

# NGOs and the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights

The Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights are a set of principles designed to guide companies in maintaining the safety and security of their operations within an operating framework that encourages respect for human rights. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and governments are also Participants in the Voluntary Principles, and encourage companies to implement the Principles.

## Benefits of joining the Voluntary Principles:

### Improved implementation and advocacy approaches

- NGOs can develop a better understanding of the issues related to security and human rights, improving their ability to advocate for change with an array of stakeholders.
- By learning from one another, NGOs can better support all stakeholders, and especially communities, through their work on human rights, peace or security.
- NGOs can learn about tools and approaches directly related to the Voluntary Principles, as well as those more broadly related to human rights and companies that they can incorporate into their work.

### Enhanced collaboration and problem solving with companies and governments

Through formal participation in the Voluntary Principles process, governments, NGOs and companies develop working relationships through which they can collaborate to:

- Share information and participate in dialogues regarding challenges in Voluntary Principles implementation.
- Engage in mutual learning and joint problem solving with a group that is well versed in security and human rights issues.
- Create joint approaches and partnerships to address the challenges of security and human rights at the international, national and project level.
- Jointly promote human rights in order to provide lasting positive impact on security and human rights issues.
- Develop publicly available tools that will help define best practice for security and human rights.

## NGO roles under the Voluntary Principles include:

- Contributing to global, national and local forums to ensure that NGOs learn from others and share their views and perspectives to help shape the future of the Voluntary Principles initiative.
- Raising awareness of significant issues that need to be addressed related to human rights and security concerns and helping company and government Voluntary Principles Participants successfully implement the Principles.
- Aiding implementation by helping companies to develop policies, procedures and training that help support respect for human rights, while maintaining security of workers and assets.
- Engaging directly with community groups using the Voluntary Principles as a framework to help improve understanding of human rights, as well as increase awareness of the proactive role that communities can play in ensuring their own security and respect of their human rights.
- Interacting with government actors, including public security forces and representatives of national and local government, to increase awareness of the Voluntary Principles and their value for the country.
- Reporting annually on activities to support Voluntary Principles implementation.
- Formally participating in the governance of the Voluntary Principles.