

COMMUNICATIONS POLICY GUIDELINE FOR THE NSWG AND THE NEITI SECRETARIAT

Introduction:

The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative which NEITI is implementing in Nigeria is built on a Multi-Stakeholders framework. The composition of the Multi-Stakeholders working group, the National Stakeholders Working Group (NSWG) clearly reflects this. Section 6 (1 & 2) of the NEITI Act 2007 specifically provides for representation from the extractive industry companies, the civil society, labour unions, industry experts, representatives from the six geo-political zones of Nigeria.

The NSWG is headed by a Chairman and has a Secretary who also heads the Secretariat as Executive Secretary. Similarly, sections 5 and 12 of the Act outlined key functions of the NSWG and that of the Secretariat to ensure effective implementation of the EITI in Nigeria. In addition, the responsibilities of the NSWG and the Secretariat are carefully outlined in the NEITI Board Charter.

Furthermore, the NEITI Communications Strategy provides for the development of a communications policy guideline that will clearly indicate levels of authorization for members of the NSWG and the Secretariat for effective information sharing, public education and enlightenment, dissemination of NEITI reports, stakeholders engagement, citizens advocacy and outreach.

Purpose:

This Communications policy guidelines are informed by the need to ensure robust and effective communications among the NSWG, the NEITI Secretariat and its strategic stakeholders. These include divergent interests represented on the NSWG in the thematic areas of extractive revenues transparency and policy governance, petroleum industry unions, the media, people living with disabilities and professional associations. Others areas covered are human rights, women and youths. The Communications policy guidelines are to further establish appropriate policies, procedures and put in place a monitoring mechanism to support good internal and external communications.

Objectives:

The communications policy guideline therefore seek to achieve the following:

- (a) Ensure effective and efficient flow of quality information from the NSWG and the Secretariat to the public in a coordinated manner.
- (b) To streamline responsibilities based on lines of authority on sources of information dissemination, disclosure, advocacy and engagement by the NSWG, its committees and service arms and the Secretariat on NEITI functions and activities with stakeholders and members of the public.
- (c) To clarify the roles of members of the NSWG, its committees, and zonal representatives as champions of NEITI/EITI implementation in Nigeria through efficient information dissemination, public education, enlightenment and engagement with stakeholders in their respective areas of assignment.
- (d) To guide the Secretariat and the heads of Departments on their roles and level of involvement on issues related to information dissemination, enlightenment, public education, stakeholders engagement and management.



- (e) Promote collective responsibility and ownership of the decisions of NSWG and Secretariat decisions on issues of public interest.
- (f) Provide platform for EITI/NEITI outreach at the grassroots level through coordinated NSWG and Secretariat-led information dissemination and stakeholders' engagement.
- (g) Promote healthy urban-rural NSWG -Secretariat Government – CSO- Companies synergy on EITI/NEITI issues.
- (h) Support the platforms for NSWG and Secretariat information dissemination and citizens' engagement.
- (i) Ensure efficient division of labour in the implementation of NEITI comprehensive communication Strategy.
- (j) Check tendency for conflict of roles and contradiction of positions on NEITI/EITI issues especially on key industry and national issues.
- (h) Promote effective feedback, petitions and recourse mechanism

Specific Tasks for the NSWG and the Secretariat:

In pursuance of the objectives listed above among others, and the overriding need to ensure that the NSWG, its committees, and the NEITI Secretariat disseminate information on NEITI/EITI reports, issues, activities, decisions, resolutions to multi-stakeholders such as the government, CSOs, Companies, and the citizens, this communication policy manual is hereby developed with the following specific tasks for the NSWG, its committees and the Secretariat.

(a) The NSWG

1. The Chairman of NEITI National Stakeholders Working Group (NSWG) and the NEITI Executive Secretary or both shall speak to the public on all relevant public policy decisions on NEITI and EITI implementation in Nigeria.
2. The Chairman of the NSWG Communications Committee shall speak on NSWG decisions and key NEITI issues of public interest as may be delegated by the Board.
3. The Chairman of NSWG Committee on Civil Society shall speak on NSWG-CSO engagements, NEITI/EITI issues and matters related to CSOs participation and protocols on EITI implementation in Nigeria in line with existing NEITI-CSOs memorandum of understanding.
4. The Chair of NEITI - Companies Forum shall speak on NSWG – Companies engagement as may be approved by the Board.
5. The Zonal Representatives of the NSWG shall speak on NEITI/EITI issues related to extractive industry matters and EITI implementation in their respective geo-political zones or others as may be delegated by the Board from time to time.
6. Representatives of the extractive industry unions/institutions on the NSWG, as may be delegated, shall speak on thematic areas of industry experience and knowledge as contribution to advancing public debate on EITI/NEITI outreach.
7. All views expressed in the media or in public by members of the NSWG that are unrelated to their respective function and position shall not be attributed to the Nigeria EITI.
8. Where members of the NSWG feel strongly about making public pronouncements/statements on key national issues that may relate to their position and influence as members of the Board, clearance from the Chairman of the NSWG shall be sought.



9. All public pronouncements/statements by members of the NSWG (in their official capacity) shall be apolitical in line with the principles of the global EITI and NEITI that insulate the initiative from partisan politics.

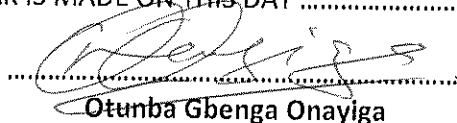
(b) The NEITI Secretariat

1. The Executive Secretary of NEITI shall speak to the public on all relevant public policy decisions on NEITI and EITI implementation in Nigeria.
2. The NEITI Director, Communications and Advocacy shall under this policy guideline carry out the statutory responsibility of engagements with the media, the civil society, companies, governments and the public for purposes of dissemination, public education, enlightenment, knowledge sharing and outreach.
3. The Director, Communications and Advocacy may delegate relevant staff where necessary from the Department to speak for NEITI in line with (2) above.
4. All press releases/statements, documentaries, podcasts, features or rejoinders to the media/civil society, covered entities and the public must be approved by the Executive Secretary in the spirit of this guideline.
5. All press conferences/staged events by NEITI for purposes of EITI outreach must be approved by the Executive Secretary or the NSWG or both as may be necessary.
6. Apart from the designated officers, other members of staff of NEITI Secretariat shall not grant press interviews, discuss NEITI issues in the media or in the public domain without the knowledge and approval of the Executive Secretary.
7. In the spirit of this policy guideline, all press and public inquiries on NEITI activities and EITI implementation in Nigeria should be directed to the Executive Secretary or to the Director, Communications and Advocacy for appropriate response.
8. In furtherance of this policy guideline, NEITI shall make all relevant communications activities of public interest timely and accessible:
 - (a) In user-friendly, correct, concise and comprehensive formats:
 - (b) In line with NEITI's commitment to openness, transparency and accountability.
 - (c) In English and other Nigerian Languages as may be practicable.
 - (d) In compliance with the Freedom of Information Act.

Conclusion:

The overall goal of the communications policy guideline is to streamline information flow, ensure effective participatory dissemination and advocacy and bridge possible communications gap among the NSWG, the Secretariat and the public in the EITI process in Nigeria.

THIS FRAMEWORK IS MADE ON THIS DAY



Otunba Gbenga Onayiga

Chair, Communications Committee on behalf of NSWG



Waziri Adio

Executive Secretary, NEITI, on behalf of the Secretariat

