

**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF THE LEITI MULTI-
STAKEHOLDER STEERING GROUP
HELD IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE LEITI SECRETARIAT
OLD BUDGET BUREAU BUILDING, REDEMPTION ROAD
MONROVIA, LIBERIA
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2025**

Present in Attendance were:

GOL

1. Eudora Blay- Pritchard (Alternate) Ministry of Mines and Energy
2. Kwame E. Ross (Alternate).....The Liberian Senate
3. Rufus Scott (Alternate).....Liberia Petroleum Regulatory Authority
4. Cllr. Edwina E. Barchue(Alternate).....National Oil Company of Liberia
5. Sam N. Tannous(Alternate)..... National Oil Company of Liberia
6. Gesler E. Murray, Jr. (Alternate) Liberia Petroleum Regulatory Authority

Private Sector

1. George Pah (Alternate).....Liberia Agriculture Company Association
2. Cllr. Michael V. Suah.....Liberia Chamber of Mines
3. Eliza D.J. Kronyanh.....Liberia Timber Association
4. James M. Strother.....Liberia Business Association
5. Samuel Na-Kronde JIaka(Alternate).....Liberia Business Association

Civil Society

1. Mr. Obediah D. Tarlue(Alternate)Liberia Labor Congress
2. Mr.Abraham B. GappieMineral Civil Society Organization of Liberia
3. Cecelia T. DanuweliPublish What You Paye-Liberia
4. Amb. George KingsleyNational Civil Society Council of Liberia

Observer

1. Sam Summerville.....GIZ

LEITI

1. Jeffrey N. Yates
2. Zaza Y. Quaqua
2. McDonald S. Kerl,Sr.
3. Kelvin Rejoice Benson

Preliminaries: The third quarterly meeting of the Multi-Stakeholder Steering Group (MSG) of the Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (LEITI) was held on Thursday, September 18, 2025, in the LEITI Conference Room, commencing at 12:20 p.m.

Following confirmation from the Head of Secretariat (HoS) that a quorum was present to conduct business, the meeting was called to order by the Presiding, Madam Eudoria Blay-Pritchard, Deputy Minister for Administration and Proxy of the Chairperson, the Minister of Mines and Energy.

The Presiding then asked the Head of Secretariat to read the agenda for the day. The agenda was then read to the Body. Upon reviewing the agenda, the Presiding Officer requested a motion to adopt the agenda. Cllr then made a motion. Michael V. Suah of the Liberia Chamber of Mines, and subsequently seconded by Madam Eliza D. J. Kronyanh of the Liberia Timber Association.

1. OPENING PRAYER

The Body offered silent prayer.

2. WELCOME REMARK

The Presiding, Madam Eudora Blay-Pritchard, welcomed all members of the MSG to the meeting and commended them for their commitment and dedication to EITI implementation in Liberia. She recognized the progress made so far, but acknowledged that there was still more work to be done to strengthen EITI implementation in Liberia.

3. SELF-INTRODUCTION

A self-introduction was conducted with 16 participants.

4. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE LAST MEETING MINUTES

This document was sent to MSG members before the meeting, so the Chairperson requested a brief review of the minutes. Following the quick review, and with no significant change, Cllr. Edwina Barchue of NOCAL moved that minutes be adopted, and Mr. Obediah B. Tarlue of the Liberia Labor Congress seconded it.

5. UPDATE FROM THE SECRETARIAT

The Secretariat's update was done by the Head of Secretariat, Jeffrey N. Yates. He updated the MSG on the following issues for the period **June to August, 2025**:

- The Ministry of Finance and Development Planning has paid the building owner US\$25,000.
- The renovation of the building has been completed at the cost of US\$_____ and furniture at the cost of US\$_____
- The National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority (NAFAA) has requested the LEITI to form part of its multi-stakeholder platform being organized.
- The MFDP sent the LEITI's budget for 2026, which has been reduced by US\$71,000.00, which could affect the Country's Validation.
- GIZ provided the LEITI with funding for the dissemination of LEITI 13th, 14th, and 15th EITI Summary Reports. The total amount disbursed was US\$_____ and a balance of US\$_____ will be disbursed soon.
- The GAC has released the report of its follow-up on the audit recommendations of the LEITI Secretariat, with 81% of audit recommendations implemented as of 2025, up from 0% in 2020.
- The Secretariat has completed the recruitment of the Administrative Manager and Communications and Outreach Officer following a competitive recruitment process spanning months.

- The Strategic Plan draft is available, but the MSG needs to make their input before it can be finalized.
- The LEITI plans to launch at the end of this year four key things: **LEITI Five-Year Strategic Plan, LEITI Data Portal, MDA Compliance Report, and Updated Simplified Contract Matrix**
- The LEITI is compliant with the Ministry of State Performance Management and Compliance System(PMCS)
- Capacity Building: Four staff members of the LEITI Secretariat are currently undergoing training at the diploma level in different areas at AMEU and Blue Crest University.
- The Secretariat has secured internet for the office up to the end of this year.
- The Cabinet has approved the Multi-Pronged BO work plan
- The draft Updated Simplified Contract Matrix and the Compliance Review will be presented to the MSG.
- The Head of Secretariat travelled to South Africa on the invitation of a group there and made a presentation.
- The EITI Global Conference is set for June next year in the Philippines. The MSG will decide its delegation to the Global Conference next year.
- The HOS will travel to Armenia next year on a peer exchange organized by the EITI International Secretariat.
- GIZ has provided funding for LEITI pre-Validation, and the consultant will be in Liberia on October 5, 2025.
- The EITI International Secretariat Pre-Validation Mission team will be in Liberia on September 29, 2025, to discuss Pre-Validation issues with stakeholders.

MFDP's cutting of LEITI's 2026 Budget

Following the presentation of the Secretariat update by the HoS, the Presiding Officer asked for comments on the update. The key comments

- Cllr. Michael V. Suah of the Liberia Chamber of Mines expressed concern over the \$ 71,000.00 cut from the LEITI budget and requested that the MFDP be approached for an explanation of this reduction. However, the Presiding responded by stating that there is an in-house budget hearing by the MFDP where this matter can be argued.
- Mr. Abraham B. Gappie of the MICSOL suggested that the Legislature be engaged on this cut. However, the President stated that using the Legislature to obtain a budget increment is being discouraged by the MFDP.
- Madam Cecelia Danuweli of the PWYP said that the issue can be addressed through the MSG Finance and Administration Committee engaging the MFDP.
- The Presiding then said that the HoS should provide the MSG with a detailed breakdown of what the US\$71,000.00 is supposed to cover. She even advised the Secretariat to increase the amount, so that any reduction will fall within the target amount.
- The HoS committed to making the breakdown of the US\$71,000.00 available on Monday.

GAC Audit Report Recommendations Follow-up

- Cllr. Michael Suah inquired of the HoS whether the GAC audit report had been shared with the MSG. The HoS responded by stating that the past MSG received and acted on the audit report. However, he will still share it with the current MSG.

Staff Recruitment

- Cllr. Michael Suah of the Chamber of Mines requested the details of the recruitment process, and the HoS promised to provide them through a recruitment report to the MSG.
- Mr. James M. Strother of the Liberia Business Association stated that the MSG granted the HoS the authority to recruit staff. He added that MSG should not attempt to question that authority at this time.
- Mr. Kwame Ross, representing Senator Darius Dillon, requested the HoS to share the recruitment policy of LEITI with the MSG, and the HoS consented.
- Mr. Sam N. Tannous of NOCAL cautioned that the MSG should not micromanage the HoS by requesting CVs and documents for the recruitment process. He stated that the Hos acted within the scope of their authority.
- Cllr. Suah of the Chamber of Mines objected to Mr. Tannous's point, stating that the MSG needs the documents that justify the recruitment process for transparency.
- Mr. Rufus Scott of the LPRA stated that the LEITI Act mandates the HoS to recruit. Only a simple report on the recruitment process the MSG needs, not CVs and scores.
- Ambassador George Kingsley stated that the LEITI Act mandates the HoS to recruit staff. It was based on this that the MSG gave its go-ahead to the process. He said he was happy with the gender inclusion of the two females.
- The Presiding closed the discussion on the matter by stating that the HoS will prepare the report for the MSG's comfort, and that the MSG was not questioning the integrity of the HoS. The MSG then endorsed the recruited staff.

Staff Capacity Building

- The Presiding asked whether there was a scholarship program at the LEITI Secretariat and how long the training program is. The HoS responded that there was no scholarship program at the LEITI Secretariat. He indicated that the training is for four months. The HoS also revealed that GIZ is to provide capacity-building funds for two LEITI staff members to travel outside the country, amounting to US\$7,000.00.
- The Presiding asked for a motion to adopt the Secretariat update. Cllr. Suah then moved that the MSG approve the Secretariat update and the recommendations, and Mr. Abraham B. Gappie seconded this motion.

The HoS then presented the MSG's comments to the draft 16th Report to the MSG for endorsement, highlighting key areas the MSG needs to make a decision. Concerned entities in relation to the Draft 16th Report presented the following statements:

- NOCAL (Sam N. Tannous): NOCAL's audited financial statement will be available by early next year.
- LPRA (Rufus Scott): The past management of the LPRA is responsible for the non-transfer of the US\$552,250.00 exploration license fee under question. He stated that the GAC is auditing the license period and that the current team has no information.
- The Presiding suggested that the MSG write the GAC to expedite the audit of the LPRA. The LPRA should send a copy of the audit letter to the GAC for attachment to the MSG's letter.

6. Any Other Business

- Under AOB, the HoS informed the MSG of a planned MSG retreat slated for November, a technical staff retreat slated for October, and a General Staff retreat slated for December 2025. The MSG welcomed the idea but referred the matter to its Finance and Administration Committee for review of the budget details and to report back to the Body.
- PWYP thanked the LEITI Secretariat for their cooperation during the PWYP public outreach. Abraham Gappie requested that MSG get involved in regular outreach in the counties to get first-hand information.
- Ambassador George Kingsley appealed to the MSG to consider viewing IF Magazine and consider doing business with the Magazine to promote the work of LEITI.

MSG's Decisions on Issues Emanating from the Agenda

- The HoS will prepare a report on the recruitment of the Administrative Manager and the Communications and Outreach Officer
- The Secretariat should provide a detailed breakdown of the US\$71,000.00 cut to the LEITI's 2026 budget
- The Secretariat will write the Commissioner-General of LRA to provide explanation on the US\$17.5 million "Unclassified Revenue" by Arcelor Mittal. This letter will be attached to the one to AML. The same applies to Bea Mountain Mining Company
- The Secretariat should write the Ministry of Mines and Energy to ask for documents on the transfer of license issuance to the Executive Mansion
- The Ministry of Agriculture will be written to provide the missing information for the 16th EITI Report

- The Finance and Administration Committee will review the retreat budget and revert to the MSG
- The MSG endorsed the two recruited staff of the Secretariat

The meeting adjourned at 2:50pm. Followed by a tour of the newly renovated LEITI Secretariat office.