

MINUTES
REGULAR LEITI MULTI-STAKEHOLDERS STEERING GROUP MEETING
HELD IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE LEITI, OLD BUDGET BUREAU BUILDING
● REDEMPTION
ROAD, MONROVIA, LIBERIA ● TUESDAY OCTOBER 31, 2017

PRESENT IN ATTENDANCE

GOL

Edward Kamara
Stephen Dorbor
Richmond Jallah

FDA
MLME
NOCAL

CSO

Daniel H. Allison Sr.
Frances R. Deigh Greaves
Flomo Golaryan
Ezekiel Johnson

PWYP/WANEP
NCSCCL
RRF
LLC

Private Sector

Laurentine H. Bass
John S. Deah
Esiaka Konneh
Victor Borbor

ExxonMobil
LTA
Gold & Diamond Brokers
WCL

Partners/Observers

Kofi Ireland
Christoph Buchberger
Collette M. Clark

UNMIL
GIZ
US Embassy

Others

LEITI Secretariat

Konah D. Karmo
Myer W. Saye, Sr.
Cedrick W. Kpadeh
Joy S. Attah

HOS/LEITI
DHOS/LEITI
LEITI
LEITI

Preliminaries - The Regular meeting of the LEITI Multi-stakeholders Steering Group (MSG) was held on Wednesday, October 31, 2017 in the LEITI Conference Room having been rescheduled from the 25th due to the lack of quorum previously. The meeting Commenced at 11:16 AM, with the Head of Secretariat Mr. Konah D. Karmo calling the meeting to order after a quorum was attained through roll call. He reminded members of the MSG of the significant role they have to play especially regarding the scooping report and the need to be proactive now that the Country expected to be reevaluated in less than 18 months. He also informed the body the Liberia Labor Congress has written to replace Mr. Ezekiel Johnson but that Mr. Johnson will continue to attend until the tenure of the current MSG ends.

After this, he turned the mantle to the presiding, the proxy co-chair of the MSG, Honorable Stephen Dorbor to preside as usual. The presiding again welcomed members admonishing them to remain engage with the process with the usual vigor that they have always exhibited over the years. The agenda was then put on the floor for adoption

Adoption of Agenda: A nine item agenda was presented to the body for adoption. With no change made, it was adopted through a motion.

Draft Minutes: The draft minutes of August 16 and September 20, 2017 Regular Meetings were adopted by the MSG with minor changes as follows:

- The presiding suggested that the names be identified with institutions at the first mention of the said person in the August 16 minutes
- Kofi Ireland of UNMIL suggested and was agreed that the September 20, 2017 minutes have inserted the Summary of Key Points and that it also states clearly why the Scooping report was not approved

Matters Arising: There were no substantial matters arising

Secretariat Update: The HoS presented the Secretariat update summarizing LEITI Secretariat's activities for the period **August 15 to October 23, 2017. See annex 1 for the update.**

Discussion of Secretariat update: Following the update, the Presiding thanked the HoS and declared the update opened for discussions. The below are highlights:

Al Dennis (LRA) asked about the content of the matrix relative to the number of contracts summarized

HOS: There are 28 contracts making up the matrix arranged according to the Counties of operation. This was done in 2015 with help from the GIZ. The Liberia Accountability and Voice Initiative (LAVI) help to reprint copies and sponsored dissemination of same across the Counties named in the update

Kofi Ireland (UNMIL): We still have issues with data collection from the Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA), Forestry Development Authority (FDA) and the Ministry of Commerce and Industries (MoCI) even after our engagements with them. Let us not keep it open ended but attach timelines, we need to support the Secretariat to bring this to a close.

HoS: Some of the information here was before our engagement with these entities, at the moment, we have had a substantial collection from them though there a still few issues. There have been significant improvements but we will keep reminding them.

Al Dennis: LRA does not provide production but export data; it is the ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy (MLME) that should be providing such data.

Minister Stephen Dorbor (MLME): To be frank with you, there are certain areas like gold and diamond production at the artisanal level, production is practically for export. Of course everyone is aware that we are trying to finalize the sector to make sure that we can capture production on –sight, but we are still a little far from that because it requires lot of inputs from the different stakeholders. We currently have a well-defined program but the funding; right now it is only the GIZ that is supporting with UNMIL and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) showing some interests lately.

At this point the HoS intimated that the Secretariat was collaborating with the GIZ for a development Advisor to help the Secretariat but that the Secretariat after a careful review of the candidates have rejected the two nominees for now. He however told the body that a full detail will be in the next Secretariat update.

With that said, the Presiding ended the discussion on the Secretariat Update and motion was made for adoption.

SECTORS UPDATE

There were no updates from any of the sectors. This was due to a suggestion from Kofi Ireland that every sector provides updates as a unit rather than individual members of the sectors. He noted that this will defeat the intent of the creation of the agenda item. His view was unanimously endorsed by the body and thus, the Presiding instructed all sectors to compile their updates and file same to the Secretariat two weeks before a meeting sitting.

Also, the HoS took this time to formally complain to the MSG what he termed as the enormous difficulty faced by the Secretariat working with the FDA in the data collection process of the Scoping report especially with Mr. Edward Kamara who sits on the MSG.

The presiding afterwards asked Mr. Kamara for a brief response stating that the matter would be resolved after the meeting.

For his part, Mr. Edward Kamara blamed computing priorities at the FDA for his actions. In response, Mr. John Deah of the Liberia Timber Association (LTA) admonished his colleagues to take the EITI process serious as it is far above individual entities' interest but the Country's.

Report by the Governance, Ethics and Membership Committee

Mr. Kofi Ireland of UNMIL chaired this committee. He presented four draft Scoping Report-9th EITI Report for Liberia for the MSG endorsement and approval. Mr. Ireland told the MSG that the document was still a work in process but that most of the substantives have been addressed and those outstanding issues cannot outshine its endorsement. He urged the Secretariat to continuously work with the Independent Administrator to get outstanding issues on proper footing. He described the document as fairly good tool that still has room for improvement.

After the presentation, the presiding put it on the floor for discussion, comments and or motion for endorsement.

Christoph Buchberger of the GIZ intimated the need for the Independent Administrator to provide through an outline how the report address outstanding issues especially those corrective measures recommended after the validation. He suggested that such plan be presented at the next sitting.

To this, the HoS agreed but said while the Secretariat will do its utmost best to address most of the corrective actions in the 9th report, it still has a chance to develop another report before the next validation in November of 2018. He said those that might not be addressed now could be in the next report.

A motion made by Mr. John Deah was interrupted by an objection from Mr. Al Dennis of LRA that the document did not have any timeline for the execution of queries as enshrined in the document. He said it was not prudent to endorse a document of such nature without specified timelines

The HoS responded by stating that the report was previously circulated for all members inputs and besides, the issue raised was already addressed in the document. He reminded the MSG again that this document was a pace setter and that the Secretariat remains committed to making sure that all necessary required measures are taken. He n pointed out that what the 9th report fails to address, will be frantically addressed in the 10th report.

With that clarity, Mr. Dennis withdrew his objection and Mr. Deah restated his motion that was seconded by Mr. Esiaka Konneh of Gold and Diamond Brokers Association thus, the MSG endorsed the report.

AOB

Under AOB, Kofi Ireland made two suggestions and an inquiry:

- That the Secretariat inquires about the conspicuous absence of Emmanuel Yarkpazuo of Golden Veroleum (GVL) and representative of the Agriculture sector. He said the continuous absence is creating an information gap in the sector relative to the EITI process and LEITI activities;
- That the Secretariat releases the scorecards. He noted that this will help encourage meeting attendance;
- That the Secretariat provided update on the reconstitution of the MSG as discussed in the August 2017 sitting.

The presiding asked the HoS to check the MSG manual regarding absenteeism. But the HoS suggested that the Secretariat be given time to contact Mr. Yarkpazuo through an email to establish cause of his absence. He said such information will be provided in the next sitting.

Regarding the reconstitution of the MSG, there were several recommendations across the floor including one from Mr. Esiaka Konneh that the reconstitution process be put on hold until after the elections. But the presiding interjected that the reconstitution process goes as planned so that all will be set regardless of what happens during the presidential runoff elections. He encouraged members to prioritize the LEITI activities noting that this will be a push to Liberia's quest to make satisfactory marks in its next validation.

With that said, the meeting was adjourned at 12: 58 GMT

Summary of Key Points

- Several corrections made to the minutes of August 16 and September 20, 2017
- Draft Scoping Report-9th EITI Report for Liberia endorsed
- Secretariat to probe absence of GVL's Emmanuel Yarkpazuo
- Sector heads to compile and send sectorial feedbacks to Secretariat two weeks to sittings
- Liberia Labor Congress replaced Ezekiel Johnson
- 18 persons in attendance

Date and time of next MSG meeting: The next MSG was scheduled for Wednesday, November 22, 2017 giving that the last Wednesday will be a national holiday in Liberia