doctorate (University of Chicago Law School) and studied Political Economy and Government (Harvard University). She was an official election observer for Nelson Mandela's historic South African election and speaks Spanish, French, and Sign Language.