

A. Commitment to the Voluntary Principles

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

In 2022, International Alert engaged in the steering committee of the VPIs through the regular meetings, retreats, and annual plenary in Geneva. Alert also attended the NGO pillar meetings, steering committee and participated in the peer review of the Pan American Silver verification process.

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

Alert published a policy brief on peace positive investment which has contributed to increased engagement with investors on conflict sensitivity and peace positive investment. Through this engagement, Alert has been an active player mobilising partnerships and bringing investors and peacebuilding organisations together to influence policies on conflict sensitive business operations.

Alert also published a study report that examined how green energy investment is impacting conflict focusing on Kenya, DRC and Morocco. As a result, Alert mobilised a couple of dialogue sessions with around, which targeted business, investors and peacebuilding organizations.

In addition, Alert participated in reviewing the UNDP toolkit on heightened human rights due diligence in FCAS and worked with other NGOs to engage with to the EU parliament on including conflict in the new EU directive on mandatory human rights due diligence.

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 2022 annual report that is published on our website. In addition,

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

Alert worked with a coalition of INGOs to engage the EU parliament on including conflict in the new EU directive on mandatory human rights due diligence. Alert also participated in the business and human rights roundtables organized by the Fund for Peace and brought together other VPI participants (DCAF, ICMC & US government representatives).

B. Procedures

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

Alert has been active in the verification process, participating in the NGO pillar meetings and discussions, providing feedback and peer reviewing new members implementation of the VPS.

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 with our local partners 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.

Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia:

International Alert through the "*Enabling the business and human rights agenda in conflict-affected settings in Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia project*" undertook a conflict and human rights impact assessment in 2022 aimed at understanding the interactions between business operations, human rights and conflicts in each context. The project aims at enhancing the accountability and conflict sensitivity of corporate and state actors in order to respond to community grievances and promote multistakeholder approaches in addressing and resolving human rights and conflict issues in each country.

In collaboration with Transparency International, our national partner in Kenya, Alert organized a national conference on enabling the business and human rights agenda in conflict-affected settings in Kenya bring together business, government and CSOs actors. The workshop objective was to promote a multi-stakeholder approach to addressing business and human rights-related issues to generate quality results for local communities, build trust among stakeholders and foster a long-term common vision for the benefit of the local communities. This led to the creation of a national platform to facilitate collaboration and linkages of government, business, and civil society organizations in Kenya.

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 developed 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.

N/A

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

Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia

Through the “*Enabling the business and human rights agenda in conflict-affected settings in Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia project*”, Alert undertook a conflict and human rights impact assessment in 2022 aimed at understanding the interactions between business operations, human rights and conflicts. The assessments focused on the renewable energy and mining sector in Kenya, Extractives sector in Uganda and Mining and large-scale agriculture development in Ethiopia.

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

International Alert has participated in the review of strategy and governance documents in both NGO pillar meetings and the steering committee meetings. Alert has also participated in the peer review of the verification process and the provided feedback to various VPI guideline.

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.

N/A

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

N/A

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