

MINUTES

MEETING OF THE MULTI-STAKEHOLDER STEERING GROUP (MSG) OF THE LIBERIA EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES TRANSPARENCY INITIATIVE (LEITI) HELD IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE LEITI, OLD BUDGET BUREAU BUILDING.

• WEDNESDAY JANUARY 6, 2021

PRESENT IN ATTENDANCE

GOL

1. Hon. C. Mike Doryen
2. Hon. Carlton S. Miller
3. Hon. Saifuah Mai Gray
4. Edrick F. Noah
- 5 B. Al- Dennis

FDA
MME
NOCAL
MOJ
LRA

CSO

1. Mr. Winston W. Wreh LLC
2. Mr. Abrahand B. Gappie MICSOL
3. Madam Cecelia T. Danuweli PWYP
- 4 Mr. Daniel Nyankonah PUL

Private Sector

1. Mr. Ekema Witherspoon
2. Mr. Elvis Morris

LTA
GVL

Partners/Observers

- 1 Samuel J. Summerville GIZ

Others

- 1 Timothy K. Jarry II
- 2 Melvin M. Sackie

NOCAL
LRA

LEITI Secretariat

1. Jeffery N. Yates/ Officer In-Charge
2. J. Kennedy Kolubah Communication Officer

Preliminaries: The regular meeting of the Multi- Stakeholders Steering Group (MSG) was held Wednesday, January 6, 2021, in the LEITI Conference Room.

Beginning at 11: 30 AM, the meeting was called to order by the MSG, Hon. C. Mike Doryen. The Chairman requested the Officer-in-Charge (OIC) at the LEITI to read the agenda. After reading an eleven-item agenda, the Presiding put the agenda on the floor for a motion of adoption.

Mr. Ekema Witherspoon then requested the body to add to the agenda for discussion the reappearance of the scorecard to enforce the attendance of Heads of Institutions at MSG meetings instead of the proxy. However, Hon. Saifuah Mai Gray of NOCAL suggested that the agenda read was crowded with items that needed lengthy discussion. Hence, it will be prudent that Mr. Witherspoon's suggestion is sent to the next MSG meeting. The Presiding then acknowledged the importance of Mr. Witherspoon's request but said it would form part of the next meeting's agenda. The agenda was adopted with no addition with a motion from B. Al-Dennis from the LRA and seconded by Hon. Saifuah M. Gray from NOCAL.

1. **Silent Prayer**-The body observed a brief period of silent prayer.

2. **Welcome Remark-** the Presiding requested the Ministry of Justice's proxy, Mr., Edrick Noah to make the welcome remarks. In his statement, Mr. Noah called on his colleagues to be proactive in the New Year to sustain the gains at the LEITI and work to ensure timely interventions for the smooth running of the LEITI Secretariat.
3. **Review of last meeting Minutes-**The OIC read highlights of the October 12, 2020 meeting minutes with no substantial matter arising as circulated via email to MSG members before the meeting.
4. **Secretariat Update-** the OIC presented the update as follows (**Please see annex**). Following the presentation, the following points were discussed as matters arising from the update
 - **Gap Analysis-**Mr. Ekema Witherspoon asked whether the gap analysis report had been prepared by the same group doing the 12th Report. The OIC affirmed and disclosed that the Independent Administrator was doing the work on a free of charge basis due to the Secretariat relationship with the IA.
 - **Recruitment-**The OIC informed the body that the Secretariat was finding it difficult to fill a vacancy for the Procurement Officer due to the low salary attached to the job following the Government's salary harmonization scheme. This was given serious deliberation, with several comments and recommendations going back and forth. In the end, it was **by a consensus agreed** that the Finance and Administration Committee work with the Secretariat to rework and restructure the LEITI's organization chart. It was **by a consensus agreed** that the F&A Committee would present to the MSG in its subsequent sitting progress made thus far.
5. **Approval of the IA's Propositions for the Scoping Study Report Report-**the OIC presented twelve propositions that the Independent Administrator would like to obtain No Objection for before developing the draft 12th EITI Report for Liberia.

The IA indicated that during its reconciliation between the lists of licenses for the Mining, Forestry, Oil & Gas and Agriculture sectors, it noted that 15 license holders were not included in the extractive revenues reported by the Government agencies for FY 2018/2019, which could affect the overall comprehensiveness of the reported extractive revenues for the period.

To this, the IA proposed that to ensure the comprehensiveness of the EITI report for the period, the MSG should approve the inclusion of these 15 companies in the scope of the FY 2018/2019 report.

After the proposition was read, Mr. B. Al-Dennis of the LRA asked how the IA got that information when those companies mentioned had no such revenue data with the LRA. This sparked a series of back and forth deliberations until a conclusion was reached by consensus that the IA provides clarity on how the data were obtained from the LRA. The LEITI Secretariat to follow up with the Companies to ensure that they're in operation as indicated by the IA.

Another proposition considered for change by the MSG was that the IA uses the definition contained in the pilot phase of the Beneficial Ownership Roadmap as approved by the MSG, rather than the IA proposed use of the LPRA's (Liberia Petroleum Regulatory Authority) definition No 003/LPRA/2020 and dated March 2, 2020, for Beneficial Ownership Disclosure.

After discussing these two propositions, the MSG gave No Objection to the rest of the IA's propositions.

6. **Discussion on funding-** the OIC informed the MSG about funding difficulties facing the Secretariat. He disclosed that the situation was hampering the smooth running of the Secretariat as all the furniture was incomplete replete and needed replacement. He mentioned that funding for the 12th Report was lacking and that the IA was constantly requesting payments in line with the signed contract. The OIC stated that the only available vehicle at the Secretariat is regularly out of fuel.

To this end, Elvis Morris of Golden Veroleum suggested that the body agreed that the Secretariat writes the Ministers of Finance and Development Planning and informs the Ministry about the Secretariat's challenges. He also requested that the MSG meeting be done on a **ROTATIONAL BASIS MSG** for the next six months. The body also agreed to extend an invitation to the President of the Republic to attend one of the rotational meeting sessions to further acquaint himself with the LEITI process, progress, and the need for Government's continuous support. In the meeting with the President, it was agreed that the Secretariat should prepare a PowerPoint video highlighting progress and challenges at the LEITI.

7. **Approval of the Summary Report-** the OIC presented a sample copy of the summarized versions of Liberia's 9th, 10th, and 11th EITI reports. He informed the MSG that African Development Bank (ADB) has already approved funding for disseminating the Report throughout the Country. He said the Secretariat was working out the final modalities to begin the dissemination exercise and sought approval from the MSG to proceed. After his presentation, the Presiding then placed it on the floor for suggestion and or motion for approval. With no direction, Daniel Nyakonah of the PUL made a motion for unanimous consent and was subsequently seconded by Madam Cecelia Daneweli of PWYP, and so it was approved for dissemination.
8. **Report from the recruitment of HOS and DHS-** At this point, the Presiding called on the Chair of the Finance and Administration Committee to brief the body on the progress of the recruitment exercise as mandated by the MSG in October.

Madam Cecelia Daneweli, on behalf of the committee, briefed the body. She informed the MSG that her committee received shortlisted names for both positions and that notifications for interviews had been sent out to shortlisted candidates. She said the interview for the post of HOS was scheduled for Thursday, January 7, 2021, while Friday, January 8, would be for the Deputy position. She disclosed that the committee had set up guidelines and criteria for scoring performances and will provide three names for each position to the MSG for final selection.

A member of the Committee, Mr. Elvis Morris of Golden Veroleum, intimated that the names would be advanced in the performance of the candidates with a recommendation for the body to select the top performer. But Hon. Saifuah Mai Gray of NOCAL suggested that Ekema Witherspoon and B. Al-Dennis bolstered that the Committee advance the three top performers for each position with no recommendation on who to pick. The body later agreed to the latter suggested by Hon. Gray. According to her, the MSG will decide through consensus or vote-taking among the three who to select for both positions.

9. **MSG Retreat-** the OIC informed the MSG that a retreat for the body is part of funding approved by the African Development Bank. The Secretariat had tentatively selected the City of Buchanan as a venue, but no date has been decided. The Presiding requested the Secretariat to select a date and circulate it to MSG members for concurrence. Mr. Ekema Witherspoon advised the Secretariat to ensure that the date for the retreat be set in February since the GIZ training on Mainstreaming and BO Transparency with the MSG is scheduled for late January. The Presiding, with this information, asked the OIC to set a date in February and circulate it.
10. **Staff Capacity Building-**the OIC also informed the body that the AFDB has approved thirty-six thousand USD for staff capacity building. However, he indicated that due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Secretariat is contemplating using some private Universities to provide the necessary training for staff members but needed a decision from the MSG. After a brief cross-examination of the issue, the MSG decided to mandate the F&A committee to work with the Secretariat to do a need assessment of staff capacity at the Secretariat and make a report with recommendations to the body in its next sitting for actions.
11. **AOB-** There was nothing discussed under AOB. However, the Presiding took time to extend gratitude to his colleagues for the tremendous work done in 2020 and admonished them to reinvigorate themselves in the New Year to work harder for the progress of the EITI implementation in Liberia.
12. **Closing Prayer-** The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 PM.

Summary of decisions taken by the MSG:

- The MSG mandated the Secretariat to ask the IA to provide a source of its data obtained on 15 companies whose revenue data are not captured under the LRA and NOCAL.
- The MSG **by a consensus agreed** to use LEITI's definition of BO instead of the LPRA definition

- The MSG **by a consensus agreed** that the Secretariat go ahead with the dissemination of the 9th, 10th, and 11th EITI Reports after approving the summary reports
- The MSG mandated its Finance and Administration committee to work with the Secretariat to revise its organizational chart

- The MSG also asked the F&A committee to do a need assessment at the LEITI and report it in the next meeting.

- The MSG mandated the OIC to follow up with LITELCO to purchase an internet package for the Secretariat.

- The MSG **by a consensus agreed** that the Recruitment committee provides three names for each position-Head and Deputy Head of Secretariat with no recommendation as to who to be selected. The MSG will make the selection through consensus or voting.

- The total number of persons in attendance for the MSG meeting was fourteen persons.

- The MSG mandated the committee on Finance and Administrative to complete the entire recruitment process of the HOS and DHOS by 21st January 2021 for onward endorsement by the body