

The Report of the meeting of the Nigerian Working Group (NWG) on the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights (VPs) held at the Swiss Residence, Abuja on 24th September, 2019

The meeting of the Nigerian Working Group (NWG) on the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights (VPs) held at the Swiss Residence, Maitama, Abuja, on 24th September, 2019 by 2pm, had a total of 20 attendees. The agenda (Annex 1) and a list of participants (Annex 2) are annexed to this report.

Roundtable-Introduction (New participants/Observers):

The Co-Chairs welcomed everyone in attendance and expressed appreciation for their early arrival. A tour de table was done for the benefit of new participants and observers. The members acknowledged the presence of Observers institutions and organizations from Solid Minerals Development Fund, under the Ministry of Mines and Steel Development represented by its Executive Secretary Mrs. Hajija Fatima Umaru Shinkafi and Mr Al-Amin Ebhota. As well as Natural Resource Governance Institute represented by Mr. Zira John Quaghe.

Opening Remarks by the Co-chair:

The co-chair Anne-Beatrice Bullinger of the Swiss Embassy and the NGO co-chair Joel Bisina from LITE-Africa welcomed all participants. She appreciated and commended everyone (the Corporate pillar, NGO pillar and government pillar) for the effort made so far in the implementation VPs in Nigeria. Joel Bisina made remarks which highlighted the enthusiasm of the Nigerian Working Group on Voluntary Principles and Security and Human Rights. Thereafter, Mr. Babatunde Ajala applauded everyone in attendance and explained the absence of some members on account of ill health and other reasons. Subsequently, Anne-Beatrice Bullinger and the NGO co-chair, Joel Bisina led discussions on the agenda items.

Discussion of developments over the past couple of months.

- **Status of funding for the NGWVP/project activities:** Mr. Joel Bisina informed participants that NWG has been able to secure a grant from the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF) to enable the group to continue to promote the implementation of Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights in Nigeria. The contract was signed between LITE-Africa on behalf of NWG and DCAF. The project is captioned “Promoting the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights in Nigeria (VPiN) September 2019 to January 2020.
- **Funding for Secretariat of the NWGVP:** Mr. Bisina informed members of efforts being made by the Group to secure funding for the NWG VPI secretariat. He however stated that the contract for the funds has not be signed, but was in the final stages.
 - **Funding for a National Conference:** The need for a national conference on VPs was re-emphasized by Mr. Bisina while briefing members on the latest development on the proposed national conference as stated in the NWG action work plan. The NWG had earlier sent a proposal which included organizing a National Conference on the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights. The NWG secretariat still awaits the approval of the proposal.

Participation in the NBA Conference and follow-up activities: Babatunde Ajala reported on NWG’s participation at the NBA conference. Through the efforts of Dr. Uju Agomoh of the Prisoners Rehabilitation and Welfare Action (PRAWA), the NWG secured slot at the 2019 Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) conference in August 2019. This provided an excellent opportunity for three members of the NWG from the Corporate Pillar and the Government pillar of the NWG to be part of a panel discussing the VPs and its relevance to the Nigerian context at the conference. The NWG was represented by Anne-Beatrice Bullinger, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Switzerland, who chaired the session; Toye Fatoki of Shell, who made the lead presentation on behalf of the Oil Producers Trade Section (OPTS); and Tony Ojukwu, Executive Secretary of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC). The NBA conference was a high level platform for advocating the VPs, being the biggest gathering of lawyers in Nigeria. The OPTS, NHRC and other discussants approached the topic from variety of perspectives, but all in unison recommended the implementation

and/or Nigeria's signing on to the initiative. This culminated in the endorsement of the Voluntary Principles by the NBA, as exemplified by its inclusion in the communique of its annual conference. Section on Public Interest and Development Law (SPIDEL) who also facilitated the slot at the conference of the Group subsequently expressed its interest in having the NGW participate at their forthcoming Section on Public Interest and Development Law conference (SPIDEL) in Abuja. Subsequently, Ogechi Ogu presented proposals on how to leverage on the NBA conference to further enhance implementation of the VPs in Nigeria

Additionally, Dr. Ogechi Ogu presented PRAWA's ideas on how to leverage on the NBA conference, to create more sensitization on the VPs. The proposal was well received. However, the co-chair Joel Bisina advised that the proposal details should be circulated by email to all members, and should also be integrated into the Plan of the NWG.

One of the discussants, a Professor of Law and Senior Advocate of Nigeria, Professor Wahab Egbewole also hinted at the possibility of inviting the NWG to the University of Ilorin to sensitize law students on the VPs.

Babatunde Ajala rounded off discussions on this issue by urging members to emulate PRAWA by working on securing platforms to promote VPs e.g. mining conference, oil and gas conferences, extractive industry meetings.

VPs Baseline Project:

The NGO co-chair Mr. Joel Bisina stated that LITE-Africa, on behalf of the NWG, entered into a contract with the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance through its Security and Human Rights Implementation Mechanism (SHRIM), on the project captioned, 'Promoting the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights in Nigeria (VPiN). The VPs baseline project documents were shared among members. The documents include the VPiN planning documents, budget and methodology for the baseline and scoping study.

The project is expected to bridge the information gap on the VPs through a national baseline and scoping study, while also informing a national policy framework to guide and facilitate implementation of the VPs. It is expected that the national baseline report on the VPs which will be developed through the project will help to strengthen the implementation of the VPs and hopefully contribute to its adoption by the Nigerian government in the long run.

Additionally, the baseline report will also increase awareness of the security and human rights situation in Nigeria; document the impact of the VPs, inform next steps in terms of implementation of the VPs in Nigeria, while further serving as incentive to potential members of the Initiative. Also, the baseline report will provide a platform for multi-stakeholder dialogue intended to enhance the collaboration between relevant entities from the government, companies, CSOs and local stakeholders and proffer cross pillar solutions to the nation's security and human rights challenges. This will promote VPs implementation tool including the use of model clause agreement between company and public security.

He went on to list the planned activities under the project as follows:

1. Development of a planning document together with the consultant;
2. Development of the methodology for the baseline and scoping study;
3. Kick-off meeting with the Nigerian Working Group on VPs implementation and assessment of the draft methodology in Abuja;
4. Submission of project activity updates for the month of September (highlighting progress and challenges) by email;
5. Baseline methodology training workshop for selected NWG CSO field enumerators in Warri, Delta state;
6. Data gathering for the study by 12 field officers in six states across 5 geopolitical zones, with each team spending 5 days in each state;
7. Submission of first quarter report for the month of September to DCAF;
8. Submission of project activity update for the month of October (highlighting progress and challenges) by email;
9. Redaction of the report;

10. Report validation workshop in Abuja;
11. Production of 200 copies of the baseline report;
12. Submission of Project activity update for the month of November (highlighting progress and challenges) by email;
13. Engagement of relevant stakeholders on the VPs including government, Corporations, CSOs and media;
14. Facilitate a one-day multi-stakeholders dialogue on business related security and human rights situations for 30 participants in Abuja;
15. Submission of Project activity update for the month of December (highlighting progress and challenges) by email; and
16. Submission of 2nd Quarterly report (for the months of October, November and December) to DCAF.

LITE-Africa is the lead partner for the implementation of the VPiN project and will benefit from the technical support from the expert consultant for DCAF. In executing the project, LITE-Africa will work in partnership with the CSO members from the NWG. The CSOs will conduct the baseline study in the 6 target states Delta, Akwa-Ibom, Imo, Lagos, Nassarawa and Zamfara, across the 5 geopolitical zones in Nigeria. Based on the request from the Co-chair, a number of NGOs indicated interest to partner with Lite Africa to implement the project, while an NGO recommended Connected Development for their experience in similar field research, especially in Zamfara., Based on the feedback received, CSOs were assigned as laid out below.

The list of NGOs and their geopolitical zone for data collection.

S/N	GEOPOLITICAL ZONE	STATE	NWG CSOs
1.	South-South Zone	1. Delta 2. Akwa-Ibom	LITE-Africa FOCONE
2.	South East Zone	3. Imo	PRAWA
3.	South West Zone	4. Lagos	New Nigeria Foundation
4.	North Central Zone	5. Nassarawa	Keen and Care Initiative
5.	North West Zone	6. Zamfara	Connected Development(Follow the Money)

Non-coverage of North East Nigeria was criticized by a participant given that insurgency was limited only to some states in the North East. In response, Mr. Bisina stated that the project had limitations which did not allow extension of the project's coverage to the North East, However, Lite Africa will explore the possibility of engaging mining companies active in the region through phone conversation/interviews.

Consideration of the Application of AFRILAW to join the NWGVP:

After due consideration and discussion on the application of AFRILAW to join the NWG, it was agreed by all that there is a need for background check on the organization (AFRILAW) for due diligence purposes.

Discussion on Re-engaging the Relevant Ministries, Training of Relevant Entities and Re-activating the Inter-ministerial Working Group

A member of the government pillar indicated that he had raised the issue of the need to reactivate the inter-ministerial committee on the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human, during preparatory meetings for the upcoming Swiss-Nigeria bilateral dialogue. However, he stressed the need for an official letter to be sent to the MFA embodying a request for its activation.

Updates on Activities from all pillars (including progress of implementation and challenges)

- A Corporate Participant disclosed that they have continued to discuss the VPs in their monthly meetings, apart from the regular trainings organized for security personnel and staff.
- The NHRC is training its staff on business and human rights and the VPs, while also working on the National Action Plan on business and human rights with a VPs component. In furtherance of that objective, the Commission partnered with the INCSR to organize a consultation for the private sector at the Nigerian Stock Exchange in Lagos.
- A member of the NGO pillar reported on carrying out campaign, training and advocacy on VPs.
- A Corporate Participant noted that the key challenge being experienced is the constant rotation of public security forces assigned to secure their operations which necessitates reorientation and trainings for the new personnel.

Discussion and Follow-up:

- In advocating the VPs, the NWG should leverage on the need of the Nigerian government to promote economic diversification through the mining sector, and the role that can be played by the VPs in making it a less-risky environment for attracting investors.
- The NWGVP secretariat should organize trainings for on the VPs for relevant government agencies. The inter-ministerial committee can be a platform for collating those to be trained from each agency.
- Relying on the model deployed during the Steering Committee where members took on specific mandates and implemented it, members are urged to contribute their quota in organizing meetings and implementing other deliverables.
- The NGO co-chair suggested that the Group could help review the training curriculum of the NHRC on business and human rights and make inputs where necessary.

- A background check on the application of AFRILAW and findings should be communicated to the co-chairs.

Any other Business:

Hajia Fatima Umaru Shinkafi, Executive Secretary of the Solid Minerals Development Fund, who attended the meeting as an observer shared insights about the work of her organization with a view to identifying areas of synergy. She expressed interest in having members of her organization trained on the VPs, while also indicating willingness to facilitate the collation of staff of the Ministry of Mines and Steel Development that can be trained on the VPs.

Closing Remarks:

The Co-chairs thanked everyone for their contributions and appreciated all for coming.