

REPORT OF THE CONSULTATIONS ON THE OGP PROGRESS REPORT ON NAP AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SECOND NAP

1.0. INTRODUCTION

The development of Sierra Leone's OGP NAP 2 was a rigorous exercise involving extensive consultation with various groups and individuals across the various sections of society. Through these consultations government officials, CSOs, grassroots organisations, religious groups, media and citizens in general were engaged. A series of meetings and dialogues were held to popularize and sensitize the general public on the OGP process. The exercise also involved getting feedback from the public about the NAP 1 and the progress made towards achieving the targets. Most importantly, the consultative process gave Sierra Leoneans the opportunity to analyse their challenges within the context of NAP principles and grand challenges to come up with specific recommendations for NAP 2. NAP 2 commitments and milestones were drawn from the suggestions and recommendations received during the consultations.

2.0. CONSULTATIVE MEETINGS AND DIALOGUES HELD ON OGP

2.1. Multi-stakeholder meeting with CSOs and Government

On the 8th of June, 2016 a multi-stakeholder meeting was held at State House involving CSOs, government officials from various Ministries, Departments and Agencies, Media and citizen representatives. It was chaired by Dr. Ernest Surrur, the Secretary to the Cabinet and Head of the Civil Service. During this meeting, members were particularly concerned that there were only a few days left towards the deadline for submission of the NAP 1 Report. Thus, members took time to look at all the eleven (11) commitments and forty five (45) milestones under NAP 1 highlighting those that were not yet achieved but could be within the time available. The MDAs responsible for the implementation of milestones under NAP 1, such as Anti-Corruption Commission, Ministry of Information and Communication, Performance Management Service Delivery Unit, Strategic Policy Unit and Ministry of Finance and Economic Development were given the opportunity to present on the progress and whether they could produce any evidences of the work that they had done under NAP 1. The meeting resolved that evidences of accomplishments done such as reports of consultations done, reports of needs assessments,

minutes of meetings held and websites for items applauded online be submitted to OGP offices by the 15th of June 2016.

Concerning NAP 2, the following commitments were suggested;

- Fiscal transparency and open budget commitment
- Records management
- Aid transparency
- Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative
- Implementing the recommendation of the Auditor General's Reports
- Open Contracting
- Climate change

Over and above the highlighted commitments some stakeholders recommended the following issues to be integrated into the Second NAP;

- Access to Justice
- Gender and Women Empowerment
- Waste management and sanitation
- Elections
- Environment and climate change

2.2. OGP Expert Panel Meeting on the Gender Commitment

On the 13th of June 2016 a meeting was held at State House with various women's organisations and experts on women empowerment. The objective of the meeting was to consider the pressing issues around gender and women empowerment in Sierra Leone in order to come up with specific commitments to address them as part of OGP NAP 2. The meeting deliberated on various issues including the implementation of gender laws, the Agenda for Prosperity's commitments for women empowerment, women and health and the National Gender Policy. However, the meeting concluded that the most pressing and immediate concern in Sierra Leone

was Sexual and Gender Based Violence. In light of this, milestones speaking to the following issues were suggested;

- The need for a special legal mechanism to hold perpetrators of domestic violence to account.
- Looking at information management so that an open data mechanism to capture statistics of violence against women is put in place.
- A forensic evidence machine to facilitate access to justice and proper medical care for the survivors of violence against women.
- Keeping a database of all the perpetrators of sexual and gender based violence for accountability and transparency.
- Members also deliberated on the possibilities of having a one stop centre that would provide victims of violence access to medical attention, courts, psychosocial support and legal attention all at the same place for free.

2.3. Consultative Meeting with CSOs

A consultative meeting was held on the 14th of June 2016 with CSOs. At least 150 participants attended the conference which was chaired by the Coordinator for Budget Advocacy Network, Mr Abu Bakarr Kamara. During the consultation, a detailed presentation on the OGP, its mandate, mission and focus was presented including the principles and grand challenges. Progress with regards to the implementation of NAP 1 was also discussed and CSOs were given the opportunity to comment. Generally, the CSOs appreciated the progress that was done and the efforts towards meeting the commitments under NAP 1. However, it was noted that such consultations should continue throughout the implementation of NAP 2, from the development of the commitments and milestones to implementation, monitoring and review. CSO members appreciated the role that OGP was playing in promoting accountability and transparency in Sierra Leone. They also underscored the need to continuously strengthen the partnership between government and civil society to promote good governance.

Members were given the opportunity to input into the OGP process by filling up questionnaires to provide their suggestions. They were informed that the output of this process will guide the

country in terms of which areas to prioritize under the OGP process. The meeting endorsed the OGP NAP II Commitments and considered them to appropriately address the challenges that Sierra Leone is facing. They commended the OGP Secretariat for its participatory approach.

2.4. Dialogue with Selected Members of Parliament

A dialogue meeting was held on the 15th of June 2016 with 30 Members of Parliament from across the country. Parliament is a vital stakeholder in the OGP process not only because it is primary the law making body of Government but because of its proximity to the people as their custodians. Parliamentarians are therefore critical to the OGP process for championing change and providing invaluable guidance and strategic leadership on achieving the NAP commitments. The dialogue meeting was also attended by OGP Secretariat, Civil Society Representatives and Media organizations. During the dialogue session, Members were informed in detail about the OGP, its mandate, objective, mission as well as the principles and grand challenges. The Country Director for OSIWA also took time to reaffirm OSIWA's commitment towards participatory democracy and open dialogue between CSOs, government and Parliament. The OGP office also elaborated on NAP 1, the commitments made and progress to date. The proposed commitments for NAP 2 were shared with the MPs who actively scrutinized each of them and vowed their support to each one of them. In particular, they were interested in Records Management, Extractive Industry Transparency Initiatives Law, climate change and fiscal transparency. MPs welcomed the commitment on promoting electoral commitment and reiterated their support to ensuring that the commitment is achieved. They concurred that the promotion of accountability and transparency in the electoral system was a major step towards advancing the tenets of democracy. In particular they hailed the inclusion of the milestone for making elections-related information available online.

2.5. Multi-stakeholder Consultation with CSOs and Government Departments

On the 16th of June 2016, a multi-stakeholder consultative meeting was held with CSOs and government departments. The meeting was also attended by media and citizens' representatives. During the meeting an update of the progress regarding the implementation of NAP 1 was provided by Cabinet Secretariat, which is supporting the OGP Secretariat and Government with technical backstopping and monitoring of NAP commitments. In particular, it was confirmed that the required evidences of implementing activities under NAP 1 had been received from Ministry of Information, Anti-Corruption Commission and Public Monitoring Service Delivery Unit. However, the presenter noted that the Cabinet Secretariat was yet to meet the Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources.

With regards to NAP 2, members discussed each of the commitments and milestones looking at the practicability and whether they were in line with OGP principles. Members endorsed with minor changes, some of the commitments but however most reiterated the fact that consultations be made with the relevant implementing agencies to get their buy in at the planning stage. With regards to the Climate Change commitment, participants were informed that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) had submitted its proposals and that discussions were to be held with OGP to ensure the compliance of the commitment to OGP standards. The commitment on Gender was presented as suggested by the expert meeting and the meeting agreed that relevant consultations be made with the implementing partners to endorse the commitment. The meeting also discussed several possible milestones under the commitment on Access to Justice but agreed that the relevant authorities be consulted before finalization.

2.6. Consultation Feedback Meeting

On the 21st of June 2016 a Consultation Feedback meeting was held with CSOs, government representatives and the media. The objectives of the meeting was to discuss the outcomes of the various District consultative meetings that were held in Western Area Rural, Makeni, Kenema and Bo, and to discuss progress on development of the NAP 2.

Concerning the District consultations, successful deliberations were noted with at least 100 participants recorded in each District, the endorsement of NAP 2 commitments and at least three commitments proposed per District.

2.6.1. Western Rural District

It was reported that the meetings with stakeholders in the Western Rural District was fruitful. The meeting was attended by government officials, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), local council, media, community leaders and villagers. The stakeholders were particularly grateful and welcomed OGP's principles towards "creating safer communities" and "improving corporate responsibility". They endorsed the commitments and milestones that were proposed under NAP

2 especially; the commitment on Local Councils with the milestones to improve waste collection. In addition, they also commended the OGP for the commitment on gender and sexual violence.

The community members emphasized that the challenges that they were facing included child pregnancy, poor waste management, land grabbing and deforestation, lawlessness, and lack of corporate social responsibility from companies operating in their community.

In light of the challenges that the Western Rural District was facing, stakeholders proposed the following:

- Commitment mandating the Environmental Protection Agency to ensure compliance with environmental issues;
- Commitment to enable authorities to deal with land grabbers;
- Commitment to ensure that Members of Parliament (MPs) visit their constituencies every month;
- Commitment to promote cabinet meetings in the Provinces.

2.6.2. Makeni District

The meeting was informed that there were fruitful deliberations in Makeni. The meeting in Makeni was attended by at least one hundred participants including government officials, CSOs, media, local council, community leadership and community members.

The key issues that the District raised were associated with the deteriorating quality of education and unemployment. The community was especially concerned that job opportunities were mostly provided by foreign and not Sierra Leonean Companies. In addition, they requested that databases be established on all government recruitments disaggregated by sex.

The District stakeholders recommended the following commitments:

- Commitment on Local Councils with milestones on waste management. The community members recommended that the mandatory public Saturday Cleaning be reactivated;
- Commitment promoting access to justice for victims of sexual violence. The community participants reported that currently there was a lot of interference in sexual violence by higher authorities that deterred perpetrators from facing justice.

2.6.3. Kenema District

It was reported that the deliberations in Kenema were successful, with participatory discussions around critical challenges. The meeting made the following recommendations:

- The justice system should improve its capacity to deal with matters of Sexual and Gender Based Violence and marital conflicts. In addition, all people should have access to justice including people residing in remote areas. Juvenile criminals should be separated and brought to justice. Community members also noted that the Presidential Pardon should have limitations and should not be extended to grievous crimes such as murder.
- In terms of Accountability, it was recommended that performance audits be conducted for Local Councils. In addition, Members of Parliament should engage their constituencies and brief them on Parliamentary issues. The community highlighted that they wanted to hear reports by the Anti-Corruption Commission, especially on issues pertaining to their District.
- A commitment on value addition was also recommended, given that the nation produces raw materials that are sold at cheaper prices.

2.6.4. Bo District

The meeting in Bo was successful and was attended by over 100 people. The major concerns that the people raised included:

- Continuity in the engagement of CSOs by government.
- OGI offices should be functional in the Southern Region.
- OGI should promote honesty and effectiveness to ensure good governance.
- Community members noted that after the Audit Service Report on Ebola Funds was conducted, nothing was done to ensure indictment of the people whose actions were questioned. They recommended that the issue be followed up.
- Community members also recommended that Asset Declarations by public officials be made public.

- In terms of the Right to Information Act, the community were of the view that the law is not yet operational since MDAs have not opened up to give them information. In addition, the issuance of contracts is shrouded in secrecy.
- Bo stakeholders also recommended the relocation of OGP from the Office of the President to make it neutral and less political.
- A commitment on dealing with corruption was proposed.
- A commitment on employment creation was also proposed. Community members argued that government can embark on huge projects especially in the agricultural sector to deal with unemployment.
- In terms of retirees, Bo stakeholders argued that they should be rewarded well and their payments should be consistent.

The meeting resolved that meetings be set with MDAs implementing the proposed commitments under NAP 2 for their input and confirmations. In that regard therefore, it was also resolved that OGP sends all commitments to responsible MDAs in the OGP format. In consideration of the fact that waste management issues were presented as burning issue across all the Districts, OGP was mandated to liaise with the Freetown City Council to come up with a commitment and milestones.

2.7. Validation Feedback Meeting on NAP 2

On the 27th of June 2016, a validation feedback meeting was held with MDAs, Civil Society and the Media. The purpose of the meeting was to review on the progress of the meetings that were held with MDAs to finalize the proposed commitments and milestones under NAP 2. Members discussed the various submissions and agreements made between OGP and the MDAs. However, the meeting agreed that the commitment on waste management at this stage should be limited to only for Freetown City Council to address the critical challenge in Freetown. Regarding the commitment on Access to Justice it was agreed that the milestone on child mediation panels should be extended to all the 19 Local Councils.

3.0. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, consultations on the NAP 1 and NAP 2 were wide, reaching out to Sierra Leoneans across the country through various medium including the town hall meetings, radio, TV and print media. The suggestions and recommendations provided by the general public, especially on the grand challenges for NAP 2 were duly incorporated into the final commitments and milestones.