

Opening Remarks by Dr Orji Ogbonnaya Orji, the Executive Secretary of the Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI) at the Multi-Stakeholders Roundtable organized by Global Rights on the 10th July 2024 at Rockview Royale, Wuse 2, Abuja.

Protocols!

1. I thank our partners Global Rights for the opportunity to offer the opening remarks at this important event.
2. This Multi- Stakeholders Roundtable on Enhancing Inclusiveness in promoting transparency and fiscal justice in Nigeria’s solid minerals sector is key to the numerous issues that NEITI consider priorities in our new strategic renewed attention and focus towards the Solid Minerals sector.
3. I therefore on behalf of our National Stakeholders Working Group reaffirm our commitment to the partnership between NEITI, the Global Rights, Ministry of Solid Minerals Development and the Ford Foundation in enhancing inclusiveness in the mining sector.
4. The theme of this year’s Roundtable “Enhancing Inclusiveness – An Imperative for Promoting Transparency, Accountability, and Development in Nigeria's Extractive Industry”.
5. At the heart of our discussions at this Roundtable are two major issues of common concern- fiscal justice and inclusion to put on the

agenda as commitments and considered major components of the on-going reforms of the Solid Minerals Sector.

6. For us in NEITI, we also need our partner, Global Rights to consider specifically and pay greater attention to the issues of gender equity and inclusion. To be specific, Women inclusion. Women's participation in mining and steel sector has become an issue of debate and advocacy globally. This is in view of the negative implications a male-dominated extractive industry characterized by limited access for women in areas of employment opportunities, training, skills acquisition, investments and exposure to issues on managing natural resources endowments.
7. This Roundtable today is important to interrogate some man made obstacles frustrating women participation in extractive sector activities. Some of these obstacles are fiscal justice, physical demands, safety concerns, cultural biases and social abuses.
8. For Nigeria and the global Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative Inclusion and Fiscal Justice require developing new standards that would mandatorily require emphasis on placing fiscal justice and gender inclusion in decision making as an important areas of policy reform through public disclosure of data that identifies specific social, economic, cultural, environmental

challenges women and children face in oil, gas and mining host communities and environments.

9. For instance, the latest independent industry audit report conducted by NEITI in the oil, gas and mining sector disclosed that employment opportunities for women in the industry in Nigeria is currently too low from global average. From the Report, 56 out of 70 companies covered had a total of 19,171 employees. 15,639 (82%) were men while 3,532 (18%) of the employees were women. Similarly, out of 2,325 top or high-level positions, women representation was less than 100.
10. In efforts to address gender equity and inclusion, NEITI working with our global development partners, 57 member countries in our organization, the media and civil society are committed to advancing fiscal justice and gender equity debate in extractive industries with specific focus on enhancing women participation in natural resource governance. To this end, NEITI has set up Women/Gender Desk to coordinate our activities designed to put women and children issues in public consciousness.
11. My presence here is to assure the Ministry of Solid Minerals Development of NEITI's commitment and partnership to support the strategy that you would unfold today. Please consider NEITI as a dependable ally in this timely and laudable initiative.

12. This is very evident with the welcome news of the review by the federal government of the mining rates which the Ministry of Solid Minerals Development said was to boost reforms in the industry
13. The NEITI report also showed some improvement in the solid minerals sector's contribution to GDP – from 0.26% in 2019 to 0.63% in 2021. The figure is though still very abysmal considering the potentials of the solid minerals sector to act as a catalyst for economic growth and development of our country.
14. Today, I urge us to focus on actionable steps to enhance inclusiveness: Build capacities, strengthen institutional frameworks, deepen community engagement, boost public awareness, education, beneficiate and add value to our mineral resources, by leveraging technology in the implementation of progressive policy reforms.
15. We must also address the intricate connection between mining activities, climate change, and growing insecurity in our sub-nationals. As global demand for critical minerals rises, driven by clean energy needs and security concerns, we anticipate increased mining activities. However, we cannot overlook the social and environmental impacts on host communities especially the

escalation of insecurity and displacement of rural communities and their livelihoods.

16. We must balance economic growth with environmental stewardship, community welfare, and equitable distribution of our natural resources. By fostering inclusiveness, embracing transparency, and committing to sustainable practices, we can harness the true potential of Nigeria's mineral wealth for the benefit of all our citizens.
17. I look forward to our collaborative efforts in shaping a more transparent, inclusive, and prosperous future for Nigeria's extractive industry.
18. Thank you for your attention.