

Minutes of The OGP Steering Committee held on the 14th January 2025 – 1pm at the NaCCED Conference Room

Agenda –

1. Opening Prayers
2. Individual Introductions
3. Welcome Remarks
4. Chairman's opening remarks
5. Discuss the Independent Review Mechanism Report
6. Africa and the Middle East Regional Meeting in Kenya Updates
7. Progress report on NAP V Implementation
8. Brief Statement on the Open Gov Challenge
9. AOB
10. Adjournment

Mrs Hannah Hamida Jimmy OGP Coordinator called the meeting to order at 1.15pm. The meeting started with individual silent prayers followed by self-introductions. She then asked the former Chairman of NaCCED to welcome the SC members and introduce the new Chairman of NaCCED. In his welcome remarks, Mr. Kalilu Totangi said he was honored to welcome SC members to the meeting and thanked them for their support and commitment over the years. He talked briefly on how he revamped the OGP process in 2018 with the visit of the Deputy CEO – Mr Joe Powel, The Africa and Middle East Regional Lead, Mr Theophilus Chivuri and Regional Coordinator Africa and the Middle East, Ms Maureen Karuiki. He led them to the President who reiterated his commitment to open government values. Since then, he said the steering committee membership have developed and implemented two cycles of National Action Plan and now on the implementation of the 5th National Action Plan. “With technical support from Campaign for Human Rights and Development International, the Office of the Ombudsman and the Open Government Partnership, we submitted an open gov

challenge on the administrative justice sector”, he pointed out. He assured the SC members that Mr Joseph Munda Bindi will continue to work with them and noted that the systematic disclosure is another sector that the SC should consider to submit an open gov challenge. “OGP is good for our country, we should communicate some of the progress made on the open governance landscape,” he maintained. He noted the fact that MCC score card is based on evaluation of how transparent, accountable a government is and citizens participation in governance. OGP values align with these parameters and full implementation of the commitments increases our chances of meeting the MCC scorecard. In conclusion, he said that Chairman Bindi comes with a wealth of experience in administration and has over twenty years’ experience working at different levels in the local councils. He ended by appealing to SC members to give all the necessary support and commitment needed to Chairman Joseph Munda Bindi to succeed at all levels.

The Chairman of National Council for Civic Education and Democracy (NaCCED) Joseph Munda Bindi in his opening remarks said it was a privilege to work with Steering committee members representing different MDAs, Civil Society Organizations, development partners and the fourth estate to achieve a common interest for our country. He went on to say that OGP is a department within NaCCED noting that, “this kind of collaboration between government representatives and civil society is rare and it is a critical element for our development. He is enthusiastic to learn with the support of the SC and cooperation of staff of NaCCED and most especially the OGP Unit. He is keen to ensure that progress is made on the commitments and he intends to follow up with the relevant implementing agencies.

With those few words, he then joined the outgoing Chairman, now Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN(Political), to once again heartily welcome the SC members. Mr. Bindi said he was impressed with the punctuality of SC members and especially the OGP Coordinator Mrs. Hannah Jimmy for her commitment and coordination skill in ensuring that the meeting is well attended. “This is not just about OGP, it is about how we collectively move forward and reposition ourselves as a country in the global arena. This is a clear commitment

you have shown me and that is something I am going to learn, to increase commitment to the issues of OGP,” he alluded. He ended on the note that NaCCED is a Change agent and we should set the pace. He then read out the agenda asked if there were no recommendations the agenda be adopted. Ms Cecilia Mattia asked she wanted Nacced to do come civic education on the street lights and this should be added under AOB. The agenda was adopted after this addition.

Updates on the Independent Review Mechanism Report(IRM)

Ms Jimmy informed SC that the IRM report on the progress of NAP 5 implementation and whether OGP guidelines were met during the NAP development and implementation period. Several recommendations were made on the commitments and those were the areas the committee should focus on.

On the first commitment: Strengthening domestic implementation of anti-corruption measures and compliance key recommendations were made: the ACC should expand its collaboration with CSOs by working with ParlCSONet to disseminate findings and progress on Integrity Management Committees and corruption prevention.

It was also recommended that MDAs include key anti-corruption deliverables. The representative from the ACC, Ms Mateneh said that this is noted and she work with the relevant units within the Commission to see that this is done.

On the Open Parliament commitment, it was recommended that OGP be integrated into parliamentary structures, leverage on ParlCSONet to strengthen citizen participation and feedback, strategic media engagement and documenting and sharing experiences of interactive online platforms to enhance citizens engagement.

For commitment 3, it was recommended that a cabinet memorandum to drive conversations and garner political buy in beneficial ownership and systematic disclosure. SLEITI could also strategically approach donors who could the technical and financial resources needed to support the Beneficial Ownership Transparency, they could also engage in awareness raising among government and non-government stakeholders on what beneficial ownership data is and its value in the fight against corruption. And finally, the Company Act of 2009 and

other relevant laws could be reviewed to include provisions on beneficial ownership disclosure.

Ms Cecilia Mattia said that Beneficial ownership requires knowledge on the actual owners of companies eg who owns Octea Mining, She further went on to say there is now a register for companies hosted by the Corporate Affairs Commission which is now a unit under the National Investment Board(NIB). The Financial Intelligence Unit, National Revenue Authority and the National Mineral Agency are all linked to or have access to this register.

For Commitments 5, Inclusion of Youths in Public works and infrastructure Projects and 6, Access to Information the milestones were not too clear. They are government priority projects but for OGP they commitments do not have an Open government lens. Mr Mohamed Jalloh representing Parliament said he is not surprised for the Access to Information milestone as at the time of drafting of the NAP 5 document, it was also brought out by experts in the room. He said it is good for this recommendation from the IRM for best practice. Mr Abdul Fatoma from the Campaign for Human Rights and Development International (CHRDl) updated the meeting on his organization's efforts regarding the draft data protection bill. CHRDl is actively advocating for the passage of this bill and is a member of the technical working group established by the Ministry of Information and Civic Education to address it. The organization has begun conducting public consultations and engaging with members of Parliament and other stakeholders. He stated that through the Ministry, the government has committed to passing the bill into law, hopefully by April this year.

Mrs Hannah Jimmy ended on the note that by the end of this year the SC will review the NAP 5 Commitments and update some commitments where necessary bring on new commitments for submission and these two commitments will be up for review.

Africa and the Middle East Regional Meeting. In a brief statement, Ms Jimmy updated SC members on the total delegation which comprise 5 from Government and CSO respectively. They are: the Secretary to the President, The Minister of Information and Civic Education, The Chairman and Point of Contact, The OGP Coordinator, and the Ombudsman from government and from Civil Society, Country Rep, Westminster Foundation for Democracy, Chief Executive, Campaign

for Human Rights and Development International, Project officer Education for All Coalition, Program Manager Center for Accountability and Rule of Law and National Coordinator, National Advocacy Coalition on Extractives. Several Technical meetings have been set up for the team especially with the submission of the Open Gov Challenge commitment on the administrative justice sector.

Update on NAP 5 implementation. The Chairman and OGP Point of contact asked representatives from the implementing agencies to send in detailed reports by close of business Friday 17th January, 2025. He asked that a summary of the updates be shared now for those who prepared for the meeting and pleaded with others to send in their reports.

The Deputy Commissioner, Mr Emerson Kamara talked about the young people entrepreneurship project they implemented in December. The Commission had two service providers who covered the Western Area and the North West Regions. Another service provider will cover the South and the East. This project covered 5000 young people and created job opportunities for them.

Ms Mateneh from the Anti corruption Commission said that the Commission launched its national strategy in December. She also said that the Commission has recovered lots of stolen money paid with interest by those found guilty of corrupt practices. She then gave updates on assets declaration which the public have complied with through submitting filled out assets declaration forms online. Chairman Bindi asked how involved Civil Society have in the recovery of stolen monies.

Mr Sahr Karku from the Sierra Leone Extractives Industries Transparency Initiative said the EITI Bill has been drafted and now sits with the Multi Stakeholder Group for review. After their review the Bill will now be sent to the Law Officers Department for final input. He noted that the Company's Act is also under review, when it comes to Beneficial Ownership Transparency there is no legal tool to actually address that. One thing to note he added is that "anybody who owns 5% in a company must declare its status" They have held workshops with stakeholders to create awareness around Beneficial Ownership.

Mr Alhassan Sesay from the Right to Access Information Commission, noted that they recently launched a website which is easily accessible for those requesting information to do so online. In addition, the Commission have 50 public

information officers on how to receive and process information. Mr Abdul Fatoma from the Campaign for Human Rights and Development International (CHRDl) updated the meeting on his organisation's efforts regarding the draft data protection bill. CHRDl is actively advocating for the passage of this bill and is a member of the technical working group established by the Ministry of Information and Civic Education to address it. The organisation has begun conducting public consultations and engaging with members of Parliament and other stakeholders. He stated that through the ministry, the government has committed to passing the bill into law, hopefully by April this year.

Mr Luseni Fofana, representing the Justice Sector Coordinating Office said that their website which has been dormant for a while will be up and running in a week from the time of the meeting. All relevant information will be posted and can be accessed by all.

Mr Mohamed Jalloh from Parliament of Sierra Leone said that out of the 10 milestones, Parliament has made progress on 3. For milestone two they held community engagements with Honorable Members of Parliament and their constituents in Kabala, Kono and Moyamba. Critical feedback from citizens were taken on board. He said that ParCSONet membership has increased. There now more ownership of the OGP process within Parliament as other departments have been brought into the fold. He maintained that there are still funding challenges, however based on the fact that they are aligning the activities with the OGP an organization from France has pledged to support the implementation of some activities.

The OGP Coordinator thanked them for the reports and appealed to SC members that we are making so many progress on NAP implementation but we are not showcasing it on the global p-platform. We need to write articles with pictures to be included in the OGP Newsletter. This she further said will help us gain recognition and attract both technical and funding resources.

Open Gov Commitment. Ms Hannah Jimmy informed SC members that sometime in December last year the OGP Unit in collaboration with the Office of the Ombudsman and Campaign for Human Rights and Development International in consultation with experts in the justice sector submitted a stand-alone commitment on the administrative justice sector. Mr Abdul Fatoma and the

Ombudsman will give a brief statement on this. Mr Fatoma said that he is pleased to inform SC members that after series of consultations both locally and with technical support from OGP global, he worked with the OGP Coordinator and the Ombudman to draft the commitment. Mr Tejan Jah, the Ombudsman recognized the efforts of the OGP Coordinator and Mr Fatoma for the technical support and an opportunity to use the OGP platform and promote review/amendment of the Ombudsman Act of 1997. This Act is one of the oldest pieces of legislation in this country and was passed immediately after the 1991 constitution. This notwithstanding he said only few people know about their activities. Interestingly, he continued, their mandate covers every sector both private and public, every citizen except the President. We will use the OGP platform to give teeth to the Ombudsman Act so that it can start to bite. He concluded by asking SC members for support as he embarks on this review process.

AOB:

Ms Cecilia Mattia said that there is flagrant disregard for traffic lights in Freetown especially in the Murray Town and Aberdeen axis. She said there is need for some civic education around traffic lights. Mr Fatoma also supported the submission. The Chairman responded that he will discuss with his team and try and engage the relevant MDAs.

Action Points

1. Implementing agencies to provide a written updates on the progress of NAP 5 Commitments implementation – Responsible Institutions – Anti Corruption Commission, Sierra Leone Extractives Industries Transparency Initiative, Right to Access Information Commission, Justice Sector Coordinating Office, Parliament of Sierra Leone, National Youth Commission
2. Follow up on civic education on traffic lights

Mr Charles Kamara moved the motion for an adjournment seconded by Ms Mateneh.

NAMES OF INSTITUTIONS THAT ATTENDED THE MEETING:

1. Memuna Transparency International Sierra Leone
2. Abdul Rahman Morlson Sesay Budget Advocacy Network
3. Sahr Karku – Sierra Leone Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative
4. Charles Kamara- Education for All Coalition
5. Mateneh – Anti Corruption Commission
6. Mohamed Jalloh –Parliament of Sierra Leone
7. Ishmail Kanu – Institute for Governance Reforms
8. Alhassan Sesay – Right to Access Information Commission
9. Jeremy Ben Simbo – Centre for Accountability and Rule of Law
10. Abdul Fatoma – Campaign for Human Rights and Development International
11. Tejan Jah – Office of the Ombudsman
12. Emmerson Kamara – Nation Youth Commission
13. Cecilia Mattia – National Advocacy and Coalition on Extractives
14. Abigail Stevens – Centre for the Coordination of Youth Activities
15. Nancy Koroma – Ministry of Information and Civic Education
16. Memunatu Seiwoh – Parliament of Sierra Leone
17. Luseni Fofana – Justice Sector Coordinating Office
18. Rev Alusine Diamond Suma – Westminster Foundation for Democracy