



Africa Center for Energy Policy support to LEITI's Simplified Contract Matrix Dissemination

September 22, 2021

Introduction

Requirement 2.4 of the 2019 EITI Standard requires implementing countries to publish the list of active contracts and the actual contracts themselves in their full texts. The LEITI has published several contracts in the extractive sector on its website, and some of the contracts are active while others are inactive. Beyond the publication of contracts in the extractive sectors, the LEITI Secretariat has innovatively summarized and simplified 26 arrangements using a legal consultant sponsored by GIZ.

The summarization, simplification, and dissemination of contracts to citizens across the country will provide them with information on what the companies should do for them and how to support them in their counties and communities. The exercise will stimulate public debates over natural resources and promote fact-based dialogues. The dissemination of the simplified contract matrix also seeks to empower citizens with the correct information to engage their leaders and companies on issues affecting them and how their engagements can inform public policy and reforms in the extractive sector.

Towards this end, with support from the African Center for Energy Policy in the amount of Ten Thousand United States Dollars (US\$10,000.00), the LEITI Secretariat, on September 10, 2021, at about 6:15 pm, dispatched three teams, each comprising one MSG member, two LEITI Secretariat staff, and a journalist. The teams left for Western Region-2 (Grand Bassa, RiverCess, Margibi, and Nimba Counties); South Eastern Region (Grand Gedeh, Sinoe, Grand Kru and Maryland Counties), and Western Region-1 (Gbarpolu, Grand Cape Mount and Bomi Counties) to disseminate LEITI's Simplified Contract Matrix. The teams carried and disseminated 275 copies of the Simplified Contract Matrix, using town hall meetings as the forums for explaining and disseminating the Simplified Contract Matrix to citizens. The dissemination took place in eleven counties, on six dates, in eleven locations, and attracted 275 participants as indicated below:

#	County	Date	Location	# of Participants
1.	Margibi	11/09/21	Kakata	25
2.	Grand Bassa	11/09/21	Buchanan	25
3.	RiverCess	12/09/21	Cestos	25
4.	Sinoe	14/09/21	Greenville	25
5.	Nimba	11/09/21	Saniquellie	25
6.	Grand Kru	15/09/21	Barclayville	25
7.	Maryland	16/09/21	Harper	25
8.	Grand Gedeh	13/09/21	Zwedru	25
9.	Grand Cape Mount	12/09/21	Robertsports	25
10.	Bomi	11/09/21	Gbah-Jeh Keh	25
11.	Gbarpolu	13/09/21	Bopolu	25
Total				275

During the town hall meetings with a cross-section of citizens from the eleven counties (elders, women, youth, civil society leaders, local government officials, physically challenged, etc.), we took note of some key concerns raised by the citizens from the eleven counties. These concerns are shown below:

- Companies operate in secrecy
- Representatives do not consult and educate the citizens on the concessions they passed.
- The issue of local content is not adhered to by companies.
- Companies are not living up to their agreement, as explained by LEITI
- Companies encroach on private land
- Employment by companies is not transparent
- Social corporate responsibility is at a minimal level
- The Government of Liberia is not doing anything about delinquent companies?
- The Government needs to make sure that companies are sticking to their agreements.
- LEITI needs to make her presence felt in the counties so that Liberians can be educated on the benefits of extractive companies.
- There is no mechanism in place by the National Bureau of Concessions to track the impact of social development funds impact.
- Forest Management Contracts are ineffective.
- Only affected communities benefit from companies' operations.
- Jarah Mining Company is illegally operating in RiverCess.
- Mandra Forestry is operating on EJ&J license but is not accepting liabilities of the social agreement.

- Government officials are conspiring with companies to deprive affected communities of their benefits.
- How can LEITI reach remote villages to sensitize our people on natural resources?
- LEITI should work with local civil society organizations to promulgate their LEITI messages to the citizens, especially the contract matrix information.
- What does Government do to companies that default on their contract agreements?
- Companies are not fully living up to their agreements.
- LEITI needs to make its citizen's engagements as regular as possible and be current with information.



LEITI's Officer-In-Charge Jeffrey Yates explaining the matrix to a cross section of a keen audience in Maryland County



An elder in Nimba County takes interest in the Matrix

Feedback

In the eleven counties, the teams carried out the dissemination of the Simplified Contract Matrix; citizens were excited about the reports and appreciated the work of the LEITI to engage citizens on their social benefits from the extractive sectors and what role they can play in promoting investment in Liberia.

The citizens want Government to account for the use of revenues coming from the extractive sector by opening an escrow account for extractive payments. They believe that proper accountability can be achieved, and tracking development projects from the extractive industry

can be quickly done. The citizens commended the LEITI and called for more engagements on revenue transparency and social benefits from the extractive industry.

Recommendations

In response to the dissemination exercise carried out in the four counties, the following recommendations were made by the citizens:

- LEITI should increase the locations for the dissemination exercise to reach more people.
- The LEITI should produce more copies of the simplified contract matrix so that more people can read and be aware of the benefits of the contracts and other social development obligations of companies.
- Local civil society organizations should be empowered to promulgate the messages of LEITI in various counties.
- LEITI Focal points in the counties should be active and known to the people of the counties.
- The Government of Liberia needs to create an escrow account for extractive revenue to make the tracking of extractive payments easy and impact measurable.