

**MINUTES**  
**EMERGENCY LEITI MULTI-STAKEHOLDERS STEERING GROUP MEETING**  
**HELD AT THE BOULEVARD HOTEL, 13TH STREET, SINKOR**  
**MONROVIA, LIBERIA • SATURDAY DECEMBER 28, 2019**

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**PRESENT IN ATTENDANCE**

**GOL**

C. Mike Doryen	FDA
Thomas Doe Nah	LRA
Samuel Tweah	MFDPA
Frank Musa Dean	MOJ
Jeremiah Sokan	EPA
Halala Kokulo	MOA
Latim Datthong	MOE

**CSO**

Winston Wreh	Labour Congress
Daniel Nyankonah	PUL
Fallah B. Kamara	MICSOL
Sayor E. Wahtoson	PWYP

**Private Sector**

Clarence Tay	Atlantic Resource
Ekema Witherspoon	LTA

**Partners/Observers**

Samuel Summerville	GIZ
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**Others**

Nathaniel F, McGill	MOS
B. Al Dennis	LRA
Edrick Noah	MOJ
Varney W. Gbernay	MICSOL
Ojuku Nyenpan	MFDPA
Ernest Clarke	MOA
Joseph Tally	FDA
Edward Kamara	FDA

**LEITI Secretariat**

Jeffery N. Yates	OIC/LEITI
Cedrick W. Kpadeh	Comms consultant
Sam S. Tokpah-	Technical Consultant

**Preliminaries** – An emergency meeting of the LEITI Multi-stakeholders Steering Group (MSG) was held on Saturday, December 28, 2019 at the Boulevard Palace Hotel on 13<sup>th</sup> street, Sinkor. The meeting was to update the MSG on series of activities relative to the progress of the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> EITI reports on Liberia as well as the presentation for approval or indorsement of the 2019/2020 annual workplan and the combined 2017/2018 annual activity report. The meeting commenced at 10:27 AM with Mr. C. Mike Doryan of the Forestry Development Authority (FDA) presiding. The presiding having observed a quorum called the meeting to order with a request to the Officer –In –Charge of the LEITI Secretariat, Jeffery Yates to read out and present the agenda.

**Adoption of Agenda:** A seven item agenda was presented to the body for adoption. With no change made, it was adopted through a motion from Mr. Ekema Witherspoon

**Opening Prayer:** prayer was offered by a volunteer member of the MSG.

**Welcome Remark:** In his welcome statement, the Presiding reminded the MSG of the critical point in the history of the LEITI especially as the Country was just days away from meeting a crucial deadline for the publication of its 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> reports and the validation of the Country thereafter. He extolled the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning for the support to the LEITI thus far and called on the Government to continue its unflinching support to the process that could see Liberia pull through its current state in the EITI implementation. He noted that the Consultant hired to see the Country through the period was in the meeting to provide update on some key issues relative to validation as well as the presentation of several reports and the status of the Country in these regards.

**Self-Introduction:** Self introduction was made across the table with prominent figures including the Ministers of Finance and Development Planning, Justice and State for Presidential Affairs all participating.

**Update from the Secretariat:** The Technical Consultant having been introduced by the Presiding, took the floor to firstly present three key documents for the MSG approval and again seek the MSG reaffirmation of the data certification procedure. The three key documents included the EITI Annual Report (2017 &18), Annual Progress Report and the workplan. In his presentation, the Technical Consultant said tremendous progress has been made in a relatively short period of time for the development of the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> EITI Reports amidst some difficult circumstances. He said usually it takes nine months to prepare such reports but from October 2019 till date, a draft report was already in sight and should be published by or before the deadline of December 31, 2019. He thanked all for their participation and reminded those still in line with contributions towards the final report to remain committed.

For the Annual Progress Report, which mainly catalogues activities of the Secretariat annually, he informed the Body that the LEITI has been lacking behind for the past two years-2017-18. The Technical Consultant reported that a hundred-page report has been produced, sent to members of the MSG and should be approved for publication before December 31, 2019. For the Workplan, he reminded the MSG that it was a living document that is amendable over progression but it too was necessary to be published before deadline day. He emphasized that in accordance with the new EITI requirements which goes into effect in January 2020, the current workplan is comprehensive of some key issues like the Beneficial Ownership Disclosure (BOD) and Mainstreaming that need adequate financial support. He pointed out that the EITI is now moving beyond paper-based reports, to automated which Liberia is still lacking behind.

Finally, he requested the MSG to reaffirm that senior managers are generally tasked to complete the reporting templates so an electronic submission from one such individuals must be considered as meeting the data certification procedure. After his presentation, the Presiding then opened the floor for questions and suggestions. While folks were running through some observations especially from the workplan, Mr. Ekema Witherspoon of the private sector bloc suggested that all three documents receive provisional approvals since the Secretariat was running to meet a tight deadline, and that the Independent Administrator should accept that senior managers are generally tasked to complete the reporting templates, hence, an electronic submission from one such

individuals must be considered as meeting the data certification procedure.. He then stated a motion that was seconded for the Body to grant provisional approval for all three documents and accept the data certification procedure. By this, the MSG agreed as was requested by the Technical Consultant.

**Validation:** Here, the Technical Consultant reminded the MSG that in the EITI process, having an excellent report does not guaranteed successful validation as there are signs that Liberia may produce an excellent report yet get red in governance even though during the last validation the Country got satisfactory progress in such. He then pinpointed some perceived missteps observed so far:

- a. Esiaka Konneh of the Gold &Diamond brokers Association was nominated to the MSG via the Executive Mansion Website but has no letter to that effect at the level of the Secretariat. Besides, Mr. Konneh has served the MSG more than twice; his current appointment is his third which is unlawful.
- b. Ekema Witherspoon's letter of appointment presented him under civil Society but he is actually from the private sector; the Executive Mansion needs to correct that;
- c. Maadam Cecelia Daneweli of Publish What You Pay was re-nominated to the MSG but her tenure has expired since 2015. Her organization has since not held fresh elections, therefore, a resolution reaffirming her should be solicited.

The presiding again opened the floor for discussion and after several suggestions were made and considered, the MSG agreed on the following actions:

- a. That the Secretariat provide to the Ministry of States for Presidential Affairs, the names of the organization or individual to replace Esiaka Konneh as well the corrected portfolio for Mr. Witherspoon
- b. That the Head of the LRA, Mr. Thomas Doe Nah works with the membership of the PWYP to get a resolution reaffirming Madam Daneweli as representative to the MSG pending a new election. The MSG was informed by the Technical Consultant that there is a resolution in progress in that regard.

### **AOB**

Under AOB, the Technical Consultant recommended that representations from the level of the private sector be ideally of higher profile to encourage participation. He observed that sending lower ranking officials at the level of the MSG was discouraging high profile officials from the Government circle from attending meetings thus making the score card really discouraging.

For his part, Mr. Thomas Doe Nah of the LRA noted that it will be difficult for higher ranking officials to participate fully but that proxies should be consistent and must not have proxies sending proxies.

To this the Minister of Finance and Development Planning, Samuel Tweah advised that the MSG identifies an authentic cause for the low participation of higher-ranking officials so that it can be addressed as soon as possible. He suggested and it was agreed that the Secretariat schedules and circulates the meeting calendar for the entire 2020 so that they can follow.

The next issue under this session was the issue with staffing at the Secretariat. The Technical Consultant told the MSG that the Secretariat is facing key employment problems as there were seven staff members brought in during the tenure of Mr. Gabriel Nyenkan that were not on payroll but have been at the Secretariat for the last two years. Additionally, according to the Technical Consultant, three other staff members are on payroll but did not go through the normal recruitment and vetting process. The Technical Consultant also advised the MSG to begin the process of recruiting the Head and Deputy Head of Secretariat. The MSG agreed that the Finance and Administration Committee should work with the Secretariat in finalizing the Job description for both positions.

Mr. Ekema Witherspoon disclosed also that the seven personnel had work portfolios that are outside of the institutions scope.

Several suggestions were made across the floor but the MSG agreed through a suggestion from Mr. Ojuku Nyenpan of the MFDP that the Secretariat collaborate with the Finance and Administration Committee of the MSG to draw out plans that will alleviate the matter in a period of two weeks.

After this decision the Presiding then solicited remarks from the ministers of State and Finance respectively. Minister Nathaniel McGill reaffirmed Government's commitment to the EITI process and promised to work closely with the LEITI when needed.

For his part, Finance and Development Planning Minister, Samuel Tweah said he looks forward to more interactions with the LEITI and promised to frequently attend meetings. He reminded the Secretariat to do a calendar of meeting schedules that he will help circulate.

In closing, the Presiding thanked his colleagues for the support during his service as Chair of the MSG while the Minister of Finance was busy resuscitating the Economy. He promised to step aside in March when Liberia shall have crossed the delisting for the Minister to take his proper seat as chair of the MSG.

With laughter and cheers, the meeting was adjourned at 11:22 AM

### **Summary of Key Points**

- MSG gave approvals the 2017/18 Annual Progress Report, the 2019/2020 workplan and the revised data certification procedure

- Finance Committee of the MSG to work with the LEITI Secretariat to come up with resolution plan for several staff members at the Secretariat; committee to report in the next two weeks
- PWYP to obtain resolution reaffirming Madam Cecelia Daneweli as its representative to the MSG
- LEITI Secretariat to advance recommendations regarding MSG governance issues to the Ministry of State for presidential Affairs

**Date and time of next MSG meeting:** There was no date for next meeting announced