**Report from the Communications Officer on the October 22, 2019 GYEITI Outreach in Region Three**

On Tuesday October 22, the Guyana Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (GYEITI) held an outreach at the Regional Democratic Council (RDC) Region Three. The target for the outreach were members of the Region Three chamber of Commerce and residents. However, the RDC invited students from the Leonora Secondary School.

Participants:

* Dr Rudy Jadoopat – National Coordinator
* Diane Barker – Deputy Coordinator
* Nikolai Earle – Communications Officer
* Mrs Jennifer Ferreira-Dougall Region Three Regional Executive Officer
* Dennis Mayers -Region Three Chamber of Commerce General Secretary

The event commenced at 10:00 am with Mrs Ferreira-Dougall delivering welcome remarks on behalf of the Regional Democratic Council Region Three/ she made the point that transparency and accountability were key elements in managing Region Three or any region for that matter. After the REO made her remarks, Mr Mayers delivered welcome remarks on behalf of the Region Three Chamber. During their remarks they both pointed out the need for transparency and accountability not only in the natural resources sector but within the wider society.

Following the opening remarks, Dr Jadoopat spoke on the origins of the EITI and of its importance to the management of the natural resources sector. He then explained what the EITI Report was all about and the road that got the country to where it was. Je spoke on some of the report’s key recommendations and the plans for moving ahead with the implementation of the said recommendations.

Following presentations by Dr Jadoopat and Ms Barker, the floor was opened for questions and a brief interactive session ensued in which a number of issues were raised and for which clarify was provided. The exchange can be characterized as vibrant and questions came from various persons in the audience including high school children and some members of the business community.

To the teachers and students in the audience, the Communications Officer made the suggestion that the topic of transparency in the natural resources sector be further explored at the level of the various schools through such avenues as debating and essay writing competitions. It was further noted that the GYEITI Secretariat will in time be organizing such activities’ to encourage youth involvement in transparency in the natural resources sector.

**Feedback from the Region Three Chamber of Commerce**

Mr Mayers told the GYEITI Communications Officer that while he passed on the notice of the engagement to all of his chamber members, some of them indicated their intention to stay away from the event fearing it to be political in nature and given the recent protest of the President on the West Coast. The Communications Officer said these factors will be taken into consideration when planning future public engagements.

Mrs Ferreira-Dougall thanked the Secretariat for coordinating the event and expressed an interest in having a similar engagement to which she will invite all of her Regional Overseers and other related personnel. The Communications Officer assured that he will be in touch regarding this follow up session.

**Outstanding payment**

The expenses for the rental of chairs and snacks have not yet been paid. The RDC had undertaken to cover these expenses provided they had assurance from us that they would be reimbursed. We furnished a letter from the Permanent Secretary to this effect but I was subsequently informed by Deputy REO Shamir Shahid that the RDC does not have money in its line item budget to cover the expenses as had been arranged hence those expenses remain unpaid. I have asked the Deputy REO to furnish in writing confirmation that the bills were not paid - as he indicated to me by phone – so that the MNR can settle these outstanding payments.

I will be following up this matter.

Nikolai J. Earle

GYEITI Communications Officer