**Comms & Engagement Subgroup Meeting, Tuesday 17th April 2024 via Microsoft Teams (11:00 am – 11:45 am)**

**Attendance (6 persons)**

* **Chair**

Tim Vickery - BDO

* **C&E Secretariat**

Hedi Zaghouani- BDO

* **UK EITI Secretariat**

Mike Nash - Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ)

* **Government**

Jeff Asser – DESNZ

* **Industry**

Aurelie Delannoy – Mineral Products Association (MPA)

**Civil Society**

Martyn Gordon - Aberdeen Business School

* **Apologies**

Helmi Ben Rhouma - BDO

**Introduction**

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

**Agenda**

UK EITI Comms & Engagement Comms Strategy

**Updates**

* Limited improvements since the 2021 validation exercise in terms of public debate through engaging public media and publishing data related to O&G, and Mining & Quarrying, in addition to general governance issues. A formal requirement and a gradual orientation towards the energy transition was expected from the new standard, which was not the case, this explains the preparation of the renewables paper that seemed to resonate the most within UK public. Therefore, an engagement is taken to enhance communication regarding the new standard and the changes made as well as the implications on the validation exercise in terms of implied parties, renewables and transition in minerals. However, it is believed that no further action will be taken from the MSG in this regard. In addition, it is senseless to include renewables without figures.
* Facilitate collaboration with local CSO group. It will be great to have 3 or 4 more organisations engaged at the local level. Furthermore, the repositioning of EITI towards energy transition will attract more stakeholders. Local CSOs are largely dominated by academics, which does not gain them much in terms of media coverage.
* Connect our relevance to the priorities and concerns of the UK EITI stakeholders on the effort towards energy transition. The engagement around the new EITI standard offers an opportunity to make the engagement more marketable yielding in the implication of more stakeholders that will try to understand the standards. For this, the efforts of the MSG members are highly recommended in reaching potential audience through invitations to events or direct communication either online or in person.
* The primary priority is to try and engage in a way that the new report is aligned with the new standard’s requirements which seems more efficient than focusing on the public debate because of the lack of viable entry points.
* Concerns around the controversial results of the O&G sector contribution over the past two years. This highlights the lack of interest in the EITI process due to the possible implications of treating such data by media.
* In contrast to public companies like Shell, the UK EITI did not pay any proactive engagement with the media in the UK.
* The O&G upstream sector revenue is highly political now and is not free from tensions, although the UK does not have a history of corruption in this field. On the other hand, it is considered as a ‘niche’ area attracting a very small portion of the public, which requires more efforts to raise consciousness about the importance of the EITI process and publications.
* Possibility of getting the attention of Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce ([link](https://www.agcc.co.uk/)) as they are very focused on the O&G sector since they meet companies on a weekly basis to debate about taxes calculations and work towards increasing investments in the sector as part of their agenda, so they might be interested in EITI.
* The is a hot debate within the industry about taxation and financing issues.
* It is less likely to identify major gaps between companies reporting and government receipts as there are no scandals in this regard. In addition, there is a broad public consciousness towards the importance of migration to renewables, which gives less attraction to data related to the O&G sector.
* The government is still engaged so they are still far from seeing the extractive industries out of the focus of stakeholders at least until 2025.
* More efforts could be made on the promotion of the UK EITI accounts on social media.

**AOB**

* None

**Action points**

* None