

MINUTES
REGULAR LEITI MULTI-STAKEHOLDERS STEERING GROUP MEETING
HELD IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE LEITI, OLD BUDGET BUREAU BUILDING
●REDEMPTION
ROAD, MONROVIA, LIBERIA ● WEDNESDAY JANUARY, 25, 2017

PRESENT

GOL

Stephen Dorbor	MLME
Elvin Frank	MIA
Harrison Karnwea Sr.	FDA
E. Richmond Jallah	NOCAL
Darlingston Talery	LRA
Chea B. Garley	MOA
Augustine N.Doe	HOR

CSO

Cecelia T. M. Danuweli	PWYP/WANEP
James Yarsiah	Rights & Rice Foundation
Frances R. Deigh Greaves	NCSCCL
Ezekiel Johnson	Liberia Labor Congress

Private Sector

Laurentine H. Bass	ExxonMobil
Ansu Konneh	Western Cluster
K. Emmanuel Yarkpazuo	GVL
Esiaka B.Konneh	Gold &Diamond Brokers and Dealers Assoc.
Zinnah Sackie	AUREUS Mining

IN ATTENDANCE

Partners/Observers

Kofi Ireland	UNMIL
Christiana von Heyden	GIZ
Lilieth Whyte	US Embassy
Alex Yeanay	AfDB
Mohamed Boakai	UNDP

OTHERS

Sekou Sheriff	Exxon Mobil
Edward S. Kamara	FDA
B. Al-Dennis	LRA
Isaac Kipi	FDA

LEITI Secretariat

Konah D. Karmo
Myer W. Saye, Sr.
Cedrick W. Kpadeh

HOS/LEITI Secretariat
DHOS / LEITI Secretariat
LEITI Secretariat

Preliminaries - The Regular meeting of the LEITI Multi-stakeholders Steering Group (MSG) was held on Wednesday, January 25, 2017 in the LEITI Conference Room. Commencing at 12:49pm, the meeting was called to order by Hon. Stephen B. Dorbor/Proxy Chairperson of the MSG/Deputy Minister for Planning and Research/MLME who challenged his colleagues to be vigilant as there were a lot to be achieved in 2017.

This admonishment was followed by self-introduction to establish a quorum. After the self-introduction, it was observed that a quorum was obtained and therefore set the motion for the meeting to proceed formally

Adoption of Agenda: HoS suggested a modification to the agenda under Other Matters to allow for the MSG's approval for the disposal of some fully depreciated fixed assets owned by the LEITI Secretariat. With this modification accepted, the agenda was unanimously approved following a motion.

Draft Minutes: The draft minutes of November 10, 2016 Regular Meeting was unanimously adopted by the body with no changes made.

- **Matters Arising:**

- There were no matters arising from the minutes to be discussed.

Secretariat Update: The HoS presented the Secretariat update summarizing LEITI Secretariat's activities for the period **November 11, 2016 to January 24, 2017 as follows:**

EITI Validation

The EITI mission from Norway, Madam Ines Marques and Madam Tove Strauss, who were in the country to conduct a follow-up workshop on the development of LEITI beneficial ownership roadmap and to provide initial updates on the works of the EITI validation fact finding team that visited Liberia between 22-26 August 2016 departed the country on Friday, 11 November 2016.

On December 16, the International Secretariat submitted an Initial Validation Assessment Report to the MSG, through the LEITI Secretariat, for its response. Subsequently on December 18, 2016, the Secretariat circulated the report via email to members of the MSG for comments.

Other stakeholders outside the MSG who participated in the initial validation fact-finding consultations were also served copies of the initial report to provide comments, where applicable. The LEITI was given a deadline of up to January 13, 2017 to provide its response to the initial report. However, due to the interruptions imposed by the Christmas and New Year holidays, the Proxy-Chairperson of the MSG directed the Secretariat to request an extension to the response deadline for up to January 31, 2017.

Dissemination of the LEITI 7th & 8th Reconciliation Report

LEITI successfully completed the dissemination of the 7th & 8th reports across the country holding close to 37 town hall meetings. The exercise was carried out from Wednesday, November 23 to Monday, December 5, 2016. The dissemination saw the participation of 5,010 persons representing youth, women, elders, security, miners, loggers and ordinary citizens. The dissemination was funded by UNDP. Copies of the full and summary reports were also distributed to institutions, including, government ministries and agencies, embassies, media instructions and non-governmental organizations.

Beneficial Ownership Disclosure Roadmap

On December 23 2016, the Secretariat submitted the completed BO Roadmap to the International EITI Secretariat. The roadmap is intended to guide the development of a Beneficial Ownership register.

Administration

During the period under review, the HOS, DHOS as well as other staff members attended series of meetings to include the following:

Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA) Dialogue on Internal Revenue Generation held at the Monrovia City Hall on Thursday & Friday, November 10 & 11, 2016.

On December 13, 2016 the Secretariat held a meeting with the Transparency International (TI) West Africa's Regional Coordinator, Mr. Samuel Kaninda. Mr. Kaninda expressed the TI's interest to collaborate with and support the works of the LEITI, especially in promoting advocacy and transparency issues in the extractive sectors.

The LEITI vehicle marked LEITI 3 which was badly damaged due to the accident involving the Deputy Head of Secretariat has been repaired with ninety percent of the cost covered by Saar Insurance, the insurer.

On December 19, 2016, Ms. Beneta Ackah, Technical Officer /Head of the Technical Department tendered her resignation to take effect in January 2017. No reason was provided, but had hinted that she was moving to a job with the Liberia Electricity Corporation (LEC). The secretariat is therefore requesting the MSG's approval to replace MS. Ackah.

2nd Post Award Process Audit)

The MSG Reporting and Communications Committee has met and deliberated on findings of the 2nd Post Award Process Audit Report. The comments and inputs were communicated to the consultants and have all been duly incorporated. The final report was also circulated on January 5, 2016 to MSG members for their reviews.

Work Plan

The MSG Finance and Communications Committee have reviewed the Work Plan which is ready for approval. Total cost of the FY2016/2017 LEITI Work Plan is put at US\$692,507.00 out of which GoL is expected to contribute US\$622,451.00, down from an initial appropriation of US\$654,451.00 in the approved national budget.

9th Report TOR

The 9th Report TOR stands to benefit from the preliminary validation assessment report from the International Secretariat. The Secretariat is currently proceeding with revision of the draft TOR and working with the International EITI Secretariat and other partners to ensure that the ToR addresses all aspects of the 2016 EITI Standard related to reporting, and to incorporate all applicable recommendations from the Initial Validation Report.

Finance Department

Audits of the LEITI Secretariat are still ongoing, covering the Government of Liberia's funding for Fiscal Years 2014 / 2015 and 2015 / 2016 and the Technical Capacity Building (II) Project funded by the African Development Bank. The audits are being conducted by the General Auditing Commission (GAC) and PKF, respectively.

During the period under review, the Secretariat signed an in-kind grant agreement with USAID's Liberia Accountability and Voice Initiative Project. Total value of the grant is US\$27,000, and the duration of the grant is six (6) months – December 1, 2016 to May 31, 2017.

The December 2016 MSG Meeting

The regular monthly meeting of the MSG scheduled for December 14, 2016 failed to convene due to the lack quorum. However, a total of eighteen (18) MSG members from the Government, Private Sector, Civil Society and Observers were present for the meeting, but the number did not constitute a quorum as there was a demand that at least six representatives of government be present.

Discussion of Secretariat update: Following the update, the Presiding thanked the HoS and declared the update opened for discussions. Various comments, concerns and issues were raised in relation to the update as highlighted below:

Mr. Alex Yeanay (AfDB)

Mr. Yeanay informed the body that the AfDB has approved a grant support and will be providing over nine hundred thousand United States Dollars to the LEITI for its program implementation but was very concerned why this important information was not captured in the Secretariat Update. He further inquired why MSG members who initially volunteered to attend the 7th and 8th reports dissemination exercise were not invited.

HoS

The Head of Secretariat clarified that the proposed AfDB grant was mentioned in the previous Secretariat Update but was not done in the current update because the grant has yet to be signed. HoS also clarified that the Secretariat invited MSG members for the dissemination exercise for example; the PWYP, WONGOSOL, UNMIL, RICE & RIGHTS Foundation, GVL, Gold & Diamond Brokers & Dealers Association and others participated in the dissemination exercise; but that the available funds were inadequate to accommodate everyone.

Emmanuel Yarkpazuo (GVL)

Mr. Yarkpazuo inquired about the deadline for the completion of the TOR

HOS

HOS informed the gathering that according to the EITI requirement on reporting, the 9th LEITI report would be due by June 30, 2018. He however said that the Secretariat would strive to complete the 9th Report ToR by February in order to begin the recruitment of the Independent Administrator (IA).

Frances D. Greaves (NCSCCL)

She wanted to know whether contributions made to the BO Roadmap by the various sectors were duly considered.

HOS

HOS noted that all sectors' contributions received were incorporated and sent. For the Post Award Process Audit, only the Observers made contributions regarding the cover page and that was also duly considered.

Mr. Yarsiah made two points in connection with the workplan; he wants LEITI to duly recognize the GOL as the major contributor to its budget by so stating, and also inquired about reporting achievements and failures of previous workplan.

HOS

To this the HOS stated that the workplan contains the information Mr. Yarsiah alluded to. He said these are reported and reflected not only in the workplan but also in the annual activity reports.

Kofi Ireland

Mr. Ireland suggested that hence forth, matters needing contribution across the MSG be done by and through sectors. He noted that such approach has proven to be more effective than others.

Documents for MSG Approval

Here the Presiding received two documents from the Reporting and Communications Committee and the Finance and Administration Committees respectively for approval by the MSG. The documents include the Second Post Award Process Audit report and the 2016/2017 draft LEITI Secretariat Workplan. These two documents were unanimously approved by the MSG.

Second Post Award Process Audit Report

On the draft second post award process audit report, the HOS before presenting it to the requisite committee for formal presentation for approval reiterated that all contributions made especially from the observers relative to the cover page. With that said, the report was then turned over to Kofi Ireland to present on behalf of the committee

In his presentation Kofi thanked all members of the Reporting and Communication Committee for the level of due diligence during the different meetings relative to resolving issues that the committee thought needed clarifications. Such issues included limitation of scope, the inclusion of sector specific templates and the review of the status recommendations contained initially in the report. He said working with the Secretariat; they were able to get to the consulting firm PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWC) for the resolution of those issues. He informed the body that all issues have been duly addressed in the final draft and therefore called on the body to approve.

It was set for approval until Ansu Konneh objected to it on grounds he did not have access to it as recommended in the December informal sitting of the MSG. It was later proven that Mr. Konneh and all other concern received copies of the report through email.

However, the presiding stated that there was no need of objecting to approval as most of the information contained in the report were factual and that all recommendations made have either been addressed or steps are been taken to address them at the Ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy. With that, the document was presented to the MSG for action.

With no serious comments coming across the floor, a motion was made for the second post award process audit to be adopted as an official document representing the output of the audit. The second post award audit report was therefore unanimously approved by the MSG.

2016/2017 LEITI Secretariat Workplan

Just like the Post Award Process Audit Report, the workplan was presented by Mr. Kofi Ireland on behalf of the Finance and Administration Committee. For this Kofi informed the body that workplan review aimed at ensuring planned activities are in conformity with the five year strategic plan of the LEITI. Also, according to him, the review process took into consideration recommendations from the initial validation report to incorporate feedback mechanism across the three sectors. To these he said, the workplan has satisfactorily considered. Kofi also pointed out the downward trend of the budget in the workplan basically due to donor fatigue and urged members of the MSG to work with the Secretariat to solidify its funding position.

With that, the workplan was presented to the presiding who also presented it to the body with the suggestion to entertain two comments.

Madam Greaves suggested that all supports from donors including LAVI and the AfDB be comprehensive of the workplan. Her suggestion sparked a debate across the floor until Alex Yeanay of the AfDB clarified that the grant from his organization will be signed between AfDB and the Government and not LEITI.

HOS also clarified that the LAVI grant was in-kind meaning not a cent was lodged with the LEITI. He said in both cases, no monies will be lodged with LEITI but the Secretariat will make the necessary memorandum disclosures. With those exchanges, a motion was made and thus the workplan was approved by the MSG and adopted as a working tool for the Secretariat.

Discussion of Response to Initial Validation Assessment Report

The presiding turned the floor over to the HOS who presented through power point; the initial validation assessment report, urged the MSG to approve the initial response on grounds that January 25, 2017 was the deadline the Secretariat had to formally respond. However, there is still a second chance as it will be sent back for second feedback before a conclusion by an independent validator is drawn.

Several suggestions were advanced including the holding of a retreat to comprehensively respond to the initial assessment report. However, it was unanimously agreed that the Secretariat do an initial response while every sector represented on the MSG was given seven days, till February 7, 2017 to meet and provide inputs to the Initial Validation Assessment Report. The Secretariat was urged to support the meeting by various sectors if requested.

AOB:

There were two issues discussed under AOB; HOS reported the resignation of Beneta Ackah, Technical Officer and was told through unanimous decision to go ahead with the recruitment of a replacement but should first exhaust internal applicants before going external.

Two vehicles were also reported by the HOS as fully depreciated and unserviceable to the LEITI and therefore needed to be disposed. The MSG unanimously approved the Secretariat's request and mandated it to proceed with the disposal of the vehicles.

Summary of Key Points

- There were no corrections made to the past November 10, 2016 minutes;
- Second Post Award Process Audit approved by MSG
- 2016/2017 LEITI Secretariat workplan approved
- Secretariat do an initial response to initial validation assessment report while sectors meet within seven days to make inputs
- 28 persons in attendance
- MSG approved request for disposal of two LEITI vehicles

Date and time of next MSG meeting: The next MSG meeting was scheduled for Wednesday February 22, 2017.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:22 pm.