

The utilisation of mineral revenues received by the Ellembelle District Assembly of the Western Region has raised concerns among traditional leaders and citizens of the area. In particular, indications by the District Assembly that it had utilised the funds on road projects and the assembly's office complex did not go down well with some participants.

They were incensed because the main road from Esiama to Nkroful, capital of the Ellembelle District, has remained in a bad state for a long time, yet the assembly's report on the utilisation of the funds did not include spending on the particular road. Their sentiments were summarised by Nana Kwasi Kutuah IV, chief of Nkroful as follows:

This road should be constructed; if for nothing at all, to honour Dr. (Kwame) Nkrumah.

These came to light when officials of the Ghana Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (GHEITI) briefed district assembly officials, assembly members, chiefs and citizens on the 2014 reports on the mining and oil and gas sectors.

The briefing took place over a two-day period from May 22 to 23 when a dissemination workshop was held at Nkroful, capital of the Ellembelle District, by the GHEITI with funding from the German Technical Cooperation (GIZ). It was the first time the district was benefitting from the GHEITI's regular briefing sessions for districts where mineral and petroleum exploitation takes place in Ghana. The displeasure had arisen after the participants learned from a presentation on 2014 Mining Sector EITI Report that their district had received GHC344,561.93 in 2012 and GHC292,935.00 in 2014 but the funds were utilised on other infrastructure.

In the presentation, Mr. Kweku Boa-Amponsem, the GHEITI Aggregator, indicated that the Ellembelle District reported that it utilised GHC47,780 on clearing of Kotokrom feeder roads; GHC42,339 of clearing Abi-Abonsamsuazo road; GHC32,500 to undertake works on Teleku Bokazo Asasetre road; and GHC33,010.87 on payment for construction of office administration complex among others.

Mr. Boa-Amponsem, who is also head of consulting firm Boas and Associates, drew attention of his audience that the Assembly's reported utilisation of the funds was difficult to assess because the assembly at the time of reporting did not have a dedicated account for receiving mineral revenue transfers. He said one of the key recommendations from the GHEITI process is for every district assembly to create a special account to hold resource funds.

Tour of Gas processing plant

Also during the two-day activity, leading officials of GHEITI paid a visit to the Ghana National Gas Company (Ghana Gas) last Monday during which they were informed that the plant had begun receiving gas from the Tweneboa, Enyenra, Ntomme (TEN) fields offshore Ghana. The TEN gas supply to Ghana Gas comes as the Floating, Production, Storage and Offloading (FPSO) Kwame Nkrumah on the Jubilee field shuts down for 10 days to allow for routine maintenance.

The amount of gas from the TEN field is 45 million standard cubic feet (mmscf) per day. Dr. Steve Manteaw, Co-chair of the Steering Committee of the Multi-Stakeholder Group (MSG) under the GHEITI, said the visit to the plant was part of work being done by the GHEITI in the district. We are here in this district to share our last report on mining, oil and gas. The hope is that there will be recommendations from these discussions that will feed into policy reforms.

We thought it wise to come here to see the plant that we have been reporting on. We will be happy to see what the processes are so we can speak competently to it, he concluded.

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