

# EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES TRANSPARENCY INITIATIVE FOR ALBANIA - EITI ALBANIA

*FINAL*

## COMMUNICATION STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN FOR NOVEMBER 2016 – DECEMBER 2017

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# **1. Introduction and an overview of the requirements for the communication consultant.**

## **1.1. Targeted audience**

Albania is an EITI implementing country since May 2013. EITI Albania has requested the assistance and has contracted a communication expert for designing an EITI communication strategy, for the period November 2016 – December 2017. The strategy will offer an analysis and will take into account all the important stakeholders to the initiative. More respectively, by means of this strategy, EITI Albania seeks to target:

- 1.1.1. The stakeholder groups that are important to EITI program (local communities, local government, state institutions, CSO-s, Extractive operators, journalists, students, researchers, experts of the field, academics);
- 1.1.2. Outreaching channels with the biggest impact;
- 1.1.3. An informed national dialogue and awareness rising on the EITI benefits, implementation process and principles.

## **1.2. Scope of work**

- 1.2.1. Impact assessment of the EITI implementation in the country through:
  - i. A public survey formulated with a set of 20 critical questions about EITI and a sample size of 1000 interviewees;
  - ii. Direct interviews with individuals interrelated to extractive Industry activities;
  - iii. Inquiry on the actual media use of the information provided through the EITI reports and its findings from different stakeholders. On the basis of these inquires will be the EITI communication Plan for 2015 as well as other interrelated activities.
- 1.2.2. Examine the MSG's work plan, in order to gain a clear understanding of the objectives and scope of EITI Albania implementation. The consultant should also review any annual activity reports that have been produced by the MSG, to see the progress made in achieving the objectives and review any actions undertaken by the MSG, to address recommendations from any previous EITI reporting exercises and validations;
- 1.2.3. Review the EITI Standard, EITI Reports and Validation report to gain an understanding of the current scope and state of EITI reporting process in Albania and assess areas where further improvement is needed;

- 1.2.4. Based on the above mentioned, identify the needs for communication in the actual stage of the EITI processes in Albania, taking into account the local context, the findings from the survey, interviews and a reassessment of the groups of interest to be targeted through this strategy.

According to these activities the Consultant shall prepare:

- i. The EITI Albania Communication Strategy 2016-2017;
- ii. The Communication Action Plan 2016-2017;
- iii. Terms of Reference for the “Package for Public Awareness Campaign 2016-2017”.

### **1.3. Objectives of the assignment**

- 1.3.1. Increase public perception and knowledge on revenue transparency and EITI Albania initiative;
- 1.3.2. Provide a regular flow of information to key stakeholders;
- 1.3.3. Identify effective tools and manners of communication to increase public awareness and debate;
- 1.3.4. Enhance media understanding of the EITI Albania as a process contributing to good governance in the extractive sector and the role it has to play in ensuring the success of EITI objectives;
- 1.3.5. Increase collaboration with local media for opinions from the stakeholders of extractive areas;
- 1.3.6. Build awareness of the communities in the extractive areas to the direct relation that the Natural Resources are common wealth and their accountable management contributes directly to the well-being of their families;
- 1.3.7. Education of the new generation with the principles of the good governance of natural resources;
- 1.3.8. Create a platform for a scientific and technical discussion on the characteristics of the petroleum and mining sectors in Albania, of the actual sector challenges and comparative analysis, about the best global practices in the technical, legal and fiscal framework. Such discussion will enable an informed scientific thinking as a strategy or reform basis for the sector.

The communication strategy must contain sections such as:

- i. Goals and objectives to achieve;
- ii. Situation analysis;
- iii. Main findings, key messages per target audiences;
- iv. Budget and implementation of action plan;
- v. To measure if objectives have been met, performance indicators and evaluating measures to be used.

#### **1.4. Requirements for the activity plan**

The Communication Action Plan should include the following activities and with reasonable time lines:

- 1.4.1. Design a simple and “easy digestible” slogan to characterize this stage of EITI implementation in Albania;
- 1.4.2. “Spicy” media findings, to recall interest for the sector and quickly provide information;
- 1.4.3. Print and visual media outreach campaigns. Publish and disseminate crucial information on EITI implementation through TV, radio, print media outreach campaigns, in order to inform the public on the overall extractives industry, EITI implementation and related events;
- 1.4.4. Organization of awareness raising events. Round tables, press conferences, conferences, forums, workshops, activities with civil society in areas where extractive industries operates, seminars and meetings with stakeholders, activities with students of Geology and Mining, organized to increase the overall understanding of the key issues in the management of the extractives sectors.
- 1.4.5. Internet and social media activities. Management of the Albania’s EITI website, Facebook, Twitter, that contains information specifically related to EITI implementation in country, as well as global news and trends on EITI implementation experiences from other countries
- 1.4.6. Education campaigns in schools, in order to induce awareness to the new generation.

## **2. Analysis of the current situation, a public perception assessment with regard to EITI Albania objective and process; analysis through stakeholder lens.**

*How much have we heard of and know about EITI?*

### **2.1 The general public and the communities in the areas of extractive industries.**

The three surveys conducted by EITI Albania (the most recent in September – October 2016) to understand the impact of the EITI in the community, and also the research work performed by the communication expert with citizens in the extractive activity areas, demonstrate that the citizens are almost indifferent to the EITI. In the cases when they have heard about it, they are unclear about the role of EITI, even though it may be to a high interest to them. The most common answer in these cases is: What's in it for me? I want to know how much money I will bring at home!

Therefore, the main findings after a series of surveys and communication activities with communities in extractive areas are of existential nature: direct income and direct damage. For the common citizen the basic need is “how much money will he bring at home today?”, or “does he own a job or not at all? Or “what damage comes to me from the EI operations and nobody is resolving it”? The matters of revenues that the government harvests from the extractive industry and that afterwards will be returned to the community as an investment. hardly can attract their immediate attention. The citizens of these areas are not conscious of this fact, therefore they do not request it, but even when they are conscious, they do not believe that with that money something will be done for them and their families.

Besides the fact that there is no meaningful awareness in these communities that a good governance of the sector and making things transparent will benefit the pockets and lives of each one of them and no one will be threatened by the uncontrolled extractive operations, - the surveys show clearly a lack of vision and education of the new generation. The youth are not aware of the fact that Natural resources are a national wealth, and they belong to all its citizens. All should therefore have the right to know how this common wealth is managed.

**2.2. The central government** (Ministry of Energy and Industry, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Justice, General Directory of Taxation, Albanian Geological Survey, National Agency of Natural Resources, Energy Regulator Authority - ERE).

## **A transparent and open government enhances its citizens' trust.**

By adopting an **internationally recognized transparency standard**, governments perform in an improved investment climate by providing a clear signal to investors and international financial institutions that the government is committed to **greater transparency, commitment to reform and anti-corruption** in a volatile sector.

Implementing the EITI Standard improves **government systems** and can lead to improved tax collection and budgetary plannings.

EITI also assists in strengthening **accountability** and **good governance**, as well as promoting greater **economic and political stability**. This, in turn, can contribute to the prevention of conflict based around the oil, mining and gas sectors.

According to research of the EITI process and discussions with EITI representatives we notice an increase in commitment and response rate by the government agencies that are part of the EITI reporting process. This shows a better understanding of the EITI reporting process, as well as an increased acceptance to provide with information that used to be confidential and hermetic a few years before. The most neuralgic agencies with regard to information supply are AKBN, along with General Tax and Customs Agencies. In the time span of 2014 – 2016, these agencies have significantly improved the delivery, speed and quantity of information for the EITI reporting, although there is still a lot of effort needed for making this process sustainable. Still, there is no automatic information generation from government agencies and let alone reconciliation.

What is interesting from the conversations with officials in these agencies, especially this pronounced in AKBN and in the Ministry of Energy and Industry, is the request to expand the range of the EITI reporting and mandate beyond the requirements of the EITI standard. Minister of Ministry of Energy and Industry mr. Damian Gjiknuri, at the EITI Conference in Peru, emphasized the importance of defining the Beneficial Owners (a request for the 2015 reporting). A “transparency making agency” delivers the expectation that the “organization” should have all the tools and mandate to resolve every issue brought forth by the process and that covers: process audit, “big” findings or “big” infringements, – roles which are not covered by EITI mandate and standard.

The role of EITI in the country may of course be adopted and expanded beyond the standard, in accordance with the national priorities in the framework of good sector governance, national transparency and anti-corruption strategies.

In the framework of the communication strategy of 2016-2017, it is of a significant importance that the stakeholders gather in round tables and brainstorm in relation to these expectations and decide the direction to expand the mandate of EITI.



This will potentially require legal/regulatory revisions, but it is of crucial importance to strategically identify the needs and expectations for a comprehensive EITI process.

### **2.3. The local government (with special focus in the areas with extractive industry operations)**

It is worth mentioning that the communities in the extractive industry areas, are the ones to benefit more from the exploitation of the natural resources. There is law on National Taxes that governs the royalty distribution to the LGU-s in the extractive areas. The EITI reports indicate that right has been poorly exercised, but for Patos Municipality. The EITI report for 2013-2014, page 81, section "2.5. Local Transfers", states that "The collected royalty from the sales of petroleum, gas and of the minerals is recorded in the state budget. According to the Law on National Taxes no. 9975, date 28 July 2008 - revised, a portion of the royalty will be transferred to every local government unit "LGU", in proportion to their contribution, in the production and sale of the minerals. Until November 2014, the Law on National Taxes has demanded that 25% of the royalty fee to be transferred to every Local Government Unit ("LGU"), in proportion to their contribution and in the framework of the provisions of the annual budget law.

In 2013, the annual budget law limited royalty transfer to 50% of the unconditional grant. On such terms, LGU-s could benefit, if their portion of royalty (calculated as 25% of royalty generated in their area) amounted above the unconditional transfer calculated in accordance with the annual budget law, from 101% up to 150% of the unconditional grant. Under this condition, the portion of royalty transferable could vary from 1% to 50% of the unconditional grant. In 2014 the transferable portion of royalty generated from the mining sector was increased up to 80% of the unconditional grant. Due to impact of the annual budget formula, royalty transfers could be not in proportion with each LGU contribution.

**The Ministry of Finance reported that sub-national royalty payment amounted at Lek 101 million in 2013 and Lek 120 million in 2014. These transfers were made to oil producing districts only, where 35% of total royalty transfers went to Municipality of Patos in both years.**

Transfers of royalty made to oil producing LGU-s comprised 1.2% of royalty generated by the oil sector in 2013. This ratio increased to 1.5% in 2014. The Ministry of Finance reported no royalty transfers made out of royalty, generated by the mining and quarry sector.

In the petroleum production, the transfers of the mine rent to the LGE-s, constitute around 1.2% of the mine rent, generated by the petroleum sector in the year 2013. **The Ministry of Finance reported that no transfers, of the mine rent, have been made in the areas of production of the mine sector.**

*The above paragraph shows clearly a lost opportunity for more public investments and improvements in the quality of life and well-being of the community.*

There is a very pronounced need to talk to the people and raise awareness in these communities and to the local government officials. They can raise their budget through the collection of the royalty and thus ambitious develop projects for public investments in the support of the community.

These matters are of paramount importance for the development of the public debate.

## **2.4. Extractive industry operators**

### **What does an investor seek in a country?**

- Stability,
- Certainty
- Clarity of country tax rules and procedures.

Benefit from a **level playing field** in which all companies are required to disclose the same information.

Benefit from mitigating political and reputational risks. Political instability caused by opaque governance is a clear threat to investments. In extractive industries, where investments are **capital intensive** and **dependent on long-term stability** to generate returns, reducing such instability is beneficial for business.

Transparency of payments made to a government can also help to demonstrate the contribution that their investment makes to a country enables a **better engage with citizens and civil society**.

The analysis of the EITI processes in Albania, as well as direct interviews with investors indicate a good acceptance of the implementation of EITI in Albania by the reporting operators. The smaller the reporting operator, the bigger is the reluctance of the operator to participate in the process. In the majority of cases this has been generated as a result of the lack technical capacity to issue the financial reporting. The human resources engaged by these operators are in a minimal numbers and lacking proper training. Some representatives of these operators see the EITI reporting as an “additional burden” and not just few of them, as a double job referring to their annual reporting process of their financial statements. This indicates the strong need for shaping the understanding of the process from the EITI operators, its benefits along with capacity building activities for their personnel. The EITI reporting process should

enable training and capacity building opportunities for the EITI operator's personnel. Down the road, by smoothing down capacity limitations, the EITI reporting process should be seen not as an extra burden that government poses to operators but as an added value to their company through which they will get the acceptance and the social license from the communities in the areas they work in. These are important factors for building a positive image in the community.

## **2.5 The Civil Society Organization (CSOs with focus in the extractive industry and related issues such as transparency, accountability, environment, etc.);**

It is clear that an EITI report can't be read or understood by everyone. Although the objective of an EITI report is to be easily readable by every common citizen, this is quite unlikely, due to the voluminous report (even though there is a pocket summary of it) as well as technical. The report must be read, understood and analyzed by field experts, economic journalists and the civil society that is engaged in this process, in an attempt to understand what goes right and what goes wrong with this industry and with its contribution in the economy of the country. These are the target groups who should translate the findings of the report into findings for the public in a digestible format of information and issues for attention.

Therefore, the experts of the industry and economy are the ones capable producing the analysis. And the most interesting findings (being them positive or negative) have a chance to become news (which again, may not be understood or be of a high interest to everyone that receives it).

The scope of the civil society is the identification of the issues and factors that have impact on the life of the communities and the environment. Regardless the high number of the CSO-s operating in Albania, they rarely employ full time field experts, neither do they own the proper finances and media access to evoke and advocate an issue completely. In the recent years, we are increasingly noticing a wide citizen's mobilization/movement; mainly triggered by the CSO-s on several delicate issues such as the "chemical weapons", the "play-park at Tirana lake park" and the "law on the import of wastes". The movements have been characterized by intensive awareness raising campaigns through massive social media usage and have escalated into massive protests. These protests and reactions have resulted successful in participation (but also in the reactions of the government; such was that of the Prime Minister E. Rama about the decision on chemical weapons), much more because of their sensitive nature, hot blood' as well as politics.

The biggest media reaction, in regard to the extractive industries operations in the recent 3 years, have been the blast events on the wells of Bankers Petroleum in Patos-Marinza oil field. In that event, aside from the protests by immediate damaged residents leaving the area, there has not been any serious involvement/organization from the Civil Society. This clearly demonstrates lack of presence and engagement from the CSO-s. It is worth mentioning here that a matter which requires reaction and that emanates from an area outside of Tirana, does not sufficiently entice the civil society localized in Tirana. Currently there is an active movement in the media and social network, demanding the annulment of concessions of the HEC-s in Valbona, with slogan “Don’t touch my Valbona”. In this case the sensibility is high, given that Valbona is a very important touristic destination for the Albanians as well as foreign tourists.

**2.5.a. A deeper analyses on the Civil Society dimension in the country; Organizational capability; financial sustainability; Advocacy;** (In 2015, the number of CSOs has increased by 489 newly registered organizations in the District Court of Tirana in 2015)

Extracted from: THE 2015 CSO SUSTAINABILITY INDEX FOR CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE AND EURASIA: ALBANIA (product of IDM and USAID)

### *Organizational Capabilities*

The organizational capacity of CSOs did not change in 2015. CSOs continued to expand their constituencies by using information and communications technologies (ICTs) and social media like Facebook and Twitter to communicate their work to stakeholders and advocate for their causes with government and donors. However, most of these activities remain sporadic, project based, and limited to social media users. While the number of social media users is increasing, they tend not to include some target groups, such as Roma, women in rural areas, and older populations. CSOs seek to define clear missions and utilize strategic planning. However, internal management systems, mission statements, and other areas of governance often fail to address such issues as long-term monitoring and evaluation and adherence to mission in programs and projects. CSOs continue to remain largely dependent on donor agendas and objectives. Executive directors and board members of CSOs continue to have overlapping responsibilities. Very few boards actively engage in governance or monitor the accountability of their organizations. The activity of board members is generally not transparent. CSOs typically rely on project-based staff. Only a few organizations based in the capital, have permanent staff. High levels of staff turnover and a lack of human resource planning, remain challenges. CSOs engage volunteers

on an Ad Hoc basis. According to the 2015 World Giving Index, the level of volunteerism remained stable, with 9 percent of respondents in Albania reporting that they participated in voluntary action in both 2013 and 2014. CSOs increasingly advocate for institutional funding that would enable them to improve their strategic planning capacities and staff development. Currently, a handful of think tanks, benefit from institutional grants from the Open Society Institute Think Tank Fund. Internet access is widespread in the country and CSOs increasingly use ICTs and free online platforms in their daily work, for example, to produce webinars.

#### *Financial Sustainability:*

CSOs primarily rely on grants from foreign donors or the government. Although accurate and comprehensive data is not available, the level of donor funding to CSOs did not change notably in 2015. ASCS remains the main source of government funding to the sector. ASCS' funding levels have remained largely stable since 2009. In 2015, ASCS issued two calls for proposals, awarding fifty-nine grants ranging from 500,000 ALL (about €3,500) to 3,500,000 ALL (about €25,000). The call aimed to strengthen the capacities of CSOs, with a focus on CSOs that are newly established, managed by young people, and located in rural areas of the country. Central and local government units, rarely contract with CSOs to provide social services. The financial viability of CSOs improved during 2015, as many donors encouraged their partners to re-grant funds to smaller and grassroots organizations. During 2015, the EU Delegation to Albania launched two calls for proposals targeting CSOs under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) and the Civil Society Facility/Civic Initiative and Capacity Building programs. Grantees were requested to redistribute at least 70 percent of the value of their contracts as small grants to support local organizations, initiatives, and projects. These programs are expected to improve the organizational capacity and increase the activity of remote grassroots organizations, youth, and activists. Other donors such as the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) began similar re-granting programs in 2015. The 2015 World Giving Index showed a significant increase in donations in Albania, with 27 percent of respondents reporting that they donated to charities in 2014, up from 17 percent in 2013. Despite this increase, the level of individual and corporate donations remains very low according to research conducted by Partners Albania in 2015. Financial support from the private sector continues to be sporadic and limited. In-kind donations are more frequent than monetary donations. Such donations mainly go towards education, marginalized groups (including children and the elderly), and relief for natural disasters. The number of CSOs engaging in economic activity remains very limited. The lack of a legal framework to regulate volunteerism and social enterprises limits CSOs' efforts to diversify their

funding bases. A very small number of CSOs have financial management systems, and only a few of them, publish annual financial reports. Upon donor request, individual projects are subject to independent audit.

#### *Advocacy:*

Despite CSOs' involvement in many advocacy initiatives during the year, Albanian CSOs' advocacy and lobbying capacities did not change noticeably in 2015. Though CSO engagement in consultations with government and the parliament are more institutionalized as a result of new laws and institutional structures, including the NCCS, it is too early to assess the impact of these new mechanisms. Most advocacy campaigns still take place in the capital, while local CSOs seldom organize advocacy campaigns in rural areas and remote communities. Civil society remained engaged in the process of Albania's bid to join the EU. In May 2015, the National Council for European Integration was established with the aim of promoting and guaranteeing inclusiveness in the EU-related reform process. Civil society representatives participated in all three of the Council's meetings in 2015, but as the EU 2015 Progress Report for Albania notes, they have yet to take an active role. In June 2015, Law No. 146/2014 on "Notification and Public Consultation" came into effect. The law specifies procedural rules and obligations of public authorities to ensure transparency and democratic participation in policy and decision-making processes. The law also foresees the establishment of an electronic registry whereby all draft legal acts will be published, thereby providing all stakeholders with the opportunity to provide feedback. In October 2015, the decision of the Council of Ministers to create the electronic registry on "Notifications and Public Consultations" was approved, although no timeline was established for completing this process. Environmental groups and CSO coalitions, continued their advocacy efforts in 2015. In November, following long-term advocacy efforts by environmental CSOs, the government approved the Draft Law for the "Management of the National Forestry and Pasture Fund in the Republic of Albania", which stipulates a ten year moratorium on logging in the forests. In July, the Protecting Rivers group, consisting of seven environmental CSOs, requested a moratorium on the construction of hydropower plants in Albania. This initiative has not yet proven successful. In April 2015, the parliament adopted amendments to the Electoral Code to increase the representation of women in local decision making as initially proposed by the Alliance of Women Members of Parliament (MPs). Following advocacy by such CSOs as the Women's Network for Equality in Decision Making, Gender Alliance for Development Center, Albanian Community Center, and Albanian Coalition for Promotion of Women, Youth and Minorities in Politics, a 50 percent gender quota for women's representation in the electoral lists for counselors was imposed prior to the local elections held in June 2015. Civil society at the national level was consulted on

Law No. 119/2015 on the “Establishment and Functioning of the National Council for Civil Society” and on the “Road Map for Albanian Government Policy” towards Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development. Civil society’s concerns during these consultations were mostly focused on the NCCS’ autonomy. Civil society also participated in a series of public consultation meetings on the draft Law on Volunteerism in 2015.

## **2.6. The decision making and supervision work-group for EITI Albania (MSG)**

MSG is the second pillar of the implementation of EITI. It is represented by:

1. Mr. Iliri Bejtja – Chairman of MSG, V.M. of Ministry of Energy and Industry

*Representatives of the Albanian Government:*

2. Mr. Dritan Spahiu - Ministry of Energy and Industry
3. Sajmir Laçej – Ministry of Finance
4. Ms. Elda Spasse – Ministry of Justice
5. Mr. Borjana Shaka – General Directory of Taxation
6. Mr. Nikoll Kaza – Albanian Geological Survey
7. Mr. Azbi Arapi – NANR

*Civil Society Organization Representatives:*

8. Mr. Sami Neza – Center for Transparency and Free Information
9. Mr. Ilir Aliaj – Center for Development and Democratization of Institutions
10. Ms. Anila Hajnaj – Center for Development and Integration
11. Mr. Baki Bajraktari – Miners Syndicate Bulqizë
12. Awaiting confirmation of the member – Civil Society

*Representatives from the Extractive Industry Operators*

13. Mr. Adriatik Golemi - Bankers Petroleum Ltd
14. Mr. Saimir Boka – Albchrome
15. Mr. Pëparim Alikaj – FIAA
16. Mr. Dritan Dervishaj – Antea cement

*Permanent Contributors to the EITI Processes*

17. Mr. Mehmet Hasalami Ministry of Energy and Industry

- |                          |                              |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| 18. Ms. Nevila Spahiu    | General Directory of Customs |
| 19. Ms. Mimoza Shema     | General Directory of Customs |
| 20. Ms. Entela Muha      | Ministry of Justice          |
| 21. Ms. Laura Çela       | BANKERS PETROLEUM Ltd        |
| 22. Ms. Erjola Sadushi   | Energy Regulator Authority   |
| 23. Ms. Raimonda Islamaj | Energy Regulator Authority   |
| 24. Mr. Anda Beluli      | PETROMANAS Albania GmbH      |
| 25. Mr. Bilal Koçi       | Albanian Geological Survey   |
| 26. Mr. Sokol Mati       |                              |

In the MSG, CSO-s have an essential role, for the reason that they must bring the speech of the community and highlight the major problems. At this point, a genuine analysis should be done and an entire work plan should be drafted, in order to increase the CSO-s involvement, not limited only to those that are part of MSG. In fact the CSO's of MSG can be a catalyzing factor in increasing the involvement and the role of the other national and local CSOs, which are not at the MSG.

One of the main pillars of this strategy should be the increased mobilization of the CSO-s that are part of MSG, in order to bring new inputs from other CSOs: inputs in expertise, new thoughts, matters, etc, all of them aiming a broader network.

The questions we raise are:

1. Are these CSO-s, part of a bigger network with focusing at extractive industry, environment, transparency, social well-fare? If yes, which are the other members of this network? How many of them are local (from the active extractive areas)? How many of them are national? How many of them are members of CSO-s or international networks that may be also members of EITI international?
2. What are the most emergent necessities of the CSO-s, with focus in the extractive industry?
3. Which are the complaints of the CSO-s towards the central and local government?
4. Which may be the potential donors and fund resources to these CSO-s?

After we have clearly taken the answers to the questions raised above, which may be argued in a purpose-built round-table, organized no longer than the beginning of 2017, then a proper activity and communication strategy may be reformulated for this part of significant importance to the process of EITI and the transparency in the country.



## 2.7. Politics and Journalism/Media

The analysis of the so far behaviour of the groups of interest, reports a relative absence of the politicians and of the journalism in general, in the stage of the proper discussions about the good governance of natural resources and the transparency.

Despite the direct efforts from the previews communication campaigns, that have tried to get the attention of the media and of the politicians, the interest of the media and journalistic analysis have been of a poor level.

Even if the questions formulated from politics or journalism are relevant to the albanian context, there is no sufficient discussion or analysis of the data which give answers to the raised questions or give more evidence of how the so far published data could bring to life proper political changes, or how this initiative is influencing in the resolution of the so far hermetic cases.

It is also to be emphasised that recent years' trend is not tradicional media anymore but the social one. The social media must take an important part in a communication strategy. In our days, the news flow firstly from the social media. The politicians use their profiles on the social networks for press releases and to formulate their opinions, which is afterwards cited on the traditional mediums of communication (TV, Radio, printed press). The news today is being read in the electronic media and the social one. Opinions are articulated through blogs or portals rather than through articles in the printed media. Advertisements also are more frequent in the electronic mediums. These mediums must be a strong point in the EITI communication strategy for 2016 – 2017.

2017, is a year of elections. It often happens that in such time, the voice of the citizens becomes stronger in the media. Some of these medias use their voice as “complaints” to the government, while some others promote government investments through it, in which could be also included those investments affecting the extractive industry. In this period, it may also happen to have news and reactions in social media about matters that affect the extractive industry and the communities of active areas. This may be considered as a very good period for public and media debates.

*Note: In the case of political rotation, could it happen that this strategy would get interrupted?! Changed?! – Risk*

EITI Albania should strengthen its relations with the journalists and media gate keepers, by building a systematic relationship through regular meetings and informing sessions, as well as train them on how to read and understand EITI reports. The local media

should be part of this relationship, especially the media in active areas/cities of extractive industry.

## **2.8. Students (Mining Geology, Journalism, Finance, Economics)**

One of the interest groups to be considered in this communication strategy, are also students:

- ✓ Students of geology and mining; related to the future of the extractive industry;
- ✓ Students of journalism; related to the news from the extractive industry and the communities of tomorrow;
- ✓ Students of finance, accountability and economics; related to the numbers of “the tomorrow” and to the economy of the country, that will be influenced by the extractive industry.

Students should be systematically informed about EITI reports, the trends of the industry, matters of the community, the numbers of the industry and the impact it has in our economy. This group of interest must be invited and be part of all the public debates, seminars, round-tables of the industry and those of EITI, etc.

## **2.9. Technical experts and the law-makers of the extractive industry**

By being a country rich in natural resources and with a long experience in exploring, producing and trading, the industry has a considerable number of experts of all the types of resources. The industry has experts of the laws that regulate the discovery, exploitation and trading of these resources. EITI should have an informative and awareness-raising approach also to this category of significant value, the proposals and opinions of which may be essential for the growth of the transparency, management and good-governance of this industry.

**3. The communication strategy and the action plan for the period November 2016 – December 2017, proposed by the communication consultant based on the analyses and findings during his assessment and in full reference to the requirements of the communication strategy ToR's, prepared by EITI Albania.**

Only few months remain to the end of 2016, nevertheless in the end of this year (December), EITI will publish its most important element, the 2015 Report. The communication strategy and the action plan are required to be implemented by an agency. Each agency will have to go through a tendering process that requires a considerable amount of time, which is foreseen to be not less than a month. In fact, some of the activities of the action plan can also be carried out by EITI and its responsible staff for the PR and communication. This may help using time in an efficient manner.

A suggestion in the framework of this strategy is that EITI Albania ought to see the possibility for the extension of the communication staff into a proper Communication Department. If this is not possible, then EITI Albania might consider hiring an external consultant (even part time).

Taking into account the activity of EITI Albania along the years; its primary product, “the reports”, its main mission “transparency”, and its final purpose “good-governance”, it is suggested that the tagline of this strategy should be:

“Transparency, for a rich future and a well-governed development”

It is suggested to distribute in order to fill in the questionnaire, in the annex 2 of this strategy, to as many as possible citizens, by sharing it also through Facebook, during October and November 2016.

The same questionnaire can be distributed in January – February 2018, which is after the end of the implementation of this strategy.

**3.1. The strategic proposals for communication and message delivery to the interest groups, in conjunction also with the respective activities:**

**3.1. a. Journalists - Media**

One of the weakest points of EITI is the lack of a close and systematic relationship with the media/journalists, which are indispensable in the promotion of the upcoming report and its findings. Due to this fact and knowing that the most important

upcoming activity is the publication of the report, the first group of interest which needs a strategic planning and communication is media and journalists. So, right away the approval of this communication strategy, the staff of EITI should:

1. Compile a list of the economic and social journalists, as well of the chief editors and directors of information to whom these journalists work. This list must contain at least the most important media in the country, but also the local ones in the active areas in extractive industry. The list can be compiled with the help of the Ministry spokesman and the EITI club of journalists, founded some years ago.

*What is to be done with this list?*

Journalists must be invited (Caution! Not by the Ministry of Energy and Industry staff, but by EITI Albania) to spend a considerable amount of time with representatives of EITI, with its board (MSG) and experts of the industry. Ideally, the meeting with them must be held in an formal and informal format. Therefore it is suggested to invite them for a half weekend outside Tirana. Through an entertaining journey and an informative and training meeting, you will try to achieve as below:

- **Building a relationship with the media and journalists**, which will have to be held with periodic meetings and not only when EITI has something important to communicate, such as the 2015 Report. Meetings must be in group format, not less than every 2-3 months and in individual format with the most important Medias. Other meetings along the year must have the same format, a semi-formal one, such as for example: “breakfast or brunch with the journalists”.
- **Preparation of the terrain for a proper promotion** of the 2015 Report, in order to secure, that after its publication and the Press Conference for the 2015 Report, news will be produced to make place in the daily, weekly or monthly agenda of the media, through news chronicles, TV show debates, analytic articles in the daily press or in the electronic media.
- Being aware that the reports of EITI are considerably long and technical and that the professional formation of the journalists, including those of economics, is not in the desired level to make proper and quick analysis, the purpose of this presentation and first-meeting will be: **Introducing EITI, its standards, its process, as well as orientation, in the form of a mini-training on “how to read the report”**.
- **Close acquaintance**, (to understand more about their personality), since you will have a fair amount of time in disposition, in the case of a “weekend with them”.

- **Their entertainment**, aiming their motivation in order to stimulate them for being active and useful to the promotion of the EITI's work.

*The major risk of this format will be, not being able to secure availability of all the journalists in the same date. This risk can be lowered through early planning and two-weeks in advance notification, as well as being sure that on the date of the trip it will not be any important issue/news of the political or economic agenda. In most of the cases, journalists cover many fields or works, which makes this process a little difficult. Journalists should be invited through an electronic or a "hard copy" invitation associated with the trip agenda.*

- Ideally and if allowable, the report should be in disposal during the training, so before publishing it in a press conference. This will give them time to read it.

**Important:** Until this trip, apart from the report, EITI should prepare the "press kit" with all the necessary leaflets and other important information for them that EITI wants to share. EITI may consider preparing "give away" gifts for participants, such as a branded USB, quality branded pens, branded agendas, etc., depending on the budget that will be allocated for expenditures.

**A sample agenda of this journey (November or the beginning of December 2016):**

1<sup>st</sup> day:

Departure (depending on the destination):

Arrival: 6 P.M

Dinner: 8 - 9 P.M, and after that, free time

2<sup>nd</sup> day:

Breakfast: 8-9 am

Meeting: 9:30 – 11:00 AM, themed – Introducing EITI

Coffee break: 11:00 – 11:15

Resumption of the meeting: 11:15 – 13:00 – EITI 2015 Report, including questions and discussions

13:00 – 14:00 – lunch

14:30: Departure for Tirana

**Destinations proposals:** Durrës, Vlorë, Sarandë, Pogradec, Voskopojë, Ohër, Mal i zi, Korfuz

A similar format must be organized also in November 2017

*Period: end of November – the middle of December 2016*

### **3.1.b. The Civil Society Organizations**

This is another important target group for the transparency, public awareness raising, and delivering information and for the development of the public debate. It may be said that CSOs should be approached in a similar way as the media at this strategy. The difference here is that CSOs are supposed be better informed about the industry, the community issues, and have experts in their compound.

The civil society organizations can be invited, mobilized and organized by the CSO-s in the board of the MSG. The latest must immediately make a list of the CSO-s with focus on the: extractive industry, transparency, environment, eco-systems, economic and social development, good-governance, etc.

The format proposed to communicate with this target group, and inform it about the EITI and the 2015 report is “round-table/for debate and brainstorming”.

This table is suggested to be held no later than 3-5 weeks from the publication of the 2015 report, which is around the middle or end of January (depending when will the press conference of the 2015 report will be set).

It would be also attractive for this target group to organize the table outside of Tirana, for example in Durrës (no further than there).

*The proposed agenda:*

- 09:30 – welcome coffee and registration (check list)
- 10:00 – 11:30 – presentation of EITI and Report of 2015
- 11:30 – 11:45 – break
- 11:45 – 13:30 – discussions, debates and brainstorming

This table must be moderated by a representative from a CSO at MSG.

*To be prepared for this activity:*

- Banner for the activity
- Bundles containing necessary materials: flyers of EITI, other relevant materials
- Give Away-s
- Power point presentation
- To have cameraman, media (or at least journalists) and a photographer

This should be one of the two activities (the other will be introduced later at this strategy) where the CSO-s will be invited to get informed about EITI and its reports. After these activities, it is expected that the CSO-s will reflect, analyze and react if they find issues.

### **3.1.c. Extractive Industry Operators**

These are one of the most important groups of interest. It is them who exploit the natural resources and their success or failure is a direct factor for the economy of our country, as well as the development of the community. Since a few years, by legal obligation they have to exclusively report also to the EITI, apart from the reporting they have to make to the other state financial institutions. After all these years of experience in the market and reporting to EITI they assuredly are aware about the importance of this transparency. In the EITI reports, apart from the financial data, there are also noted comments in relation to the figures. A good portion of these comments reflect “confusions” during the reporting process. To mention a few from the 2014-2015 report: “Payments are incorrectly classified as fines; “the operator reported payments for social and health security, which is not part of this report”; “moreover some fine payments were reported by the operator as VAT and were corrected”; “payments carried out to the customs office and not to the tax office”, etc., including also “the tax office did not report on this subject”.

Considering the reporting process to EITI still novel and taking into consideration that every year new demands may add up in the reporting format to the operators as well as to other state financial institutions involved in the process, this communication strategy suggests that along all the period, EITI should continue to provide seminars and trainings for the “EITI reporting process”.

Besides these, EITI should inform and educate, as many as possible employees of the operators and state institutions (financial institutions, central and local government, labor offices, etc) involved in the process, about the importance of reporting in increasing the transparency and the industry management.

The participation of an operator in the EITI reporting process means assurance of transparency for the citizen of the active areas, credibility growth for the operator and a better image of the operator in the community. A well-informed employee about the reporting process may result in an ambassador of his company and of the community where he/she lives.

It is suggested that besides the continuation of seminars, EITI should organize regional tables (by grouping types of operators and their areas), to “hear” their problems, challenges, suggestions for changes in the legislation and market regulations, etc.

These tables may be organized beginning in January and then in March, May and September 2017 also in cooperation with NANR, field experts (depending on the type of natural resource) and the Line Ministry.

### **3.1.d. Students (mining geology, journalism, finance, economics)**

With the 4 groups of students and the help of student clubs and professors of the faculties it is suggested to organize:

1. Open seminars in the faculties, with students of all 4 branches. In these seminars will be presented EITI and its reports throughout the years, along with the summaries of findings, designed specifically after each branch. These may be organized in November 2016 (mining geology) and April 2017. Apart from EITI representatives, may also be invited as “guest speakers”, representatives of the biggest operators in the country.
2. With mining geology and journalism branches students, “Field trips” may be organized in some selected operators.

From time to time, EITI can place posters in these faculties informing about upcoming events and invite them to participate in different round tables, meetings and conferences.

### **3.1. e. The communities of the active areas in extractive industry**

Research done with the residents of these areas, shows lack of information regarding the operators that exploit the natural resources. The community has almost no knowledge about the contribution that the exploitation of this national resource (as a consequence, of the citizens) brings to the community they live in.

The fact that the royalty has not cashed in their municipalities for almost years (excluding Patos municipality), brings the need of informing and making aware these communities over their legal rights and the influence of the absence of this budget in the development of the community. Royalties can form a budget that could bring a better quality of life, if allocated for public investments.

*Messages are suggested to be transmitted by means of a campaign through:*

- Local media;



- Posters in the city, displayed in places like: municipality offices, schools, markets and local coffeehouses.

The message will be articulated around themes such as: “the natural resources of my city are wealth of the citizen” & “the royalty is useful for public investments in our community”.

Other messages that can be transmitted, are those by the operators of the area themselves, such could be for example: “Albchrome, has employed xxx heads of household”, “The revenue in the economy of the country, from the extractive industry is xxx per year”.

The campaigns may be designed in a “co-branded” EITI – operator manner. This way the operator becomes a co financer of the campaigns.

In the local media of the extractive industry areas, funds must be allocated for advertisings and PR throughout all the year. The communication campaign in these media can as well be co-financed between “EITI – Operator”

In these communities, other educative and informative activities must be undertaken, with focus to city schools. Open seminars (after school time) may be useful for the presentation of EITI, the reports it produces, the importance of the royalty to the municipality and the community, etc.

Likewise, once a year, in every city with active extractive industry an informative seminar may be organized for the citizens, announced in advance in the local media or by means of the posters in the city. This seminar may be also organized in cooperation with the operators and the respective municipality, where the latest can make transparency of the situation of the industry, or also of the profited or not profited funds from the royalty.

*In conclusion, the scope of the message transmission in these cities must be: education, information, public awareness-raise and transparency.*

### **3.1. f. The broad public**

In 2015, EITI produced a 45 sec long television spot and transmitted it in some national channels and some local ones (in the cities with extractive activity). This ‘graphically’ realized spot), aside from demonstrating what EITI does, it conducted the message of the importance of the transparency for the management of the natural resources of our country and reminded us that the revenues from these resources, must be returned to the community in the form of public investments. It is a fact that this spot contained too many messages for an

“not sensitive” to the sector audience and was overly rapid on the attempt to keep it up to 45 sec, as otherwise it would have to be paid more for its transmission. It is also a fact that the spot was broadcasted for a short period, with a media-plan that did not assure sufficient visibility and that in comparison to a daily consumer product/service television spot, it is less attractive to pay attention to and difficult to be comprehended . Another disadvantage of this spot was the fact that it did not contain voice over text but only graphics and music. Nevertheless, even in the case of a “maximal comprehensiveness” of the message from this spot, the broad public would not be that interested about EITI and its reports, which means we wouldn’t be able to induce an interest to the citizens.

Certainly in the last year’s strategy, there were other elements of communication, like: web banners, conversations with the EITI director in some radio and television broadcasts, an article on the Monitor Magazine, launching of EITI-s Facebook page (currently has 1160 likes) etc., all those insufficient for increasing the visibility of EITI, for the understanding of its process and importance to “a better managed extractive industry”. A weak point of last year’s campaign has also been the low budget available (approximately 24.000 \$).

Hence, in the 2016 – 2017 communication strategy will be necessary the initiation of advertising campaigns and the continuous presence in the media, to increase public perception and awareness of EITI Albania, and to educate make more aware the public opinion through delivering messages such as “The natural resources of our country are national wealth” and “The revenues from extractive industry help the economy of the country and the development of the communities through public investments”.

The creation of an attached and systematic relationship with the media and journalists from the beginning of the implementation of this strategy, by their constant updating, inclusion and invitation to participate in every activity organized by EITI, it is expected to be reflected in a higher visibility, through news chronicles, program organization in different media and gradually in the “raising of a public debate”.

As a cause of the modest budget of EITI Albania for the realization of this communication strategy, the purchase of sufficient advertising space may not be possible. For the preparation and transmission of television and radio spots, if EITI Albania agrees, the “co-branded” EITI – Operator campaigns may be proposed to some of the biggest operators in the industry. The production and

transmission of educative and awareness-raising spots may be subject of this cooperation.

For a stable and systematic message, it is suggested that these campaigns be present throughout all the extent of the communication strategy, beginning from December 2016- December 2017. It is suggested that the visibility and presence of these messages to be as much as possible, in the following medias:

- Televisions: TVSH, Top Channel, Klan TV, Vizion+, News 24, Top News, A1 Report, TV Scan.
- Local TV-s: Bulqize (TV Bulqiza), Fier (TV AVN, TV Kombi, TV apollon, TV Jug), Pogradec (TV Sot 7), Korce (TV lobi, TV Magic), Berat/Kucove (TV Berati, onufri TV, Glob TV), Kukes (TV kukesi), Burrel (TV Mati), Elbasan (TV Skampa, TV ETV)
- Radio: Top Albania Radio, Club Fm
- Electronic media (including the most read portals): Ballkan Web, Top Channel, Shqiptarja.com, lapsi.al, panorama.com.al, gazetatema.com, mapo.al)
- Outdoor (billboard and City lights)
- Social media (sponsored): EITI Albania must have and well-manage: its own website, Facebook page, and Twitter and LinkedIn accounts.
- Printed press: Monitor magazine, journals: Shekulli, Gazeta Shqiptare, Panorama, Shekulli, Koha Jone, Tema

### **Outdoor campaign with city light in Tirana and the other localities:**

It is suggested for EITI Albania to use also city lights in Tirana and in cities of active extractive industry (in the cities where there are CTL available). CTL-s to be used in Tirana 3 months per year and scattered in strategic positions (6-8 are sufficient). While in other cities one per city is sufficient.

The prices of CTL-s in Tirana are 400 euro/piece, monthly VAT not included. Monthly budget:  $400 \times 6 = 2400 \times 3$  months for year = 7200 euro, VAT not included.

The prices of CTL-s in the localities are 300 euro/piece, monthly VAT not included: Fier, Pogradec, Kukës, Elbasan, Bulqizë, Berat, Burrel, Kucovë = 8 cities  $\times 300$  euro/piece  $\times 3$  months for year = 7200 euro, VAT not included

*The final channels for the campaign may further be defined by EITI, after the approval of the final budget that will be used for this purpose and if agreed with*

*some big operators of the extractive industry and with EITI, to have collaboration for “co-branded” campaigns.*

As part of this strategy, another suggestion for EITI, is the “testing” of the citizens (a sample of at least 50 people in Tirana and in the cities with extractive industry) in the streets (or through focus groups), where after they have been showed once time the last year’s spot in a tablet/smartphone, can be asked:

1. What is this spot about?
2. What does EITI Albania do?
3. What should we do with the income from natural resources?

After (wrong) answers, we show them the spot once more and they are requested again to summarize in a single sentence “the message they received”.

In the case of a positive feedback on more than 60% in the first cases and more than 85% the second time, this spot can be reused this year. Otherwise, another spot will have to be produced with the assistance of an advertising agency that is able to clearly reflect what the EITI is and what it does.

Meanwhile, in regard to the educative spot about the natural resources of our country, it is suggested to produce an “animated” spot, in order to be more attractive to the children. By means of this spot we aim to raise awareness of and reeducate the new generation and other indifferent citizens, about the importance of the fact that our country is rich in natural resources and the benefits this brings in the case of a good management. We take into consideration here mostly, the development of the communities as a consequence of public investments.

### **3.1.g. Public state institutions as party of interest, as well as experts and individuals interested in the extractive industry**

#### **The Informative periodic bulletin**

It is suggested for EITI Albania to prepare at least once in 3 months an informative Bulletin (newsletter) which may be distributed by means of:

- EITI Albania Website, also by e-mail subscription
- The social network
- E-mail, to all the public institutions with which it interacts (ministry, NANR), including the local government, tax office, etc)

- All the operators, who also may be required to share it to their staff.

This bulletin may contain information and news about: EITI Albania, EITI International, extractive industry and the operators (separated into sections according to the source type), articles from field experts, etc.

The content of this bulletin must be prepared by the responsible staff for the communication in EITI, and by contribution of different external individuals (by operators or experts), depending on the articles the bulletin will contain.

The format of this bulletin can be “electronically browsed” (example: <http://partnersalbania.org/publication/towards-a-sustainable-society-quarterly-newsletter-2/> )

If it is impossible to be prepared by the staff of EITI, the electronic format of the bulletin may be prepared by an advertising/marketing agency or by a freelancer, specialized in this field.

### **The annual report (financial and of the activities)**

The Annual Report of the Activities of EITI is published on the web-site. It is suggested to be further enriched with activities and images of these activities during the year, as well as to be distributed in hard copy to the parties of interest.

#### **3.1.h. The local government and its staff**

In the EITI reports, it is noticeable that the royalty has not been cashed to the local government (in the 2014 – 2015 report, it is stated that only 1.2 % of the royalty has been distributed and 35% of that, cashed by the Patos Municipality for these two years).

It may be an added value that the working staffs for the budgeting in the municipalities of the areas of active extractive industry and that have the legal right to cash the royalty, to be trained for “Project writing and management”, skills which they can latter put in disposal of the writing and managing of public investment projects, which can be covered by the budget of the royalty.

Trainings such as this are also offered by the Chamber of Commerce in Tirana. By this support, EITI contributes in the capacity building of the staff and as a

consequence, the development of the communities. This initiative can also be realized together with the financial input and other resources of big operators.

#### **4. National/regional or international conference of the extractive industry**

This conference is suggested to be one of the most culminating activities of this communication strategy. This activity may come as a coronation, after the tables and seminars (including those organized by EITI, throughout the years) with “the technical” parties of interest and the civil society. A portion of the themes that this conference may treat may be products/suggestions/necessities raised by the round tables, seminars and suggestions of the Operators, the central government, the local government, the civil society, etc.

Some of these themes may be:

- Legal and regulatory framework
- Mineral Resources and other Natural Resources of our country
- Fiscal packages and the taxes in the extractive industry
- The best practices from our country, the region and the globe

The content and size of this conference makes it easy that, to be sponsored also from the biggest operators of the extractive industry, from other donors and the state/ministry budget.

5. Awareness rising **photography exhibition** and the production of a mini-documentary, themed “Living where earth is rich”. By means of this project, it is aimed the raise of awareness about “the life of a community that lives in an area rich of natural resources”.

## Annex 1 - Action Plan, timeline and a cost estimation

	Description of activity	2016		2017												
		November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	
1	Trip with media gate keepers, journalists, MSG and EITI representatives and field experts - in a half weekend informal format.	x													x	
2	Other gatherings and meetings with the journalists during 2017. Media breakfasts or brunches.				x			x				x				
3	Round tables with CSO-s			x												
4	Round tables with extractive industry operators			x		x		x				x				
5	Press Conference for EITI 2015 report		x													
6	Press Conference for EITI 2016 report															x
7	Open seminars with the students (Mining geology, journalism, finance and economics.)	x							x							
8	Student "Field trips" to big operators				x										x	
9	Public awareness campaigns and informative seminars in cities with active extractive industries (seminars at schools, public hearings at municipality, etc)									x				x		x
10	Testing the old EITI TV spot in Tirana, Bulqiza, Korça, Elbasan, Pogradec, Fier, Patos Marinza, Kukës, Berat, Kuçovë	x	x													
11	Production of EITI TV and Radio		x	x												

	spots														
12	Campaigns in TVs including local ones		x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x
13	Radio campaigns					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
14	Campaigns in electronic media				x		x		x				x	x	x
15	Campaigns in daily press and Monitor Magazine			x		x		x	x	x			x	x	
16	Campaigns in outdoor CTL in Tirana, printing of posters included			x					x				x		
17	Campaigns in outdoor CTL in other cities, printing of posters included						x					x	x		
18	Sponsored campaigns in social media		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
19	Preparing the content of periodic newsletter by EITI staff	x	x		x	x	x		x	x	x		x	x	
20	Preparing the electronic newsletter				x				x				x		x
21	Preparing the Annual Report content by EITI Staff	x	x	x	x										
22	Preparing the electronic version of EITI Annual Report						x								
23	Training the employees of municipalities in extractive areas on Project Writing and Management (in collaboration with Chambers of Commerce, operators and freelance experts)					x			x				x		
24	Informative and training sessions on EITI and royalty cahsing with the municipality staff of extractive areas					x			x				x		
25	International conference of extractive inudstry (ex: on 5th of June, International Environment									x					



	Day)													
26	Production of promotional items (logo branded agendas, pens, USBs, etc)	x												
27	Field work (traveling in extractive areas" for the photography exhibition and mini - documentary "Living where the ground is rich"			x	x	x								
28	Opening of the exhibition and boradcast of the documentary (ex: 22 of April, International Earth Day"													

