

MINUTES
REGULAR LEITI MULTI-STAKEHOLDERS STEERING GROUP MEETING
HELD IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE LEITI, OLD BUDGET BUREAU BUILDING
REDEMPTION
ROAD, MONROVIA, LIBERIA Thursday, FEBRUARY 9, 2023

Present in Attendance were:

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| 1. Hon. C. Mike Doryen | FDA |
| 3. Timothy Jarry II | NOCAL |
| 4. Fahnseth B. Mulbah | MME |
| 6. B. Al Dennis | LRA |

Private Sector

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| 1. Ekema Witherspoon | LIBTA. |
| 3. Elvis Morris | LACA |

CSO

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| 1. Mr. Winston W. Wreh | LLC |
| 2. Mr. Fallah B. Kamara | MICSOL |
| 3. Cecelia Danuweli | PWYP |
| 4. Loretta A. Pope Kai | NSCL |

Observer

Others

LEITI

1. Jeffery N. Yates/HoS
2. McDonald S. Kerl Sr.-Technical Officer
3. Cedrick Kpadeh-Communications Officer

Preliminaries: The first regular meeting of the LEITI Multi-stakeholders Steering Group (MSG) for 2023 was held on Thursday, February 9, 2023 in the LEITI Conference Room. Commencing at 12:04pm, the meeting was called to order by Hon. C. Mike Doryen, Chairman of the MSG who asked the HoS to present the agenda for the day. The HoS presented an eleven-item agenda that was immediately adopted as presented.

1. **Opening prayer:** With instruction from the Chair, Fallah Kamara of MICSOL invoked the presence of God to guide the meeting
2. **Welcome Remark:** The Chairman mandated the Co-chair to welcome members in attendance. To this, the proxy to the Co-chair, Fahnseth Mulbah welcomed his colleagues admonishing them to be open minded for a fruitful sitting.

3. **Self-introduction:** Self-introduction was observed with at least 12 persons participating.
4. **Review and Approval of last meeting minutes:** The chairman led the Body to reviewing the last meeting minutes. They took time going through page by page and finding no corrections to be made, a motion was sought and obtained through Timothy Jarry of NOCAL for the minutes to be adopted and archived. He was supported by Elvis Morris of LACA.

5. **Review and Approval of Secretariat Update:** The HoS presented the Secretariat update as follows. See annex for details

Discussion arising from update: LEITI support from the national budget was said to be dwindling as reported through the Secretariat update and this was the area that took the interest of the Body. The HoS told the MSG that a drop of about Ninety Five Thousand United States dollars was being experienced through the current national budget.

The Chairman expressed serious concern about the revelation and asked his colleagues about the way forward. After several cross deliberations, the Body agreed to use their various constituencies to lobby for more support for the Secretariat. The Government constituency will continue to engage the national Legislature for increment in LEITI's allotment while Civil Society will make public outcry for support to the institution. Meanwhile, the Secretariat was also urge to continue to engage the Country's development partners for extra source of funding. Also, as Suggested by Timothy Jarry, the LEITI Secretariat is to document all achievements against the years support was at its peak vice versa the fall in budget years. This will help the MSG to make a case for the Secretariat.

6. **MSG DECISION ON EITI INVITATION:** The Chairman asked the HoS to read out a communication from the International Secretariat on the nomination of members for the upcoming Global conference. The HoS read the communication that suggested that the International Secretariat will sponsor three MSG members for the conference. The HoS also told the MSG that a maximum representation for a member country is 15 but due to financial constraints, Liberia will be sending 10 delegates.

Through a consensus the MSG selected three Civil Society bloc members on the slot of the International Secretariat and mandated the HoS to have a maximum delegation to represent the Country. According to the MSG, the Secretariat should solicit sponsorships from across the Government and Industries. Those selected include: Madam Cecelia Danuweli of PWYP, Madam Loretta Pope Kai of NCSCS and Mr. Ekema Witherspoon of LTA.

7. **Presentation of fy2023 Workplan Activities:** The HoS presented a list of activities that will be included in the workplan for fy2023 for the MSG provisional approval. The list

contained 12 bullet point activities. According to the HoS the activities were carefully selected to support the gradual progress of the MSG even as the Country goes to national Elections.

8. Approval of the Workplan Activities- After bloc to bloc consultations, the MSG agreed to grant a provisional approval to the listed activities with the caveat that the document is a living documents that can be altered when the need be.
9. AOB: Madam Cecelia Danuweli of PWYP requested the Body to start to review the contract situation of the HoS especially as the Country nears elections. In her mind, if his contract is renewed, the stability of the Secretariat will be unhindered despite the expected change that may arise. Her request was strongly supported by the chairman and was therefore placed on the floor for discussion and decision. After almost ten minutes of discussion, the MSG agreed based on a suggestion from Ansu Konneh of MoA that the MSG through its appropriate committee evaluates and recommends to the Body a contract renewal that runs from 1st March 2023 to 28 February 2025.
- 10. Adjournment:** With that said, a motion for adjournment was made by B. AL- Dennis of LRA and seconded by Timothy Jarry of NOCAL

The meeting was adjourned at 1:09 pm.

Summary of key points

- MSG granted provisional approval for fy2023 workplan activities
- MSG agreed to review and extend the HoS' contract by two years
- MSG to engage the National Legislature for budgetary increment for LEITI
- LEITI Secretariat to write a letter each to Golden Veroleum, Arcelor Mittal and NOCAL regarding sponsorship for Global conference; letter should seek audiences with the hierarchy of the institutions
- LEITI Secretariat to document achievements when the entity was receiving high budgetary allotment versus when the budget started to fall.
- MSG to strategize for additional funding for staff motivation
- 12 persons in attendance, 2 females

ANNEX I

LEITI Secretariat Update

JANUARY 1, 2023, to February 9, 2023

Below is the summary of the LEITI Secretariat's activities for the period:

15th Report TOR

Following the MSG approval of the Terms of Reference to prepare the 15th EITI Report, the Secretariat has worked with the PPCC and sent a Request for Proposal to five auditing and accounting firms. According to the schedule, the Secretariat will complete the winner's evaluation and selection before the month's close. The Secretariat expects to sign the contract with the winner on March 1, 2023, indicating the full commencement of the reporting process. As approved by the MSG, the 15th EITI Report for Liberia will be produced using the Conventional Reporting Framework (Reconciliation of the data).

Beneficial Ownership Transparency

At the close of last year, the National Steering Committee received from Open Ownership and the EITI the final draft of the National Beneficial Ownership Regulation and requested that the same be shared with relevant stakeholders for last review and input. Accordingly, the Regulation was shared, and the deadline to receive input expired. Hence, Open Ownership and EITI are preparing the final copy of the Regulation for submission to the National Steering Committee. Once the Committee receives the final document, it will work with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for publication. Upon the publication of the Regulation, the next activity will be for the National Steering Committee to work with Open Ownership and the EITI to develop and launch the Beneficial Ownership Registry for Liberia. This, we expect to achieve mid-year.

Contract Transparency

The LEITI Secretariat has begun disclosing the listing and Full Text of all Active MDAs, Contracts, and Licenses in the Mining, Forestry, and Agriculture Sectors. The Secretariat will continue with this initiative and is hopeful that the active listing and full text of all MDAs, Licenses, and Contracts in the three sectors will be disclosed on its website before the close of April 2023.

Administration

During the period under review, we are pleased to inform the MSG of the following: The restoration of internet service at the Secretariat and the finalization of the contract for the Deputy Head of the Secretariat. The Secretariat, at the close of December, received the Administrative Manager's resignation letter. The Secretariat is working with the GAC to complete the audit of the Secretariat for four years (2016/17, 2017/18, 2018/19, and 2019/2020). Finally, as earlier approved by the body, the LEITI Secretariat will conduct a two-day staff retreat in Buchanan City, Grand Bassa County. The retreat is aimed at strengthening staff capacity at the Secretariat around EITI Implementation, reviewing progress, identifying challenges and opportunities, and planning for the future. The following have confirmed their participation as speakers: Cllr. Nagebelee Warner (Managing Partner, Heritage Law Firm), Mrs. Decontee King Sackie (Consultant), Mr. Michael Uzoigbe (EITI Anglophone Africa Manager), and Mr. Samson S. Tokpah (Managing Partner, SRG Consulting LLC). Samson and Michael will present by way of zoom.

Work Plan

The LEITI Secretariat has begun the preparation of the workplan for FY 2023. The MSG will receive a copy of the draft workplan upon approving the activities in the Call meeting slated for today.

Funding

The Secretariat wishes to inform the MSG that there has been a profound drop in its appropriation for FY 2023. Last year, an amount of 498,000.00 was appropriated for the Secretariat. Unfortunately, the Secretariat received from the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning a total of 403,000.00 as its budget for FY 2023. This indicates a drop of 95,000.00. The Secretariat is pleased to inform the MSG that it has settled the arrears owed to the Independent Administrator for the production of the 13th and 14th Reports.

PREPARED BY: THE LEITI SECRETARIAT