

MINUTES
REGULAR LEITI MULTI-STAKEHOLDERS STEERING GROUP MEETING
HELD IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE LEITI, OLD BUDGET BUREAU BUILDING
● REDEMPTION
ROAD, MONROVIA, LIBERIA ● WEDNESDAY AUGUST 16, 2017

PRESENT IN ATTENDANCE

GOL

Elvin C.A. Frank
Edward Kamara
Jamba D. Keita
Richmond Jallah
Alieu F. Nyei

MIA
FDA
MLME
NOCAL
MFDP

CSO

Cecelia T. Danuweli
Marpue M. Speare
Frances R. Deigh Greaves
James Yarsiah
Ezekiel Johnson

PWYP/WANEP
WONGOSOL
NCSCL
RRF
LLC

Private Sector

Laurentine H. Bass
Ansu Konneh
John S.Deah
Esiaka Konneh

ExxonMobil
WCL
LTA
Gold &Diamond Brokers

Partners/Observers

Kofi Ireland
Christina Von Heyden
Lilieth Whyte
Alex S. Yeanay

UNMIL
GIZ
US Embassy
AfDB

Others

Finda Salay
Alusine M. Sheriff
Collette M. Clark

WONGOSOL
US Embassy
US Embassy

LEITI Secretariat

Konah D. Karmo
Myer W. Saye, Sr.
Cedrick W. Kpadeh

HOS/LEITI
DHOS/LEITI
LEITI

Preliminaries - The Regular meeting of the LEITI Multi-stakeholders Steering Group (MSG) was held on Wednesday, August 16, 2017 in the LEITI Conference Room. Commencing at 12:55pm, the meeting was called to order by the Head of Secretariat Mr. Konah D. Karmo who informed the gathering that proxy chair of the MSG Hon. Stephen B. Dorbor could not be in the meeting due to bereavements and as provided for under the MSG manual, the Private sector bloc would chair the meeting. Mr. John Deah of the Liberia Timber Association was then introduced to chair the meeting.

This was followed by self-introduction where a quorum was established to proceed after which, Madam Lilieth Whyte of the US Embassy, an observer on the MSG, was given the opportunity to introduce her team. She expressed joy over the working relations established with the LEITI Secretariat over the period she served and admonished the MSG to continue to serve with purpose especially sustaining the gains made in making the EITI process workable in Liberia amidst the many challenges. She then introduced Madam Collette M. Clark as the new member replacing her on the MSG. Earlier, the HoS described the outgoing Lilieth Whyte as a strong partner whose contributions are invaluable not only to the MSG and the LEITI, but the Country

at large. The HoS on behalf of the Secretariat presented a certificate of appreciation to madam Whyte for her outstanding contributions and expressed optimism over a cordial working relation with Madam Clark.

Adoption of Agenda: An eleven item draft Agenda was presented to the body for adoption. The HoS made a request that was unanimously considered that a twelfth item- reconstitution of the MSG is included. Kofi Ireland of UNMIL reminded his colleagues about a previous decision not to include agenda item # 3 as the minutes should be reviewed before meeting dates. It was therefore removed through a motion of adoption.

Draft Minutes: The draft minutes of June 28, 2017 Regular Meeting was adopted by the MSG with no changes made based on earlier suggestion by Mr. Ireland for the deletion of this item on the agenda.

Matters Arising: The HoS provided updates on the execution of tasks captured under “summary of key points” noting that all were successfully executed during the period as specified.

Secretariat Update: The HoS presented the Secretariat update summarizing LEITI Secretariat’s activities for the period **June 28 to August 15, 2017. See annex 1 for the update.**

Discussion of Secretariat update: Following the update, the Presiding thanked the HoS and declared the update opened for discussions. The below are highlights:

Kofi Ireland (UNMIL) asked about the current status of the Government of Liberia support to the LEITI.

HOS: We first received seven hundred fifty five thousand United States dollars initially but was cut back to seven hundred fifteen thousand for which we were requested to make expenditure plan and submitted to the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning for onward submission to the legislature. Up to present, we do not know whether the President has signed it or not. But we are privileged to have the Assistant Minister Alieu Nyei here who can elaborate further.

Alieu Nyei: We have informed any agency about the budget because whenever the budget is passed, there is whole shifting table that is generated by the legislature in which they move money from one line to another, from one institution to another. When the budget is passed by the legislature, the ways and means committees of both Houses sit to finalize that sheet. This finalization is been completed and we are now doing the adjustments which will be completed very soon. The department of budget will shortly after the process begin to notify institutions about their approved budget numbers. Once this done, the next step will be the spending plan.

Madam Marpue Speare of WONGOSOL inquired about the lifespan of the partnership with PWYP on the thirty thousand dollars grant from UNDP

HoS: It runs from now till December 2017 since Madam Danuweli is here, let us hear from her

Madam Cecelia Danuweli (PWYP): It started in 2014 with the Extractive Industries Sustainable Development program which we were part of that brought together government, private sector and civil society groups. Due to the Ebola, everything was shut down. It resumed in 2015 but we could not get the partnership in gear due to the lack of funding from the UNDP end. It was just in July 2017 that we finally heard from them that the fund was ready.

Alex Yeanay of AfDB wanted to know the separate roles been played by the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) and the LEITI relative to the implementation of the Beneficial Ownership as the Bank also supports the FIU.

HOS: The current training that is taking place in Indonesia is of no cost to the LEITI. With respect to what role they will play, we are still discussions on going regarding that.

Ansu Konneh (WCL) suggested that the Liberia Business Registry be included on the list of partners for the BO implementation as they command a lot necessary data that affect the process. To this the HOS confirmed that the LBR is already included.

With that said, the Presiding ended the discussion on the Secretariat Update

SECTORS UPDATE

The presiding opened the floor for members of the various sectors to provide feedback or updates from their various engagements after the last sitting.

Government bloc did not provide update for the period. The Civil Society bloc represented by Mr. James Yarsiah of the Rice and Rights foundation provided the followings as updates from his bloc:

PWYP worked with UNDP on extractive industries in Nimba, Cape Mount, Sinoe, Grand Gedeh and Maryland Counties where they organized community clusters and distributed 100 copies of the abridged contract matrix.

The Rice and Rights Foundation worked with partners on the tropical forest alliance, the round table on sustainable the oil palm and the oil palm sector technical working group. Also in Bomi, there is a current issue between Sime Darbe and a community known as Gbaa Jake. RRF is working with a CSO to ascertain the facts but there is a potential threat that may need the MSG intervention.

WONGOSOL is working around natural resources mainly using every opportunity to highlight the work of the LEITI; currently working on project with the Carter Center on women issues and access to information.

The Liberia Labor Congress is currently engaged with the investigation of the employment of Liberians as provided for under the various concession agreements.

Laurentine Bass also provided updates on behalf of the private sector as follows: The private sector did not meet formally during the period due to the election campaign activities, however, relevant communications and key documents were circulated and feedbacks generated. Arcelor Mittal requested a reinforced program to strengthen collaboration with the private sector companies to reach out to communities noting that the lack of access to information is the root cause of conflicts in concession communities. According to Mittal, there is an information gap when it comes to the concession agreements. Mittal will appreciate if the LEITI will drive this initiative.

For the observer bloc, Alex Yeanay of the African development Bank stated that bloc's meeting did not go well as only the GIZ attended and therefore his update basically was centered on the AfDB 's support to the LEITI which the HOS earlier elaborated on during the presentation of the Secretariat update.

With those reports, the presiding announced the next agenda item.

Report by the Governance, Ethics and Membership Committee

Mr. Kofi Ireland of UNMIL chaired this committee. He presented four draft documents for the MSG endorsement and approval including the validation Matrix, Draft LEITI strategic and Action Plan (2017-2020), draft Constituency Feedback Mechanism, and Annual Workplan Development procedure. Presenting the documents, Mr. Ireland appealed to all sectors to share feedbacks beforehand especially when the feedbacks will affect major reports or that those feedbacks will need to be incorporated into reports. He said it will be a waste of too much time and energy if the feedbacks are coming after reports are reviewed for approval. With that said, he presented the documents noting that substantial works have been done with major feedbacks incorporated respectively.

After the presentation, the presiding called for a motion for endorsement. It was moved and seconded and therefore endorsed by the MSG.

Submission of the Draft Annual Report 2016/17 for Approval

Presenting the report, the HoS stated that the report details activities of the Secretariat over the period 2016. He said the 49 page document is divided into five sections including an executive summary, assessment of performance against LEITI workplan, assessment of performance against the EITI 2016 requirements, total implementation cost for the period, and details of the MSG during the period.

The presiding then put it on the floor for approval receiving a unanimous approval by the body.

Reconstitution of the MSG

Again the HoS took charge here. He told the body that pursuant to the Act creating the LEITI, the MSG must be reconstituted by the President after three years. He said as customarily done, the Secretariat usually requests the MSG for permission to start the process of consultation with the various constituencies especially the civil society. He noted that the Secretariat's role will be to create the enabling environment only as there will be absolutely no interference with the process. Mr. Karmo also noted that the bar be set to Deputy Ministers as proxies and no less. With that said he request was placed on the floor for discussion.

Mr. Ireland recommended that the MSG recommends to the president that at the level of the deputy Ministers, there should be no permanent proxies less than that portfolio.

Madam Frances Deigh Greaves suggested that it will be very prudent to open the process up as much as possible especially those sectors that will be doing the vetting to ensure adequate feedback is generated. Also that the secretariat provides criteria to guide the process since some of the constituents may not be familiar with the workings of the LEITI. According to her, that way, the right people will be selected.

With that it was agreed that the Secretariat request be granted.

Finance and Administration Report on Head of Secretariat Contract Renewal

At this point the presiding asked the HOS to leave the meeting and thereafter turned to the Committee on Finance and Administration to make its report.

Madam Cecelia Danuweli told the body that after a thorough appraisal which included talking with staff members, the EITI international Secretariat and others who have worked with Mr. Karmo as well as interaction with him, it has no doubt to recommend a renewal or extension of contract for another three years as he performed exceptionally during the past three years. In its recommendation, the committee noted that benefits and increment in salary be considered in accordance with funding availability.

After the presentation the presiding opened the recommendation for discussion. Madam Frances Deigh Greaves suggested that a percentage of increment be allotted given the exceptional performance. To that Kofi Ireland said salary at the LEITI is being paid by government and there is policy of not increasing salaries at the moment. He also suggested that the HoS and his deputy be encouraged to settle or sort out all contractual issues with the rest of the staff who may be out of contract before the next sitting.

It was unanimously endorsed with the committee instructed to meet with Mr. Karmo to negotiate all necessary details including bonuses.

AOB

Under AOB, Deputy HoS Myer Saye Sr. stated the scoping for the 9th report is currently ongoing but that some ministries and agencies are yet to comply fully with the process. He named the ministries of Lands, Mines and Energy, the Forestry Development Authority, Ministry of Finance and Development planning and the Ministry of Agriculture as those who are yet to fully comply. He pointed out that the process is time bound as the process needs to move to the real preparation phase.

Kofi Ireland suggested that an official email be done to the MSG copying the relevant agencies concerned. Jamba Keita of the MLME acknowledged receipt of the communication and have started working on it but that they needed the soft copy of the template which the HOS said was also sent.

Edward Kamara said his entity had completed the first and that the second one was been sent to SGS for compilation. He promised to send the information on the official letter head of the FDA the next day.

Ezekiel Johnson inquired on how the LEITI was generating revenue information from the artisanal mining sector rather than just consolidating the report the MLME.

The HoS stated that the artisanal mining sector has been problem even for the Government which is why the LEITI wanted to organize them into cooperatives. He said it is capital intensive to go after every one of them. So the LEITI is working with the MLME because they are in the process of formalizing that sector. Once the sector is formalized, the LEITI will now be able to get the needed information.

With that said, the meeting was adjourned.

Summary of Key Points

- No corrections made to the past minutes;
- Draft Strategic plan and other documents endorsed
- Annual activity Report for 2016 approved
- Hos Contract extension approved for next three years
- 21 persons in attendance
- MSG bids farewell to Lilieth Whyte

Date and time of next MSG meeting: The next MSG meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, September 27, 2017.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:00 pm.

JUNE 28 – JULY 21, 2017

Below is the summary of the LEITI Secretariat’s activities for the period June 28 – July 21, 2017.

Independent Administrator (IA)- With the MSG’s approval of the recruitment report submitted by the Secretariat in the June 2017 meeting, Parker and Associates, LLP in Association with Moore Stephens, LLP, has been hired to prepare Liberia’s 9th EITI report. The IA is expected to begin work on August 1, 2017. The IA conducted first round of consultations with relevant MACs aimed at gathering data to prepare the Scoping Study. Hedi Zaghouni and Horatius Porte represented Moore Stephens and Parker and Associates respectively and conducted the consultations in the week of 31 July 2017. The consultations marked the beginning of the Scoping Study for the 9th EITI Report for Liberia.

Meanwhile, the EITI Secretariat and LEITI are validating summary payment data reported by Liberia from FY07/08 to FY11/12. The final outcome will later be published on the EITI website.

Validation Matrix, Strategic and Action Plan

During the reviewed period, as mandated by the MSG in its June 2017 meeting, the Secretariat prepared an activity schedule to guide sectors’ inputs to the draft strategic and action plans coupled with draft MSG Feedback Mechanism and circulated same to all sector members. The Secretariat also developed and circulated a validation matrix to all sector members. However, sector members were unable to meet but promised. Only the observer bloc made substantive inputs to the documents referenced above and was duly incorporated by the Consultant leading to the final draft documents which is being submitted at today’s meeting for approval.

Beneficial Ownership

The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) will be convening a workshop on Beneficial Ownership in Indonesia from 23-24 October 2017. The conference is being held in collaboration with the Government of Indonesia and will have input from several of our partner organizations working on beneficial Ownership (BO). To this end, the EITI requested the Liberian Secretariat to nominate two of our strategic partner organizations who would support the implementation of our BO Roadmap.

Accordingly, the Liberian Revenue Authority (LRA) and the Intelligence Financial Unit (FIU) were nominated because of their involvement with our Beneficial Ownership Disclosure Roadmap and the nature of work these institutions perform which have links to the development of the BO register.

Dissemination of Contract Matrix

A 2-man LEITI team was in Grand Bassa and Margibi Counties for a weeklong dissemination of the contract matrix and county specific social development fund payment disclosure from July 10-15, 2017. Three hundred twenty (320) participants including local authorities, disable community, women, youths, traditional leaders and concessionaires were reached during the exercise. The dissemination is in continuance of the recent grant extension signed with USAID LAVI based on findings from the first exercise.

Financial Related Issues

The Secretariat is still working with the General Auditing Commission (GAC) for completion of the LEITI audit.

The Secretariat has submitted expenditure plan to the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning for the execution of the first 30% of the AFDB approved \$606,000 grant.

Administration

During the period under review, the HOS, DHOS as well as other staff members attended series of meetings to include the following:

- Several joint meetings with GIZ, LAVI, and GC on formulating strategies for the convening of a national Forum on the management of Social Development Funds.
- A meeting with World Bank consultants seeking to prepare Liberia's Open Data policy, an initiative that complements LEITI's effort towards open data.
- Concluded/Led Contract negotiation Meetings for the preparation of the 9th EITI Report for Liberia;

Trainings

Communication and Outreach Officer Cedrick Kpadeh was among several civil society organizations and media practitioners that completed a two week intensive training on mining during the reviewed period with special focus on the Liberian mining sector. Organized by the GIZ, the training lasted from June 26 to July 7, 2017 and was held in Bong County. Columbia Center on Sustainable Investment (CCSI) facilitated the training.

Participants were coached through on topics such as: Resource base development, introduction to mining, collection and distribution, fiscal regime design, Social and environmental impacts, contracts monitoring and negotiations etc. 28 persons received certificates at the end of the ten day event.

On August 10, 2017, Communication and Outreach Officer Cedrick Kpadeh attended a one day proposal writing workshop organized by the USAID funded Liberia Accountability and Voice Initiative (LAVI). Held on icampus in Monrovia, the workshop provided an overview of LAVI's expectations and common issues in proposal; review of technical narrative components and practice proposal-writing best practices, as well generated feedback on its activities among partner institutions. Participants were also acquainted with LAVI's formatted Request for Proposal (RFP).

Two staff of the Technical Department in persons of Sarnyenneh Dickson and Elijah Kai, participated in a weeklong interactive peer learning and training on Good Finance Governance in the extractive sector, organized by the GIZ. The training took place in Freetown, Sierra Leone, and brought together over twenty five (25) public sector participants from both Sierra Leone and Liberia. Participants were drawn from EITI Institutions, revenue authorities, mines authorities, oil & gas authorities, concession and investment authorities, central banks, etc. Some topics covered included expectation management and transparency in decision to extract, contract negotiation and legal framework, fiscal regimes around revenue collection, production monitoring, allocation and use of extractive revenue, etc. The training ended on July 14, 2017.

PREPARED BY: THE LEITI SECRETARIAT