

LEITI Empowers Women Stakeholders

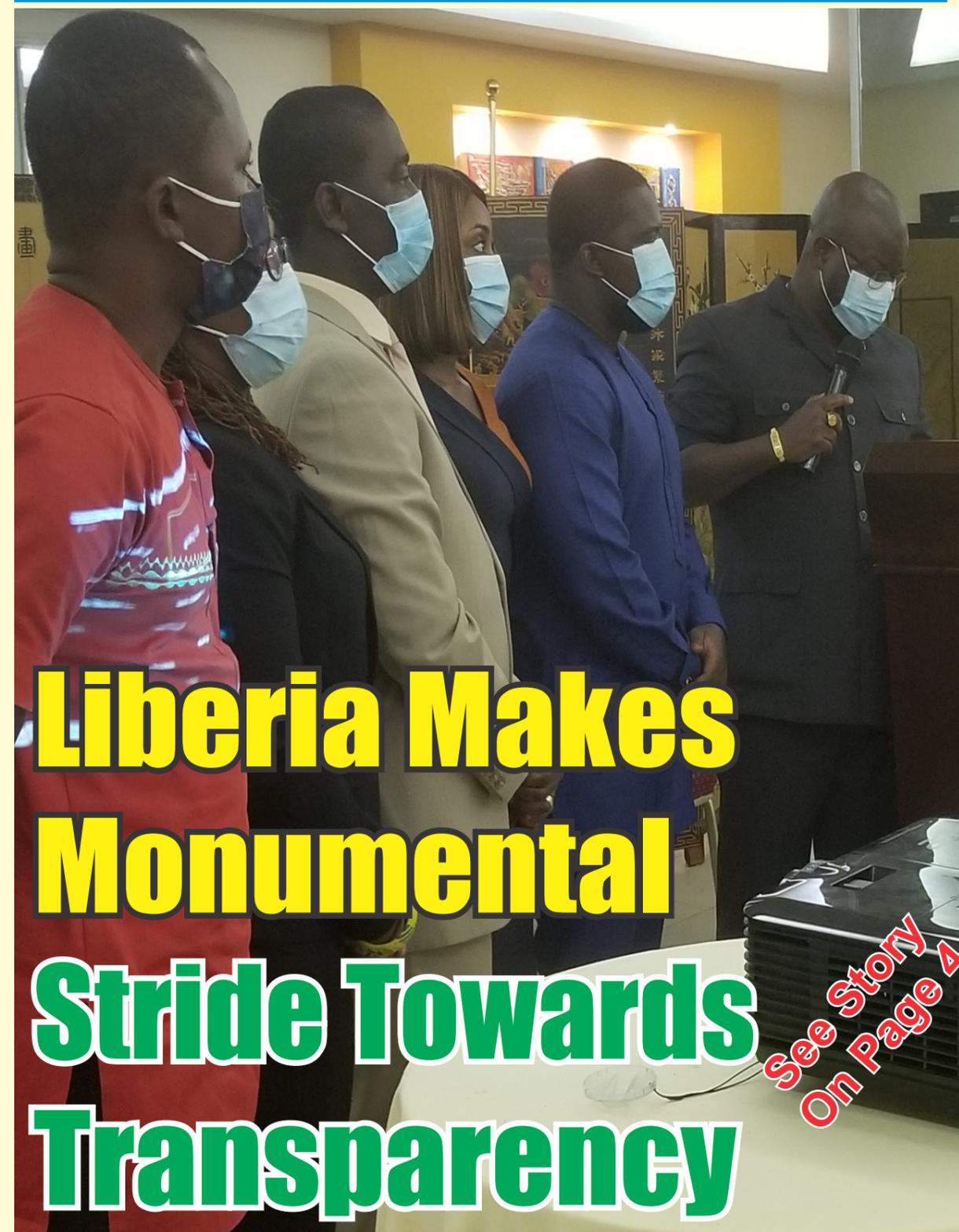


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Participants at the one day gender mainstreaming workshop posed for photo with C. Mike Doryen and Jeffrey N. Yates after the daylong session

For Better Natural Resource Governance

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Liberia Makes Monumental Stride Towards Transparency

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- Launches Open Extractive Programme

Message From The Head Of Secretariat



Head of LEITI Secretariat, Jeffrey N. Yates

Welcome and thank you for reading this Newsletter. I am Jeffrey N. Yates, Head of Secretariat at the Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (LEITI). The general objective of the LEITI is to assist in ensuring that all the benefits due the Government and people of Liberia on account of the exploitation and/or extraction of the Country's minerals and other resources are verifiably paid or provided, duly accounted for, and prudently utilized for the benefits of all Liberians and on the basis of equity and sustainability.

Achieving the above objective requires the MSG and the LEITI Secretariat to solve complex problems by providing concrete recommendations that strengthen

the governance of the natural resource sector. To this end, the Secretariat has produced and disseminated eleven EITI reports throughout the Country. Since its establishment by an Act of the National Legislature, it is evident that the LEITI has made and continues to make solid progress in implementing the EITI Standard. Our reports have identified that the Government of Liberia has received 993 million United States Dollars as direct revenues from the extractive sector for the twelve fiscal periods (2007-2019).

Liberia was one of few countries that produced an EITI report using the Flexible Reporting Framework due to the Covid 19 pandemic. Accordingly, LEITI's 12th EITI report for the fiscal year 2018/19 is the first of its kind in the institution's existence. The major highlight of the report was the disclosure of Beneficial Ownership information of some companies in line with requirement 2.5 of the New 2019 EITI Standard. As part of efforts to actualize its commitment to improving Beneficial Ownership Transparency, the Liberian Government confirmed its willingness to participate in the Opening Extractives Programme, a joint program by the EITI and Open Ownership, which aims to accelerate the progress of Beneficial Ownership Transparency in 13 resource-rich countries. This was manifested by the recent launch of the Open Extractive Programme in Monrovia. Detail of the programme and so many other progress are cataloged in this Newsletter.

Though recent, there were enormous challenges; however, our mindset to change the story has shown great rewards. Liberia is fast regaining its position as a pioneering implementing country within the EITI. The Secretariat is speedily rebranding day-to-day, and team members show solid ethical and honest behaviors along with firm commitments. Development Partners are gradually renewing their interests in the workings of the LEITI Secretariat by their presence at MSG meetings. MSG members are conspicuously playing their individual and collective roles without interference and strongly supervising the works of the Secretariat. This is welcoming and healthy for the EITI implementation! Government, too, continues to show immense interest and openness to the process, thereby making the LEITI regain its status incrementally, as previously mentioned. We remain hopeful of an even robust effort from all stakeholders as we approach a critical stage of the process -Validation. We admonish all stakeholders to stay engaged as we are confident that we will deliver success at the Validation with a strong commitment, perseverance, and determination. May God continue to bless the works of our hands.

Three locations are selected in each county based on the population. Robertsport, Sinje, and Weaju were selected for Grand Cape Mount, while Bopolu, Gbama, and Monakwelleh were selected for Gbarpolu. For Bomi, the team visited and disseminated in Clay, Tubmanburg, and Gbahjehkeh. A total of 1,700 persons, including women, youth, the elderly, disabled, and local authorities, received information on the reports. Dissemination exercises started on September 11 through 19, 2021.

Another team simultaneously visited Margibi, Grand Bassa, and River Cess Counties and disseminated in Buchanan City, Compound One and Three for Grand Bassa, Kakata, Weala, and Harbel in Margibi County, while in River Cess, the team visited Cestos City and Yarkpah town. A total turnout of 1,845 persons were recorded across these locations.

Citizens in these counties were more concerned about the corporate social responsibilities of the respective concessionaires and how they could track such payments. The team documented the concerns to be presented to the MSG at the end of the exercises.

In July 2017, the MSG commissioned the audit and assurance firm Parker & Company LLC of Liberia in association with Moore Stephens LLP of the United Kingdom to prepare the 9th Report. The Report captured all material taxes, including royalties, land/surface rentals, and other administrative fees paid to and acknowledged by the Government of Liberia by companies in the oil, mining, forestry, and agricultural sectors for the fiscal period July 1, 2015, to June 30, 2016. According to the Report, the total revenue generated across the four sectors-mining, agriculture, forestry, and oil & gas is 66.37 million United States dollars.

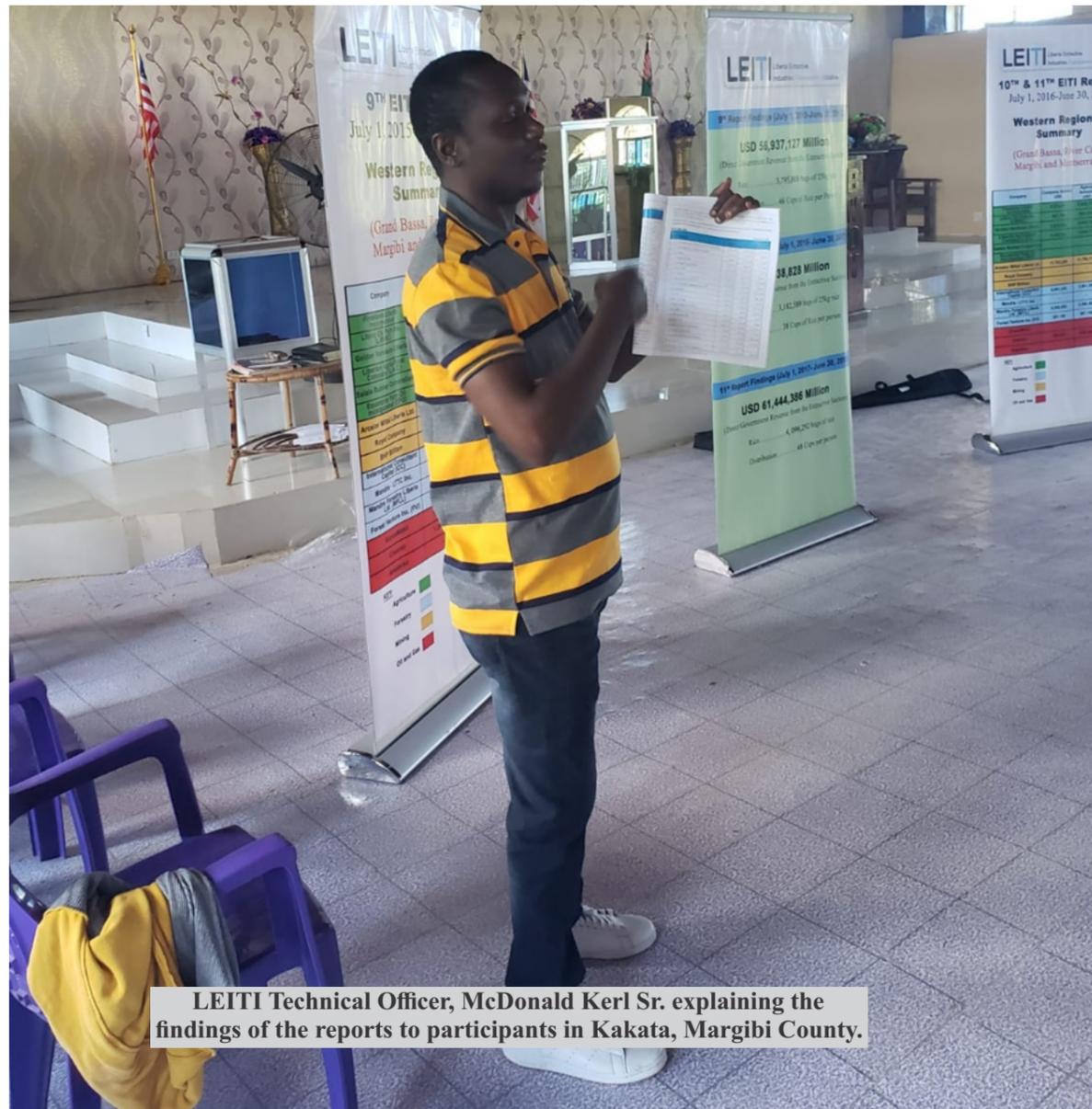


Meanwhile, the MSG, at the start of October 2019, commissioned BDO-UK in collaboration with Parker & Associates Liberia, two reputable auditing firms, to prepare the 10th & 11th EITI Reports combined.

The 10th report reveals that the total revenue received by the government from the oil, mining, forestry, and agriculture sectors for the period July 1, 2016, to June 30, 2017, amounted to USD53.84 million, while the total amount received for the period July 1, 2017, to June 30, 2018 (11th report), amounted to USD68.9 million. This represents a 28% increase in revenues collected from the sectors covered under Liberia's EITI scope.

Funding for the dissemination of these reports is provided by the African Development Bank (AfDB) with guidance from the Project Management Unit (PMU) of the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP).

LEITI Begins Dissemination Of Its 9th, 10th And 11th Reports



LEITI Technical Officer, McDonald Kerl Sr. explaining the findings of the reports to participants in Kakata, Margibi County.

The Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (LEITI) has started to disseminate its 9th, 10th and 11th reports across Liberia. The dissemination of the LEITI reports has been regularly done in compliance with the EITI Standard. However, due to the Covid 19 pandemic, the Secretariat had been limited to publishing the reports through the Liberian Press and its website.

“LEITI Secretariat commenced disseminating its 9th, 10th and 11th Summary Report across the country due to the improvement in the fight against the virus. The first teams, blended with members of the MSG, have completed the dissemination exercise in Grand Cape Mount, Gbarpolu, Bomi Grand Bassa, River Cess, Margibi, and Montserrado counties. The remaining two teams will shortly depart for Lofa, Bong, Nimba, Sinoe, Grand Gedeh, Grand Kru, River Gee, and Maryland counties. An MSG member will be represented on each of the teams.” Head of Secretariat Jeffery Yates informed a sitting of the MSG recently.

'Your Role Is Critical'

- Former LEITI Boss Tells MSG

LEITI's former Head of Secretariat, Cllr. Nagbalee Warner has challenged the LEITI MSG to be proactive in successfully implementing the EITI process in Liberia.

Cllr. Warner, who served as the first Head of Secretariat of the LEITI, described the role of the MSG as critical but central to the entire EITI process noting that an essential EITI Requirement is an engaged and well-functioning MSG. "It is one thing to establish an MSG and another to have it functioning. To have a functioning MSG, members must be committed, engaged, attend meetings and be accountable and report to your constituents or principals," he reminded the gathering of the LEITI MSG.

The erudite lawyer also called on the Liberian Government to show and maintain its commitment to an operational EITI process by treating the MSG conveniently. "An engaged government will ensure that the EITI is headed by a person who has the requisite access and authority to ensure senior representation on and attendance of MSG and funding to support EITI implementation," He emphasized.

Cllr. Warner made these statements when he served as a lead facilitator at a two-day retreat of the LEITI MSG in Buchanan City, Grand Bassa County, where the MSG had converged to review and reflect on its operations, as well as strategize the way forward on prevailing circumstances, including the Validation of the Country and funding strategies for the Secretariat.

He recommended, among others, that the MSG seeks at least 30 minutes of Cabinet time to make a presentation on LEITI, noting, 'if the MSG must rise to the occasion, the government must be engaged.' Cllr. Warner also wants Legislators to serve on the LEITI MSG based on nomination and appointment by the President.

At the end of the retreat, the MSG agreed to make several changes, especially to their operation manual, to reflect current realities and enhance adequate focus and participation of MSG members. One of such decisions was to reduce the monthly meetings to quarterly (once in three months) with the caution that senior-level representatives across all constituencies attend at least fifty percent of the sittings annually.

Under the theme: Strengthening the Capacity of MSG Members for a Successful EITI Implementation in Liberia, the retreat sought to strengthen the capacity of MSG members to enable them to lead a successful EITI process in Liberia through effective MSG oversight and was held from February 18 to February 19, 2021, with the entire MSG membership in total attendance



Former Head of the LEITI Secretariat, Cllr. Nagbalee Warner addressing the MSG retreat in Buchanan City, Grand Bassa County

Liberia Makes Monumental Stride Towards Transparency

- Launches Opening Extractives Programme



Deputy Finance Minister, Samora P. Z. Wolokollie at the launch of the programme in Monrovia

Liberia, through the Liberia Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (LEITI), has formally launched the 'Opening Extractives Programme' -a new cross-sector partnership between the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) and Open Ownership (OO), aimed at ending the use of anonymous companies linked to corruption and mismanagement in the extractive sector.

On September 21, 2021, the LEITI Secretariat, Liberia Revenue Authority, Liberia Business Registry, EITI International, and the Open Ownership formally launched the programme in Liberia to officially kick-off the programme and raise awareness to wider stakeholders on the opportunities available through the programme in Liberia.

According to LEITI Head of Secretariat Jeffrey N. Yates, the purpose of the launch is to mobilize stakeholders, create public awareness of the Opening Extractives programme in Liberia, and explore how stakeholders can work together through the programme to support Beneficial Ownership Transparency reforms.

"The initiative aims to make a dramatic and sustainable difference to the level of publicly available information on the individuals, who own and control extractive companies." Jeffrey N. Yates disclosed.

The programme runs for five years, and its main objective is to ensure that Liberia establishes a Beneficial Ownership Registry for the Extractive Sector within the time frame.

Liberia is one of 13 resource-rich countries across three continents that are benefitting from the programme. In addition to LEITI, the Liberia Business Registry and the Liberia Revenue Authority make up a national steering committee driving the initiative.

Phase one of the activity was held in Buchanan City, Grand Bassa County from 16-19 February 2022 with 108 CSO actors drawn from nine counties-Bong, Bomi, Grand Bassa, Grand Cape Mount, Gbarpolu, Lofa, Margibi and RiverCess Counties following an earlier assessment.



Addressing participants at the start of the Buchanan training via zoom, Michael Uzoigwe, Country Manager of EITI Anglophone Africa extolled CSOs for their participation noting that their role is crucial to the overarching function of the EITI, stating that there can be no EITI without the role of the civil society.

Earlier, Head of Secretariat, Jeffrey N. Yates disclosed that the LEITI will partner with the local CSOs to enhance its works across the country through their monitoring and use of EITI tools and data. He admonished them to use the LEITI data and other tools to push for the necessary policy reforms for the good of the Liberian people. He said with support from the African Development Bank, CSOs undergoing the training will be able to access small grants to carry out their respective workplan but only through a competitive bidding process.

CSOs expressed willingness in the partnership, pledging to expand the works of the LEITI in their respective communities. Their will was unanimously expressed through a joint resolution signed and presented to the Secretariat at the end of the training.

At both trainings, CSOs were drilled on the usage of EITI reports, monitoring and tracking of Social Development Funds, the LEITI Act, EITI Civil Society Protocol, the role of civil society in the EITI process, The Role and Functions of the MSG, among others.

Funding for this activity was provided by the African Development Bank through the Project Management Unit at the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning.

As LEITI Decentralizes Engagements, County Based CSOs Call For 40 Percent Extractive Revenue Utilization On Feeder Roads Development



A segment of participants pose for the press at the close of the three day event in Buchanan

The Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (LEITI) has ended the training of vetted County-based Civil Society Organizations in Liberia with a call for National Government to set aside forty percent of extractive revenue for feeder roads development. CSOs from Sinoe, Grand Kru, Maryland, RiverGee, Grand Gedeh and Nimba Counties made the call recently in Zwedru, Grand Gedeh County at the closed of a three day event for southeastern Liberia. The call was contained in a joint resolution signed by the CSOs attending and participating in the training exercises.

The CSOs believe the annual exercise will help mitigate the problems citizens face with bad roads across Liberia especially the South east. They averred that this singular action by the Government would restore confidence in the government's financial expenditure in the absence of a proper mechanism to track the full utilization of extractive revenues. Liberia currently runs a consolidated account system where all revenues generated empties thus making it extremely difficult to track the impact of extractive revenues.

The training in Zwedru brought together 48 CSO actors from Sinoe, Grand Kru, Maryland, RiverGee, Grand Gedeh and Nimba Counties-all other counties are from the southeast of Liberia except Nimba which is located in northern Liberia and was held from 11-15 March, 2022.

The training aimed to acquaint county-based CSOs with EITI Reporting and Monitoring as well empower them with these tools and data to inspire change and reforms in their respective constituencies.

The programme is also a result of the 2019 EITI Standard, specifically requirement 2.5 that deals with the 'Beneficial Ownership Registry.' Liberia is progressing with the development of the Registry in this regard.

Deputy Finance Minister for Fiscal Affairs, Attorney Samora P. Z. Wolokollie, who deputized for Finance Minister Samuel D. Tweah Jr., said the Government sees the programme as an eye-opener in the governance of the extractive sector and as a medium of ensuring greater transparency.

"The Government relies strongly on the flowing of revenues from resources in the extractive sector to support the national budget every fiscal year. As such, this programme aligns with pillar four of the core of the Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) government national development agenda, the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development that deals with governance and transparency," he concludes.

"The government has unequivocally demonstrated its commitment to the sector by swiftly responding to the International Secretariat of EITI to be a part of the programme as demonstrated here today."

He noted that the Government has instructed the steering committee to work hard and make representation at the highest level to ensure success. He called on companies and CSOs to ensure that they do the needful, to make the initiative a success.

"The government is unconditionally requesting all companies operating in the extractive sector to work with the committee to ensure that the requirements of the 2019 EITI Standard are achieved without delay, as the Government stands ready to deal with every challenge that would hamper the smooth implementation of the programme. Through the Minister of Finance and Development Planning, the Government requests a regular briefing from the steering committee on the status of the programme," he said.

For her part, the Regional Associate at Open Ownership, Favour Ime, said the world is at a stage where the need for transparency and accountability in the use and management of natural resources cannot be overemphasized. "We at the Open Ownership and EITI, through the Opening Extractives programme, have therefore pledged support to ensure that this global need for effective governance in the extractive sector is met," she said.

"We are impressed with the progress Liberia has made in the past years," Ime said, making specific reference to steps taken to amend the Associations Law and Business Corporation Act in April 2020 to provide the legal basis for integrating BO disclosure as part of the existing business registration, filings, and amendments process. "We are honored and humbled by Liberia's confirmation to participate in this programme, and we support you on this journey. We will be glad to develop the extractive sector register." She assured.

She pledged her entity's commitment to providing technical assistance in the next phase of the beneficial ownership implementation through guidance to reform policies and establish a regulatory and legislative framework that will support Beneficial Ownership Transparency.

She promised that her institution would help improve the quality and accuracy of the data by designing robust verification systems and undertaking a risk-based approach to making more BO data public.

Accordingly, Opening Extractives builds on the collaboration of Open Ownership and the EITI over the last three years in delivering workshops, training, and technical assistance in a broad range of countries. The programme draws on recent research undertaken by Open Ownership and the EITI. The project will be partly funded by the BHP Foundation and delivered by the EITI International Secretariat and Open Ownership.

The launch at the Cape Hotel in Monrovia brought together line Government Ministries and Agencies, Civil Society Organizations, and International Partners.

LEITI Civil Society Bloc Holds Constituency Engagements In South East -Envisions A People – Driven Agenda



The Civil Society bloc of the LEITI Multi-stakeholder Steering Group (MSG) recently held a ten-day constituency engagement and outreach tour targeting five southeastern counties in Liberia-Maryland, Rivergee, Grand Kru, Grand Gedeh, and Sinoe. As the direct representative of the people, the Civil Society bloc used the tour to disseminate information regarding the implementation of the EITI process in Liberia, focusing on critical recent documents and happenings to include the 12th EITI Report for Liberia, the 2019 EITI standard as well as the EITI validation process.

Feedback from these engagements would inform and drive the Civil Society to carve a people-driven agenda through the MSG. "These engagements are not just only intended to strengthen natural resource governance or to ensure equitable distribution of the country's natural resources but mainly to solicit the views and suggestions from the ordinary citizens whose lives are most impacted by these large concessions and on the activities of the LEITI." Madam Cecelia Danuweli of Publish What You Pay (PWYP) noted.

The engagement process allowed citizens to know about the LEITI's Act, discuss, understand and ask questions about the total extractive revenue collected for FY2018/2019 by the Government of Liberia from companies operating in the extractive sector, including the total social contribution made by some extractive companies.

Participants were also enlightened on LEITI's endeavor to maintain a publicly available register of beneficial owners of corporate entities (companies) that hold relevant interest in extractive assets; such information, among other things, will include companies' identities and level of ownership of shares in the operations.

Participants at all forums challenged the bloc to prevail on the LEITI Secretariat to hold these exchanges twice a year to understand the EITI process better. They believe that doing so will arm them with enough information to engage their respective local authorities, especially on issues surrounding concessionaires on the one hand and the local affected communities on the other.

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that aims to empower youth on the governance of the Country's natural resources.

In a release Tuesday (October 19, 2021) in Monrovia, LEITI says it is working out modalities to have Emmanuel as its first E-Club Ambassador when and after he has returned to schooling. "We think he should be a true face of integrity in this Country; what he did is touching and unimaginable, and we are convinced that his story can help many young people regain a cautious integrous mindset." Says Jeffrey Yates, Head of LEITI's Secretariat.

LEITI also commends the President of the Republic, His Excellency George M. Weah, for the timely recognition, honor, and reward the boy received on the national stage on Monday, October 18, 2021. "This demonstrates that there is always a reward for good deeds and those that thought his action to return the money to its rightful owner was imprudent and in vain would themselves have a rethink," Yates concludes.

Recently, Liberians woke up to the news that a 19year old motorcyclist, Emmanuel Tuloe, found a bag containing the amount of US\$50,000 and LD\$100,000 while en route to Tappita on his commercial motorbike for a dowry program from Saclepea in Nimba County, northern Liberia. Upon hearing a public service announcement on a local radio station, Tuloe returned the monies to the rightful owner.

The decision taken by the young Liberian commercial motorcyclist claimed the attention of not only the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission (LACC) and other anti-graft institutions operating in the Country but also President Weah, who identified with Tuloe at his Jamaica Resort located on the Roberts Field Highway, outside Monrovia.

The Liberian President awarded the 19year old scholarship that covers his current 7th grade tuition up to master's level and US\$10,000. The President also gave him two motorbikes and will earn a monthly salary of five hundred United States dollars.





Emmanuel Tuloe speaking when he received honor from several anti-graft institutions in Monrovia

The Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (LEITI) extols the demonstration of scarce integrity by Emmanuel Tuloe—the teenager of Nimba, in the recent fifty thousand United States dollars incident.

The LEITI Secretariat believes the quality of integrity demonstrated by the 19 year old Liberian is immeasurable, unprecedented, and must be celebrated anywhere. LEITI sees Tuloe as an icon of honesty, integrity, and self-discipline, whose action is an evergreen twilight in the history of this nation.

Emmanuel Tuloe is a classic example of the kind of young people cultivated through LEITI's Extractive Club (E-Club), a flagship program for young high school students

LEITI Civil Society Bloc Holds Constituency Engagements In South East *Continued from page 6*

The engagement forum participants were drawn from local women groups, men, youth/students community, labor sector, and the Press Union of Liberia. The engagement was sponsored by African Development Bank (AfDB) through the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) with guidance from the Project Management Unit (PMU). A total of one thousand five hundred people, mainly women, participated in the ten-day engagement exercises across the five counties.

Madam Danuweli headed the civil society engagement team. It included Winston Wreh of Liberia Labor Congress (LLC), Daniel Nyakonah of the Press Union of Liberia (PUL), and J. Elijah Kai, a Sector Analyst at the LEITI Secretariat.

Similarly, the Government bloc of the MSG held its engagements with the broader constituency outside of the MSG in Buchanan City, Grand Bassa County, and lasted up to three working days. Meanwhile, the Private sector is expected to conduct similar engagements before the close of the year.

Liberia Releases Much Improved 12th EITI Report -As Covid 19 Impacts Revenue



Head of Secretariat Jeffrey Yates (Right) presents the 12th EITI Report to the Chairman of the MSG, C. Mike Doryen as Madam Cecelia Danuweli of the Civil Society bloc looks on

The Multi-Stakeholder Steering Group (MSG) of the Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (LEITI) on April 20, 2021, approved the 12th EITI Report for Liberia covering the period July 1, 2018, to June 30, 2020, under the Flexible Reporting Framework adopted by the EITI Board. **Continues On Page 8**

Liberia Releases Much Improved 12th EITI Report

From page 7

The Flexible reporting seeks to ensure that EITI implementation safely contributes to global and national responses to the Covid-19 pandemic while upholding commitments to transparency, accountability, and multi-stakeholder dialogue.

It allows implementing countries to retain the momentum of the EITI process while adapting to local circumstances and urgent information needs. Unlike the Conventional Reporting Framework that requires reconciliation between government receipts and companies' payments, the Flexible Reporting Framework requires unilateral disclosure of financial data by government institutions.

LEITI MSG, at the start of November 2020, commissioned its 12th EITI Report and hired the services of BDO in collaboration with Parker & Associates Liberia, two reputable auditing firms, to prepare the 12th EITI Report for Liberia using the Flexible Reporting Framework.

LEITI's 12th EITI report shows that the Government of Liberia generated USD 79.63million as total revenues from the extractive sector. This report shows that total revenues from the extractive sector increased from USD 68.98 million in 2017/18 to USD79.63million in 2018/19, resulting in a net increase of USD 10.65million or 15.4%.

The report reveals that the Liberian Government generated US\$37,104,314 in 2018 compared to US\$42,240,233 in 2019. That is an increase of US\$5,135,919 million or 12.16 percent.

The report also discloses challenges in sectoral oversight, data collection, and licensing processes, among others. The LEITI will begin to work with relevant government ministries and agencies to address these concerns.

Update of the Mainstreaming Feasibility Study Report:

The MSG, in February 2021 at a two-day retreat in Buchanan, unanimously agreed to update the Mainstreaming Feasibility Study that was first conducted in 2016. Mainstreaming is the process by which EITI information is disclosed using existing government systems. It reduces the cost and enhances the timeliness of publishing EITI disclosures.

As of date, a consultant has been selected through a competitive bidding process supervised by the Project Management Unit (PMU) at the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP). The LEITI Secretariat expects an updated report at the close of 2021.

Validation of Liberia by the International Secretariat:

Liberia's Validation by the EITI was expected to have begun on July 1, 2021, but due to the Covid 19 pandemic, the MSG, through a unanimous verdict, requested a six-month extension that the EITI Board subsequently granted. Hence, Liberia's Validation will begin in January of 2022. "We admonish all relevant stakeholders to continue their unabated engagement with the Secretariat to ensure success at the end of the validation," Says LEITI's Head of Secretariat, Jeffrey Yates. Liberia was last validated in 2016 and gained a 'Meaningful Progress' status, a step just below the maximum of 'Satisfactory Progress.'

publish EITI Reports for 2016/17 and 2017/18, 2019 Annual Work Plan, and 2017/18 Annual Progress Report. The Board reiterated its decision in mid-2019 due to delays in publication of the 2017/18 EITI Report, 2017/18 Annual Progress Report, and 2019 Annual Work Plan.

Consequently, the MSG, in its wisdom and at an emergency meeting, appointed Jeffrey N. Yates as Officer-In-Charge (OIC) and hired the services of an international consultant to help speed up the development of these critical documents whose delays had led to the Country's temporary suspension. And in three months-October to December 2020, the documents were produced and presented to the MSG for approval and subsequent publications before the December 31, 2019 deadline.

As a result, the EITI Board, effective March 6, 2020, lifted the temporary suspension on Liberia after the Country complied with the provisions of the key documents before the deadline.

In a recent statement released in Monrovia, the MSG extolled all stakeholders, especially the President of Liberia, H. E. George Manneh Weah, and the Liberian Government, for the expressed commitment to making the EITI process workable and fully operational in Liberia.

Meanwhile, the MSG appealed to the President to continue his unflinching support to fully implement the EITI process in Liberia as the Country continues to make strides of historical significance to the global community. A statement from the EITI said Liberia had shown improvement in implementation related to stakeholder oversight and the publication of outstanding EITI reports.

"The decision is due to improvement in implementation related to Multi-stakeholder Group (MSG) oversight (Requirement 1) and the publication of outstanding EITI Reports. The findings of the review reflect an improvement in EITI implementation between June and December 2019. Liberia has demonstrated considerable progress in addressing gaps identified in the review of Requirement 1, which was concluded in June 2019.

Within a short time frame, the Government of Liberia has demonstrated its full commitment to the EITI process, which has led to the restoration of the credibility of Liberia's EITI. This is evident from government funding allocated to the process, the publication of the 2016/17 and 2017/18 EITI Reports, the development of a 2019/2020 work plan, and the preparation of the 2017/2018 Annual Progress Report. Liberia's second Validation will commence on July 1, 2020,"an EITI Board statement on Liberia's situation read.



Mr. C. Mike Doryen (L), Chairman of the MSG, receives a copy of the report from Jeffrey Yates, Officer-in-Charge of the LEITI on December 31, 2019

Liberia EITI Rally Calls For Support As The Suspension Is Lifted

The Multi-stakeholder Steering Group of the Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (LEITI) has termed as a huge relief the recent decision of the EITI Board to lift the temporary suspension on Liberia.

The EITI Board suspended Liberia in September 2018 due to its failure to

'LEITI Is Vital; We Will Continue To Support...'

GOL Pledges Unflinching Support As New MSG Takes Seat



MSG Chairman, C. Mike Doryen presiding at the two-day event in Monrovia

As new members of the Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (LEITI) Multi-stakeholder Steering Group (MSG) sets in motion with a two-day orientation, the Government of Liberia (GOL) has expressed its willingness to provide the necessary support for the implementation of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) in the Country.

“The LEITI is a vital institution, and this government will continue to provide the necessary support to get it where we all want it.” T. Ojuku Nyenpan, Assistant Minister for Revenue and Tax Policy at Liberia's Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP), who proxied for MFDP's Minister Samuel D. Tweah Jr., stated at the two-day event.

Minister Nyenpan further praised the Secretariat for the level of work it has done in a relatively short period to get it where it is, given the difficulties. “We stand ready as a government to give LEITI budgetary support to move this vital process forward.” He concluded amid applause from a fully seated MSG Body.

Earlier, the Chairman of the group, Forestry Development Authority's Managing Director C. Mike Doryen, who served the last MSG, recounted the commitment of the past MSG and challenged his colleagues, especially newcomers, to consider their appointments as a civil duty to Liberia in its drive to harness the extractive resources for the benefit of all transparently.

In his remarks, LEITI's Head of Secretariat, Jeffrey N. Yates, recommitted the unwavering support of his staff to the workings of the MSG in the interest of the Country. He admonished the Body to continue to support the Secretariat as the Country prepares for validation in January 2022.

Aimed at orientating new members on the MSG Policy Manual and the LEITI Act, the two-day event also saw the approval of an updated communications strategy, a resolution adopting an open data policy for the EITI implementation in Liberia, and the signing off of the MSG Policy Manual. Members of the MSG collectively pledged to work collaboratively for transparency in the natural resource sector. The two-day event brought together all recently appointed members of the Multi-stakeholder Steering Group.

LEITI Empowers Women Stakeholders For Better Natural Resource Governance

More than twenty five women beneficiaries at a one day training on gender mainstreaming are calling for practical actions for women empowerment and participation in Liberia's natural resource sector.

At a one day workshop on gender mainstreaming organized by the Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (LEITI), the women drawn from key civil society organizations, the private sector and line government ministries and agencies collectively noted that while there are existing laws that guarantee women rights and participation in especially the management of natural resources, there are no practical steps taken by men to ensure their full participation.



Participants at the one day gender mainstreaming workshop posed for photo with C. Mike Doryen and Jeffrey N. Yates after the daylong session

“Women bear the brunt of concessions and should be key players in the signing of these agreements” says Madam Teresa Viskinda, President of the Liberia Labor Congress. “It is time we push our male counterparts to adhere to the laws to see us as equal partners in decision making concerning our resources; it is my expectation that women voices will be strengthened in the natural resource sector of this country after this training.” She furthered.

“Women issues are serious issues and so society should be keen on them, we need more education on how concessions are signed and the roles women play should be conspicuously cleared because the more education women receive, the better the society.” Mrs. Cerue Garlo, Senior Gender Specialist at the Carter Center Liberia and lead facilitator, noted.

Madam Garlo admonished her colleagues to work together if they are to achieve their goal: “This meeting is intended to give stronger voices to women in the national resource governance sector and hence, we must take actions such as reviewing the laws and policies to reflect our collective desire for change.” She stressed.

For his part, the Chairman of Liberia's Multi-stakeholder Steering Group, C. Mike Doryen promised to work with the women stakeholders to garner the necessary measure to ensure women get their just recognition and impact in the natural resource management of Liberia. “One of the ways for us to end marginalization against women is providing education, let's look at the laws and policies and see how we can empower our women so that they can influence things in the society.” He admonished.

Earlier, the Head of Secretariat, Jeffrey N. Yates disclosed that at the LEITI, gender mainstreaming is a new phenomenon especially in the natural resource management setting but that the Secretariat stands ready to work with the women to elevate their issues and amplify their voices on issues surrounding the management of the natural resources: “We have not made significant progress towards this issue but we need to work together to accelerate the little gains. We will stand with you.”

The workshop was aimed at encouraging participants and stakeholders to reflect on their current attitudes and perceptions of gender, decision making and Natural Resource

Management, and explore new paradigms of practice.

It also aimed to create space for women and men to work together to achieve sustainable Natural Resource Management in Liberia and was held under the topic: Importance of gender equality, mainstreaming and social inclusion in the natural resource governance of Liberia. The gathering identify the patriarchal nature of the Liberian society as a challenge to gender inclusiveness especially in rural Liberia.

At the end of the workshop, the women outlined several recommendations to the LEITI that would enhance their adequate participation in the sector of which popularization of the existing guidelines on how concessions are made, the revision of existing laws and regulations on gender as well as the establishment of a gender policy and unit for the LEITI are key.

Gender inequalities can be exacerbated when women are excluded from natural resource management or face barriers to their full and equal participation. Decision-making process in the governance and management of the extractive sector must be inclusive; to ensure that the views of women and the most vulnerable and marginalized members of communities impacted by the sector are taken into account.

Requirement 7.1 sections two (II) and three (III) of the 2019 EITI Standard encourage implementing countries including Liberia to mainstream gender in their local implementation activities especially reporting and dissemination.