



ENERGY COOPERATION BETWEEN THE EU, THE LITTORAL STATES OF THE BLACK & CASPIAN SEAS AND THEIR NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES



REPORT: COMMUNICATION WORKSHOP IN GEORGIA

by Component C, INOGATE New ITS Project

8 February 2013, Tbilisi

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1. Executive Summary

The INOGATE Technical Secretariat (ITS) conducted a communication workshop on sustainable energy in Tbilisi, Georgia, on 8 February 2013. Goals were a) to define the main direction of an awareness raising campaign for Georgia, b) to identify contributing stakeholders, and c) to identify potential actions for implementation.

ITS will use its limited resources to support local stakeholders willing to take ownership of awareness raising campaigns. ITS will build synergies and reinforce existing initiatives through media, internet, information centres, schools and more.

Thematically, the communication workshop chose a focus on the transport sector for awareness raising. For various reasons, other energy sectors did not qualify as strong candidates for consideration in Georgia.

Workshop participants worked in small groups for brainstorming sessions, then presented their best ideas on awareness raising campaign themes:

- Wider use of rail transport
- Promotion of public transport
- Educational information campaign
- Events about greener and healthier transport
- More efficient vehicles
- Eco-driving
- Legislation and standards
- Local authorities
- Biofuel

2. Participants

The workshop gathered key stakeholders with interest and willingness to support awareness raising campaigns for the development of sustainable transport. Policy makers from the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources of Georgia, Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia (Transport Department and Sustainable Development Department) and the Georgian Railway led the discussion on the governmental support actions.

Other key stakeholders participating were Tbilisi City Hall (local authority), the Energy Efficiency Centre (NGO and ESIB coordinator), Georgian Technical University (education institute), a number of key NGOs working on environmental, transport and energy issues, and media representatives. They all recognised the importance of promotion of public transport and organisation of an educational campaign. The final list of participants appears in Annex 1 of this report.



Stakeholders (side tables) and ITS team (left rear table)

The organisers of the communication workshop were sustainable energy and communication experts of the New ITS Project.

3. Objectives

The overall objective of the workshop was to develop a tailored campaign strategy and, subsequently, an action plan for Georgia with emphasis on promotion and development of sustainable transport.



Ms. Khatuna Didbaridze, ITS communication expert, co-chairing the workshop

The main specific objectives of the communication workshop were

- To focus on sustainable transport as the main thrust of an SE campaign for Georgia
- To identify target groups in order to refine the concept of an SE campaign and ensure its effectiveness
- To elaborate ideas for the plan of activities for sustainable transport campaign
- To identify organisations that would lead, guide and contribute to conducting the SE campaign

It is critical that local stakeholders take ownership of awareness raising campaigns. ITS will use its limited resources to support those organisations that are willing to contribute and sustain such campaigns. The ITS approach aims at building synergies and reinforcing existing initiatives, where possible, rather than embarking on new campaigns. Options for specific actions may include mass media publications, local websites, SE/Energy information centres, educational materials on SE for schools, contests.

Thematically, the communication workshop focused on possible awareness raising activities in energy efficiency. The industry sector in Georgia is rather small. The building sector is not ITS' competence, and the energy sector is

already reported to be over 90% green (hydropower). Therefore, the transportation sector emerged as the logical area of focus.

4. Main findings and further actions

ITS presented its approach for selecting the energy sector in Georgia that would receive a targeted awareness raising campaign.



Working groups



Working groups



Working group discussions yielded the following proposals:

- Wider use of rail transport - Emission reductions can be achieved by developing and improving the services on rail transport, since it is more energy efficient than road transport. Promotion of publications with research on transport emissions can help implement this activity. It would be also beneficial to involve the railway company in information/awareness raising campaigns.
- Promotion of public transport - Tbilisi has few metro stations. The rest of public transport includes buses, mini-buses, and many taxis. Traffic is an issue in Tbilisi including its impact on the environment. It is important to

promote wider use of public transport and to develop public transport with a stronger focus on its efficiency and sustainable development.

- Educational information campaign - A campaign to educate and increase awareness of various groups, including students and schoolchildren on environmental, sustainable energy and sustainable transport issues (this can include special TV programmes, TV spots, videos, guest lectures, contests, etc.)
- Events about greener and healthier transport - Events about sustainable and “greener” transport can promote use of bicycles, walking and a healthier lifestyle, engaging different groups.
- More efficient vehicles - Emission reduction also requires more efficient vehicles. Promoting use of efficient cars can also be an option to consider (engaging with banks and car dealers could help to find ways to motivate people to buy newer and more efficient cars.)
- Eco-driving - Driving habits are an issue in Georgia, not only from the viewpoint of more efficient driving, but of safety considerations, as well. Promotion of eco/efficient driving and enhancing safety as a “side effect” through demonstration and education of drivers can contribute to improving the situation.
- Legislation and standards - Assistance will help policy makers in adopting transport legislation and standards to be closer to those of the EU. Awareness raising and study tours for decision makers can show examples and familiarize policy makers with the EU experience that facilitates implementation of reforms in the transport sector as well as best practice and innovative ideas in sustainable transport.
- Local authorities – Awareness raising for local authorities will help to encourage wider use of public transport projects and standards to be closer to those of EU practice. Seminars and study tours for local authorities can show examples and familiarize authorities with EU best practice and innovative ideas in sustainable transport.

- Biofuel - Currently, there are not many organisations working on the issue of biofuel in Georgia. Development of biofuels requires analysis of policy and legislative environment as well as technical capabilities.

5. Conclusions

The workshop participants expressed their support for the effort aimed at creating a conducive and enabling environment for the development of sustainable energy. Most of the stakeholders present at the workshop showed interest in participating in awareness raising activities for sustainable transport. The awareness raising needs identified by the stakeholders during the workshops are twofold: a) awareness raising for policy makers, and b) awareness raising for the wider public. For the first group, the aim is to motivate them to **improve the legal framework** and to enhance institutional capacity for SE in transport. For the second group, the aim is to reach out to the wider public to **create demand** for sustainable transport as well as improve understanding of the issue, fostering behavioural change.

The communication workshop in Georgia also helped to identify the synergies that may lead to effective and successful public awareness.

6. Annexes (separate documents)

6.1 Agenda

6.2 List of Participants

6.3 Presentations by ITS:

- Presentation: Overview and awareness raising on sustainable energy – Khatuna Didbaridze
- Presentation: A new direction of communication for INOGATE – Elena Nikitina
- Presentation: Summary of INOGATE work programme for sustainable energy – Larry Good
- Presentation: Awareness raising on sustainable energy, sustainable transport – Khatuna Didbaridze