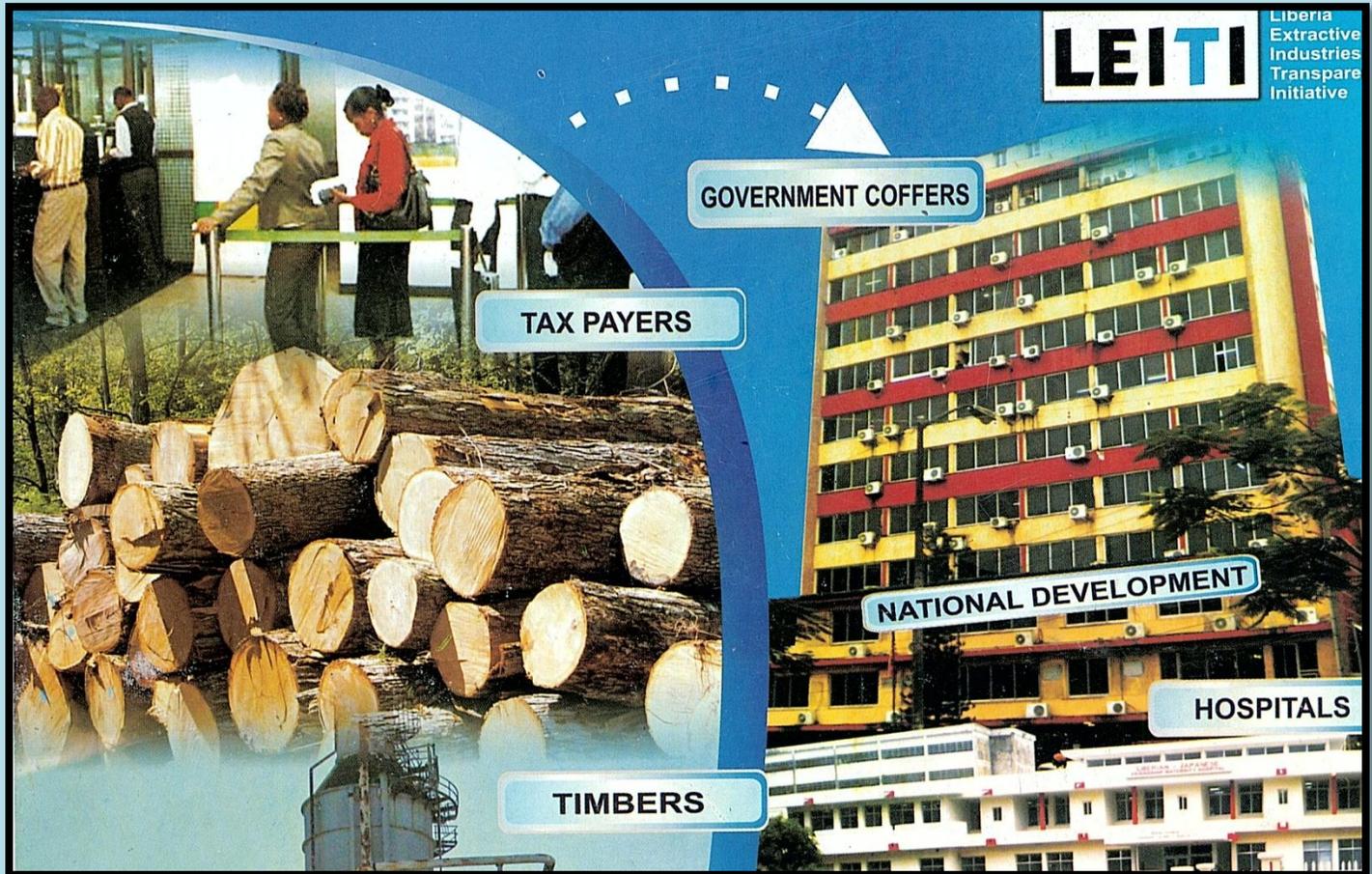


Bridging the Disconnect...



Why Communication Is Crucial To Promoting Extractive Transparency?

A Study of Citizens' Perception of the LEITI Process

November, 2011



Authors: Lawrence Randall, Klonnious Blamo with contributions from Molley V. Paasewe

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ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	African Development Bank
AMEU	American Methodist Episcopal University
CSO	Civil Society Organization
EITI	Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative
ELBC	External Liberia Broadcasting Corporation
FAQ	Frequency Asked Questions
FM	Frequency Modulation
GOL	Government of Liberia
LAC	Liberia Agriculture Company
LEITI	Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative
LMC	Liberia Media Center
UL	University of Liberia
UMU	United Methodist University
UNESCO	United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
PPS	Probability Proportionality to Size
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This work is the combined effort of the Liberia EITI team, dedicated LMC volunteers and our team of expert reviewers led by Mr. Molley Paasewe. Undoubtedly, a work of this quality would not have been possible without hard work and commitment.

While we must acknowledge the assignment lasted longer than anticipated, it is our expressed opinion that the quality of this effort has vindicated our collective industry. For this, we are grateful to the Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency for not only providing the funding that made this research possible but the opportunity to have been involved in this amazing piece of undertaking.

We at LMC believe that transparency in the extractive sector is crucial to addressing the primary root-causes of conflict, especially conflict associated with resource extraction. Transparency is a viable tool to combating public corruption. While transparency requires full disclosure and the sharing of information, many governments and private companies working in the extractive sector have done little to address issues of access to information and public scrutiny. Hence, the Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative has been heralded by pro-transparency and anti-corruption advocates as the ideal platform through which resource money can be easily traced and other compliance regulations can be effectively monitored.

This publication mirrors an examination of the effort the LEITI team has undertaken in making sure the general public and specific target groups are properly informed and engaged with the process. It examines the level of knowledge across various stakeholder groups and provides detail analysis based on a review of documentations and interviews.

We hope the results of this research will be used to inform the redesign and development of a robust communication strategy for the LEITI.

In conclusion, the Management of LMC expresses appreciation to the staff who worked on this assignment, notably Klonnus Blamo, Christian Brown, and Wesley George employees who did a magnificent job in organizing the research and coordinating the publication.

The project finally extends appreciation to many individuals for their criticism of the literature and the useful insights and twists they provided to further sharpen the focus of the work and lighten the perspectives.

T. Lawrence Randall

Executive Director, Liberia Media Center

Foreword

The Liberian government made Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative implementation an integral part of its National Anti-Corruption Strategy and a key cornerstone of its Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS), when it established the Liberia EITI in May 2007, becoming the 14th African country¹ to officially join the international EITI. Our work since then has focused on promoting access to information, citizens' engagement and participation around the EITI process in Liberia with the overarching objective of promoting increased accountability and transparency amongst LEITI stakeholders.

To fully gauge the level of progress made by LEITI in translating the implementation of its programs to citizens, LEITI in 2008 engaged the Liberian Media Center to design a communication strategy spanning 2008 – 2011. The strategy was aimed at supporting the Secretariat to effectively and efficiently disseminate its messages through the use of diverse mass media channels. This study which is an offshoot of the LMC collaboration seeks to determine information and knowledge gaps amongst stakeholders and various interest groups on issues relating to the extractive sector and activities of the Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. More specifically, it seeks to gauge citizens' awareness levels of the LEITI Process and how effective is the communication strategy in meeting this objective. The study also indicates the most trusted information sources of the people and their information priority needs regarding the LEITI process, and presents a general perception of how ordinary people view the process and how they can support the initiative.

It examines all the activities that were implemented and how they have increased stakeholders understanding of and participation in the process. The strategy was prepared by the Liberia Media Center and implemented by the LEITI Secretariat.

In view of the foregoing, we seize this opportunity to congratulate the LMC for undertaking such a milestone assignment, which we hope will go a long way in further enhancing

¹ <http://www.afdb.org/en/news-and-events/article/liberia-joins-extractive-industries-transparency-initiative-eiti-1580/>

citizen's perception about our work, and ensure transparency and accountability in the extractive industries. We also hope that the publication will enhance the work of other institutions with similar mandate.

Finally, it would be a costly omission, if we fail to acknowledge the quality of work done by our predecessors in shaping the strategy, conceiving this post-strategy research and ultimately seeing the report finalized. These efforts only demonstrate the level of industry and hard work that have been and continue to be invested by Liberians in seeing our extractive sector transparent and working for the people.

Samson Tokpah

Head of Secretariat

Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (LEITI)

1. INTRODUCTION

a. LEITI Overview:

The Extractive Industries Initiative was announced by UK Prime Minister Tony Blair at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, September 2002. It aims to increase transparency over payments by companies to governments and government-like entities, as well as transparency over revenues by those host country governments. EITI is expanding globally with more than 11 countries now EITI compliant. Over twenty-four other countries around the world have publicly endorsed its “Principles and Criteria” and are recognized as “EITI Candidate Countries”.

EITI is a global standard that promotes revenue transparency. It has a robust yet flexible methodology for monitoring and reconciling companies payments and government revenues at the country level. The process is overseen by participants from the government, companies, and national civil society organizations. The EITI Board and the International Secretariat are the guardians of the EITI methodology internationally².

In May 2007, the Liberia Government endorsed the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative or EITI, and was subsequently accepted in September 2007 as an EITI candidate country. Its overarching mandate is to ensure the disclosure and publication, on a disaggregated basis, of all material payments made by the private sector to all agencies, entities and levels of the Government, and all corresponding revenues received by all agencies, entities and levels of the Government from the private sector.

Since endorsing the EITI 2007, Liberia has gained international acclaim as one of the best performing EITI compliant countries. Like most of the EITI countries, the Liberia Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (LEITI) is directed by the Multi-stakeholder Steering Group comprising representatives of the Government of Liberia (GOL), led by the Ministry of Finance; civil society representatives, representatives of the private sector to include

²LEITI brochure

companies operating in the oil, mining and forestry sectors³; and representatives of multilateral institutions including the World Bank, African Development Bank, IMF, DFID, and the US Government. The steering committee is charged with making policy relating to and guiding the implementation of the LEITI.

The LEITI Secretariat (“Secretariat”) carries out the day-to-day activities of the Steering Group and provides required administrative and logistical support. The core objective of the LEITI is to (1) Ensure transparency in the award of mineral, oil, gas and forestry rights and the exploitation of those resources for the ultimate good of the citizenry, (2) Ensure accountability in allocation of taxes and royalties paid by companies and concession holders and revenues received by government, and (3) Provide opportunity for independent, credible and professional audit of published revenue information from both government and the private sector sources.

LEITI has made huge strides since joining EITI countries. Liberia is the first and only country in the world to include forestry and agriculture in its EITI program in addition to the mining and oil sectors.

Liberia is the first to include contracts transparency in its EITI program; Liberia is the first EITI country to publish an EITI report and complete EITI validation within the two year period set by the EITI Board. Liberia is the second EITI implementing country to have a dedicated EITI Legislation. Liberia is among few EITI countries with comprehensive strategy for communicating the EITI. To cap off these achievements, Liberia won the best EITI Implementation Country Award in 2009.

³ LEITI brochure: While logging is not an extractive sector, it has been included under the LEITI in order that revenues from the forestry sector are properly accounted for and not mismanaged as was done in the past

b. Background to the study

This study is the outcome of the “Communications Strategy”⁴ implementation process that began in May 2008, designed as a platform for outreach and engagement of the public through the use of diverse mass media channels. The strategy was prepared by the Liberia Media Center and implemented by the LEITI Secretariat.

The strategy sought to broadly promote access to information, citizens’ engagement and participation around the EITI process in Liberia with the overarching objective of promoting increased accountability and transparency amongst LEITI stakeholders involved with disclosure and compliance issues.

More specifically, the strategy was developed to support the LEITI Secretariat in communicating the program with a coherent, organized and results-focused approach to its key stakeholders and the general public.

It proposed a sequential methodology for implementing the various communication activities which centered around five key outputs starting with a baseline study to determine the level of knowledge base amongst stakeholders with the view of setting a realistic benchmark for success.

The strategy called for the use of various mass media channels and communication support interventions including use of radio, television, town-hall style sensitization events, school outreach, web-based tools including website, and e-newsletter, and more crucial, the appointment of an in-house communication specialist to assist in rolling out the program and tracking the progress of the strategy.

Nonetheless, to establish the impact of the strategy, critical questions must be answered. To what extent was investment made towards meeting the “strategic communication” objectives? Who were targeted? In what manner and form were the respondents targeted? What has been the overall strategy in communicating to the various target groups? What was the most profound impact yield of the exercise? These questions are crucial in

⁴LEITI Communication Strategy brochure

assessing whether or not knowledge and awareness of the LEITI has brought any form of value to the process.

After three years of implementation, this study takes stock of how far the communication efforts have advanced knowledge and awareness levels amongst key stakeholders and the ordinary public. It examines all the activities that were implemented and how they have increased stakeholders understanding of and participation in the process.

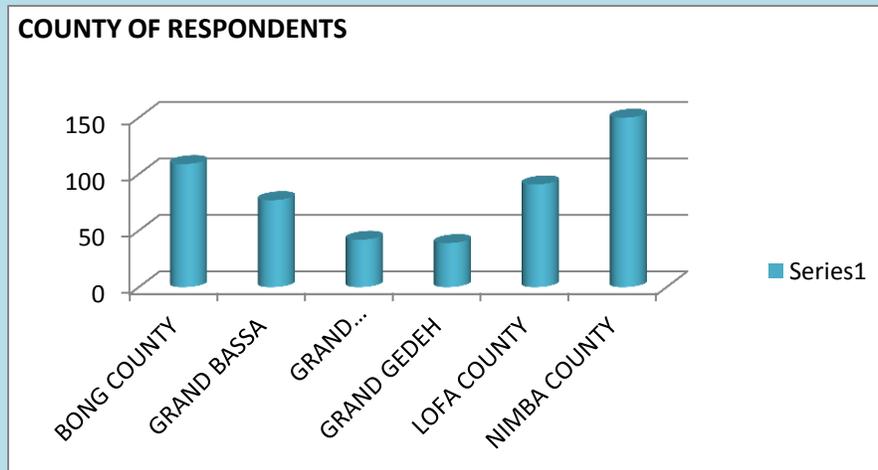
c. Objective of the Study

The study seeks to determine information and knowledge gaps amongst stakeholders and various interest groups on issues relating to the extractive sector and activities of the Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. More specifically, it seeks the following:

- To gauge citizens awareness levels of the LEITI process and determine the effectiveness of the communication strategy employed in disseminating LEITI messages
- To establish the most trusted information sources of the people and capture the information priority needs of communities regarding the LEITI process
- To present a general perception of people about the process and outline how they can support the initiative
- To show how people receive and use information about the process, among others.

d. Study Scope, Methodology and Limitation

The study covered six counties including Nimba, Bong, Grand Bassa, Grand Gedeh, Grand Cape Mount and Lofa. The counties were selected based on the volume of communication initiatives LEITI undertook in those areas. As indicated in the graph below, Nimba County had the highest number of selected respondents of 212, followed by Bong County with 153 respondents. Lofa County had 125 respondents and Grand Bassa County 103. Grand Cape Mount and Grand Gedeh Counties had 57 and 59 selected respondents respectively.



The study utilized both quantitative and qualitative research techniques in order to provide conclusions based upon key research questions emanating from the objectives of the study. A multi-staged sampling method was employed in conducting the survey. At each level, a stratified sampling method based on probability proportionality to size (PPS) was used. The PPS method assigns probabilities to each stratum or level of the study based upon the proportion of the stratum in relation to the total sample size selected.

The field survey was conducted over a period of eight days and involved 508 respondents. Twelve field researchers were involved with data collection and documentation review⁵.

A key limitation of the study was the scope of the research. It covered six counties and thus failed to generate baseline information from other counties that could be useful in future assessments. This was a strategy agreed by the Consultant and LEITI due to budget constraints.

As in urban centers, most respondents in rural areas were apprehensive or reluctant to conduct the interviews. This culture of silence was even pronounced at a number of extractive companies and local government agencies. Women were especially less inclined to talk and in some instances, respondents demanded compensation to talk to the interviewers. The general lack of knowledge of the purpose of surveys and public opinion polling seems to have undermined the process. This lack of education on baseline studies led to a lot of negative insinuations from the respondents, especially people working at

⁵ See annex for detailed methodology

extractive companies. In some cases, field workers were turned down, notably at the Liberia Agriculture Company (LAC) in Buchanan.

Literacy was another factor that affected the polling process. While the interviewers were taught to speak in simple Liberian English, a number of respondents were just far below understanding basic issues and provided a lot of contradictory responses thus invalidating a number of the questionnaires.

e. Executive Summary

This study was undertaken to assess the level of progress made by LEITI in the implementation of its communication program and outreach activities. The strategy was designed in 2008 to support the Secretariat public information and awareness campaign. It was conducted in six counties, where the secretariat had carried out most of its sensitization activities. The results should be viewed primarily as a baseline outcome than an assessment of performance since this is the first study to be commissioned prior to the design and after the adoption of the communication strategy.

The study key finding was that though sizeable investment (\$ 349, 888.21 USD) has been made in supporting outreach, communication and public engagement activities of LEITI, awareness levels remain generally low. Men were more likely to be informed about the LEITI initiative than women and people between the age group of 27-38 were better informed than other age groups. Students and local government officials had better understanding of the program and its purpose. It was established that low levels of education was directly correlated with respondents understanding and awareness of the program, making the need for customized programs to address the needs of different target groups bearing in mind group dynamics.

From the findings, the EITI process in Liberia seems widely associated with the mining industry, with most respondents not knowing the oil, forestry and agriculture sectors are part of the program. Only 14% of respondents know there is a “Secretariat” that supports the program implementation.

Though awareness was generally low across all demographics, people overall perception of the program was good. More people felt the information provided through the program was useful for practical purposes even though a lot more respondent said it was difficult to understand some of the information that LEITI was communicating. LEITI usually produces voluminous reports and even the summary reports are very technical and difficult to breakdown.

On media penetration, radio accounts for the primary medium through which people access information on the process, notwithstanding, this medium has not been used in a robust and sustained manner. Since 2008, 2009 when the Secretariat conducted intensive public awareness through radio programs, there has been minimum media engagement activities. In fact, radio and airing spending account for roughly 10% of the communication and outreach budget, while training, capacity building and meetings account for over 50% of the budget.

This has greatly affected awareness levels and the penetration of the program across different demographic groups.

The study found that the gains and accomplishments of the LEITI initiative are not properly communicated. Fewer people are aware of these accomplishments. Communicating success stories and accomplishments is crucial to facilitating public understanding of the nature of work LEITI is doing and how it is being received. Furthermore, it provides an incentive for people to explore the work of LEITI, thereby gaining an appreciation of the commitment of the various stakeholders including the Government to the promotion of transparency and fiscal discipline in the extractive sector.

Though the communication strategy recommended the hiring of a communications specialist, LEITI to date has no dedicated communications person, leaving the task with other staff members. This has affected media and communication flow and could justifiably account for the weak level of penetration the program has had despite the stunning successes it has recorded. A drawn-out and robust communication strategy using mainly radio should be developed to increase awareness and penetration levels. Also in rolling out

the strategy, it is important to maintain an awareness of the environment and the approaches to employ, especially in light of the mixed results on knowledge level across the different demographic groups.

2. FINDINGS

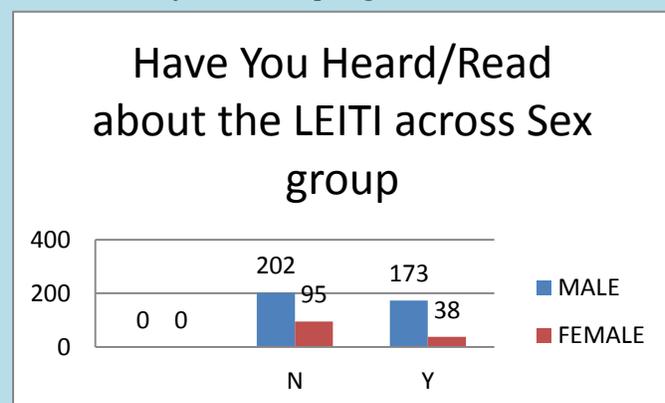
a. Citizens Awareness Level

-General Knowledge Levels

To determine the extent of respondents' knowledge about the LEITI process, the study tested and correlated knowledge across different indicators. General knowledge level was analyzed using key awareness indicators (fully aware, aware, slightly aware and not aware). These were further disaggregated by gender, age, occupation, education levels and EITI thematic focus. Awareness of LEITI achievements was further tested to evaluate respondents' retention of LEITI gains including knowledge of LEITI successes and milestones, the law and the secretariat. With Liberia making stunning progress since enrolling into the program, the study sought to establish if these gains were being properly communicated.

This section of the study begins with the key question of whether respondents have heard, read or seen anything about LEITI. 41.5% of respondents said they had either heard or read about LEITI, while the majority 297 persons or 58.5% of all respondents said they had never heard or read about LEITI. Given the fact that the respondents were chosen quite loosely, this represents a strong indication of visibility for the program. However, it is instructive to note, that mere visibility can not necessarily be translated to knowledge gain or awareness about the program.

To obtain better understanding of respondents' knowledge level, respondents' knowledge were tested by



their response against a rating scale (*Fully Aware, Aware, Slightly Aware, Somewhat Aware and Not Aware*).

The study found that fewer people (6.3) were fully knowledgeable about the process, though 41.5% said they had heard about the initiative. Respondents with minimum knowledge about the process constituted 28.3%, while 6.7% of respondents who claimed to have heard about the initiative knew nothing at all. The key test of respondents' knowledge was on the meaning of LEITI acronym, the process and the nature of work of the LEITI.

This is not a very good result especially in light of the way the question was framed to capture the most basic information about LEITI. Further, the various responses were analyzed not on the basis of accuracy, meaning where a respondent defined LEITI based on his understanding and that definition matched what LEITI is about, the interviewers rightly coded the response as meeting the minimum threshold.

The general picture also does not look good but it is instructive to note, that most respondents were selected at random though LMC was guided with a list of stakeholders LEITI had targeted in its outreach. The goal was to examine how far the messages were reaching in the target areas and not specifically the awareness level of those previously exposed to information about the process. There is still confusion amongst many people about the nature of work LEITI is involved with.

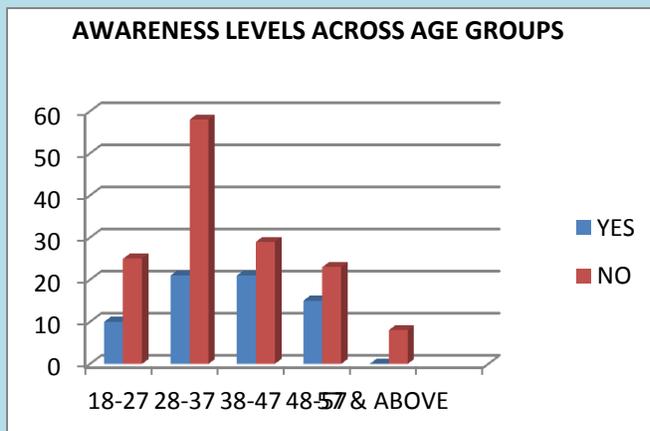
Gender and Age

While most respondents in general seem to have limited awareness levels, when disaggregated by gender, awareness level is higher among male respondents (34%) than females (7.2%). Also, despite the overall low awareness level, people between age group 28 – 37 seem to be more aware with 15% saying they have heard or read about the LEITI, followed by respondents in between the age group 38 – 47. Older people were less likely to be aware of the process with just 2% of people above 50 claiming to be aware.

It is instructive to note however, that the survey polled more people in the 28 – 37 age range and could potentially account for the high number of respondents in this category.

Conversely, though more people were polled between the age range 18-27 than any respondent age group, there were fewer people knowledgeable about the process. It is alarming that most young people are not aware about the initiative and its benefits of the country.

This finding is interesting but partly confusing as in most of the LEITI public engagement



forums at the county level, the Chiefs, Zoes and senior county officials were involved. It could also be a case of poor communication between ordinary elderly people and their counterparts at the dialogue forums. Alarming though is the low level of awareness amongst women due in part to fewer women

participating in the sampling and also the lack of a specific strategy that addresses gender and women considerations. Improvement has to be made in designing gender responsive communication activities.

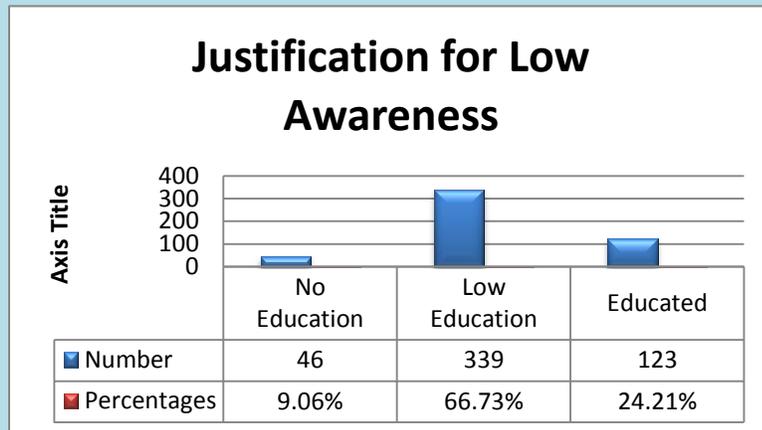
Education

Most respondents saying they were aware of the initiative (44.3%) have attained at least secondary education with a sum total of 225 persons in the category, followed by 123 persons (24.2%) with college level education or above. The remaining fell in primary and vocational level education bracket, with those 37 persons claiming to be illiterate.

However, when respondents were separated into three groups (Educated, Low Education and Non-Educated⁶) the disaggregated result show that majority of respondents (339) fell in the Low Education category, with 123 falling in Educated category and 46 Non-educated.

⁶ This scaling was used to better analyze and probe respondent's knowledge proficiency and quality of education. For example, there were respondents who said they attended secondary school but did not complete due to the war. A respondent in this category was deemed to have "low education".

Given this result, which tilts heavily towards the Low Educated category representing 66.73%, the overall low level in awareness could be directly proportional to the low education level of majority of the respondents.



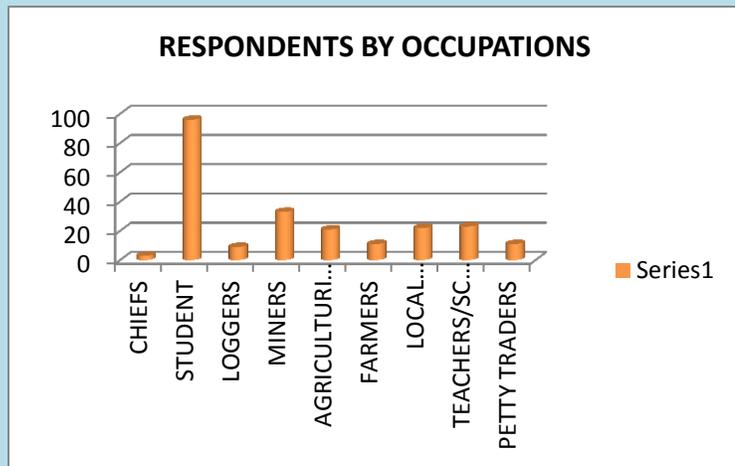
On account of the above, the study questions whether the education levels of various target groups were considered when information and communication campaigns were being organized. Customized programs to address the needs of different target groups bearing in mind group

dynamics might not necessarily elaborate this approach, but in rolling out the strategy, it is important to maintain an awareness of the environment and the approaches to employ.

As indicated by the graph below, most of the people interviewed fall in the low education category. Low Education constitutes three levels of sub-groups including primary, secondary and vocational education. Educated People include people with college degree and above, while those who have never attended any school and those in the “others” category are considered Non-educated People.

Occupation

The results show that awareness across occupation varied across several occupational demographics. Students, local government officials, miners and school teachers accounted for the groups more knowledgeable. Chiefs, loggers and farmers were less knowledgeable about the LEITI initiative.



An explanation for the high penetration in the student community is the LEITI engagement activities in schools and universities, initiated in 2008-2009.

Awareness by County

Interestingly, 16 out of 32 respondents who have maximum level of knowledge about LEITI come from Grand Gedeh County, followed by 8 persons from Bong County. Nimba County has 4 persons while Grand Bassa and Lofa Counties have 3 and 1 person respectively. Interestingly, no respondent from Grand Cape Mount County claimed to have maximum knowledge of the LEITI process. It was understood from the desk review that LEITI had worked actively in the southeast prior to the research.

Awareness By Thematic Focus

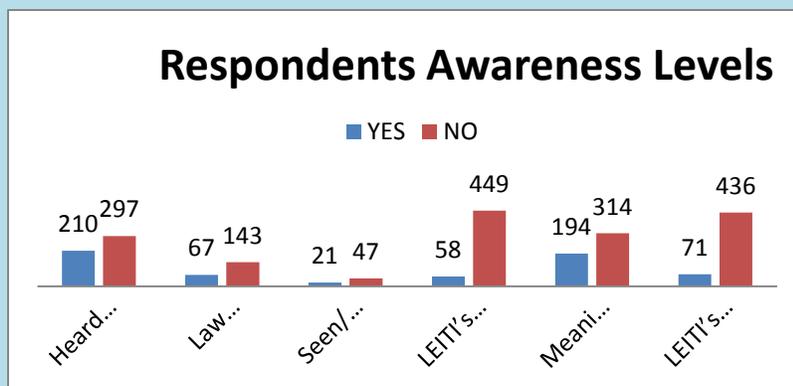
Most respondents with knowledge of the process (23.6%) associated it with the Iron Ore (11%) and diamond/gold mining sector (12.6%), while 7.3% of the respondents with knowledge of the process associated it with agriculture (rubber) and oil drilling combined.

Liberia is the first and only member of the EITI countries in the world to include forestry and agriculture in its EITI program in addition to the mining and oil sector but nobody cited logging or agriculture related activities. This suggests that the LEITI Secretariat needs to expand its outreach and engagement efforts to inform the public about the other sectors in the initiative.

Awareness of LEITI Achievements

LEITI has made great strides in the implementation of its programs, with some of the most outstanding achievements in the history of the global EITI. In the face of these developments, only 11.4% of the people who were interviewed said they are aware that LEITI has made such achievements.

More respondents showing awareness of the LEITI initiative know that Liberia was the first country to include agriculture and forestry in its program. The next achievement known by respondents was the fact that LEITI had released two reports. Fewer people said they knew Liberia was the second EITI country in the world and first in Africa to be validated. The least achievement known was that Liberia was awarded the best EITI implementing country in 2009.



Only 14% of respondents knew the LEITI Secretariat and its work. The graph below features summary results of other aspects of citizens' awareness about LEITI including the scope of its Work, Meaning, Achievements,

the Act and the Secretariat. Though lack of awareness dominates knowledge level across all sectors indicated in the graph, awareness level of people who have heard or read about LEITI is higher than all other levels of knowledge about the process.

The greatest weakness in knowledge about the process is around the LEITI Law. Far less people, as demonstrated in the graph, have seen the LEITI Law, and far fewer people know about the law on LEITI's activities. Though it is not known to what extent the LEITI Law has become a public document, whatever work was done in presenting the document to the public did not succeed in reaching across as much as possible.

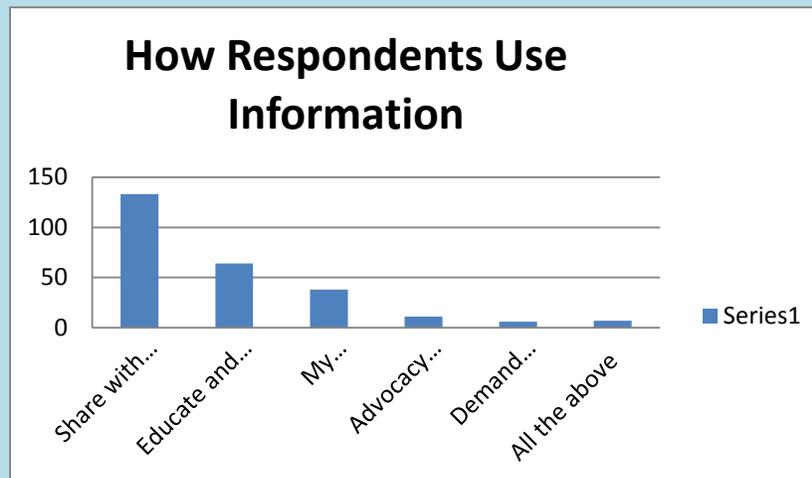
Interestingly, the number of people who do not know about LEITI's Secretariat is almost equal to the number of persons who say they do not know about the achievements of the initiative.

Even though appropriate financial allocations were made in the LEITI annual work plan budgets to facilitate the implementation of a well laid out communication strategy, a strategy whose objective was to increase awareness and knowledge levels of people, citizens' awareness of the LEITI process is relatively lower than anticipated. This is largely due in part to how budget allocations for specific communication interventions were made.

b. Information Use And Sources

Information Use

Out of 508 persons covered in the baseline study, fewer respondents (27%) said they **do use** the information they obtain about LEITI from the different mediums and sources mentioned above. This is so because fewer respondents said they have heard or read about the LEITI program. Most of the respondents share the information with families and friends, while use the information to educate and inform others.



The data is encouraging as it shows the impact inter-personal communication could have in driving this process. The trends of responses show most of the information that is received by respondents are shared with their friends and family

members. The high level of information usage in the form of sharing with friends and family members could be an avenue to reach several homes with the LEITI message. Once messages are localized and tailored to the understanding of ordinary people, there is a high multiplier effect.

Nevertheless, further research must be conducted to study the attitude, perception and reception patterns amongst LEITI local disseminators, with the view of improving their knowledge base and empowering them to communicate LEITI messages to different groups at the community level.

Notwithstanding, some respondents also complained that they not have find LEITI information useful and hence, they do nothing with it. Majority of respondents in this category said the information was difficult to understand, while said it was irrelevant to them. Few said it was complex with a good number of respondents preferring to remain silent on their response.

Drawing from the analysis above, there is the need to rethink how the LEITI designs, packages and disseminate its information to the public though at the same time avoid creating an information overload.

Information Source

Majority of the people interviewed said they trusted media, especially radio, for their information. Different media sources selected by respondents include Radio (including commercial Monrovia based and community radios), television and newspapers.

Out of the 508 respondents, 248 persons representing 48.8%, expressed trust in information provided through the mainstream media. The result clearly reinforces the need for sustained engagement of the media and especially radio as a platform for advancing LEITI agenda.

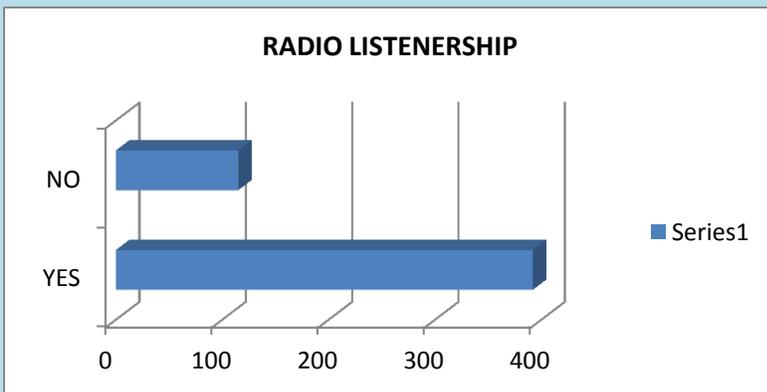
UNMIL Radio ranked highest amongst the trusted sources of information with 29% of the audience saying it provided most of the information about the process to them. Community radios followed with 22% of the listenership with ELBC next up with 6.2%. The statistics is valuable given the work carried out by the Secretariat between 2008-2009. And with community radio having a much larger impact and connection with the rural population of the country, its continuous use would entrench people's understanding of the program and trigger their demand for information. Other sources of information included television,

newspaper and billboards, mediums previously used by the Secretariat to communicate its programs.

Radio Penetration

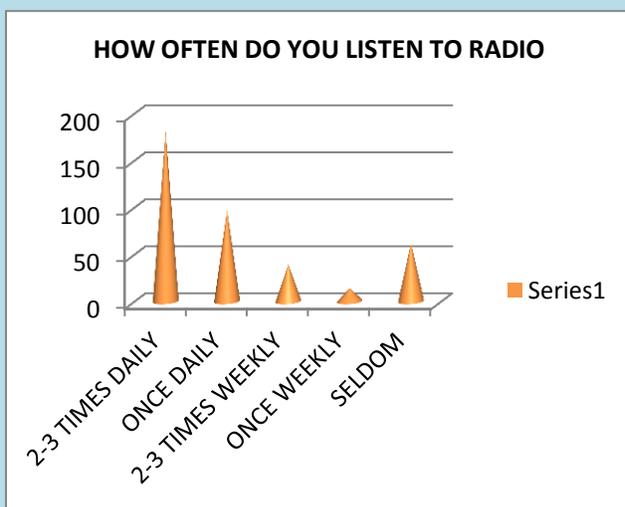
Radio penetration in Liberia is very high, largely due to the sheer size of the illiterate population and the mobility of radio as a mass media information source. The study found that over 2/3 of respondents surveyed listen to radio.

The LEITI awareness level is mostly credited to radio as the primary source of information, with 198 respondents saying they heard about the initiative via radio. This result triples the stats for newspaper and quadruples that of the internet, as indicated in graph below:



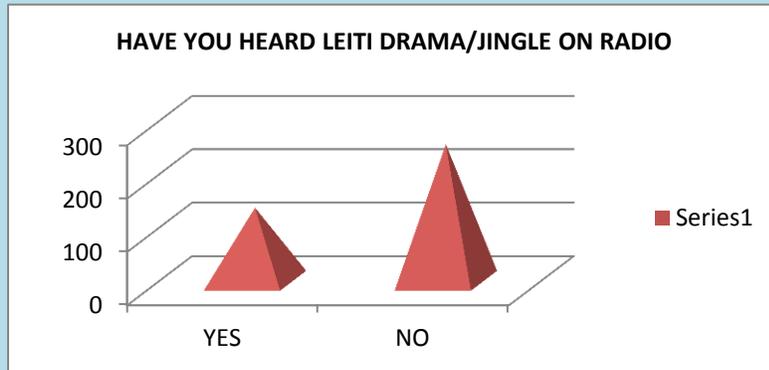
Encouraging is the fact that the frequency of listenership varies across various demographic groups with over 181 respondents listening on an average of 2-3 times daily.

The LEITI Secretariat has produced radio dramas and jingles in simple Liberian English and also translated them into various vernaculars to enhance information delivery and increase awareness levels. Close to 140 respondents (71%) that listen to radio said they have heard LEITI drama and



jingles. Also, on the question of whether people are aware of the existence of an LEITI Secretariat, 66 (93%) of the 71 persons who answered 'yes' are also radio listeners. Similarly, out of the 58 respondents who said they know about some of the things LEITI has achieved, 57 (98%) listen to radio. The correlations make interesting reading and seems to

position radio as an indispensable source of educating and informing people of the work of the LEITI. Given the data, radio is far reaching and has a greater penetration than other channels of communication used in disseminating LEITI messages. Unfortunately, radio



spending constituted roughly 10% of the Communication and Outreach Budget from the 2008-2011 budget periods.

Awareness Correlated by Listenership

Also, the high percentage in knowledge level is directly proportional to people's attitude toward radio listenership. A cross tabulation of people's awareness level on the work that LEITI does, and their frequency of radio listenership, shows that most (22 persons) of the people who are fully aware (constituting 19% of all respondents) are also those who listen to radio 2 – 3 times daily. The total number of people who listen to radio 2 – 3 times daily sums up to 115.

People who exhibit poor radio listening habit show less knowledge about the LEITI process. For example, only two persons that listen once and twice a week respectively had demonstrated knowledge of the program. Regular radio listenership is a factor in increased knowledge levels of the people, making the need for creative ways to engage people with their radio and ways to present LEITI information in a variety of ways that could stimulate interest in listenership.

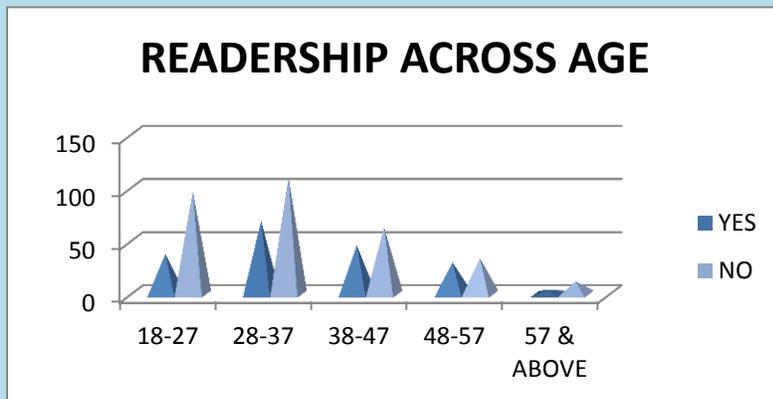
Newspaper Penetration

While newspaper remain a valuable information source and a tool to influence policy change, it is a very ineffective medium to advance education and information around development issues largely due to the fact that newspaper have lower levels of penetration and target mainly the educated elites. On the LEITI process, 132 respondents, constituting 71% of the 187 respondents that read newspaper never read anything about the LEITI process, while only 55 respondents, constituting 29.4% said they had at one time or the other read something about the LEITI in the papers. But much more funds were expended

on newspaper advertorials and literary materials including newsletters, brochures and the LEITI Act (roughly 18%) of the communication and outreach budgets).

Furthermore, among the age groups interviewed during the survey, it has been noted that people between the ages of 28-37 read more newspapers than the rest. This shows that newspaper readership among those interviewed is prevalent among the middle age and young adults and could be an interesting entry point for messages targeted towards this group.

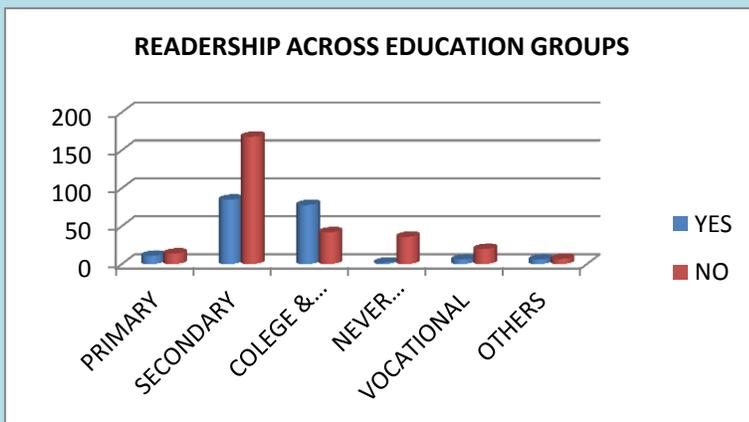
Moreover, newspaper readership varies with education levels as is shown in the graph



below. In relation to education, majority of those who read newspapers, a total of 85 persons, are those who have attained secondary education. Newspaper readers with college degree and above totaled 78, while those readers with

primary education are 44. A few persons who have vocational education, about 6 persons in all, said they read newspapers.

As indicated in the graph below, newspaper readership varies across different occupational

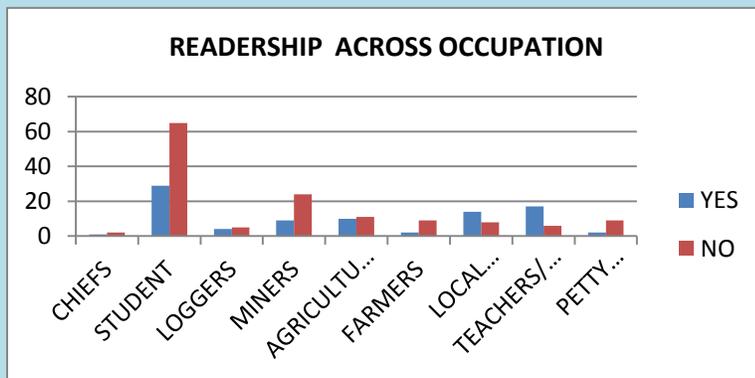


groups with more people in the Student category reading newspapers. The study found that while most newspapers readers not reading about the program in the papers might be a function of lack of media interest in LEITI issues, the frequency of publications from

LEITI in the press is also worth considering. We sought to determine the number of press insertions, the frequency of those insertions, media engagement events and the use of list-

serve as a media directory for mass dissemination. The findings show not much was done internally to integrate these features and track these numbers. Also, the system for media engagement was not strategically organized to measure its success. For instance, although LEITI allocated significant resources in media engagements, no effective monitoring mechanisms were instituted to verify whether or not media institutions professionally delivered the services paid for.

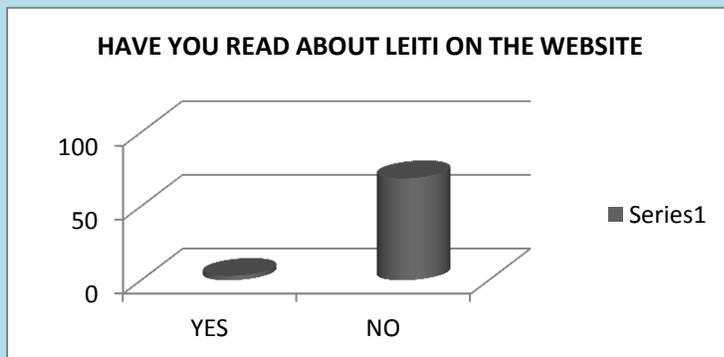
Going forward, it is important for LEITI to organize an independent standalone communications department.



Internet

The use of internet as an information source is growing in Liberia but only a tiny fraction of the population have the means and platform to use the medium. Out of the 508 respondents only

71 persons browsed or accessed the internet. Of the 71 internet users, only 3 persons or 0.59% have read about LEITI on the internet as indicated on the graph below.



Other Information Sources

Other methods of communicating the LETI process retreats, workshops, county road shows, advertising (including erection of billboards) and printing of brochures, all of which have contributed to favorable

impression of the process but less public understanding of the initiative. More investment has to be made but strategically targeting the most viable means of information delivery through a sustained approach.

c. Citizens Perception About The LEITI Process

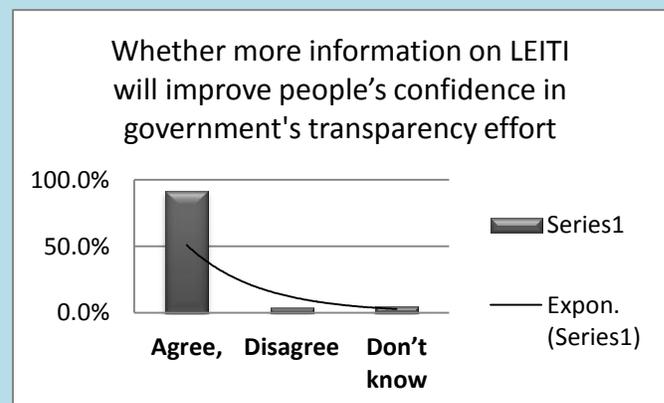
While knowledge level about LEITI remains considerably low, public perception about the program looks promising. People with deeper sense of understanding of the initiative were more inclined to suggest it was relevant and making impact. Whereas, respondents with low levels of awareness and understanding were generally inclined to suggest the initiative was not relevant and thus not making impact. To illustrate this point, of the 14% respondents that knew a dedicated secretariat was supporting the LEITI work, 7% felt the Secretariat was performing well, while 4% felt it was performing fairly, with the remainder 3% said it was doing its job poorly.

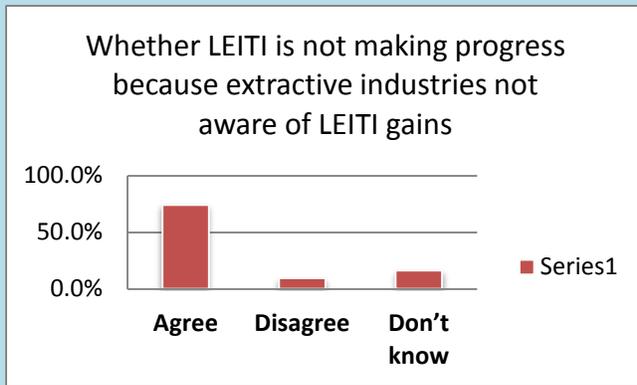
On the basis of available data, it became known that only 14% of all those who were interviewed actually knows that there exists a LEITI Secretariat, while on the question of disseminating information on the work of LEITI, only 7.0% of the people think the Secretariat has performed considerably good. In the same vein, 4.1% said the Secretariat performed fairly, and 2.4% said they performed poorly.

3. ANALYSIS

a. Information Quality And Usefulness

So, why is it that more people are not aware of the work of the Secretariat, though lot more had heard about the LEITI process? The study found that barriers to accessing information about the process were a major factor contributing to the imbalance. 20.1% of respondents said authorities at LEITI were not providing enough information about the process. This could be further interpreted to mean, information was not reaching more respondents as oppose to a deliberate campaign not to share the information. On the other hand though, 18% of respondents said accessing information from the LEITI was without difficulty.

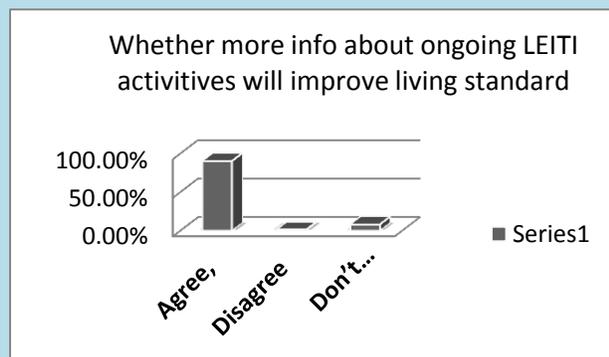
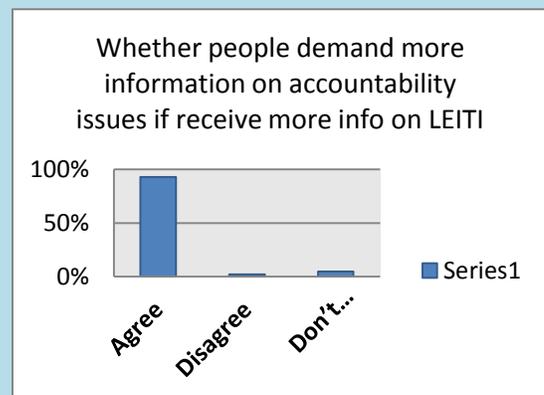




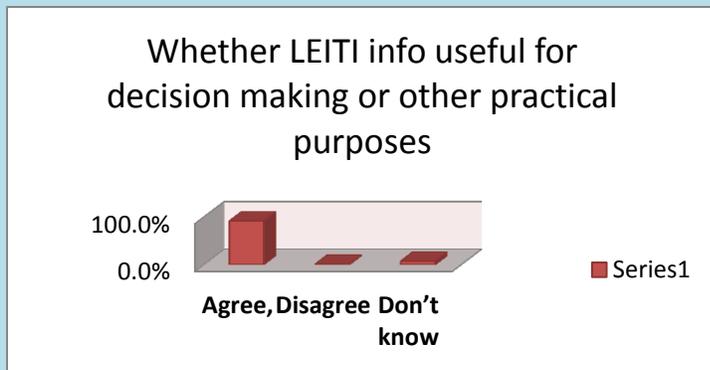
In a bid to further understand how people access information on the LEITI process, respondents were asked if they do seek other information on the LEITI work and whether they find the information normally sought after. In response to this question, 39 persons said they seek information about the LEITI and,

interestingly, all of them say they find the information they seek. Of that number, only 24 respondents felt the information was easy to understand.

Most respondents felt it would prove valuable if LEITI provided information about its work as it would improve people's confidence in government's transparency efforts.

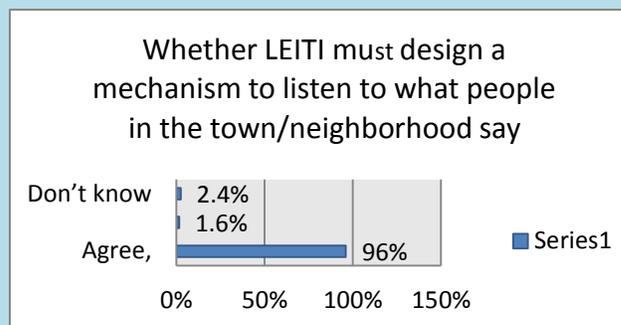


Most of the respondents (74.2%) felt it was difficult to believe that LEITI was making progress without their gains being communicated and as such, that lack of awareness of those gains was appropriately correlated with their belief in LEITI success claims.



Majority of respondents agreed that they could demand more information on accountability issues if they had access to more information.

More respondents agreed that the information provided by LEITI was useful for decision making and other practical purposes, though they stressed that LEITI must design a mechanism to listen to what people in the town/neighborhood say.



b. Communication Strategy and Implementation: Matching Results With Investment

In 2008, the LEITI Secretariat adopted a communications strategy to drive its public engagement and awareness raising campaigns. From the review, the Secretariat instituted appropriate steps to support its communication program. Communication and outreach was effectively mainstreamed in the LEITI work plan and budget.

Generally speaking, the LEITI Secretariat did a good job implementing a good number of activities as recommended under the strategy.

Spending on media coverage of LEITI programs were significantly higher in the first eight months of implementation of the communication strategy. For the print media, six daily newspapers were engaged to publish center spreads containing illustrations and FAQs on the LEITI process, status and milestone. The LEITI spent over \$ 349, 888.21 USD from the period 2008 to 2011. Of this amount, only \$ 35, 856.00 USD was spent on radio and airings, constituting 10%. Outreach, training and town meetings took away a whopping 50% of the budget.

The six selected newspapers were also contracted by LEITI on a three months basis to publish short incisive and pointed messages on the EITI in their newspaper earpieces. Also during this time (2008), a series of Town Hall meetings were conducted (one meeting per county), covering a period of eight months in all. Every time these events were held, pictorials were published in the local dailies, and press releases were done to the effect.

On the broadcast front, the Secretariat engaged four Monrovia based radio stations and 11 community based radio stations to run series of short messages in simple Liberian English. At the community radio level, messages in the dominant vernacular were also aired. The problem with the broadcast media was the lack of a system of verification and monitoring of those broadcasts especially with community radio stations. The study recognizes the challenges LEITI faces in signing these contracts and monitoring the coverage of the media outlets but efforts must be made in addressing the impact evaluation and monitoring side of this engagement. A more practical proposition would be to engage a media monitoring agency to provide support in this direction.

Another observation and probably this brings into focus the subject of the communication specialist, is the fact that these campaigns peaked around late 2008 and 2009 and were not sustained. Good number of respondents has heard about LEITI but their knowledge retention on the subject and awareness beyond the name recognition is low. The only logical explanation with all the investment made at this stage, is the failure to sustain the gains made in the 2008-2009 cycle. Besides that, the investment choices are questionable. When only 10% was spent on radio, close to 15% was spent on billboards, and billboards accounted for less than 5% of knowledge gained about the process. The communication specialist would have derived effective strategies to capture and increase citizens' awareness levels, while at the same time efficiently monitor the impact of the communication inputs.

However, on close review, the study found some confusion in the budget lines and allocation to specific inputs. For example, a second vehicle procured for the Secretariat under an ADB grant was factored under the communication budget, on the theory that the vehicle was being used to facilitate outreach campaigns. Other program related costs like

workshops, events and some consultative related expense were also broadly factored under communication.

It is instructive to note however, that while these investments are positive and could potentially influence the quality of communication around the program, it was important for budget allocations to communication related activities to remain standalone for purposes of tracking the impact of spending. Unless, where a vehicle was bought for the exclusive use of a communication unit, can we assess and evaluate the utility of such incentives to the program. Public engagement activities like workshops, consultation and events, are not communication strategic activities in a sense though, they are opportunities for engagement of stakeholders and platform for sharing knowledge and information.

Nevertheless, it would be difficult in the context of tracking impact, when evaluating a communication strategy all programmatic activities that should be technically separate are bundled up as part of the communication program.

While the LEITI must be praised for taking concrete policy and strategic steps in advancing the goals of the strategy, there were a number of gaps noted by the consultant. Understandably, more emphasis was placed on impact related activities like radio programs, billboards and road show but investment was not made in small but strategic tools like creating the LEITI contact database for mass dissemination of information about the LEITI, maintaining a functional website, designing and using e-newsletters, developing and sharing a media toolkit and rolling out a media engagement program.

For instance several media engagements were held, especially in 2008 and 2009 which saw continuous engagements between LEITI and the media, as a means of bringing the media on board to assist with the dissemination of information.

These engagements notwithstanding, there are far fewer media reports on the extractive sector using statistics from LEITI. Beyond reporting programs and visibility activities, a strong media engagement strategy would have developed into niche reporting on the extractive sector potentially helping to popularize the program and the concept. Further to this, a network of journalists on the sector can effectively sustain media focus on issues

around the extractive sector and provide an opportunity for journalists interact, share information and build strong niche and thematic reporting around these issues. As we noted earlier in this report, all of these processes could be simultaneously managed by the Secretariat without a dedicated communication specialist responsible for rolling out this program and keeping a lid on its progress. It was in this regard, that the Communication Strategy suggested “that a specialized firm be hired to support the implementation of the activities recommended for the short run, as it would require intense mobilization of resources and assets and use of diverse expertise. The firm would support LEITI in identifying competent communication specialist that would drive the long-term implementation of the proposed activities and oversee performance monitoring and evaluation”.

Notwithstanding, there were appropriate allocations made to communication and outreach in three budget cycle stretching back to 2008 under two grants from the African Development Bank and two solid budget proposals in the 2009-2010 budget (15%) of the allocations respectively. This was a significant improvement to the budgets for the initial period, which showed strong policy commitment to funding the communication component of the program.

4. Conclusion

The findings from this study must be viewed in two respects. First, it shows a strong policy commitment on the part of the LEITI Multi-stakeholder group and the government of Liberia in making communication and information a key cornerstone of the program. This demonstration of political will by the policymaker is a major asset that would further entrench the program as a global flagship program coming out of Liberia. In this direction, continue political will is necessary to ensure the gains are not reversed.

On the other hand, while much has been accomplished by the Secretariat, a lot more is still required to ensure information and communication is effectively mainstreamed in the program. Vast sums of money were expended to disseminate messages about the LEITI operations with the aim of raising awareness, and ensuring transparency and

accountability in the extractive industries-the media was engaged, meetings were held, publications were produce etc.

In spite of these gains, the study finds that more people are not aware of the program and hence do not understand and appreciate its values to their lives. This disconnect must claim attention as it has the tendency to slow down public understanding of the program and its objectives.

Efforts should be made to ensure a sustained and strategically designed communication approach drawing lessons from the study findings. By doing this, it would lay the foundation for greater public engagement and interest and ultimately a more transparent and accountable extractive industry.

5. RECOMMENDATION

For LEITI to efficiently and effectively enhance its communication strategy to meet the understanding capacity of the vast majority of Liberians, most of whom are illiterate, LEITI should seriously consider the following recommendations, which are specifically derived as a result of this study:

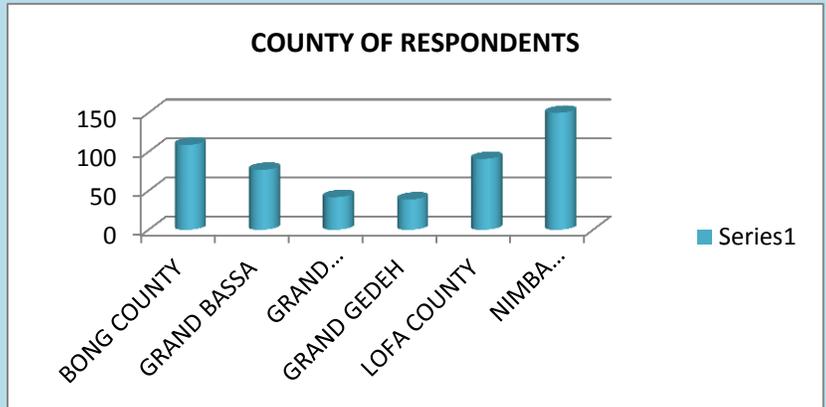
- Based on the findings of this study, re-commission a communication strategy development process for developing a long-term communication strategy with appropriate budgets;
- Prepare smart disaggregated, standalone budgets for communication support interventions;
- Intensify dissemination of messages about LEITI process targeting radio and other communication channels using localized modes of outreach (town halls meeting, video showing, cultural troupes, community leaders, etc);
- Tailor messages about LEITI process to suit the understanding level of the local rural communities, most of whom are undereducated and comprise the youth;

- Appoint a consulting firm to supervise an audience survey on radio listenership to determine radio audience and frequency. This will help in targeting specific audiences at specific times, and thus increase audience reach; Firm should also be hired to provide in-process monitoring and evaluation services
- Facilitate the establishment of a small network of strong and credible journalists that could pursue a working relationship with the public through constant information flow and for feedback purposes;
- Hire a Communication Specialists to manage LEITI media engagement, communication events and other support functions including regular update of the LEITI website, regular press release and other communication and information resources;

6. ANNEX

Respondents Demographics

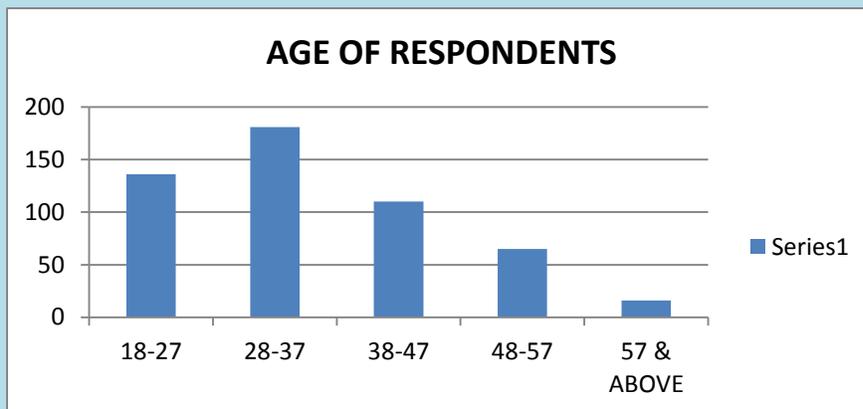
Respondents were drawn out of six counties specifically selected because LEITI's scope of work is covered there and also because several engagements and outreach programs have been conducted in these counties by LEITI. The counties include Nimba, Bong, Grand Bassa, Grand Cape Mount and Grand Gedeh as indicated in the graph below.



The counties include Nimba, Bong, Grand Bassa, Grand Cape Mount and Grand Gedeh as indicated in the graph below.

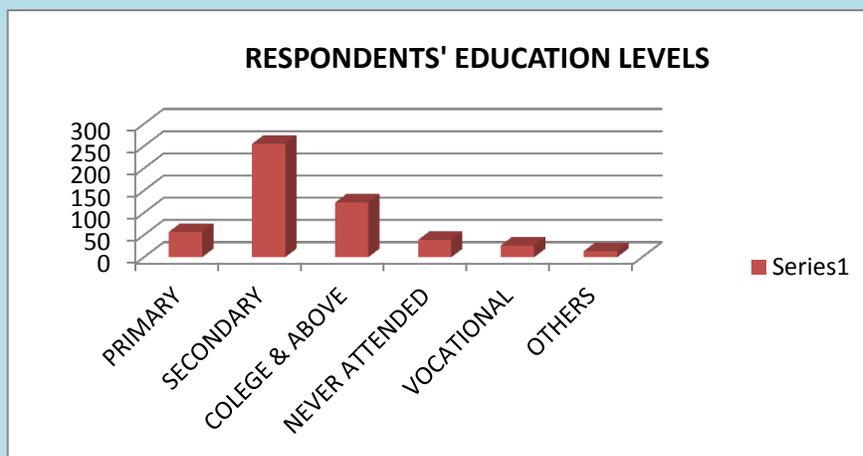
- **Age**

As depicted in the graph below, the total number females interviewed were 133 or 26.2% while males were 375 or 74%. The age groups of respondents were divided into four with the highest group being those with ages from 28 – 37 representing a total of 181 persons or 36%; followed by age range 18 – 27 with 136 respondents or 26.8%. People in the age range of 38 – 47 were 110 or 21.7%, those at 48 – 57 were 65 or 13%, while 57 and above were 16 persons representing 3.1%.



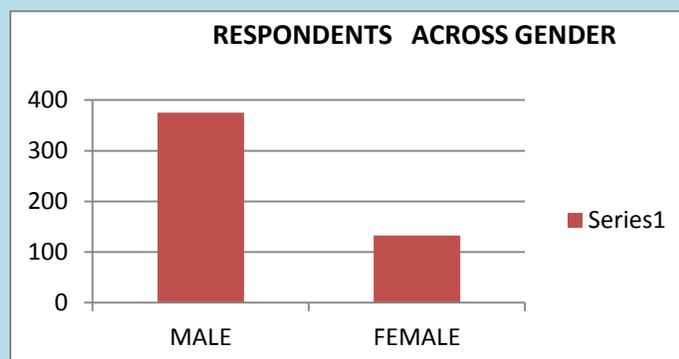
- **Education**

Moreover, a majority of the respondents comprised individuals who have attained a secondary education with a total of 225 persons and representing 44.3% in the category. Those with education level of college and above were 123 persons or 24.2%; those with primary level education totaled 57 persons or 11.2%; and people with vocational education were 27 persons, representing 5.3%. Moreover, respondents who have never acquired any formal education numbered about 37 or 7.7% of all those interviewed, as indicated in the graph below:



- **Gender**

The survey covered more males than females and more young adults and middle age folks. Also, majority of those reached during the survey had secondary education, even though the interviews were not conducted in any predetermined order as indicated in graph below.



Detailed Methodology

Introduction

The study will be conducted with the main objective of determining information and knowledge gap amongst stakeholders and various interest groups on issues relating to the extractive sector and activities of the Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. The baseline/perception survey would endeavor to conduct a sample survey of stakeholders' access to information on the extractive industry in Liberia.

Area of the Study

The baseline/perception study will be conducted in six counties, namely: Nimba, Bong, Grand Bassa, Grand Gedeh, Grand Cape Mount and Lofa Counties. These counties were chosen for the study because they cover LEITI scope of work.

Research Design

The LEITI baseline/perception study shall utilize both quantitative and qualitative research techniques in order to provide conclusions based upon the key research question emanating from the objectives of the study, that is *“What is the extent of the information and knowledge gap among citizens, Community Based Organizations (CBOs) – Are CBO different from or the same as Civil Society?, Local Government Authority, as well as people working in the extractive industry on issues relating to the extractive sector, including those of the Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (LEITI)?”* A social survey and a key informant, semi-structured interview will be used to gather quantitative and qualitative clues into stakeholders' level of awareness of the Liberian extractive industry and the LEITI.

Sampling Technique

A multistage sampling method will be used to conduct the study. At each level, a stratified sampling method based on probability proportional to size (PPS) will be used. The probability proportional to size method assigns probabilities to each stratum or level of the study based upon the proportion of the stratum in relation to the total sample size selected.

Sample Size Selection

The size of the research sample will be chosen purposively. On the overall, a total of 500 individuals will be canvassed: 300 at the citizens' level, 100 Employee of Extractive Industries, 75 CBOs and 25 Local Government Officials. The PPS method at each level of the study is explained in Tables 1-4.

Sample Selection of Citizens

Table 1: PPS Method Sample Selection of Citizens per Stratum

County	SN(h)	Population per stratum (mi)	$pi=mi/M$	Desired population per stratum $ah=500*pi$
Nimba	1	462,026	0.30	149
Bong	2	333,481	0.22	108
Grand Gedeh	3	125,258	0.08	40
Grand Bassa	4	221,693	0.14	72
Grand Cape Mount	5	127,076	0.08	41
Lofa	6	276,863	0.18	90
		1,546,397		300

Sample Selection of Extractive Industry Employees

Table 2: PPS Method Sample Selection of Extractive Industry Employees

County	SN(h)	Population per stratum (mi)	$pi=mi/M$	Desired population per stratum $ah=500*pi$
Nimba	1	462,026	0.30	30
Bong	2	333,481	0.22	22
Grand Gedeh	3	125,258	0.08	8
Grand Bassa	4	221,693	0.14	14
Grand Cape Mount	5	127,076	0.08	8
Lofa	6	276,863	0.18	18
		1,546,397		100

Sample Selection of Community Based Organizations

Table 3: PPS Method Sample Selection of Community Based Organizations

County	SN(h)	Population per stratum (mi)	$pi=mi/M$	Desired population per stratum $ah=500*pi$
Nimba	1	462,026	0.30	22
Bong	2	333,481	0.22	16
Grand Gedeh	3	125,258	0.08	6
Grand Bassa	4	221,693	0.14	11
Grand Cape Mount	5	127,076	0.08	6
Lofa	6	276,863	0.18	13
		1,546,397		75

Sample Selection of Local Government Official

Table 4: PPS Method Sample Selection of Sample Selection of Local Government Official

County	SN(h)	Population per stratum (mi)	$pi=mi/M$	Desired population per stratum $ah=500*pi$
Nimba	1	462,026	0.30	7
Bong	2	333,481	0.22	5
Grand Gedeh	3	125,258	0.08	2
Grand Bassa	4	221,693	0.14	4
Grand Cape Mount	5	127,076	0.08	2
Lofa	6	276,863	0.18	4
		1,546,397		25

Instruments or Tools of the Study

A single questionnaire, comprising structured and semi-structured questions, will be used to capture responses from the four major stakeholders of the study. The instrument of the study will be pre-coded so as to capture responses from the various stakeholders. The questionnaire will be administered through interviews by trained enumerators.

Pretesting of Research Instruments

In order to test the validity and reliability of the research instrument, the consultant will ensure that pretesting of the tool be conducted prior to the actual field exercise. After pretesting of the tool, appropriate changes will be effected to the questionnaire.

Method of Data Analysis

After the field survey exercise, the questionnaires gathered will be edited in order to correct inconsistent responses from the various subjects of the interviews. The edited data will then be entered into a data entry software called EpiData, where subsequently the data will be exported for cleaning and analysis in the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17.0. Basically, frequency distribution tables and cross-tabulations will be generated to obtain both univariate and bivariate statistics.