

OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP



REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

**SIERRA LEONE'S
NATIONAL ACTION PLAN**

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ACRONYMS

ACC - Anti-Corruption Commission
ASSL - Audit Services, Sierra Leone
CC - Citizens' Committee
CRC - Citizens' Report Card
CSO - Civil Society Organization
CSR - Corporate Social Responsibility
EIA - Environmental Impact Assessment
EIRA - Extractives Industry Revenue Act
EPA - Environmental Protection Agency
IFMIS - Integrated Financial Management Information Systems
MAFFS - Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security
MCCU- Millennium Challenge Coordinator Unit
MDAs - Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MEST -Ministry of Education and Science Technology
MHS - Ministry of Health and Sanitation
MIC - Ministry of Information and Communication
MLSS - Ministry of Labour and Social Security
MMMR - Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources
MOFED - Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
MTI - Ministry of Trade and Industry
NAP - National Action Plan
NASSIT -- The National Social Security and Insurance Trust
NMA - National Minerals Agency
NPPA - National Public Procurement Agency
OGI - Open Government Initiative
OGP - Open Government Partnership
PAC - Public Accounts Committee
PD - Petroleum Directorate
PMSD - Performance Management Service Delivery
PRSP - Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PSRU - Public Strategy Reform Unit
RAI - Right to Access Information
SC - Steering Committee
SLCDT - Sierra Leone Conference on Development and Transformation
SLEITI - Sierra Leone Extractives Industry Transparency Initiative
SPU - Strategic Policy Unit
STA - Single Treasury Account

Introduction

The Government of Sierra Leone has enjoyed peace and stability from 2002 and has worked diligently to move out of the post conflict framework to a burgeoning democratic, stable and developing state. This transformation has been gradual and responsive to the demands of citizens who have been essential in the dialogue with Government on where Sierra Leone is going especially around aspirations encapsulated in the Agenda for Prosperity (PRSP III).

As a Government that has assiduously worked towards improving transparency and accountability in the delivery of services to its citizens, the Government wanted to further concretize its actions and use them as leverage points to develop a more ambitious agenda to improve good governance.

Creating the National Action Plan was a key step towards gaining full membership to the Open Government Partnership, an initiative born in 2011 when eight countries came together to show that they want to be more responsive to the needs of their citizens. To this end, the Government of Sierra Leone embarked on a nationwide sensitization and consultation process that engaged citizens, public officials, civil society organizations and other partners to put together a national action plan that is reflective of a transparent, accountable and responsive open government process. The consultation process also included Sierra Leoneans living in Guinea, the United Kingdom, Belgium, Netherlands and the United States of America.

The National Action Plan (NAP) will address the three grand challenges as agreed upon in the national steering committee of **improving public integrity, effective management of public resources and improving corporate accountability**, which the Government and the people of Sierra Leone believe will inform a more strategic engagement towards driving shared growth and good governance practices. A fourth grand challenge emerged after consultations because it became apparent that when asked to choose their own grand challenges of the five suggested by the OGP global support unit, the people of Sierra Leone consistently were interested in 'Improving Public Services' as their first choice. As a steering committee of civil society organizations and government agencies we had to respond to what the people want.

Sierra Leone's Open Government Efforts to Date

Transparency

The Government of Sierra Leone has worked steadfastly on improving transparency across Government by bringing the citizens closer to governance. This has been the cornerstone of the Agenda for Change (Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper II) and the more recent Agenda for Prosperity (PRSP III) especially in the areas of public resources management, public integrity, fighting corruption and corporate accountability. Further, in October 2013, Sierra Leone passed the Right to Access Information (RAI) law which additionally emboldened its commitment to transparency and gave us eligibility to the open government partnership.

Key Actions:

- **Transparency Sierra Leone Website:** In 2012, the Office of the President launched Transparency Sierra Leone. The objective of this initiative is to give citizens access to information on contractors, funding mechanisms and progress of implementation of major government projects to increase transparency in service delivery.
- **Audit Service Sierra Leone:** Recent policy reforms in the Public Accounts Committee of Parliament, has ensured that audit reports are reviewed and published within a shorter time frame. In addition, audit reports are made public at the same time it is laid in parliament. Currently, the Auditor General's report is submitted within the twelve months period as required by the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone.
- **Archives and Records Management:** GoSL is committed to building a reliable and trustworthy evidence-based information/data management system to support policy-making and service delivery across the public service. To achieve this, it requires an integrated records and information management strategy linked to a sound legal and organizational structure and a capacity-building program.

Citizen Participation

Increasing civic participation in governance and decision making has been promoted by Government efforts especially through the Open Government Initiative under the Office of the President. The process of increasing civic engagement in the day to day dealings of Government has positively impacted delivery and has made Government more responsive to the demands of the people.

Key Actions:

- **Sierra Leone Conference on Development and Transformation (SLCDT):** the objective of the conference was to chart Sierra Leone's ascent to a middle income country within the next few decades. The formulation of the action plans were buttressed by extensive national consultations in all 13 Districts. However, more work will need to be done to strengthen the Citizen's manifesto and systematically assess the implementation of the action plan.
- **Citizens' Committee:** An outcome of the SLCDT was the creation of a Citizens' Committee (CC) to monitor the implementation of the action plan from the conference. The secretary of the committee is to work in collaboration with citizens to hold the Government accountable for implementing the key recommendations.
- **Open Government Initiative:** the OGI has been in existence since 2008 to bring government closer to citizens. One of the key accomplishments of the OGI is the presentation of a scorecard by citizens on the performance of Government in the key service delivery sectors. Over the years they have done many activities that show that government is interested in opening up her activities to the citizenry of Sierra Leone even before the concept of open government partnership was born.

Accountability

Increasing accountability through citizen participation has been a major thrust of Government activities.

Key Actions

- **Citizens' Budget:** Since 2012, a citizen's budget has been prepared by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development to inform the public about how the country's resources are being managed. It is a simplified version of the economic policies, allocations and summaries of the previous budget to allow for year-on-year comparisons by citizens.
- **Citizens' Report Card (CRC):** A national survey that urged citizens to report on the activities of the government of Sierra Leone with regard to their activities and whether they had been fulfilling, or not; thereby holding them accountable to the people.

Fighting Corruption

The President of the Republic of Sierra Leone in his State Opening of Parliament in 2014 and in the Foreword of the Agenda for Prosperity reiterated his zero tolerance policy on corruption. The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has been given independence since 2008 and benefits from the cooperation of the highest office in the Office of the President to systematically rout out corruption in order to improve service delivery.

Key Actions

- **Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Act:** The amended 2008 ACC law is one of the strongest in the sub region which allows for independent prosecution of corrupt individuals without reverting to the Office of the Attorney General. Between 2008 and 2013, over 50 prosecuted cases have ended in a conviction including sitting Ministers and Worshipers of the Local Councils.
- **Asset Declaration Unit:** This unit under the ACC requires all public servants to declare their assets, income and liabilities three months before taking office following which they should provide yearly submissions until they leave office. In 2012, approximately 47,761 declaration forms were distributed and over 45% were returned to the Asset Declaration Unit by public officials. It is important to note that asset declarations are currently still private and are not in the public domain.
- **Pay No Bribe Campaign:** An inter-governmental campaign was launched in February, 2014 to tackle the issue of petty bribery in key service delivery institutions in collaboration with DFID. This campaign will firstly ensure that citizens are empowered by being aware of their rights through the publication and dissemination of service charters of key Government services. Government then intends to scale up monitoring and reporting on incidences of bribery through a robust data collection and management system that will be established in the Anti-Corruption Commission.

Improving Service Delivery

In the Agenda for Change, the President espoused his desire to run the country like a business in order efficaciously and efficiently address this issue of inadequate service delivery. In order to ensure that performance and delivery became the center of Government operations, the Office of the President has championed efforts to introduce a performance contracting

system. Today all key tiers of Government including MDAs, Local Councils, and tertiary education institutions operate under performance contracts through which MDAs effectiveness, efficiency and level of accomplishment of annual work are measured.

Key Actions

- **Performance Contracts:** through the Performance Management Service Delivery Directorate; Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), local council officials and other public servants are required to sign performance contracts with the Office of the President which sets out their yearly objectives and activities. Performance is assessed on a bi-yearly basis and performance scores are made available to the public.

Technology and Innovation

Key Actions

- **Landing of the fiber optic cables:** the fiber optic cables have landed and the backbone structure is at the latter stages of development.
- **Integrated Financial Management Information System:** this system was implemented in 2005 using a free balance platform to support fiscal discipline, objective allocation of resources, value for money and probity in the use of public funds. This has been one of the key concrete steps towards e-government penetration.
- **Open Government Initiative Digital Resource Libraries:** As recently as November 2013, the OGI launched a new website along with digital libraries in all four regions (Kenema, Makeni, Mattru Jong and Western Area Rural). The intent is to help residents of those areas in close vicinity to have access to information that is currently on other websites of MDAs and at the same time provide facilities such as those similar to an Internet Café. This could be a medium that the GoSL can leverage on when we use technology as the basis for making open data available from government to the people.

National Action Plan Development Process

Formation of the civil society network (March 2014)

- A civil society network, the Federation of Civil Society Organizations (The Federation) wrote a letter to government in response to the request for their participation in developing Sierra Leone's first National Action Plan (NAP). The Federation held a press conference at the office of the Sierra Leone Association of Journalists. Campaign for Good Governance, Society for Democratic Initiatives, Center for Accountability and the Rule of Law and others met separately with regard to the Open Government Partnership (OGP) membership process.
- Government responded to the civil society network's letter by welcoming the engagement of CSOs in the OGP and NAP.
- Members of the civil society network agreed on the need for a civil society coordinator, and the Federation Chairperson assumed the role with concurrence or no opposition from the other CSOs.
- The initial meeting saw members of civil society get together to rally around a common vision for the OGP process and submitted more names to be included in the civil society network. So the initial steering committee that was supposed to be a team of twenty, increased to thirty-four.

Early meetings with the Government (March 2014 to April 2014)

- President Koroma gave his support for the NAP to be developed in partnership between government and civil society and designated the Open Government Initiative (OGI) and the Millennium Challenge Coordinating Unit (MCCU) to be co-implementers of the NAP development process.
- A thirty-four person Steering Committee consisting of 17 members each from both civil society and government was established.
- Meetings were held between government officials and CSO network members to co-design and agree the NAP development process.

- A series of open meetings facilitated by the OGI were held between the CSO network and government officials (the Steering Committee) to scope out the action plan and commitment areas.

Draft National Action Plan (March 2014 to April 2014)

- The narrative for a draft NAP was developed by implementing units and shared and agreed upon within the Steering Committee.
- OGI organized a sensitization effort with regard to the draft National Action Plan at events in all twelve districts of the country and the Western Area.
- The draft NAP, which included commitments agreed by government and civil society and an annex of additional tasks in a work-plan format, was then released for public consultation.
- Sensitization and consultations were separately held again with all twelve districts in the country and the Western Area. During the consultation the people of Sierra Leone referred to “Improving Public Services” as their most popular grand challenge. The steering committee deliberated around that and decided to create at least one commitment that speaks to improving public services. It was subsequently agreed that the service charter commitment be affirmed as the one that will address the concerns of the citizenry (see consultations report).
- Consultations were very interesting and the people of Sierra Leone, represented by the roughly 3,000 people that were sensitized and consulted which saw the people of Sierra Leone asking that a particular grand challenge and relative commitments be thrown into the mix. In every district we went to and presented the opportunity for the people to choose their own priorities with regard to the grand challenges, the one that was referred to as the topmost priority was one that the steering committee did not even choose: Improving Public Services. And the steering committee made allowances for it by identifying at least two commitments that spoke to the challenge.
- Consultations were also held with Sierra Leonean’s living in the diaspora. These include neighboring Guinea, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Belgium and the United States of America.
- Media outreach proved very effective during the sensitization process. Traditional and social media were effectively utilized during the development of the NAP. The steering committee for example received updates via a WhatsApp group named OGP Steering Meet. Citizens

were also updated via the OGP Salone Facebook page and the Open Government Initiative website. The Society for Democratic Initiatives, a civil society which is represented on the steering committee also dedicated a newsletter to the process.

Finalizing the Draft National Action Plan (April 2014)

- Steering Committee New policy leads met with civil society network members and government policy leads.
- The OGI facilitated meetings between civil society network members and policy leads on relevant commitments as gathered from the consultations. Data collected was analyzed and information from the consultations shared in a report.
- Public validation was held based on the draft NAP on April 29th, 2014. His Excellency the President of the Republic of Sierra Leone confirmed the validation in his keynote address at the same meeting.
- Commitments were developed and agreed in further detail between government and civil society, and a final meeting held to clear up any issues arising from some commitments. The final meeting spurred more discussions and the OGI was able to set up and hold meetings with the various stakeholders that were identified as implementing institutions. This involved the MDAs described in the appended work plan.

Finalizing the National Action Plan (May 2014 to June 15, 2014)

- Consultations will continue as the draft NAP is made final by the steering committee. Adjustments to the NAP will be made after feedback is received from the OGP Support Unit as necessary. The NAP itself is a living document, which means it can entertain additions as situations evolve and we will make the necessary updates as required by the OGP process.
- Various focus group discussions were held between the OGP Coordinator, members of the civil society organizations and the implementing ministries, departments and agencies to agree on the Commitments, the plan of action and establishment of relevant institutional arrangements that will inform the implementation of the NAP.

Sierra Leone's Open Government Partnership Commitments

Objective 1: Public integrity improved vis-à-vis the promotion of more effective transparency and accountability measures for public officials

1. Develop and implement a Public Integrity Pact with 5 pilot MDAs that identifies key commitments in line with Section 8 -- Public Integrity -- of the ACC Act, 2008 to improve public trust in public service delivery and to ensure effective accountability of public officials.

Sierra Leone does not currently have a public integrity policy, however, it is expected that a Public Integrity Policy will institute safeguard measures that will guarantee timely access to public services. There is a Code of Conduct for all public officials and other regulations, however, adherence and popularization leaves much to be desired which adversely affects corruption. It is expected that the development of the Pacts will promote ethical and proactive performance by public officials in the discharge of their duties especially in delivering key public services in an effort to improve accountability.

RELEVANCE – Accountability

Actions Required/Milestones for Completion:

- a) Dissemination, administration and enforcement of existing integrity policies to improve public trust strengthened.
- b) 5 pilot MDAs selected to sign an integrity pact with ACC on key commitments to reduce corruption in their Institutions.
- c) Service charters for 20% MDAs (including 5 pilot MDAs for integrity pacts) which clearly identifies the service provided, timeframe to expect service to be rendered and any associated costs developed and displayed with clearly visible complaints mechanisms to identify when services are not rendered according to published procedures and timeframes.
- d) Yearly assessment of integrity commitments undertaken for 5 pilot MDAs.

2. Pass a robust and proactive Archives and Records Management Act to support the implementation of the Right to Access Information Act in a bid to improve public transparency

The Archives and Records Management Bill has been drafted and several small scale consultations have already been had in collaboration with the Strategy and Policy Unit in the Office of the President. However, it has yet to be tabled by Cabinet or Parliament. Passing of the Archives and Records Management Bill will support the implementation of the Right to Access Information Act as it will serve as a key tool to informing database management and archiving of key Government documents that will be stored in formats that are accessible to the public vis-à-vis print and electronic mediums.

RELEVANCE – Transparency and Accountability

Actions Required/Milestones for Completion:

- a) Public consultations on the Archives and Records Management Bill undertaken.
- b) Draft tabled in Cabinet by the Ministry of Information and Communication in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology.
- c) Capacity and needs assessment in records management completed.
- d) Bill submitted to Parliament by Ministry of Information and Communication.
- e) Archives and Records Management Bill passed by Parliament.
- f) Establish of an e-governance infrastructure

Objective 2: Improved management of public resources through reducing opportunities for wastage, ensuring value for money and improved transparency in budget management

3. Scale up and deepen the activities of the Performance Management and Service Delivery Directorate to improve accountability and increase civic participation in governance.

The Performance Management and Service Delivery Directorate was established in 2013 in the Office of the Chief of Staff to lead performance contracting of key public officials within key service delivery institutions across Government. To date, performance contracts have been rolled out to over 80% of ministries, departments and agencies, tertiary education institutions and local councils. The Performance Tracking Table is used to help institutions plan their activities against which they are assessed on a bi-yearly basis in a bid to ensure improved service delivery, however, dissemination of the assessments to the public has been poor, which has undermined its objective of improving accountability. Improving on civic participation in the PMSD process will increase accountability which is assumed will result in improved service delivery.

RELEVANCE – Transparency, Accountability and Citizen Engagement

Actions Required/Milestones for Completion:

- a) All assessments of MDAs covered by PMSD published in a yearly volume to be made available to the public in print and online mediums.
- b) 9 pilot MDAs for implementation selected.
- c) Ensure that in the planning and budget cycle for an initial 9 piloted MDAs; yearly activity plans are prepared in conjunction with procurement plans which will be the basis of budgets submitted for consideration to the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development. The planning cycle and fiscal cycle must be synchronized to ensure that the activity based budget by MOFED is in fact informed by proper planning vis-à-vis a robust activity and procurement plan, which should inform budget preparation.
- d) Town Hall meeting held not more than 2 months after publication to engage the public on the findings by the Performance Management and Service Delivery Directorate through a public bi-yearly assessment of the performance contracts.

4. Increase compliance with audit measures to improve transparency and accountability in public resource spending

The Audit Service Sierra Leone is the key institution that have championed the fight against reducing public wastage and promoting value for money across Government. However, there are still opportunities to strengthen the work of this institution in an effort to ensure more efficient and transparent use of public resources.

RELEVANCE – Transparency and Accountability

Actions Required/Milestones for Completion:

- a) White Paper prepared by the Executive that addresses key mechanisms and actions that Government intends to take to implement the recommendations of the annual Audit report with the view of reviewing recommendations.
- b) Policy paper to advice the Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee with regard to placing limitations on length of time their review and deliberations and the publishing of the audit report. This policy paper will be prepared by Open Government Partnership Sierra Leone National Steering Committee.
- c) At least 50% of the published Audit Report and/or PAC recommendations implemented by relevant MDAs and these actions made public during the annual performance contracting assessment process.

5. Establish a Single Treasury Account to improve financial accountability

It is evident that reducing wastages in the management of public resources is partially dependent on fiscal discipline and the leveraging of the extractive industry especially through the promotion of transparent practices in contract negotiation and management. The aim is to leverage on key actions that the Government has already identified as essential to improving fiscal and extractive industries transparency with a view towards better management of public resources such as the establishment of the Single Treasury Account which was highlighted in the 2014 Budget presentation by the Hon. Minister of Finance and Economic Development. Its establishment will streamline Government fiscal procedures and create more transparency and accountability in Government spending.

RELEVANCE – Accountability and Technology/Innovation

Actions Required/Milestones for Completion:

- a) Single Treasury Account established by undertaking a census of all Government Bank accounts and findings made public.
- b) Procedures and mechanisms implemented by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development in collaboration with relevant institutions will run a Single Treasury Account (STA) which will form the basis of a new Memorandum of Understanding with relevant Banks on the modus operandi of Government transactions based on STA Model.

6. Enact an Extractive Industry Revenue Act (EIRA) to promote transparency and accountability in the granting of tax incentives

The Extractives Industry Revenue is an Act that is required to regulate the management of revenue especially with reference to the granting of tax incentives to companies operating in Sierra Leone. Implementing the draft Extractives Industry Revenue Bill is crucial in that it would require the government to publish a statement of its tax expenditure, detailing all tax exemptions, the beneficiaries and the revenue foregone in a bid to promote transparency. It will also require producing and publishing a cost benefit analysis on the need to grant tax incentive on an annual basis hence the public will be well informed on the rationale for granting tax incentives which may engender public debate and foster accountability and reduce the discretionary powers of Government officials. Recently, according to the National Revenue Authority over \$1 Billion in concessions were given to countries operating in Sierra Leone over a two year period.

RELEVANCE – Transparency and Accountability

Actions Required/Milestones for Completion:

- a) Public consultations held on the Bill within a reasonable time frame.
- b) Bill tabled in Cabinet by Ministry of Finance and Economic Development.
- c) Bill tabled in Parliament.
- d) Bill passed by Parliament and enacted.

7. Scaling up extractive industry transparency initiatives

In the area of transparency in the extractive industries, Sierra Leone has been a member of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative since 2008, and although it was suspended in 2012, she just recently became EITI-compliant. It is currently working on passing the EITI bill which has already been developed to improve efforts towards transparency and to ensure Sierra Leone's compliance. The non-disclosure of mining contracts has been an issue that has been raised by many civil society organizations and the issue is valid as it will hold both government and the extractive industries accountable in their dealings.

RELEVANCE – Transparency

Actions Required/Milestones for Completion:

- a) EITI Bill tabled in Cabinet by the relevant MDA (Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources or the Office of the Chief of Staff).
- b) EITI Bill passed by Parliament.
- c) Publish the process and outline the checks and balances carried out for allocation of licenses by the Mines and Mineral Resources Ministry and the Petroleum Directorate.
- d) Disclose environmental impact assessments prior to the award of any extractives rights.
- e) Perform audits and publish reports of the Diamond Area Community Development Fund and the Community Development Fund.

Objective 3: improved corporate accountability through more transparent negotiation processes for mining activities and the utilization of open data portals to give the public access to mining contracts and other relevant documents

8. Improve monitoring of the Local Content Policy (LCP) especially around monitoring the implementation of activities and improving linkages with MDAs in order to improve local participation and accountability in the process.

This policy is necessary to ensure that there is sufficient linkage between the local economy and foreign enterprises. By setting specific performance requirements, the Government aims to ensure that the benefits that Sierra Leone seeks to obtain from FDI including improved technology and managerial skills are integrated into the domestic market and distribution networks. There are key facilitative commitments that are already prescribed by the LCP such as the establishment of an implementing committee; however, it is currently not functional. And for us to proceed effectively; it needs to become more functional. Since key MDAs have a monitoring role to play, it is important that they understand their roles and responsibilities to implement the LCP. Moreover, MDAs should have collaborative meetings and share plans, revenue streams to enhance transparency and accountability.

RELEVANCE – Accountability and Citizen Engagement

Actions Required/Milestones for Completion:

- a) Setting up of an MDA linkage mechanism (revival of the implementing committee) to inform the implementation and monitoring of the local content policy to ensure more efficient sharing of information across key implementing institutions facilitated.
- b) An audit of the implementation of the local Content Policy to inform the development of a Local Content Bill to be undertaken.
- c) Local Content Bill tabled by Ministry of Trade and Industry in Cabinet.
- d) Local Content Bill discussed and ratified by Parliament and passed into law.

9. 70% of all Mining and Agricultural lease agreements and contracts revised and made public with a view to improve transparency, accountability and public participation

Currently, not all mining and agribusiness agreements and contracts are accessible documents vis-à-vis Government online repositories. Following the preparation of the 2011 EITI report, a gap analysis was undertaken by Government institutions in collaboration with civil society organizations and one of the key areas of concern was the revision of contracts and making these documents public. While significant progress has been made on the revision of key mining contracts, some work is still required on making lease agreements and contracts public in an effort to promote transparency and encourage civic participation in the debate and execution of mining contracts. This commitment will create more access points for the public to these documents to engender national debate. Similar issues lie around agribusiness contracts and the level of concern is similar to that of mining companies.

RELEVANCE – Accountability and Citizen Engagement

Actions Required/Milestones for Completion:

- a) 70% of mining and agricultural contracts published on the yet to be established open data portal, in addition to the websites of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, National Minerals Agency and Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security.
- b) Publish processes and outline the checks and balances carried out for allocation of licenses by the Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources and the Petroleum Directorate.
- c) A yearly symposium held of private sector partners, relevant communities, Government and Civil Society Organizations to discuss the state of contract execution.
- d) Public discussions held on all new Mining licenses and Agribusiness contracts before they are signed by Government with relevant documentation prepared for public dissemination by the Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources and Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security.
- e) Participating companies make public their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policies and yearly Work Plan (online posting a minimum) to facilitate operation of the Community Development Agreement and ascertained by the Strategy and Policy Unit.

Adherence monitored by the National Minerals Agency in a yearly assessment of the respective work plans of the participating Companies.

10. Implementation of the Right to Access Information Law

The Right to Access Information Act was passed in October, 2013 as part of Government's response to a clarion call to improve transparency across Government by making information readily available and accessible. Government has worked collaboratively with civil society and donor partners to develop the Right to Access Information Act and implementation has leveraged on support from partners; however, we need to put pressure to ensure full implementation. GoSL is vested in ensuring that the Right to Access Information Act tenets take root in Sierra Leone and engender greater transparency in Government wide transactions. Some training has been undertaken of Information Officers and a Right to Access Information Act implementation readiness assessment is currently underway but the process needs to be supported and nurtured to achieve the desired results.

RELEVANCE – Transparency, Accountability, Citizens' Participation

Actions Required/Milestones for Completion:

- a) Regulations to implement the Right to Access Information Act developed.
- b) 250 public information officers in 13 Districts within the first year of implementation trained.
- c) Public sensitization campaigns launched for both Government and non-government users.
- d) Public Information Commission established with Commissioner(s) identified.

11. Establish an open data portal to improve transparency in fiscal and extractive transactions.

The Government of Sierra Leone has made a commitment to participate in the open government partnership in order to increase transparency and accountability, and at the same time to help in the fight against corruption.

Building on our progress to date with other initiatives, Sierra Leone continues its efforts to expand access to government data from government ministries, departments and agencies. Today, we do not have such a website that is fully functional with open government data even though we have a website named Transparency Sierra Leone that has not met its objectives. This past October, Sierra Leone announced its intent and commitment to become a member in the open government partnership whose strategy is grounded on information technology as the primary medium to open up government.

RELEVANCE – Transparency and Technology/Innovation

Actions Required/Milestones for Completion:

- a) Open data readiness assessment completed in collaboration with development partners.
- b) Experts on the design of an open data portal with development partners and Non-Governmental Organizations engaged.
- c) Source funding to establish a data portal for pilot Government documents such as budget, 70% of mining and agricultural contracts and 20% of Laws of Sierra Leone that have been gazetted.

Time Frames and Implementing Institutions

Activity	Implementing Institution(s)	Start Date	End Date
<p>Commitment 1: Develop a Public Integrity Pact with 5 pilot MDAs that identifies key commitments in line with Section 8 - Public Integrity in the ACC Act, 2008, to improve public trust in public service delivery to ensure effective accountability of public officials</p> <p>In the ACC ACT, Section 8, speaks to Integrity in the Public Office. Also integrity policies among the 5 pilot MDAs if applicable would be reviewed and disseminated. We have chosen a pilot group with more to be added when we make additions to the NAP. They include the following: Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MOFED), National Public Procurement Agency (NPPA), the National Social Security and Insurance Trust (NASSIT), National Revenue Authority (NRA), and the Ministry of Health and Sanitation (MHS). With regard to service charters, most of the MDAs had cited that funding was a restrictive factor and we need to be cognizant of that going into the implementation stage. While personnel of the implementing agencies had requested that we go for all as opposed to a pilot prudent advice dictates that we slowly roll out some of these commitments so we do not bargain for more that we can handle in one or two years. If there is a need to increase the number after the pilot phase there is no restriction on that. We will leverage on the yearly assessments being undertaken by the PMSD and others and synchronize them into one strong function.</p>			
1) Dissemination, administration and enforcement of existing integrity policies to improve public trust strengthened.	Ministry of Information and Communication, ACC, Public Sector Reform Unit and OGI/P	April 2014	April 2015
2) 5 pilot MDAs selected to sign an integrity pact with ACC on key commitments to reduce corruption in their Institutions.	Anti-Corruption Commission and OGI/P	June 2014	October 2014

e) Service charters for 20% MDAs (including 5 pilot MDs for integrity pacts) which clearly identifies the service provided, timeframe to expect service to be rendered and any associated costs developed and displayed with clearly visible complaints mechanisms to identify when services are not rendered according to published procedures and timeframes.	Performance Management and Service Delivery, Millennium Challenge Coordinating Unit, Anti-Corruption Commission and OGI/P	April 2014	August 2015
3) Yearly assessment of integrity commitments undertaken for 5 pilot MDAs.	Anti-Corruption Commission, PMSD and OGI/P	September 2015	September 2016 and beyond
<p>Commitment 2: Pass a robust and proactive Archives and Records Management Act to support the implementation of the Right to Access Information Act in a bid to improve public transparency</p> <p>We need to create the awareness around the archiving and management of records. We also should make sure the bill is reviewed and revised if possible or appropriate and have the Minister of Information and Communication table it in Cabinet in collaboration with the Minister of Education and Science Technology, who currently has oversight of the archives and records effort, but particularly as it relates to academia. This national effort will broaden that scope. While there has been some temporary and/or small-scale training, the relevant institution needs capacity building and training of staff in archiving and records management discipline. The Bill should be consulted on and hopefully passed in Parliament by the appointed time.</p>			
4) Public consultations on the Archives and Records Management Bill undertaken.	Public Sector Reform Unit, Ministry of Information and Communication, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, and OGI/P	August 2014	December 2014

5) Draft tabled in Cabinet by the Ministry of Information and Communication in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology.	Ministry of Information and Communication, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, and OGI/P	-	January 2015
6) Capacity needs assessment in records management completed.	Public Sector Reform Unit, Ministry of Information and Communication, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and Parliament and OGI/P	-	August 2014
7) Bill submitted to Parliament by Ministry of Information and Communication.	Ministry of Information and Communication, Parliament and OGI/P	-	February 2015
8) Archives and Records Management Bill passed by Parliament.	Ministry of Information and Communication and OGI/P	March 2015	March 2015
<p>Commitment 3: Scale up and deepen the activities of the Performance Management and Service Delivery Directorate to improve accountability and increase civic participation in governance.</p> <p>The PMSD in a meeting held on Monday, June 2nd 2014, has agreed in principle to everything that is being suggested in Commitment 3 and they would like to do even more than what is being suggested. They questioned as to why only 9 pilot MDAs as opposed to all was raised again. See explanations to the pilot programs (in Commitment 1) above.</p>			
10) All assessments of MDAs covered by PMSD published in a yearly volume to be made available to the public.	Performance Management and Service Delivery Directorate and OGI/P	-	November 2014 - ongoing

11) 9 pilot MDAs for implementation selected.	Performance Management and Service Delivery Directorate and OGI/P	September 2014	September 2014
12) Ensure that in the planning and budget cycle for an initial 9 piloted MDAs; yearly activity plans are prepared in conjunction with procurement plans which will be the basis of budgets submitted for consideration to the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development. The planning cycle and fiscal cycle must be synchronized to ensure that the activity based budget by MOFED is in fact informed by proper planning vis-à-vis a robust activity and procurement plan which should inform budget preparation.	Performance Management and Service Delivery Directorate and OGI/P	September 2014	November 2015
13) Town Hall meeting held not more than 2 months after publication of PMSD reports to engage the public on the findings by the Performance Management and Service Delivery Directorate through a public bi-annual assessment of the performance contracts.	Performance Management and Service Delivery Directorate and OGI/P	-	November 2015
Commitment 4: Increase compliance with audit measures to improve transparency and accountability in public resource spending			

<p>The OGP Steering Committee will oversee the draft of a policy concept/paper to be shared with the CRC. In our meeting with the ASSL unit that liaises with the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) in Parliament it was understood that none of the audit reports since 2007 has been followed up on. Apparently by the time the PAC deliberate, make their recommendations to the Attorney General, who is also Minister of Justice, a lot of time would have transpired and the issues could have easily been dropped or found not interesting whether deliberately or not.</p>			
<p>14) White Paper prepared by the Executive that addresses key mechanisms and actions that Government intends to take to implement the recommendations of the 2012 Audit report with the view of reviewing recommendations.</p>	<p>Strategy and Policy Unit and OGI/P</p>	<p>-</p>	<p>December 2014</p>
<p>15) Policy paper to review and amend of the Government budgeting and Accountability Act, 2005, on placing limitations on length of time the Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee has to review and publish the audit report prepared by Open Government Partnership Sierra Leone National Steering Committee.</p>	<p>Sierra Leone Open Government Partnership National Steering Committee and OGI/P</p>	<p>-</p>	<p>September 2014</p>
<p>16) At least 50% of the published Audit Report recommendations and/or the recommendations from the PAC implemented by relevant MDAs and these actions made public during the annual performance contracting assessment process.</p>	<p>PMSD and OGI/P</p>	<p>When new audit report is published</p>	<p>Yearly assessment</p>
<p>Commitment 5: Establish a Single Treasury Account to improve financial accountability</p> <p>This commitment is not too far from full implementation as per our discussions with members of the Accountant General's Office which happens to be the implementing unit within the Ministry of Finance, but there still is much work to be done to make it operational. All the banks have been contacted and a census around their activities held. The Central Bank has informed that MOFED has to get their ICT hardware to run the software. This is a very good</p>			

<p>initiative for the GoSL because it makes idle and non-interest bearing monies at the banks available for prioritized use by government instead of government going back to borrow her own funds sitting idly in the banks at exorbitant rates; thereby crowding out private sector in a direct downstream effect. All bad for growth and especially, good governance. The expected date of completion is by the end of this year, which puts us in good shape for this commitment that was already ongoing even before our intervention.</p>			
17) Single Treasury Account established by undertaking a census of all Government Bank accounts and findings made public.	Ministry of Finance and Economic Development and OGI/P	-	September 2015
18) Procedures and mechanisms implemented by The Ministry of Finance and Economic Development in collaboration with relevant institution will to run a Single Treasury Account (STA) which will form the basis of a new Memorandum of Understanding with relevant Banks on an STA Model.	Ministry of Finance and Economic Development and OGI/P	April 2015	December 2015
<p>Commitment 6: Enact an Extractive Industry Revenue Act (EIRA) to promote transparency and accountability in the granting of tax incentives</p> <p>Found out that the Revenue Management Bill should not be our focus for implementation and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development offered the more relatively robust Extractive Industries Revenue Bill as a viable option. So we found it worthwhile to change this commitment 6 from what it was before now to what has been proposed. The action items do not change however, as the same or similar steps have to be undertaken</p>			
19) Public consultations held on the Bill and revised accordingly.	Ministry of Finance and Economic Development and OGI/P	June 2014	December 2014

20) Bill tabled in Cabinet by Ministry of Finance and Economic Development.	Ministry of Finance and Economic Development and OGI/P	February 2015	April 2015
21) Bill tabled in Parliament.	Ministry of Finance and Economic Development and OGI/P		June 2015
22) Bill passed by Parliament and enacted.	Parliament and OGI/P		January 2016
Commitment 7: Scaling up extractive industry transparency initiatives			
In a meeting with SLEITI a firm commitment was ascertained by the Ag. National Coordinator. The bill would be tabled by the Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources or the current supervisory unit of the initiative, which happens to be the Office of the Chief of Staff.			
23) EITI Bill tabled in Cabinet by the Office of the Chief of Staff.	Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources (or the Office of the Chief of Staff) and OGI/P	-	Oct, 2014
24) EITI Bill passed by Parliament.	Parliament, SL Extractives Industry Transparency Initiative, National Minerals Agency and OGI/P	-	March 2015
25) Publish the process and outline the checks and balances carried out for allocation of licenses by the Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources and the Petroleum Directorate.	National Minerals Agency, National Revenue Authority and OGI/P	July 2014	March 2015
26) Disclose environmental impact assessments prior to the award of any extractives rights.	Environmental Protection Agency, Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources,	January 2015	March 2015

	National Minerals Agency and OGI/P		
27) Perform external audits and publish financial reports of the Diamond Area Community Development Fund and the Community Development Fund.	NMA, MMMR & ASSL and OGI/P		Fiscal 2014
<p>Commitment 8: Improve monitoring of the Local Content Policy especially around monitoring the implementation of activities and improving linkages with MDAs in order to improve local participation and accountability in the process.</p> <p>The Ministry of Trade and Industry oversees an implementing committee that has become somewhat dormant according to our interview with the coordinating person at the Ministry. The strategy is to have them reconvene as soon as possible, to review and discuss the Local Content draft bill, sensitize and consult on it, and have Parliament ratify the draft. We found a report prepared by Adam Smith that speaks to the burning issues of the difficulties in successfully implementing a Local Content Policy, which shows commitment, if nothing else. That document suggests nine recommendations. We would endeavor to push for its ratification of the Local Content Policy/Bill and the implementation of the Act very quickly because this is a sensitive area for our nation to be able to address effectively and efficiently in the best interest of the long-suffering masses. There is also opportunity to share resources among the various MDAs for things like staff training, for example.</p>			
28) Setting up of an MDA linkage mechanism (revival of the implementing committee) to inform the implementation and monitoring of the local content policy to ensure more efficient sharing of information across key implementing institutions facilitated.	Ministry of Trade and Industry, & Ministry of Labor and Social Security and OGI/P	August 2014	Ongoing
29) An audit of the implementation of the Local Content Policy to inform the development of a Local Content Bill to be undertaken.	Ministry of Trade and Industry, Ministry of Labor and Social Security and OGI/P	August 2015	April 2015

30) Consultations on Bill held		May 2015	August 2015
31) Local Content Bill tabled in Cabinet by Ministry of Trade and Industry in Cabinet.	Ministry of Trade and Industry, Ministry of Labor and Social Security and OGI/P		November 2014
32) Local Content Bill tabled in Parliament and passed.	Ministry of Trade and Industry, Ministry of Labor and Social Security and OGI/P		October 2015
<p>Commitment 9: 70% of all Mining and Agricultural lease agreements and contracts revised and made public with a view to improve transparency, accountability and public participation.</p> <p>Some of these activities are currently underway as some of the mining agreements are being reviewed while others have been and placed on the website of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development. The impacted communities and CSOs will have public discussions along with the mining and agribusiness companies on an ongoing basis to make sure the citizenry are not only informed, but also that they participate in the decision-making process. The involvement of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is also imperative in these discussions as is their publication of environmental impact assessment reports (EIAs).</p>			
33) 70% of mining and agricultural contracts published on the yet to be established open data portal, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development website and National Minerals Agency website.	Ministry of Information and Communication, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development the National Minerals Agency and OGI/P	Ongoing	June 2015
34) Publish processes and outline the checks and balances carried out for allocation of licenses by the Mines and Mineral Resources Ministry and the Petroleum Directorate and Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security.	Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources and the Petroleum Directorate and OGI/P	Ongoing	June 2015

35) A biannual symposium held of private sector partners, affected communities, Government and Civil Society Organizations to discuss the state of contract executions.	Strategy and Policy Unit, Private Sector Adviser and OGI/P	-	June 2016
36) Public discussions held on all new mining and agribusinesses licenses and contracts before they are signed by Government with relevant documentation prepared for public dissemination held by Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources and Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security.	Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security and OGI/P	August 2015	Ongoing
37) Participating Companies make public their CSR Policy and yearly Work plan (at a minimum post online) to facilitate operation of the Community Development Agreement and ascertained by the Strategy and Policy Unit. Adherence monitored by the National Minerals Agency in a yearly assessment of the respective work plans of the participating Companies.	National Minerals Agency and OGI/P	June 2015	Ongoing
Commitment 10: Implementation of the Right to Access Information Law			
We understand that the Ministry of Information and Communication (MIC), with funding and support from one civil society organization was able to work on a draft concept to operationalize the Right to Access Information Act. We also found out that some 50 information officers have been trained out of a target for 250 as the MIC suggests. And as usual some funding is needed to complete some of these exercises.			
38) Regulations to implement the FOI Act developed.	Ministry of Information and Communication and OGI/P	July 2014	December 2014

39) Public information officers in 13 Districts within the first year of implementation trained.	Ministry of Information and Communication and OGI/P	-	February 2015
40) Public sensitization campaigns launched for both Government and non-government users.	Ministry of Information and Communication and OGI/P	-	December 2014
41) Public Information commission established with Commissioner(s) identified.	Ministry of Information and Communication and OGI/P	-	December 2014
Commitment 11: Establish an open data portal to improve transparency in fiscal and extractive transactions.			
The Communications Manager at the Ministry of Information and Communication alongside his Director, was clear as to the magnitude of having such an open data portal. We discussed through the plethora of documents that may have to be uploaded and tied back into the Archiving and Records Management system (Commitment 2). This is arguably the single-most important commitment if we are true to having an open government as it forms the foundation on which most of the documents within government that have not been classified as secret and above is disseminated.			
42) Open data readiness assessment completed in collaboration with development partners.	Ministry of Information and Communication, Open Government Initiative, Millennium Challenge Coordinating Unit and OGP	August 2014	January 2015
43) Experts on the design of an open data portal with development partners and Non-Governmental Organizations engaged.	Ministry of Information and Communication and OGI/P	August 2015	March 2015
44) Source funding to establish a data portal for pilot Government documents such as budget, 70% of mining and agricultural contracts and 20% of Laws of Sierra Leone that have been gazetted.	Ministry of Information and Communication and OGI/P	January 2015	April 2015

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