

Stakeholder Consultation – Construction & Operation of Kaiha 2 Hydropower Project in Lofa County

Meeting: Construction & Operation of Kaiha 2 Hydropower Project in Lofa County

Date: March 16, 2016

Venue: Lehuma Town

Attendants:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Town/ Organization</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Contact</i>
Momo Vannie	Bondowalahun #1	Youth Leader	0888810310
Joseph Kanneh	Bondowalahun #1	Town Chief	0888959855
Ansumana Zuzu	Bondowalahun #2	Town Chief	
Williette T. Clarke	Earthtime	Administrative Assistant	0880556677 0777399999
Basma Shamas	Earthtime	Environmental Consultant	0888300766
Kangoma Sesay	Kimbalahun #2	Town Chief	
Siafa Kanneh	Kpengbelahun	Town Chief	
Adorphus L.Momo	Kpengbelahun	General Secretary	
Bookai Kanneh	Kpengbelahun	Elder	
Salie Safu	Kpengbelahun	Elder	
Walliam Armah	Kpengbelahun	Youth Chairman	0886709200
Aaron Korha	Kpengbelahun	Deputy Youth Chairman	
Victor J.Hokoi	Lehuma	Pastor	0888108949
Hawa Tulay	Lehuma	Market Woman	
Janka Kama	Lehuma	Market Woman	
Sinda Kollie	Lehuma	Chair Lady	
Fatorma Kamara	Lehuma	Business man	0886127418
Willie Salia	Lehuma		
Salle Armah	Lehuma		
Derrick A. Henah	Lehuma	Spokesperson	0886200779
Henah Armah	Lehuma	Youth Chair Assistant	
Augustine Varney	Lehuma	Youth Leader	0888100996
Karmo Tulay	Lehuma	Department TK.	
Varnie kamara	Lehuma		
Bookai Namera	Lehuma	Elder	
Momo Hena	Lehuma	Chief	
Kowo Kokoi	Lehuma	Town Chief	
Amdu Kamara	Lehuma	Elder	
Fungbah Tulay	Lehuma	Town Chief	
Varney Mallay	Lehuma	Business man	
Boakai Sambo	Lukasu	General Town Chief	
Anthony S.Armah	Lukasu	Elder	
Stephen Kamara	Manena	Youth	
Smeh Bagolar	Manena	Youth	
Jusu Foday	Manena	Youth Leader	

<i>Name</i>	<i>Town/ Organization</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Contact</i>
Kabah Veney	Mbaloma	Town Chief	
Blama Kannah	Mbolana	Deputy Town Chief	
J.Vincent Fialoy	Ministry Of Agriculture (MOA)	TCO	0886365685 0775296627
Jorn Stave	Multiconsult	ESIA Team Leader	0888392613
Momo N.Kamara	Pasolahun	Division Chairman	0886702725
Bookai D. Kamara	Pasolahun	Paramount Chief	
Abraham Bility	Rural And Renewable Energy Agency (RREA)	Social Development Officer	0886621340

Summary:

A meeting was held between the chiefs and some community members of the towns of Bondowalahun #1, Bondowalahun #2, Kimbalahun #2, Kpengbelahun, Lehuma, Lukas, Manena, Mbaloma, Pasolahun, elders representing the newly created district of Lukambeh and Wanhassa, and representatives of Liberia's Rural & Renewable Energy Agency (RREA), Multiconsult (project engineers and environmental consultant) and Earthtime (environmental consultant) to present and discuss the construction and operation of a mini hydropower station at Kaiha 2 location in Lofa County. The discussion included a brief presentation of the project location and components as well as the probable environmental and social impacts that might arise from the project and the concerns and opinions that the communities might have regarding the project. The presentation and discussion was translated by locals to local dialects to ensure that all the attendees are well informed.

Presentation:

Abraham Bility (RREA) and Jorn Stave (ESIA Team Leader) introduced the project and provided a brief description of the project component and location, the steps that were done so far to assess and choose the location, the towns that might benefit from the current and probable environmental and social impacts arising from project activities.

Questions and Concerns Session:

The purpose of this section is to focus on the questions, concerns and comments on the different aspects of the project that were discussed in the meeting.

The attendees welcomed the team and expressed their happiness regarding this project and the development that it will bring to the area if implemented and several chiefs spoke in favor of development projects and expressed their hope in the project and their willingness to assist in any way needed to make sure the project will be implemented as soon as possible. The attendees also mentioned that discussions for using the Kaiha River for hydropower has been going on for so long and they are hopeful and happy that things are currently moving on towards implementation.

The following questions were raised and discussed during the meeting:

- **Political setup and district divisions:**

The District of Kolahun was recently divided into 3 districts (Kohahun, Lukambeh and Wanhassa). The Kaiha 2 location, previously within Kolahun district, is now within Lukambeh district. The attendees raised a question on how the project will benefit the newly created district.

Jorn Stave (ESIA Team Leader) explained that the original plan of the project was to provide power to the 3 big cities of Voinjama, Kolahun and Foya being the cities with the highest demand. Also, since Kaiha 2 was located within Kolahun district, the project planning tried to provide current to as many towns as possible along the transmission route. At that time, the new districts were not yet created. Currently with the new districts in place and kaiha 2 location becoming part of Lukambeh district, the team will try to check if adjustment can be made to the transmission line while keeping the project feasible.

Jorn explained that the cost of installing transmission lines is very high, and if additional transmission lines are planned, the price of the current will become higher and everyone will have to pay more to receive the current. He also mentioned that the current plan still includes towns and villages from the newly created districts, so these districts are still benefiting from the project to a certain extent and the ESIA team will raise this issue for the engineers to try and include more towns into the plan and keeping the project feasible.

- **Structures, crops, cultural sites and land issues along the transmission line route:**

Questions were raised regarding the procedure that will be in place in case the transmission line crosses structures, coffee/cocoa gardens or other crops.

Jorn Stave (ESIA Team Leader) explained that the transmission line route will be planned along the right of way (ROW) of the road. Usually main roads have a ROW that extends 75 feet from the center of the road in each direction. The exact size of the right of way differ based on the classification of the road and will be confirmed with the Ministry of Public Works. The ROW is usually left clear (no structures or crops should exist) to enable rehabilitation and development along the roads. Usually, structures or crops within the ROW are not entitled for compensations; however, depending on the funding agency of the projects, agreements might be reached and crops might be compensated.

Jorn explained that the implementation of the project will depend on its feasibility, and high resettlement and compensation costs will decrease the feasibility of the project. For this reason, the transmission line route will be selected carefully to avoid crossing structures, which will reduce the cost of resettlement and make the project more feasible. The route will be mainly adjacent to the main road and within its right of way; however, if structures are in close proximity to the main road, the transmission line route might be diverted as much as possible to a location where it does not cross any structure.

If the transmission line crosses a cocoa/ coffee garden or other permanent crops, a portion of the garden might be brushed. Discussions and agreements with the communities will be made to provide a fair compensation that does not reduce the feasibility of the project.

If the line crosses a temporary crop, the towns will be notified ahead of time and the project will wait for the harvest of the crops before using the land.

In this regard, the town chiefs agreed that crops and compensations should not stand in the way of development projects that the area need and will benefit from and they advised that they will be ready to negotiate and make the right decisions and even give away these crops even without compensations because their towns support and are in need for development and will cooperate so that the project can be implemented.

In addition, the attendees confirmed that some traditional sites and women bushes are located in close proximity to the road. During implementation, the contractors should consult with the town chiefs to locate these areas and try to avoid crossing through them; however, the attendees also showed willingness to relocate these sites if needed.

- **Road rehabilitation plans within the project activities:**

The attendees mentioned the bad road condition in the area and asked if the roads will be rehabilitated as part of the project activities.

Jorn Stave (ESIA Team Member) explained that an access road will be created to reach the site and some road rehabilitation activities will be taking place along the transmission line route and on the roads leading to the site, to enable the movement of heavy equipment from and to the site. These activities will be limited to the projects needs belt.

- **Employment opportunities and gender equality during the project construction phase:**

The attendees asked if they will be benefiting from the project during construction phase. They were also concerned regarding gender equality and employment for women.

The team explained that skilled and semi-skilled workers from the local community will be hired where and when possible. They also assured the attendees that gender equality will be met as much as possible if the skills required are available in the women of the communities.