

Members of the Ghana EITI National Steering Committee, Good Morning, it is my pleasure to welcome to the first meeting of the Steering Committee in 2015 and also to wish you a happy new year.

2. This certainly is a good opportunity to set the tone for the months ahead and provide general guidance on how we want to chat the future of the Ghana EITI going forward, especially for 2015. Generally, these Steering Committee meetings are very important because it provides our partners from Civil Society and Companies the opportunity and the platform to bring their perspective to bear on the governance of the extractive sector and in shaping the future of Ghana EITI. 3. In 2014, we all worked hard to ensure actualization of our work plan, especially, the production of the 2012 and the 2013 EITI Reports and subsequently meeting the 31st December, 2014 deadline for the publishing of the reports. I wish to commend you all for your dedication and commitment to ensuring this initiative adds value to our quest for greater transparency and accountability in the management of the country's natural resources. I also look forward to the implementation of some of the key recommendations from the report. So the institutions that are affected by the recommendations and are represented here must take note.

4. As Chairman of this group even though I acknowledge the good achievements of the initiative I would like to see the initiative working not only with the institutions represented on the Steering Committee but other institutions which have similar objectives like the Public Interest and Accountability Committee, the Open Governance Partnership (OGP), the EPA on the issues of the mining and the environment and other anti-corruption agencies to achieve the full utilization and implementation of some of the very potent recommendations this process has produced since the first EITI reporting. For example we want to see more collaboration between the Ghana EITI and the PIAC .

5. As we take on board the workload of 2015 we must continue to work at ensuring that this initiative remains relevant to the extractive sector. With vast and long years of rich mining experience, we must ensure that our processes add value to the dialogue on issues of oil/gas and possibly forestry.

6. As you are all aware one of the most important activities on the work plan for 2015 apart from the production of the 20114 EITI report is the upcoming validation in October. Sufficient preparation is necessary as we cannot afford not go through successfully. All the sub-committees must be fully engaged and their capacities brought to bear on the work head. This will not only ensure building the capacities of the groups across board but will also avail to the committee a rich pool of technical skills.

7. I have been informed that their still challenges with the data collection for the EITI reporting. For example the consultants reported that *"During the reporting exercise a lot of effort was required in order to obtain data from the GRA and the Minerals Commission. For example information on corporate tax and royalty payments could not be obtained speedily from the GRA. In the same manner it took a long time before details of payments for the different categories of mineral rights i.e. Reconnaissance, Prospecting and Mining lease were obtained*

from the Minerals Commission. The explanations received by the Consultants suggested that the system of data collection has not been designed to facilitate the retrieval of such details quickly”.

8. This is so across board for both mining and oil and gas. I think we need to strengthen the electronic reporting platform the SAP data collection system. The data collection system must be seen as improving so we need to work at it. The importance of these reports we producing cannot be overemphasized. For Government the availability of such information will helps as formulate the appropriate interventions to strengthen the institutions. I will therefore call on all parties to lend us their support to the EITI process.

9. I also want to commend you for the work done on the GHEITI Bill. I was informed that further consultations will be held on it during the first quarter of this year and then sent to Cabinet .We are hopeful that when finally passed the Bill will also address some of the challenges of the data collection and reporting.

10. Let me conclude by once again thanking all of you for your endurance and hard work. As Chairman of the group it always comes with great pride to hear the initiative is contributed contributing positively to a policy and development outcomes. I urge you all to keep up the good work and may the Good Lord continue to bless our home land Ghana.

Thank you all for your attention and have a fruitful session.

MEETING AGENDA

1. Opening Prayer
2. Chairman's Opening remarks
3. Update on the GHEITI draft Bill
4. Overview of the 2015 GHEITI Work plan
5. Launch
6. Dissemination of the 2012/2013 EITI reports
7. Discussion of the comments on the GHEITI 2012/2013 oil and gas report
8. Update on the draft report on GHEITI impact assessment
9. Other matters

Closing

Initiative (GHEITI) Reports For Mining And Oil And Gas Sectors, 9.00am Mensvic Hotel, Accra
- February 10, 2015