

LITE-Africa 2025 Annual Report

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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.

During the reporting period, LITE-Africa remained actively engaged in advancing the objectives of the Voluntary Principles Initiative (VPI) through its leadership and coordination role within the Nigerian Working Group on the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights (NWG). As part of this engagement, LITE-Africa, as the secretariat of the ICWG in Nigeria, contributed to strategic planning, coordination, and implementation of activities aimed at strengthening awareness and implementation of the Voluntary Principles in Nigeria during this reporting period.

Following the global VPI Plenary Meeting in March 2025, members of the NWG convened a coordination meeting to review developments from the global process and to realign national priorities with emerging strategic directions of the Initiative. This meeting provided an opportunity for members from the government, corporate, and civil society pillars to reflect on progress made in Nigeria and to identify practical pathways for advancing implementation in the country.

LITE-Africa (Secretariat NWG) led the development of the NWG's annual work plan and activity calendar, collaborating with members of the working group, which served as a framework for coordinated engagement throughout the reporting period. The work plan prioritised awareness creation, stakeholder engagement, and advocacy directed at encouraging the Government of Nigeria to formally join the Voluntary Principles Initiative.

In addition to coordination activities, LITE-Africa implemented several capacity-building initiatives aimed at strengthening knowledge of the Voluntary Principles among key stakeholders. These included training programmes for community leaders and private security actors in areas where extractive activities take place. These initiatives were designed to strengthen understanding of the principles relating to human rights, security management, and responsible corporate conduct.

Notably, engagements during the year were further reinforced through the NHRC, which played a leading role in advancing Business and Human Rights (BHR) frameworks aligned with the Voluntary Principles.

The NHRC entered into a strategic partnership with the Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI), establishing a joint framework that integrates human rights considerations into extractive sector transparency mechanisms. This collaboration reflects a practical application of the Voluntary Principles by linking corporate accountability, civil society protection, and state oversight.

Through sustained collaboration with civil society partners, corporate actors, and government representatives, LITE-Africa contributed to maintaining momentum for the implementation of the Voluntary Principles in Nigeria despite operational and financial constraints. These engagements reflect the organisation's continued commitment to supporting the effective implementation of the Initiative at the national level.

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

Promoting transparency in the implementation of the Voluntary Principles remains a central component of

LITE-Africa's engagement within the Nigerian Working Group. Internally, transparency is promoted through structured coordination processes that ensure all participating members remain informed of ongoing activities, planned engagements, and progress made in advancing the Voluntary Principles in Nigeria.

During the reporting period, LITE-Africa, as the secretariat of the ICWG in Nigeria, supported the development and dissemination of the NWG annual work plan and calendar of activities. These documents provided members with a clear outline of planned engagements and priority actions for the year. Sharing these planning tools across the working group strengthened internal accountability and facilitated coordinated implementation among members.

LITE-Africa also ensured that key meetings and engagements were properly documented. For example, the report of the quarterly coordination meeting was circulated among members of the NWG to provide a record of discussions, decisions, and action points. Such documentations contribute to institutional memory and ensure that stakeholders remain informed about the direction of the group's activities.

Externally, LITE-Africa promoted transparency by engaging directly with government institutions responsible for human rights and policy coordination. Courtesy visits and advocacy engagements were conducted with the National Human Rights Commission and the Ministry of Justice to discuss progress towards Nigeria's potential accession to the Voluntary Principles Initiative.

Some members of the NWG also contributed to increasing transparency and implementation of the VPs through collaboration with other stakeholders. The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), a member of the Nigeria Working Group and a government agency, reinforced transparency through engagement with the Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI), particularly following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between both institutions. The partnership introduces a joint monitoring framework that integrates human rights reporting into extractive sector transparency audits, thereby enhancing public oversight of corporate activities.

Furthermore, the Nigerian Working Group continued to use digital communication platforms such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and WhatsApp to share information among members and facilitate engagement with stakeholders across different regions of the country. These platforms helped sustain collaboration and communication despite the challenges of convening physical meetings.

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

Constructive dialogue among participants remains essential to the effective implementation of the Voluntary Principles. During the reporting period, LITE-Africa actively engaged with other participants of the Initiative through its role in the Nigerian Working Group, which brings together representatives from government institutions, extractive companies, and civil society organisations.

The working group serves as an important platform for dialogue among the three pillars of the Voluntary Principles. Through coordination meetings and collaborative activities, members are able to exchange perspectives on challenges related to security and human rights in the extractive sector while identifying practical solutions that align with the principles of responsible security management.

LITE-Africa participated in the global VPI Plenary Meeting held in March 2025, which provided an opportunity to engage with international stakeholders and learn from experiences in other countries where the Voluntary Principles are being implemented. Insights from the Plenary informed subsequent discussions within the Nigerian Working Group regarding strategies for advancing the Initiative in Nigeria. Dialogue also occurred through engagement with corporate members operating in Nigeria's extractive sector. Companies such as Chevron Nigeria Limited and the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited shared updates on ways the Voluntary Principles are being incorporated into their operational practices and internal training programmes. These discussions helped reinforce mutual accountability among stakeholders and encouraged the sharing of good practices, increasing awareness and implementation of the VPs in Nigeria.

A multi-stakeholder engagement held in Rivers State provided an opportunity for FOCONE to raise awareness of the Voluntary Principles among civil society organisations that were not yet members of the

working group.

Through these platforms, LITE-Africa and the NWG helped maintain regular dialogue and strengthen relationships that support collective action on security and human rights issues in Nigeria.

Procedures

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

During the reporting period, LITE-Africa continued to operate in a manner consistent with the expectations outlined in the NGO Pillar Verification Framework of the Voluntary Principles Initiative. Participation in the Nigerian Working Group and implementation of relevant programmes demonstrated ongoing commitment to advancing the objectives of the Initiative.

Key activities implemented during the year included coordination of working group engagements, advocacy with government institutions, and delivery of capacity-building programmes targeting community leaders and security actors. These activities reflect the organisation's efforts to promote awareness and practical application of the Voluntary Principles in Nigeria.

The verification process also highlighted certain contextual challenges affecting implementation. One of the most significant constraints remains the fact that Nigeria has not yet formally joined the Voluntary Principles Initiative. This limits the extent to which government institutions can publicly promote the Initiative or fully integrate the principles into national policy frameworks.

A key development strengthening compliance was the active role of the NHRC in advancing Business and Human Rights frameworks aligned with the Voluntary Principles. The NHRC's partnership with NEITI represents a significant step toward institutionalising human rights considerations within extractive sector governance.

Additionally, national-level processes such as the development of the National Action Plan (NAP) on Business and Human Rights (2024–2028) and the validation of State Action Plans demonstrate growing policy alignment with international standards.

Funding limitations were also identified as a challenge affecting the frequency of coordination meetings at the national level, the introduction of the regional working groups, and the scale of awareness-raising activities that can be implemented across the country. Despite these constraints, LITE-Africa and other members of the Nigerian Working Group continued to demonstrate commitment to advancing the Initiative through available resources and collaborative engagement.

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.

Raising awareness of the Voluntary Principles among stakeholders remains a core component of LITE-Africa's work within the Nigerian Working Group. During the reporting period, several initiatives were implemented to strengthen the VP's understanding among communities, civil society actors, and security personnel operating in areas affected by extractive activities.

One of the key activities implemented was a four-day capacity-building programme in collaboration with Search for Common Ground (SFCG) for approximately 128 SFCG staff, community leaders, and private security actors from Abuja, Bayelsa, Delta, and Rivers states. The programme combined practical discussions on human rights standards with sessions focused on responsible security practices and community engagement.

LITE-Africa supported participants to develop time-bound action plans that could be implemented within their respective communities and operational environments. These action plans served as practical tools for creating awareness and promoting the application of the Voluntary Principles at the local level.

In addition to this training programme, LITE-Africa conducted a Training of Trainers initiative for Tantita Security Service Nigeria Limited and Maton Engineering security personnel responsible for protecting pipeline infrastructure. Approximately 200 personnel from Abia, Bayelsa, and Rivers states participated in the training, which focused on strengthening their understanding of human rights obligations and appropriate conduct when interacting with host communities.

Furthermore, the training of 218 Chevron Nigeria Limited (CNL) security personnels which also guided CNL policy reforms towards strengthening human rights in their corporate operations. The security personnel represented various security agencies such as the Army, Navy, Nigerian Police Force, SPY, security duty officers, and Private Security Guards cover CNL facilities in Abiteye, Abuja, Escravos, Gbagada, Lagos, Makaraba, Olero, and Warri.

At the institutional level, the NHRC conducted targeted capacity-building activities, including training for the Nigeria Immigration Service on integrating human rights into security and border operations. These efforts contribute to embedding the Voluntary Principles within state security structures.

Additionally, national dialogues on Business and Human Rights provided platforms for multi-stakeholder engagement, further promoting understanding of the Voluntary Principles across sectors.

These awareness-raising efforts contributed to expanding knowledge of the Voluntary Principles among stakeholders directly involved in security operations and community engagement. By strengthening the capacity of these actors, LITE-Africa aims to reduce the risk of human rights violations and promote responsible security practices within Nigeria's extractive sector.

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.

LITE-Africa supported efforts within the Nigerian Working Group (NWG) to broaden participation in Voluntary Principles-related activities by engaging community leaders and other relevant stakeholders operating in regions affected by extractive activities. Recognising that effective implementation of the Voluntary Principles requires broad-based awareness and participation, the working group placed emphasis on expanding outreach beyond existing members.

One of the primary mechanisms for engagement was through community-level training and sensitisation initiatives. LITE-Africa collaborated with SFCG to conduct capacity-building activities that brought together community leaders and private security personnel operating in extractive areas. These engagements provided an opportunity to introduce non-member stakeholders to the principles relating to human rights and responsible security management while encouraging their participation in broader advocacy and awareness efforts.

The NWG designated anchor organisations in the northern and southern regions of the country to facilitate regional coordination and stakeholder mobilisation. These regional focal organisations were tasked with the development of action plans fit to local contexts, to identify opportunities, and to involve community-based organisations and grassroots stakeholders in discussions related to the Voluntary Principles.

Furthermore, partner organisations of the NWG conducted sensitisation activities through their own networks. For example, a multi-stakeholder engagement held in Rivers State provided an opportunity for FOCONE to raise awareness of the Voluntary Principles among civil society organisations that were not yet members of the working group. These engagements served as entry points for continued dialogue with community representatives and local NGOs working on environmental protection, peacebuilding, and human rights.

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.

Advocating for the integration of the Voluntary Principles into institutional policies and governance frameworks has remained a key focus of LITE-Africa's work since the DCAF project. Through the Nigerian Working Group, the organisation participated in coordinated advocacy efforts aimed at encouraging

government institutions and corporate actors to incorporate the principles into their operational and policy frameworks.

Engagements were conducted with relevant government bodies, including the Ministry of Justice and the National Human Rights Commission, to discuss the importance of Nigeria's sign in to the Voluntary Principles Initiative. These engagements were intended to strengthen government understanding of the Initiative and to encourage the integration of its standards into national policy discussions relating to human rights and security management in the extractive sector.

The NHRC played a central role in advancing the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights, providing a policy framework that aligns closely with the Voluntary Principles. Through technical support to stakeholders, the NHRC also contributed to the development of corporate human rights policies that integrate international standards into business operations.

The NHRC–NEITI partnership further reinforces policy alignment by embedding human rights considerations into extractive sector governance and transparency mechanisms.

At the corporate level, dialogue within the working group provided opportunities for companies operating in Nigeria to share updates on how the Voluntary Principles are being incorporated into their internal systems and operational procedures. For example, representatives of the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited reported that the company had begun integrating the Voluntary Principles into its business operations and had implemented staff and security training aligned with the framework.

These discussions help create a platform for peer learning among corporate actors while reinforcing expectations around responsible security practices and respect for human rights.

Although Nigeria has not yet formally joined the Voluntary Principles Initiative, continued engagement with government institutions and corporate partners contributes to building momentum toward greater policy alignment with the principles at both institutional and operational levels.

Country Implementation

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

LITE-Africa's efforts to promote the Voluntary Principles contribute to broader objectives related to strengthening the rule of law in Nigeria, particularly in sectors where security operations intersect with community rights and natural resource management. Through its activities within the Nigerian Working Group, LITE-Africa supports initiatives that promote accountability, responsible conduct, and adherence to human rights standards by both public and private security actors.

One key aspect of this work involves collaboration with national institutions responsible for human rights oversight and legal accountability. Engagements with the National Human Rights Commission provide an important avenue for reinforcing the relevance of human rights protections within security operations connected to extractive industries.

A key focus during the reporting period was ensuring that victims of corporate-related human rights abuses have access to effective remedies, as outlined in the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights - the document is implemented to promote and protect Human Rights, and is a tool guiding the protection and enforcement of Human Rights in Nigeria.

Capacity-building activities implemented during the reporting period also contribute to strengthening the rule of law by promoting awareness of legal and human rights standards among individuals directly involved in security operations. Training sessions for private security personnel and community leaders included discussions on appropriate conduct, proportional use of force, and the importance of respecting the rights of local populations.

By promoting dialogue between communities, civil society organisations, government institutions, and corporate actors, the working group creates an environment in which concerns related to security and

human rights can be discussed openly and constructively. This multi-stakeholder approach helps reinforce the importance of lawful conduct and encourages institutions to align their practices with internationally recognised human rights standards.

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

LITE-Africa programmes contribute to identifying and mitigating potential risks through stakeholder engagement, training, and community dialogue.

A mapping and mobilisation activity was undertaken as part of capacity-building programmes targeting community leaders and private security personnel. These activities helped identify key stakeholders operating in areas where extractive activities are present and provided insight into the security dynamics affecting host communities.

The training programmes delivered during the year also included discussions on common human rights risks associated with security operations, particularly in the protection of extractive infrastructure such as pipelines and production facilities. By addressing these issues through training and dialogue, LITE-Africa helps ensure that security personnel are aware of the risks associated with the misuse of force and the importance of maintaining constructive relationships with local communities.

Participants were encouraged to develop practical action plans for promoting responsible conduct within their areas of operation. These plans focused on improving communication with community stakeholders, strengthening awareness of human rights standards, and preventing situations that could escalate into conflict or human rights violations.

At the institutional level, the NHRC–NEITI joint monitoring framework introduces a structured approach to identifying and addressing human rights risks within extractive sector operations.

This integration of human rights into transparency audits represents a significant step toward systematic risk monitoring and mitigation.

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

LITE-Africa contributed to strengthening policies, procedures, and operational practices relating to the Voluntary Principles through its coordination and capacity-building activities. These efforts focus on ensuring that stakeholders understand the principles and have the tools necessary to integrate them into their operational frameworks.

One of the mechanisms used to support this process was the delivery of targeted training programmes for security actors and community stakeholders. These trainings addressed key elements of the Voluntary Principles, including respect for human rights, appropriate conduct during security operations, and engagement with host communities.

LITE-Africa also supported the development of structured planning tools within the working group. The annual work plan developed for the reporting period served as a guiding framework for the group's activities and ensured that efforts related to awareness raising, advocacy, and stakeholder engagement were implemented in a coordinated manner.

Within corporate discussions held through the working group, companies reported taking steps to integrate the Voluntary Principles into their internal procedures, including staff training and operational guidance for security personnel.

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.

Engagement with security actors remains a crucial element of promoting the Voluntary Principles. During

the reporting period, LITE-Africa implemented several programmes aimed at strengthening awareness of human rights standards among private security personnel responsible for protecting extractive infrastructure.

A key activity implemented during the year was a Training of Trainers programme conducted for approximately 200 Tantita/Maton Engineering personnel include representatives of the Nigeria Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) responsible for safeguarding pipeline facilities in multiple operational states. The training focused on strengthening participants' understanding of the Voluntary Principles and their application in daily security operations.

In addition to the Training of Trainers programme, LITE-Africa collaborated with SFCG to conduct a broader-training programmes involving 128 staff, community leaders, and security actors. These engagements created opportunities for dialogue between security providers and community representatives, helping to build mutual understanding and reduce the risk of conflict.

Furthermore, the training of 218 Chevron Nigeria Limited (CNL) security personnels which also guided CNL policy reforms towards strengthening human rights in their corporate operations. The security personnel represented various security agencies such as the Army, Navy, Nigerian Police Force, SPY, security duty officers, and Private Security Guards cover CNL facilities in Abiteye, Abuja, Escravos, Gbagada, Lagos, Makaraba, Olero, and Warri.

These activities are particularly important in contexts where private security personnel interact regularly with local communities and where misunderstandings or excessive use of force can lead to human rights concerns.

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

LITE-Africa supports accountability among participants of the Voluntary Principles through active engagement within the Nigerian Working Group and through the promotion of transparent dialogue among stakeholders. The working group provides a platform where members from government, corporate, and civil society sectors can share experiences, discuss challenges, and report on progress related to the implementation of the Voluntary Principles.

Corporate members participating in the working group regularly share updates on their internal efforts to integrate the principles into their operations. For example, corporate representatives reported that staff training and security awareness programmes aligned with the Voluntary Principles had been conducted within their operational environments.

These exchanges help create a culture of peer accountability in which stakeholders are encouraged to uphold the commitments associated with the Initiative.

LITE-Africa also promotes accountability through documentation and reporting of working group activities. Meeting reports and programme updates provide members with information on actions taken and help ensure that commitments made during coordination meetings are followed up on.

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.

The reporting period generated several important lessons regarding the promotion of the Voluntary Principles in Nigeria. One key lesson is the value of the multi-stakeholder working group model. Bringing together representatives from government institutions, corporate actors, and civil society organisations has proven effective in facilitating dialogue and coordinating advocacy efforts.

Another important lesson relates to the importance of strategic recruitment of new members. By

encouraging organisations with relevant expertise and networks to join the working group, the group has been able to expand its reach and strengthen its collective capacity.

Despite these positive developments, several challenges remain. Limited funding continues to affect the scale and frequency of activities that can be implemented across Nigeria. The country's large geographic size and diverse stakeholder landscape also make awareness raising a complex task.

Looking ahead, LITE-Africa intends to continue advocating for Nigeria's formal accession to the Voluntary Principles Initiative while expanding regional outreach and strengthening partnerships with stakeholders working on human rights, peacebuilding, and natural resource governance. The working group will further strengthen media outreach, pursue diversified funding, and continue advocacy to support Nigeria's signing into the Voluntary Principles Initiative.

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).

LITE-Africa recognises the important role played by human rights defenders in promoting accountability, transparency, and respect for human rights in contexts affected by extractive activities. Through its work within the Nigerian Working Group, the organisation contributes to creating an enabling environment in which civil society organisations and community advocates can engage constructively on issues related to security and human rights.

Capacity-building initiatives implemented during the reporting period provided opportunities for civil society actors and community leaders to strengthen their understanding of the Voluntary Principles and the mechanisms available for addressing security-related human rights concerns. By equipping these stakeholders with knowledge of international standards and responsible security practices, LITE-Africa supported their ability to engage effectively with government institutions and corporate actors.

The Memorandum of Understanding between the NHRC and NEITI explicitly prioritises the protection of civil society organisations and human rights defenders working in the extractive sector. By integrating human rights considerations into transparency and accountability frameworks, this partnership creates safeguards against reprisals and promotes a safer operating environment for civic actors.

The working group also provides a platform for civil society organisations to raise concerns and contribute perspectives on security and human rights issues affecting their communities. These engagements help ensure that discussions related to security management include the voices of those directly affected by extractive activities.

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.

LITE-Africa is the Head of the Secretariat of the Nigerian in-country working group, and we contributed to the planning and implementation of working group engagements, including coordination meetings, advocacy initiatives, and stakeholder outreach activities. Although financial constraints limited the number of physical meetings that could be held, the working group successfully convened virtual coordination meetings that brought together members from the corporate and NGO pillars.

In addition to participating in meetings, the organisation provided in-kind contributions through staff time, technical expertise, and logistical support for the coordination of activities. Staff members were involved in preparing meeting documentation, supporting communication among members, and facilitating engagement with government institutions and other stakeholders.

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).

Gender inclusion remains an important consideration in LITE-Africa's implementation of activities related to the Voluntary Principles. The Nigerian Working Group recognises that security practices and community engagement processes affect women and men differently, particularly in communities hosting extractive operations.

Efforts were made to ensure that women were included in training programmes and stakeholder engagements organised under the framework of the working group. Capacity-building activities targeting public and private security personnel, as well as community leaders, encouraged the participation of women in order to ensure that their perspectives and experiences were reflected in discussions related to security management.

At the policy level, the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights incorporates considerations related to vulnerable groups, including women, in the implementation of human rights standards.

The working group also continues to promote the participation of women-led civil society organisations in its activities. Encouraging the membership and involvement of organisations working on women's rights, peacebuilding, and community development helps strengthen the inclusiveness of discussions related to the Voluntary Principles.