

## 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 18, 2016

**Venue:** Mbaloma Town (Lukambeh District – Lofa County)

### Attendants:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Organization</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Contact</i>
Vannie Karvah		Town Chief	
Augustine Massa	Mbaloma Public School	Principal	0888972033
Borley P. Kollie	Mbaloma Public School	Registrar	
Blama Konneh		elder	
Momo Karvah		Youth Leader	
Vannie Konneh		Elder	
Janneh Konneh		Chair lady	
Armah Tarnue		Elder	
Bendu Sallia		Elder	
Othetlo M. Armah			0880359625
Morris Armah			
Ben Blama			
Bandu Sarma			
Sangay Kamara			
Lansam Konneh			
Hawa Konneh			
Morris Borley			
Sayan Sheriff			
Hawa Tuley			
Jarso Konneh			
Hawa Saylu		Elder	
Himah Konneh		Elder	
Sangay Kutu		Elder	
Watta Kamara		Chair lady	
Vanire J. Marley			0888853022
Blama Kamara			
Vanrie Giafa			
N. Yorvor			
Morris S. Kamara	DDC	Co-Chairman	0886374229
Mbowai Kamara		Elder	
Armah Karvah			
Boakai Konneh			
Allen B. Kamara			
Amos Korfu			
Siafa Kameh			
Bandu Momo		Elder	
Miatha Vannie		Elder	
Kpanna Mamai		Elder	

<i>Name</i>	<i>Organization</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Contact</i>
Mbowai Sando		Elder	
Folley Larsan			
Jomdi Sallee			
Kpana Ngohullo			
Lansana Karva			
Hawa Bonnah			
Sallia Siafa			
Feimatta Sando			
Sarngay Jaupoe			
Kpana Kpehe			
Hawa Konneh			
Jorn Stave	Multiconsult	ESIA Team Leader	0888392613
Abraham Bility	Rural And Renewable Energy Agency (RREA)	Social Development Officer	0886621340
Williette T. Clarke	Earthtime	Administrative Assistant	0880556677 0777399999
Basma Shamas	Earthtime	Environmental Consultant	0888300766

### **Summary:**

A meeting was held between the community members of Mbaloma Town including town chief, youth leader, chairlady and elders 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. They also emphasized that

they will not let this opportunity slip away and they provide all the help they can to ensure the project gets into the implementation phase.

The following questions were raised and discussed during the meeting:

- **Structures, crops, cultural sites and land issues along the transmission line route and the access road to the Kaiha 2 location:**

In addition to the transmission line route, the access road to the Kaiha 2 location will pass through the lands of Mbaloma Town. Land acquisition procedure for the access road will be put in place and agreements will be made with the town authorities to compensate any structure or crop that will be damaged.

The town chief explained that the lands in the town belong to the town's local authorities and that the chiefs distribute the lands to the community members based on requests and needs to be used for houses or agriculture, etc. The land use priority for the areas in close proximity of the town center is for Town development and construction. Lands further away in the bush are mostly used for agriculture.

The access road to Kaiha 2 location will be crossing some farms and crops. The majority of the community members and the town chief confirmed that the necessary lands will be provided by the town to the development of the project's access road with no request for compensation. They elaborated by saying that there are plenty of lands in the town to be used for agriculture and farms can be moved to other lands, but this project is a very important project that the area have been waiting for so long and Mbaloma town is ready to host this project and provide anything that is necessary to the implementation of this project. Only one opposite voice was raised from a community member who insisted on being fully compensated for his cocoa/ coffee crops if they are affected by the project.

With regards to the transmission line route, Jorn Stave (ESIA Team Leader) explained that the 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 addition, the planning will try to avoid any traditional site and during implementation, the contractors should consult with the town chiefs to locate these areas and try to avoid crossing through them.

The attendees and the town chief confirmed again that there will be no problems regarding lands, crops or traditional sites and they are willing to provide any land that is necessary for the implementation of the project.

- **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 and if the project can assist the towns in rehabilitating and opening new access roads.

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.

- **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.

The attendees also suggested that the project help the locals and train them to be able to work on the project during the operation phase as well.

- **What is the expected timeline of the project and when will it start?**

The ESIA Team explained that the environmental assessment for the site is currently being conducted. This phase will take approximately 3 months. Once completed the project owner will be looking for donors to fund the implementation. Few donors expressed interest in funding the project and there is a good chance they will proceed with funding. Once funding is secured the project will start and the construction phase will take approximately 2 years. During these 2 years current will not be

available yet but other benefits like employment opportunities will be available. After the construction phase is completed, the operation phase will start and current will be generated.

The operation phase does not have a specific timeline and the hydropower plant will be operating as long as it is maintained properly.