Introduction

This Annual report highlights a set of activities implemented under the programme in the year 2017 as derived from WGI’s 5–year Strategic Plan 2014 – 2019 and WGI’s key result areas that include: Extractives industry interactions with water, Community-Company relationships/Assessment, Water Quality, Supply and Sanitation in the context of how water is used in oil and mining industry and treated to avoid environmental pollution.

It also highlights the core achievements realised and challenges faced with the aim of finding ways to overcome them and make 2018 a more successful year. It is important to note that most of the activities implemented under the programme in the year 2017 were under the OSIEA project on Promoting Oil and Mining Industry Compliance to Social and Environmental Safeguards in Uganda.

In October 2015, WGI secured a grant from Open Society Institute for East Africa (OSIEA) to promote oil and mining industry compliance to social and environmental safeguards in Uganda. This two year project ended in September 2017.

Below is a summary of WGI’s extractives programme achievements for the year 2017, as we look forward to another year of working towards promoting good governance in Uganda’s extractives sector.
Activities Implemented

1. Conducted a research study on “Oil and Mining Industry Compliance to Social and Environmental Safeguards in Uganda”. This report aimed at informing Ugandans and other stakeholders on the state and status of extractive industry compliance to safeguards in Uganda. This research entailed reviewing water, land, mining and environmental policies and legislations in Uganda with a view of teasing-out key social and environmental safeguards that oil and mining companies must comply to and those which government must enforce in relation to international standards and best practice. A report in this regard was published and is available on our website. This report will be used to influence policy makers at all levels local, regional and international.

2. Collected soil and water samples from gold mining areas and processing points in Moroto, Nakapiripit and Mubende districts. In March and April 2017, WGI conducted field trips to Moroto, Nakapiripit and Mubende districts to collect soil and water samples from gold mining areas and processing points. The soil and water samples collected were tested in the laboratory for contamination levels of chemicals used in gold extraction including mercury, cyanide, arsenic, lead and aluminium as indicators of pollution. The results derived from the laboratory tests were shared with relevant stakeholders at local government and central level through community meetings in the districts and a national stakeholders meeting in Kampala.

3. Conducted community research dissemination meetings in Moroto and Mubende districts. These meetings took place in July and August 2017. The meetings sought to achieve a number of objectives including:
   - To disseminate research results to the relevant authorities at local and central government levels derived from the soil and water samples collected from gold mining and processing points that were tested for presence of Mercury, Cyanide, Arsenic, Lead and Aluminium as indicators of pollution.
   - To disseminate research information to community members to trigger appropriate responses/ remedial actions.
   - To raise awareness and sensitize relevant stakeholders on the negative social and environmental impacts of mining on communities and ways in which such impacts can be mitigated.

   Participants at these meetings included artisan miners, district natural resource officers, environmental officer and representatives of miners associations.

4. Held a stakeholder engagement and feedback meeting on mining industry compliance to social and environmental safeguards in Uganda. This took place in August 2017. The main objective of this meeting was to disseminate research information to stakeholders on mining industry compliance to social and environmental safeguards to
trigger appropriate responses/remedial actions. Participants at this meeting included the Minister of state for energy Hon, Peter Lokeris, officials from Directorate of geological Survey and minerals, media and representatives from other civil society organisations. The meeting was an eye opener for participants and government officials who reflected on issues raised in the research.

5. In 2017, WGI under the extractives programme produced two proposals, two concept notes, two field reports and two proceedings reports. One of the proposals was written to National Endowment for Democracy and the other to the Democratic Governance Facility. Although these were not successful WGI will this year continue to market them to other donors for possible funding.

6. Produced opinion articles in the media. The media is very powerful in shaping opinions, attitudes and in effecting behavior change. Cognizant of this, WGI used print; electronic and social media to inform educate and lobby for good governance in the extractives sector. Through these articles we were able to reach out to relevant stakeholders including Uganda’s legislators (MPs), the executive including Ministers of Energy, oil companies, technocrats working in the extractives sector and the public atlarge. In addition to opinion articles, WGI also used several channels of communication, these are, newsletters, radio, and television, Facebook, Twitter and our organization’s website.

In 2017 WGI produced 4 opinion articles under the extractives programme that were published in leading media houses. Through these articles WGI was able to create public wareness, influence public opinion and amplify voices of local communities. These articles revolved around the following themes:

- Expedite new mining law, policy to protect local communities
- Oil cash bonanza should be a wakeup call for Ugandans
- Artisanal, Small- and Medium-Scale Women Gold Miners need Protection from Extraction Chemicals
- Mining police Unit, Eviction of ASMs: Is this the right thing to do?

7. Participation in partners meetings. In 2017 WGI participated in several meetings organized by her partners. Some of these meetings fitting within the extractives programme include:

- CSCO meeting on revenue management in the oil sector
- CRED meeting on Dialogue on Natural Resource Conflicts in Albertine region
- AFIEGO meeting on climate change and oil
- CRED and TIU meeting on land rights in the extractives sector
- Tax Justice Alliance Uganda meeting on taxation in the extractives sector with finance officials including Uganda revenue authority.
Achievements

Under the extractives programme WGI registered a number of achievements in the year 2017. First and foremost the programme was able to successfully implement and end its project on mining.

8. We successfully empowered artisan and small to medium scale miners in the districts of Moroto, Nakapiripit and Mubende on the dangers of using chemicals mercury, cyanide in the gold extraction. The community meetings were eye opening to both participants and facilitators. Through these interactions we also got to understand community grievances.

9. WGI was able to sensitize Ugandans, government, media and policy makers on the levels of mining industry compliance to social and environmental safeguards; pollution risks associated with the mining activities. We successfully created platforms where the public was able to drawing strategies to avoid and/or mitigate the risks associated with mining operations in the country.

10. Another success was producing a research report on “Oil and Mining Industry Compliance to Social and Environmental Safeguards in Uganda”, that will be used by policy makers in decision making processes in the extractives sector and also inform researchers, media and academia.

11. Another achievement was that we were able to spur government interest on the dangers of using mercury and cyanide in gold mining in Uganda and its impact on human health and the environment.

12. Government was able to put in place a draft mineral policy and we were part of efforts calling on government to expedite the process through our articles such as the one on expedite mining law, policy to protect local communities.

13. Another success registered in 2017 was WGI being part of shaping the debate on oil issues i.e. the oil cash bonanza, through use of the media. WGI staff appeared on television and radio talk shows.

14. WGI was also part of the team of CSO’s that contributed alternative articles to the mining policy and they had been adopted by government.

Challenges

Apart from draconian laws such as the NGO act, public order management act, that generally affect our work as an organisation, the extractives programme still faces the challenge of lack of resources to implement activities and for this reason there’s need to work hard towards resource mobilisation in the year 2018. The team will need to double its fundraising efforts.
Another challenge worth mentioning is government interference for example some areas in Mubende we cordoned off by government during the evictions and thus we could not access them and hold meetings with stakeholders.

**Way forward**

The extractives programme successfully implemented most of the activities as laid down in the approved work plan for the year 2015-2017. However, there stills some pending activities. The Mining project was implemented in a few mining districts namely Mubende, Moroto and Nakapiripit. WGI intends to do similar work to cover other mining districts such as Kanungu, Buhweju, Rukungiri, Kabale, Kisoro and Ntungamo.

During the research it was discovered that Uganda lacks bio data on the effects of mercury, cyanide, arsenic on the health of humans. WGI would like to undertake a bio data analysis of the effects of chemicals used in mining on humans and contribute to the pool of knowledge in this regard as basis for policy makers. WGI will also analyse plant samples for chemical poisoning as an indicator for contamination of the food chain.

WGI was also unable to conduct its study on oil because the oil industry has not yet started commercial production of oil, however we were able to assess the social and environmental compliance of preliminary works and we shall be undertaking this study this year.

The programme also hopes to expand beyond extractives and raise more awareness on other energy issues. With its robust and enthusiastic team, the extractives programme hopes to raise resources towards continuous promotion of good governance in Uganda’s extractives sector and change lives through empowerment.