

Voluntary Principles Initiative – Guidance on Certain Role and Responsibilities of NGOs

Civil society organizations fulfill a range of functions, including playing a “watchdog” role, providing policy advice, program implementation, and representing the perspectives of specific constituencies.

The matrix below attempts to reflect this diversity of roles. In the context of the Initiative of the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights (“Voluntary Principles Initiative” or “VPI”), the matrix does not imply that each NGO Participant should be fulfilling each category of role (at least not to the same extent) but rather suggests a framework for accommodating the diversity of NGOs which are already, or might in the future be, participants in the process. There are some core roles & responsibilities, however, that should – and do – apply to all NGOs, and these are described below.

The NGO pillar continues to reflect on the diverse ways in which it may contribute resources to the Voluntary Principles process, and to national-level and project-level implementation.

GENERAL GOOD PRACTICE	IMPLEMENTATION AND ASSISTANCE IN IMPLEMENTATION	PROMOTION
<i>Progressing thinking and guidance on implementation of the Voluntary Principles:</i>	<i>Facilitating/supporting in-country processes:</i>	<i>Internal and external awareness-raising and advocating for adoption of the Voluntary Principles into international policy frameworks:</i>
<p>Commitment to Rules of the VPI</p> <p>Participants in the NGO Pillar are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abide by the Governance Rules; and • Attend Annual Plenary Meetings, and as appropriate and commensurate with resource constraints, Extraordinary Plenary Meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All NGOs should support efforts to strengthen rule of law and accountability mechanisms in the security sector. • Some NGOs have a role in assisting with implementation of the Voluntary Principles either individually or through multistakeholder collaboration. Some have a role in assessing and commenting on the extent to which all Participants, as well as external actors, are fulfilling their responsibilities regarding security and human rights and the Voluntary Principles in particular. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All NGOs have a responsibility to publicly express and demonstrate commitment to the objectives of the Voluntary Principles. • All NGOs have a responsibility to raise awareness and promote understanding of the VPs among their various constituencies. • The NGO Pillar should conduct outreach to and educate non-participating NGOs and CSOs, companies, governments and affected communities on the Voluntary Principles.

<p>Engagement in the VPI</p> <p>Participants in the NGO Pillar are encouraged to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in Pillar Meetings; • Participate in Working Groups; • Participate in in-country meetings; • Promote cross-Pillar coordination to support implementation of the Voluntary Principles; and • Work to maintain the Voluntary Principles Initiative as a leading multi-stakeholder initiative, aligned with international norms and best practice in the field of business and human rights. 	<p>Rule of Law</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake initiatives related to capacity building, training, lobbying and advocacy, and remedy. <p>Risk Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor implementation and impact, particularly in regard to company policies and processes; • Assist with performance of company site assessments; and • Provide information that may help companies conduct appropriate risk assessments. 	<p>Public Expressions of Commitment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicize commitment to, benefits of, and activities within the Voluntary Principles, as appropriate (through web site, reports, etc.) <p>Outreach to Internal Stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote organizational awareness and understanding of the Voluntary Principles; and • Integrate a “Voluntary Principles focus” into organizational or program strategies, where appropriate.
<p>Transparency and Dialogue</p> <p>Participants in the NGO Pillar are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit annual reports on efforts to implement or assist in the implementation of the Voluntary Principles; • Communicate publicly, at least annually, on efforts to implement or assist in the implementation of the Voluntary Principles; • Participate in dialogue with other Participants; and • Provide timely responses to reasonable requests for information from other Participants in order to facilitate greater understanding of issues related to implementation of the Voluntary Principles. 	<p>Policies, Procedures & Guidelines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop guidance on specific Principles and their integration into policy and procedures; • Develop indicators to measure implementation; • Develop mechanisms for determining impact and effectiveness; • Share lessons learned; and • Identify/facilitate civil society involvement in in-country and project-level processes. <p>Public Security Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor implementation and impact, particularly in regard to company policies and processes; • Facilitate training on the Voluntary Principles, and security & human rights; and • Facilitate dialogue across sectors. 	<p>Outreach to External Stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote awareness amongst companies, governments, and civil society; • Encourage applications for membership in the VPI; • Educate NGOs, civil society organizations, and communities on advancing security and respect for human rights through the Voluntary Principles; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with governments and NGOs/civil society organizations to encourage them to join the Voluntary Principles Initiative; • Consult with companies (member and non-member) and encourage them to implement the Voluntary Principles; • Identify/facilitate civil society involvement in in-country and project-level processes;

<p>Participants in the NGO Pillar will endeavor to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share information about their efforts to implement or assist in the implementation of the Voluntary Principles with other Participants and the public. 	<p>Private Security Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor implementation and impact, particularly in regard to company policies and processes; • Facilitate training on the Voluntary Principles, and security & human rights; and • Facilitate dialogue across sectors. <p>Accountability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holding Participants to account for their responsibilities regarding security and human rights; • External publication of Voluntary Principles Annual Report; and • Use of the internal dispute resolution mechanism, where appropriate, to hold VPI Participants accountable to implementation of the Principles and participation in the Initiative. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify/facilitate representation of affected communities in the Voluntary Principles Initiative and related processes; • Help facilitate civil society participation in the Voluntary Principles Annual Plenary Meeting and Voluntary Principles workshops; • Advocate for recognition/adoption of the Voluntary Principles in government and multi-lateral policy statements and instruments; • Participate in outreach efforts with companies and governments and civil society present in the country to promote implementation of the Voluntary Principles on the ground; and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share best practices and promotion of discussion and learning, e.g. through case studies.
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