

## **GHANA EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES TRANSPARENCY INITIATIVE (GHEITI) MULTI STAKEHOLDER GROUP (MSG) ADOPTS 2006, 2007 AND 2008 GHEITI REPORTS**

**Accra, Friday October 15, 2010.** Ghana's Multi-stakeholder Group, overseeing the implementation of the Ghana's Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (GHEITI) on Wednesday October 6, accepted by unanimous decision the 2006 – 2008 EITI audit reports submitted by the aggregator, Messrs Boas and Associates.

The acceptance of the report paves way for the formal launch, subsequent dissemination and public discussions on the findings of the reports.

Commenting on the release of the reports, the National Coordinator of the Ghana EITI (GHEITI) Secretariat, Franklin Ashiadey said: "It's been a long journey, and it has taken some effort to close the gap in our reporting, but I am glad we are there".

The issue of delayed reporting has been one of the reasons for which the EITI International Board has withheld its approval of the Ghana EITI validation report, and the expectation is that, with this and other hurdles cleared, Ghana would be declared compliant when the Board meets in Dar es Salam, Tanzania from 19<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> October, 2010.

The GHEITI Steering Committee has scheduled a stakeholder review of the reports for Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2010 at Agona Swedru in the Central Region, where the relevant government agencies, company representatives, and civil society groups would be expected to respond to the findings of the reports. The Committee also plans to formally launch the reports and to disseminate the reports country-wide.

"The release of these reports certainly marks an important milestone in Ghana EITI implementation, but what is important at this stage is the spread and quality of engagement of stakeholders, especially the citizenry on the reports" said, the Revenue Watch Institute' Africa Regional Coordinator in response to the release of the reports.

The EITI is a multi-stakeholder (tripartite) initiative, comprising governments, companies, and civil society. Its principles and criteria hinge on the regular publication of all material oil, gas, and mining payments by companies to governments and receipts of these payments by governments from companies in a manner that is accessible to citizens, both organized and unorganized, in a comprehensive, and comprehensible format.

The premise is that the availability of such information will bolster the bottom up demand for accountability and therefore ensure effective and efficient use of such revenues.

Civil society participation as an equal stakeholder in the initiative is a key requirement. They are to be engaged in the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the initiative.

Countries join the EITI first as candidates.<sup>1</sup> Later they progress to implementing countries, and end up as compliant countries after successfully undergoing validation. EITI validation ensures compliance to the principles and criteria of the initiative. So far only two countries, Azerbaijan and Liberia have successfully completed validation and have been conferred compliant status.

In March 2010 the validation deadline for Ghana and 19 other EITI implementing countries had to be extended. According to a press statement released after an EITI international board meeting held from April 15 - 16, 2010 in Berlin, the Board discussed the request of 17 countries implementing the EITI to extend their deadline for completing EITI Validation, and considered the application of Sao Tome and Principe to voluntarily suspend their EITI Candidate status.

The release said, the Board considered the applications on a case by case basis in accordance with the EITI rules, which permits an extension of the validation deadline only if a country demonstrates that its inability to meet the deadline is due to exceptional and unforeseeable circumstances outside its control.

Board agreed to grant extensions to 16 countries, namely: Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Congo, Gabon, Ghana, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Peru, Sierra Leone, Timor Leste and Yemen. New deadlines in each country case were set.

The Board did not approve the request for an extension of the deadline for Equatorial Guinea. Sao Tome and Principe's application for a voluntary suspension was also not approved. As a consequence of these decisions, these countries are no longer considered implementing or candidate countries. Both countries can however re-apply to become EITI Candidate countries once the barriers to effective implementation have been addressed.

Ghana technically missed the deadline, having submitted its validation report at the eleventh hour but unable to complete the consideration and approval processes before the March 9, deadline. The country now has up to July 9 2010 to complete its validation process.

Signed,



Notes to Editors:

Globally, 31 countries are recognized as either EITI candidate or compliant. These are: Afghanistan, Albania, Azerbaijan, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Mongolia, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Peru, Republic of the Congo, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Timor-Leste, Yemen and Zambia.

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