



The European Union's "Media for improved reporting on environment and natural resources in Central Asia" programme

Regional Assessment Report



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**Regional Assessment on access to and quality of information on environmental issues for
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RESEARCH REPORT

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Introduction

The main objective of this research project was to develop a baseline around quantity and quality information on environment and natural resources in Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan in order to inform Internews' Central Asia project, specifically capacity building and networking activities, as well as help assess outcomes achievement and impact contribution.

Methodology

Internews contracted SIAR, a specialized company based in Bishkek, to conduct this regional research. Internews's Senior Monitoring and Evaluation Manager, Yulye Jessica Romo Ramos, developed the research design as well as provided technical support and supervision, ensuring adequate use of methodology and overall quality of research.

The main method used was content analysis with elements of media monitoring. The former helped assess quality of content whereas the latter helped measure availability of content. Preliminary research for selection of relevant media outlets, their reach and other important characteristics pertinent to this project informed the research design.

Internews aimed to study a variety of media outlets in order to ensure wide representation of different sources of information per target country: two TV channels, one state-owned/public outlet, one private-owned and one online information agency.

The priority for media outlet selection was prioritized based on:

- TV outlets with the widest audience reach, according to available in-country audience research.
- The most popular online media outlets according to website ranking services Alexa.com and local website ranking services
- A mix of both public and privately owned media outlets

Consult Annex 1 for desk research insights per country. Below is a breakdown of selected media outlets per country:

Kyrgyz Republic

1. KTRK – public TV channel
2. NTS – private TV channel
3. Akipress – online news agency

Kazakhstan

1. “Habar” – public TV channel
2. «KTK» - private TV channel
3. Informburo.kz - online news agency

Uzbekistan

1. “Uzbekiston” - state TV channel
2. “Uzreport” - private TV channel
3. “Gazeta.uz” - online news agency

Tajikistan

1. “Tochikiston”¹ - state TV channel
2. “CM-1” - private TV channel
3. “Asia-Plus” – online news agency

Turkmenistan

1. “Neutral Turkmenistan” - newspaper
2. “Turkmenistan: the golden age” – public online news agency
3. “Informational portal of Turkmenistan” - private online news agency

Note: All TV channels, newspapers and most of online news agencies in Turkmenistan are state owned. Due to the fact that TV Channels in Turkmenistan do not keep video archives (all video materials are deleted 2 weeks after broadcasting, except video with the President and politics) and have no websites, it was decided to analyze one state newspaper, one state online information agency and 1 one private online information agency.

The content analysis methodology was fine-tuned after the coding table was piloted and used by SIAR analysts on August 12, 2016, using two media materials - 1 from a TV channel and the other from an online media outlet. Internews accepted several comments and finalized the coding table, making the scoring process more clear and definite. The final coding table was presented to SIAR coders as well as analysts from Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. The training ensured all coders understood and adequately used the content analysis criteria and coding table, which was key in ensuring inter-coding reliability.

The final criteria of content analysis and the coding table included an assessment of²:

- Balance
- Conflict-sensitive language
- Easy to understand
- Accuracy & pertinence of sources
- Actionable information
- Relevance to environment and natural resources
- Human Interest
- Inclusion of women
- Use of multimedia (only for online media outlets)

A detailed interval scale with 5 options was development for each one of the above and codes were assigned to identify these. One generally represents the lowest quality content and five the highest. Internews’ considers pieces of quality when they have a score of 3.

Parameters:

- Pieces related to environment and natural resources issues: based on the headers or on keywords search³, including text, video, audio, multimedia materials
 - Exclusion: sports, entertainment and financial/business news - unless they are linked to the topic of interest
- Period of study: pieces published by selected media outlet between May-July 2016
 - Exception: Due to a lack of video archives of state and private TV channels in Uzbekistan for the last 3 months, there was organized watching of weekly online

¹ This TV channel replaced the “Safina” TV channel due to non-availability of “Safina” TV channel’s products. More – in the “Content analysis and in-depth interviews” part of this report

² Consult annex 2 for more details about the full criteria and its scale.

³ Keywords were provided by Internews, based on local context and specific thematic area.

broadcasts of these channels for the period of August 24-30 and analysis of available content of video archives for the period from July 12 to August 2 (more details in “Content analysis and in-depth interviews” part of this report).

Sample size

- If the total number of pieces using the above parameters is 1-8 then SIAR analyzed all of the pieces found within the parameters abovementioned.
- If the total using the above parameters is 9-30 then SIAR analyzed 8 of the pieces found within the parameters abovementioned using a random sampling technique.
- If the total using the above parameters is 31-60 then SIAR analyzed 15% of the pieces found within the parameters abovementioned using a random sampling technique.
- If the total using the above parameters is 60-200 and more then SIAR analyzed 10-15 of the pieces (8-15%) found within the parameters abovementioned using a random sampling technique.

The above resulted in a total of 103 pieces analysed, of which 32 were produced by males and 36 by females, for rest (n=35) the author’s name and sex remained unknown.

Sampling technique

Random sampling was used once pieces for each media were identified using the above parameters. This was done in Excel (a number was assigned in chronological order to each piece relating to environment and natural resources) and then random numbers were chosen using a random number generator, indicating the ID the pieces need to be analyzed. When the same number appeared - the procedure was carried out again.

Other research methods

Literature review and key informant in-depth interviews were also conducted to complement and triangulate data produced with the above mentioned methods, targets per country as follows:

- Government entities – 3 interviews in each country
- Representatives of NGO – 3 interviews in each country
- Media experts – 3 interviews in each country

Specific names of interviewees and the organisations they work for are not disclosed in order to protect the sources. Selection criteria ensured only those working on environment and natural resources organisations were contacted, particularly those with a high profile in each of the target countries.

Findings

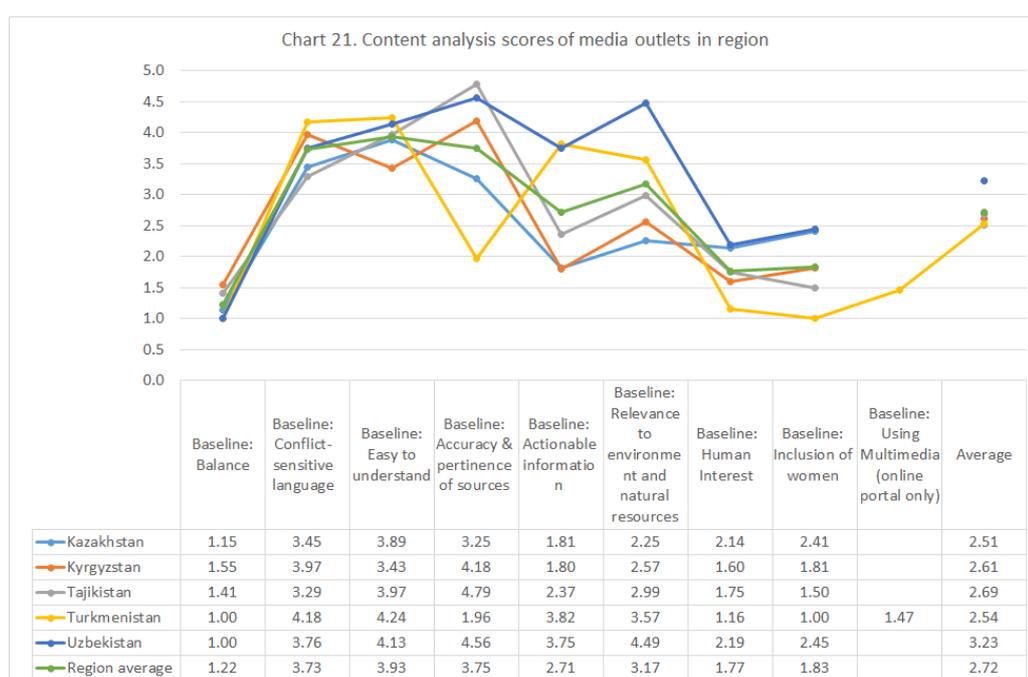
Central Asia summary

According to the content analysis and in-depth interviews conducted in region it was revealed that the availability and quality of information on environmental issues is low and has a lot of common characteristics in different countries of this region, namely:

- For most media outlets studied, the availability of information around environmental and natural resources is low (around 3% of total content output).
- The “Balance” criterion has a lowest score (average is 1.22) in the region, due to the fact that usually there is only one side of conflict or issue covered – mainly the government’s.
- The conflict sensitive language criterion has a higher score than many others (average 3.73), it is explained by using neutral language by authors and guests of media products.
 - *This might be an issue going forward however, if journalistic practice moves towards a more balanced coverage of diverse perspectives other than the government’s.*
- The “easy to understand” criterion, “accuracy & pertinence of sources”, “relevance to environment and natural resources” also have a good average score 3.93, 3.75, 3.17 accordingly.
- Information presented in media outlets of the region can’t be named as actionable due to low presence of recommendations to ordinary audience of mass media (average of 2.71)
- The presence of case study or human angles is very low – average is 1.77 - as well as inclusion of women (average score of 1.83)

Therefore it is recommendable to focus capacity-building efforts of media stakeholders around: balance, provision of actionable information with a human angle and including women. For those using multimedia, training should also help improve standards.

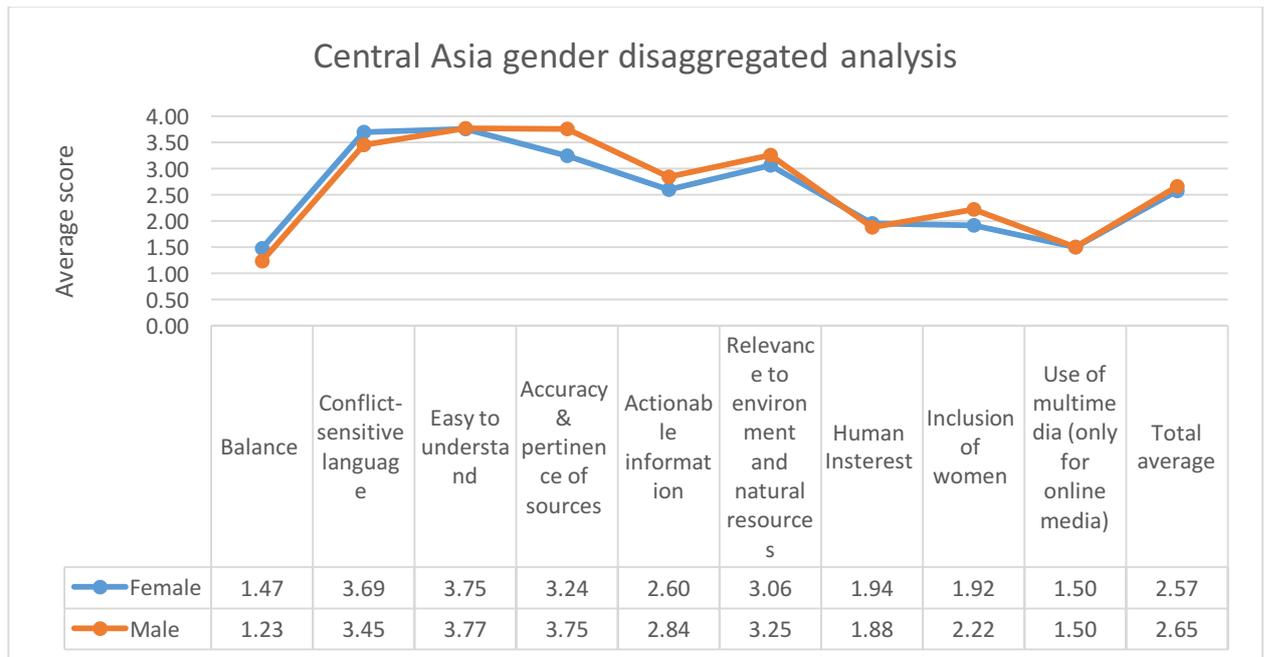
Figure 1: Quality of content results - Central Asia



Overall female and male media stakeholders demonstrate similar journalistic practice – see figure below⁴. Key differences are:

- More female writers use balanced coverage and conflict-sensitive language than men
- Male were stronger in accuracy and use of sources as well as inclusion of women and overall seem to report more often on environmental issues.

Figure 2: Quality of content results disaggregated by gender - Central Asia



The following sections present detailed results by country and media outlet.

⁴ Of the total 103 pieces studied, 32 were produced by males and 36 by females, for rest (n=35) the author's name and sex remained unknown.

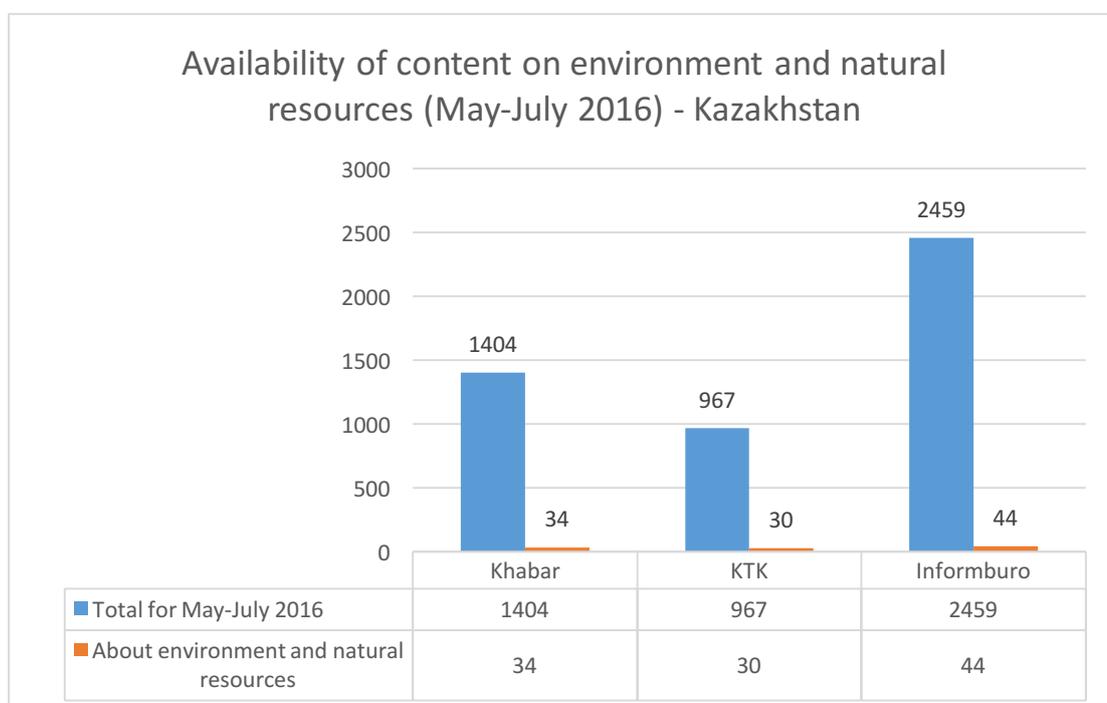
Kazakhstan

Availability of content around environment and natural resources

Availability of content around environment and natural resources issues is low ($\geq 3\%$) based on our media monitoring analysis, details below. This findings were also triangulated via key informant interviews, finding a matching perception of availability of content around these topics.

1. Khabar public TV channel⁵:
 - a. Total number of channel products found within the reporting period of May-July 2016 amounted to 1,404. Of these, 34 materials (2.42% of total) were dedicated to the theme of ecology and the environment.
 - b. Sample size: 15% or 5 pieces
2. KTK private television channel:
 - a. Total number of channel pieces found within the reporting period was 967. Of these 30 (3.10% of total) related to environmental issues.
 - b. Sample size: 8 pieces
3. Online portal InformBureau⁶:
 - a. Total number of channel pieces found within the reporting period was 2,459. Of these, 44 were dedicated to environmental issues (1.79% of the total number)
 - b. Sample size: 7 pieces

Figure 3: Availability of content on environment and natural resources - Kazakhstan



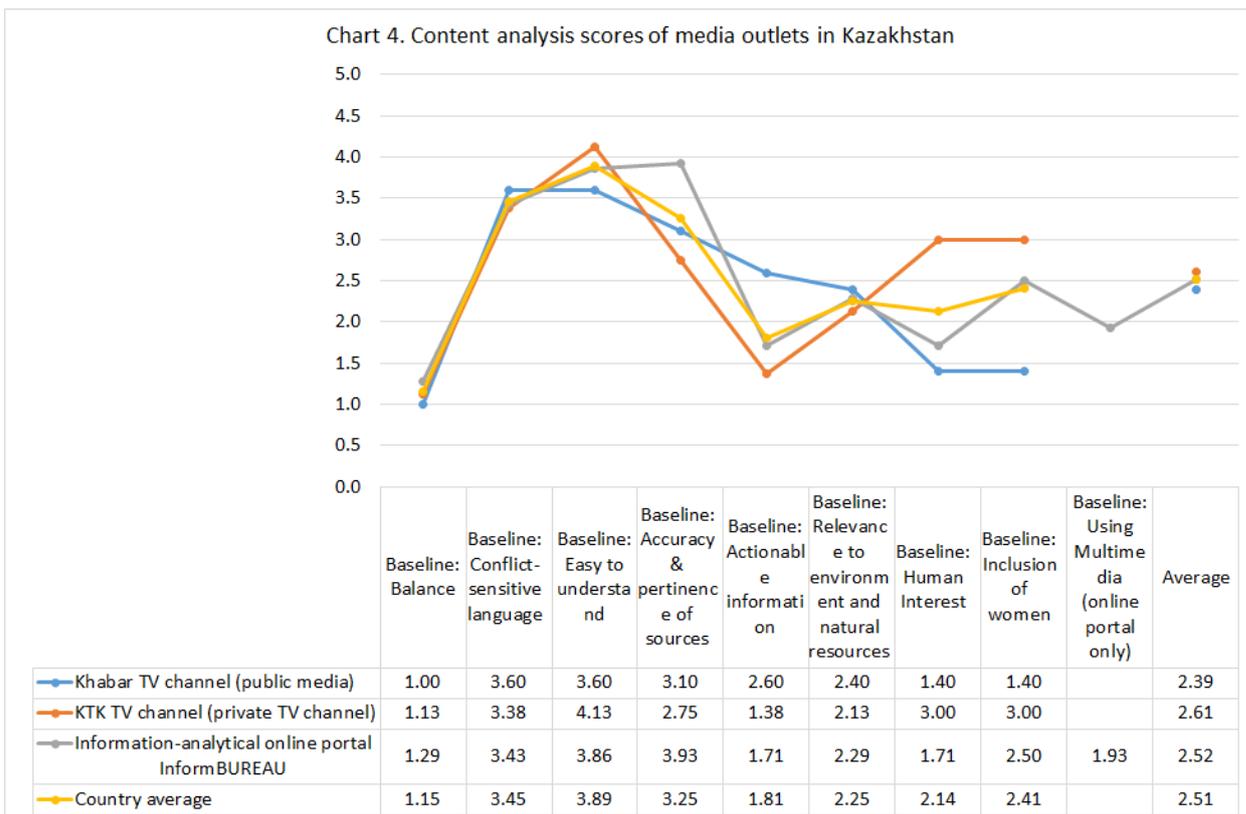
⁵ <http://kazakh-tv.kz/>

⁶ www.infrombuko.kz

Quality of content around environment and natural resources

Quality content on environmental and natural resources does not meet Internews’ quality standards (average of 2.51). Main issues related to lack of balance (use of one point of view only, generally state-sources), lack of human angle in stories as well as for lack of inclusion of women or actionable information. We note that key informant interviews also agree with this findings. More details as follows:

Figure 4: Quality of content results - Kazakhstan



1. These issues do not seem a popular and relevant topic for coverage. The difference between the different types of media is not large: it ranges from 1.8% on the website to 3.1% on a private TV channel. Almost all products on the subject (with rare exceptions) are short news reports, there were no documentaries and full investigations in the period under review.

2. Practically all stories represent only one point of view. The criterion of “balance” for all three media is about 1 score. At the state TV channel “Khabar” all stories presented pro-government point of view, while the officials are the main source of information. The private media may represent the position of others, however, even there it is unusual for journalists to contact other interested or involved parties to maximize objective reporting of problems or achievements.

3. Presentation of the information regarding the environment and natural resources in the Kazakh media in general is at a high professional level. On the criterion of “conflict-sensitive language” and “easy to understand” all media showed a high enough average score ranging from 3.38 to 3.60 scores. The material is presented in a fairly relaxed manner, provocative language is never used. Emotional expressions are more common in the private channels than in the state channels; such presentations of material is found in those stories where

the environmental impact on people's lives and environmental issues are discussed. More general stories are characterized by calm and smooth manner of presentation.

As for simple language, in general the authors of products - in all media - avoid the use of terminology. Stories, where there are special terms or terms that need clarification are rare and are more the exception.

4. According to the criterion of "accuracy & pertinence of sources", the situation in different media has its differences. On state television a key source of information are the representatives of the government, the experts often express a point of view confirming the position of the state. In many materials the representatives of state bodies are the only source of information or the translator of views on the issue. At that, this trend occurs with other media. Of the 20 analyzed products, 5 contained only one source of information, which was the state representative or the employee of state-controlled company.

As for the private KTK channel, the situation is common when the only one source of non-obvious certainty is referred to. At the same time the Internet media showed much more responsible attitude to the choice of speakers. Almost in all stories their number was more than two, the independent experts were often involved.

5. As a result of content analysis of materials quite superficial attitude to "actionable information" has been found in Kazakhstan mass media and it is characteristic of all media. Materials are mostly illustrative or declarative, referral to future is an exception.

The state TV channel "Khabar" scored the highest average score (2.60), however, it has less to do with the analysis of the material or the depth of the issue, but to the fact that the materials themselves initially are dedicated to already developed plans of government agencies responsible for one or another problem. In the stories these plans are presented as ideas to resolve the stated problems, accordingly, these stories formally receive a higher score. However, actually, the practicality of these products is much lower.

6. Also, for the authors who create materials on the themes under consideration, it is not always important to display the problem at the level of "relevance to environment and natural resources". Content analysis showed that all the media referred to this matter generally in the same way, the average score for the media ranges from 2.13 (KTK TV channel) to 2.40 (Khabar TV channel). Almost all of the issues addressed in the materials are dedicated to Kazakh realities, however, are presented as a special case and the stories almost never go to the level of environmental problems typical for a particular region of the country.

7. "Human Interest" is the most typical technique for private KTK TV channel, while state television and Internet portal obviously neglect this way of material presentation. This seems to be due to the fact that it is important for the private channel "to catch" and "keep" the viewer, so "life stories" are very effective to create the most colorful and emotionally interesting picture.

As for the state TV channel, due to the specifics of the main customer and the objectives of information provision the emphasis is made on the facts and positive impact on the overall picture. For the Internet portal, where the reader is offered a concise and succinct textual material and where large products tend not to be published (not to lose the attention), "life stories" are also not attractive.

8. According to the parameter such as "inclusion of women" private KTK TV channel is also a leader (3 scores), women were involved as experts in a half of the products analyzed. Furthermore, most of the materials were prepared by women. At the same time, at the state TV channel "Khabar" the opposite picture was observed (1.40 scores). Women were never involved as the experts there, in one of the stories they were represented only as people from the street answering questions. Similarly, women never appear as the authors of the materials.

As for the Internet portal “InformBureau”, involvement of women is quite heterogeneous, however, the content analysis data suggest that for the media, gender is not an important factor both for selection of participants of the materials, and of their authors.

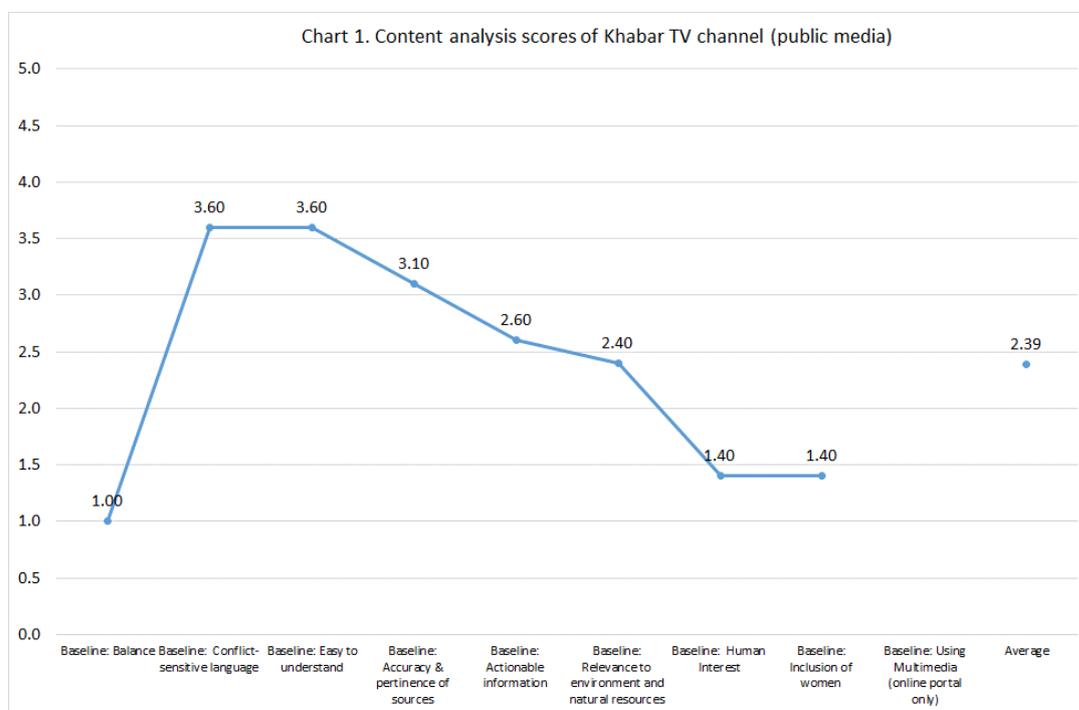
9. “Use of multimedia” to cover the topic of the environment and natural resources cannot be considered common practice in online media of Kazakhstan. Only template and thematic photos are most commonly used, other visualization means or other content illustrations are used rarely.

A detailed analysis per media outlet in this country is presented in the below sections.

Khabar TV channel (public media)

With an average score of 2.39, Khabar is short from meeting Internew’ quality standards. Detailed results as follows:

Figure 5: Quality of content results, Khabar media outlet - Kazakhstan



a. **Balance** (average score of 1). Most pieces studies only presented one point of view on the issue dealt with in the story. For example in the program “In fact”, where the benefits of alternative energy sources were discussed, there was no mention of the implementation difficulties in Kazakhstan from a private or academic stakeholder, only the position of state agencies was presented.

b. **Conflict-sensitive language** (average score was 3.60). The general rhetoric of the authorial program “In fact” was not very conflict-sensitive. However for the rest of the pieces analysed from other programmes, the materials were presented by calm weighted terms, without provocation and excessively dramatic clichés. The material is presented professionally in general and the viewer is not imposed on the emotional perception of the problems.

c. **Easy to understand**. For most stories analyzed the presentation of material is characterized by a fairly simple and understandable language (average score of 3.60)

The story of the above mentioned program “In fact” scored 5 – the highest score, where there was virtually no special terminology and everything was discussed with regular citizen in colloquial everyday language (when conducting walking passers survey) and in simple and understandable emotional language in those periods, when onscreen moderator spoke.

Two news stories and the report of final program dedicated to greening the surroundings of Astana (“Green Lungs of Astana”) were presented in simple language with understandable to all terms that do not require special explanations.

The article about the moraine lake scored 1, as the viewers were not explained the key term “moraine lake” that is unfamiliar to the residents of not mountainous areas of the country (the majority), and it was not disclosed what was the threat of it for Almaty.

d. **Accuracy & pertinence of sources** (average score of 3.10). In three of the five pieces studies, the sole source of information are the representatives of the state bodies or government agencies. Such materials scored 2.5 as the only one source was used, but this is the public authority and hence a reliable source.

In two other cases, the president of Kazakhstan was the leading source. The material of “In fact” program scored 3, because in addition to the president the position of ordinary people was actively used, but they cannot be attributed to the experts in any way. The article “Green Lungs of Astana” covered the position of four eminent experts, and therefore it scored 5.

e. **Actionable information.** (average score of 2.60) The analyzed products showed heterogeneity for this indicator. Short stories, including news about the violation of environmental laws and the problem of moraine lake were limited to a statement of information without any ideas, forecasts and proposals, so these materials scored 1 point each. At the same time, other stories presented some concrete plans for the future and, given the varying degrees of their feasibility in the near future, these scored 3-4 points each.

f. **Relevance to environment and natural resources.** (average score of 2.40). In this case, as regarding the practicality of the information, it is difficult to identify a general tendency characteristic for that channel. Scores are distributed non-uniformly, which is related both to the volume of the material, and to its objectives. Short stories do not focus on the big picture and do not tend to show all cause-effect relationships. More detailed stories pay more attention to links with local context, focus on the long term and relevance to the environment of an area.

g. **Human Interest.** This technique is rarely used in preparation of materials on the TV channel “Khabar”, judging from the analyzed material. Average score is 1.40. Only one story – “Green Lungs of Astana” – had an element of the life history, when it was told about the landscaper who has been working at the “green belt” during the entire period of existence of the forest zone. In the program “In fact”, a passer-by respondent complained of air pollution appealing to his own experience. There are no “life stories” in the remaining materials.

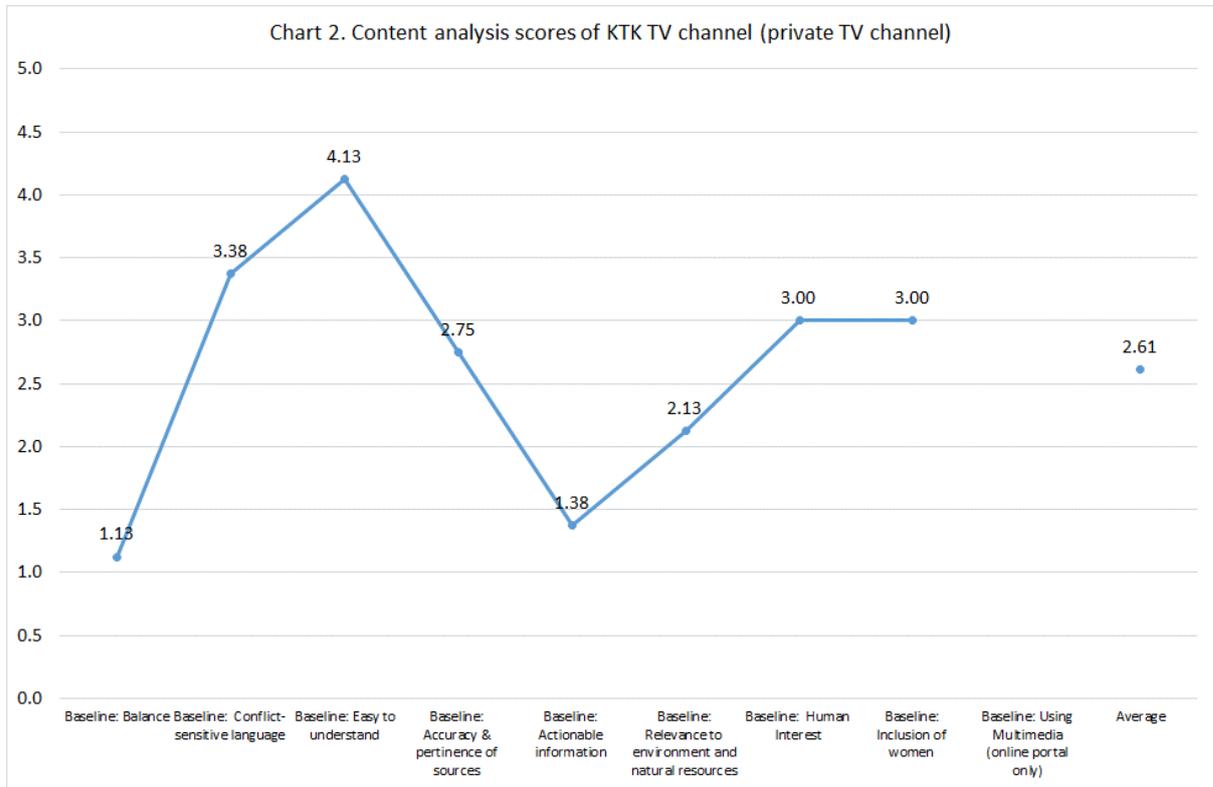
h. **Inclusion of women.** (average score of 1.40). Women were never been involved as experts. With the release of the program “In fact” dedicated to the “Clean Energy”, three female passers-by in the street were involved, who expressed their views on clean energy issues from the ordinary audiences’ perception. Moreover, the author’s materials were also prepared by men.

i. **Use of multimedia.** This criterion was used only for online media outlets and is therefore not applicable for this media outlet.

KTK TV channel (private TV channel)

KTK TV’s news stories analysed had a duration of no more than 3-4 minutes and had an average score of 2.61. Results as follows:

Figure 6: Quality of content results, KTK TV media outlet - Kazakhstan



- a. **Balance.** The stories showed a balance at the level of 1 score in almost all cases but one, when in the story related to strangle of midges the viewpoint of urban entomologists was also partly presented, however, there was no question of the uniform airtime and neutral attitude.
- b. **Conflict-sensitive language** (average score of 3.38). Stories that concerned people’s problems (rats, floods, hydrogen sulphide emissions) were covered more emotionally, but without provocation turns. Stories on general issues not directly affecting the population were told in more balanced language, however, they failed short in presentings possible solution to the problem, which would have merited the highest score.
- c. **Easy to understand.** (average score of 4.13). Half of the material gained the highest score of 5. Only one story dedicated to the fight against the invasion of rats in Almaty scored 1, as it contained terms such as “deratization destructive activities”, “extremely dangerous infections like yersiniosis, pasteurellosis, listeriosis”, “synanthropic bird” without any clarifications from experts or journalists.
- d. **Accuracy & pertinence of sources** (average score of 2.75). In half of the cases there is only one source of information and its reliability can be questioned. Another two stories involved government officials as the sole source of information and, but the source is reliable. In the story about the hydrogen sulfide emissions, in addition to official competent in the matter, the academician as an expert in the problem under consideration was also involved, therefore, it got the highest score.
- e. **Actionable information** (average score of 1.38). Pieces do not strive to make recommendations or conclusions for the future. The vast majority of stories rather colorfully describe the problem being limited to purely descriptive character of the material. Only one story - about a flooded area where several families live - voiced a number of feasible measures that could change the situation.

f. **Relevance to environment and natural resources** (average score of 2.13). Most stories are rarely linked to the environmental problems and local conditions. The highest score (4) was assigned to the stories about invasion of rats and hydrogen sulfide emissions, since they showed the impact on the local context, but there were no details, statistics, and general coverage of similar problems.

g. **Human Interest** (average score of 3). In almost all stories, except for brief materials that are not directly related to people’s lives, in one way or another uses the elements of the “life stories” which make the necessary impression and hold attention. However complete and powerful life stories were not presented, so the highest score has not been assigned. Of the eight products, in only two (unexpected smog in Northern Kazakhstan and changed color of the Tikhaya River) the human interest criterion was not presented.

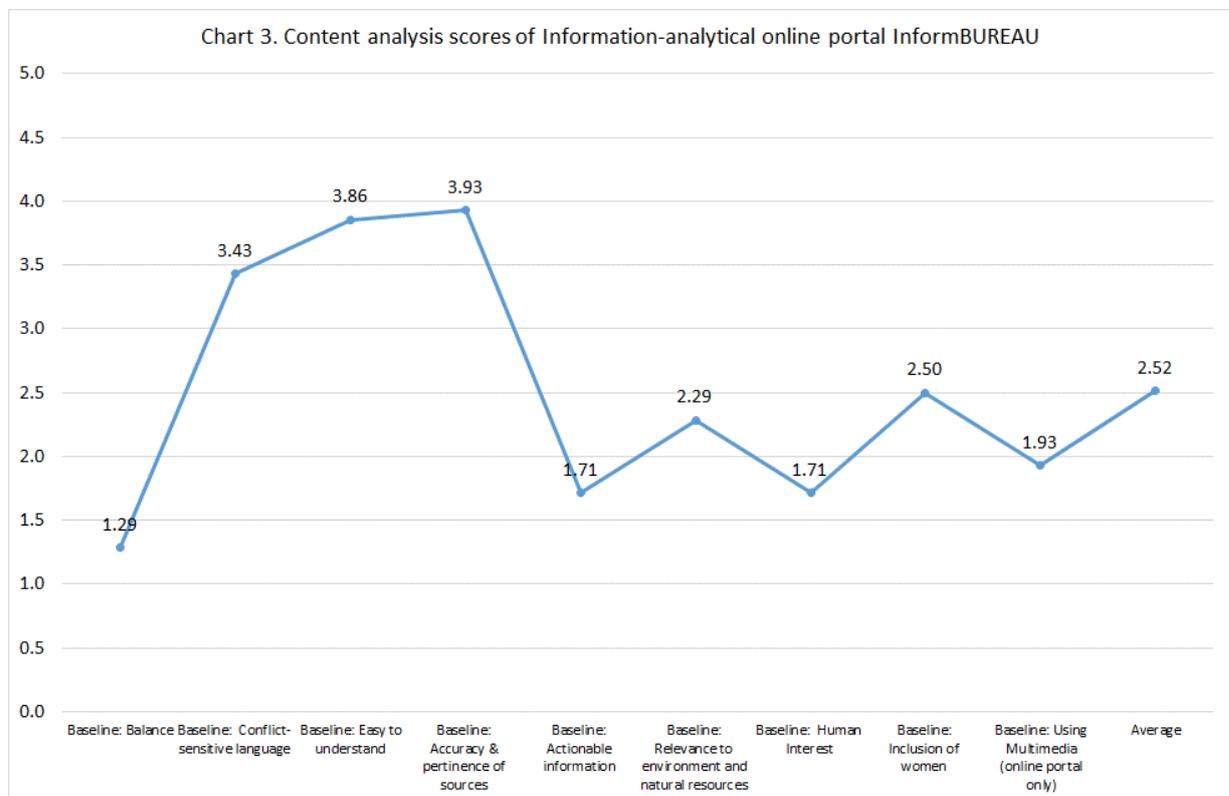
h. **Inclusion of women** (average score made up 3). Analysis of materials showed a fairly high - almost on a par with men - involvement of women in the coverage of environmental and natural resources issues. The two materials scored 3.5, as only one woman was involved, but she was an expert. Two stories involved two female experts and they scored 5. In two stories women were not involved. As for the authors of the materials, in contrast to the “Khabar” channel, the authors of six of the eight stories are women.

i. **Use of multimedia**. This criterion was used only for online media outlets.

Online portal InformBureau

All the seven pieces studied for this media outlet were news stories and had an average of 2.52. Details as follows:

Figure 7: Quality of content results, InformBureau online media outlet - Kazakhstan



a. **Balance** (average score of 1.29). Only one point of view was covered generally except for a news piece about the discharge of waste into the Tikhaya River by “Kazzinc”. The material, in addition to the environmental prosecutor’s opinion and references to social networks,

the position of the enterprise is also presented. However, the proportion of the content provided to present “Kazzinc” position is clearly lower than that of other participants, and the author’s opinion is not on its side.

b. Conflict-sensitive language (average score of 3.43) Presentation of the material by the Internet portal InformBureau showed high conflict sensitivity; the materials are estimated at 3 or 4 scores. As is the case with KTK channel, emotions appear when stories affect the lives of ordinary people, but when it comes to natural phenomena or pollution of whatever nature regardless of people the language becomes entirely neutral and correct, however, a possible solution to the problem is still not proposed.

c. Easy to understand (average score made up 3.86). Most of the materials are easily understood, complicated or unexplained terminology is virtually absent.

The only story that scored 1 is the above-mentioned material about the discharge of waste into the Tikhaya River by “Kazzinc”. The text without explanations includes expressions such as “water inlet well”, “pulp discharge”, “tailings”.

d. Accuracy & pertinence of sources (average score of 3.93) The Internet portal InformBureau uses fairly responsible approach to selection of sources of information, almost always these are authoritative experts. Three stories scored 5, as the situation was covered with involvement of more than two specialists.

In the story about the unknown production smoke in Astana only one source is used, but since it was a representative of public institution, which is considered a reliable source, then the story scored 2.5.

e. Actionable information (average score of 1.71). Most of the stories completely lack recommendations or proposals. In five out of seven materials there are no recommendations or proposals whatsoever. They are present in two stories. Thus, in the material on the prospects of elimination of stench from Astana holding basin Taldykol plans of local administration are set out with financial terms and calculations, but due to the lack of applicability element in the other cases, 4 scores were assigned. A similar situation is observed with the material about the problem of domination of mosquitoes and black flies in the country, but there are ideas and recommendations more or less clearly spelled out with less likely realization in life, so 3 points were assigned.

f. Relevance to environment and natural resources. (average score of 2.29). Not in all stories the authors explained the effect of the phenomenon or problem under consideration on the environment of the country or a particular region. However, in two cases out of seven 4 scores were assigned, as in the materials about the hydrogen sulfide emissions and the invasion of midges connection to the local context was present, but there was a lack of implementers and reference information.

g. Human Interest (average score for this criterion is 1.71). This media most often neglects using “life stories” in its materials. In three materials of the seven “life stories” are completely absent, in another three - only their minimum components are present. Only in one story, one can see the use of this technique, where it is discussed what the inconvenience Kazakhstanis numerous mosquitoes and gnats bring.

h. Inclusion of women (average score for this criterion is 2.50). Involvement of women is not at the highest level. From seven materials, four materials do not involve women at all. At the same time in two materials that received 5 scores two or more women as experts are involved. One story scored 3.5, as there is only one woman, however, she is an expert.

i. Use of multimedia (average score of 1.93). Most often this media used template and several thematic photos. Only in two of the seven cases an exemplary short amateur videos without the accompanying text was available. Audio materials and infographics in the materials in the sample were not provided. The material related to river contamination scored 2.5 as an illustrative video was present there, but both template and theme photos were absent.

Kazakhstan in-depth interviews

Within the framework of the study, in-depth interviews were conducted with the representatives of the NGOs from the environmental field and media experts covering the theme of ecology.

NGO experts

All the representatives of the NGOs on the question of how well and accurately the topics of environment is covered by the media, said that **the level of coverage was insufficient**. At that, two out of three respondents expressed specifically extremely negative assessment, as “poorly”, “badly” and “irregularly”. The third representative of the NGO avoided harsh evaluations, as he noted, that he monitored the media very little, but also expressed his opinion about the unsatisfactory level of coverage.

The representatives of the NGOs cover various subjects depending on the area of their activities. However, two of the three representatives noted that their organizations **often responded to emergency situations** such as mudflow, death of saiga antelopes, river pollution, felling of trees and etc. giving an expert assessment or covering the subject in a special column. To the question whether there is enough information in the media on the environmental theme, the representatives of the NGOs rather **unanimously noted that it was not enough**. Speaking about the reasons, the NGO representatives highlighted the absence of the authorized state body, the lack of independent experts, strict censorship, resulting in de facto ban for some topics, and possible lack of airtime.

The representatives of the NGOs found it difficult to answer the questions on what media cover the environmental issues, referring to the fact that they are not engaged in special tracking of media activity in the field of ecology. Representative of the branch of the State Institute of Geography suggested that the central TV channels of Kazakhstan cover the theme periodically, but she could not indicate any media or particular journalists in the field of environment. The other two respondents were not able to mention any publication, program or specific journalists.

We could not find common media during in-depth interviews, which all the representatives of the NGOs specializing in environmental issues would work with together. Each representative of the NGO preferred to identify those media that are suitable for his business profile. For example, if representative of the branch of the State Institute of Geography, mentioned the state-owned media, such as Khabar, Kazakhstanskaya Pravda, Egemen Kazakhstan, the head of interviewed independent NGO, identified publications from the private sector, such as KazTAG (at the moment there is a lawsuit against the head of KazTAG, which most of the experts associate with political motives), the newspaper “Karavan” and magazine “Eurasian Energy”.

None of the respondents could name specific journalists, who would work together with the NGO representatives. That is, the respondents did not know of journalists specializing in environmental theme and did not cooperate concretely. Overall, this leads to preliminary conclusion that **in Kazakhstan ecological journalism is of peripheral character**, editorial staff does not include specialists on environmental issues.

This conclusion is also confirmed by the survey of media experts: none of them named any journalist specializing in environmental issues. It should be noted that in Kazakhstan, for example, in the political, economic or even criminal category a number of names of journalists are known who are engaged only in their topics for many years.

To the question of the availability and transparency of environmental data, **all three respondents agreed that the data were missing**, as is evident by the lack of available presentation that state authorities cannot manage informing the public.

However, opinions diverged regarding to what extent such information should be open. The representative of the branch of the State Institute of Geography is of the opinion that **full access to environmental information of the general public may cause erroneous interpretation**

and panic that would lead to undesirable consequences. By virtue of which she offers to differentiate access to information on the principle of state agencies, specialized institutions, and the general public. At the same time, in her opinion, at the moment, specialized institutions get the information not fully.

The representatives of non-governmental NGOs expressed the opinion that *the entire information should be open to the public*. Since, to date, insufficient information is published, whereas the information that is provided is selected not depending on the needs of the society, but rather based on discretionary or departmental interests of the state bodies.

Media representatives

Two media experts interviewed, as well as the representatives of the NGOs **in a negative way described the level of coverage of the topic of environment and natural resources in the local media**. A parliamentary representative noted the lack of serious analytical programs on the environment, reported that the media did not pay attention to the theme of ecology. In turn, the expert reported that due to the state order in the sphere of mass media in Kazakhstan there was a general degradation of all media, their critical dependence on the state's interests in the coverage of a particular topic. That is, the state is not interested in a full-scale public attention to the environment, accordingly, the media do not have the means and the desire to concentrate their efforts on the environmental theme.

Media representative expressed the opposite position. According to her opinion, the environmental topic coverage in Kazakhstan is planned, moreover, there are all the signs of a positive trend in the direction of increasing of the airtime.

To the question of which environmental protection topics are covered in the media, respondents' opinions were divided again. If the expert described the subject extremely harshly as irregular, unprofessional, covering only in emergencies, the media representative noted that her editor's office produced many stories on environmental issues: from emergencies to stories about the need to preserve the flora, fauna and the entire ecosphere in Kazakhstan.

To the question if there is enough information surrounding the topic of the environment and natural resources in the media in general, how regular and who covers, all the experts agreed that **the information was not sufficient and that the information at best was lost in the general flow**.

According to the respondents, *there is not enough educational information showing the relationship between man and nature*. In particular, the media representative noted that due to her occupation she often faced with environmental damage caused by people due to their ignorance. The expert noted *the lack of the information at the micro level*, at the level of city districts, so that a simple man in the street knew the level of ongoing environmental activities, and knew where to go in case of violation of the environmental legislation.

To the question of transparency of the information about the environment, respondents' opinions sharply divided. A parliamentary representative and the expert were sure that *there was a lot of information, it was published on the websites of government agencies, but the media did not use these data*. In particular, the expert pointed to the availability of quarterly, semi-annual and annual reports.

However, according to the media representative, *there is not enough information about the environment*. The state agencies and other stakeholders of ecological processes conceal the information, provide it with a delay, provide little information and etc. Also, the media representative referred to the reports mentioned by the expert, but in contrast to the public man, the journalist believed that these statements were of little help in the daily work of the media, that more detailed and updated information was required, which had to be obtained only at the official request.

When asked about the demand of ecology sections in the content of local TV channels, radio, print and online editions, *all respondents unanimously pointed to the need of such formats*. However, almost all indicated a lack of interest at the moment to create such a content.

Regarding a feedback from the public, media representative gave the most complete answer, she emphasized the high activity of the society in response to the destruction of the ecological environment. That is, citizens apply to the media very intensively when they see how the environment is harmed by such actions as tree felling, illegal dumping and etc.

A parliamentary representative in fact evaded the answer saying that her party was taking all measures to public inquiries. The expert noted that *the professional agenda was very different from the narrow-minded one, therefore, he had to deal with the myths and stereotypes*. Apparently, the kind of activity of this respondent is connected with the opposition to social activity.

To the question of what measures should be taken in the future to raise public awareness about the environment and natural resources to receive high-quality, practical information, the respondents expressed the following views: the expert proposed to intensify efforts at the level of secondary schools hoping for change of mindset in the next generation.

The media representative sees the opportunities in addition to columns and programs on TV in development of social promos and banners.

A parliamentary representative refused to answer the question citing that this issue required a separate judgment and in-depth discussion.

Government representatives

Representatives of the government agencies assessed the coverage of the environmental issues in Kazakhstan rather positively. They mainly criticized the media, its incompetence, its pursuit of sensationalism, and the absence of the environmental journalism as such.

For obvious reasons, the representatives of the state agencies are evaluating the national information policy in a quite positive way, moreover, it is the state media they rely on in the active coverage of the environmental topics.

All respondents expressed confidence that Kazakhstan has a wide access to the environmental information and that the state agencies actively cooperate with the media, even more so, the MFA representative noted that his Committee has to look for experts for the media and initiate a variety of environmental topics independently, as the media lacks competence in order to do it on their own.

In contrast to the representatives of NGOs and media experts, representatives of the government agencies do have information about specific environmental journals such as "Ecology of Kazakhstan", etc. However, it should be noted that the mentioned publications exist on the money allocated within the state procurement and are actually affiliated and state-run media. This is a very common practice in Kazakhstan, where the Ministry has its own edition, running it through a controlled RSE.

All respondents are confident that Kazakhstan has all the resources for the further development of the dissemination of environmental information.

Conclusion

In general, in-depth interviews showed that all respondents, except for the government agencies, considered the environmental coverage in Kazakhstan at a low level. Even those respondents who to a direct question reported about the adequacy of the information, acknowledged the lack of information and high quality content.

Virtually all of the respondents blamed public authorities in current situation. Even experts and journalists affiliated with the government recognize closeness of the state bodies or the lack of government commitment to cover the environmental issues. Of course, except for

representatives of the government agencies, who see the problem in the low competence of reporters.

Two respondents noted one of important nuances as the division of environmental subjects among several government bodies, which reduces the level of responsibility, coherence and financing in the media.

Also, refusal of the representatives of state bodies of Kazakhstan to participate in this study is highly significant in this light. Despite of official requests to the relevant agencies, direct or veiled rejection was received on all calls. Thus, the conclusion by the respondents of closed state structures is confirmed.

Thus, the availability of the information on the environment and natural resources in the mass media of Kazakhstan showed the following results:

First, the data of the study demonstrated that the existing system of state control of the media greatly affects coverage of the environmental topics. State media and the state order for private media, internal and direct censorship, dependence on government agencies form the general background for coverage of environmental topics. In this regard, **the problems of the environment and natural resources are covered only from the positions suitable for authorities.**

This conclusion is supported by the results of content analysis of the data of in-depth interviews with experts. At the level of content analysis all examined products demonstrated only one point of view, while the experts in many areas emphasized dependence of the media on the “good will” of the state bodies.

Secondly, despite of the need of the society for an easily accessible and understandable information on the status and issues of the environment, at the moment **the level of coverage of the environmental issues in Kazakhstan is low.** The results of the study suggest that this is due to the fact that the state does not wish to publicize the environmental problems being painful topic for the public.

In-depth interviews and media materials, where there are ordinary citizens, show clear deep concern and interest of the public in obtaining the information. Thus, some experts emphasize the high activity of citizens and the need to provide access to environmental information to the public. However, on the basis of content analysis, the share of materials on this subject does not exceed 3% in the total amount of media products. None of the experts could name any specialized program or heading dedicated to environmental issues.

From the results of in-depth interviews it can be assumed that **this is due to the reluctance of the state to finance the activity of the media in this area.**

Third, the study showed that the Kazakh media **rarely referred to independent experts in the field of ecology.** Thus, the data of content analysis showed that the main speakers in environmental material were either employees of government agencies, or organizations that are depending on the state.

One can assume that this is due to two main factors. First of all, the theme of ecology, in contrast to the politics, economy, sports, crime, etc., **has no clearly defined pool of professional journalists,** who would have studied the subject for years, would have known the personalities. As a result, since the reporters involved in other areas are engaged, they go the path of least resistance by processing the official reports of state bodies.

Another factor is **the weakness of the NGOs themselves** lacking incentives and opportunities to conduct extensive information campaigns.

Fourth, based on the results of content analysis, we can conclude that the information about the condition of the environment proposed by the media is **private and almost never gives viewers or readers a complete picture,** does not seek to raise public awareness about the common or typical Kazakh ecology problems.

This is confirmed by in-depth interviews, where experts say about the shortage of environmental education programs, the low level of environmental awareness, which often leads to predatory attitude to the environment.

Fifth, **involvement of women in coverage of the environmental and natural resources issues in Kazakhstan is quite high**, there are a lot of women- experts both in media coverage and among the journalists, as well as in the number of experts in the sample of in-depth interviews, where their share made up 50%.

Women occupy leadership positions both in government bodies and in the NGOs, they are media persons actively engaged in the discussion of environmental topics. Only public channel “Khabar” showed low involvement of women among other media studied, but most likely this is due to random sampling.

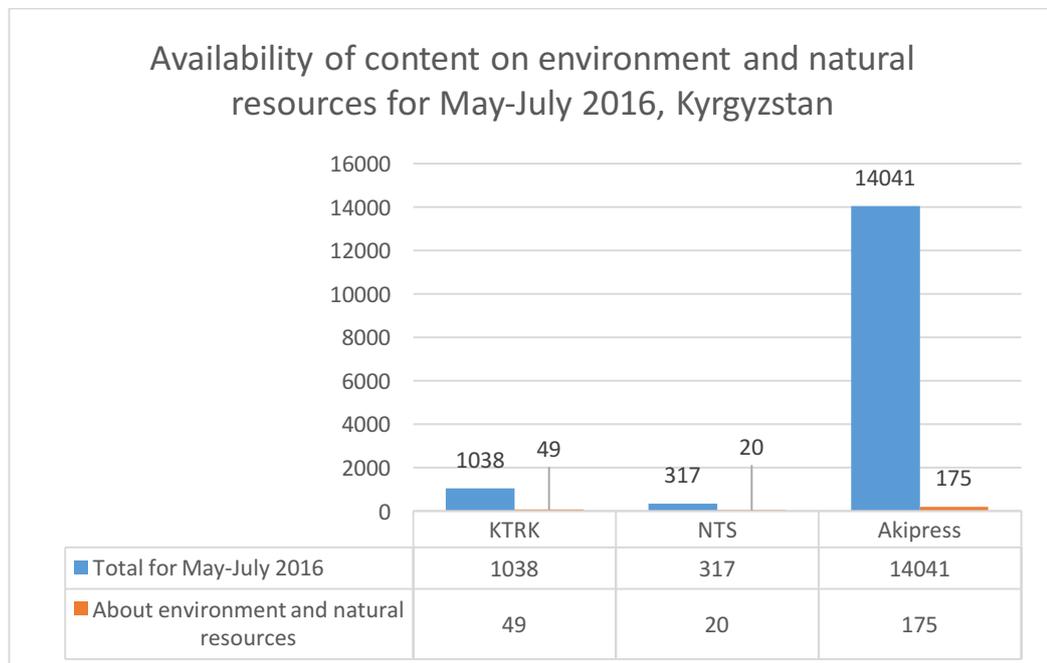
Kyrgyzstan

Availability of content around environment and natural resources

Availability of content around environment and natural resources issues is low ($\geq 6\%$) based on our media monitoring analysis, details below. These findings were also triangulated via key informant interviews, finding a matching perception of availability of content around these topics.

1. KTRK.
 - a. The total number of products for the reporting period (May-July 2016) was 1038.
 - b. Of these, 49 materials (5% of total) were dedicated to the theme of ecology and the environment,
 - c. Sample size: 7 pieces.
2. NTS
 - a. The total number of products for the reporting period was 317
 - b. Of these 20 pieces (6% of the total) referred to environmental issues.
 - c. Sample size: 8 pieces.
3. Akipress
 - a. The total number of products for the reporting period was 14, 041
 - b. Of these, 175 (1%) referred to environmental issues
 - c. Sample size: 12 pieces.

Figure 8: Availability of content on environmental and natural resources issues - Kyrgyzstan



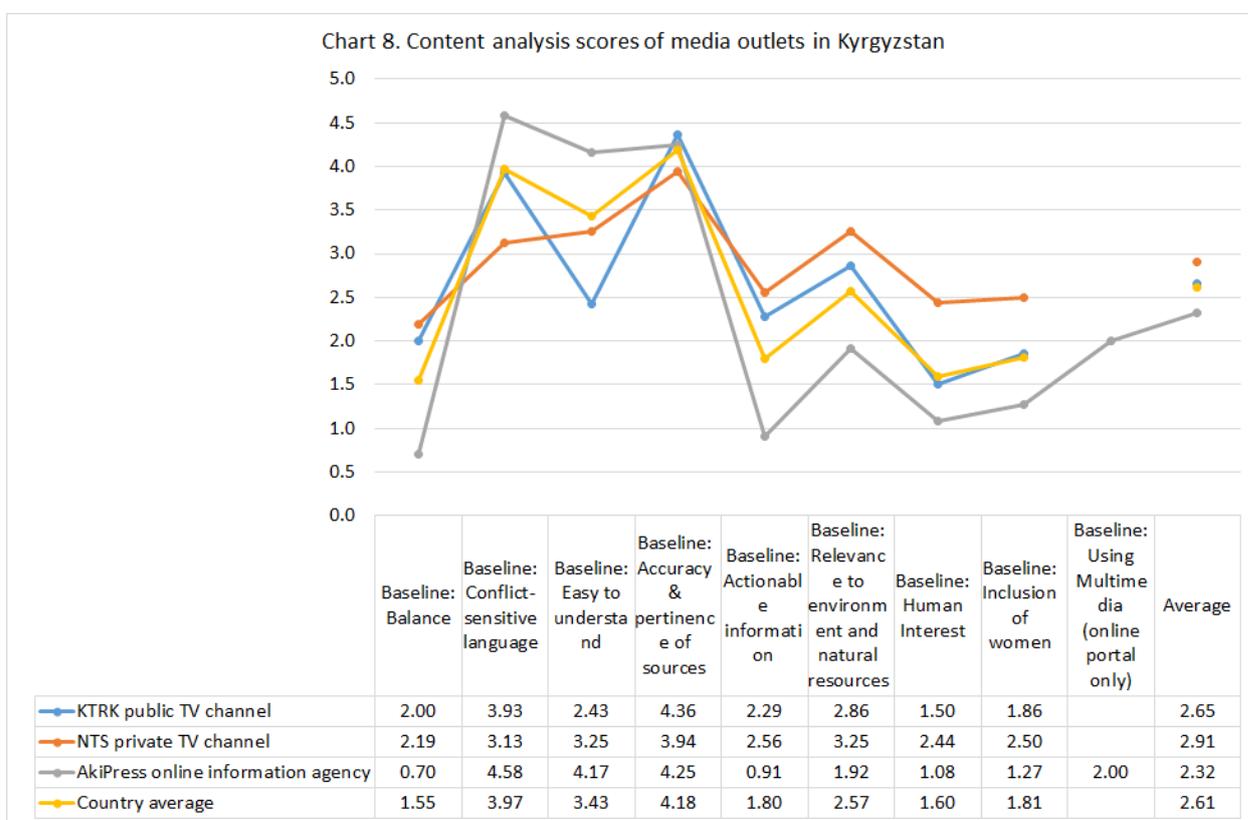
Only KTRK has a separate section for the ecological theme (environment and natural resources), NTS has its materials on ecological theme at the society category, AKIpress – at the section of accidents and investigations, mostly in the form of short notes about natural disasters (official reports of the responsible authorities), less frequently in the section of society.

The part of the materials of AKIpress has the least conformity by the relevance to the topic of environment, in particular the responses of the mayor’s office to the questions of citizens. This type of product cannot always be assessed according to the content analysis criteria.

Quality of content around environment and natural resources

Quality content on environmental and natural resources does not meet Internews’ quality standards (average of 2.61). Main issues are related to lack of balance (use of one point of view only, generally state-sources), lack of human angle in stories as well as for lack of inclusion of women or actionable information. We note that key informant interviews also agree with these findings. More details as follows:

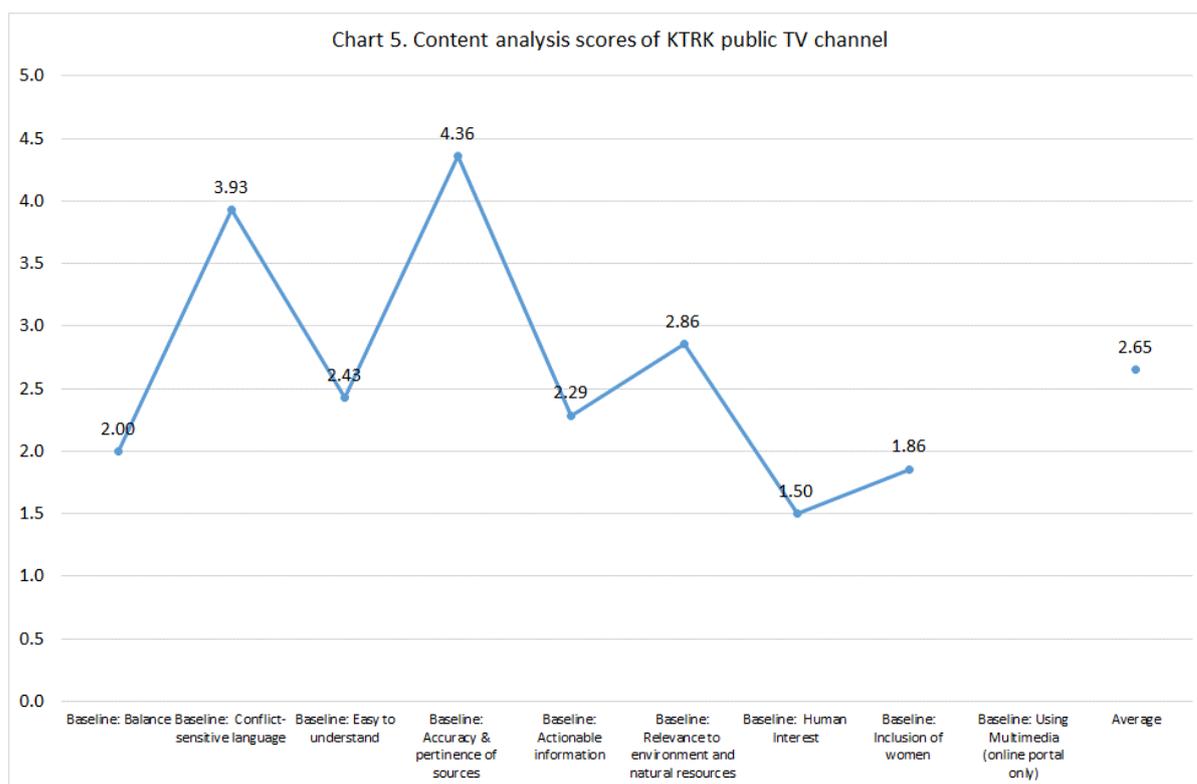
Figure 9: Quality content results - Kyrgyzstan



KTRK public TV channel

In total 7 news stories were analyzed, 3 of them are on the topic of water resources, 3 are on the topic of greening the city, and 1 - on environmental safety. The average duration of the material is about 2.5 - 3 min.

Figure 10: Quality content results of KTRK TV media outlet - Kyrgyzstan



1. On **balance** (average score of 2), most of the materials reflect one point of view; usually it can be a point of view of local authorities and / or citizens. The materials of the neutral tone prevail, however rarely the emotional coloring occurs as in the certain words of the text, so in the intonations of the author.
2. **Conflict-sensitive language** (average of 3.93). Provocative language or attempts to cause a sensation has not been detected in the analyzed units. 3 of 7 subjects include scientific/technical/professional language without explanations/definitions.
3. **Accuracy and pertinence of sources** (average of 2.43). In most materials the representatives of the state municipal authorities are involved as sources of information, often the residents of the settlements, where the event takes place, serve as the respondents. Also, there are cases when the author refers to the sources a link to which does not exist and/or its reliability cannot be verified. This is reflected in the text, the words “ecologists/ experts/community think”, etc.
4. **Actionable information** (average 2.29). From the standpoint of usability, most materials do not provide any advices/ideas for solving the problem/issue. But 2 materials contain interviews of respondents who give possible ways of problem solution.
5. **Relevance to environmental issues** (average of 2.83). The content of 2 out of 7 news stories are in line with the theme of environment and natural resources, the topic is described sufficiently, but there are no details. In the rest of the materials the topic of the

environment and natural resources is reflected superficially, there are no a profound approach and analysis of the raised problems.

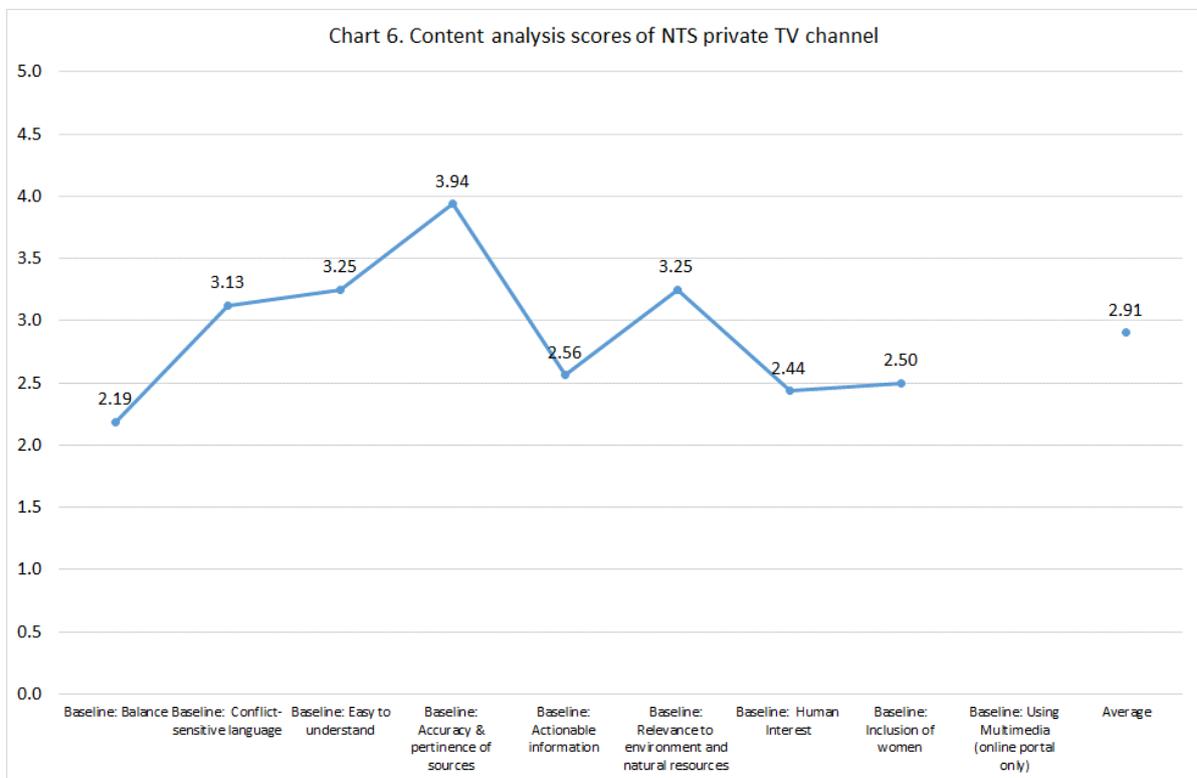
6. **Human interest** (average of 1.50). Virtually all the materials have no "life story" or reflected indirectly.
7. Gender inclusion (average of). The gender balance is not kept; the news stories do not involve women.
8. **Use of multimedia** (average of).The footages are mediocre, static, more likely to be spatially limited; the voices of the narrators have not been elaborated. In terms of content of materials there is a lack of a creative approach as to a method of study and exposition of the problem, and as to the operator's work.

To improve the quality of the work it is recommended to train journalists to cover the issues of environment and natural resources (approaches, methods of coverage, style and ethics of presentation of a material); to refer to the “life stories” more often, to be creative in process of shooting, to work on the creation of "speaking", "live" shots, to give dynamics; to give reliable links and sources of information; to identify communication task-message (to define the ultimate goal of materials on the coverage of environmental issues).

NTS private TV channel

In total 8 subjects were analyzed, 7 of them - news, 1 - in the framework of TV shows. The average duration of the materials is 2.5 - 3 min. Theme issues reflected in the stories: 3 - on the theme of water resources, and one story for each of the topics on environmental damage, damage to the fauna, natural disasters, and air pollution.

Figure 11: Quality content results of NTS TV media outlet - Kyrgyzstan



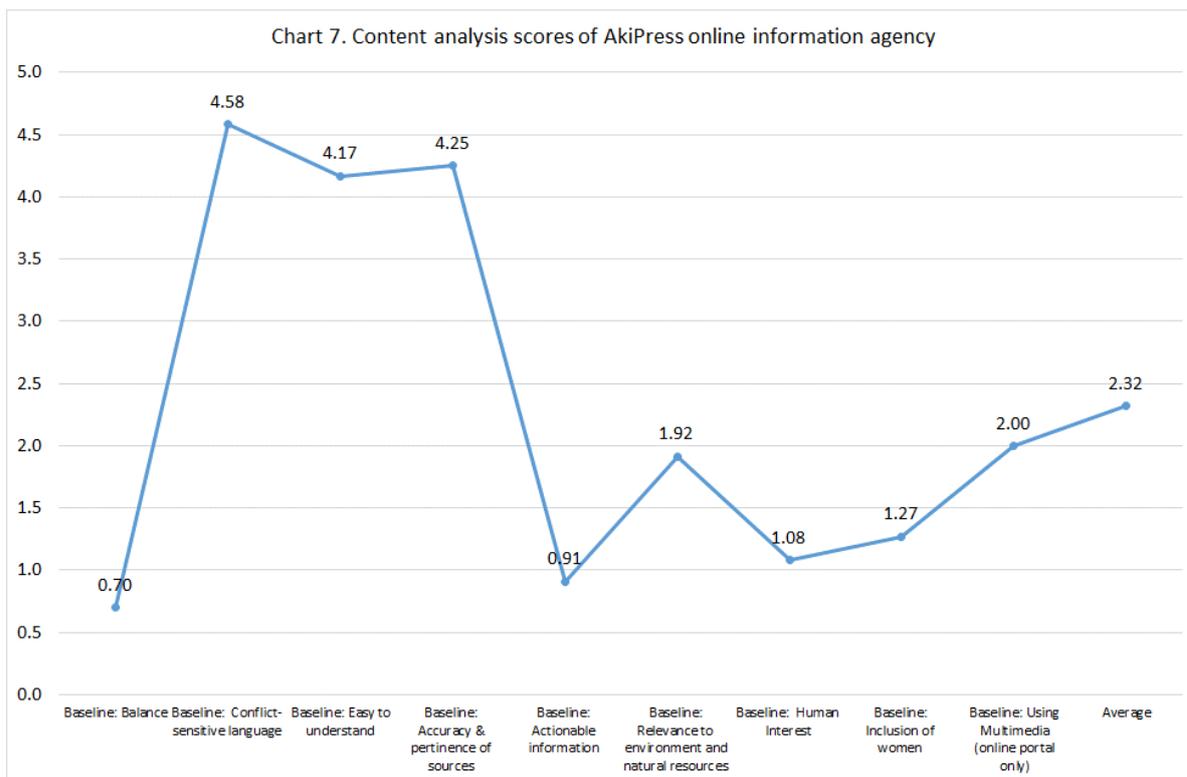
1. **Balance** (average score of 2.19). In the vast majority (5 of 8) the opinions of interested parties are not represented.
2. **Conflict-sensitive language** (average score of 3.13). The neutral tone is kept, although it is possible to observe an excessive emotional coloring in certain cases
3. **Easy to understand** (average score of 3.25). In the majority of materials simple definitions are used to make the material easy for perception, only 2 out of 8 stories have deciphered terms.
4. **Accuracy & pertinence of sources** (average score of 3.94). Sources of information are mainly of medium relevance; there is a lack of representation of the maximum number of interested parties.
5. **Actionable information** (average score of 2.56). In several materials there are ideas and recommendations to solve the problems, the rest of the materials remain at the level of factual description.
6. **Relevance to environment and natural resources** (average score of 3.25). Most of the material corresponds to the theme of environment and natural resources, they are described in detail, but often do not have enough information in terms of representation of the parties, expert opinion, or effects / forecasts.
7. **Human Interest** (average score of 2.44). In the majority of the materials "life stories" are represented indirectly, and in certain stories are well reflected
8. **Inclusion of women** (average score of 2.50). The involvement of women is presented, but not as experts.
9. **Use of multimedia**. This is not applicable to this type of content. However, we note that the majority of the materials have good camera work, there are attempts to show dynamics, the style of presentation has considerably improved, inter-noise is present. The quality of content was lacking for a clear focus on the issues of ecology, causes, consequences and solutions.

It is recommended to monitor the representation of all stakeholders; there is also a necessity of the series of training seminars for journalists on covering environmental issues. Because in the materials there is still more emphasis on the accompanying details, the main topic remains behind the scenes. Identify a communication task-message.

AKIpress online information agency

Twelve pieces were analysed in detail as follows:

Figure 12: Quality content results of AKIpress online media outlet - Kyrgyzstan



Half of these publications are statements of fact of the incidents, in most cases according to official sources, half is messages covered by the citizens. In terms of effective coverage of environmental issues, the content does not meet the requirements.

It is assumed that the media organization does not aim to focus on environmental issues. All the analyzed materials relate to matters of environment and natural resources superficially. Posted materials do not lead to actions, do not imply increase of the involvement of civil society, do not offer recommendations/ideas for improvement. From the standpoint of access to information, because of the presenting only one point of view, the reader is limited.

In the case of media organization agree to review the publications format, it is recommended to review the communication message in terms of content, which must convey the effective material (including photos) on the topic of ecology.

In-depth interviews analysis

The in-depth interviews with experts from media, government and ecology show that in general the environment and natural resources topics are highlighted not well enough in local mass media. According to majority of interviewed experts' opinions, the reasons are the low demand from media audience on the one side and low capacity of media organizations and journalists on the other side. However, the views of representatives from different fields vary and described below.

NGO experts

Experts in the fields of ecology, environment and natural resources stated that this fields related information has started to appear in mass media more often recently. For example, the biodiversity issues have started to figure in mass media more often. In last 2-3 months forest saving issues, disappearing animals' protection and natural resources corruption topics were

discussed in media mostly. Nevertheless, this media highlight is related to “hot news” or incidents and have spontaneous character.

The project manager of an environmental NGO noted that also the availability of content on environment issues depends on a season and more likely to appear in summer when tourist season is active. In addition, she noted that the publications contain only description of problems but not the solutions. For example, one of the media highlighted the issue related to deforestation in Jeti-Oguz village of Issyk-kul oblast, the material consisted of the description of unlawfulness and that what leaves the audience with the sense of disappointment and disturbance and doesn't give any possible solution. The expert's recommendation is to add an advice such as the phone number people can call in case of witness of illegal deforestation or to add similar tips such as a call to not buying the Christmas tree and by this contribute in saving forests.

Environmental expert noted that we need information that is more objective, because most of natural resources information in media related to mining companies is ordered by someone. *“For example, it would be interesting and informative if we have something like reality TV show of external ecological audit of different mining companies by journalists”*.

Other environmental expert also stated that the availability and quality of information on environment and natural resources is very low. According to him the professional level of experts in Institute of Biology and Soil Science of the Academy of Sciences became very low. *“I have not heard that they were somewhere in the media. The only thing what they are doing now is producing a variety of books with pictures of animals and flowers.”* The expert also noted that there is no information in media related to everyday ecological damage made by agriculture especially in pastures as well as there is not any information on ecological threat from squirrel as a carrier of encephalitis tick in city parks and boulevards.

Media representatives

According to interview of media experts the information in mass media is not actionable as well as not analytical and do not include recommendations on ecological behaviour. The reasons are following:

- Low professional level of journalists in ecology
- Low professional level of most ecological NGOs
- Low level of education in Kyrgyzstan, which influenced a low demand from public on qualitative news on environment and natural resources.

According to experts' opinion now the Facebook users are more active in highlighting the actual information on environment and natural resources than the media outlets. That is due to lack of interest in producing the ecology related information from media outlets top management.

In Kyrgyzstan, we have the experience of media rubric on environment in Region.kg website in 2013, it was quite successful, and however the other media outlets were not very active in this field. Experts note that media today are not shaping the agenda as well as the NGOs and international organizations are not planning the media campaigns of their projects.

In addition, the experts stated that problem of low availability and quality of environment related information is not in information absence or lack of resources such as financial, but in low level of ecological education of media audience and journalists. *“You know, we do not have enough educational information. Many do not even know what they are doing. Many of our citizens and many businesses who are engaged in things harmful to the environment probably make it not intentionally... If these questions covered by media in a large scale, then somehow it could create public opinion against such acts, and in some way it would be possible to stop this harmful activities”*.

Government representatives

Experts from public authorities

- Representative of the State Agency Environmental Protection and Forestry under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic,
- Representative of the State Committee of Industry, Energy and subsoil of the Kyrgyz Republic,
- Representative of the State Inspection for ecological and technical safety under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic

Note that these government bodies are more than open to public in sharing the information and regularly publish it on their websites and Facebook pages. They also note that usually the information on the websites not easy to understand for readers due to use of professional language. According to the interviews, the reason is low capacity of mass media, which does not allow highlighting the topics in high quality level. The government representatives as well as media experts think that media should produce more environment and natural resources related educational content.

Conclusion

The content analysis showed that the main tasks to be covered by media organizations and journalists in Kyrgyzstan is to produce more qualitative content from the balance, applied character and human interest sides of information. These three parts of criteria have the lowest score in all media outlets analysed in Kyrgyzstan. However, the assessment revealed that mostly media organizations use accurate and pertinent sources of information in their products. As well as the sources of information, the language used in media was assessed higher than others parts or criteria and was indicated as neutral and not conflict or provocative.

These main findings above are supported and confirmed by in-depth interviews results. Thus, experts in the fields of ecology, environment and natural resources and media share a common opinion that these topics have been appearing in mass media more often last months and became more available. Nevertheless, the quality of this information cannot be assessed as high. Experts noted that information on environment and natural resources in media is not actionable and doesn't inspire the people to start something that matters in ecology, what makes this content not interesting in terms of real human history cases. According to media experts' opinion, the accuracy and pertinent of information sources ensured due to the fact that the specialized government bodies and NGOs are the one and only competent sources of information and there is a critical need in journalists to rewrite received information in more interesting and actionable way. Experts also noted that the audience of mass media has a demand on political issues more than on other news, however despite this fact they also stated that there are only a few journalists who address the ecology related issues in their publications qualitatively and regularly. Also according to in-depth interviews the capacity of press departments in local organizations in ecology field, governmental and non-governmental, is very important. In addition, there is almost no any quite good specialists in these organizations now. Therefore, the suggestion of experts is to build capacity of media organizations and media departments of government bodies and NGOs by providing them with education and best practices. Moreover, some of experts addressed the whole education system in Kyrgyzstan and suggested to include the ecology lessons in high schools and universities more actively as well as to establish an awards and financial support for students-journalists to make an environment and natural resources content of high quality.

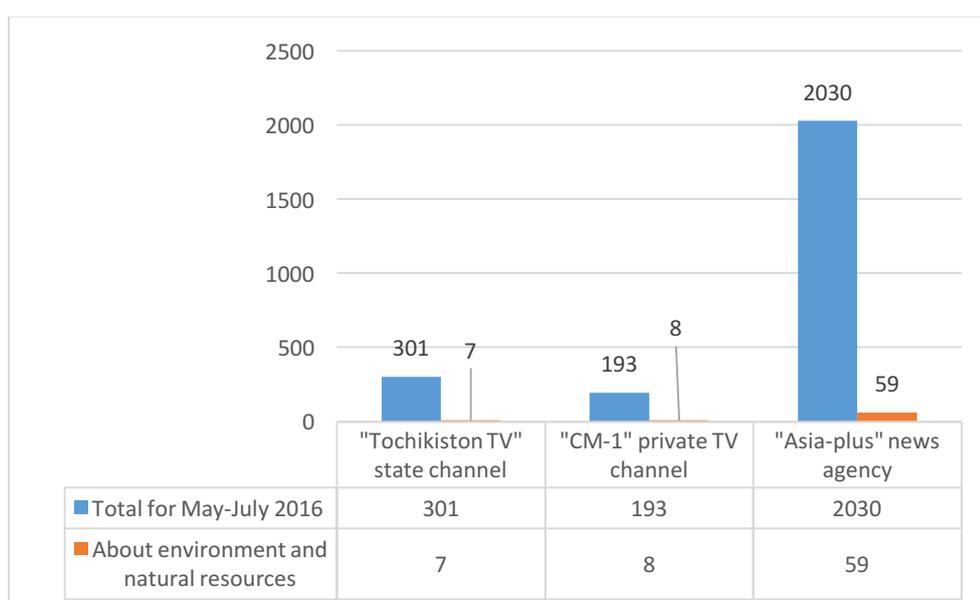
Tajikistan

Availability of content on environmental and natural resources

It should be noted that the choice of the media outlets was based not only on coverage and audience perception analysis, but also on several other factors such as the availability of information and the editorial office's location in Tajikistan. Hence, "Safina" TV channel was selected as state broadcaster initially, but their programs, promos and program clips were not available for general public. Requested video archives could not be reached due to bureaucracy and it was decided to replace Safina TV with Tochikiston TV, which has similar coverage and available video archive on its website.

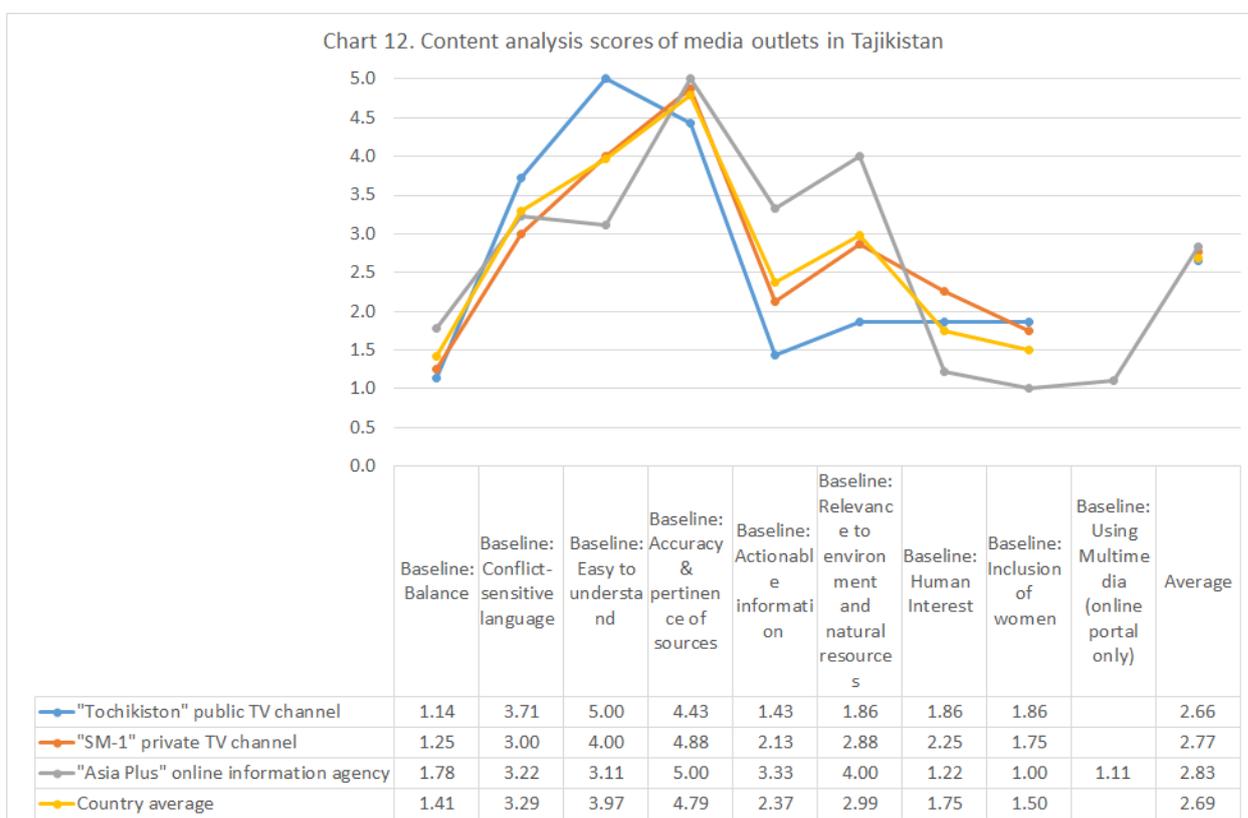
1. Tochikiston
 - a. The total number of channel pieces found in the reporting period (May-July 2016) was 301.
 - b. Of these, 7 (2.32% of total) materials were dedicated to the theme of ecology and the environment
 - c. Sample size: 7 pieces
2. CM-1
 - a. The total number of channel pieces found in the reporting period was 193
 - b. Of these, 8 (4.15%) of them referred to environmental issues.
 - c. Sample size: 8 pieces
3. Asia Plus
 - a. The total number of channel pieces found in the reporting period was 2030
 - b. Of these, 59 (2.90%) of them referred to environmental issues
 - c. Sample size: 9 pieces

Figure 13: Availability of information on environmental and natural resources - Tajikistan



Quality content on environmental and natural resources

Quality content on environmental and natural resources does not meet Internews' quality standards (average of 2.69). Main issues related to lack of balance (use of one point of view only, generally state-sources), lack of human angle in stories as well as for lack of inclusion of women or actionable information. We note that key informant interviews also agree with these findings. More details as follows:

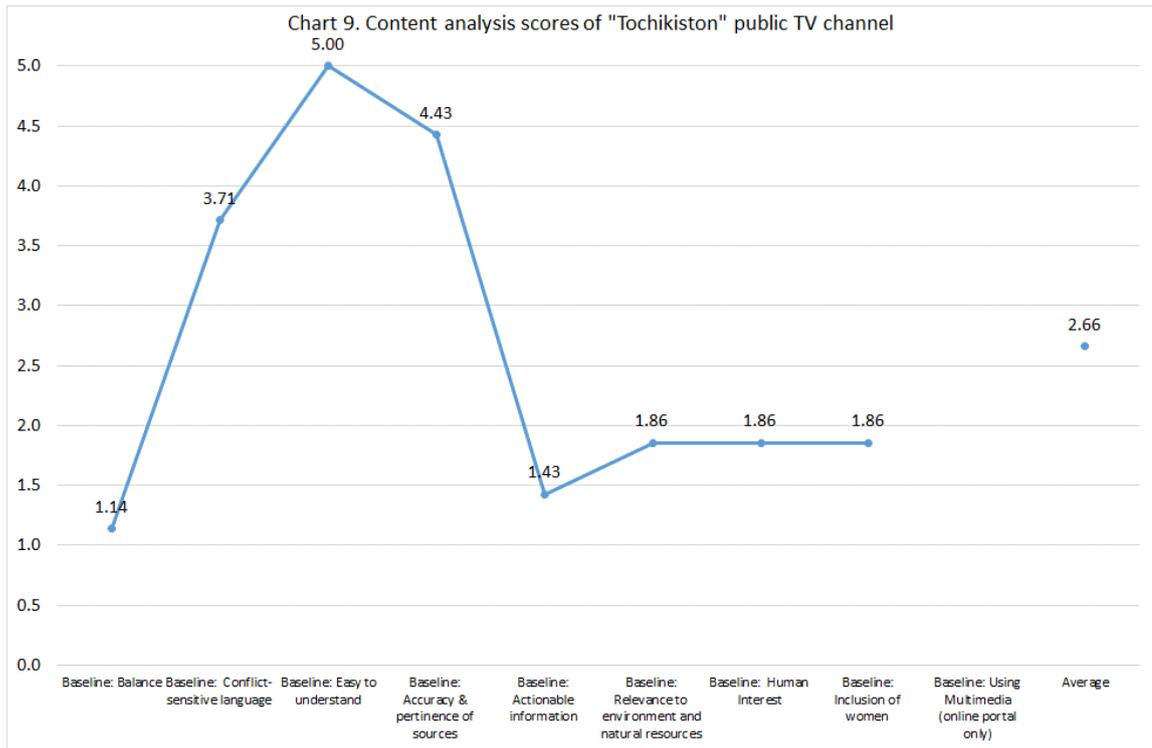


The findings of the analysis of the content led to the opinion that local media has a potential, however, there is still a long and laborious path to development. Average ratings for state media and private online news agency are about the same, pointing to the gaps in the balance of the reports, the use of life stories and bringing women experts to discuss the news. Moreover, due to the prevalence of environmental news related to natural disasters, a lack of practical use of this information, connectivity to the discussion of environmental problems are observed. Moreover, due to the coverage of common topical issues, journalists write articles on topics related to the environment, using the most formal terminology.

State TV Tochikiston

Pieces for content analysis were taken from the generally available public materials posted on the websites of the TV channels. Thus, 7 types of the environment-related materials were found. At the same time 4 news were related to the natural disasters in the territory of the Republic of Tajikistan, 2 of them aimed at attracting tourism and another news discusses the negative effects of the oil and oil wars on the environment. The average score of the media is 2.66

Figure 14: Quality content results of Tochikisto, TV media outlet - Tajikistan



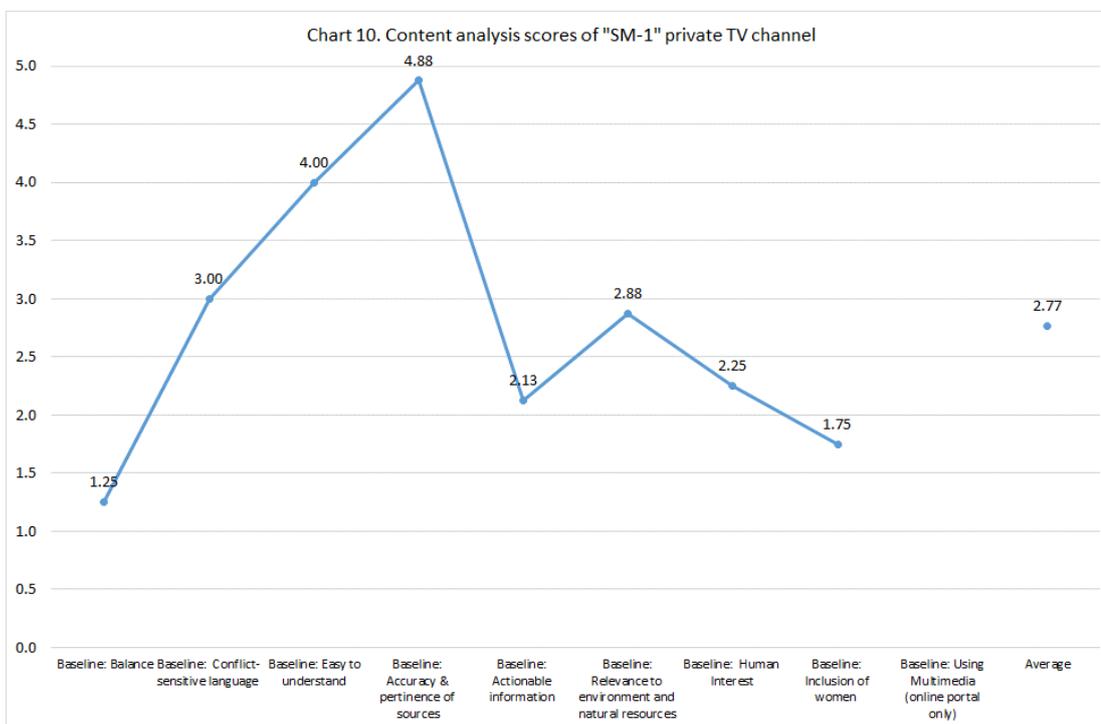
1. **Balance** - average score is 1.14 - the vast majority of environmental reports were rated as "1" because they presented only one point of view on the situation;
2. **Conflict-sensitive language** - average score is 3.71 - the author is not trying to create a sensation and almost does not use provocative language ("4"). Except for a summary of the discussion of the oil and its impact on the environment. ("2");
3. **Easy to understand** - average score is 5 - the level of perception is maximal, due to the fact that specific words were not used, the material was presented in the understandable Tajik language. The two materials, targeting tourists did not have accompanying texts.
4. **Accuracy & pertinence of sources** – average score is 4.43 - two and more relevant sources of information have been used (score "5" was given to 6 of 7 reports). In only one report (a tourism promo) they did not give the floor to experts (rate "1");
5. **Actionable information** – average score is 1.43 - in view of concrete subject of the majority of reports (news about natural cataclysms), recommendations are not available. There is just a direct ascertaining of the fact (rate "1" in six reports). In the discussion of oil to ecology there were recommendations and a practicality (rate "4");
6. **Relevance to environment and natural resources** - again, taking into account the fact that the factual situation of the natural disasters is described, they discuss, mainly the consequences, but not factors and recommendations (the average rate "1.86");
7. **Human Interest** - average score is 1.86 - life story was found in 2 of the 7 news reports, in the tourism promo video and the discussion of oil to the environment (rate "4"). In the other stories there are no life stories ("1");
8. **Inclusion of women** - average score is 1.86 - more than one female is present in two of the seven reports, but not as experts ("3"). The remaining stories do not have them ("1");
9. **Use of multimedia.** Not applicable (only for online media outlets).

Private TV channel CM-1

Data of channel "CM-1" were requested from their representatives. They said that they would be able to provide data only by the beginning of October. The online programs and news

reports of this TV channel were found, among which the sampling was made. The number of news somehow related to the environment amounted to 8 reports. Of these, 6 reports were directly related to natural occurrences in the rural areas of the republic. Two news were discussing the disposal of waste in the city of Khujand and the provision of oil from the Russian Federation. The average rate of the media is "2.77".

Figure 15: Quality content results of CM-1, TV media outlet - Tajikistan



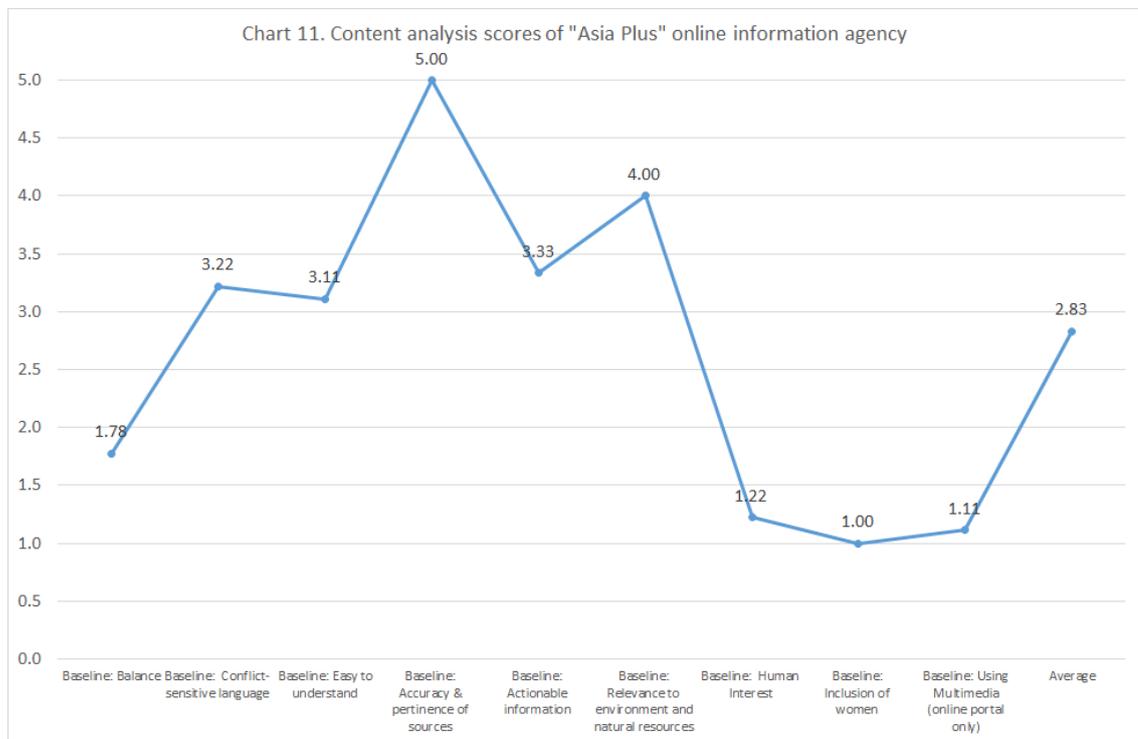
- **Balance** – it is extremely low in the channel materials (the average rate is "1.25");
- **Conflict-sensitive language** – the average rate is "3". At the same time, 4 of six reports connected with natural incidents are written with the use of provocative conclusions and an appeal to a sensation (the average rate is "2"). The story about utilization of garbage has been estimated as the most neutral among the others;
- **Easy to understand** - the average rate is 4 - is extremely highly rated ("4" according to all reports). It should be noted that specific terms are little specified and don't influence ease of understanding of materials;
- **Accuracy & pertinence of sources** - it is interesting to note that there were proven sources of information in these reports ("4.88" in the average in 5 reports). In three reports they have also utilized the tested source, but only one (not two, as indicated in the instructions of the content analysis);
- **Actionable information** – the average rate is 2,13 - one of the reports which broadcast about natural cataclysms contains some recommendations ("4"). Also, data on utilization of garbage waste contain practical value ("4"). The others are rated "1";
- **Relevance to environment and natural resources** – the average rate is 2,88 - among the news reports covering natural cataclysms, only one news contains constructive information on the environment, connected with a local context (rate "4"). The others, again, describe factual reports of the victims and consequences (on average "1,8"). Reports about utilization of garbage have been highly rated ("5" on average);

- **Human Interest** - the average rate is 2.25 - in five of 8 reports a life story has not been provided ("1" on average). In three reports connected with natural cataclysms life stories have been provided ("4" on average);
- **Inclusion of women** - in all reports women are either not presented, or their role is insignificant ("1.75" on the average).
- **Use of multimedia**. This criterion was used only for online media outlets.

Online news agency "Asia-Plus"

Of the nine randomly selected news reports related to the environment, in the online news agency "Asia Plus" only four are related to natural disasters. The average score is 2.86.

Figure 16: Quality content results of Asia Plus, online media outlet - Tajikistan



- **Balance** - the average rate is 1.78 - according to the assessment, only two of the nine news reports represent the position of several parties (including one news is related to natural disasters, and one is about consequences of the drilling of the second well), with a final grade of "4". The rest of the news has been rated at the lowest grade of "1";
- **Conflict-sensitive language** – the average rate is 3.22 - the majority of materials (6 of 9) have emotional colourings of the described situation (the average rate among them is "2.7"). Among the news discussing possible problems which can impact on republic ecology, the grade is higher the previous ones ("4");
- **Easy to understand** - the average rate is 3.11 - an interesting dynamics of the ease of perception was seen at which the coverage of the natural cataclysms, situation described in the generally accepted terms that do not interfere with the easiness of perception. However, among the news stories that discuss the potential environmental problems/impact, the ease of perception is "1.5";

- **Accuracy & pertinence of sources** – absolute majority of materials is seen in which several relevant sources for confirmation of the facts have been used ("5" on average);
- **Actionable information** - the average rate is 3.33 - among news reports, broadcasting of natural disasters, there is practical information in a comparatively lesser extent, due to the coverage of the facts and the consequences ("1.6" among 3 of 9 reports). The others have both practicality and recommendations for use ("4.6");
- **Relevance to environment and natural resources** - the average rate is 4 - only one of the news reports was rated "1" as the least relevant for the topic of the environment (the news about the destruction of the households in the aftermath of an earthquake). The rest were rated at "4";
- **Human Interest** – there were no life story related to ecology in the reports of the news agency "Asia-Plus" ("1.22" on average for all);
- Inclusion of women - women were not involved. The average rate is 1;
- **Use of multimedia** - the average rate is 1.11 - the use of multimedia was also not seen since all except one of the selected news reports contain multimedia video based, mainly, on the body of the article.

In-depth interviews

All experts stated that the information on environmental problems in the general access is extremely insufficient. The media lacks systematic programs related to ecology which would be aired on a permanent basis. One of the journalists noted that in the past the newspapers would provide a column for articles related to the environment, and on radio the news block was required to include environmental news. Nowadays, the news focuses on the socio-political and economic news.

«environmental problems are insufficiently covered, i.e. social and economic problems of our country, political problems come out on top, and somewhere on the third, fourth, fifth places they may place the environmental issues, and they do it depending on a situation» (journalist)

As a result of the conducted in-depth interviews, several directions of topics available in general access were identified. The priority topics mainly include political and "loud" stories. These stories relate to recent events related to either natural disaster (such as landslides, floods, landfalls) or political events, such as a water conference for representatives and experts, signing of the agreements, references to the need for paying attention to ecology by RT President.

«Especially after the Paris conference, the President of the country often speaks on environmental protection in a context of the climate change» (representative of the state structures)

An interesting division of topics was also reflected in the regions. One of the journalists from Sogdi region, noted that the environmental issues are mainly covered in the capital, through such channels as "Asia-Plus" newspaper, while In Khujand and other regions these topics were rarely addressed. Moreover, the coverage of the environmental issues varies regionally. Thus, in the regions /jamoat/towns, these topics can be discussed by the local governments. In such cases the agenda of discussions are the problems of certain areas.

"For example, our officials sometimes broadcast relevant topics only for certain reasons. In some of the local areas there is an increased level of radiation, and the coverage of this subject is important for discussion and the local population need it." (journalist)

One of the important points in the discussion of the actuality of topics also includes specific activities of NGOs and state structures. For example, an NGO dealing with the consequences of the climate change, promotes and draws attention of the public to specific

information. They also organize article contests among the youth or journalists and organize trainings (for example, trainings on ecology journalism were organized by the Committee on Environmental Protection).

"There are a few good journalists on environmental topics, but not enough. They begin to write on such topics when such contests are announced or when this theme is actual and famous" (journalist)

According to the opinion of respondents from the government agencies and NGOs, there are communication channels that broadcast urgent environmental problems of the Republic of Tajikistan. Thus, each of the respondents identified the channels (mostly online websites), upon which their agency/ organization/project work. For example, representatives of the government agencies involved in the projects mentioned the sites: www.eclim.tj, www.aarhus.tj, www.ecocenter.tj etc. It is assumed that each of these news does not cover the general public.

«We have our own electronic digest, we have our own subscribers by e-mail. Basically, of course, it includes the civil society organizations, experts, specialists "(journalist)

The second communication channel is the publication of newspapers/magazines at certain government institutions. For example, a representative of the Committee on Environmental Protection noted the release of the monthly newspaper "Inson Va Tabiat" ("Man and Nature") and publication of a quarterly magazine Khivzi Tabiat ("Environment"). However, a circulation, due to the financial capacity, limited by the amount of 500-600 copies and distributed mainly among stakeholders. Thus, this newspaper and magazine were mentioned by the representatives of NGOs and one journalist.

NGO experts

According to the representatives of the state structures and NGOs, the funding available at the moment is enough to improve the coverage of the environmental issues.

"Do you remember, when the President spoke at the opening of the school, Dzhanobi Oli said that, you do not need anything, just get together once a month, plant a tree, water it, tidy around, remove flasks, why would you need financial resources here?" (Representative of state agencies)

"For example, there are topics on garbage which pollutes the public area. But there is no information for the population, where the trash bins can be placed, in how many meters away from the houses they should be placed. We are aware of the problem, but our children play in the street next to the garbage ... these themes on the one hand are elementary, but they must be thoroughly explained to the public "(journalist)

NGO representatives, as well as the representatives of government agencies mentioned their websites and newspapers where they post their information on the environmental situation in Tajikistan. At the same time, speaking about certain (limited) circulation of newspapers published by one of the NGOs, they noted that the audience of the newspaper is specific and consists of those who are already interested in the topic. Consequently, the newspapers go to a specific social network. According to an NGO representative, the available funds are sufficient for the coverage of the environmental issues, but it is necessary to make every effort to increase the environmental awareness among the population.

Media representatives

Reporters as well as representatives of the government agencies and NGOs noted that there is a small number of environmental stories in the media. Most of the available summaries of information on ecology are directly related to the natural disasters or political and economic news.

According to the journalists, they often lack knowledge and capacity for high-quality coverage of the specific topics. The so-called "universal" journalists take on any topic assigned by the editor and try to disclose it. Therefore, journalists write stories on such subjects in which

highlighting of specifics isn't necessary, i.e. they write on general topics, on those resources which are in general access. Journalists who are engaged in writing stories on ecological subjects for years, note the lack of knowledge in the sphere of ecology, the lack of understanding of the information specifics.

"We broadcast topics that are easy to broadcast, without going into details due to the lack of knowledge and practice. We are writing about loud topics such as a burst pipe, a lack of hygiene, natural disasters in Tajikistan and their consequences. While global issues are little covered, journalists do not want to address difficult subjects "(journalist)

At the same time, journalists noted that the reason why we have so few specialized journalists writing on the theme of ecology, is the lack of funding. Therefore, journalists take on a variety of topics without sufficient focus. Moreover, due to the lack of interest among the public, journalists may cover environmental issues in general.

Government representatives

According to the government officials, environmental issues are extremely rarely covered in the media of Tajikistan. News stories in the newspapers and on television may be related to the environment, but, mainly, in the context of political and economic news. The ecology issues are mainly reflected in reports related to natural calamities in Tajikistan (floods, landslides, mudslides, earthquakes, etc.). This phenomenon is caused by the lack of professional journalists in the field of economy. In this regard, competitions on environmental stories or activities on eco-journalism are being held, which bring together representatives of the media where they discuss certain issues. On their part, representatives of the government agencies state their readiness to provide true information. Representatives of the government agencies mentioned the websites or publishing of newspapers (limited circulation) related to a particular state structure. There is no general media resource, which would contain information from all agencies, NGOs and other resources.

Different opinions were voiced during a discussion about the quality of provided information, depending on the communication channels. Representatives of the government institutions and NGOs said that they do not trust information prepared by journalists in the media.

"I must say, some materials are available. Often there are some good stories, though they are prepared not by journalists but by the experts "(NGO representative)

At the same time, representatives of the government agencies working on trainings and activities for training journalists, noted that journalists, who write frequently on the topics of environmental protection, often consult and receive all the necessary information from them. At the same time, these journalists are graduates of the club for ecology journalists, which is run by the Committee in the last several years. This club brings together journalists on a monthly basis for discussion of concrete subjects.

"Regularly, every month, journalists get together, we write letters to companies so that they nominate someone. They send us their representatives. We receive lists and according to these lists we invite them "(representative of the state agencies)

Conclusion

Content analysis and in-depth interviews show a limited amount of information related to the environment. Topics covered now are mainly related to the occurred disasters or political and public news related to the environment.

At the same time, in the local media there are no permanent columns/programs which would broadcast environmental news both in the republic and outside. Thus, the interviewed experts paid attention to the site/newspaper that they use as a source of reliable information. As a

rule, an access to these sources of information is available to the stakeholders working in this field.

Information in the public media raises doubts about its quality and authenticity. The journalists noted their lack of experience and qualifications for writing specific articles. In the opinions of all experts, there are some journalists competent on environmental issues, however, they rarely write and do all other topics set by their editor.

Recommendations are:

- Increase environmental awareness among the population;
- Organize trainings on environmental issues for journalists on a regular basis;
- Organize events such as games, simulations, discussions, blogging on environmental issues.

Turkmenistan

Availability of content on environmental and natural resources

Analysis of the publications of existing print media and online media in Turkmenistan suggests that the theme of ecology has a very diverse range of coverage. They tend to cover the efforts of formal system aimed at maintaining a favourable ecosystem, including by the use of environmentally sound technologies, waste-free technology in the period of rapid industrial development of the state. As a rule, they cover the aspects of prevention of harmful effects on the eco sphere of new industrial facilities and areas of economic development. At the same time, none of existing media revealed the essence of existing environmental problems and especially not assessed the adverse effects of environmental factors. It is obvious that any mass and environmental activities such as “urban greening” are certainly important, but at the same time the issue is not addressed of mass felling of perennial plants, which “supposedly” do not fit into the landscape design of the new city architecture. However, traditionally existing environmental problems of Turkmenistan, according to unofficial sources, tend to worsen, and thus enhance the impact on life safety. Such problems include the following ones:

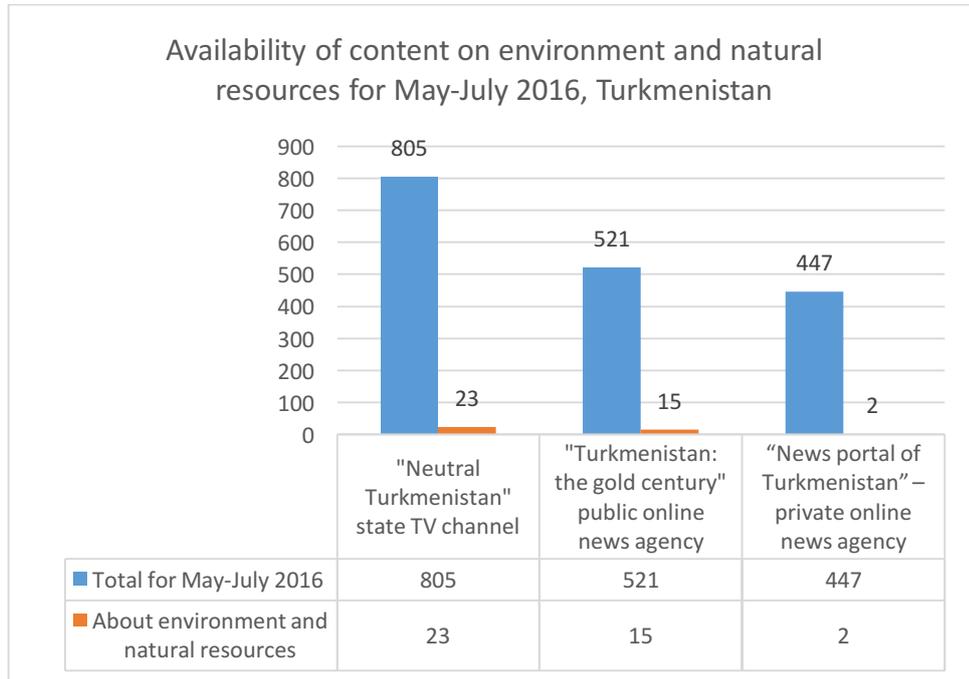
- ✓ *Freshwater supply;*
- ✓ *Natural background radiation;*
- ✓ *Increased levels of dust and gas pollution;*
- ✓ *Continuing desertification;*
- ✓ *The problem of the Aral Sea region.*

Obviously, the publications cannot cover these issues, as they are required to follow the general ideology of formal system, which is mainly focused on promoting state activity in this area, rather than on criticizing the individual initiatives that are unable to change the situation as a whole. In this context, it seems that the time has come to establish and legalize the independent environmental impact assessment, which status would legally allow reflecting environmental issues that would contribute to development of approaches in the strategy to overcome the environmental problems.

It is no coincidence that the share of environmental topics in total number of publications is 2.2%, which clearly indicates its low availability. As indicated above, the breadth of environmental issues coverage is unlikely to be correlated with the concept of “quality”.

1. “Neutral Turkmenistan” newspaper.
 - a. The total number of channel pieces for reporting period (May-July 2016) was 805.
 - b. Of those, 23 pieces (2.85% of the total) were related to the theme of ecology and the environment,
 - c. Sample size: 8 pieces
2. “Turkmenistan: the golden age” public online news agency
 - a. The total number of channel pieces for reporting period was 521
 - b. Of these, 15 (2.87% of total) were related to environmental issues.
 - c. Sample size: 8 pieces.
3. “Informational portal of Turkmenistan” private online news agency
 - a. The total number of channel pieces for reporting period was 447 pieces
 - b. Of these, only 2 (0.44% of total) were dedicated to ecology issues
 - c. Sample size: 2 pieces.

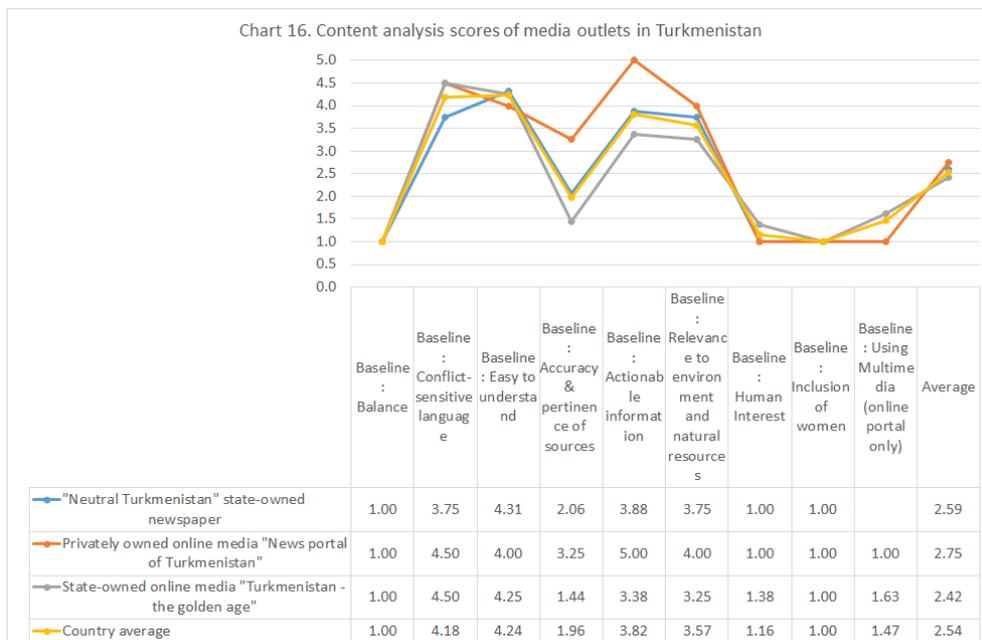
Figure 17: Availability of information on environmental and natural resources - Turkmenistan



Quality of content on environmental and natural resources

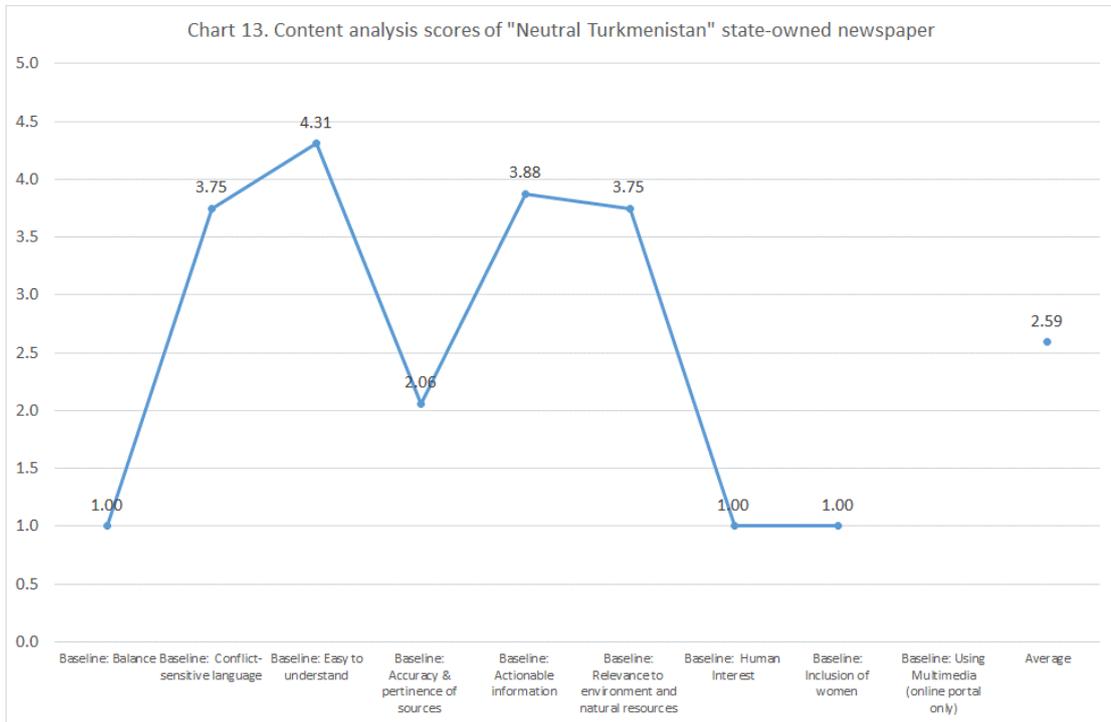
Quality content on environmental and natural resources does not meet Internews’ quality standards (average of 2.54). Main issues related to lack of balance (use of one point of view only, generally state-sources), accuracy and pertinence of sources, lack of human angle in stories as well as for lack of inclusion of women or actionable information. We note that key informant interviews also agree with these findings. More details as follows:

Figure 18: Quality content results - Turkmenistan



Print media “Neutral Turkmenistan”

Figure 19: Quality content results of Neutral Turkmenistan, print media outlet - Turkmenistan



Content analysis conducted for this leading print media, which is the most popular among the population, indicates the absence of a balance of opinions, attitudes and mainly reflects just official position regarding all published topics. This also contributes to the fact that almost all publications in the “Neutral Turkmenistan” are prepared by government affiliated journalist and usually are based on either her own position, or on the opinion of an expert from the Ministry of Natural Resources.

In large parts of the publications moderate conflict-sensitivity is present without excessive emotionality and sensational color. At that, all publications have a pseudo-scientific colouring and are primitively written in an understandable form. The materials covered by the analysis practically do not contain any references to sources of information and look like the opinion of the author, who is a staff member of “Neutral Turkmenistan”. Tips and recommendations proposed by the author of the publications in most cases seem abstract and do not have an address character. If printed materials in general meet the category of “Ecology”, they mainly do not refer to specific areas, and certainly are not linked to a particular manifestation of the situation of ecological crisis.

The total score of printed media of “Neutral Turkmenistan” indicates a lack of coverage of environmental topics, low use of expert evaluations without specific reference to the sources of information, and hence poor quality of printed materials.

Online media: “News portal of Turkmenistan”, and “Turkmenistan: the golden age”

In online information publications, a similar situation is observed with the lack of alternative / compromise assessments, low quality of material and the lack of references to the information sources. If in general the publications considered are presented in understandable for comprehension language, they still have certain scientific background claiming to be a practical solution to problems taking into account environmental characteristics of the regions of Turkmenistan.

It should be noted that the proposed online information is not backed up by multimedia support, and only limited by the thematic photo material. All this quite rightly reflects the evaluation of this format identical to the previous one at the level of 2.49 scores.

To sum up, we can state that the quality and availability of the information related to environmental issues in the country are clearly inadequate, this was caused by the state monopoly on censorship of publications designed to reflect a formal position of the system, and not to enter into conflict with it, both in general and on specific aspects of environmental safety problems.

In addition, one of the reasons for low quality of publications consists in the lack of access to legal sources of information on environmental issues by the authors, as well as the absence of the independent environmental impact assessment in Turkmenistan.

Figure 20: Quality content results of News portal of Turkmenistan - Turkmenistan

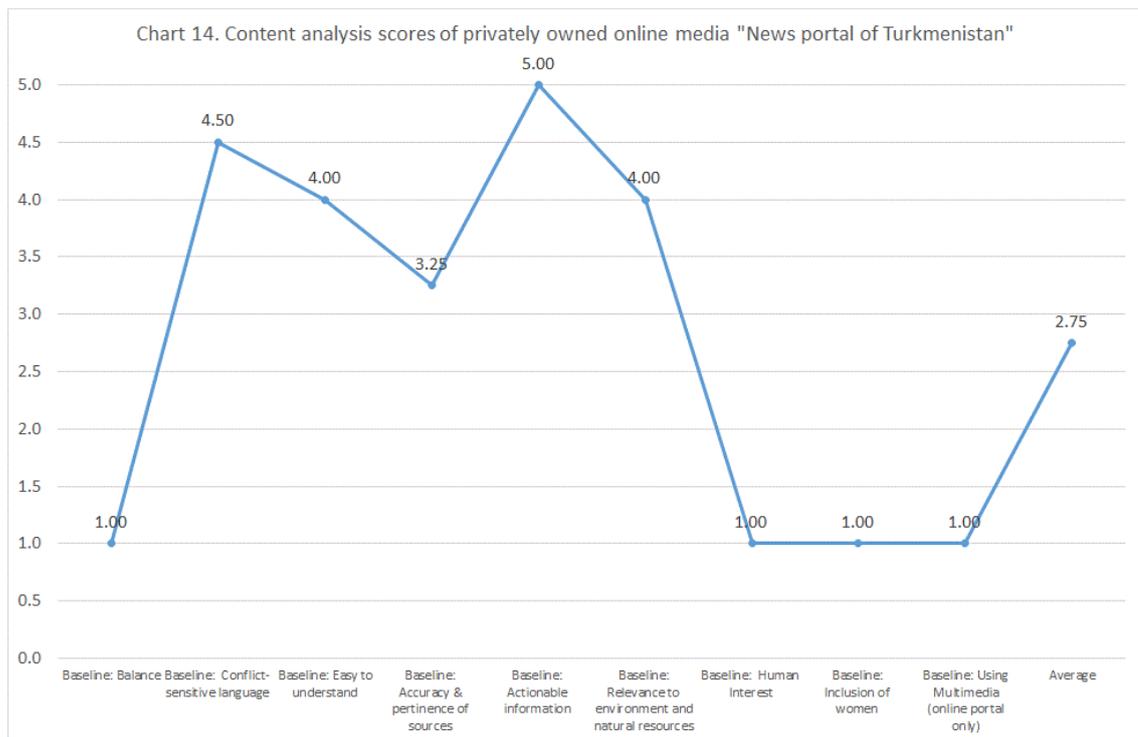
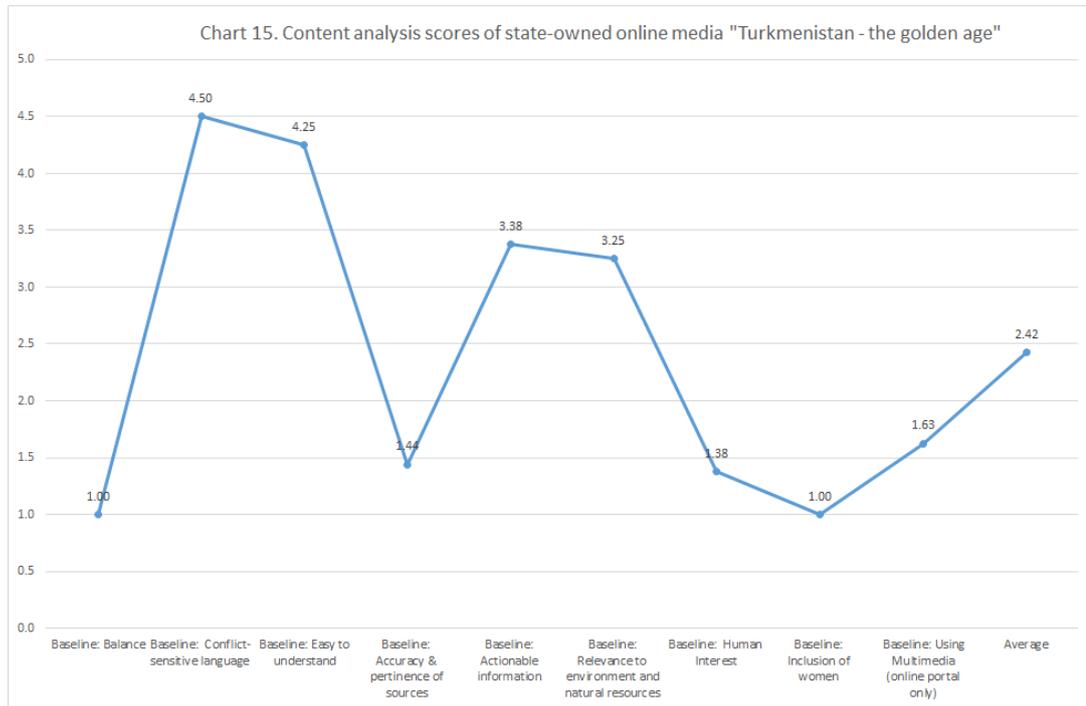


Figure 21: Quality content results of Turkmenistan - the golden age



In-depth interviews

In-depth interviews conducted conditionally can be divided into 3 categories:

- *Journalists and mass media representatives;*
- *Representatives of international organizations;*
- *NGOs.*

It should be noted that almost all of the respondents who participated in the interviews were informed about the questions of the questionnaire (which was the main condition for participation). Some questions caused a negative reaction on the part of the respondents, and they were afraid to answer these questions (refused to answer). Moreover, In Turkmenistan, the interviewers were arrested by law enforcement agencies when trying to interview the government representatives. Due to this obstacle the interviews with the government representatives were not conducted and we interviewed experts from media, NGOs and international organizations.

Media experts

It is obvious that for the category of "Reporters" such position is largely caused by their attachment to a particular printed edition. It predetermines, in general, an attitude to the content of the published materials, and makes a certain impact on the formal perception of this topic in connection with the respective official status. And since all the print media in Turkmenistan are under a single ideological censorship, then any critical coverage of the ecology issues, in one way or another is linked to the national programs aimed at maintaining the ecological security. Otherwise, different behaviour of reporters can be qualified as discrediting of the state policy in the field of nature protection and may lead to quite predictable "formal" consequences. In this regard, the answers of this category of respondents have to be considered both from the point of their visual perception and in the context of the issues disclosed therein.

NGO representatives

The acting NGOs are under even tougher regulations because some of them were established by the state, and the rest of them directly depend on the loyal attitude of the respective structures of the formal system towards them. So, the answers may be considered only in the context of the tasks, rather than as real experts' reviews of the publications related to the coverage of environmental issues. In general, the activities of NGOs on environmental issues usually focus on the local area and concern the issues of making the respective communities more active on setting up stereotypes of a healthy lifestyle and care for the natural diversity. At the same time, NGOs' printed products on the environment are normally limited by the resource capabilities and mainly reflected in producing small booklets, materials for trainings and seminars, the circulation of which is limited by the donors' project budgets, and that is why it does not reach the general public.

International organization representatives

It would be incorrect for the representatives of international organizations to focus on the criticism of the topic in question because their accreditation requires compliance with various procedures of the law of Tajikistan. The activity of any international organizations in Turkmenistan can be legalized only if it aims at the maintenance of the strategic directions of the state policy and strongly contributes to their success. Therefore, when any foreign mission develops its strategy, they first place the aims, which are of the state's priorities in order to promote their soonest implementation.

Despite of the differences in status of the designated groups, the answers to the questions asked were virtually identical and were reduced to a positive evaluation of availability, quality and thematic diversity in the coverage of environmental topics. It is quite obvious that if for the category "Journalists" this position is largely due to their job in the media, for the international organizations it would be incorrect to put the emphasis on criticism of the study subject because of their accreditation obligation to comply with various regulatory procedures in accordance with the law. In this sense, existing NGOs are under even more stringent regulations, as some of them are established by the state, and others are in direct dependence on loyal attitude to them from the part of the relevant structures of formal system. Therefore, the answers could be considered only in the context of tasks set out, rather than as a real expert evaluations of publications related to environmental issues coverage.

Conclusion

To sum up, we can state the following:

- In 85% of the studied materials there is no description of specific measures and actions aimed at preserving the environment, only natural sites are described and in the best case the existing in Turkmenistan international environmental programs are listed.
- A similar situation is observed with environmental issues, there is no clear description of it anywhere.
- Absolutely all studied material shows only one point of view.
- The advantages of the materials studied include the ease of comprehension. The vast majority of articles are written in plain language, in some of them scientific and technical terms are used, however, they did not affect the understanding of the material.
- Almost all of the articles are written in the form of author's material, that is, the author does not refer to any source of information.
- Only one article included a case study.
- Apart from the authors of the articles women are never mentioned (involvement of women is equal to zero).

- If we consider online publications, none of the articles present any infographics or audio-visual support. There were only thematic photo materials.
- None of the publications contained relevant environmental problems, as they are required to follow the general ideology of formal system, which is mainly focused on promoting state activity in this area, rather than on criticizing individual initiatives that are unable to change the situation as a whole.
- There are few journalists who publish materials about ecology;
- The share of environmental topics in the mass of publications is 2.2%, which clearly indicates its low availability.
- The results of in-depth interviews conducted are almost identical, the representatives of all sectors of respondents gave positive answers to the questions, which indicates their dependence on the state authorities;
- For existing environmental NGOs – to greater extent use the Internet resource to ensure correct ecosystem problems coverage, including forums specially created for these purposes.

Uzbekistan

Availability of content on environmental and natural resources

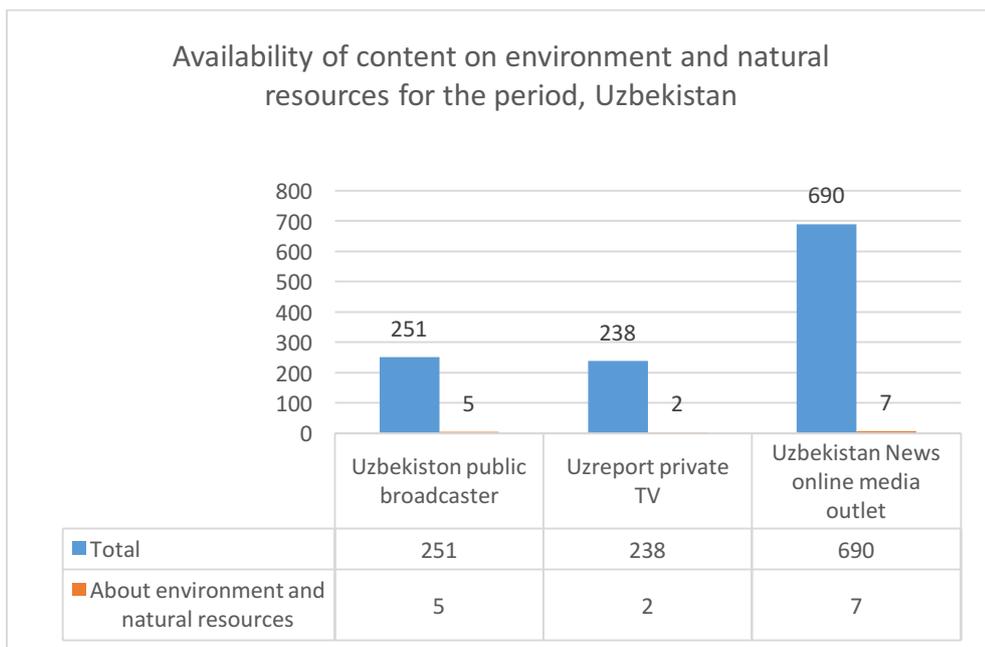
Mass media	All materials for the period:	Number of materials on the environment and natural resources topic	Comments
Uzbekiston public broadcaster	251	5	Watching of broadcasts for 1 week and archive video materials of 20 broadcasts
Uzreport private TV	238	2	Watching of 1 week broadcasts.
Uzbekistan News online media outlet	690	7	Reviewed all articles for the last 3 months
TOTAL materials for the content analysis	14		

In the course of collecting materials for the content analysis they experienced such difficulties as:

1. Lack of access to video archive materials in the selected for the survey non-state TV channel.
2. Lack of video archives for the selected period (last 3 months), in the contents there are only the latest records, over the time, they are automatically deleted and updated with the latest files.
3. The state broadcasting company agreed to provide video archives of all Uzbekiston channel broadcasts over the past three months, but due to a large volume of material, the acquisition cost was very high - \$ 2 per a minute of a video materials and only for 3 months there are more than 1000 hours of only news programs and talk shows, in which the surveyed topics could be covered. Also preparation of such volume of the material required about two months time. The state TV and Radio company representative noted that for the last 3 months there were only 2 broadcasts on the environmental topic, 1 video copy was provided but they refused to provide the second material due to a lack of time (the broadcasting duration was 64 minutes). The content analysis used the broadcast acquired from the state TV and Radio company.

Due to a lack of video archives of state and private TV channels for the last 3 months, there was organized watching of weekly online broadcasts of these channels for the period of August 24-30 and analysis of available in the content of video archives for the period from July 12 to August 2. In the selected online source of " Uzbekistan news" there were found archives for all 3 months and it was not difficult to collect information for the content analysis.

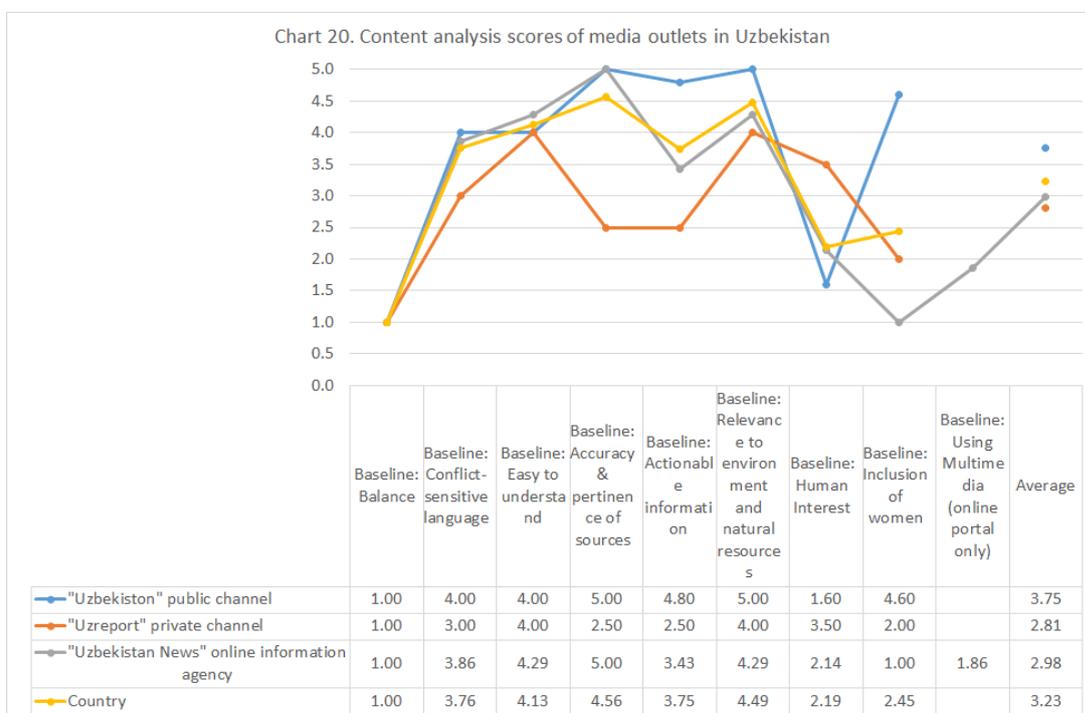
Figure 22: Availability of information on environmental and natural resources - Uzbekistan



Quality of content on environmental and natural resources

Quality content on environmental and natural resources meets Internews' quality standards (average of 3.23). Having said that, there are issues related to lack of balance (use of one point of view only, generally state-sources). Opportunities for improvement can be found by including a human angle in stories as well as women and in the use of multimedia. More details as follows:

Figure 23: Quality content results - Uzbekistan



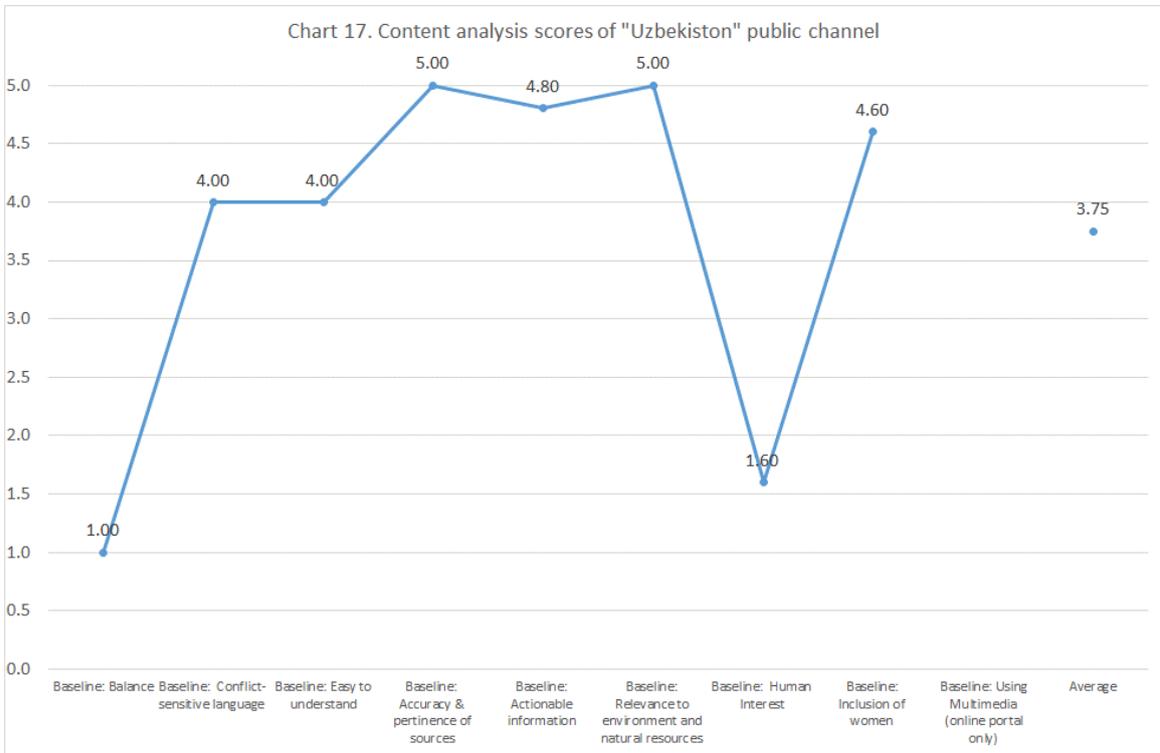
1. There is a low level of criticism in covering materials, none of the materials provided an opinion of the second and / or third parties. Perhaps this is explained by the choice of not specialized in the environment topic sources, most popular among the population. The

results of DI (covered in the next section) show that the critical materials are covered in the local media, but mostly in special programs on the sites of specialized organizations / agencies.

2. Cover in the content analysis not only national, but also local TV channels - 1 channel in Tashkent and 3-4 in the major regions. Local channels more often cover topics related to environment problems.
3. Preparations for the project to start long before the collection and analysis by viewing online and records of TV programs on video carriers. For example, if the materials are needed for 3 months, it is necessary to organize online viewing and recording on video carriers of only telecasts, where the environment topics were covered. The disadvantage of this proposal - the involvement of a large number of employees to view a large volume of material to be stored on video media, which entails an increase in financial and labour costs.
4. Analysis of the coverage of the topic in the selected online source also revealed that the topic for the covered period is not so deep (7 articles of the total 650 articles). But there are sites of specialized organizations / agencies, in which environmental issues are covered wider and deeper. It would be appropriate to explore the discussions on such social media like Facebook, where users are actively discussing the ecology and environmental issues. For example, there were a number of critical views on the problem of plane trees felling in Tashkent.
5. Perhaps a small number of material on the topic of environmental protection was due to the fact that the summer vacation months were selected.
6. In order to cover more materials on the topic of environmental protection, it is proposed to conduct a content analysis of the materials in the newspapers in which these topics are covered more regularly (as an average 1 time per week) than on TV or online sources.
7. There are no infographics, videos in online sources. Perhaps this is due to insufficient internet speed, which does not allow to load volumable materials or in the absence / lack of authors / journalists' knowledge.

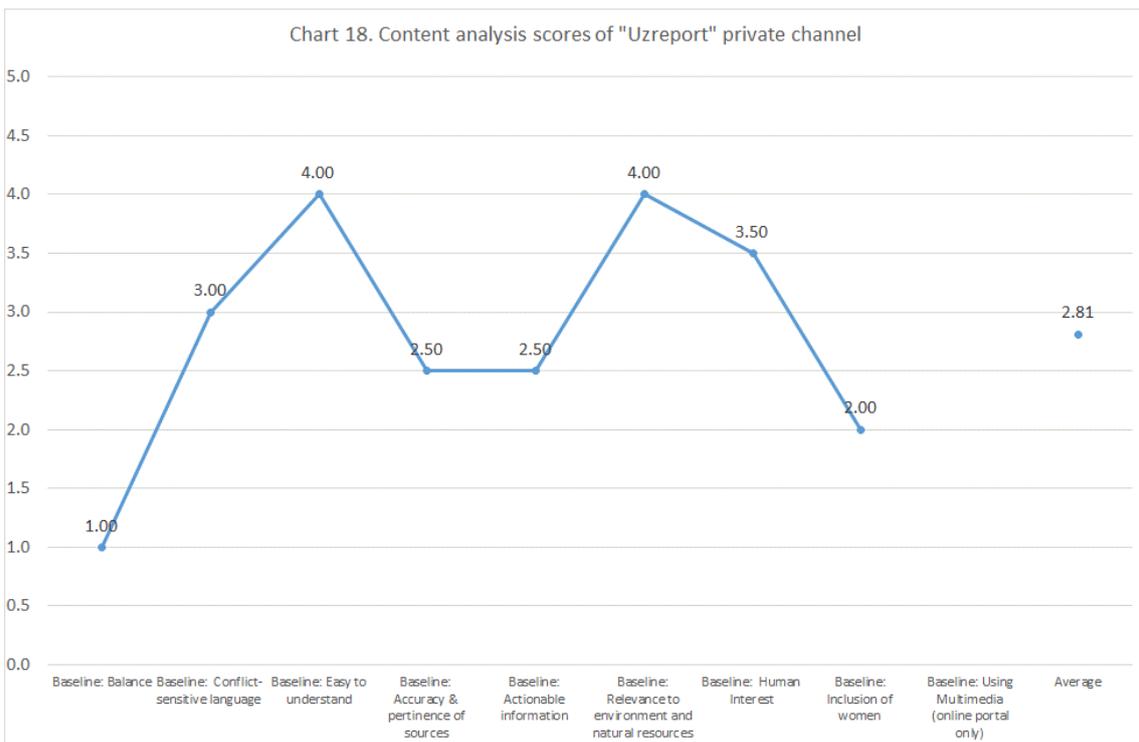
TV channel Uzbekiston

Figure 24: Quality content results of Uzbekistan, TV media outlet



TV channel Uzreport

Figure 25: Quality content results of Uzreport - Uzbekistan



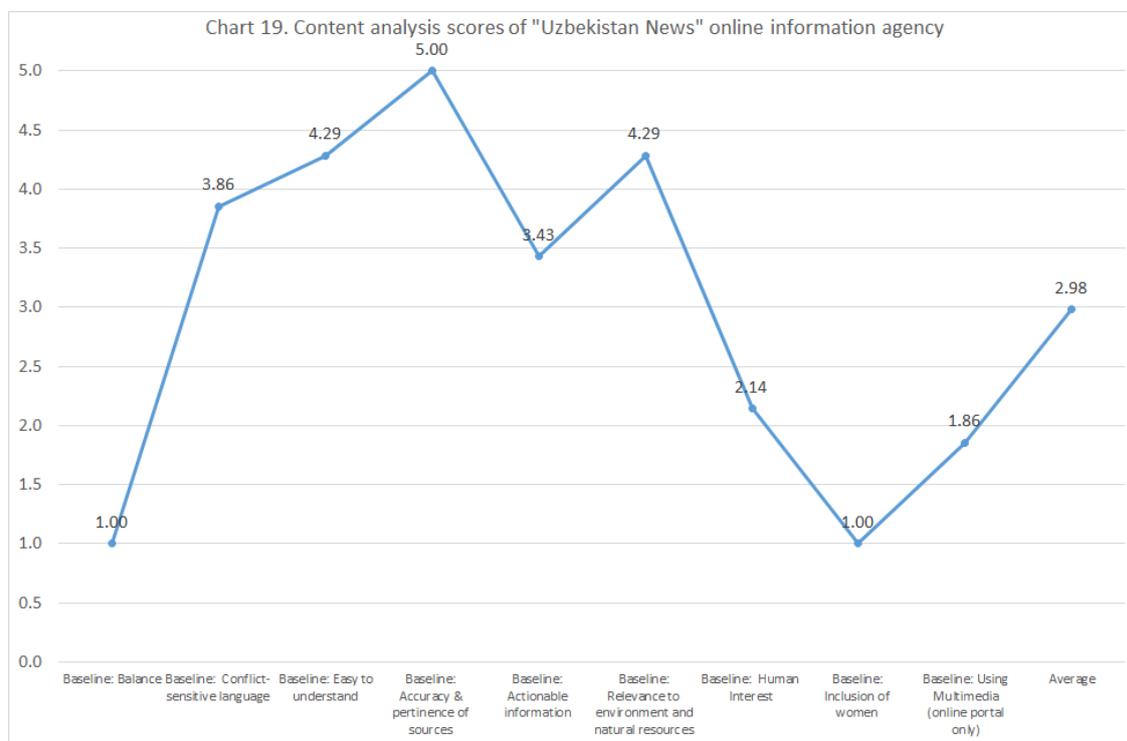
- Balance 1, the material highlights only one point of view, the employees of the Tashkent Zoo.
- Conflict-sensitive language 2, the material used such words as irresponsible people, the death of animals because of the people, etc.
- Easy to understand, do not use scientific words and terms.
- Accuracy & pertinence of sources 3, they used such sources as the Red Book, Zoo.
- Actionable information 4, it contains proposals for the protection of animal at the zoo, but not widely enough.
- Relevance to environment and natural resources 4, the material describes with concern the issues of protection of animals at the zoo, tells about the number of deaths and illnesses of animals as a result of human impact, but some details are absent.
- Human Interest 5, the material is built on a "life story", describes specific cases of death and disease in animals, in particular due to the fact that people throw plastic bottles into cages, which are then found in the stomachs of animals, etc.
- Inclusion of women 3, the presence of women experts in the material - Zoo employees, but they do not give interviews, they do not make reference to them.
- Use of multimedia. This criterion was used only for online media outlets.

Material 2: August 26, 2016 "Urungach: Magic jade lakes. " Overview of the expedition to the Ugam Chatkal reserve, which describes the waterfalls, landscapes, jade lakes. The author: Zhasurbek Gaybullaev

- Balance 1, this is an information material, which reflects only one point of view.
- Conflict-sensitive language 4, in major part of the material the neutral tone is maintained, they do not use provocative language and do not create a sensation. But there is no proposal to solve the problems, thus assessment of the material is 4 points.
- Easy to understand_4, they do not use scientific terms.
- Accuracy & pertinence of sources 2, they used only one source - the Ugam Chatkal reserve. According to the criterion the score of 3 is given when there is mentioning of 2 and more reliable sources. Therefore, they have 2 points.
- Actionable information_1, the material does not offer solutions to the problems, they are not discussed as such.
- Relevance to environment and natural resources 4. The expedition highlighted in material was organized by the State Committee for Nature Protection. This material related to the theme of the environment, but without specifying certain information.
- Human Interest_2, the material contains a minimum or consequential element of "life stories", showing travelers, making a trip, etc.
- Inclusion of women 1, the material does not contain female guests, participants, characters
- Use of multimedia. This criterion was used only for online media outlets.

Online information agency: Uzbekistan News

Figure 26: Quality content results of Uzbekistan news



In-depth interviews

NGO experts

In general, the representatives of NGOs pointed out that the environment issues are sufficiently covered in the mass media. NGOs closely work with state media and government agencies, in particular in covering the results of their activities in the media.

Main media, with which NGOs collaborate, include:

- State national TV channels "Uzbekistan", "Yoshlar", "Dunyo boylab", state regional TV channel "Tashkent", etc.
- Newspapers "Youth of Uzbekistan", "Turkistan", "Youth of Uzbekistan", "Mening Mulk", "Evening Tashkent", "Voice of Uzbekistan", "Qishloq hayoti", "Tashkent okshomi", newspaper of the Ministry of Health of Uzbekistan, "Nuroniyy" and so on.

Weaknesses mentioned by NGOs experts:

1. Not always the results of the NGOs work on environmental issues are communicated to the public.
2. Lack of funding for the publication and distribution of brochures among the population, in particular among students of educational institutions.
3. The need for conducting of more seminars and trainings with the participation of environmental specialists, NGOs, international foundations / organizations and the media.
4. Insufficient coverage of environmental issues by the national channels. In contrast to the national TV channels in the regional ones environmental protection topics are covered sufficiently enough.

Respondent (NGOs): "There is little information on the national channels. The local TV channels broadcast all the materials. In areas of joint channels also comes about environmental issues. But for some reason on Uzbekistan channels Yoshlar, such information is not enough. "
"In principle, the work now is done well, and it is done by our city Environmental Committee. They have a whole division dedicated to publishing scientific manuals, posters about the environment, this is their general direction. For example, on the theme of energy saving, recycling of lamps, etc. Especially when they conduct seminars they prepare for this work well"

Media experts

Media experts noted that in the media, particularly the printed and TV media environment topics are covered sufficiently and quite correctly.

Mainly they cover such topics as: "Recycling of secondary raw materials", "Processing of production and household waste", "Emissions problems," especially emissions in the atmosphere, including automobile exhaust, "Biodiversity", "The problem of preservation of wildlife" "Promotion of sites of natural objects of Uzbekistan."

The media experts work is supported by issued by the Oliy Majlis government grants for coverage of environmental issues

Media experts work closely with NGOs, government agencies. They are invited to various events, raids.

Respondent (media expert): "We cooperate with environmental organizations, such as "Ecosan", "Ecology Movement" and "Ekomaktab" etc. We have a department of "Camelot" which deals with the environment issues, including our very actively cooperation with their departments, and through it we cooperate with schools' activists. "

As one of the media experts mentioned, the media does not have enough critical materials, which are based on life stories.

Government representatives

As well as representatives of NGOs, experts of state authorities believe that the environment issues are insufficiently covered in mass media. The advantage of government agencies (in particular, of the main body - the State Committee for Environmental Protection) is the state funding, the activities of a special unit to highlight the performance of not only their organization but also of all stakeholders. Thus, the State Committee for Environmental Protection publishes its journal "Ecological herald".

In general, the state authorities cooperate with the same, mentioned by NGOs media. Unlike NGOs, state agencies need specialized literature in their field. But specific topic is not vital for the general public, and the public servants do not see the need for media coverage.
The respondent (government agency): "Regularly throughout the year, I see advertisements about ecology. On Saturday we have the clean-up day on television, both in Russian, and Uzbek languages there are programs about the environment. The main directions there include: "Do not leave litter about, do not throw rubbish " and so on. "

State bodies need to increase the staff and pay employees for the work.

The respondent (government agency): "For a year I speak on TV 155 times, more than 400 times on the radio and write the same many articles together with other employees of our organization for newspapers and magazines. Our department is engaged in public awareness raising but we have only three employees for 18 provinces and cities. I believe it is necessary to increase the number of employees of the department instead of other unnecessary departments"

In contrast to NGO state bodies have sufficiently many publications in mass media. For 8 months of this year they published 69 articles instead of the planned 52. On TV there were 60 presentations, on the radio – 64 presentations.

The majority of respondents believes that the coverage of environmental problems and environmental issues in the online resources are insufficient, especially they advise to activate discussion and coverage in social networks like Facebook.

«It is necessary to develop social networks. We need to open a page in Facebook. Because young people generally sit in the telegram, Facebook, Instagram. We have specialists who work with the sites. We plan to give them an assignment to work in this direction. »

As the popular media, which actively highlight environmental problems, there were identified such sources as:

- TV channel "Tashkent";
- TV channel "Poytaht";
- Newspapers "Tashkent okshomi" and "Evening Tashkent" (in Uzbek and Russian languages);
- Channel «Mening yurtim»;
- TV channel "Dunyo boylab";
- Radio station "Poytaht";
- Radio "Mashal";
- "Ecological Bulletin" magazine.

Conclusion

The majority of experts interviewed believes that the information about environment problems is open and accessible. But there were opinions that they are not sufficiently open. For example, during conducted by the specialized agencies raids to identify violations in this area, violators of the order requested the author not to broadcast their violations (in particular, the illicit waste accumulation). Due to this it is proposed to show live coverage on television, to give sharpness and urgency to the plotting in order to attract the attention of users. It is also an obstacle to the openness of information is that the journal "Ecological herald" of the State Committee of Uzbekistan is not free, so that it is available only to specialized agencies / organizations.

The majority of the population is not informed about this source. One of the important ways of informing the population is to hold meetings and talks at educational establishments, mahallas.

According to experts the coverage of environmental issues is quite well developed by showing public service announcements on TV (*they were not included in the survey because there were no objectives to explore PSAs*). These commercials are created taking into account the local mentality, show national traditions. For example, in one of the commercials they show a group of guys who were throwing cigarette butts and paper rubbish anywhere, and children, who were playing nearby, clean the waste and thrown it into the waste bins. Adult guys, having seen this, are ashamed of their behaviour, start collecting waste and putting in waste bins.

Long-term projects covering environmental issues in the country are carried out. They are mainly government projects, involving the State Nature Conservation Committee and related organizations / institutions. The main resources to undertake long-term and short-term measures to attract public attention to the environmental issues include government funding of projects and international grants, issued by organizations such as the UN, ADB.

Conclusions and recommendations

Kazakhstan

- Kazakhstan desperately needs increasing media attention to the environment and natural resources issues. Achieving this goal is caused by addressing of a number of priorities that could be implemented under the current political system.
- Creation of specialized columns, broadcasts, documentaries, multimedia materials on environmental issues. The implementation of these measures does not require large amounts of additional funding, but political will is needed to stimulate the media outlets in the coverage of this topic. Grants from international and national foundations that fund such projects on a regular basis may raise media interest in environmental issues.
- State bodies of Kazakhstan need to change their attitude to the coverage of environmental topics from the mindset of a “besieged fortress”. Obviously, there is the need for more transparency and interaction with the general public.
- Scattered functions in covering environmental and natural resources issues between various ministries and departments create a situation when the environmental themes do not receive concentrated attention from the particular public body. It is required to create a single state authority, at least at the level of the agency, which will have all the powers in covering environmental topics. Thus, this body will lobby for environment topics promotion in the media.
- In the educational grants and grants for journalists to editors, the theme of environmental journalism should be taken into account and developed. Thus, conditions will be created for emergence of specialists in covering environmental issues among journalists of Kazakhstan.
- The media need to change their approach to coverage of environmental and natural resources issues by switching from situational reports in cases of emergency to creation of full-fledged analytical and educational materials with multiple points of view, easily understood and informative.

Kyrgyzstan

Content analysis and in-depth interviews showed that there is a critical issue with increasing a level of environmental and ecological education in schools and universities and the recommendation is to conduct educational activities for journalists and students from appropriate faculties and to cover such topics as how to make the publication more balanced, easier to understand and how to provide more actionable information. Many experts share a common vision that Kyrgyzstan needs in educated journalists with specific skills in making ecology related media products with educational character as well as in creating the separate TV channels, printed media and online resources intended to highlight the environment and natural resources topics.

Tajikistan

- Introduce running news reports/ecology columns on a regular basis (in all media).
- Place information reports by the concerned government services on a regular basis (at least weekly).
- Determine one web-portal, which would hold all news reports (including those from the government agencies, NGOs, international organizations, news agencies, media and individuals).
- Broadcast it on TV, since it is the most popular channel of communication in the Republic of Tajikistan.

Turkmenistan

In-depth interviews conducted reiterated the need to initiate establishment of an independent ecological service, which in accessible and loyal form in the first place, would be a legal source of information on environmental issues, and secondly, on a regular basis to prepare materials for publications on the most important aspects of existing ecosystem in Turkmenistan. The independent environmental agency created with the assistance of the World Bank in the Russian Federation can be an example of such a service.

Uzbekistan

In order to improve the quality and accessibility of materials on the environmental issues it is recommended to:

Conduct seminars and conferences for journalists, involving all stakeholders in order to improve the skills of journalists;

- Increase NGO funding, which may not always provide material about their activities, ongoing events and environmental issues on television, because often they have to pay for the services.
- Preparation and broadcasting of live TV programs, as now they mainly broadcast programs, which were prepared in advance. Live coverage will give sharpness to problems, will cause dynamic discussion.
- Due to the preference of talk shows among the public, they are encouraged to include environmental issues in entertaining, informative talk shows.
- Provide feedback to population, it is suggested to organize live broadcasts on TV, when the audience can ask interesting for them questions.

Annex 1. Desk researches per country

Kazakhstan

According to the data provided by TNS Central Asia, which is a part of the global group of companies. TNS specializing in the field of media and advertisement research and being leader in this sector, the most popular public channel in July, 2016 was “Khabar” TV⁷ channel. The channel is a part of “Khabar” agency; the only stakeholder of this agency is Communication, Informatization and Information Committee under the Ministry for Investments and Development, Republic of Kazakhstan. In July, 2016 the coverage of the audience constituted 64.11%⁸, the data of TNS Central Asia said.

The channel is broadcasting in Kazakh and Russian languages. Among the programs broadcasted on the channel there are news, entertaining and educational programs, talk shows, documentaries and feature films.

The channel is included in the list of the channels required to be broadcasted on cable networks in the country.

According to the same information source “The pervyi kanal Kazakhstana”, which was previously known as “The pervyi kanal Eurasia”, as the leading private TV channel with the coverage of audience by 81.08% in July, 2016.⁹

This channel mostly broadcasts adapted programs of the Russian “Pervyi Kanal”, including the programs translated into Kazakh and programs of its own production.

At the same time, taking into account the objectives of the project, we propose to study the second most popular private TV channel in Kazakhstan “KTK”¹⁰ (coverage is 72.29%) as more appropriate one; the owner of this channel is JSC “Kommercheskiy Televisionnyi Kanal”. This choice can be justified by the fact that “Pervyi kanal Kazakhstana” performs the role of the repeater of the programs and news broadcasted by the Russian “Pervyi Kanal”, in a prime-time, especially. As a consequence, this channel cannot be considered as representative, since most of the topics raised in the programs are related to Russia.

Meanwhile, “KTK” channel provides TV audience with original content based on the Kazakh realities and interests of local audience. The channel is included in the list of the channels which are required to be broadcasted on cable networks of the country.

As the data from the leading Kazakh service of internet-statistics ZERO.kz shows, the most popular internet-portal in the category of “News. Media” during the last 30 days is Nur.kz with 1 847 803 of hosts and 103 816 541¹¹ of views (from 11.07 till 11.08). Nevertheless, this resource is not an independent news agency; it is specialized only in news aggregation. In this context, it is more expedient to monitor the data from international information agency InformBuro, which is an independent agency.

As a result, it is proposed to study the following:

⁷ <http://khabar.kz/ru/agency/o-nas>

⁸ http://www.tns-global.kz/ru/research/tv_index_l6.php

⁹ <http://www.1tv.kz/>

¹⁰ <http://www.ktk.kz/>

¹¹ <http://zero.kz/?c=11&sr=kz&pd=2592000>

- “Khabar” TV channel
- “KTK” TV channel
- Informburo.kz

Kyrgyzstan

According to «Freedom House»¹² research, Kyrgyzstan is the one of the countries with partly free media. The number of media entities is increasing year by year and according to “Journalists” Public Union special research¹³, constituted 1500 in 2014, 206 of them are more active:

- 159 newspapers
- 25 TV channels
- 26 radio stations

In accordance to the SIAR Omnibus survey¹⁴ held in November, 2015, the main information source for most of respondents are TV channels: 94% of respondents watch TV and name it as primary information source. The next popular source of information is internet: 12% of respondents notes that they usually get an information from internet. However, respondents from only a few provinces of Kyrgyzstan named internet: mainly in Bishkek and Osh and less in Chui and Naryn provinces; and no one from respondents in Talas and Batken province named the internet as the main source of information. Less than 2% named newspapers, journals, radio stations, friends and relatives as the main source of information.

SIAR Company conducted an Omnibus survey on TV channels rating in June, 2016. The sample of 1000 respondents from all provinces of Kyrgyzstan was representative. The survey showed that the most popular TV channels in Kyrgyzstan are the following:

- 1st place- KTRK 37,2%
- 2nd place – Perviy kanal 11,8 %
- 3rd place - ELTR 7%
- 4th place – NTS 4,4%

According to the media indicator on average daily audience of TV channels in Kyrgyzstan provided by M-Vector¹⁵ the leaders are following:

1. KTRK – more than 2.2 million people
2. Perviy kanal – nearly 1.9 million people
3. ELTR – nearly 1.18 million people
4. Rossia RTR – more than 529 thousand people
5. Sedmoy kanal – more than 473 thousand people
6. NTS – nearly 405 thousand people – however NTS leaves Sedmoy kanal behind on indicator which characterizes duration of watching

¹² About Freedom in the World. An annual study of political rights and civil liberties - <https://freedomhouse.org/report-types/freedom-world>

² The number of media outlets in Kyrgyzstan was identified - <http://arch.24.kg/community/163336-v-kyrgyzstane-podschitali-kolichestvo-smi.html> (on Russian language)

¹⁴ Mass media survey results, SIAR Research and consulting, November 2015

¹⁵ Analytical report on TV market research in Kyrgyzstan - http://soros.kg/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Analyticalreport_TVmarketresearch2015.pdf

People not only in the capital city but also in the regions use internet sources more actively. The Alexa¹⁶ website aimed to measure websites rating shows monthly updated data on Kyrgyzstan. In case of news websites the leader in Kyrgyzstan is Akipress, the following are Turmush.kg and vb.kg. IRI (International Republican Institute) data¹⁷ for 2016 year also shows that Kyrgyzstanis choose Akipress among all news websites.

The request of content analysis sample is to select one public TV channel, one private TV channel and one online information agency. Perviy kanal was excluded from the list as the content analysis will include only local TV channels, ELTR was also excluded as it is public channel despite the fact that it is more popular than others after Perviy kanal.

As a result of above mentioned we propose three media outlets for content analysis:

1. KTRK – public TV channel
1. NTS – private TV channel
2. Akipress – online information agency

Tajikistan

Tajikistan is the country with a population of over 8 million inhabitants that has its own operating TV and radio companies as well as information agencies. In accordance with the report produced by OSCE, in 2013, 33 TV companies and 22 radio companies were registered in the Republic of Tajikistan. 24 out of 33 TV companies are private; the remaining 9 companies are public¹⁸. On the 1st March, 2016, the eve of the 25th anniversary of the state independence of the Republic of Tajikistan, the list of public channels was filled up by two channels “Sinamo” TV and “Varzish” TV¹⁹. The activity of TV and radio is regulated by the Committee on TV and radio under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan.

In accordance with the data provided by JSC “Teleradiokom” the percentage coverage of the population by the public channels is the following: “Tochikiston” TV – 99.72%, “Safina” TV – 86.64%, “Bahoriston” TV – 84.20%, “Djahonnamo” TV – 75.71%²⁰. At the current moment, public TV channels have the widest territorial coverage – around 95% of the population. Private (independent) channels covers only 44% of the population, approximately.²¹

¹⁶ <http://www.alexa.com/topsites/countries/KG>

¹⁷ <http://siar-consult.com/wp-content/uploads/IRI-Poll-Presentation-Kyrgyzstan-March-2016-ENG-72-91.pdf>

¹⁸ Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. “Feasibility Study on the Establishment of a Single, Converged Regulator for Telecommunication and Broadcasting Services in Tajikistan”. 2015. Available at .

¹⁹ Asia Plus (Information Agency). “President zapustit v efir dva novyh tadjikskih telekanala”. February 29,2016. Available at <http://www.news.tj/ru/node/222548>.

²⁰ Teleradiokom. “Technicheskie parametry priema televisionnyh I radiosignalov so sputnik”. 2014. Available at <http://ru.teleradiocom.tj/main/83-tehnicheskie-parametry-priema-televizionnyh-i-radiosignalov-so-sputnika.html>.

²¹ Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. “Feasibility Study on the Establishment of a Single, Converged Regulator for Telecommunication and Broadcasting Services in Tajikistan”. 2015. Available at <http://www.osce.org/tajikistan/215401>.

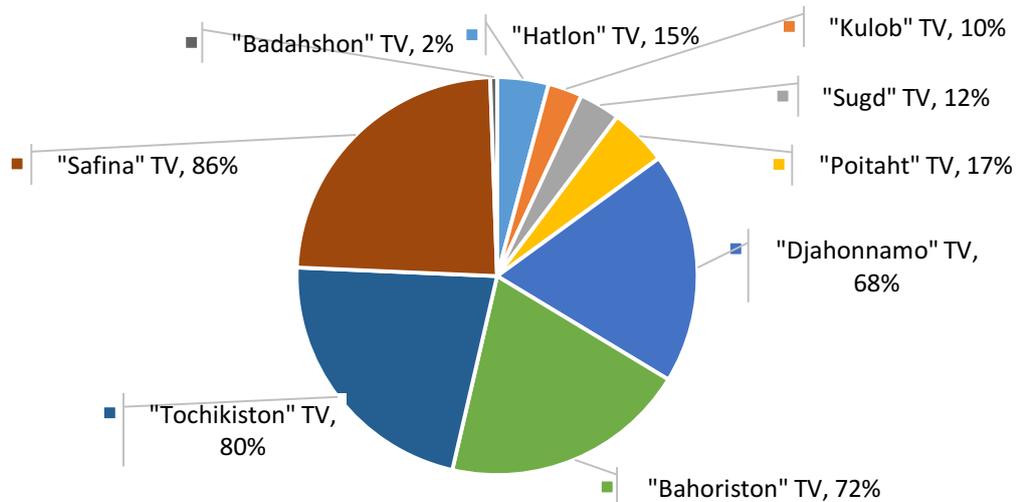
Chart 1. Coverage by public channels



The results of the research “Market Brief” conducted from November 27 up to December 12, 2015 by “Z-Analytics Group” company revealed the following results on public/private TV channels and online information agencies:

Public TV channels

Chart 2. Popularity of the public channels, N=1000



The most popular public channel is “Safina” TV (86%). “Tochikiston” TV (80%), “Bahoriston” TV (72%) and “Djahonnamo” TV (68%) are occupying the next places.

The “Safina” TV channel’s content is not available and the representatives of channel are refused the request of archives and due to this the second popular public TV channel named “Tochikiston” was selected as the content analysis unit.

Private TV channels

Population mostly prefer 4 public national channels as “Safina” TV, “Tochikiston” TV, “Bahoriston” TV and “Djahonnamo” TV. Private TV companies have their own regional identity. You can see the information on the private channels by regions of Tajikistan below:
 Dushanbe – TV SMT (13% of regional population)
 Districts under Republican Subordination – Regar TV (15%)

Sogd – Tanin TV (24.4%), TRK CM-1 (23.5%), Chahonoro (20.5%), Asia Teleradio Company (18.8%) and others.

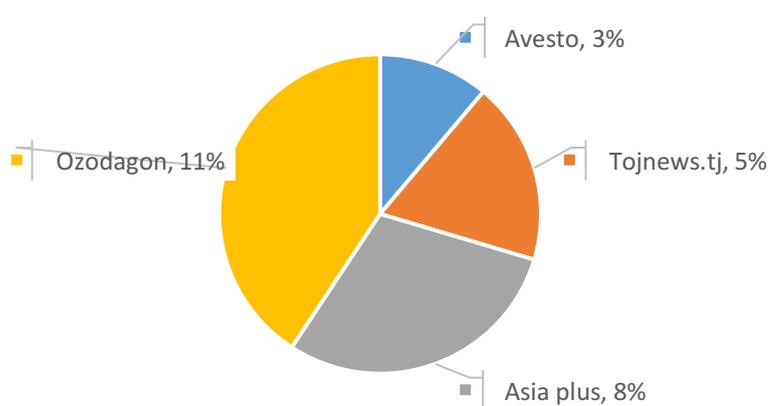
Hatlon – the majority of population of this region prefer to watch public national channels. Among regional channels (which are also public) population watch Hatlon TV (32.6%), Kulob TV (17.5%) as well as others.

There are no private TV channels in [Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region](#).

Information agencies

The level of Internet penetration in Tajikistan is relatively low. In 2016 internet users constitutes only 18.7%²² of the population. The results of the “Market Brief” research conducted by “Z-Analytics Group” discovered the most visited websites by internet users. Such social networks as “Odnoklassniki” (86%) and “Facebook” (26%) were among the most popular ones.

Chart 3. Popularuty of (online) information agencies



Regarding information agencies, internet users emphasized the following online information agencies: Ozodagon²³ (11%), Asia Plus²⁴ (8%), Topnews,tj²⁵ (5%), and Avesta²⁶ (3%). But, since the editorial board of the information agency “Ozodagon” is located not on the territory of Tajikistan, we propose to include Asia Plus information agency to be studied in this research. As a result of the data above, the most appropriate for content analysis media outlets are:

1. Public channel – “Tochikiston”;
2. Private channel – TRK CM-1²⁷;
3. Information agency - “Asia Plus” (www.news.tj).

Comments:

We also want to emphasize that despite the fact that 11 internet providers are operating on the territory of Tajikistan, 4 of them are mobile companies, a lot of internet sites are subjects to blocking by the order of the above-assigned state bodies. As a consequence, such sites as “YouTube”, “Instagram”, “Facebook”, and others are being regularly blocked. Moreover, the

²² Tajikistan Internet Users. 2016. Available at <http://www.internetlivestats.com/internet-users/tajikistan/>

²³ <http://www.ozodagon.tj/>

²⁴ www.news.tj

²⁵ www.topnews.tj

²⁶ www.avesta.tj

²⁷ Two channels from Sagdyi oblast (Tanin TV and TRK CM-1) are the most popular in Sogdyi oblast. As it was discussed at the training with the client and colleagues from Kyrgyzstan on August 17, 2016, in the framework of this particular research, the subject of the study will be the materials from the private TV channel TRK CM-1.

abovementioned information agencies are also subjected to blocking, periodically (Ozodagon and Asia Plus)²⁸.

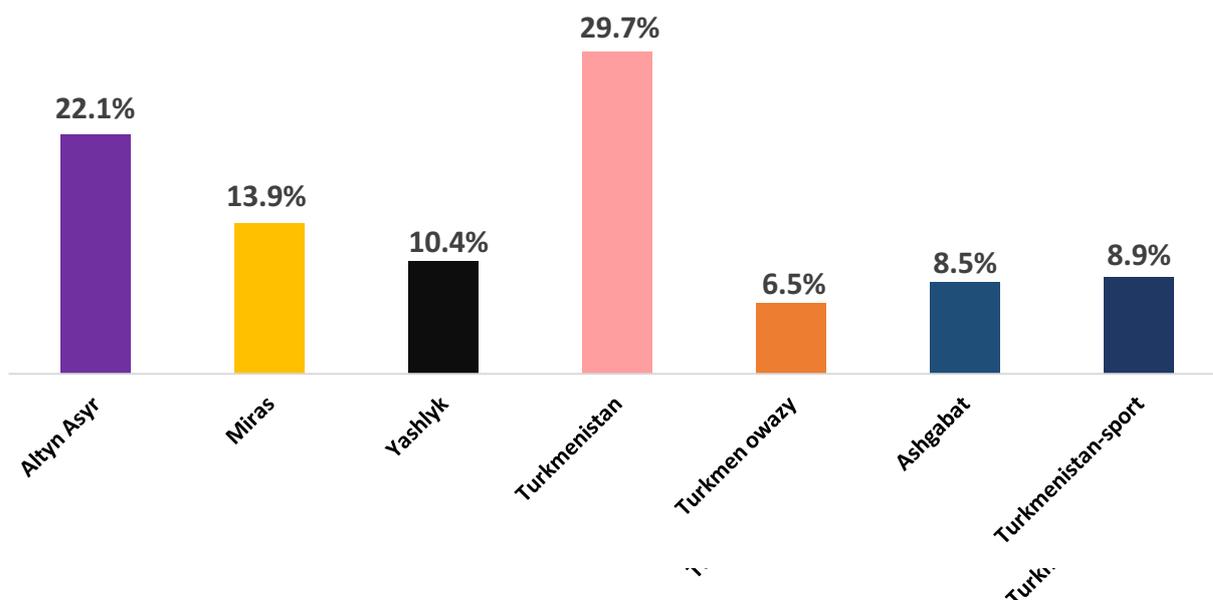
Turkmenistan

TV channels

Nowadays in Turkmenistan 7 public TV channels are broadcasting – 6 of them cover all country and 1 is presented only in Ashgabat. The Russian and Turkish TV channels are also presented in Turkmenistan and this channels are very popular among audience. The number of this kind of TV channels available in Turkmenistan varies between 150 and 200.

Chart 4 TV channels rating in Turkmenistan²⁹

As it seen in the chart below, the most popular TV channels are «*Turkmenistan*» - 29,7%, «*Altyn Asyr*» - 22,1%, «*Miras*» - 13,9%.



TV channel	Comments
✓ “ <i>Altyn Asyr</i> ” — the main TV channel of the country.	✓ Video recordings are not being preserved at all. Programs featuring the president and statesmen are being archived. Storage time of such video recordings ranges from 1 to 3 years. ✓ Storage time of the rest of TV programs lasts up to 2 weeks. Afterwards all the recordings are being deleted.
✓ “ <i>Miras</i> ” — TV channel that covers the culture and the heritage of Turkmen nation;	
✓ “ <i>Yashlyk</i> ” – youth-oriented TV channel;	
✓ “ <i>Türkmenistan</i> ” — international TV channel, which broadcasts in seven different languages;	

²⁸ Asia-Plus. “V Tadjikistane zablokirovany ryad informacionnyh saitov”. May, 2016. <http://news.tj/ru/news/v-tadjikistane-zablokirovany-ryad-informatsionnykh-saitov>.

²⁹ «Identification of consumers preferences in local mass media» research, MCT Agency, 2015

✓ “Türkmen owazy” — music TV channel;	✓ Once again we emphasize that all TV & radio channels of Turkmenistan are entirely owned by the state. Therefore, aforesaid rules apply to all TV & radio channels.
✓ “Ashgabat” — TV channel of the capital, broadcasts only in the capital city of Ashgabat;	
✓ “Turkmenistan-sport” – sports TV channel.	

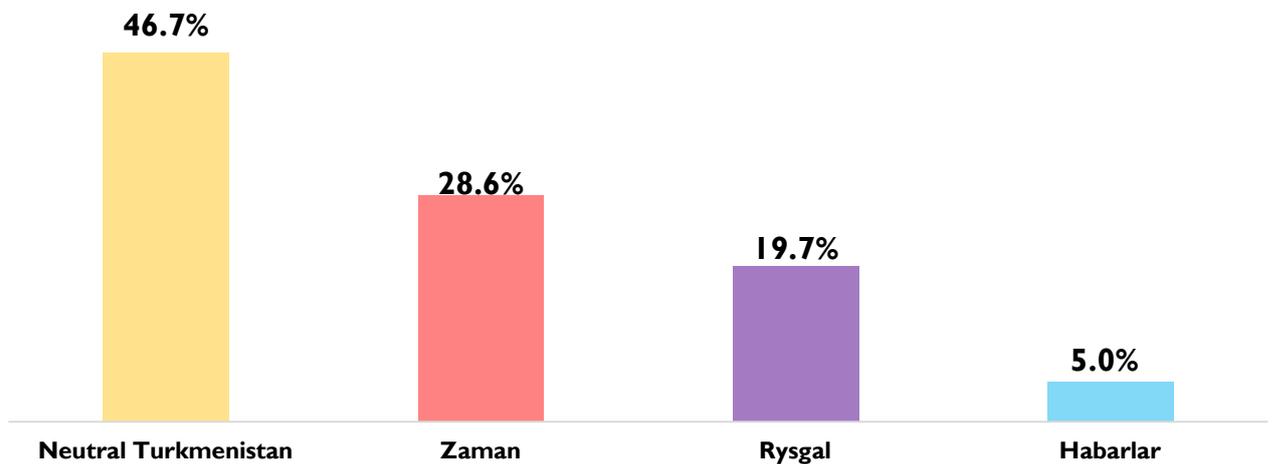
Table 1. TV channels in Turkmenistan

Print media

Practically 100% of print media in Turkmenistan is also owned by the state. One publication printed by The Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs of Turkmenistan is the only exception. In total, 57 printed publications (newspapers, magazines) are being published on the territory of Turkmenistan. These publications cover various aspects of country’s life:

- ✓ **Newspapers** (published daily, weekly, several times a week, once a month) – **27 items**;
- ✓ **Magazines** (published daily, weekly, several times a week, once a month) – **30 items**.

Chart 5 rating of printed media among the population of Turkmenistan³⁰



As seen from data provided above the newspaper **“Neutral Turkmenistan”** is the most popular printed publication in Turkmenistan. It is necessary to mention that this publication is being published in 2 languages (Russian and Turkmen). The publication in Russian language is named **“Neytralniy Turkmenistan”**. The publication in Turkmen language is named **“Türkmenistan”**. **Newspaper “Neutral Turkmenistan” is published 6 times a week.** This publication publishes the news on politics, economy, society and other aspects of country’s life. Thereupon, it is necessary, in the first place, to tackle the newspaper “Neutral Turkmenistan” for further monitoring and survey of printed media.

Online news agencies

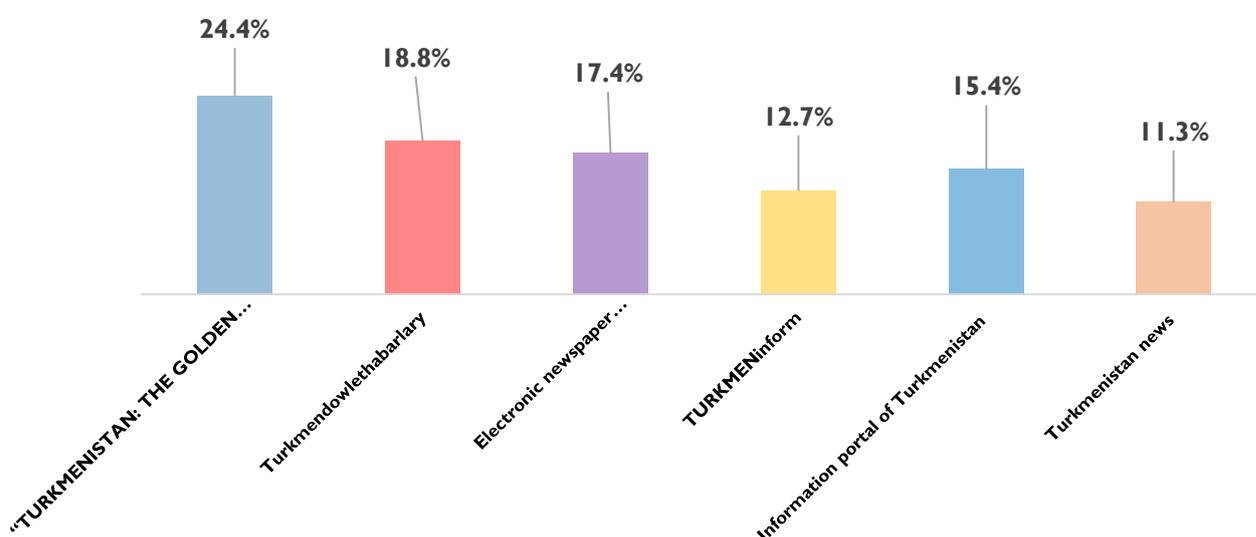
Presently, more than 10 online news agencies are being run in Turkmenistan. 3 of them are state-owned, whereas the rest are privately owned. However, oftentimes, privately owned news agencies are copying information from the state news websites.

³⁰ Data retrieved from conducted research titled as **“Determination of consumer preferences regarding local mass media”**, MCT Agency, 2015, also data retrieved from circulations of printed publications of Turkmenistan.

It is also necessary to mention the internet penetration in Turkmenistan, which currently comprises about 84%³¹.

- ✓ **Most popular online news agencies are as follows:**
 - “TURKMENISTAN: THE GOLDEN AGE” — (<http://www.turkmenistan.gov.tm/>);
 - [Turkmenowlethabarlary](http://www.tdh.gov.tm/) — (<http://www.tdh.gov.tm/>);
 - Electronic newspaper “TURKMENISTAN.RU” — (<http://www.turkmenistan.ru/>);
 - TURKMENinform — (<http://turkmeninform.com/>);
 - Information portal of Turkmenistan — (<http://turkmenportal.com/>);
 - Turkmenistan news — (<http://gundogar-news.com/>);
 - News portal — (<http://asgabat.net/>);
 - Information portal of Turkmenistan — (<http://arzuw.tm/>);

Chart 6. rating of online news agencies in Turkmenistan³²



From the data given above it is seen that main portion of consumers (users) falls to online news agency “TURKMENISTAN: THE GOLDEN AGE” (<http://www.tdh.gov.tm/>) – 24, 4%. This information portal is state-owned and has the highest rating both in terms of opinion polls conducted among internet users and in the number of visits to this website (information about the traffic given on this website).

To monitor online news agencies we selected the following:

1. “TURKMENISTAN: THE GOLDEN AGE” (<http://www.turkmenistan.gov.tm/>); state-owned publication and 2. Information portal of Turkmenistan – (<http://turkmenportal.com/>) – privately owned publication.

According to the results of conducted research the publication “TURKMENISTAN: THE GOLDEN AGE” holds the leading position among the population – 24, 4%. Although publication “Information portal of Turkmenistan” is not at 2nd most popular place, it is widespread among internet users of PRIVATELY OWNED publications – 15, 4%. For this

³¹ Data retrieved from conducted research titled as “Sociological survey”, 2016, MCT Agency

³² Data retrieved from conducted research titled as “Determination of consumer preferences regarding local mass media”, MCT Agency, 2015, also data on website traffic of online news agencies.

reason, the choice has been made in its favor. There is a possibility that during the process of data gathering at this internet portal, we would be able to find news/articles from alternative (non-state) sources. As mentioned earlier, in Turkmenistan, even privately owned publications are copying information from the state sources.

While making a sample of online news agencies to monitor and analyze their content a following facts were considered:

- “Turkmenowlethabarlary” is a state-owned online information agency.
- The source of information published in newspaper “Turkmenistan.ru” is the newspaper “Turkmenistan: The golden age”.

Therefore, the “Turkmenistan: The golden age” newspaper was included to content analysis sample.

In conclusion, as “online news agencies” we have selected one state-owned and one privately owned.

According to the results of conducted desk research the following media outlets were selected for content analysis:

Printed publications -

1. Daily newspaper “Neutral Turkmenistan”

Online news agencies -

2. “Turkmenistan: The golden age” (<http://www.turkmenistan.gov.tm/>); state-owned publication
3. Information portal of Turkmenistan – (<http://turkmenportal.com/>) – privately owned publication*

Uzbekistan

In accordance with the data provided by the Agency of Press and Information of Uzbekistan, 1437 media got official registration of the Republic of Uzbekistan on January 1, 2016.³³

Officially registered Media Outlets in Uzbekistan:

- 690 newspapers;
- 300 magazines;
- 95 TV and radio channels;
- 332 websites.

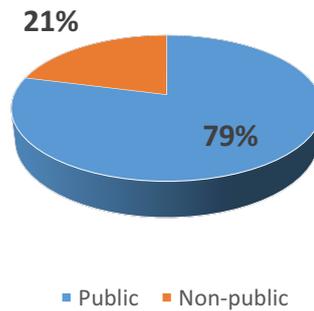
Media of the country publish and broadcast in seven languages of the ethnic groups living on the territory of Uzbekistan.

Today, 79% of TV and radio channels and websites are non-public media.³⁴

³³ Results of the research conducted by the agency of Press and Information of Uzbekistan <http://www.review.uz/index.php/novosti-main/item/6520-kolichestvo-smi-v-uzbekistane-dostiglo-1437>

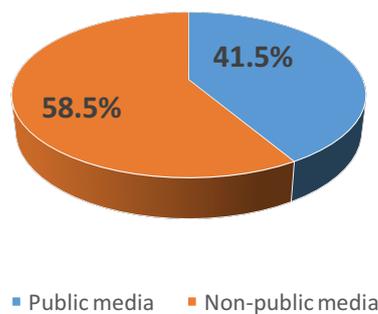
³⁴ Uzbekistan media: statistics and infographics <http://infocom.uz/2015/07/07/smi-uzbekistana-statistika-i-infografika/>

Chart 7. Public and non-public electronic media in Uzbekistan



Among all the media, 58.5% are non-public.

Chart 8. All public and non-public media in Uzbekistan



The number of internet resources registered as media has been increased in more than 2 times during the last 5 years. The number of Internet media reached 261, among them 255 (98.1%) are non-public on January 1, 2014. Internet media provide information in Uzbek, as well as in Russian, English, French, German, and in other languages.

It is obvious that the growth of the domain «uz» of Internet resources, specializing in the dissemination of news, directly related to the increase in the number of Internet users. In accordance with the data provided by the State Committee of Communication, Information and Telecommunication Technologies of the republic of Uzbekistan, in 2007 the number of internet users was 1 million people, approximately, while by the end of 2013 this number was equal 10.9% million people.³⁵

TV channels of Uzbekistan.

At the current moment the Uzbek television broadcasts the following available TV channels:

Public:

Name	Topic	Broadcasting language
Uzbekiston	universal	Uzbek, Russian, English
Yoshlar	entertaining, information	Uzbek
Sport	sport	Uzbek, Russian,
Navo	music, entertaining	Uzbek
Kinoteatr	movies, entertaining	Uzbek, Russian,
Bolajon	children's, entertaining	Uzbek, Russian, English

³⁵ Main tendencies of media development in Uzbekistan. <http://www.turkishnews.com>

Dunyo Bo'ylab	natural history, entertaining	Uzbek, Russian, English
Madaniyat va Ma'rifat	Cultural	Uzbek
Diyor	Universal	Uzbek
Oilaviy	entertaining	Uzbek, Russian, Kara-Kalpak
Mahalla	universal	Uzbek
Toshkent	information, entertaining	Uzbek, Russian
UzHD	HD universal channel	Uzbek

Table 2. Public TV channels in Uzbekistan

There are also public channels which are broadcasting in each oblast of Uzbekistan. You can find their names in Uzbek, below:

- Andijon
- Buxoro
- Farg'ona
- Jizzax
- Navoiy
- Namangan
- Samarqand
- Sirdaryo
- Surxondaryo
- Qaraqalpaqstan
- Qashqadaryo
- Xorazm

Private TV Channels

There are only two private channels broadcasting in Uzbekistan (May, 2015), which are Uzreport TV and MY5.

Online resources of Uzbekistan.

You can find information on the most-visited channels below:

Statistics on August 12, 2016³⁶

- [Gazeta.uz – Novosti Uzbekistana](http://Gazeta.uz) 83%
- podrobno.uz 77%
- uz24uz 74%
- Novosti Uzbekistana: nezavisimaya gazeta 75%
- [Sputniknews Uzbekistan \(ru\)](http://Sputniknews Uzbekistan (ru)) 60%
- Xabar.Org :: Eng yangi xabarlar 67%
- 1news.uz – novosti Uzbekistana 76%
- Uzbekskiy informacionnyi portal 64%
- Zamin.y3 – Novosti Uzbekistana I Mira v 3 yazikah 78%
- inormacionno-analiticheskii portal 81%
- [Sputniknews Uzbekistan \(uz - cyr\)](http://Sputniknews Uzbekistan (uz - cyr)) 73%
- Utro.uz – Novosti Uzbekistana I Mira 80%

³⁶ Statistics on online resources in Uzbekistan. <http://www.liveinternet.ru/rating/uz/media/#geo=uz;group=media>

As a result of the abovementioned, we propose the following media to be selected for the content analysis:

1. Public channel – “Uzbekiston”.
2. Private Channel – Uzreport Channel
3. Online source - Gazeta.uz – Novosti Uzbekistana

Annex 2 – content analysis criteria

Assessment criteria	1 = Very poor quality	2 = Low quality	3 = Fair with room for improvement	4 = Good	5 = excellent, meets international standards
Balance	The report (news/story/article and etc) only includes a single perspective	The report (news/story/article and etc) includes perspectives of two parties but these are not given equal time/ space/ placement/approach (<i>treated with an equal degree of intensive questioning</i>)	The report (news/story/article and etc) includes perspectives of all relevant parties but they are not given equal time/ space/ placement/approach	The report (news/story/article and etc) includes the perspectives of the majority of relevant parties who are given equal time/ space/ placement/approach	The report (news/story/article and etc) includes perspectives from all possible stakeholders who are given equal time/ space/ placement/approach
Conflict-sensitive language	Inflammatory language or sensationalizing is used consistently in the report (news/story/article and etc)	Inflammatory language and a sensational tone is used in order to emotionalise the topic unnecessarily	Neutral tone is maintained in most parts of the report but some aspects of the report are sensationalized	Neutral tone is maintained in most parts of the report, inflammatory language is not used and topic is not sensationalized	Neutral tone is maintained throughout the report, inflammatory language is not used and topic is not emotionalized. The story includes possible solutions to the problems
Assessment criteria	1 = Very poor quality	2 = Low quality	3 = Fair with room for improvement	4 = Good	5 = excellent, meets international standards

Easy to understand	The report contains scientific jargon (scientific, technical, professional language/terminology) without explanations/definitions	Scientific jargon (scientific, technical, professional language/terminology) has explanations that use more scientific jargon or with words that are not simple	Use of scientific jargon (scientific, technical, professional language/terminology), around half of which is defined with simple explanations while the rest remains undefined or explained via more jargon or with words that are not simple	The majority of the scientific jargon (scientific, technical, professional language/terminology) used is defined with simple words. Scientific terms are not used or used common terms that do not affect the ease of perception.	All scientific jargon (scientific, technical, professional language/terminology) is explained with simple words and precise examples
Accuracy & pertinence of sources	Does not make use of sources and therefore perceived more like an opinion piece	There is only 1 source used whose details are not referenced or cannot be verified	There are 2 or more sources used, referenced and verified but the sources do not have the relevant experience/knowledge for the topic	There are 2 or more sources used, referenced and verified but the sources are not experts in the field (i.e. medium relevance)	There are 2 or more sources used, referenced and verified and these are from experts and/or leaders in the field
Actionable information	The report has no ideas or recommendations for environmental issues	The report has ideas or recommendations but their implementation is unrealistic under local conditions	The report has ideas or recommendations but their implementation is difficult, economically not effective and etc.	The report has ideas or recommendations that are applicable / feasible	Has ideas or recommendations that are applicable and subject to vulgarisation
Assessment criteria	1 = Very poor quality	2 = Low quality	3 = Fair with room for improvement	4 = Good	5 = excellent, meets international standards

Relevance to environment and natural resources	Does not have direct correlation to environment and natural resources	Linked to environment and natural resources but superficially covered	Linked to environment and natural resources and covered in depth but makes no links to the local context	Linked to environment and natural resources and has depth as well as relevance vis a vis the local context but it misses some details (definitions, descriptions, features/characters, forecasts/trends, international/regional specifics)	Linked to environment and natural resources, has depth as well as relevance vis a vis the local context and has all appropriate details (definitions, descriptions, features/characters, forecasts/trends, international/regional specifics)
Human Interest	The story is not presented using Human Interest angles and narratives	The story is presented with a limited or indirect Human Interest perspective, narrative or angle	The story is presented with Human Interest perspective, narrative or angle that explains and humanizes the issue	The story is presented with a Human Interest perspective, narrative or angle that provide the reader with a reason to keep reading, listening, watching	The story is presented using a Human Interest angles that weave through the narrative to explain an issue, exemplify a concept or create a powerful human story to hook the reader
Inclusion of women	There are no women hosts /participants /interviewees/ heroes	There is one women (a host /participant /interviewee/ hero and etc) but her role is marginal	More than 1 women included but not as expert	There is 1 or more women but less than half of them as experts	There is 1 or more women - half or more are experts
Assessment criteria	1 = Very poor quality	2 = Low quality	3 = Fair with room for improvement	4 = Good	5 = excellent, meets international standards

Use of multimedia (only for online media)	There is only text or text with one sample photo	The text includes sample photo and 1 or more thematic photos	The text includes sample or thematic photo and audio or video	The text includes sample or thematic photo, audio or video and infographics	The text includes sample or thematic photo, audio or video or infographics plus a multimedia element that was created using special multimedia tools (longread, timeline, interactive map, interactive photo, tests and etc)
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