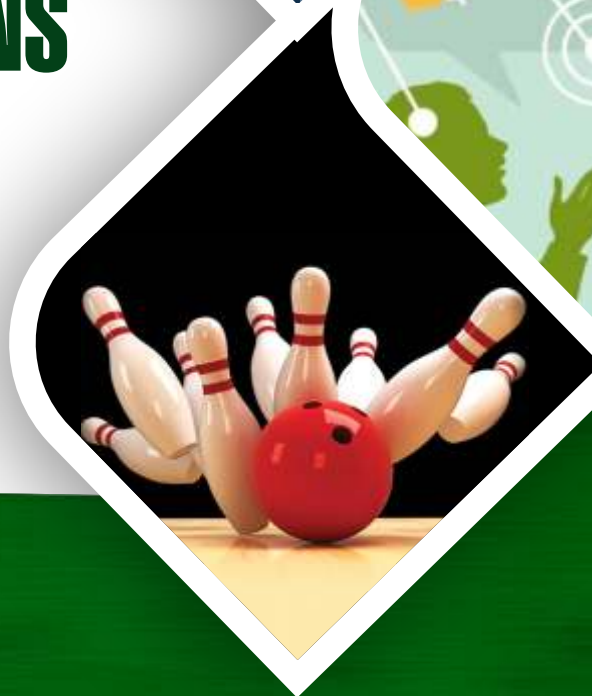




NEITI **COMMUNICATIONS** **STRATEGY** **(2022 – 2026)**



Impactful Engagement and Broader Reach

NEITI COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY (2022 – 2026)



Impactful Engagement and Broader Reach

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For more information, contact:

The Communications Department

Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI)

No 60, Nelson Mandela Street,

Off Kwame Nkrumah Street.

Asokoro, Abuja –Nigeria.

Telephone: 09-2905984, 2906623

Email: info@neiti.gov.ng

Website: www.neiti.gov.ng

NEITI COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY (2022 – 2026): Impactful Engagement and Broader Reach

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Foreword

The NEITI Communications Strategy (2022-2026) is a roadmap designed to guide NEITI to effectively influence its diverse stakeholders and address the resource curse syndrome through effective advocacy, awareness creation, education and enlightenment. NEITI, which is the Nigerian chapter of the global Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI) is to instil a culture of transparency and accountability in the management of Nigeria's extractive resources to alleviate poverty, propel sustainable development and ultimately benefit the citizens.

NEITI is of the view that the brand of communication that will bring about behavioural changes among policymakers and the citizenry must be hinged on effective advocacy, sustained action, partnerships built on trust and a desire to make change happen.

During the development of this Strategy, the use of newer, more innovative approaches, such as digital media, social media, policy advisory tools, targeted publications and public enlightenment programmes that are targeted at specific user groups, seminars, eLearning platforms, live chat sessions and podcasts, were favoured options towards public enlightenment of stakeholders about the EITI process.

However, the above options will have implications on the level and sophistication of infrastructure that will support the delivery of the subject matter. Traditional approaches to communications and user engagement like press conferences, traditional media appearances, general awareness campaigns, local radio programmes, presentations, town hall meetings, roadshows, zonal outreach events and focus group discussions were considered preferable engagement platforms for sub-national groups.

NEITI is not daunted but has armed itself with the details in this strategy document to take advantage of modern communication channels and platforms to produce tailor-made advocacies and communication tools that would support the different stakeholder groups and their preferred engagements and communication styles.

I call on all NEITI stakeholders to take advantage of the various communication platforms

and channels that NEITI is deploying to add their voices to the decision-making processes in the management of Nigeria's natural resources. Until every Nigerian, young or old benefits from the country's natural resources, the EITI process that Nigeria signed on to would have fallen short of expectations.

Mr. Olusegun Adekunle

Chairman, NEITI NSWG

November 2022

Acknowledgement

The NEITI Communications Strategy 2022 - 2026 is one of the important documents required by NEITI to support its mandate and ensure a successful implementation of the EITI in Nigeria. The strategy document will be deployed as a guide to NEITI's impactful and goal-driven communication and stakeholder engagements and the engine to drive the implementation of the NEITI strategic plan 2022 – 2026.

In the journey and efforts towards achieving its mandate, particularly its goal, vision and mission, NEITI has been blessed with skillful manpower, active stakeholders and supportive development partners who ensure that it lives up to expectations and fulfills its institutional obligations. We would like to thank the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) which implements BMZ's programs in Nigeria for their technical and financial support to NEITI. The NEITI Communications Strategy 2022 – 2026 is one of BMZ-GIZ supports to NEITI. We would also like to thank Dr. Darlington Chimezie Ashamole, the technical advisor seconded to NEITI by BMZ/GIZ in 2019. Dr. Darlington reviewed and developed the NEITI Communication Strategy (2022-2026) working closely with the Communication Department and Civil Society, and with institutional support from NEITI.

NEITI is a multistakeholder organisation, which is reflected in its approaches, actions, activities and operations. Hence, the contents of this Communications Strategy represent the views, concerns, inputs, and suggestions made by the various NEITI stakeholders who were consulted in the development of the document. Unfortunately, it is not possible to mention by name, all who provided guidance and information during the process of developing this Communication Strategy. From the Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative -NEITI, we would however single out for mention the Acting Director of Communication and Stakeholders' Management, Obiageli Onuorah who oversaw the entire strategy development process and the staff of the Department-Chris

Ochonu, Kazeem Lameed, Oluremi Bello and Angela Obasi who facilitated the processes that led to the birth of the NEITI Communication Strategy 2022-2026.

We would also like to express our gratitude to all those who reviewed the numerous drafts and participated in the various consultative meetings including the focus group discussions. They provided feedback and brought insights that enriched the final strategy document. Specifically in this class is the former Chair of the NEITI Communication Committee of the NEITI Board, Otumba Gbenga Onayiga, who was the lead reviewer, alongside Ms. Faith Nwadishi, Okey Epia, Bassey Udo and Juliet Alohan.

The successful implementation of this Communication Strategy will require the commitment, support and participation of all stakeholders in the NEITI process- government, companies, civil society, media, professional associations, donors etc. I call on them to join hands and contribute their quotas towards the implementation of this Communication Strategy so that together, Nigeria will effectively manage its natural resources and use revenues from the sector to support national development which is the purpose for which NEITI was set up.

Orji Ogbonnaya Orji, PhD

Executive Secretary/CEO & National Coordinator, EITI, Nigeria.

NEITI Secretariat Abuja

November 2022



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Executive Summary

The new Communications Strategy for the Nigerian Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI) emphasises impactful stakeholder engagement and broadening the reach of the demographic.

In the recent past, NEITI witnessed commendable progress in its communication in creating awareness of the facts about the Nigerian extractive industry. NEITI held stakeholder engagement events, media campaigns and capacity building workshops to that effect.

The New Communications Strategy (2022 – 2026) builds on an extensive review of previous communication efforts, qualitative and quantitative surveys, and SWOT analysis of NEITI. It outlines a robust communication and engagement plan with a detailed conceptual framework and approaches to take the organization to another level. The objectives are to effectively engage stakeholders, communicate NEITI's audit findings and message to the Nigerian public accurately in line with the organisation's 2022-2026 strategic plan and EITI Standard.

NEITI can achieve impactful outcomes and expand its audience and reach by:

- Simplifying/demystifying its Audit Reports

- Translating its findings and messages into Nigeria's main local languages or

forms easily understandable to its different target audiences using radio, television, infographics, audio-visual, skits and social media platforms.

Regular capacity building and sensitisation of stakeholders including awareness campaigns.

Prioritising the grassroots demographics in information dissemination

Supporting the Communications Strategy with an implementation plan.

The New NEITI Communications Strategy thus seeks to provide mechanisms with which NEITI can continue, strengthen, and improve on its past achievements and its path towards relevance and higher contribution to the improvement and sustainability of Nigeria's extractive industry.

Channels and approaches matter. NEITI should emphasise the PESO quadrant in its media management. PESO means paid, earned, shared and owned media. NEITI should prioritise owned media as a primary tool. This means strengthening its media channels for both internal and external communication. The NEITI website, blog, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter tracks should also be given considerable attention and promoted.

1.2. Situation Analysis

The Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI) is the Nigerian chapter of the global Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI). Nigeria signed up to EITI in 2003, started implementation or created NEITI in 2004 and institutionalised it in 2007 with the NEITI Act 2007. NEITI, as an anti-corruption and multi-stakeholder agency, is created to instil transparency and accountability in the management of Nigeria's extractive resources' revenues. NEITI has done this task through annual audits whose findings and recommendations it publishes so stakeholders, particularly citizens and accountability actors, can use them to ask questions and hold the managers of the extractive resources accountable.

The reviews conducted in the realm of this new Communications Strategy identified many gaps in the implementation of the previous NEITI Communications Strategy. These

manifest in issues such as lack of finance to perform certain stakeholder engagement activities, too technical nature of the NEITI reports, poor dissemination of the audit findings, use of wrong or overreliance on specific communications tools, and more.

The predecessor Communications Strategy recommended Communications Maturity Model approach. It mainly involved awareness creating and educating the public on issues relating to the extractive sector and assessing the impacts of such interventions. NEITI has progressed in achieving the above goal of empowering citizens with knowledge through its media campaigns and capacity building workshops. Its civil society organisation (CSO) and media engagements created awareness and educated numerous stakeholders. Nevertheless, the secrecy and absence of information that characterised the extractive sector, particularly the oil and gas sector, created distrust between Nigeria's extractive assets managers and stakeholders, including the extractive companies and the citizens who tend to doubt whatever data put out there by those managers. NEITI has recently done well in reducing such mistrust through its revealing yearly audit reports (which put out quality and reliable data in the public domain) and awareness campaigns that have aided citizens' knowledge about the extractive industry's background and operations, including the extractive revenues.

These efforts or impacts are relatively popular among the educated and urban population. However, NEITI and its impacts still lack awareness at the grassroots with the economically disfranchised population who seems disconnected or excluded from the scheme of things and has less knowledge about NEITI. This Communications Strategy therefore presents ways of deepening these impacts and awareness.

Nigeria is a unique country. It is unique in demographic composition and cultural diversity, rapid urbanisation and the existence of numerous languages and local customs. The languages and customs added complexities such as low social capital, (geographical/regional) differences in choice regarding the source of reliable or trusted information and varying preferences regarding mode/medium of communication.

The new Communications Strategy recommends frameworks to help NEITI leverage or turn these complex factors into success factors rather than them acting as impediments to the realisation of its mandate and strategic/communication objectives.

Some of these recommendations include translating NEITI's findings and messages into Nigeria's main local languages and simplified forms and prioritising the grassroots population, where there is currently a lack of awareness about NEITI and EITI implementation.

The new Communications Strategy will equip the National Stakeholders Working Group (NSWG) with formidable and effective communication and stakeholder engagement tools they require in advancing NEITI's mandate and strategic goals and deepening NEITI's achievements through effective communication and stakeholder engagements. It equally recommends and emphasises the importance of teamwork, partnership, professionalism and collaboration for a successful implementation. Part of the findings of the reviews was also that NEITI's previous Communications Strategy lacked an implementation plan – a communications plan. Indeed, Communications Plan and Communications Strategy are two different documents or concepts that are often mistaken for the other or wrongly used interchangeably.

1.3. Communications Strategy and Communications Plan: Clarifying the Concepts

As mentioned above, a Communications Strategy is often confused with a communication plan. While the strategy is about or encompasses the entire framework, choices and set of decisions that drive activities, a plan, on the other hand, specifies and details the individual activities, actions as well as the timeline and budgetary arrangements required for successful implementation of the strategy. The plan, therefore, provides a direction on how to implement the strategy successfully.

This clarification is crucial as it helps the organisation to first define or resolve the common issues of who its target audiences are, why and how to get to or engage them, and the message it intends to communicate to them; before structuring the specific

activities with which to engage them. Such clarification is also necessary as it facilitates goal-driven communication and stakeholder engagements that aid or promote prudent and strategic use of available scarce resources.

A Communications Strategy offers an organisation a roadmap for using communication as a tool for achieving its mandate and strategic objectives. In this case, NEITI's Communications Strategy would aid its efforts to promote transparency and accountability in Nigeria's extractive sector. It would motivate citizens to ask questions about the use of their extractive revenues. NEITI's Communications Plan would provide coherence for all communications and stakeholders' engagement activities and allow for strategic and efficient deployment of communication resources. Such prudent deployment would help to realise NEITI's mandate successfully, and address the interests of the strategic stakeholders, thereby advancing the organisation's Mission, Vision, Communication objectives and strategic goal.

1.4. NEITI's Communications Objective, Vision, Mission, and Strategic goal – An Epistemological/Conceptual Interdependency

NEITI's new Communications Strategy aims to empower a more significant proportion of the Nigerian public to effectively access and understand information relating to the extractive sector and participate meaningfully in the ongoing dialogue about using Nigeria's extractive resources prudently. This objective fits its vision of achieving "a Nigeria whose extractive industry is transparent, accountable and beneficial to all; and the mission of institutionalising accountability mechanisms and processes to instil a culture of transparency and participation in Nigeria's extractive sector for the benefit of all. Besides, NEITI's new Communications Strategy also wheels NEITI's strategic goal and objectives (as outlined in NEITI's strategic plan 2022 - 2026), which are themselves informed by NEITI's vision and mission.

1.5. NEITI Strategic Goal and Objectives (As in Strategic Plan 2022 – 2026)

Strategic Goal: To be a facilitator of the effective governance of the Extractive sector for

maximum benefit to Nigerians.

Strategic Objectives: (1) Strengthen extractive sector governance and reforms through policy research, strategic stakeholder engagement, communication, and inter-agency collaboration, (2) Sustain extractive sector reporting and relevance by focusing on national and international priorities, and (3) Achieve operational excellence in implementing the NEITI mandate through professionalism, innovation, use of technology, resource management, and capacity building.



2. THE TARGET AUDIENCE AND STRATEGIC STAKEHOLDERS

EXTERNAL AUDIENCE / STAKEHOLDERS		
NEITI STAKEHOLDERS	ROLES IN THE NEITI PROCESS	EXPECTED ACTION
Extractive Companies	The extractive companies in the oil and gas and mining sectors are essential in the NEITI process, given their roles in the extractive business, particularly as income generators to the government. They are legally obliged to disclose the payments they made to the government for NEITI annual audit.	Support NEITI's Audit process through (1) compliance and timely response to NEITI's requests, particularly as regard to NEITI's audit template population and submission, (2) disclosure of payments to the government, (3) providing NEITI with accurate information and data that facilitate the smooth and successful audit process

Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI)	The global EITI sets the rules and standards for EITI implementation and Audit process in member countries.	Provide the needed technical and financial support to the NEITI secretariat for smooth and successful implementation of the initiative in Nigeria. Critique or commend NEITI's under/non-performance or achievements and provide direction.
Civil Society	The CSOs are essential stakeholders in the EITI implementation or NEITI process. EITI is a tripartite arrangement that involves the government, extractive companies and civil society. The CSOs act as a watchdog in the EITI process and ensure uncompromised implementation of the initiative. These are organisations such as Petroleum and Natural Gas Senior Staff Association of Nigeria (PENGASSAN), National Bar Association (NBA), National Union	Encourage transparency and accountability in managing the extractive resource revenues by asking or motivating citizens to ask questions about the prudent management of the extractive revenues. Hold the government accountable, where necessary, with the NEITI audits. Support NEITI in creating awareness about the NEITI process, the benefits of EITI implementation, and the roles of the citizens. This groups' understanding of the NEITI

	of Journalists (NUJ), Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), National Union of Petroleum & Natural Gas Workers (NUPENG), Nigeria Labour Congress, etc. Vital actors in the civil society stakeholder category are: Industry experts, opinion and community leaders.	process and audit is vital for an impactful, successful EITI implementation. They can shape opinions, influence the actions of their followers, and motivate them to act, particularly regarding asking questions and holding the government accountable for NEITI's audit findings.
Media	Analysts classify the media under civil society, but the media, which plays a distinct role in the EITI/NEITI process, regards itself as a stakeholder of its own. However, the media plays the role of information disseminator and advocacy in the NEITI process. The media has proved to be one of NEITI's main strengths.	Support NEITI's advocacy campaign and dissemination of NEITI's audit findings. Encourage fair reporting of NEITI's activities and audit findings. Advancing NEITI's campaign for good extractive revenue governance. Awareness creating, advancing NEITI's interests and bringing NEITI's achievements to the public, particularly at the grassroots level where these are urgently needed.

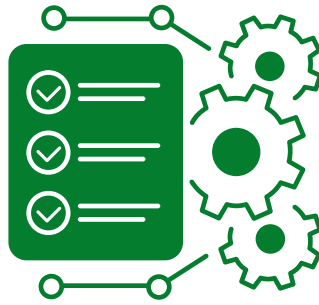
Government	The government (the executive and legislature) is a significant player in the EITI implementation. It is the owner of the resources exploited by the companies. Also, besides signing up for the EITI, the government provides the enabling environment for successful implementation of the initiative. Countries like Nigeria have institutionalised the initiative's implementation through legislation (The NEITI Act 2007).	Support the EITI/NEITI process by providing the needed enabling environment and institutionalising the process. Act on or rectify issues identified in the NEITI audits. Match NEITI's Audit findings and recommendations with policy reforms. Take advantage of and encourage NEITI's policy research works and proposals. Support NEITI's Audit process through (1) compliance and timely response to NEITI's requests, particular as regard to NEITI's audit template population and submission, (2) disclosure of payments from the extractive companies, and (3) providing NEITI with accurate information that facilitate smooth and successful audit process. Oversight of extractive revenue Allocation and Utilisation.
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Government Agencies and MDAs	The government agencies and MDAs comprise organisations such as the Nigerian National Petroleum Commission (NNPC) and its subsidiaries, the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR), Office of the Accountant General of the Federation (OAGF), Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Petroleum Products Sales Reconciliation (PPSRC), EFCC, ICPC, Federal Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Mines and Steel Development. These ministries/agencies either represent or carry out the government's interests in the extractive business – which could be collecting revenues (taxes, royalties, etc.) from the extractive companies or implementing the government's extractive related laws and directives.	Support NEITI's Audit process and accountability and transparency campaign through (1) compliance and timely response to NEITI's requests, particularly as regard to NEITI's audit template population and submission, (2) accurate disclosure of payments received on behalf of the government from the extractive companies, and (3) providing NEITI with accurate information and data for smoothly and successful audit process.
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The Nigeria Public	This stakeholder group is critical in the NEITI process not only because they are the beneficiaries of the overarching objective of the initiative, but they are expected to be active in the forefront of asking questions and demanding accountability from the managers of the extractive revenues.	They should be enlightened about the NEITI process, its expected roles, and the impacts and benefits of transparent and accountable resource revenue governance. They should be actively asking questions and demanding accountability for the information they are provided through the NEITI audits.
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INTERNAL AUDIENCE / STAKEHOLDERS		
NEITI STAKEHOLDERS	ROLES IN THE NEITI PROCESS	EXPECTED ACTION
NSWG (THE NEITI BOARD)	The NSWG is the governing body of NEITI. It has its 15 members drawn from all the tripod arrangement sections (government, extractive companies and civil society) and the Nigeria's six geopolitical zones. It is responsible for formulating and implementing NEITI's policies,	Exhibit and encourage quality and committed leadership and secretariate that reflect and actively promote NEITI's transparency and accountability principles. Creates environment and policies that promote NEITI's values and strongly connect it with its stakeholders while

	strategies, and programs to realise NEITI's objectives and strategic goals.	creating the awareness needed by citizens to ask questions and demand accountable resource management. Ensure quality and comprehensive audits. Create structures and encourage arrangements that aid in realising NEITI's strategic objectives, mission and vision. Determination to drive NEITI's values and goals forward and sustain its achievements.
NEITI STAFF	The NEITI staff carry out the board's instructions and execute NEITI's work plans and programs.	Engage in actions that reflect and promote NEITI values and principles. Carry out activities that aid or support the realising of NEITI's strategic goals. To be good (brand) Ambassadors.



3. STRATEGIES AND TACTICS: RECOMMENDED COMMUNICATIONS TOOLS / CHANNELS AND TARGET AUDIENCE

Communications Strategy: Owned Media as PESO Lead

Communication flourishes within organisations in a variety of forms, activities and functions:

1. In management communication, public relations, advertising and personal selling.
2. As an ingredient of the corporate culture.
3. As a central feature of the relationships between staff within the organisation and their relationships with other stakeholders outside the organisation.

The media have become even more central and contributory to the management of corporate communication in the Internet age. Media touchpoints have increased, as has access to media by stakeholders. It is therefore critical that media is strategically managed in this age.

- **The PESO Model**

Communication happens now in the age of PESO. PESO is the acronym for paid, earned, social and owned media.

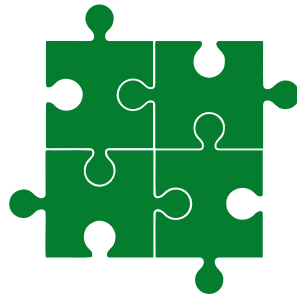
- **Paid Media** is the mention you buy, such as advertising, supplements, or commercial news.
- **Earned Media** is when your media relations efforts grant you the opportunity to appear in news mentions.

- **Shared Media** is user-generated content and social media mentions.
- **Owned Media** is internally-generated content that you deploy on your website, magazines, blog, podcast, TV and other media assets.

Astute communication managers now prioritise Owned Media. Their media channels contain a repository of the most accurate, timely and valuable information on the organisation, such as NEITI. Media and other stakeholders should come to NEITI's media channels as the first course for data, analysis and perspectives on issues around the brand.

The call on the NEITI Communication Team is to develop strong owned media channels:

- i. Robust platforms: (a) Website (b) Blogs (c) Facebook (d) Instagram (e) Twitter (f) YouTube (g) Pinterest (h) WhatsApp.
- ii. Make it interesting, rich and quotable.
- iii. Tell exciting stories.
- iv. Have rich photos, videos and infographics.



4. MATCHING CHANNELS TO STRATEGY AND LANGUAGE

	Direct Communication Strategy	
Communication Channels	Target Audience / Stakeholders	Language of Communication
Radio	1. Rural/Grassroots Population, particularly in Northern Nigeria, where more people rely on radio for information. 2. Urban population	English, pidgin-English, Local languages: Igbo, Yoruba, Hausa, Fulani, and Others, as may be required English, Pidgin-English and local languages - as may be required
Television	1. Urban population (especially in the Southern Part of the country with more TV sets/viewers). 2. Rural/Grassroots population	English, Pidgin-English and Local languages, as may be required. Local Languages – Igbo, Yoruba, Hausa, Fulani, and others as may be required

Print Media (News-papers, Magazine)	1. Urban Population 2. Rural/Grassroots Population	English, pidgin-English, Local languages: Igbo, Yoruba, Hausa, Fulani, and Others, as may be required English, pidgin-English, Local languages: Igbo, Yoruba, Hausa, Fulani, and Others, as may be required
Audio Visual (videos, pictures, charts, Posters, Flyers, Billboards)	1. Urban Population 2. Rural/Grassroots Population	English, pidgin-English, Local languages: Igbo, Yoruba, Hausa, Fulani, and Others, as may be required English, pidgin-English, Local languages: Igbo, Yoruba, Hausa, Fulani, and Others, as may be required
Internet	The educated population (in Urban and rural areas)	English, Pidgin-English, and maybe in local languages, if required.
Social Media	The educated population (in Urban and rural areas)	English, Pidgin-English

Other Intermediaries and Stakeholder Engagement Techniques		
Communications Channel	Target Audience/ Stakeholder	Language
Opinion Leaders, including Local, Youth, Women and Religious leaders	Urban and Rural/ Grassroots population	English, pidgin-English, Local languages: Igbo, Yoruba, Hausa, Fulani, and Others, as may be required
Education Institutes	The educated population (in Urban and rural areas)	English, pidgin-English, and Local languages, as may be required
Social Media Influencers	The educated population (in Urban and rural areas)	English, pidgin-English, and Local languages if required
Inter-Agency / Ministerial Collaboration/Partnership	Relevant Government Agencies (anti-corruption agencies, managers/regulators of extractive business)	English, Pidgin-English and local languages - as may be required
Courtesy Visits and Phone Calls (to foster partnership)	Government, government agencies, extractive companies, some strategic partners, CSOs and Media	English and other languages as may be required
Townhall Meetings	CSOs, media, the public (grassroots population)	English, pidgin English, and local languages, as may be required
Roadshows	CSOs, media, the public (grassroots population)	English, pidgin English, and local languages, as may be required

Retreat and Sensitisation/capacity-building Workshops	Government, Government agencies, Development partners, NSWG, NEITI staff, CSOs, Media, the public	English, Pidgin English, and other languages as may be required
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and FOI Portal	All stakeholders	English, and any other language that may be necessary
Documentary (Yearly) on audits reports and activities	The public, CSOs, Media and other strategic stakeholders	English, Pidgin English, and other local languages, as required.
Forums and Conferences	All stakeholder groups	English, Pidgin English, and other local languages may be required.



5. CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS AND CRUCIAL STEPS TOWARDS SUCCESSFUL OPERATIONALISATION OF THE COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

5.1. Sensitisation and capacity building opportunities for NEITI Strategic Stakeholders on EITI Process and the Extractive Sector

Surveys show that many of NEITI's stakeholders and target audience (particularly the media, civil society, NEITI donors, and NEITI's staff and NSWG) want more information and deeper understanding of EITI and the extractive sector in general (see figure 1). Moreover, as figure 2 can indicate, almost all the stakeholders in question wished for regular sensitisation and capacity building opportunities on EITI and extractive sector issues from NEITI. For a successful implementation of the initiative, these interventions are however necessary. This is given the dynamic nature of EITI priorities and standards, which requires that stakeholders be kept abreast of the developments and changing events.

Figure 1: Percentage of the Respondents that want more information and deeper understanding of NEITI and the Extractive Sector

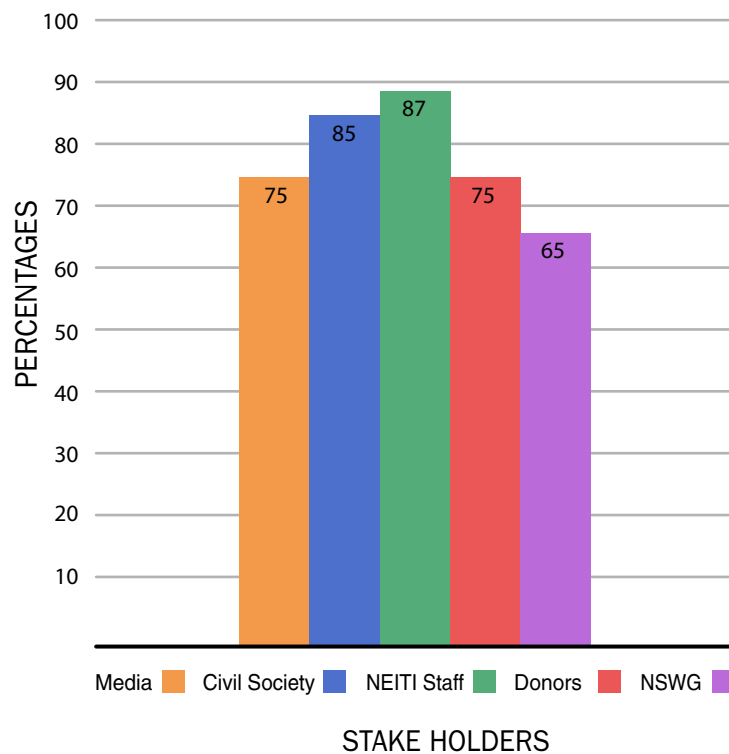
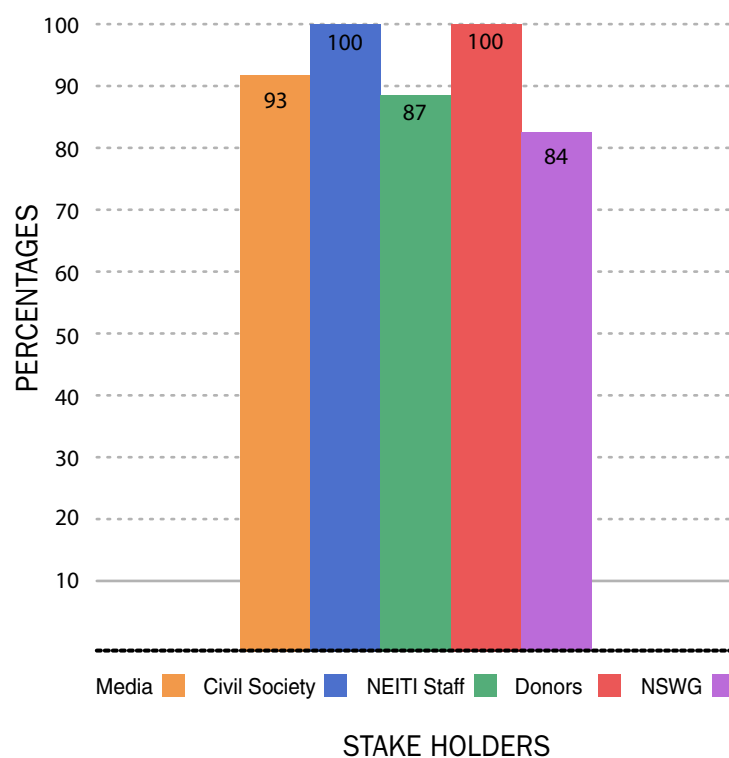


Figure 2: Percentage of the Respondents that wish regular Sensitization Workshop on NEITI Process



The message from these empirical findings is that NEITI needs to commit efforts and resources towards sensitising and aiding the knowledge of its critical stakeholders and target audience about its operations, mandate, and the importance of its audit reports and particularly the EITI process. However, if equipped with adequate knowledge about EITI and the extractive sector, stakeholders like the media and CSOs can serve as NEITI's advocates and gateway to subnational actors by directly engaging or enlightening the grassroots population. They will inform about NEITI and its relevance or take NEITI's message down to the grassroots where there is lack of awareness about NEITI and its operations or mandate.

EITI standards and themes are dynamic as they evolve constantly. Therefore, NEITI needs to keep up with this and keep its strategic stakeholders abreast of these changes through regular sensitisation and capacity building.

NEITI can organise special capacity-building programs for the government actors – the presidency and National Assembly - as they hold the key to implementing NEITI's findings and reform proposals/recommendations. NEITI can extend the arrangement to the government agencies that partner in the transparency and accountability campaign. EMPLOYEE RETREATS would improve the capacity of its employees and NSWG's ability and enlighten them more on the NEITI process, EITI emerging issues, including NEITI's achievements and challenges. The Employee Retreat should hold every quarter.

Employee Retreats would enhance the knowledge and productivity level of the board and staff. External and internal experts would serve as resource persons.

5.2. Simplifying and Demystifying the NEITI Audit Reports

NEITI should simplify and demystify its reports. The survey indicates stakeholder preference for less complex pieces.

Stakeholders view the reports as too technical, elitist and complex (see figure 3). Their perception could be because of the (technical) terms and complex figures and tables used in those reports. They are usually too abstract for anyone without technical

knowledge to comprehend. NEITI should make its reports as reader-friendly and straightforward as possible so they can be attractive to a broader audience.

Survey participants however suggested that NEITI can achieve this by making those reports available in Nigeria's local languages, particularly the major ones – Igbo, Hausa, Yoruba, etc. It can also translate the messages into widely spoken pidgin English (see figure 4).

Figure 3: NEITI Audit Reports are too Technical and Elitist

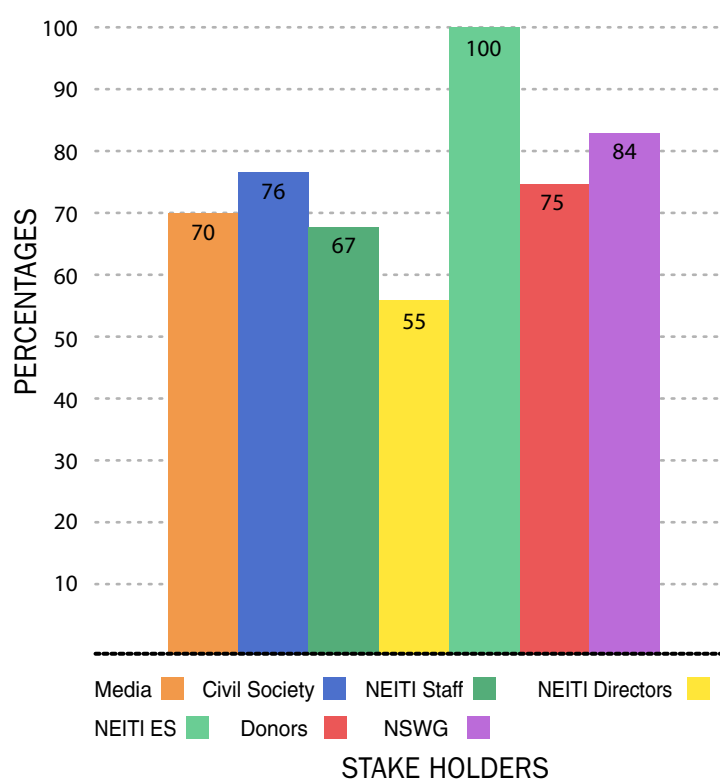
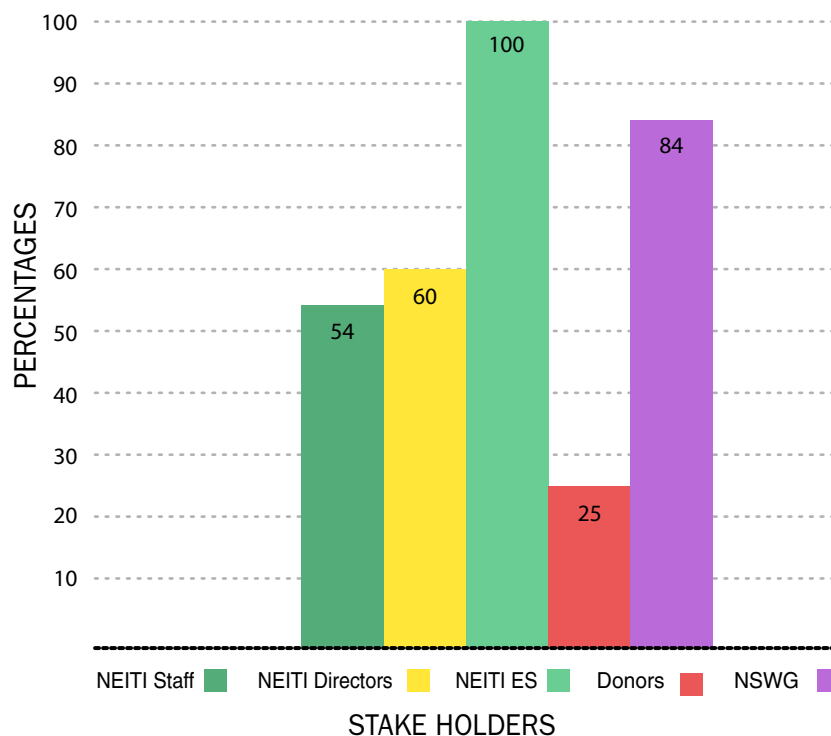


Figure 4: Translating NEITI Audit Reports into Nigeria's main Local Language - Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba



Notably, in the past NEITI has tried the approach of translating its reports into Nigeria's major languages as a way of simplifying them and increasing its audience, but this did not quite produce the expected or targeted results. This communications Strategy, however, recommends that the original copy of the reports this time be simplified or made available in forms the diverse and different compositions or sections of the population, particularly at the grassroots, can easily understand. Jingles, video captures, skits, and special programs (TV, Radio, etc) that can capture the attention and interest of the target audience or the zone(s) NEITI is trying to engage can also be used. This will save cost and hopefully produce more effective outcomes.

This communication strategy also recommends producing the reports in audio-visual and infographic forms. The approaches will resolve the challenges of poor visibility and lack of awareness of NEITI.

The NSWG's communication committee should take charge of the project. It should identify and engage a communication firm that can design or produce the required

audio and visual communication materials. The Comms Team should customise and profile target groups to support and boost the initiative's effectiveness.

It will involve studying their demographics, communication and learning styles, communication behaviours and media consumption.

Each target group is unique and needs to be addressed or handled so. Simplification and demystification will surely enhance the effective dissemination of NEITI audit reports. It will involve adjustments and the remodelling of NEITI's current dissemination patterns.

5.3. Remodelling NEITI's Dissemination Approach

5.3.1. Leveraging Nigeria's Diversities

Nigeria's diversities refer to its many cultures from its ethnic groups, which translates into differences in religion, local customs and languages. There are preferences about the means, styles, and methods of communication and accessing information.

For example, while Northerners access information mainly through the radio, those in the South do so mostly through television and print media. The two regions attached disparate significance to the views of religious leaders. Similar considerations apply to urban and rural populations whose communication methods and preferences differ significantly.

Our SWOT analysis showed these diversities and differences as part of NEITI's strengths. NEITI can turn them into advantages in advancing its mandate and communication objectives by designing and aligning stakeholder activities to suit the preferences, habits, and sociocultural arrangements of the groups, audience or region targeted.

5.3.2. Dissemination through NEITI Staff – Utilising Internal Strength/Resources

The audit identified NEITI staff as one of its strengths. They can play essential roles in the NEITI communications and dissemination functions. However, NEITI staff are always encouraged to share NEITI Reports and other similar or important publications in/with their network of friends, especially on social media platforms. However, the survey showed that about 40% of NEITI staff do so, and only sometimes.

Staff should serve as adjuncts to the communications team. NEITI staff should be encouraged, motivated and possibly incentivised to play that role as one of NEITI's communication channels or gateways to the public.

5.3.3. NEITI Webpage and Social Media Handles

5.3.3.1 Webpage Manager

The NEITI webpage serves as its mirror for the outside world and deserves careful strategic handling. It not only gives an impression about what NEITI does but also mirrors its identity, plans, programs, objectives, and values to the outside world. Seemingly, the current NEITI administration has demonstrated the acknowledgement of these facts, particularly the importance and role of an attractive, robust, and user-friendly website in the success of an organisation, by embarking on the construction of a new NEITI website that has what it takes to drive the organisation forward. To realise the website project's purpose and intended goal, we recommend engaging a web or content manager who will daily or at least weekly update NEITI's website with current invents, programs, news, publications, etc.

The NEITI website should also serve as an interactive archive and repository for NEITI reports, publications and knowledge materials, programs, and stakeholders' engagement activities. NEITI should promote the website and encourage people to visit it.

5.3.3.2 Social Media Strategy/Policy

Currently, no organisation runs a business or social media handle without a social media strategy or policy. No organisation can take the impacts and roles of social media for granted in our current world. It can stir up an uprising or be the source of social, economic and political destabilisation, including fake news. Therefore, the negative dimension of social media has particularly necessitated the adoption of policies or strategies that either mitigate or avert such unwanted impacts. Noticeably, NEITI currently has no social media policy component.

Therefore, NEITI needs a social media policy to guide social media activities and communication. The Communication subcommittee of the NSWG in collaboration with NEITI's Comms department should provide NEITI with one.

5.3.3.3 Engaging a Social Media Influencer

NEITI should also consider engaging a social media influencer. Their brief would aid NEITI's social media campaigns and drive forward or promote NEITI's agenda and activities on social media. The need for a social media influencer is one of the survey's findings. NEITI's communications department or communication subcommittee of the NSWG should identify and engage competent social media influencers.

5.3.4 Balancing/Complementing/Strengthening the Media Option - with other Communication and Dissemination Mechanisms

Indeed, the press is critical to the success of any organisation such as NEITI as a vital stakeholder in itself and as an important channel for reaching other critical stakeholders. But it is equally important to note that as important as the media are, they are not the communication itself, mainly where the goal is to mobilise support, win trust, engage, promote and empower citizens to demand accountability. However, as the survey revealed, other NEITI stakeholders believe that NEITI over-depends on media for its advocacy, communications and stakeholder engagement activities. It somehow neglects other methods and stakeholders. This view was presented by 60% of NEITI staff, 89% of NEITI directors and 72% of the NSWG members who took part in the survey.

NEITI's management must see communication as a critical success factor beyond just having articles in the media, thus re-prioritising and restructuring how it communicates to its strategic stakeholders.

Indeed, it is impossible to engage or communicate with all the NEITI's stakeholders only through the media. Other mechanisms are certainly needed. For example, NEITI cannot successfully engage the grassroots entirely through the media, given their financial constraints and limited access to basic amenities and resources, including media

products. The urban demographic fare better with access to the (print and electronic) media.

The SWOT analysis conducted in the realm of this Communications Strategy also confirmed the significant contribution of the media to NEITI's success. The survey identified the media as one of NEITI's strengths. However, strength can become a weakness if it is not managed correctly or utilised. Thus, NEITI's inability to use its media advantage to reach or connect with the grassroots population and actors could be part of the reasons media is seen by some stakeholders as one of NEITI's weaknesses, as described above.

NEITI should explore other communications and stakeholder engagement approaches like town hall meetings, roadshows, communication through local, religious and opinion leaders. NSWG's subcommittee on communication and NEITI's Comms Department should support developing a stakeholder map by "suitable communication and engagement approach and preference".

If possible, NEITI should create a platform to interact or communicate and share information and ideas with its stakeholders, particularly the journalists. It will also create an avenue for stakeholders' interaction (with each other) and allow NEITI to receive constructive feedback from stakeholders, increasing its relevance and smoothening its campaign and advocacy.

Surely, NEITI's activities, particularly stakeholder engagements, are currently constrained by limited financial resources. NEITI can reduce the limitations posed by such circumstance by exploring the option of using volunteers to develop some of its frameworks, strategies, policy documents and guidelines. This option can also be used in carrying out some of its outreaches, advocacy and stakeholder activities, especially at the grassroots.

We also recommend that NEITI sponsors special radio and TV programs and activities, and newspaper pages that capture the attentions and issues that are of interests to its different target audiences.

5.4. Stakeholder Engagement and Communications Operational Manual

The review also revealed that past NEITI's communications strategy documents lacked an operational manual or plan. With a communications operational manual/plan, an organisation demonstrates its confidence in and commitment to high quality, consistent and reliable communications and stakeholder engagement, including how it intends to navigate or achieve its strategic goals and set-out communication objectives.

An operational plan gives a detailed insight or serves as a guide into the categorisations, objectives, structures, the needed resources, expected outcomes and audiences of each of the events planned by an organisation in its communications and stakeholder engagement campaign. It also details how to carry out those activities. The operational plan further ensures maximising the potential and effective use of scarce resources.

An operational manual would indicate the category of events, the target audience, the event manager, the required resources and logistic arrangements, the goals and targeted results of the events, and how they fit into the broader context of the organisation's communications objectives and strategic plan. An operational communication plan also informs about the communication tools and the stakeholder(s) to reach out to or address their needs. An excellent operating manual guarantees adequate, well-structured/organised, and well-managed stakeholder engagement and outreach events/programs. It's all about smooth, effective, efficient and impactful communications and stakeholder engagement.

An organisation's communications operational manual should flow from the inside. It should be an articulation of the stakeholder engagement programs of the project owners. In other words, it should be designed by or at least in collaboration or consultation with the projects' owners or programs implementors, who knows what they need or are in a better position to identify what is required to implement given programs as they fall within their work plans.

5.5 Other Internal Exigencies

5.5.1 Internal communication and interdepartmental linkages

Primarily, internal communication involves transmitting or sharing information between different members or components/departments of an organisation. It could be vertical (between staff or between departments) or horizontal (Management ↔ staff, Board ↔ staff, Board ↔ management etc.). Internal communication keeps employees and all the organisation's components connected and informed while creating a shared understanding of the organisation's goals, values, vision, mission, and operating guidelines. NEITI needs to develop an internal communication plan and improve internal communications. It should encourage collaborations and strong linkages between departments and constantly reinforce them. The Internal Communications plan should be continually strengthened to discourage unhealthy interdepartmental rivalry, increase success and productivity, and aid the secretariat's effective and smooth implementation of NEITI's mandate.

NEITI's departmental meetings should be organised regularly and taken seriously. While such an approach will allow staff to directly and timely report, reflect, and express their views and concerns, it will enable the organisation to quickly deal with and manage or resolve crises or issues before they escalate or get to another level.

As suggested by some NEITI stakeholders we consulted, NEITI's directors should be allowed into the meetings of the NEITI Board, even if as observers. Such participation improves internal communications and relationships between the Board and Secretariat. It would reduce rumours and unnecessary suspicion and facilitate direct and unfiltered communications between the directors/secretariate and NEITI's governing body (the Board or NSWG).

5.5.2 Crisis Response and Communication Plan

Currently, NEITI has no crisis communication strategy or plan in place. Crisis is part of human nature, including organisations. While it can occur at any time, how it is handled

or managed matters a lot for the image and existence of an organisation.

Therefore, we recommend that NEITI develop/adopt a crisis response plan. The NSWG communications subcommittee could collaborate with the Executive Secretary to create one.

5.5.3 Communications Strategy Implementation Plan

Stakeholders believe that the previous NEITI Communications Strategy was a good document with everything required for effective communication and stakeholder engagement. Its problem was poor implementation: no plan guided its performance. The poor implementation of the previous communications document is evident in the neglect of specific stakeholder engagement and communication approach(es) or tool(s). Therefore, NEITI needs a plan that details how to implement the new communications strategy and supports a constant review of its implementation, particularly regarding the stakeholder engagement activities. It should seek the stakeholders' views, and the document updated or improved with their suggestions and feedbacks.

5.5.4 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

NEITI plans to expand its scope of operation to accommodate more events or cover most activities, especially in the Solid Minerals sector. Such expansion comes with both responsibilities, complexities, and more questions. NEITI should restructure or redesign its FAQs platform to accommodate, clearly answer, and clarify questions and issues that might arise due to such expansion. It should constantly update the FAQs to reflect questions and problems arising and the concerns and interests of the web visitors.

5.5.5 Measurement and Evaluation

NEITI should periodically assess its communication and stakeholder engagement efforts. The best methods are through media monitoring, and evaluation that scans or captures the level of presence and prominence or attention NEITI and its activities generally enjoy or attract in the public space, particularly the media. The results of the scan or assessment can be evaluated and used for improving or strengthening NEITI's communications

strategy and operations.

Perception audits offer more profound assessments of stakeholders' awareness, opinion and judgement about NEITI and its operations or programs. Such audits are through opinion polls, one-one interviews, telephone interviews, focus group discussions. The gathered data can be evaluated and used to improve NEITI's operations, communications and stakeholder engagement programs.

5.6. Prioritising Critical Stakeholders

- The Presidency and National Assembly

The Presidency and National Assembly are critical stakeholders that NEITI should prioritise. They hold the key to implementing NEITI's audit findings and policy recommendations. According to the survey findings, while their support and buy-in are essential in the NEITI process, NEITI has not engaged the two stakeholders properly or well.

As the survey findings also revealed, the methods with which NEITI has engaged these stakeholders - courtesy visits, workshops (NASS) and invitations to NEITI events – have not produced the desired or targeted outcome. Such poor results make change or adoption of new approach(es) imperative in the NEITI's engagement with these stakeholders.

NEITI can engage the Presidency and National Assembly with approaches and methods such as co-sponsorships, joint-event hosting, and other collaborative initiatives.

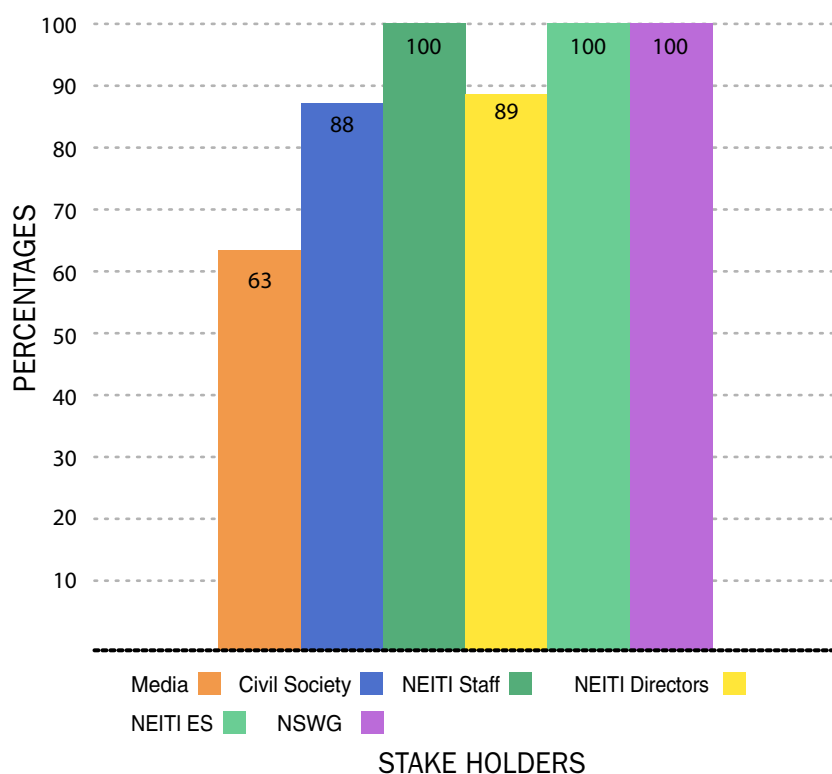
Nigeria has neglected the subnational chief executives (governors and local government chairmen), particularly the local government chairmen, in the EITI process. Therefore, there is equally the need to prioritise or consider these stakeholder groups in the NEITI's stakeholder engagements. It can adopt the same engagement methods listed for the National Assembly and The Presidency.

- The Grassroots Population

NEITI lacks visibility and name recognition at the grassroots due to poor engagement, according to the survey. Therefore, there is the need to engage, target adequately, and

prioritise the grassroots population in NEITI's stakeholder engagement campaign as drivers and beneficiaries of the EITI project (see figure 5). They need to be impacted with knowledge and provided with the necessary information to effectively play their roles in the NEITI process – asking questions and demanding accountability from their leaders.

Figure 5: NEITI should prioritize the Grassroot, as it currently receives less attention in the NEITI process.



NEITI can effectively engage the grassroots population through the following engagement strategies:

(a) Building partnerships with local CSOs and local opinion and community leaders - for the sensitisation and educating of the grassroots population, (b) advertising and publishing its programs, activities and findings with local or grassroots media outlets, (c) organising regular or increasing stakeholder engagement activities at the local level, (d) structuring or designing an all-inclusive stakeholder engagement programs that engage both the young and the old alike and mainly target the youth population and equip them with the necessary tools (knowledge and information) for demanding accountability, (e)

NEITI can also successfully engage the grassroots through its NSWG members or zonal representatives by empowering and providing them with resources to organise outreaches and stakeholder engagements in their respective states and local governments or zones. These will go a long way in improving NEITI's relevance and creating awareness at the local or grassroots level, (f) through the newly created Civil Society Steering Committee (CSSC) arrangement.

- The Academia and Opinion Leaders

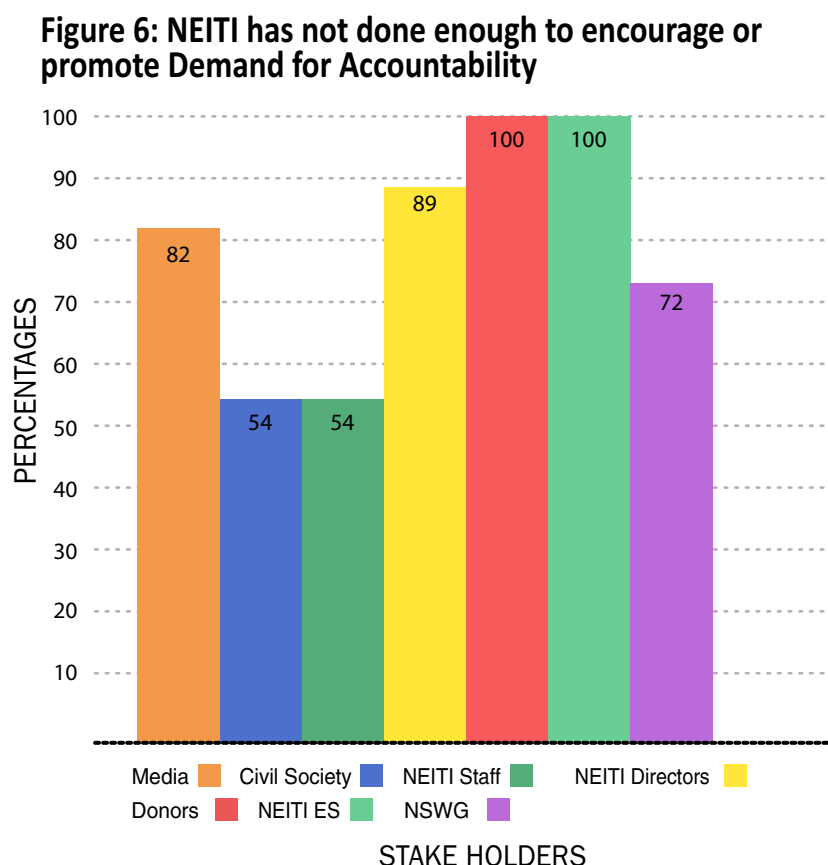
The academia and opinion leaders have the power and influence to shape minds and thoughts and propel change, especially where the aim is to motivate or mobilise individuals for action. These actors can play significant roles in the NEITI process, particularly in disseminating NEITI reports, creating awareness and sensitising citizens at the grassroots. NEITI has not engaged these stakeholders or considered them despite their significance, according to the survey. However, NEITI should bring these stakeholders into the process while leveraging their influence and power to advance its course.

NEITI can leverage the advantages provided by these stakeholders by creating arrangements and partnerships that give them notable roles in the NEITI process, maybe as ambassadors or intermediaries between NEITI and the public or citizens. NEITI can also collaborate with some universities and research institutions, especially in its research works.



6. ENHANCING ACCOUNTABILITY, RELEVANCE AND WIDER REACH

Figure 6. NEITI has not done enough to encourage or promote Demand for Accountability. NEITI has yet to instil transparency and accountability in Nigeria's extractive resources management through its audits or inspire citizens to ask questions and demand accountability from their leaders. Experts state that publishing or bringing out reports, as NEITI has done so far, is not enough to achieve the above goal (see figure 6).



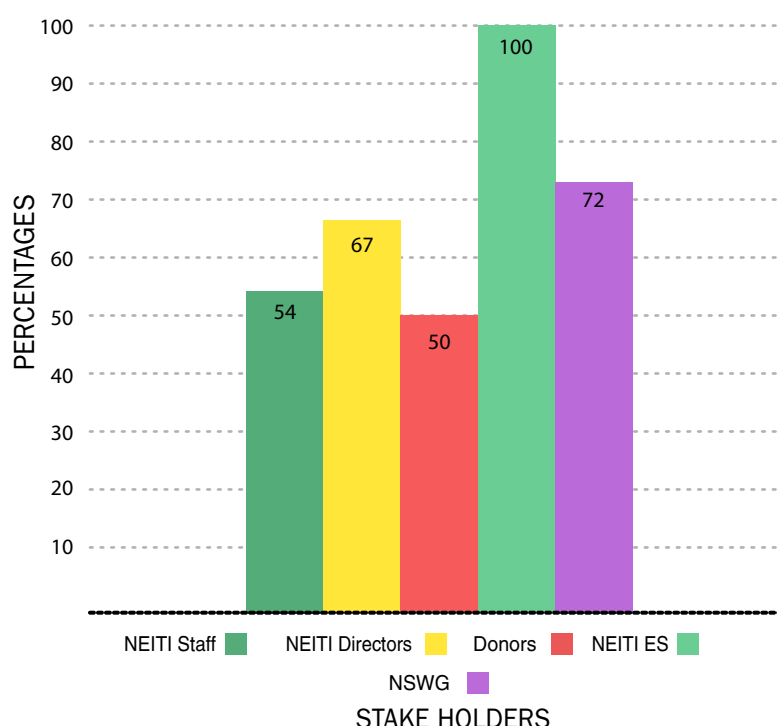
Therefore, NEITI needs to go beyond putting out reports in the public domain. It has to adopt some strategies that will aid in achieving its objective while enhancing its relevance and coverage. We have mentioned simplifying the reports and presenting them in different forms and possibly in indigenous languages.

NEITI can also build strategic relationships and partnerships with other accountability actors and citizen groups that use its reports. Such alliances will increase awareness and public acceptance of NEITI, thereby getting more people to ask questions or demand accountability. Also, NEITI can enhance accountability and improve its relevance by linking the contents of its reports with citizens' daily challenges and experiences that the revenues lost could have tackled - IMPACT. NEITI's recent efforts to build partnerships with relevant ministries and anti-corruption agencies like the EFCC, ICPC, and NFIU are laudable. They would deter corrupt practices in the sector and enhance relevance while increasing accountability and transparency. It can broaden and strengthen such initiatives.

Other strategies include:

- **Establishment of NEITI State/Regional Offices and Grassroot Partnerships**

The survey showed that the absence of NEITI offices outside Abuja, FCT, contributes to its poor visibility. According to the survey result, NEITI can solve or mitigate these challenges by establishing zonal or state offices (in Figure 7. Establishing NEITI State/Zonal Office seach of the six geopolitical zones or 36 states), see figure 7 below.

Figure 7: Establishing NEITI Local/State or Regional Offices

NEITI can also resolve these issues by building partnerships with local NGOs and other relevant subnational actors. Collaboration with local NGOs is critical to facilitating the successful implementation of EITI in Nigeria. NEITI can phase the implementation of this strategy by starting in states with significant extractive activities.

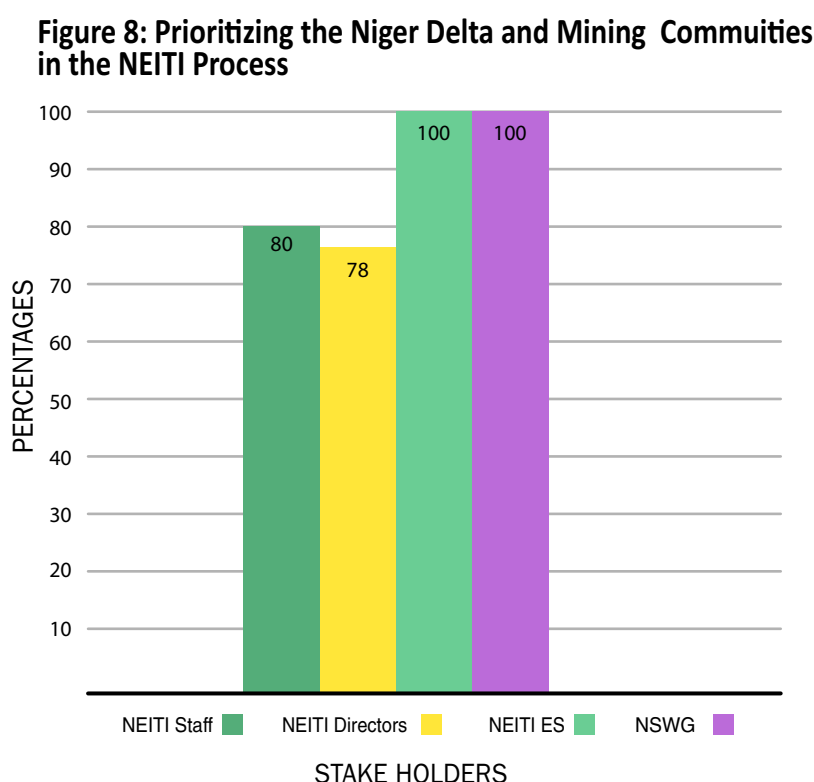
- Prioritising the Niger Delta and Mining Communities in the NEITI Process

NEITI's previous Strategic Plan identified the Niger Delta as an area of interest deserving special attention in the NEITI process. However, this seems not to be the case, given the lack of enough effort and stakeholder engagement activities that target the region and its population. Moreover, the previous NEIT's Communications Strategies neither prioritised the area nor provided a specific plan to communicate, engage or target the region's population in the NEITI's campaign.

Given NEITI's plan to broaden its operation in the Mining or Solid Minerals (SM) sector and Government's economic diversification plan that targets or lays much emphasises on the SM sector, the mining communities should also be prioritised in the NEITI process.

Experience and empirical studies have shown that people directly and more affected by resource extraction are equally likely to agitate, ask questions, and demand accountability and equity/fairness than those who are less or not affected by resource extraction. Indeed, the Niger Delta and other mining communities have been more affected by the negative impacts of resource extraction than any other region in Nigeria. Therefore, giving them significant/special attention in the NEITI process, as majority of the interviewed NEITI stakeholders believed (see figure 8), will surely aid the push for accountability demand and successful implementation of EITI in Nigeria.

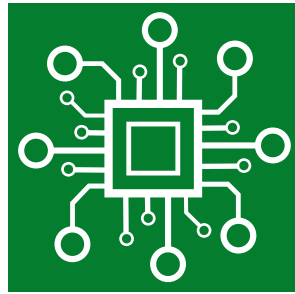
There is thus the need for awareness creating and robust stakeholder engagement activities in the Niger Delta and other mining communities. NEITI should overcome the challenge of limited resources through partnerships with local NGOs, community leaders, youth leaders, women groups and other recognised and organised social or pressure groups. They would act on behalf of NEITI or help implement NEITI programs in the region. NEITI can also engage local print and electronic media for advertising and awareness creation.



- **Improving NEITI - Donors Relationship**

Some NEITI donors believe that NEITI's priorities change too fast and they find it difficult to follow or cope with the dynamism. As a result, donors advised that NEITI reduces or adjusts the rate at which such change occurs, which will help improve and strengthen their relationship with NEITI. Besides, donors felt they were not being carried along by NEITI in its operations and therefore wished for more and regular engagement and interaction with NEITI.

Certainly, NEITI priorities reflect or change according to EITI requirements and expectations. Donors may not be aware of these changes but they want to be consulted and taken along. Regular sensitization, consultation and capacity building of donors on EITI can go a long way in mitigating this problem.



7. LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY, AND PROMOTING GENDER-INCLUSIVENESS AND OTHER EMERGING ISSUES OF EITI

NEITI should ensure that its Stakeholder engagement programs and other communication activities reflect and promote the gender-inclusiveness requirement, as well as other emerging issues (such as contract transparency, environment, etc) of EITI.

We are currently living in a technological era. NEITI should leverage technology and the advantages offers by technological innovation to effectively engage and communicate with its stakeholders, achieve operational excellence, as well as realize and advance its strategic objectives. In line with the demand of our time, NEITI should be an innovative and technology-driven organization. Its data automation (Audit Management Systems – NAMS) and RemTrac projects are laudable technological initiatives that should be promoted and built on.

CONCLUSION

8. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We have developed strategic options for NEITI stakeholder communication and engagement. We deployed empirical data, and first-hand information gathered through a qualitative and quantitative research approaches that mainly featured semi-structured interviews and document analysis.

While this document would serve NEITI or guide NEITI's communications and stakeholder engagement activities for the next five years (2022 – 2026), its accurate and successful implementation is critical for NEITI's success during this period. As recommended, proper and successful implementation of this communications document requires a plan that guides the implementation process, particularly regarding how and the sequence to implement the outlined programs and strategies.

NEITI is a coalition of actors, so this communications document reflects that diversity and collaborative efforts. Its successful implementation will also require collaboration, teamwork, dedication and synergy between the relevant stakeholders. NEITI is not limited to the outlined strategies, methods, or channels in its communications and stakeholder engagements. It can be flexible and adopt any other approach or system it deems suitable, appropriate, and fit. It can also combine or intermix strategies for achieving impactful results and NEITI's program objective of “empowering a greater proportion of the Nigerian public to effectively access, understand and participate meaningfully in the ongoing dialogue about using Nigeria's extractive resources”.

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