**School engagement report**

As part of the communications and outreach efforts outlined in our work plan, the Guyana EITI Secretariat held a series of school engagement sessions across several secondary schools in Georgetown.

Commencing on January 28, 2025, at the Christ Church Secondary School and the Cyril Potter College of Education, the sessions continued at Saint Stanislaus College, North Ruimveldt Multilateral School, St. Rose’s High School, The Bishop’s High School, Queen’s College, President’s College, and St. Joseph High School.

The main thrust of the presentations was the need for transparency within the extractive sector and how the EITI was assisting countries like Guyana in this process.

Essential to the presentations were the terms Dutch Disease, Natural Resource Curse, Transparency and Accountability, Corruption and many others. The presentations demonstrated the relationship between the management of a country’s natural resources and economic prosperity. EITI is a standard which is the global benchmark for transparency and accountability in the extractive sector.

Dr. Prem Misir, National Coordinator of GYEITI, delivered a PowerPoint presentation to the students at Christ Church Secondary School, the Cyril Potter College of Education, St. Rose’s High School, The Bishop’s High School, Queens College, President’s College, and St. Joseph High School.

During the presentation, Misir explained terms such as Natural Resource Curse, Dutch Disease, corruption, transparency, and accountability. He stressed that transparency is essential for accountability to become a living reality.

Misir noted that corruption includes more than monetary bribery; it also involves abuse of power, like influencing employment decisions unfairly. He discussed how countries with abundant natural resources remain poor despite their wealth. He also addressed the view that the EITI Standard aims to develop good public and corporate governance of the extractive sector.

Public Affairs and Communications Officer within the Guyana EITI Secretariat Johann Earle, who preceded Dr. Misir, explained basic concepts about the extractive sector, transparency, and accountability.

He highlighted the sector's significant role in the economy and quizzed students on the different kinds of extractive resources. Earle emphasized the importance of protecting these resources for future generations.

Earle mentioned that EITI advocates for the idea that a country's natural resources belong to its people and should benefit from them.

While there was no scientific review done to assess how much of the information the students cognitively assimilated, the feedback during the question-and-answer period was encouraging. Students demonstrated that they were able to explain terms with which they only became familiar during the presentations.

Not only was the exercise’s objective to inform students about transparency and accountability in the extractive resources, but also to establish EITI Clubs within those institutions of learning. The goal is to have a model of EITI Clubs successfully implemented in these schools before replicating them in secondary schools across Guyana. Several headmistresses in the above-named schools have indicated their willingness to move the initiative forward. Similarly, several students from each of the schools also indicated their willingness to be part of the clubs.

The Secretariat is currently in the process of liaising with the designated point persons at each school with a view to moving ahead with the establishment of the EITI Clubs. It has been recognized that while the Ministry of Education has granted approval for the project, each of the schools may have different protocols and these are being taken into consideration.

We express our sincere gratitude to the Chief Education Officer, the Deputy Chief Education Officer, (Technical) the head teachers at the schools visited and all others involved in making this project a successful one. We look forward to the establishment of the EITI Clubs, not only in the high schools visited, but also for secondary schools across the country with the support of the Ministry of Education.

February 26, 2025