



The Open Government Initiative
Office of the President, State House

The Open Government Partnership – Sierra Leone
C/O Open Government Initiative
Office of the President
State House
Freetown
Sierra Leone
14th June 2014

The Open Government Support Unit
Washington, D.C
USA

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Open Government Partnership (OGP) Steering Committee Elections

The Government of Sierra Leone is committed to the Open Government Partnership as indicated in our letter of intent signed in October 2013. We have found an implementing unit in the Open Government Initiative and the National Action Plan developed in collaboration with civil society has been submitted on time.

The implementing unit, the Open Government Initiative (OGI) was established by the President in 2008 to promote citizens engagement between government and the people. The initiative was conceived because there was no machinery that served as a link between state and non-state actors.

The OGI has become the formal medium between the public and the state. It coordinates an open dialogue between the government and the people of Sierra Leone to contribute to policy making and strategies for implementation with regard to the socio economic development of the country. OGI promotes participatory democracy, accountability and transparency by providing a forum where government functionaries account for its stewardship to the people.

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The Open Government Partnership - Sierra Leone, is comprised of 34 steering committee members of which 17 are representatives from Government and 17 from Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to ensure fair representation on each side.

The National Steering Committee led the process for the drafting of the National Action Plan (NAP) which was submitted to the OGP support unit in Washington, D.C on the 30th April 2014. The NAP captures four grand challenges. They include:

Increasing Public Integrity, More Effectively Managing Public Resources, Increasing Corporate Accountability; and the fourth, which was suggested by the people of Sierra Leone during consultations, is Improving Public Services.

The national validation of the NAP was preceded by a robust national sensitization and consultations in the twelve districts of Sierra Leone that made the entire process inclusive and participatory. Consultations were also done in the Diaspora with Sierra Leoneans on the OGP. His Excellency, The President of the Republic of Sierra Leone personally validated the draft NAP on April 29th 2014 along with about 500 stakeholders that included school children, women's groups, disabled groups, Tribal Heads, Village Heads, Chiefs, Civil Society organizations, Cabinet Ministers and members of the diplomatic corps.

What Sierra Leone will bring to the table is a fresh but experienced perspective on citizens' engagement, which we demonstrated during the consolidation of the national action plan development process by giving the people of Sierra Leone a stake in the process via national and international sensitization efforts before we went back to consult and validate the draft NAP with them. Our approach was so unique that we received accolades from some members of the Open Government Partnership Support Unit and the International Community. We were also asked to share what we did and how we did it with other partner countries in the OGP European Session held in Dublin, Ireland, in April of this year.

We are also convinced that our membership in the steering committee will give us the opportunity to encourage other African countries to participate in the OGP, to promote global democracy. As you may know we have offered to host the African session of the OGP here in Sierra Leone later this year, which could be a platform to showcase the OGP to other African countries even if they are not yet part of the 64-member group.

It is against this backdrop that OGP Sierra Leone is applying to participate in the 2014 Rotation of the OGP Steering Committee.

Yours faithfully,

R. Thomas
For – Secretary to the President of Sierra Leone

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