

MINUTES
REGULAR LEITI MULTI-STAKEHOLDERS STEERING GROUP MEETING
HELD IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE LEITI, OLD BUDGET BUREAU BUILDING
REDEMPTION
ROAD, MONROVIA, LIBERIA Friday October 15, 2021

Present in Attendance were:

GOL

1. Hon. C. Mike Doryen	FDA	<u>Private Sector</u>	
2. Edrick Noah	MOJ		
3. Timothy Jerry II	NOCAL	1. Mercy M. Swen Dwalu	LIBTA.
4. Medecy Hessou	MME	2. George Pah Sr	GVL

CSO

1. Mr. Winston W. Wreh	LLC	<u>Observer</u>	
2. Mr. Fallah B. Kamara	MICSOL	Roosevelt Tule	
3. Sayor E. Wahtohson	PWYP		
4 Mr. Daniel Nyankonah	PUL		

LEITI

1. Jeffery N. Yates/HoS
2. Cedrick Kpadeh/Comms. Officer

Preliminaries: The regular meeting of the Multi- Stakeholders Steering Group (MSG) of the Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (LEITI) was held on Friday October 15, 2021 in the LEITI Conference Room starting at 12:57 GMT

The meeting was called to order by the Chair of the MSG, Hon. C. Mike Doryen after a confirmation from the Head of Secretariat (HoS) that a quorum was guaranteed.

The HoS was then asked to read the agenda for the day. A ten item agenda was presented to the Body. Upon reading, the Presiding sought for a motion for adoption and that was subsequently made through Mercy Swen Dwalu, a proxy for Mr. Ekema Witherspoon of the Liberia Timber Association (LIBTA). The motion was seconded by Daniel Nyankonah of the Press Union of Liberia (PUL). There was no addition or subtraction to the agenda however.

1. **Opening prayer:** The HoS, Jeffery Yates said the opening prayer.
2. **Welcome Remark:** The Presiding immediately after the opening prayer called on the Ministry of Justice to make welcome remark. To this, Mr. Edrick F. Noah challenged his colleagues to remain steadfast in the collective discharge of all duties appertaining to the MSG. He prayed for an undivided attention and a fruitful discussion.
3. **Self-introduction:** Self-introduction was observed with at least 13 persons participating.
4. **Review and Approval of the last meeting minutes-** Due to the fact that this document was sent to MSG members prior to the meeting, the Presiding requested a quick review. Manor changes were made to the document as follows:
 - The date of the meeting was changed from June to September; Daniel Nyankonah's observation,
 - Few typographical errors corrected-"subsequently" and "Peer" were misspelled

5. Update from the Secretariat

The Secretariat's update was done by the Head of Secretariat, Jeffrey Yates. He presented the following as updates for the period July to September: **(Please see annex I for details of the update)**

MSG Decision on critical issues presented in the update:

- a. In the update, the Secretariat recommended that MSG approves the use of the conventional reporting framework for the production of the 13th and 14th EITI report for Liberia with cost set at 143 thousand United States Dollars. After this was placed on the floor for discussion, it received an overwhelming consensus as all constituency agreed to the proposal. However, the MSG set the production cost at 150 thousand for 'unforeseen' purposes.
- b. **Endorsement of new staff members-**Also in the update, the Secretariat presented five newly recruited staff members for the MSG's endorsement. The staff members were recruited in the following positions: Communications and Outreach Officer, Procurement Officer, Technical Officer, Administrative Officer and Finance Manager. Mr. **Edrick Noah** inquired as to why the Secretariat was still using the old position titles when the MSG had taken decision to affect these positions for proper salary allocation. To this the HoS clarified that the positions remained so, since the committee that is working with the Secretariat (Finance and Administration committee of the MSG) to make the changes was yet to make a full report to the Body.

With that clarification, the MSG again through a consensus endorsed the new staff members with the Presiding calling on Timothy Jerry II of NOCAL to officially welcome the new recruits. In his statement, Mr. Jerry praised the HoS' vision and admonished the new members to diligently serve their respective positions for the betterment of Liberia and the EITI process. Earlier, the HoS, presenting the five staff members informed the MSG that the recruitment exercise was rigorous and involved the Public Procurement

and Concession Commission (PPCC), the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission (LACC), the Internal Audit Agency amongst others.

- 6. Presentation of the Workplan-**The HoS presented a well costed 18 month Workplan for provisional approval from the MSG. Provisional approval due to the fact that the October 15, 2021 sitting would be the last of the MSG that was constituted in September of 2018.

After his presentation, the Presiding asked the Body for its will and pleasure and a unanimous verdict to grant the provisional approval was granted.

7. Any Other Business-Two things were discussed under AOB:

A. Letter to Ojuku Nyenpan-The Presiding suggested to the Body that a formal communication conveying the Body's sympathy to one of its members, Ojuku Nyenpan be drafted and sent in the shortest possible time. The Secretariat was mandated to execute in the following working week.

B. The Presiding took time to officially welcome Mr. Roosevelt Tule of USAID to the meeting. He recounted the advocacy role played by Mr. Tule in the student community during the 1980s and extolled him for attending the meeting. He bewailed the numerous challenges facing the LEITI and expressed hope that Mr. Tule's presence will be the beginning of a new era for the LEITI.

Mr. Tule meanwhile expressed gratitude for the recognition and disclosed that the his organization had worked with the LEITI previously and although he was in no position to make official promises, was ready to use his office to make recommendations on behalf of the LEITI. He requested the Secretariat to outline key challenges that will need immediate attention and forward to his office in the shortest possible time.

With that, a motion was sought for the adjournment of the meeting. The PUL made the motion and was seconded by NOCAL that the meeting be adjourned having exhausted all agenda items. The meeting was then adjourned with a word of prayer said by Fallah B. Kamara of Mineral Civil Society of Liberia (MICSOL), at 2:15 PM

Summary of key points

- MSG reviewed and approved the last meeting minutes with minor typographical corrections. The date of the meeting was corrected from June to September 2021
- MSG agreed with the Secretariat's proposal for the production of the 13th and 14th EITI Report for Liberia to be produced using the usual format-not the flexible reporting framework; also agreed on the amount of 143 thousand as production cost for both reports.
- The Body also endorsed the recruitment of all staff recently recruited by the Secretariat. A procurement Officer, Communication and Outreach Officer, Finance Director,

Administrative Manager, and Technical Officer were positions for which staff were recruited.

- MSG also endorsed the capacity building initiative that the Head of Secretariat had initiated but cautioned that the Secretariat takes into consideration the relevance of such short term trainings to the EITI implementation in Liberia
- The MSG through a general consensus passed a provisional approval to the LEITI Workplan-an 18 month detailed and costed document.
- Through an information provided by the Presiding Chair of the MSG, the Body agreed to write a letter of condolence to one of its members, Mr. Ojuku Nyenpan for the loss of his mother.
- Roosevelt Tule requested the Secretariat to document and forward to him, constraints at the LEITI that will need urgency.
- There were 13 participants-12 male, 1 female attending the meeting

ANNEX I

JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2021

LEITI SECRETARIAT UPDATE

REPORTS

- a. **Annual Progress Report-** the LEITI Secretariat has completed the first draft of the 2019 and 2020 Annual Progress Report and will share the same with members of the MSG for review and inputs before the close of October.

- b. **13th and 14th EITI Reports preparation for Liberia:** The Secretariat recommends that MSG approve the conventional reporting framework to produce Liberia's 13th and 14th EITI report. ***(Kindly see the Financial Proposal from BDO for the production of the 13th and 14th EITI report)***

VALIDATION

The LEITI Secretariat is currently working with Mr. Samson Tokpah to finalize the Pre- Validation Report for onward submission to the International Secretariat. As a reminder, Liberia's validation starts in January 2022.

BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP DISCLOSURE REGISTRY

The Secretariat is pleased to inform this august Body that Liberia has signed up to the Opening Extractives program – a joint program by the EITI and Open Ownership, which aims to accelerate the progress of Beneficial Ownership Transparency in 13 resource-rich countries. On September 21, 2021, the LEITI Secretariat, Liberia Revenue Authority, Liberia Business Registry, EITI International, and the Opening Ownership formally launched the program in Liberia to officially kick-off the program and raise awareness to wider stakeholders on the opportunities available through the program in Liberia.

The purpose of the launch was to mobilize stakeholders, create public awareness of the Opening Extractives program in Liberia, and explore how stakeholders can work together through the program to support beneficial ownership transparency reforms. The program runs for five years, and its main objective is to ensure that Liberia establishes a Beneficial Ownership Registry for the Extractive Sector within the timeframe. Participants at the launch included Government MACs,

Private Sector, Civil Society Organizations, Development Partners, Opening Extractive, and the International Secretariat.

MSG RECONSTITUTION

As a reminder, the current MSG tenure expires on October 19, 2021. With due cognizance, the MSG, in its last sitting, approved the period July 15- September for the CSOs and Private Sector Constituents to nominate their representatives for respective presidential appointments.

In line with the LEITI Act and MSG Policy Manual, the Secretariat has sent out letters to members of the CSOs and Private Sector informing them about the expiration of their tenure and the need to work with member organizations to nominate the representations on the next MSG. For the CSO's representation, the Secretariat has sent out letters to the following organizations: Publish What You Pay-Liberia, (Statutory), Liberia Labor Congress (Statutory Union of Workers), National Civil Society Council of Liberia, and the Mineral Civil Society Organizations of Liberia.

For the Private Sector, letters were sent to Liberia Timber Association (representing the Forestry Sector), Liberia Agriculture Companies Association (representing the Agriculture), the Liberia Chamber of Mines (representing the Mining Sector), and the Liberia Chamber of Commerce (representing the Oil and Gas Sector). Accordingly, the MSG approved the invitation to the Liberia Chamber of Commerce due to the lack of an Oil Company in Liberia.

However, the Liberia Chamber of Commerce declined the invitation indicating that it lacks the technical know-how and personnel to represent the institution on LEITI's MSG.

Also, the Liberia Chamber of Mines declined the invitation indicating that the institution currently has an interim leadership in place.

Consequently, the Secretariat requested a no-objection approval from the MSG to send an invitation to the Liberia Business Association to represent the Oil Sector.

The MSG granted the No-Objection authorization, and the letter of invitation was sent to the Liberia Business Association.

Regarding the Liberia Chamber of Mines' declination, the Secretariat has sent out a letter to the current Mining Sector representative on the Board, Mr. Marcus Wleh requesting him to work with other mining organizations to ensure their representation on the next MSG.

RECRUITMENT OF STAFF AT THE SECRETARIAT

The MSG, in its last sitting, approved the recruitment of staff for the positions of Finance Director, Technical Officer, Administrative Manager, Procurement Officer, Communications and Outreach Officer, and Deputy Head of Secretariat.

The Secretariat advertised the various positions via the Executive Mansion website and two local dailies for two weeks in executing your approval. At the close of the application deadline, and to have a transparent recruitment process that follows best practice, the Secretariat invited the General Services Agency, Liberia Institute of Public Administration, Governance Commission, and Liberia Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission to serve on the shortlisting committee. The shortlisting committee worked for a week and independently shortlisted three persons for each position for an interview. A total of 15 persons were shortlisted for the interview.

After that, the Secretariat invited the Public Procurement and Concessions Commission, Internal Audit Agency, and Liberia Anti- Corruption Commission to serve on the interview committee. The interview committee worked for two weeks and recommended the following persons: Finance Director: Mr. George Dennis, Administrative Manager: Mrs. Elizabeth Johnson Sirleaf, Procurement Officer: Madam N. Mucha Kumeh, Technical Officer: Mr. McDonald S. Kerl and Communication and Outreach Officer: Mr. Cedrick Kpadeh.

MSG CAPACITY BUILDING

Following the approved Workplan for 2020/2021, the Government and Civil Society constituencies have concluded the capacity building with their members. The Government Constituent members had their capacity building in Grand Bassa County. At the same time, the Civil Society Organization took their capacity building to Sinoe, Grand Kru, Grand Gedeh, Rivergee, and Maryland counties.

Funding for the Private Sector members' capacity building is available, and preparation for the event is underway, and it is expected to be conducted in mid-November 2021.

UPDATING THE MAINSTREAMING FEASIBILITY STUDY

The Project Management Unit at the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning has concluded the procurement process and has selected a consultant to update the Mainstreaming Reporting. The report for this task is expected at the close of the year.

RECONSTRUCTION OF LEITI'S BILLBOARD

The Project Management Unit at the Ministry of Finance and Development has completed the procurement process and awarded a contract to a printing firm to construct LEITI's billboard throughout the country. In Montserrado County, billboards have been erected at the following locations: 12th Street, Sinkor, Freeport of Liberia, and Smell-No-Taste community.

The firm has moved into the remaining counties across the country to construct the billboards. The process is expected to end at the close of November 2021.

UPDATING LEITI'S COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

The Project Management Unit at the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning has completed the procurement process for consultants to update LEITI's Communication Strategy.

The consultants are expected to begin work this month, and an updated communication strategy is expected at the close of November 2021.

RESTRUCTURING OF LEITI'S WEBSITE

The Project Management Unit at the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning has completed the procurement process for the firm that will restructure LEITI's website. The LEITI Secretariat expects to have a restructured website at the close of December 2021.

DISSEMINATION OF LEITI'S 9TH, 10TH, AND 11TH SUMMARY REPORT

The Secretariat has commenced disseminating its 9th, 10th, and 11th Summary Report across the country. The first teams, blended with members of the MSG, have completed the dissemination exercise in Cape Mount, Gbarpolu, Bomi Grand Bassa, Rivercess, Margibi, and Montserrado counties.

The remaining two teams will depart on October 20, 2021, for Lofa, Bong, Nimba, Sinoe, Grand Gedeh, Grand Kru, Rivergee, and Maryland counties. An MSG member will be represented on each of the teams.

CSO CAPACITY BUILDING

The Bank has approved the Secretariat's concept note along with the budget for this activity. A team from the Secretariat is expected to depart Monrovia on October 22, 2021, for an assessment mission. The assessment aims to identify CSOs in the counties that will benefit from the capacity-building process. A complete evaluation report will be submitted to the Project Management Unit at the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning.

GRANT TO CSOs

The Secretariat has submitted a concept note to provide a mini-grant to CSOs to the Project Management Unit at the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning for review. As per the approved project concept note, the grant will be given to CSOs trained during the CSO's capacity-building event. The purpose of the grant is to allow the trained CSO's to conduct training of their members around EITI implementation in Liberia.

STAFF CAPACITY BUILDING

A concept note and budget have been submitted to the Project Management Unit at the Ministry of Finance and Development for review and approval. Staff members are expected to go on short-term training programs in specialized fields outside of the country.

STAFF SALARY

The Secretariat has developed a new salary structure for staff at the Secretariat and has shared the same with the Finance and Administration Committee members.

FUNDING

AfDB: The AfDB is the only development partner that has a grant running for the LEITI. The grant is being used for the following activities: Dissemination of LEITI's 9th, 10th & 11th Summary Report, Updating of LEITI's Communication Strategy, Erection of LEITI's Billboards throughout the country, MSG Capacity Building, Staff Capacity Building, Updating the Mainstreaming Feasibility Study Report, Purchase of Beneficial Ownership Registry Software, CSOs capacity building, Grant to CSOs, MSG Capacity Building and Reconstruction of the LEITI website.

MINISTRY OF FINANCE:

The Secretariat submitted a funding request to the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning to support EITI implementation and Secretariat's operation in USD 50,000.00, and the Minister has approved this amount.

AUDIT

The GAC is currently auditing the LEITI Secretariat for FY 2017-2021.