

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

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

Date: March 15, 2016

Venue: Velezala Town (Voinjama District)

Attendants:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Organization</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Contact</i>
Weedu Callva		Assistant Chair lady	
Kormassa B. Jallah		Chair Lady	0777155553
Ballah D. Kormazu		Town chief	0777155553
Mulbah Jomah		Officer In Charge	0776740051
Joseph F. Jallah		Co-Youth chair	0770941975
Jallah M. Corlvah			
Alfred S. Kessellie	Velezala Clinic	C.H.D.C Chairman	0776086324
Fasu Flomo		Youth	
Ballah Kerkula	Velezala Clinic	GCMV	0776086324
Mulbah S. Kortee		Youth	
Swen Augustine	ACF	Youth Leader	0777830930
Massayam Kormah			077908175
Steph Kollie		Advisor	0776170933
Jefferson		Elder	
Korpo Zayzay		Student	0776379784
Sabah Larla			
Tinu Sow			
Aoron S. Kollie Sr.		CF Chairman	077786740
Othello Jallah		Deputy Town Chief	0777366769
Kpaka M. Jallah		Deputy Quart Chief	
Abraham Bility	Rural and Renewable Energy Agency (RREA)	Social Development Officer	0886621340
Williette T. Clarke	Earthtime	Administrative Assistant	0880556677 0777399999
Jorn Stave	Multiconsult	ESIA Team Leader	0888392613
Basma Shamas	Earthtime	Environmental Consultant	0888300766

Summary:

A meeting was held at Velezala Town (Voinjama district, Lofa County) between some community members including the town chief, assistant town chief, youth leader, chair lady and assistant chair lady, 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 community 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 the community members have on the different aspects of the project.

The community members welcomed the team and expressed their happiness regarding this project and the development that it will bring to the area if implemented.

The following questions were raised and discussed during the meeting:

- **Location of the hydropower plant:**

The community members asked why the kaiha 2 location was chosen for this project and not another location. Jorn Stave ((ESIA Team Leader) explained that 3 locations on the kaiha river were assessed and Kaiha 2 was found to be the most feasible location for the project. The other 2 locations might be developed at later stages through other projects.

- **Is the project only targeting the towns along the main road to provide the current to?**

Jorn Stave (ESIA Team Leader) explained that the main target of the project is to provide current to the 3 big cities of Voinjama, Kolahun and Foya being the cities with the highest demand. The power plant is expected to generate electricity that can cover more towns and that's why the project will try to connect as many towns along the transmission line route (which is mainly along the main road) as possible. The project cannot supply the towns away from the main road because the cost of installing transmission lines to supply these towns is very high and beyond the budget of this project.

- **Will the project be distributing current to government entities like public schools?**

Abraham Bility (RREA Representative) explained that once a transformer is installed to supply the town, anyone in the town can be connected if they apply for it. However, the current will not be supplied for free and the receivers will be paying

for the electricity they will use. The cost of the current would be lower than the cost of electricity generated using fuel oil.

- **Employment opportunities during the project construction phase:**

The community members asked if they will be benefiting from the project during construction phase. The team explained that skilled and semi-skilled workers from the local community will be hired where and when possible.

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

The community members confirmed that they do not have traditional sites along the main road (which will be the main proposed route for transmission line), but they do have some crops that are in close proximity to the road.

They also advised that the lands in the town are managed by the local administration (i.e. Town chiefs) and if the project will cross over a land or a crop that needs to be brushed the local administration should be consulted directly.

The community members showed willingness to provide any necessary land or crop for the project implementation as they are happy to have such development projects in the area.

The ESIA team explained that 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.