

Centro para Democracia e Direitos Humanos (CDD) 2025 Annual Report

Commitment to the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights

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

CDD has actively engaged in the Voluntary Principles Initiative through both governance-level participation and continuous engagement within the NGO Pillar. CDD participated in the annual Board retreat of the Voluntary Principles Initiative, contributing to strategic discussions on the direction of the Initiative and sharing insights from the Mozambican context, particularly in relation to security and human rights challenges in extractive areas.

In addition, CDD maintained regular engagement within the NGO Pillar, participating in monthly coordination meetings where members provide updates on implementation progress, emerging risks, and country-level developments. Through these platforms, CDD has consistently ensured that Mozambique country-specific experiences feed into the broader global dialogue of the Initiative.

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

Efforts to increase transparency in the implementation of the Voluntary Principles combine structured internal coordination with proactive external disclosure.

Internally, transparency is reinforced through regular meetings of the National and Provincial Working Group and its pillars, bringing together government, companies, and civil society. These platforms enable information sharing, coordination, and accountability. Conducted under the Chatham House Rule, they allow open discussion of sensitive issues while supporting collective reflection on progress, challenges, and emerging risks.

Externally, the Secretariat ensures public access to information through multiple outputs. Quarterly reports on Security and Human Rights analyse key incidents and patterns in Palma and Montepuez and are published on the CDD website, with four reports produced in 2025. Trained local monitors inform the reports by documenting developments on the ground, engaging communities to identify grievances and risks linked to public and private security actors. This information feeds into the working groups, enabling early warning and preventive engagement.

Additional transparency is achieved through regular publications, including the “VPSHR in Mozambique Bulletin” and “Business and Human Rights (BHR+)”. In 2025, over 20 bulletins were disseminated via the CDD website and social media, reaching more than 158,000 people. The Secretariat also generated evidence to inform dialogue and capacity building, notably a gender baseline study on the impact of the extractive sector on women and vulnerable groups. This study was publicly disseminated and used to support training sessions on gender and Business and Human Rights in Maputo, Balama, and Montepuez.

3. Describe any efforts to engage in dialogue with other participants of the Voluntary Principles Initiative.

CDD has actively engaged in dialogue with other participants of the Voluntary Principles Initiative through a combination of structured national platforms and international engagement, contributing to strengthened collaboration across the Initiative’s three pillars.

At the country level, CDD plays a central role in facilitating and participating in in-country working groups,

which function as the primary dialogue platforms among government, companies, and civil society. In 2025, this included at least 3 National Working Group meetings in Maputo and 3 provincial Working Group meetings in Cabo Delgado, bringing together key Corporate Pillar members such as TotalEnergies, Gemfields, and Eni, alongside government institutions and civil society actors. These engagements enabled continuous exchange on security and human rights risks, the sharing of field-based evidence, and the joint identification of practical responses to emerging challenges, particularly in conflict-affected districts in Cabo Delgado.

Dialogue was further deepened through at least 3 pillar-specific coordination meetings (government and civil society pillars in Maputo and Cabo Delgado), which strengthened internal alignment and informed broader multi-stakeholder discussions. In addition, CDD facilitated and participated in 3 targeted consultation meetings with private security companies and civil society organizations, creating focused spaces to discuss regulatory challenges, operational practices, and human rights concerns in the security sector.

Beyond these, the national secretariat engaged 2 major conferences in December 2025, including a High-Level Conference on the Voluntary Principles and a dedicated conference on private security. These events brought together a wide range of VPI participants and partners, providing additional opportunities for exchange of experiences, dissemination of good practices, and alignment with international standards.

At the international level, CDD also participated in the VPI Annual Plenary Meeting, engaging with governments, companies, and civil society organizations from across the Initiative. This platform enabled CDD to share lessons from Mozambique, particularly from conflict-affected contexts, while drawing on comparative global experiences to inform its national-level engagement.

Procedures

4. Provide a summary of the findings of the verification process.

The implementation of the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights in Mozambique faced several challenges in 2025:

1. **Delay in approval of the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights:** The slow governmental approval of this plan hindered the consolidation of a comprehensive strategy to align the Initiative's objectives with national priorities.
2. **Interlinked crises of political instability, social unrest, and economic tension:** The post-election period in October 2024 exposed governance weaknesses and exacerbated unresolved community grievances. The volatile context disrupted commercial operations, reduced investor confidence and caused large-scale damage extending into early 2025.
3. **Limitations in engagement with the private sector:** Divergent priorities and lack of adherence to international standards by some actors impeded effective cooperation, reducing the impact of consultations and collaborative efforts necessary for successful VP implementation.
4. **Persistent community tensions and lack of trust:** Fragile relationships between companies, government, and local communities continued to fuel distrust, undermining dialogue and cooperation.

Opportunities

Despite these challenges, several opportunities emerged in 2025:

1. **Development of the National Action Plan on Security, and Human Rights (VPSHR):** This strategic milestone provides a national framework to guide the integration of the Voluntary Principles into public policies and corporate practices, demonstrating the government's commitment to aligning security and extractive sectors with international human rights standards.
2. **Active stakeholder engagement:** Ministries, the Police of the Republic of Mozambique (PRM), provincial authorities, companies, and civil society showed willingness to participate in multi-stakeholder dialogue, paving the way for provincial working groups that integrate diverse perspectives and develop joint solutions for security and human rights challenges.
3. **Resumption of operations by TotalEnergies:** The suspension of the force majeure declaration in

October 2025 created space to rebuild trust between companies, communities, and government, provided it is accompanied by transparency and accountability measures.

4. **Collaboration with complementary initiatives:** Aligning the Voluntary Principles with ongoing conflict resolution dialogues, energy transition projects, social cohesion programs, and violent extremism prevention initiatives offers synergies that can strengthen Mozambique's comprehensive approach to security and human rights challenges.

Recommendations

1. **Approval and implementation of the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights:** The government should prioritize formal approval and the execution of the Plan's actions to consolidate commitments to human rights and integrate responsible practices across the economic sector.
2. **Development of a VPSHR-specific National Action Plan:** A targeted plan should establish concrete measures to ensure companies operating in Mozambique adhere to the Voluntary Principles and support the broader National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights.
3. **Promotion of legal awareness:** Efforts should be intensified to enhance stakeholders' understanding of legal obligations under human rights and International Humanitarian Law (IHL). Awareness campaigns, training programs, and capacity-building initiatives can strengthen compliance and encourage private sector participation in VP implementation.
4. **Continuous monitoring and mapping in Cabo Delgado:** A dynamic system for tracking security and human rights initiatives in Cabo Delgado should be established. Multi-stakeholder working groups will be essential for identifying critical issues and providing timely, evidence-based inputs for decision-making and interventions.
5. **Enhanced risk assessment:** Stakeholders should strengthen the use of context-specific risk assessments to identify security and human rights vulnerabilities. Capacity-building to conduct these assessments effectively will allow for proactive mitigation measures.
6. **Strategic use of third-party human rights monitoring mechanisms:** Independent monitoring mechanisms should be leveraged for objective evaluations, actionable recommendations, and strategic support. Emphasizing these tools as instruments for collaboration and improvement (rather than punitive measures) will promote continuous learning, accountability, and reinforcement of human rights practices.

Promotion of the Voluntary Principles

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

The Mozambican secretariat has undertaken sustained efforts to raise awareness of and promote understanding of the Voluntary Principles among internal stakeholders, combining structured capacity-building, multi-stakeholder dialogue, and targeted knowledge dissemination.

Awareness and understanding were strengthened through continuous engagement within the Voluntary Principles architecture. In 2025, this included at least 3 National Working Group meetings, 3 provincial working group meetings in Cabo Delgado, and 3 pillar-specific coordination meetings, which provided regular platforms for government, companies, and civil society to deepen their understanding of the Principles and align on their application in practice. These engagements enabled participants to reflect on real cases, share operational experiences, and collectively build a common understanding of security and human rights standards.

The secretariat has also implemented capacity-building and outreach agenda targeting local stakeholders. In 2025, at least 5 structured training sessions on the Voluntary Principles, gender, and Business and Human Rights were conducted in Balama, Montepuez, Palma, and Pemba, as well as at national level. These trainings reached a diverse group of actors, including district authorities, security forces, companies, civil society organizations, and community leaders, strengthening their capacity to apply the Principles in local contexts and promoting responsible security practices.

These efforts were complemented by broader awareness-raising platforms, including 1 national workshop and 2 conferences in December 2025, notably a High-Level Conference on the Voluntary Principles and a

conference on private security. These events brought together national and international stakeholders, creating spaces for knowledge exchange, dissemination of good practices, and promotion of international standards such as the Voluntary Principles and ICoCA.

In addition, CDD promoted awareness through evidence-based learning and dialogue processes. This included the development of a gender baseline study on the impact of extractive activities on women and vulnerable groups, as well as 3 targeted consultation meetings with private security companies and civil society organizations. These initiatives not only generated knowledge but also translated it into practical learning and policy discussions, further embedding understanding of the Principles among stakeholders.

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

Over the past year, CDD's efforts related to participation in the Annual Plenary Meeting and associated workshops were focused on supporting and strengthening the engagement of the Government of Mozambique, an engaged member of the Voluntary Principles Initiative (VPI), while also creating pathways for non-member civil society and community voices to inform these processes.

In this context, CDD has played a facilitative role in preparing and accompanying government participation in global VPI processes. This included continuous engagement around the Annual Plenary Meeting and related workshops, aimed at strengthening the Government's understanding of participation requirements, expectations, and opportunities for more substantive and proactive contributions. These efforts are directly linked to CDD's technical support to the development of the National Action Plan (NAP) on Security and Human Rights, which constitutes a key milestone for Mozambique's transition from engaged to full member status within the Initiative.

Engagement with grassroots actors was strengthened through at least 5 localized training sessions conducted in Palma, Montepuez, Balama, and Pemba, targeting community leaders, local CSOs, and representatives of vulnerable groups. These sessions enhanced understanding of the Voluntary Principles and equipped participants with the capacity to engage more effectively in dialogue with government, companies, and international stakeholders, including those linked to VPI global platforms.

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

CDD has focused its efforts on two strategic policy processes to promote the adoption of the Voluntary Principles within national frameworks and alignment with international standards.

First, CDD has provided sustained technical support to the development of the National Action Plan (NAP) on Security and Human Rights, positioning it as the primary vehicle for institutionalizing the Voluntary Principles in Mozambique. Through technical assistance, policy dialogue, and facilitation of multi-stakeholder consultations, CDD contributes to ensuring that the Voluntary Principles are reflected in national strategies and aligned with existing legal and regulatory instruments. This engagement also supports Mozambique's progression toward full membership in the Voluntary Principles Initiative.

In parallel, CDD promotes the uptake of the Voluntary Principles within corporate practices, particularly among companies operating in the extractive sector. Through direct engagement, training sessions, and multi-stakeholder dialogue platforms, CDD encourages companies to incorporate the VPs into their internal policies, risk assessment processes, and security management systems.

CDD also works to bridge national and international standards by promoting coherence between the Voluntary Principles and other relevant guidelines, including the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. Through research, policy engagement, and high-level dialogue, the organization advocates for integrated approaches that avoid fragmentation and strengthen accountability across sectors.

Second, CDD has been actively advocating for the adoption of the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Providers (ICoCA) as a complementary international standard. This effort has focused on

influencing policy direction and regulatory thinking, contributing to the Government of Mozambique's ongoing consideration of ICoCA membership. The objective is to strengthen the governance, oversight, and professionalization of the private security sector, ensuring its alignment with both the Voluntary Principles and broader international human rights frameworks.

Country Implementation

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

Our efforts to strengthen the rule of law focus primarily on legal assistance and strategic litigation, responding to an average of four new cases per day covering police violence, illegal detention, labour disputes, land conflicts, and administrative injustices. By providing pro bono legal representation and prioritizing serious violations, CDD helped ensure access to justice for vulnerable groups and reinforced the enforcement of constitutional rights.

CDD also advanced the rule of law by pursuing high-impact cases with strong institutional implications, including litigation on excessive use of force by police, illegal internet restrictions, and abuses of authority by senior officials. These cases aim to establish legal precedents, promote accountability of state and corporate actors, and challenge systemic impunity within public institutions.

In addition, CDD contributed to strengthening accountability through monitoring, reporting, and institutional engagement, ensuring that violations are documented and followed through judicial and administrative channels. This combination of legal action, evidence generation, and sustained pressure on institutions supports a more predictable and rights-based governance environment, reinforcing the foundations of the rule of law in Mozambique.

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

CDD conducts and monitors risk assessments through a structured, evidence-based monitoring system that enables continuous analysis of security and human rights dynamics in areas affected by extractive activities. By systematically identifying vulnerabilities, tracking changes over time, and linking findings to practical recommendations, this process provides an early warning function and supports more informed, preventive, and accountable responses by government, companies, and other stakeholders, ultimately contributing to reducing the likelihood of human rights violations. The process was piloted in Palma and Montepuez districts, in Cabo Delgado Province, now undergoing methodological improvements.

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

CDD has actively worked to strengthen the institutional and operational frameworks that support the implementation of the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights in Mozambique, ensuring that both government and private sector actors have clear guidance and tools to align their practices with international standards.

At the government level, CDD supports the development and refinement of the National Action Plan on Security and Human Rights, providing technical expertise, facilitating stakeholder consultations, and offering recommendations to integrate the Voluntary Principles into national policies. This includes aligning security and extractive sector regulations with international human rights frameworks, promoting clear guidance on the roles and responsibilities of state actors, and ensuring that procedures for monitoring and reporting on security-related risks are robust and practical.

For the private sector, CDD has facilitated workshops, consultations, and training sessions with companies, particularly VPI Corporate Pillar members such as TotalEnergies, Gemfields, and Eni, to support the integration of the VPs into corporate security policies, standard operating procedures, and internal risk management processes. These efforts emphasize compliance with both national regulations and international standards, including the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers.

CDD has also promoted guidance on risk assessment and monitoring procedures, providing tools and training to local authorities, security actors, and civil society to identify, prevent, and respond to potential human rights violations. Community-based monitoring initiatives in Palma and Montepuez serve as practical examples of operationalizing these guidelines, linking local intelligence to policy-level discussions and decision-making.

Moreover, CDD emphasizes the integration of cross-cutting considerations, including gender and protection of vulnerable groups, into policies and procedures. Specialized gender trainings and the baseline study on the impacts of extractive activities on women and vulnerable populations have informed updated procedural guidelines and corporate practices, ensuring that human rights considerations are systematically embedded.

Through these combined initiatives, policy support, procedural guidance, training, and monitoring, CDD strengthens the institutional capacity of both government and private sector actors to implement the Voluntary Principles effectively, consistently, and in alignment with international best practices.

11. 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.

CDD has undertaken sustained efforts to engage with and support both public and private security sectors in Mozambique, with the aim of promoting responsible security practices aligned with the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights and other relevant international standards.

With regards to the private sector, CDD convened a consultation meeting with private security companies operating in Mozambique, focused on analyzing the sector's operational challenges, promoting respect for human rights, and strengthening alignment with the Voluntary Principles, as well as other international standards such as the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers. The meeting provided an open and constructive platform for dialogue, allowing participants to share practical insights into the functioning of the sector and to identify critical areas requiring further attention.

The consultation brought together representatives from various private security companies, who exchanged experiences, concerns, and good practices from the field. This exercise contributed to strengthening understanding of the challenges faced by the sector, while also raising awareness of the importance of integrating international standards into security operations. It further reinforced commitments to professionalization, accountability, and respect for human rights.

In addition, the consultation aimed to gather input from Private Security Companies (PSCs) to better understand key governance, regulatory, and oversight challenges affecting the sector in Mozambique. The perspectives collected through this and other stakeholder consultations are informing the development of a national roadmap on the regulation and oversight of private security, as well as contributing to the National Action Plan (NAP) on Security and Human Rights.

Complementing these efforts, CDD co-organized a national conference on the private security sector in Maputo, in partnership with the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers and the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance. The event brought together government authorities, regulatory bodies, private security companies, corporate clients, civil society organizations, and international partners, creating an inclusive multi-stakeholder platform for dialogue on the governance of the private security sector.

The conference provided a space for open discussion on key challenges, risks, and opportunities facing the sector, particularly in complex and high-risk environments such as extractive and energy operations. Discussions emphasized the need to strengthen national regulatory frameworks, improve oversight and accountability mechanisms, and enhance compliance with international standards, including the Voluntary Principles and ICoCA.

Furthermore, the event supported ongoing efforts to professionalize the private security sector in Mozambique by promoting responsible security practices grounded in respect for human rights. Through the exchange of international experiences, good practices, and lessons learned from other contexts, the conference contributed to building a shared understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the State,

private security providers, corporate clients, and civil society.

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

CDD actively works to promote accountability among participants of the Voluntary Principles Initiative in Mozambique, ensuring that members uphold their roles and responsibilities in line with the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights.

A key element of this accountability approach is multi-stakeholder monitoring and dialogue. CDD regularly convenes meetings of the National Working Group, bringing together government representatives, corporate actors, including VPI Corporate Pillar members such as TotalEnergies, Gemfields, and Eni, and civil society actors. These meetings provide a platform to review progress, share findings from field monitoring, and raise concerns regarding adherence to the VPs.

CDD's community-based monitoring systems in Palma and Montepuez also play a central role in accountability. Local monitors document grievances, security incidents, and potential human rights violations, enabling CDD to report instances where corporate or governmental actors may not be fully meeting their VPs commitments. This evidence-based approach allows for targeted engagement and constructive feedback, promoting corrective actions where needed.

Lessons, Effective Strategies, Innovative Approaches, and Additional Reporting

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

Over the reporting period, CDD's implementation of the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights in Mozambique has generated important lessons and identified key opportunities for further advancement.

One of the most innovative elements of CDD's approach has been the integration of community-based monitoring mechanisms, particularly in the districts of Palma and Montepuez in Cabo Delgado. By working with trained local monitors, CDD has been able to capture early warning signals related to community grievances, security incidents, and human rights risks linked to extractive activities. This localized monitoring system has strengthened the flow of information between communities and national-level dialogue platforms, enabling more timely and informed engagement with relevant stakeholders. It has also contributed to empowering communities by increasing awareness of their rights and providing structured channels through which concerns can be raised.

Several key lessons have emerged from this work. First, building trust among stakeholders in conflict-affected environments requires sustained engagement, consistency, and neutral facilitation, particularly in contexts where historical tensions exist between companies, communities, and security actors. Second, community awareness and meaningful participation are essential for the effective implementation of the Voluntary Principles, as local communities are often the first to experience the impacts of security practices associated with business operations. Third, the Mozambican experience has demonstrated that civil society can play a critical bridging role, facilitating dialogue between actors that may otherwise have limited opportunities to engage constructively. Finally, the experience in Cabo Delgado underscores the importance of context-sensitive approaches, where implementation strategies must remain adaptive to complex realities such as ongoing conflict, displacement, and evolving security dynamics.

Looking ahead, CDD identifies several opportunities to further advance the Voluntary Principles. These include strengthening and scaling up community-based monitoring systems to additional districts, deepening engagement with public and private security actors, and supporting the Government of Mozambique in finalizing and implementing the National Action Plan (NAP) on Business, Security, and Human Rights. There is also a continued need to enhance transparency, reinforce accountability mechanisms, and promote greater alignment between the Voluntary Principles and broader national and

international frameworks on Business and Human Rights.

14. Human Rights Defenders - Describe initiatives, policies, procedures, programs, and/or activities related to the protection of human rights defenders, as set in the VPI's "Guidance on Respecting the Rights of Human Rights Defenders" (a copy is available on the VPI website's Resources page).

CDD has implemented targeted mechanisms to ensure the protection of human rights defenders (HRDs), combining direct support and structured protection systems. In 2025, at least 20 defenders received legal, medical, and psychosocial assistance, including access to safe houses and emergency protection. These interventions followed strict security and confidentiality standards, ensuring immediate and effective response to risks.

At the institutional level, CDD supported the creation of a Human Rights Defenders Desk within the National Human Rights Commission (CNDH), formalized through a Memorandum of Understanding. This mechanism provides a permanent platform to receive, document, and respond to cases, strengthening coordination between civil society and the state and improving predictability in protection responses.

CDD also strengthened prevention and resilience through network building and capacity development in accessing protection mechanisms, digital security and protection frameworks. These efforts enhanced early warning, self-protection capacities, and collective response to emerging threats.

15. Participation in In-Country Working Groups - Describe your participation in the In-Country Working Groups, for example: which ICWGs you participated in this year, and information on in-kind support/contribution.

CDD plays a central and active role in the Voluntary Principles in-country Working Groups in Mozambique, serving as the secretariat of the National Working Group. In this capacity, CDD is responsible for organizing meetings, preparing agendas, documenting discussions, and facilitating follow-up on action points, ensuring the group functions effectively and inclusively.

16. Gender - Describe specific initiatives, policies, and/or procedures that address the needs of gender and vulnerable groups in the provision of security, as set in the VPI's "IGT companion Tool – Operationalizing the Voluntary Principles Through the Lens of Protecting and Respecting the Unique Needs and Rights of Women and Other Disadvantaged Groups" (a copy of this tool is available on the VPI website's Resources page).

CDD has taken important steps to integrate a gender perspective into the implementation of the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights in Mozambique, with particular attention to the impacts of extractive activities on women and other vulnerable groups.

A key milestone was the development of a gender baseline study focused on the impact of the extractive sector on the security and rights of women and vulnerable groups in affected communities. The study aimed to identify key risks and challenges emerging from extractive activities, analyzing how these dynamics influence daily life, social protection, and access to opportunities for women and marginalized populations. This initiative represented an important step in understanding local realities and generating evidence to inform more inclusive and gender-sensitive policies.

The study was conducted through a participatory approach, involving affected communities, civil society organizations, and gender experts who contributed data, testimonies, and recommendations. This process highlighted critical concerns, including physical security risks, labor exploitation, unequal access to resources, and environmental impacts that disproportionately affect women and vulnerable groups. The findings provide a strong evidence base to support mitigation measures and protection strategies aimed at promoting equity and respect for human rights in extractive areas.

Building on these findings, CDD organized a specialized training on Gender and Business and Human Rights (BHR), targeting members of the National Working Group on the Voluntary Principles. The session was delivered by the consultant who conducted the gender baseline study and aimed to strengthen participants' understanding of how to integrate gender perspectives into business practices and human

rights processes. The training emphasized the importance of aligning corporate activities with international standards on responsible business conduct, while addressing gender inequalities and differentiated impacts.

During the training, participants engaged in practical case discussions, explored analytical tools, and examined strategies to ensure that the private sector contributes to the protection and promotion of human rights in a gender-responsive manner. The session helped consolidate knowledge and foster a shared commitment to implementing the Voluntary Principles through a more inclusive and equitable approach.

To expand its impact, CDD replicated these trainings at the local level in Pemba, Montepuez, Balama, and Palma, reaching a broader range of stakeholders, including local authorities, community representatives, and civil society actors. These efforts contributed to strengthening institutional capacities and ensuring that gender considerations are systematically integrated across policies, practices, and stakeholder engagement processes.