

## MINUTES

### MEETING OF THE MULTI-STAKEHOLDER STEERING GROUP (MSG) OF THE LIBERIA EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES TRANSPARENCY INITIATIVE (LEITI) HELD IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE LEITI, OLD BUDGET BUREAU BUILDING.

• WEDNESDAY JANUARY 6, 2021

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#### PRESENT IN ATTENDANCE

##### GOL

1. Hon. C. Mike Doryen
2. Hon. Carlton S. Miller
3. Hon. Saifuah Mai Gray
4. Edrick F. Noah
- 5 B. Al- Dennis

FDA  
MME  
NOCAL  
MOJ  
LRA

##### CSO

1. Mr. Winston W. Wreh LLC
2. Mr. Abraham B. Gappie MICSOL
3. Madam Cecelia T. Danuweli PWYP
- 4 Mr. Daniel Nyankonah PUL

##### Private Sector

1. Mr. Ekema Witherspoon LTA
2. Mr. Elvis Morris GVL

##### Partners/Observers

- 1 Samuel J. Summerville GIZ

##### Others

- 1 Timothy K. Jarry II NOCAL
- 2 Melvin M. Sackie LRA

##### LEITI Secretariat

1. Jeffery N. Yates/ Officer In-Charge
2. J. Kennedy Kolubah Communication Officer

**Preliminaries:** The regular meeting of the Multi- Stakeholders Steering Group (MSG) of the Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (LEITI) was held Wednesday January 6, 2021 in the LEITI Conference Room.

Commencing at 11: 34 AM, the meeting was called to order by the Chair of the MSG, Hon. C. Mike Doryen. The Office –in-Charge (OIC) at the LEITI, Jeffrey Yates then read an eleven item agenda for adoption. The Presiding, after the reading of the agenda, put it on the floor for a motion of adoption. Mr. Ekema Witherspoon then requested the Body to add to the agenda, an item to discuss the irregularities of MSG sittings and the reappearance of the scorecard. This was immediately objected to by the Madam Saifuah Mai Gray of NOCAL. She argued that the agenda was already crowded with items that needed lengthy discussion and as such it will be prudent for no addition. The Presiding then acknowledged the importance of Mr. Witherspoon’s suggestion but said it would form part of the next meeting agenda. With that, the agenda was adopted with no addition with a motion from B. Al-Dennis and seconded by Madam Gray.

1. **Silent Prayer**-The Body then observed a brief period of silent prayer.

2. **Welcome Remark**-Usually, the Presiding allow the Co-chair to do the welcome statement but with him not in attendance at the start of the meeting, the Presiding then called on the Ministry of Justice's proxy, Mr., Edrick Noah to step in. In his statement, Mr. Noah called on his colleagues to be proactive in the New Year to sustain the gains at the LEITI as well make timely interventions for the smooth running of the LEITI Secretariat.
3. **Review of last meeting Minutes**-The OIC read highlights of the October 12, 2020 meeting with no substantial matter arising as it was prior to the ongoing meeting, circulated via email to MSG members. The next item was then ordered by the Presiding.
4. **Secretariat Update**- the OIC once again presented the update as follows (Please see annex). Following the presentation, the following were discussed as matters arising from the update
  - Gap Analysis-Mr. Ekema Witherspoon asked whether the work was been done by the same group that is doing the 12<sup>th</sup> Report. The OIC affirmed and disclosed that the group was doing on a free of charge basis.
  - Recruitment-The OIC had informed the Body during his briefing from the Secretariat update that he was finding it difficult to fill a vacancy for a procurement officer due to low salary attached to the job following the Government's salary harmonization scheme. This was given serious deliberation with several comments and recommendations going back and forth. At the end it was unanimously agreed that the Secretariat work with the Finance and Administration committee of the MSG to rework and restructure the LEITI organization chart to reflect the requisite salary given that the LEITI is an integrity institution. The report will be presented to the MSG in its next sitting for further actions.
5. **Approval of the IA's Propositions for the scoping Report**-Here, the OIC presented twelve propositions that the Independent Administrator would like to obtain clearance before proceeding with the development of the 12<sup>th</sup> EITI Report for Liberia. The OIC took time to present the propositions in tandem with all but one receiving unanimous approvals. During its reconciliation between the lists of licenses (Mining, Oil & Gas and Agriculture) the IA noted that 15 license holders were not included in the extractive revenues reported by the Government agencies for 2018 and 2019 which could affect the comprehensiveness of the reported extractive revenues. To this, the IA proposed that to ensure the comprehensiveness of the EITI report for the said period, to include those 15 companies in the scope of the 2018 and 2019 report.

After the proposition was read, B. Al-Dennis of the LRA asked to how the IA got those information when those companies mentioned had no such revenue data with the LRA. This sparked series of back and forth deliberations until a conclusion was reached by consensus that the IA provide clarity on how the data were obtained for LRA and the LEITI Secretariat to make follow up with the said Companies. With that noted, the next agenda was called in.

6. **Discussion on funding-** Jeffrey Yates informed the MSG about funding difficulties especially with Government's commitments to the Secretariat. He disclosed that the situation was hampering the smooth running of the Secretariat as all the furniture were in complete replete and in need renewal. He stated that the only functional vehicle at the Secretariat was even out of fuel.  
To this end, Elvis Morris of Golden Veroleum suggested and it was agreed by the Body that the Secretariat writes the Ministers of Finance and Development Planning and State informing them of a ROTATIONAL MSG meeting plan for the next six months. The Body also agreed to extend an invitation for the President of the Republic to attend one of the rotational meeting sessions to further acquaint himself with the LEITI process, progress and the need for Government's continuous support. In the meeting with the President, the Secretariat should prepare a power point video highlighting progress and challenges at the LEITI.
7. **Approval of the Summary Report-** As usual, the OIC presented a sample copy of the summarized versions of the 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> EITI reports for Liberia. He informed the MSG that African Development Bank (ADB) has already approved a proposal from the LEITI for the dissemination of the reports throughout the Country. He said the Secretariat was working out the final modalities to begin the dissemination exercise and was therefore seeking the approval from the MSG to proceed. After his presentation, the Presiding then placed it on the floor for suggestion and or motion for approval. With no suggestion, Daniel Nyakonah of the PUL made a motion for unanimous approval and was subsequently seconded by Madam Cecelia Daneweli of PWYP and so it was approved for dissemination.
8. **Report from the recruitment of HOS and DHS-** Here, the Presiding called on the Chair of Finance and Administration Committee to brief the Body on the progress of the recruitment exercise as mandated by the MSG in October. Madam Cecelia Daneweli on behalf of the committee briefed the Body. She informed the MSG that a shortlisted names of eleven persons for both positions were received by her committee and that notifications for interviews have been sent out to persons concerned. She said the interview for the post of HOS was scheduled for Thursday January 7, 2021 while Friday the 8<sup>th</sup> of January would be for the Deputy position. She disclosed that the committee had set up guidelines and criteria for scoring performances and will provide three names for each position to the MSG for final selection. A member of the Committee Mr. Elvis Morris of Golden Veroleum intimated that the names will be advanced in the order of performance of the candidates with recommendation for the Body to select the top performer. But Madam Saifuah Mai Gray of NOCAL suggested and it was buttressed by Ekema Witherspoon and B. Al-Dennis that the Committee advance the three top performers for each position with no recommendation as to who to pick. According to her, the MSG will make a decision through consensus or vote taking among the three as to who to select for both positions. The Body later agreed to the latter.
9. **MSG Retreat-** Jeffrey Yates informed the MSG that a retreat for the MSG is part of funding approved by the African Development Bank and that the Secretariat had tentatively selected the City of Buchanan as venue but no date has been decided. The Presiding requested the Secretariat to select a date and circulate to MSG members for concurrence.

But Mr. Ekema Witherspoon noted that the date be set in the month of February so that the GIZ training does not coincide with any date. He noted that the GIZ training for MSG members will be held in January at the Secretariat and will be for only a day. The Presiding, with this information asked the OIC to set a date in February and circulate.

10. **Staff Capacity Building**-The OIC also informed the Body that the ADB has approved thirty six thousand dollars for staff capacity building and due to the corona virus pandemic, the secretariat is contemplating on using some private Universities to provide the necessary trainings for staff members but needed to a decision from the MSG. After a brief cross examination of the issue, the MSG decided to mandate the F&A committee to work with the Secretariat to do an assessment of staff capacity and make report and recommendation to the Body by its next sitting.
11. **AOB**- There was nothing discussed under AOB. The Presiding however, took off time to extend gratitude to his colleagues for the tremendous work done in 2020 and admonished them to reinvigorate themselves in the New Year to work harder for the progress of the EITI implementation in Liberia.
12. **Closing Prayer**- The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 PM with no date for next meeting set

#### **Summary of decisions taken by the MSG:**

- The MSG mandated the Secretariat to ask the IA to provide source of its data obtained on 15 companies whose revenue data are not captured under the LRA and NOCAL.
- The MSG agreed that the secretariat go ahead with the dissemination of the 9<sup>th</sup> ,10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> EITI Reports after giving approval to the summary reports
- The MSG mandated its Finance and Administration committee to work with the Secretariat to revise its organizational chart
- The MSG also asked the F&A committee to do a capacity assessment at the LEITI and report in the next meeting.
- The MSG mandated the OIC to a follow up with LITELCO to purchase an internet package for the secretariat.
- The MSG agreed that the Recruitment committee provides three names for each position- Head and Deputy Head of Secretariat with no recommendation as to who to be selected. The MSG will do the selection through consensus or voting.
- Total number of persons in attendance for the MSG meeting were fourteen persons.

- The MSG mandated the committee on Finance and Administrative to complete the entire recruitment process of the HOS and DHOS by Wednesday the 21<sup>st</sup> of October 2020 for onward endorsement by the Body
  
- MSG mandated the Secretariat to do a circular to the Ministers of Finance and State Detailing a rotational MSG meeting for the first six months of 2021. The President should be invited in one these meetings. Secretariat should do a power point video on the progress and challenges at the LEITI for presentation in a meeting with the President.

## ANNEX 1

### LEITI SECRETARIAT UPDATE

#### REPORTS

1. **Gap Analysis:** The Gap Analysis report is nearing completion by the Independent Administrator. Though there are challenges in the data collection, the Secretariat is finalizing the collection of outstanding data from various institutions for onward submission to the Independent Administrator. The Gap Analysis report will be ready for publication before the end of next month.
2. **2019 Annual Progress Report**-the Secretariat has completed a draft of the APR for 2019 and will send it to the MSG members for review and input before the close of the week.
3. **12<sup>th</sup> EITI Report for Liberia:** On November 18, 2020, the LEITI Secretariat successfully hosted a One- day Technical workshop with reporting institutions (Government MACs and Companies) at Sharks Entertainment on the Airfield to jump-start the 12<sup>th</sup> EITI reporting process. Afterward, the Secretariat has worked with BDO (Independent Administrator) for the collection of data for the Scoping Report. The work included field visitations to various MACs, emails, phone calls, constant follow-ups, etc.
4. **Summary Report:** The Secretariat has produced the combined summary report for the 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> EITI reports for Liberia. The summary report is now ready and will be presented to the MSG today for approval. The summary report will be used for dissemination as per the EITI requirements.

#### VALIDATION

1. After a series of conversations with the International Secretariat, the LEITI Secretariat is pleased to inform the MSG that Liberia's Validation has been moved from January 1, 2020, to a date to be determined by the International Secretariat. Once a final date is reached and communicated to the Secretariat, the Secretariat will inform the MSG.
2. **BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP DISCLOSURE REGISTRY**
  1. The International Secretariat has hired SRG Consulting to do the first phase of the BO Registry work. The firm and the LEITI Secretariat have begun work and a draft report is expected to be shared with the International Secretariat and LEITI for comments by the close of next week. Once the draft is circulated with the LEITI, it will be sent to the MSG for review and input. SRG Consulting and LEITI have held zoom meetings with the FIU, LRA, Business Registry, and the LPRA in support of the BO Registry work. Zoom meetings with FDA, MME, NBC, and Agriculture are being arranged.
3. **MAINSTREAMING**
  1. The Secretariat held a zoom meeting and agreed with GIZ and Tove that SRG Consulting will host a workshop on behalf of Tove for the MSG this month to present the Mainstreaming Feasibility Study Report. It is expected that after the workshop, the MSG

will approve the Mainstreaming Feasibility Study Report to allow the LEITI and the International Secretariat to proceed with mainstreaming the LEITI process in Liberia.

#### **4. FUNDING**

1. Since the start of the budget year, the Secretariat is yet to receive operational and reporting funding from the Government of Liberia. The Chairman, Hon. C. Mike Doryen has written two letters to the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning seeking budgetary support for the LEITI. The recent of these letters was seeking funding for the current report. The Chairperson requested 110K for the report and to support the Secretariat and MSG operations. The Secretariat has made a series of follow-ups at the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning but is yet to receive any money for the report. With the production of the Scoping Report, the Independent Administrator is requesting initial payments as per the terms and conditions of the contract before proceeding to the next stage of the report.
2. AfDB: The Secretariat has submitted concept notes and budgets for the following activities under the AfDB grant support, and they've all been approved by the Bank for implementation. They are: a). Dissemination of LEITI's 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> reports, b). Updating of LEITI Communication Strategy, c). Erection of LEITI Billboards throughout the country, d). LEITI Pre- Validation Initiative and e). MSG Capacity Building.

#### **3. OTHER ISSUES**

1. The Secretariat is pleased to inform the MSG that LEC power is now restored at the LEITI Secretariat.
2. The LEITI Secretariat is pleased to inform the MSG that it has received appreciation letters from the International Secretariat for works done last year in implementing the EITI in Liberia. The letters were shared with the MSG. Thanks for the support and push.
3. The LEITI Secretariat is pleased to inform the MSG that during the festive seasons, it worked with the Management of GSA and provided each staff with a 50kg bag of gari to help supplement their earnings for the season.

#### **CHALLENGES**

1. Vehicle- the Secretariat has only one functioning vehicle marked LB-6600. The vehicle is being used by all the departments in the Secretariat, thereby increasing the maintenance cost.
2. The Secretariat currently lacks communication cards for internet usage and calls to relevant stakeholders. Unarguably, most of the works during this COVID-19 period are done online. The lack of communication cards for both internet and making direct calls is a challenge.
3. The Secretariat is finding it difficult to attract experienced and competent staff to fill the Procurement Officer position. This is due to the remuneration currently being awarded for the position. The net salary after harmonization for the position is USD\$ 374.53.

4. 90% of the furniture at the LEITI have outlived their lifespan, and there is an urgent need to replace them.
5. There are offices at the LEITI without air conditioners, in addition to the need for serious renovation.

MSG Meeting Agenda

January 6, 2020

1. Opening Prayer- Silent Prayer
2. Welcome Remarks- Chairman
3. Review of last meeting minutes
4. Secretariat Update- Secretariat
5. Approval of the IA's Propositions for the Scoping Report
6. Discussion on funding
7. Approval of the Summary Report
8. Report from the recruitment of HOS and DHOS- Chairperson/ Proxy of F&A Committee
9. MSG Retreat Timeline
10. Staff Capacity Building ( MSG Decision)
11. AOB
12. Closing Prayer