

A. Commitment to the Voluntary Principles

A1 Describe how you have engaged in the Voluntary Principles Initiative over the past year.

In 2021, International Alert engaged in the steering committee of the VPIs through the regular meetings, retreats, and annual plenary. Alert also attended the NGO pillar meetings and participated in the one UK in country working group that took a place in 2021.

Further, Alert engaged with the conflict working group, which focussed on producing a new conflict tool that is being currently piloted by a couple of corporate members.

A2 Describe efforts to increase transparency, both internally and externally, regarding your efforts to implement or support implementation of the Voluntary Principles.

Alert, in collaboration with other partners working on ‘enabling good governance in the Kenya oil sector’ published a practice note on dealing with fragility for oil and gas companies. The paper, published in September 21 was based on key lessons learned from the Kenya oil project.

Alert has also reported on our engagements in the VPI and the different ways in which we were involved in implementing the VPSHR in our 2021 annual report that is published on our website.

A3 Efforts to engage in dialogue with other participants of the Voluntary Principles Initiative

Kenya

In 2021, International Alert continued to work closely with fellow VPI participant, Tullow Oil, to continue its work on VP implementation and improve community engagement efforts in Turkana, Kenya through Alert’s ‘Enabling Good Governance in Kenya’s Oil Sector’ project.

Using communication mechanisms facilitated by Alert, Tullow Oil and local communities have embraced dialogue as a way to address issues, concerns and grievances, leading to a reduction in violent demonstrations and attacks. Alert has also delivered training on conflict sensitive business practice for company representatives. Additionally, Alert’s accompaniment of Tullow Oil has resulted in their adoption of cultural dispute resolution approaches within their grievance mechanisms, reduced tensions between communities and security services, and led to strengthened relationships with other commercial entities in the region to improve their collective approach to governance and community engagement.

B. Procedures

B4 Provide a summary of the findings of the verification process as outlined in the NGO Pillar Verification Framework.

N/A

C. Promotion of the Voluntary Principles

C5. Describe your efforts to raise awareness of and promote understanding of the Voluntary Principles with both internal and external stakeholders.

(Democratic Republic of) Congo

International Alert has worked with multiple levels of the extractives industry in eastern DRC to improve security, social cohesion and human rights by raising awareness through implementation of a mining code. The mining code ensures mine workers are protected by verifying that mine operators have the necessary procedures in place to ensure workers' security and rights. The project has delivered trainings to establish reporting mechanisms in each region of operation and to sensitise stakeholders (members of the reporting structure, political authorities, armed forces and police) on human rights and the mining code that will be monitored in mines through the project. This promotes understanding of the Voluntary Principles by making it easier to assess the risks of each mine, ensuring protections of worker's rights and

C6. Describe efforts to engage and facilitate participation of non-member CSOs, affected communities, and other relevant stakeholders in the Annual Plenary Meeting or workshops.

N/A

C7. Describe your efforts to promote the adoption of the Voluntary Principles into relevant government or corporate policies, as well as international standards and/or guidelines.

(Democratic Republic of) Congo

Through the project 'Improving security, social cohesion and human rights in conflict mineral rich regions of Eastern DRC', Alert has begun to develop policy recommendations for national and regional governance of mineral chains and engage the private sector on both the supply and demand sides to ensure sufficient levels of due diligence are upheld and companies take proactive steps to improve security in their regions of operation.

International Alert has also engaged with the efforts lead by the Swiss government and facilitated by DCAF to develop a roadmap for the DRC to become a member of the VPI.

D. Country Implementation

D8. Describe efforts to strengthen the rule of law in the countries where you work.

Kyrgyzstan

In Kyrgyzstan, Alert has been working to strengthen the rule of law and prevent election-based violence by supporting youth volunteer groups, civil society, and local self-government bodies to improve conflict-analysis, prevention and mediation skills in 25 districts and pilot locally led, inclusive initiatives to prevent election-related violence. This is complemented by higher-level political dialogue and analysis with key officials through a working group which discusses key issues fuelling election violence and disseminates messages of tolerance, the rule of law and respect for a pluralist democracy, as well as recommendations for various political actors.

D9. Describe efforts to conduct and monitor risk assessments for potential human rights violations in the areas where you work.

(Democratic Republic of) Congo

Through the 'Improving security, social cohesion and human rights in conflict mineral rich regions of Eastern DRC' project, Alert has established a set of standards to ensure human rights and security are

protected on mining sites and to reduce the incursion of conflict minerals in supply chains. Our project staff visit mining sites to assess their compliance to human rights protections, security provisions and conflict sensitive dispute resolution and those that meet the required standards are certified and are regularly monitored for their compliance.

D10. Describe your efforts to strengthen policies, procedures and guidelines related to the implementation of the Voluntary Principles.

International Alert has participated in the work of the conflict working group to draft a conflict tool that aims to aid companies to implement the VPSHR while also being conflict sensitive as many companies felt that the tools available do not largely respond to their needs and are difficult to customise. The tool is the first step towards providing a comprehensive guidance to companies it can facilitate undertake conflict analysis when relevant for companies' operations.

D11. Describe your efforts to engage with or support engagement with the public security sectors and/or private security sectors in the countries where you work.

Nepal

International Alert was requested to work with the police force in Nepal to improve their response to gender-based violence. By institutionalising the Community Score Card method, a participatory accountability tool to collect, assess and act on the needs and concerns of community groups, the Nepali police have demonstrated commitment to engaging with and building relationships with community members by prioritising their needs and collectively defining an action plan. This approach has built mutual respect between the police and community members, improved police effectiveness when dealing with GBV, increased people's confidence to report crimes and encouraged community involvement in crime identification and investigation.

Philippines

Alert Philippines has established a conflict monitoring system which collects nationwide data to identify conflict trends and provide insights for decision makers. In 2021, this system has been used to present briefings to national security stakeholders and informed a report identifying the conflict risks and dynamics in the Bangsamoro region spanning the past 10 years. The findings from this report helped to prompt multi-level discussions on urgent issues surrounding the upcoming election and substantiate policy recommendations to curb the proliferation of illegal firearms, the spread of violent extremism and the rise in violent conflict over land and resources made to local, regional, national and international stakeholders, including ministry officials and the security sector.

D12. Describe efforts to hold Voluntary Principles participants accountable for upholding their roles and responsibilities as members of the Voluntary Principles Initiative.

Kenya

Working with local communities in Turkana, International Alert held Tullow Oil to account by ensuring that the people who live in their operational area are respected by the company and its security providers, and that they are able to have their concerns addressed peacefully and appropriately. We worked alongside communities to help them raise their grievances and accompanied the adoption of cultural dispute resolution approaches.

Alert facilitated the trust-building process between local communities and security providers, as well as between oil companies and the government. We have helped resolve conflicts between communities and both public and private security providers, dispersed information on community

rights relating to the oil sector and built relationships between regional authorities to reduce barriers to business. This has helped to create an enabling environment for multi-stakeholder dialogue on conflict sensitive governance in the oil sector in Turkana and has resulted in best practices and policy recommendations to address the impacts of the oil sector on conflict and governance in the region, including on gender relations and women.

E. Lessons and Issues

E13. Lessons or issues from this reporting year, as well as plans or opportunities to advance the Voluntary Principles for the organization

N/A