**OGP COUNTRY SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT**

**1 Introduction and Background**

The Open Government Partnership (OGP) was launched in 2011 to provide an international platform for domestic reformers committed to making their governments more open, accountable and responsive to citizens. Since then, the OGP has grown from eight (8) countries to the sixty five (65) participating countries. In all of these countries, government and civil society are working together to develop and implement ambitious open government reforms (OGP website).

The Government of Sierra Leone believe in the ideal and values of the OGP and had already established an outfit (OGI) to ensure this practice. It therefore submitted its Letter of Intent to join the Open Government Partnership in October 2013, following the passing of the Right to Access Information Act. Sierra Leone was able to qualify based on the following scores:



To accelerate its committments to the OGP, the 1st NAP speaks to eleven “bold” commitments that revolve around four (4) main principles of the Open Government Partnership namely: Transparency, Civic Participation, Public Accountability, Technology and Innovation for Openness and Accountability. The commitments are also further categorized with due consideration of the four grand challenges the country is focusing on to address Commitments 1 and 2 speaks to Improving Public Integrity, Commitments 3, 7 and 8 speaks to Improving Corporate Accountability, Commitments 4, 5 and 6 to Managing Public Resources and Commitments 9, 10 and 11 to Improving Public Services.

**The Country’s National Action Plan attempts to address the Grand Challenges as Follows:**

**INCREASING PUBLIC INTEGRITY**:

**Commitment 1: Develop and implement a Public Integrity Pact with 5 pilot MDAs that identify key commitments in line with Section (8) of the Anti- Corruption Commission (ACC) Act of 2008, to increase public trust in public services and to ensure accountability of public officials.**

Sierra Leone is currently implementing Integrity Pacts with 5 pilot MDAs, including the Ministry of Health and Sanitation. The pacts ensure minimum standards of operations for public-private interface as a way of ensuring effective service delivery with a taste for transparency and integrity.

**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.**

The effective implementation of the Right to Access Information Act depends on the proper and dedicated management of records and archives. Public Officials are now compelled to keep correct and proper records as they will be in a position to make such records public when requested. This is to be sustained by requisite capacity building an enforcement mechanisms.

**Commitment 9: 70% of all mining and agricultural lease agreements and contracts revised and made public with view to improve transparency, accountability and public participation.**

Following the 2011 EITI report, the government in collaboration with civil society conducted a gap analysis and one of the concerns identified was the revision of contracts and their disclosure to the public. The disclosure of mining and agricultural lease agreements and contracts to the public is an effort to promote transparency and encourage civic participation in debate and execution of contracts that bears on their livelihoods and standards of living but more important to place value for money as expended on their behalf.

**IMPROVING PUBLIC SERVICES:**

**Commitment 10: Implementation of the Right to Access Information law**

This is part of Government’s response to a clarion call by the public to improve transparency across Government by making information readily available and accessible to the public. The Government has established the Right to access Information Commission in order to regulate the Law and is in the process of ensuring it is fully operational structure, and systems an funding wise.

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

This is a conduit for government to share information produced with the public, release such information proactively and routinely where practicable, within the remits of the law together with the standard principles of transparency and honesty.

**Improving Corporate Accountability**

**Commitment 3: Scale-up and deepen the activities of the Performance Management & Service Delivery Directorate to improve accountability and increase civic participation in governance issues.**

This is in line with government’s effort in reducing opportunities for wastage by ensuring value for money and improved transparency in budget management. The Performance Management and Service Delivery Directorate was established in 2013 in the Office of the Chief of Staff in a bid to lead in performance contracting of public officials within key service delivery institutions across government. The performance contract is used to help institutions plan activities and relate these to budget and results against which they are bi-yearly assessed in a bid to ensure improved service delivery and accountability for the benefit of the citizens.

**Commitment 7: Scale-up Extractive Industry Transparency Initiatives.**

Sierra Leone is a member of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiatives (EITI) since 2008. The aim of the EITI is to create standards for countries to increase greater transparency on companies and government disclosure of income received from Extractive resources. Key to this process is the regular reconciliation of payment received by the government from mining companies through regular reporting. A Secretariat has been established jointly by Government and civil society to ensure the above.

**Commitment 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.**

The local content policy is necessary and needed to ensure that there is sufficient linkage between the local economy and foreign investment and enterprises. The local content policy reflects a regional desire to focus on local content development, promoting the transfer of skills to Sierra Leoneans, generating jobs and increasing the use of locally produced goods and improving the rate of local ownership. This trend is in line with the country’s Poverty Reduction Strategy code-named Agenda for Prosperity. The setting of specific performance requirement ensures that the benefit that Sierra Leone seeks to obtain from foreign direct investments including improved technology and managerial skills are integrated into the domestic market and distribution networks.

**Effective Management of Public Resources:**

**Commitment 4: Increased compliance with audit measures to improve transparency and accountability in public resource spending.**

The Audit Service Sierra Leone releases comprehensive Audit reports with key findings and recommendations on the activities and structures of MDAs related to improved Public Service delivery transparent procedures and value for money. However, the recommendations are not translated into actions by compliance of MDAs in order to effectively manage public resources. Reaction and implementation of audit queries and recommendations is the mechanism for judicious use of funds and the built up of transparent culture in service delivery.

**Commitment 5: Establish a Single Treasury Account to improve financial accountability.**

The Single Treasury Account is to leverage on key actions that government has already identified as essential to improve fiscal transparency. It’s establishment will streamline government’s spending from the current fragmented system of handling government receipts, accounts and payments, thus minimizing wastage. The new system will enable consolidation and optimum utilization of government’s cash resources.

**Commitment 6: Enact a Revenue Management Bill to promote transparency and accountability in granting of tax incentives.**

This law will regulate the management of revenue especially with reference to the granting of tax incentives so that government can generate more revenue for social services delivery. Tax incentives are presently granted in a discretionary manner and without a cost-benefit analysis. Also, there is no accountability in the tax incentives granted by government does currently not report or publish the tax incentives granted.

The law shall require government to publish a statement of its tax expenditure, detailing all tax exemptions, the beneficiaries and revenue forgone in a bid to promote transparency. It shall require producing and publishing annually a cost-benefit analysis on the need to grant tax incentive and hence the public be well-informed on the rationale for granting tax incentives.

OGP’s Networking Mechanism is helping government and civil society connect with the expertise they need to support these efforts.

**Consultations during the NAP Development**

In February 2014, His Excellency the President Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma announced that the Open Government Initiative (OGI) with technical support from the Millennium Challenge Coordinating Unit will implement the OGP.

A group of 17 Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and 17 Civil Society Organizations were nominated to serve on the Steering Committee chaired by Rt. Rev. Canon Ajayi-Nicol of the Inter-Religious Council of Sierra Leone.

Weekly Meetings were held since March, 2014 that led to the development of the National Action Plan.

Sensitization campaigns were undertaken in March 2014, by the OGI in partnership with the National Federation of Civil Society and Media Organizations in 14 Districts and in the Diaspora (Guinea, Belgium, USA and UK) to gain buy-in on the OGP Process.

Consultations were also held in April 2014, in 13 Districts, the Action Plan was validated by His Excellency after incorporation of consultation results.

Challenges in the Action Plan development:

* Mistrust between CSOs and government at the initial stages
* Misconception –OGP versus MCC
* Funding
* Timeframe

How it was overcome:

* The President was committed to the process and gave his assurance;
* Quick to understand that the grand challenges coincides with the open governance approach already in existence;

How the cycle evolved?

* Established mutual cooperation between both parties;
* Formation of the Steering Committee
* Consultation on the grand challenges
* Consultation on the committee

The National Federation of Civil Society and Media Organizations convened a Press Conference at the office of the Sierra Leone Association of Journalist in March 2014, inviting civil society organizations such as the Campaign for Good Governance (CGG), Society for Democratic Initiatives (SDI), Centre for Accountability and the Rule of Law (CARL) who had earlier registered their intention to be part of the OGP Process. The essence was to discuss the Open Government Partnership membership process. One of the outcomes of the Press Conference was the formation of a civil society network and names of other civil society organizations not present were submitted for inclusion in the network. The network wrote a letter to government and in response the latter welcomed the participation of civil society groups such as Transparency International, Budget Advocacy Network and Network Movement for justice and Development,in the OGP process and the development of the National Action Plan.

The President, His Excellency, Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma established a 34 person Steering Committee that comprised equally of both government and civil society to develop a National Action Plan with leadership of the Open Government Initiative (OGI) Secretariat and support from the Millennium Challenge Coordinating Unit (MCCU). The Steering committee and sub- committees (consultation group and action plan drafting group) held reasonable number of meetings and with plans for a nation-wide sensitization on the OGP process and consultations for a draft National Action Plan.

The rationale of the sensitization and public consultations was to ensure a participatory process that is legitimized by feedback from the people for the understanding of government that its priorities are in fact the priorities of its people. Also, to create a well-informed citizenry on the OGP process and to further solicit the people’s views on the prospects and challenges to Sierra Leone being a member of the OGP. The Steering Committee reached –out to youths, women, disabled groups, students, paramount chiefs and tribal heads, religious leaders, civil society that are non-members of the Steering Committee and other stakeholders. Initially, three grand Challenges were taken for consultations in the districts. In the final analysis a fourth grand challenge which is Improving Public Services was recommended by Citizens and agreed upon by the Steering Committee.

The feedback comments (see appendix) from the public consultations were incorporated into the draft National Action Plan and the commitments addressed the OGP principles and reflected and agreed on. The government and civil society held a meeting and agreed on the commitments. The Steering Committee reviewed the National Action Plan including the commitments and then transmitted it to the OGP Support Unit for comments and approval. The Steering committee slated implementation of the National Action Plan for July 2014. However, the country was faced with the Ebola Viral Disease (EVD) in May 2014 and this impacted on the momentum already built. Despite the health crisis MDAs made conscious effort to ensure the actualization of the commitments. However Commitments that were largely contingent on legislations were crippled because the legislators had long recess as they were involved in the fight against Ebola in their constituencies.

**Consultation during Implementation**

* Continuous engagement of the citizenry
* Constant review of the plan
* Readjustment of identified challenges

**Forum- A Multi-Stakeholders Channel**

* Steering committee meetings held on Monthly basis in an effort to keep the committee in-charge and to provide strategic directives and assistance to the implementing institution and the Secretariat.
* Focus group discussions- were intermittent after the weekly meetings in small groups. Organizations participated in clusters and according to their areas of expertise.
* Radio and TV discussion- on a weekly basis and this was to keep the Sierra Leonean Populace updated on the scores and challenges on the implementation
* Quarterly Town hall meetings were held keeping the locals in the rural settings in the loop
* Technical and thematic cluster meetings- These were groupings to interrogate, review and re-adjust as per the implementation strategies

Through these mediums the Citizens’ continue to direct and own the process and in their own way had continued to put the necessary pressure on government to remain open and honour the partnership to do so.

**Outcomes of Consultative Meetings and meeting of steering committee on the Self- assessment**

Two Consultative Meetings were held in the last two weeks prior to the finalization of the report and the objective was to validate the status of the commitments as reported by the CSOs Parallel Monitoringand the report presented by Government. The outcomes of those meetings were included under lesson learnt on the availability and accessibility of the report by the Public.

The approach from the Steering Committee took the form of cluster groupings around the 4 grand challenges; a Parallel CSO/ Government Monitoring and Evaluation framework helped to keep track of the progress in a sustained and engaging fashion.

Worthy to note on the part of Citizens engagement in the implementation of the commitments was evident in the seven (7) days consultations at district level country-wide. Both the CSO and the PMSD provided updates on the implementation of the commitments in the NAP proffering suggestions to the challenges that were inherent in the updates. Corrective actions were taken both at Steering Committee level and the Executive as permitted by the EVD circumstance.The unfettering commitment by both CSO and Government is where the strength in delivering on the OGP objectives was drawn.

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| **Commitment 1** | | | | |
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| 1 Develop and implement a Public Integrity Pact with 7 Pilot MDAs that identifies key commitments in line with Section 8- Public Integrity- of the ACC Act 2008. | | | | |
| Lead implementing agency | Anti- Corruption Commission | | | |
| Names of responsible person  From implementing agency | Mr Joseph Fitzgerald Kamara | | | |
| Title, Department | Commissioner, Anti- Corruption Commission | | | |
| Email | Jozykay5@hotmail.com | | | |
| Phone | +23276733491 | | | |
| Others Government  Actors  Involved  CSOs, private  sector, working  groups  multilaterals | Ministry of Information & Communication; Public Sector Reform Unit; Performance Management & Service Delivery Directorate; Millennium Challenge Coordinating Unit;  Campaign for Good Governance, SLUDI, CARL, Transparency Initiative, Federation of Civil Society and Rogbainbay. | | | |
| Main objective | To improve vis a’ vis the promotion of more effective service delivery, transparency and accountability measures for public officials. | | | |
| Brief description of  Commitment  (140 character limit) | 1. Integrity related policies and pact printed and training conducted with 7 identified MDAs and subsequently all MDAs. 2. The pacts are popularized and disseminated among public and civil servants; and enforcement plan developed. 3. The pacts are signed between the ACC and the identified MDAs 4. The public sensitized on the integrity pacts and relevance in fighting corruption. 5. Yearly assessment of integrity commitments and reported submitted to ACC 6. 20 % MDAs identified for service charters and developed charters displayed in strategic areas for public information | | | |
| Relevance | This Commitment relates primarily to improve trust in public service delivery and to ensure effective accountability of public officials. It speaks to a change in work ethics responsibility and culture. It’s also serves as a tool for preventing corruption if well built into the work character. It established value for money and public trust in the work of government and official. It empower citizen to access information on service delivery | | | |
| Ambition | The ambition is to promote ethical standards in public service delivery. Via which is to serve as a tool to fight corrupt practices through integrity.  If well followed it will ensure a minimum standard of operations for Public Private interface as a way of ensuring effective service delivery and transparency. Sierra Leone ratified the United Nations Convention Against Corruption on the 30th September 2004; African Union Convention on preventing and combating corruption and; the ECOWAS protocol to combat Corruption. Currently, the Anti- Corruption Commission now has the prosecutorial powers over corruption cases.. | | | |
| Completion level | Not started | Limited | Substantial | Completed |
|  |  | Yes |  |
| Description of the results | 1. The ACC established integrity management committees in MDAs and Local Councils so as to provide the support and environment that will ensure the implementation of recommendations of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy. 2. All public Officials sensitized and trained on the integrity policy 3. ACC launched and signed integrity pacts with the 5 MDAs (MEST, MoHS, MAFF, NRA, NASSIT) 4. Implementation of commitments in the pacts is ongoing 5. Modalities for integrity pacts yearly assessment agreed 6. Service charters for the 20% MDAs completed and billboards displayed. | | | |
| End Date | August 2016. | | | |
| Next steps | There is an enforcement plan to yearly assess MDAs on the implementation of the commitments in the pacts. The assessment will commence in May 2016. Civil Society will provide concrete and concerted action to monitor this exercise. | | | |
| Additional information (Description on what remains to be achieved  And any risks or challenges to implement the commitment. | | | | |
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| **Commitment 2** | | | | |
| 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 transparency. | | | | |
| Lead implementing agency | Ministry of Information & Communication | | | |
| Names of responsible person  From implementing agency | Hon Alpha Kanu | | | |
| Title, Department | Government Cabinet Minister | | | |
| Email |  | | | |
| Phone |  | | | |
| Others Government  Actors  Involved  CSOs, private  sector, working  groups  multilaterals | Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Public Sector Reform Unit, Parliament, Cabinet Secretariat, National public Procurement Authority.  Non- State Actor, DADA- SL, International Media Development, National Federation | | | |
| Main objective | To support the implementation of the Right to Access Information Act as it will serve as a tool to inform database management and archiving of key government documents which will be stored in format accessible to the public in print and electronic medium. | | | |
| Brief description of  Commitment  (140 character limit) | 1. A robust policy be in place to address this commitment 2. This will be followed-up by the requisite legislation ( a bill is under way to parliament for enactment) 3. The requisite government agencies, Ministry of Information and Communication, to follow- up the process of legislation and also host the implementation of both policy and implementation | | | |
| Relevance | This commitment speaks to transparency, public accountability and civil participation in governance. It is clear that with a sound archive and records management as a practice of government, peoplewill ultimately have clarity in government procedures and practices. If there are records, it makes government the open and through this the public is empowered to hold government officials accountable for all lapses and procedures as approved by related legislation. It re-enforces clear referencing and knowledge in government’s procedures and for future learning. It ensures continuity and trigger innovation to service delivery. | | | |
| Ambition | 1. This is to promote transparency in the work of government vis a’vis procedures and practices, but more importantly to establish a tool for referencing, for accountability, for sustainable in knowledge and work culture. 2. If well focused, it will provide a turn- around in the culture of records keeping and result to improvement in service delivery as per approved legislation and statutory instruments. 3. The more open we are in keeping records, the better we would be in civic participation in governance, Learning from mistakes of the past and innovating for effective and efficient service delivery. | | | |
| Completion level | Not started | Limited | Substantial | Completed |
|  |  | YES |  |
| Description of the results | 1. The expertise in records and archives management is in place and a policy taking cognizance of the short-fall in records and archives management has been approved by the Sierra Leone Cabinet. 2. The Ministry of Information and Communication and the Attorney- General office are working on the bill. 3. A work plan for the implementation of the policy has been agreed. 4. Nurturing and nourishing the enactment of the bill is now in the purview of the Ministry of Information and Communication and the Attorney- General office for necessary legalities. 5. A platform for the civic participation into this policy is agreed. | | | |
| End Date | March 2017. | | | |
| Next steps | 1. The Minister of Information and Communication is being put in gear to support the enactment process of the bill. 2. An operational structure to effect implementation of the policy is also under consideration and there are discussions that this structure will be merged with the current e-government structure to give it the required taste for innovations and technology. | | | |
| 1. Complete buy –in of parliament especially the Public Account Committee (PAC) to fully grasp the value of this information. 2. There are constraints because at the time of its enforcement, the budget circle has relapsed. 3. We envisage that parliament can use a standing order to delay an action and also the long recession of Parliament. | | | | |
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| **Commitment 3** | | | | |
| 3 Scale-up and deepen the activities of the Performance Management & Service Delivery Directorate to improve accountability and increase civic participation in governance issues. | | | | |
| Lead implementing agency | Performance Management & Service Delivery Directorate | | | |
| Names of responsible person  From implementing agency | Mr Abdul-Rahman Sowa | | | |
| Title, Department | Director, Performance Management & Service Delivery Directorate | | | |
| Email |  | | | |
| Phone | 076650637 | | | |
| Others Government  Actors  Involved  CSOs, private  sector, working  groups  multilaterals | Citizens Committee  Network Movement of Justice and Democracy (NMJD) | | | |
| Main objective | The performance contract is used to help institutions plan activity in conjunction of procurement plan, Institutions management, and standard operation by the president | | | |
| Brief description of  Commitment  (140 character limit) | 1. The provision of an advisory paper. 2. To engage the MDAs on the relevance of the recommendations which requires their compliance and therefore implementation of those recommendations should be highlighted during the performance contracts. 3. To ensure that there is a monitoring and evaluation framework to ensure implementation of recommendations on the audit report. | | | |
| Relevance | 1. This commitment speaks to public accountability and fiscal transparency and more so to adherence to procedures in legislation in financial matters 2. It expands on the fact that spending has to be done in accordance with approved budget and for the purposes for which funds were allocated. 3. Therefore, the relevance is to create a mechanism in which public spending is being gauge with compliance and purpose. 4. Also, it helps for MDAs to account for variances and emerging responsibilities in the budgetary process. 5. If well practiced and followed, it ushers in a change in human practice of not only wanting to be examined. 6. It supports integrity in both self and organization and working under the ambit of the law. | | | |
| Ambition | 1. Government intends to be opened and transparent with what it plans to deliver in an annual basis and to gauge it performance in doing so. This type of mannerism shows government ambition to improve service delivery, recognition of good and poor performance. 2. It provides an opportunity for reviews, adjustments in both quality of what has been deliver and what has been spent. 3. It also provides civic participation in both monitoring and evaluation of government and promotes the culture of service responsiveness, performance, accountability and judicious use of the tax leones. | | | |
| Completion level | Not started | Limited | Substantial | Completed |
|  |  | YES |  |
| Description of the results | 1. The 2014 assessment performance feedbacks sent to the President. 2. 2015 performance contracts set and are currently under operation. 3. The culture of performance is been deepen, cascaded and taking-in a sector approach. | | | |
| End Date | November 2016 | | | |
| Next steps | 1. Sustained capacity built across government institutions. 2. A tool for public accountability and transparency through the service charter is being developed for its executions 3. A sector standard is being developed across MDAs and States Owner Enterprises | | | |
| 1. Publishing of performance assessment in a yearly document 2. The formation of civil society related negotiators and evaluators | | | | |
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| **Commitment 4** | | | | |
| 4. Increase compliance with audit measures to improve transparency and accountability in public resource spending. | | | | |
| Lead implementing agency | Strategy and Policy Unit, Office of the President. | | | |
| Names of responsible person  From implementing agency | Professor Strasser-King | | | |
| Title, Department | Director, Strategy and Policy Unit | | | |
| Email |  | | | |
| Phone |  | | | |
| Others Government  Actors  Involved  CSOs, private  sector, working  groups  multilaterals | Audit Service Sierra Leone, Performance Management & Service Delivery Directorate. Open Government Partnership Steering Committee, Parliament.  Budget Advocacy Network, Federation of Civil Society and Reporter Union. | | | |
| Main objective | To ensure that MDAs comply with recommendation of the Audit Service Sierra Leone in order to improve transparency and accountability in public resource spending and reducing public wastage and promoting value for money across Government. | | | |
| Brief description of  Commitment  (140 character limit) | Every year billion of Leones is unaccounted for the same issues. There is not much improvement on the side of MDAs to adhere to the recommendations on the Auditor General’s report and even the Public Account Committee of Parliament. This commitment is to ensure that there are legal provisions and a policy paper which will push MDAs to adhere to the recommendation of the Audit report | | | |
| Relevance | This Commitment is primarily to reduce wastage and improve transparency and accountability on the use of public resources. | | | |
| Ambition | 1. The ambition is to see that all MDAs adhere to the recommendation of the Auditor General’s report. 2. It will also ensure that value for money is obtained and proper public financial management procedures adhere to. 3. Transparency and accountability on the use of public resources to citizenry will build the trust and confidence of the citizen hence foster improved democracy in Sierra Leone. | | | |
| Completion level | Not started | Limited | Substantial | Completed |
|  |  | YES |  |
| Description of the results | 1. The Public Account Committee of Parliament has produced a report on the 2012 Auditor General’s report which has series of recommendation which the office of the Anthony General has to look into for action and this report is made public 2. The Steering Committee has prepared a position paper which has been submitted to the constitutional Review Committee on the length of time Parliament should take to debate and produce a report on the Auditor General’s report. 3. The Auditor General’s report | | | |
| End Date | December 2015 | | | |
| Next steps | There are outstanding recommendations on the 2012 and 2013 Audit reports to be assessed for their implementations by the relevant MDAs and reports made public | | | |
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| **Commitment 5** | | | | |
| 5 Establish a Single Treasury Account to improve fiscal accountability. | | | | |
| Lead implementing agency | Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED) | | | |
| Names of responsible person  From implementing agency | Hon Dr Keifala Marah | | | |
| Title, Department | Government Minister, MoFED | | | |
| Email |  | | | |
| Phone |  | | | |
| Others Government  Actors  Involved  CSOs, private  sector, working  groups  multilaterals | Accountant -General Department.  Budget Advocacy Network, Federation of Civil Society | | | |
| Main objective | To consolidate the optimum utilization of government cash resources and also the receipt and payment of government at the end of each day. | | | |
| Brief description of  Commitment  (140 character limit) | 1. This commitment is gear towards establishing a structure that links all government bank accounts held in different commercial banks for the consolidation and optimum utilization of government cash resources. 2. It will also enable government to consolidate it receipt and payment at the end of each day hence reduces idle cash lying in banks while government struggle to finance social service delivery. | | | |
| Relevance | 1. This commitment is to improve financial accountability using innovative technology. 2. The Single Treasury Account will facilitate better fiscal and monetary coordination as well as better reconciliation of government accounts in a timely manner which in turn improves the quality of fiscal information. 3. It will enable government to improve appropriation, operation control during budget execution and efficient cash management hence reduces wastage and quantum of government resources lying idling in various commercial bank accounts | | | |
| Ambition | 1. The Single Treasury Account (STA)) is to address the current fragmented system for handling government receipts and payments that greatly hamper the progress towards preparing a comprehensive public account that will include all Government operations. 2. This commitment will led to unified control over government’s cash resources that will reduce the cash lying idle for extended periods in numerous bank accounts held by spending agencies while the Government continues to finance its activities by high level of borrowing. 3. The intended policy result was to have a legal framework which will regulate the commitment. This has already been achieved as the current Public Financial Management Bill has clauses which will regulate the Single Treasure Account and also make provision for the publishing of government accounts on monthly, quarterly and yearly bases. | | | |
| Completion level | Not started | Limited | Substantial | Completed |
|  |  | YES |  |
| Description of the results | 1. A Working Group was formed which comprises of various stakeholders was form to work on the (STA) 2. Term of Reference for the procurement of specialist to work with and guide the working group in the design of the STA was developed which has led to the design of the STA 3. An inventory of all Government Bank held in various commercial accounts classified according to according to controlling entity has been conducted from responses of the MDAs and various commercial banks 4. A database designed to maintain records of all bank account authorized for opening by the Minister of Finance and Economic Development and the signatories to those accounts 5. The Single Treasury Account software procured, the account designed and a management committee set-up. 6. The report for the implementation of the Single Treasury Account completed. 7. Press conference was held to inform the public about the STA   The slated date for the launching of the STA is October 2015 | | | |
| End Date | December 2015 | | | |
| Next steps | 1. Passing of the Public Financial Management Bill as this will give the operation of the STA a legal mandate 2. Launching of the Single Treasury Account and make it operational | | | |
| The delay in the passing of the Public Financial Management will affect the legal operation of the STA | | | | |
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| **Commitment 6** | | | | |
| 6. Enact a Revenue Management Bill to promote transparency and accountability in the granting of tax incentives | | | | |
| Lead implementing agency | Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED) | | | |
| Names of responsible person  From implementing agency | Hon Dr Keifala Marah | | | |
| Title, Department | Government Minister, MoFED | | | |
| Email |  | | | |
| Phone |  | | | |
| Others Government  Actors  Involved  CSOs, private  sector, working  groups  multilaterals | Parliament  Budget Advocacy Network, Federation of Civil Society. | | | |
| Main objective | To regulate granting of tax incentives | | | |
| Brief description of  Commitment  (140 character limit) | 1. This commitment is geared towards reducing tax expenditure and foster transparency and accountability in the granting of tax incentives. 2. It will also require the government to publish a statement of its tax incentives detailing all tax exemptions, the beneficiaries and the revenue forgone | | | |
| Relevance | 1. This Commitment is meant to promote transparency and accountability by providing information to the public about tax incentives. It will enable citizen to know how much tax incentives has been granted to various institutions and individuals hence empowering citizen to hold duty bearers and those receiving the incentives accountable for it use. 2. It will also reduce the discretionary way government is granting of the tax incentive. CSOs can also use the tax incentive information to analysis the cost-benefit of some of the investments or individual that receiving incentives. | | | |
| Ambition | 1. This bill will commit Government to produce an annual public statement on its tax expenditure, the beneficiaries and revenue loss. 2. It will also mandate the Ministry of Finance & Economic Development and the National Revenue Authority to provide Parliament a cost- benefit analysis of all tax incentives granted. 3. Another ambition is to see that a periodic review of the continuance of existing tax incentives by assessing the extent to which they could meet the objectives the budget*.* | | | |
| Completion level | Not started | Limited | Substantial | Completed |
|  | YES |  |  |
| Description of the results | There have been no public consultations on the current draft Revenue Management Bill. However, we were told by the Director of Economic Policy and Research Unit that some of the mechanism to reduce the tax incentives will be address in the coming Finance Act that will be laid in Parliament in October 2015. | | | |
| End Date | August 2016 | | | |
| Next steps | Look at the coming Finance Act to see it the aspect of reducing tax incentive is address  Push for a regulation that will regulate the granting of tax incentives  Push for the publication of tax incentives in the annual government budget. | | | |
| Government has tabled the draft Public Financial Management Bill in Parliament which will now replace the Government Budgeting and Accountability Act. Once this bill is passed without the inclusion of clauses that will regulate the granting of tax incentives it will be very difficult for another separate bill to be passed specifically to regulate tax incentives. Tax incentive issues are very sensitive and therefore the political will to push it is very minimal | | | | |
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| **Commitment 7** | | | | |
| 7. Scaling-up Extractive Industry Transparency Initiatives | | | | |
| Lead implementing agency | Office of the Chief of Staff | | | |
| Names of responsible person  From implementing agency | Dr Saidu Conton Sesay | | | |
| Title, Department | Chief of Staff, State House | | | |
| Email |  | | | |
| Phone |  | | | |
| Others Government  Actors  Involved  CSOs, private  sector, working  groups  multilaterals | Parliament, Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative Unit, National Mineral Agency, Ministry of Mines & Mineral Resources, National Revenue Authority, Open Government Partnership Office, Citizens Committee.  Network Movement of Justice & Development, Federation of Civil Society, Reporters Union. | | | |
| Main objective | To improve corporate accountability through more transparency processes for mining activities and the utilization of open data portal to give the public access to mining contract and other relevant documents. | | | |
| Brief description of  Commitment  (140 character limit) | 1. To have the EITI Policy as atool that will determine the guidelines 2. To subsequently proffer a policy and regulation as legislation in support of the policy and practice especially on the disclosure of revenue and operational structure within government to support the objectives of the Sierra Leone EITI. This takes the form of moving a bill for enactment and an operational structure within government to support the objective of the EITI | | | |
| Relevance | This commitment speaks to fiscal transparency, public accountability of the extractive industries which is to enhance civic participation and knowledge which will benefit the extractive industry. | | | |
| Ambition | Our ambition is to have a robust policy regulation, procedure and guidelines for both disclosures on the use of resources in the extractive industry for the benefit of Sierra Leoneans.  Our hope is to wipe-out public mistrust of government that bears relationship on the extractive industries and the use of resources that are accrued. In our opinion, it is a way to build an open, transparent and accountable government to its people. In our view, revenue from the extractive industry is a starting point.  If well-articulated, it will bring to the fore the need of communities in governance and the practice of disclosure, fiscal responsibility and organization integrity. | | | |
| Completion level | Not started | Limited | Substantial | Completed |
|  | YES |  |  |
| Description of the results | 1. There is a general consensus that the policy is required to support the existing bill making disclosure in the extractive industry a must by law. 2. However, a policy is yet to receive Cabinet approval and therefore the bill yet to be approved by Parliament but willingness to achieve this commitment is at the highest level of government and the intention is to have it within the shortest possible period. | | | |
| End Date | August 2016 | | | |
| Next steps | 1.To secure Cabinet approval for the SLEITI policy  2.Bill to be ingazette and the enacted by Parliament  3.Both documentations to be popularized and disseminated for public knowledge  4.An implementation plan to be designed for the policy and Law that will be enacted | | | |
| Government realized that a policy would have been in place to inform the current bill and is therefore working assiduously to enact the bill into a law. | | | | |
|  | Government realized that the SLEITI policy would have been in place to inform the current bill and therefore working assiduously to realize this. Operationally the SLEITI Secretariat is in place, the tax regime is also in place in readiness to actualize the policy. | | | |

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| **Commitment 8** | | | | |
| 1. Improving 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. | | | | |
| Lead implementing agency | Ministry of Trade & Industry | | | |
| Names of responsible person  From implementing agency | Hon Mabinty Daramy, | | | |
| Title, Department | Government Cabinet Minister, Ministry of Trade & Industry. | | | |
| Email |  | | | |
| Phone |  | | | |
| Others Government  Actors  Involved  CSOs, private  sector, working  groups  multilaterals | Ministry of Labour & Social security, Citizens Committee,  Network Movement of Justice & development, Federation of Civil Society, Human Right Commission, NATCOM. | | | |
| Main objective | The objective is to ensure sufficient linkage between the local economy and foreign enterprises in Sierra Leone through effective monitoring and Evaluation of the Local Content Policy. | | | |
| Brief description of  Commitment  (140 character limit) | 1. This commitment is to bring to the fore a mechanism for effective linkage between the local economy and foreign entrepreneurship investment. It takes into cognizance the implementation of a LCP and its relevance on the people of Sierra Leone as they strive to integrate proactively into the local economy. | | | |
| Relevance | This Commitment speaks to civic participation public accountability and empowerment which is a critical booster to a thriving economy. In the Sierra Leone case, a sound integration of the local economy and foreign investment is key in answering the current aspiration of becoming a middle-income country by 2025.  If well-articulated it is supposed to be perennial to our poverty reduction strife and our ‘Agenda for Prosperity’. It is supposed to aid employment, entrepreneur knowledge and the linkage to the international market. | | | |
| Ambition | Sierra Leone is making strides to bring to reality its ambitious aspirations of becoming a middle-income economy by 2025. A key contribution to this ambition is the integration of the local economy to foreign direct investment. The accompanying job creation and empowerment that is envisaged, will ultimately allow a competitive advantage to locals and the local entrepreneurs. | | | |
| Completion level | Not started | Limited | Substantial | Completed |
|  |  | YES |  |
| Description of the results | 1. There is a Local Content Policy in place 2. There is political will to implement it. 3. There is a LCP unit established hence coordinating structure agreed upon. 4. The idea is well popularized 5. It is envisaged that it will form part of the Nations’ Labour Law 6. Assurance that there is the required skill to move the nation 7. Course Curriculum in local institutions have been redesigned taking into account local content 8. Public education on the policy is well underway with the policy been popularized | | | |
| End Date | October 2015 | | | |
| Next steps | The Bill to be tabled in Parliament and then enacted into Law. There is a need for a compliance framework which will ensure compliance to the LCP both by the local and foreign entrepreneurs. | | | |
| Additional information (Description on what remains to be achieved  And any risks or challenges to implement the commitment. | | | | |
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| **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. | | | | |
| Lead implementing agency | Ministry of Information & Communication (MoIC),  National Minerals Agency (NMA) | | | |
| Names of responsible person  From implementing agency | Hon Alpha Kanu  Mr Sahr Wonde | | | |
| Title, Department | Government Minister, MoIC  Department Executive Director | | | |
| Email |  | | | |
| Phone |  | | | |
| Others Government  Actors  Involved  CSOs, private  sector, working  groups  multilaterals | Ministry of Mines & Mineral Resources, Ministry of Finance & Economic Development, Ministry of Justice and Attorney- General, Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative Unit, Petroleum Directorate, Strategic Policy Unit, National Mineral Agency and OGP Office.  Transparency Initiative, Justice Sector Coordinating Unit, Anti- Corruption Commission, SDI, CARL, SLUDI, National Federation of Civil Society. | | | |
| Main objective | To create more access points for the public in order to engage in national debate on lease agreement and contracts in the Mining and Agriculture sectors. | | | |
| Brief description of  Commitment  (140 character limit) | 1. 70 % of mining and agricultural lease agreements and contracts are accessible to the public and through and Open data on both the Ministry of Finance & Economic Development and the National Mineral Agency websites. 2. In addition to ensure that the Ministry of Mines & Mineral Resources, Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Forestry and the Petroleum Directorate develop and publish procedures and guidelines for the allocation of licenses. 3. Also contracts awards and executions discussed by the CSOs,private sector partners, relevant communities, and Government in a bi-yearly symposium and the report disseminated to stakeholders. 4. Public Participation in contractual discourse before signature and Cooperate Social responsibility policies and yearly work plan monitored through a yearly assessment by the National Mineral Agency. | | | |
| Relevance | 1. Contractual and lease agreement procedures remains a concern for credible and transparent governance. The relevance of this commitment therefore speaks to public accountability, fiscal transparency and civic participation and governance. 2. A start-up with the two thriving sectors namely: agriculture and mining is a pointer to this. If well practiced, it clarifies the public apprehensions around accountability and transparency on the process. | | | |
| Ambition | Our ambition is to close the feedback loop regarding the two sectors for which the people are so interested to see progress regarding accountability and transparency. Therefore been able to account through disclosure on all data and information on all contracts and lease, is the way forward to the above. Both NMA and Ministry of Agriculture websites would serve as the conduits to achieve the stated objective. | | | |
| Completion level | Not started | Limited | Substantial | Completed |
|  |  | YES |  |
| Description of the results | 1. NMA and MoFED staff have been capacitated on open data use 2. Currently all mining contracts published on the NMA website[www.nma.gov.sl](http://www.nma.gov.sl) 3. The needs of the Mining communities are been addressed through the Community Development Agreements (CDA). Implementation due in the next few months | | | |
| End Date | June 2016 | | | |
| Next steps | Key stakeholders symposium on contract execution and report of the discussions disseminated to stakeholders. Furthermore all participating companies in the symposium to provide CRS policy and yearly work plan; and the National Mineral Agency to conduct yearly assessment of the submitted in order to ensure compliance. | | | |
| Additional information (Description on what remains to be achieved  And any risks or challenges to implement the commitment. | | | | |

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| **Commitment 10** | | | | |
| 10. Implementation of the Right to Access Information Law. | | | | |
| Lead implementing agency | Ministry of Information & Communication (MoIC) | | | |
| Names of responsible person  From implementing agency | Hon Alpha Kanu | | | |
| Title, Department | Government Minister, MoIC | | | |
| Email |  | | | |
| Phone |  | | | |
| Others Government  Actors  Involved  CSOs, private  sector, working  groups  multilaterals | Right to Access Information Commission,  National Federation of Civil Society, Coalition of Civil Society and Human Right Activist, Independent Media Development | | | |
| Main objective | To improve access to information and data processes for requesters and agencies. | | | |
| Brief description of  Commitment. | * An enacted Right to Access Information Bill popularised and critical public Information officers at post country-wide within the first year of the implementation of the Act. * Regional Commissioners are at post. Open Data Portal handed over to RAIC to facilitate the critical service of accessibility of information as per request. * The Commission is underway for full operationalization backed by the development of strategic and operational plans | | | |
| Relevance | This commitment is in tandem with civic participation public accountability, transparency and empowerment. It lays bare on Sierra Leone’s strong willingness to account to its people and to ensure their full participation at every level of governance underscoring the principles of democracy -- for the people, of the people and by the people. | | | |
| Ambition | * The ambition here is to have both in spirit and practice an open, transparent and accountable governance; and to do so through an infrastructure committed to the people where information and data can be received.Thus, the establishment by law of the RAIC and the support to its human resource and finance. * It is hoped to ensure a string civic participation and an empowered public that will demand for a better public service delivery. | | | |
| Completion level | Not started | Limited | Substantial | Completed |
|  |  | YES |  |
| Description of the results | The law has been promulgated and is being operationalized including office for the commission. Commissioners are at post and operational staff underway. The draft policy and regulation has been review by the American Bar Association and is being acted on by the Attorney-General’s office. A robust strategic and operational plan is currently been discussed. | | | |
| End Date | February 2016 | | | |
| Next steps | Implementation of the regulation on the Right to Access Information | | | |
| |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Commitment 11** | | | | | | 11. Establish an Open Data Portal to improve transparency in fiscal and extractive transactions. | | | | | | Lead implementing agency | Right to Access Information Commission (RAIC) | | | | | Names of responsible person  From implementing agency | Mr Unisa Sesay  Ms. Yeama Thompson | | | | | Title, Department | Commissioners RAIC | | | | | Email |  | | | | | Phone |  | | | | | Others Government  Actors  Involved  CSOs, private  sector, working  groups  multilaterals | Ministry of Information and Communication, Open Government Initiative Secretariat, Millennium Challenge Coordination Unit.  National Federation of Civil Society, International Media Development, Non State Actors. | | | | | Main objective | To serve as a public repository to input and access government and other information for public interest. | | | | | Brief description of  Commitment   1. Character limit) | * The concept and value addition to open governance has been articulated and the Open Data Portal has been established. [www.opendata.sl](http://www.opendata.sl) * The hired vendor concluded designing and development of the website and the necessary MDA personnel trained. * Data was supposed to have been posted such as 70 percent of agriculture and mining lease agreement and 20% of gazetted Law documents of Sierra Leone posted. | | | | | Relevance | This commitment relates to access to information, civic participation and technology and innovation. This ultimately ensures openness and accountability which is extremely relevant to our current governance landscape. An infrastructure like the Open data is a conduit for this action. | | | | | Ambition | * The Open Data is a means to be connected to Sierra Leone in an era of globalization making the country open, transparent and accessible and helps Sierra Leoneans at home and in the diaspora with planning and benchmarking progress. * It helps to forge partnership in a more open fashion. | | | | | Completion level | Not started | Limited | Substantial | Completed | |  |  | YES |  | | Description of the results | * Open Data platform established and publicly launched. * Some related MDAs have been capacitated on the use of the Open Data Portal and the Portal is now been managed by the RAIC with some extent of popularization of the Open data Portal through television and Radio programmes. | | | | | End Date | January 2016 | | | | | Next steps | * Conduct an Open Data Readiness Assessment. * Uploading of relevant data * Increased popularisation on the use of the portal | | | | | Additional information (Description on what remains to be achieved   1. And any risks or challenges to implement the commitment. The Open data readiness Assessment (ODRA) was postponed as the hired consultant could not come to Sierra Leone because of the Ebola. However, there is a timeline of October- December 2015 for the assessment. 2. The risk envisage in maintenance , operation and power supply are major concerns | | | | |   Additional information (Description on what remains to be achieved  And any risks or challenges to implement the commitment. | | | | |

**Progress on Eligibility criteria**

**Fiscal Transparency**

Evidence abound that Sierra Leone has made some progress in improving fiscal transparency example Sierra Leone score on the Open Budget Index increased from 39 in 2012 to 52 percent in 2015; which means the Government of Sierra Leone has increased the amount of budget information made available to the public.

**Disclosure of Asset**

A 70 percent increase has been recorded in the disclosure of Asset of Public officials, a progression from about 15,000 in 2010 to about 26,200 currently. This attribute helps to minimize corruption, increase transparency and improve judicious use of public resources.

**Citizens Participation**

Increased stakeholders participation in the budget discussions has been recorded. There has been increased engagement and participation at all levels. This could be indicated by the extent and level of attendance, meaningful or significant contributions in meetings and constructive criticisms. On the OGP process in particular, irrespective of our democratic and partisan governance, there is coherence on the way forward for open governance, participation and partnership.

**Right to Access Information**

There is clear evidence that there are still challenges to access information based on the fact that some citizens are not interested and some do not find use for certain information. In addition, adequate information forums have not been sustained and in some instances the structure has been lacking. However, we have been encouraged by a change of this attitude through the consultation on the commitment, by a supportive legislation now in place and the Open Data Infrastructure.

Through modern technology, especially in the form of community radio stations and the increase in the number of television, access to information is bound to be increase. The OGP process will continue in its second NAP to consolidate the “Right” element to information.

1. Peer Exchange and Learning

Sierra Leone recognizes the value inherent in Peer Exchange and Learning as have been demonstrated by the leadership in the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) process. The OGP process also subscribed to this as evident bythree study visits tours undertakennamely: the European Regional Meeting in Dublin Ireland, London in Britain and Manila in Philippines. The aim was to ensure preparedness of the OGP management team in Sierra Leone and the Steering Committee as a way of benchmarking best practices in the OGP process.

**Conclusions, Other Initiatives and Next Steps**

**Lessons Learnt**

* OGP has helped in enhancing effective collaboration between state and non-state actors
* The OGP process has brought government closer to the people through public consultations.
* Building trust between CSO and Government in terms of partnership is a gradual and painstaking process which requires consistency and courage.
* The timing of the Sierra Leone NAP does not tie in to the Sierra Leone National Budgetary process thereby starving commitments that require financial allocations.
* The inclusion of the public at the initial national consultations enhanced the validation of the NAP as country document hence citizens’ ownership enforced.

**Challenges**

* Grasping the OGP concept was quite challenging especially with an existing OGI concept in Sierra Leone. Learning was mostly by doing.
* The process itself met some initial resistance as there were skepticisms and misgivings by MDAs in terms of a group monitoring their activities.
* Resource allocation for OGP coordination and implementation were extremely limited.
* Getting the buy-in and cooperation of Public officials at the initial level.
* Awareness-raising was a challenge as the OGP concept was new.
* The government did not allocate special funds for the OGP process activities but rather the process financing was subsumed into the allocation of the OGI Secretariat.
* Resistance by MDAs to provide information in order to benchmark progress on the implementation of the NAP.
* The Ebola disease was a hindrance in the early implementation of the National Action Plan as all implementing agencies were focusing their activities in the fight against Ebola, a presidential ban on all public gathering which delayed public consultations on the implementation progress of commitments, cancellation of steering committee meetings for commitment progress up-date, fear of touch which caused increased absenteeism at workplaces and the early writing of the self-assessment report.

**Other initiatives taken by Government to advance OGP values/ principles that were not included in the NAP**

* Establishment of the Open Data Council to provide technical and strategic policy guidelines on the Operation of the Open Data Portal
* Sectoral arrangement for performance and public service delivery which is a mechanism for enforcing coordination, collaboration synergy and information sharing among MDA sector members for transparency, collective wisdom, accountability and consultation in service provision.
* Public signing of the Integrity Pledge by 5 MDAs
* The service delivery charter as per the NAP was limited to certain MDAs but Government has now made it mandatory to all MDAs.
* Government has moved forward to ensure that Single Treasury Account is part of our legal framework
* As per NAP, government was scaling-up and deepening performance management but now as long as any agency access government funding it is mandatory to sign-up to performance management.
* The Government is now publishing the citizens’ budget.

**Next steps with respect to OGP generally and unfulfilled commitments**

* Outreach to neighboring countries to embrace the tenets of OGP
* Follow-up on some of the outstanding commitments through rigorous monitoring
* Influence the Sierra Leone Government for Budget allocation for OGP activities
* On-line training on the Independent Review Mechanism for the national steering Committee
* Development of a more rigid monitoring and evaluation framework to enforce the implementation of the NAP
* Align unfulfilled commitment into the government-wide performance contract of implementing MDAs.
* Preparation of the second National Action Plan for Sierra Leone

**Conclusion:Positive impact of activities and related outcomes to each commitment.**

The Government of Sierra Leone has always made effort to remain open in governance but the OGP process brought a new face to this and now there is a strong partnership (CSO and Government) which would ensure government remains open and transparent. A culture has been imbibed for more transparency and citizens’ engagement through the equal partnership principles devoid of power dynamics. The OGP process has given Sierra Leone legitimacy both at the national and international level as a country striving towards openness and accountability and the national consultations created an outreach opportunity to feedback to citizens.

As a result Sierra Leone today has inculcated the OGP principles as projected in the 11 commitments with conscious effort to imbibe the tendency of integrity in doing government business, the tenets of fiscal transparency public accountability and citizen’s participation. There is now an increased sense of probity and patriotism.

6 Appendixes