

FIRST MSG MEETING MINUTES

First Meeting of the Multi-Stakeholder Steering Group (MSG) of the Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (LEITI) held on Tuesday October 9, 2018 at 11:00am in the Conference Room of the LEITI, Old Budget Bureau Building, Monrovia, Liberia.

Attendance:

GOL

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| 1. Hon. C.Mike Doryen | FDA |
| 2. Hon.Gestler E. Murray | MME |

CSO

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| 1. Cecelia T.M. Danuweil | PWYP |
| 2. Rev. Joseph Johnson | CSO |
| 3. Daniel Nyankonah | PUL |

Private Sector

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| 1. Esiaka B. Konneh | Gold/Diamond Brokers &Dealers Association |
| 2. Raymond Gwenigale | Firestone Liberia INC |
| 3. Eric Swen | Arcelor Mittal |
| 4. E. Ekema Witherspoon | Liberia Timber Association |
| 5. Ansu Konneh | Western Cluster |

LEITI

1. Hon J.Gabriel Nyenka
2. Jeffery N. Yates
3. McDonald S. Kerl
4. Emmanuel K. White
5. J.Kennedy Kolubah

Preliminaries: The first regular meeting of the Multi- stakeholders Steering Group (MSG) of the Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (LEITI) was held on Tuesday October 9, 2018 in the LEITI Conference Room.

Commencing at 11: 32 am, the meeting was called to order by the chair of the MSG, Hon. C. Mike Doryen. The Chair asked the Head of Secretariat to read the agenda. The agenda was read as requested. Following the reading of the agenda, the Chair presented the agenda and requested the will of the body towards the agenda. Mr. Ekema Witherspoon asked that the agenda as read be opened for discussion. Mr. Ansu Konneh requested that clarity be provided on the use of Report in the agenda. The clarity was provided by the HOS that the Report in the agenda refers to the draft 9th EITI report. The Agenda was at this point opened for discussion. Without additional concerns, the agenda was accepted by the body. Silent prayer was offered by members. This was followed by self-introduction of members of the MSG and observers present. The HOS welcomed the MSG members and stated that they are the governing body. He emphasized that the HOS and the Secretariat cannot do anything without the approval of the MSG. He said he is prepared to do everything to ensure that the MSG comfortable.

The Chairman, Hon. C. Mike Doryen, in a short statement welcomed everyone on behalf of the President, H.E George M. Weah and himself. He stressed that Liberia is the only country we have and we all have to work to make it stable. He emphasized that LEITI is a transparency framework that seeks to promote the accountable management of the country's natural resources. He stated that the practice of transparent resource management prevents conflict and promotes stability of the state. He urged his fellow MSG members to put Liberia's interest first despite our diverse political and religious views. He encourages all to build relationship and mutual respect for progress.

Agenda implementation

The Chair mandated the secretariat to provide both hard and soft copies of the MSG Policy Manual to all members. He stated that the MSG Policy Manual appears to be a document in progress. However, Mr. Ansu Konneh clarified that the MSG Policy was not a document in progress as it was endorsed by the Previous MSG in the presence of officials of the International Secretariat at the RLJ Hotel at a retreat in 2015. He advised that it will take time and money to go over the MSG Policy Manual review process.

Mr. Esiaka B. Konneh asked that his colleagues accept the Manual instead of making changes /amendments every time to the document which takes a lot of time.

For his part, Mr. Daniel Nyankonah said that he has some problems with the MSG Policy Manual. He stated that there are some provisions he would not be prepared to go by and there are some he is prepared to abide by. He therefore called for a review of the Policy Manual and that the agenda be followed.

The Co-Chair, Hon. Murray, advised that the MSG Policy Manual that is available should be worked with and that there was no need to reinvent the wheels. Mr. Raymond Gwenigale urged his colleagues to read the MSG Policy Manual that is available. After reading the Manual then

they can discuss it at a later meeting. He argued that this was the right way to proceed. The Chair closed the discussion on the MSG Policy Manual by stating that the document was not cast in stone. There can still be changes as time goes by.

Update for the Secretariat—HOS

1. Validation

- The HOS stated that the MSG is the governing council. PWYP is a statutory member of the MSG and that the International Board / Secretariat cannot recognize any document not approved by the MSG.
- The HOS stated that Validation is due at the end of November. He indicated that our last Validation was not thorough as expected. He explained that validation is a process by which a country's performance is checked against certain benchmarks. He said that Civil Society must be active in the EITI process as a key requirement for an effective MSG governance.

2. 9th Report

- The HOS stated to the MSG that Liberia was suspended for not publishing its 9th EITI Report on time.
- He revealed that the Independent Administrator identified some gaps in the last LEITI Report and that we are trying to fill the gaps to avoid issues during the Validation.
- He said he made an appeal for extension to the International EITI Board during its meeting in Berlin, German but was rejected because it did not come from the MSG.
- He argued that the political transition in 2017 affected the Country's EITI process in the Extension appeal.

Financial Position

- The HOS disclosed to the MSG that LEITI's budget was reduced to USD380, 000 in the current budget from around USD600, 000.00 in the previous year's budget (2017/2018).
- He indicated that the Independent Administrator has written twice to get their balance payment but there has been no favorable response from LEITI. He disclosed that of the 95,000USD to be paid, only 36,000USD has been paid to date, thereby resulting in a balance of 59,000.00
- He lamented that LEITI only operate with one vehicle. He stated that he has made request to the MOS for vehicles to facilitate the work of LEITI but has gotten no favorable response to date.
- The HOS informed the MSG that he was in regular contact with Pablo Ververde and Edie Rich of the International Secretariat. He stated that they were excited about this first MSG meeting and would appreciate contributing via telephone if necessary.

At this point, the Chair thanked the HOS for the updates.

GIZ observer in the meeting said GIZ was happy that Liberia has started the MSG process. She stated that the process leading to the formation of the MSG was not up to EITI standards. She stated that observers were not notified of the MSG process. She encouraged Civil Society to publicly nominate their individual to the MSG. She called on the Government to follow the rules in the establishment of the MSG to avoid problems during Validation. She urged the LEITI to write the Report and fill the gaps if necessary.

In response to GIZ observation, Mr. Ekema Witherspoon stated that the GOL went through the right process as far he knows. He stated that his group received letter for nomination to the MSG from the MOS and that he was nominated. He suggested that the MSG write the President to inform him of the urgent need to publish the 9TH EITI Report, the endorsement of the HOS by the MSG and the preparation of annual report and emergency work plan of the Secretariat.

Mr Ansu Konneh informed the GIZ observer that the request for nomination to LEITI MSG was on the e-mansion website. He requested that the MSG write the Liberian Senate and the Cabinet to prioritize the LEITI issues. He stated that the MFDP presence on the MSG is very cardinal, especially on financial matters.

Mrs. Cecelia Danuweli from PWYP was recognized at this point to speak. She stated that once we set programs into place, partners such as UNDP, GIZ, AfDB, WB and EU can help with specific programs and funding of LEITI activities. She stated also that Civil Society cannot be confrontational with Government in its operations and with the EITI Process. Civil society needs to dialogue. She urged her colleagues to work cooperatively to ensure that Liberia does not miss out on Validation.

Rev. Joseph Gardea Johnson urged his fellow MSG members to stick to the rules as an integrity institution and asked that the right things be done by the MSG and they should not to be in hurry. He urged his colleague to allow everyone to speak their minds and avoid responding to every comments made.

Mr. Raymond Gwenigale stated that there were gaps in the 2016 EITI Report. He stated that financial support will come if we demonstrate that we are serious. We don't work in a vacuum. There are standards we need to follow so that we cannot be seen as rubber stamp. He advised that observers who are willing to fund, their comments should be incorporated and taken seriously.

The Chairman at this point indicated that the President followed the procedure in the appointment of MSG members. He said that all comments will be seriously considered.

The HOS stated that the Secretariat and the MSG all share the same goal. He stated that everyone wants to see the suspension lifted. Since the EITI International Secretariat is in regular contact with the Secretariat, let's do all we can to get out of suspension, the HOS

pleaded. He clarified that the reason why legislators are not on the MSG is because their inclusion will violate the Constitution.

Mr. Esiaka Konneh was recognized by the Chairman at this point in time and he pleaded with his colleagues to love Liberia. He indicated that every EITI process has its own problem. He called on his colleagues to build around the new Secretariat as they did with the previous.

Mr. Raymond Gwenegali urged his colleagues to focus on progress while looking for possible reasons that led to our suspension and take corrective measures. He appreciated the openness in the meeting and requested the MSG to get to business to ensure that the 9th Report doesn't come back to us.

Mr. Witherspoon suggested and it was agreed by the body that the MSG write the International Secretariat stating that the MSG has been constituted and requested for extension, develop a six-month work plan and see how partners can buy in. The Chairman advised all in the meeting not to come with preconceived notion that certain people are prone to mistakes. UNDP observer said that UNDP is excited that the MSG process has started. She indicated that they are willing to support the process and the emergency work plan when developed.

The Chairman suggested that the next meeting be held on the 18th of October and was accepted. The meeting adjourned at 1:35pm.

