



Western Region-II Dissemination Team

Back- to- Office Report

September 22, 2021

Submitted by: Dissemination Team

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Introduction

The EITI Standard requires implementing countries to disseminate their country's EITI Report to the citizens as a way of stimulating public debates over the governance of natural resources. This exercise seeks to empower citizens with the right information they need to engage their leaders and companies on issues affecting them and how their engagements can inform public policy.

Towards this end, on September 10, 2021 at about 6:15pm, a team comprising of a MSG member, two LEITI Secretariat staff and a journalist left for Western Region Two(Grand Bassa, RiverCess, Margibi & Montserrado Counties) to disseminate LEITI's 9th, 10th and 11th Summary Reports and contract matrix. The team carried several copies of the summary report, contract matrix, pull-up banners containing data summary and analysis and conducted the dissemination of the summary report and contract matrix as follows:

#	County	Date	Location	# of Participants
1.	Margibi	11/09/21	Kakata	250
2.	Margibi	11/09/21	Weala	200
3.	Margibi	11/09/21	Harbel	200
4.	Montserrado	12/09/21	Careyburg	185
5.	RiverCess	13/09/21	Yarkpah Town	180
6.	RiverCess	13/09/21	Cestos	200
7.	Grand Bassa	14/09/21	Compound 2	180
8.	Grand Bassa	15/09/21	Compound 3	200
9.	Grand Bassa	16/09/21	Buchanan	250

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

Margibi County

1. What is responsible for the discrepancies in payments?
2. Companies still operate in secrecy
3. Representatives do not educate the citizens on the concessions they passed.
4. The issue of local content is not adhered to by companies.
5. Companies are not living up to agreement as explained by LEITI
6. Companies encroach on private land
7. Firestone is buying rubber from ordinary Liberians
8. Firestone blocked the road to prevent small rubber farmers who don't want to sell to it.

Montserrado County

1. What does the Government of Liberia do about delinquent taxpaying companies?
2. Government needs to make sure that companies are sticking to their agreements.
3. LEITI needs to make her presence felt in the counties so the Liberian people can be educated on their benefits.

River Cess County

1. Forest Management Contracts are ineffective.
2. Only affected communities benefit from companies operations.
3. Jarah Mining Company is illegally operating in RiverCess.
4. Mandra Forestry is operating on EJ&J license, but is not accepting liabilities of the social agreement.
5. Government officials conniving with companies to deprive affected communities of their benefits.

Grand Bassa County

1. How can LEITI reach remote villages to sensitize our people on natural resources?
2. LEITI should work with local civil society organizations to promulgate their LEITI messages to the citizens.
3. What does Government do to companies that default on their contracts?
4. Companies are not fully living up to their agreements.
5. LEITI needs to make their citizens engagements as regular as possible and be current with information.

Feedback

In the four counties the team carried out the dissemination, citizens were excited about the reports and appreciated the work of the LEITI to engage citizens on the revenue and social benefits of the extractive sectors. The citizens want Government to account for the use of revenues coming from the extractive sector by using an escrow account for extractive revenues. By this, they believe that proper accountability can be achieved and tracking of development projects can be easy. The citizens commended the LEITI and called for more engagements on revenue transparency and social benefits from the extractive sector.

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 their benefits in the contracts and others social development obligations of companies.
- The LEITI needs to make the revenue data/ summary report current from the extractive sector.
- Local civil society organizations should be empowered to promulgate the messages of LEITI in the various counties.
- 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 revenues and make the tracking of extractive revenue impact easy.

Western Region Two Team Members

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