SECTION 5: Guidance on Making a Voluntary Principles Verification Presentation

Overview

Pursuant to a motion adopted at the 2015 Annual Plenary Meeting in London, all Participants in all three Pillars are required to make a presentation that provides verification of a Participant's efforts to implement the Voluntary Principles.

Participants provide their presentations in accordance with the schedule developed by the Secretariat and approved by the Steering Committee.

Generally speaking, the verification presentations give focus to how a Participant's protocols, procedures, and policies reflect efforts to implement the Voluntary Principles. The verification presentations also offer Participants with an opportunity to provide the Plenary with a closer window into specific regions and operations that can highlight successes and/or challenges with implementation of the Voluntary Principles. The verification presentations allow Participants to exchange information, identify best practices, and potentially coordinate to improve implementation efforts at specific extractives locations and to strengthen adherence to the Voluntary Principles writ large.

Content

Many of the Participants that have presented to date have chosen to focus on a specific aspect of their implementation efforts, either by exploring their human rights- and security-related policies and procedures as implementing globally or by looking at their policies and approach to human rights and security at a specific location in a specific region.

In some instances, a Participant's presentation provides a comparison of two or three operations spread across one or several regions, and use that cross-comparison to contextualize the Participant's broader implementation efforts and challenges that have arisen from implementation across several settings.

Overall, the verification presentations were originally designed to provide Participants with flexibility regarding the substance of their presentations.

Some suggested topics include:
- Experiences implementing the VPs at organizational and operational levels, including challenges and successes
- Experiences with measuring performance and sustainment of VP processes (including KPIs, risk assessments, etc.)
- Examples of stakeholder, community, and host government engagement
- Experiences with implementation of the Roles and Responsibilities documents
- Experiences with internal/external reporting and the challenges and successes in driving

performance
- Case studies of assurance processes specific to particular operational sites
- Case studies of implementation of assurance processes at an organizational level
- Challenges or successes in implementing the Voluntary Principles
- Engagement with public and private security forces to implement the Voluntary Principles
- Efforts to use the Voluntary Principles to positively address issues with forced labor, modern slavery, child labor and children's rights, and gender-based violence in the context of extractives operations.

Presenters are requested to keep introductory remarks that provide background on the Participant, its history, and its business to a minimum except to the extent such remarks are directly relevant to the issues that will be discussed in the presentation.

While the presentations are a great opportunity for knowledge sharing and discussion of best practices, they are, at the core, an accountability mechanism. As such, they must provide an opportunity for VPI members to assess the presenter's ongoing compliance with the Voluntary Principles.

Format

Each presenter should share its presentation with the Secretariat no later than fourteen (14) business days prior to the presentation date. The Secretariat shall review and share comments and suggestions for improvement, which the presenter may choose to incorporate at its discretion.

Presentations should be 45-60 minutes in total, consisting of a 15-20 minute presentation, followed by 10-15 minutes of responses to peer-review input from two reviewers, and up to 30 minutes of open Q&A (with priority given to peer reviewers for follow-up comments/questions).

A Participant's Verification presentation is followed by a "peer review" session conducted by two other Participants, who can ask clarifying questions and provide additional comments on the content of the presentation. Participant's answers to these questions and comments should also inform the Participant's future Voluntary Principles annual reports.

Peer review will be conducted by at least two volunteer Participants, at least one of which must be from another Pillar. Peer reviewers will be given an advance version of the presentation at least seven (7) days prior to the presentation date. This will provide the reviewers and opportunity to prepare questions, comments, and suggestions during the presentation.

Thus far, most Participants have selected to provide this information as a set of PowerPoint slides and to provide further detail in their oral presentation of the slides. An ideal verification presentation is about 10-15 slides and provides clear and concise information on a specific operation(s) and general policies that serve as examples for the steps the Participant has taken to advance the implementation of the Voluntary Principles (see above for suggested topics).

The best presentations tend to use the slides only as way to guide the discussion provided by the

presenter. Presentations where the presenter essentially reads from the slides are considered less effective and engaging.

Additionally, the password-protected section of the Voluntary Principles website contains all the verification presentations that presenting Participants have agreed to share, under the "View Documents" tab. Presenting Participants are also encouraged to review the Guidance on Making a Voluntary Principles Verification Presentation for their respective Pillar to procure further guidance and background.

The Secretariat will create a standard form that will incorporate the questions from reviewers and other participants that could not be asked during the session. The presenter will have 14 days from receipt of the questions to provide the answers. The Secretariat will then consolidate the questions and responses and post the resulting document. The resulting document will be subject to the same confidentiality terms as the presentation itself.

If applicable, the Secretariat will collect any recommendations received from participants and provide them to the presenter no later than one month after the Verification Presentation.