

A NEW DAWN...

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LITE-AFRICA BECOMES FIRST NGO ADMITTED INTO THE VOLUNTARY PRINCIPLE INITIATIVE !

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News Alert: LITE-Africa hosts International Call to Action Conference on Voluntary Principles

The Call to Action Conference on the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights was held in Abuja, Nigeria on the 26th of February, in partnership with the Nigerian National Human Rights Commission (NHRC). The conference brought together representatives of strategic government agencies, CSOs, the diplomatic corps, trade union association, representatives of oil bearing communities and the media to discuss among other things; insecurity in the extractive sector and its impact on Nigerian economy – the role of the VPs and other multistakeholder initiatives. The conference also focused on the implementation of the VPs in Nigeria – role of CSOs, companies and government and provided a global experience on the VPs drawing from the examples of Columbia and Indonesia.

The conference was opened by the Executive Director of LITE Africa, Mr Joel Bisina. In his opening speech, Mr Bisina noted that the Call to Action campaign recorded 2,109 signatures of Nigerians from all works of life requesting the government to sign onto the VPs .

In his Keynote talk, the Switzerland Ambassador announced that the Swiss government has extended invitation to the Nigerian government as an invited guest to the next VP Association plenary meeting in March 26th 2014. Key issues for 2014, including opportunities for promoting wide and effective implementation of the VPs in Nigeria was an intrinsic part of the conference.

Some of the key findings included;

- The VPs should not be considered in isolation of existing initiatives in Nigeria such as the extractive industry transparency initiative (EITI)
- There is a challenge of lack of understanding and suspicion of the origin of the VPs in Nigeria, in particular, the Federal Government sees the VPs as a foreign imposition due to overreliance on foreign donor



Chairman, Governing Council National Human Rights Commission presenting a keynote address at the International Call to Action Conference in Abuja

funding by the CSOs, leading to a lack of state sovereignty and supremacy on the issues of the VPs and the question of *how can they dictate to us?*

- The lack of community participation on the VPs initiative is a flaw that must be corrected. LITE-Africa is one of the first organizations to apply for entrance as a Civil Society Member to the Association and has worked hand-in-hand with many communities to build awareness of the VPs.

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LITE-AFRICA BECOMES FIRST NGO ADMITTED INTO THE VOLUNTARY PRINCIPLE INITIATIVE



In March 2014, LITE-Africa was formally admitted as the first NGO into the Voluntary Principle Initiative. This has been a long road as LITE-Africa has been extremely active in implementing VP activities in Nigeria. LITE-Africa pushed the envelope in late 2012 and applied to become a member of the VP Initiatives and after much deliberation, we became the first NGO admitted into the Initiative. We are thankful to the great team working on the VP Initiative and we will of course keep our readers informed.

What is the Voluntary Principle Initiative?

The Voluntary Principles Initiative, which is comprised of three Pillars (companies, governments, and non-governmental organizations (“NGOs”)) seeks to: actively promote universal respect for human rights in the provision of security for extractive industry activities in a manner guided by the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights; strengthen implementation and accountability; and increase the number of Voluntary Principles Initiative Participants.

The Voluntary Principles are a set of principles, that are intended to guide companies in maintaining the safety and security of their operations within an operating framework that ensures respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Voluntary Principles are the only human rights guidelines designed specifically for extractive sector companies. Participants in the Voluntary Principles Initiative — including governments, companies, and NGOs — agree to proactively implement or assist in the implementation of the Voluntary Principles.

What does participation in the Voluntary Principle Initiative mean?

Participation in the Voluntary Principles Initiative provides non-governmental organizations with the opportunity to promote respect for human rights within the context of security provision in the extractive sector. Member organizations engage with companies and governments to promote adherence to and implementation of the Voluntary Principles through the development of strong corporate policies, practices and procedures.

Affected populations are of paramount concern to NGOs who are best-placed to foster dialogue and collaboration between multiple stakeholders — including, most importantly, local communities — to ensure the successful implementation of the Voluntary Principles from the site level to the national level. For more information please visit: www.voluntaryprinciples.org

LITE-Africa’s effort on the Voluntary Principles

LITE began working on the VPs since 2006 through our work with Chevron Nigeria Limited as in the Niger Delta region, creating awareness and guiding policy reforms, towards integrating Human Rights into its operations in Nigeria. So far we have trained well over 1,500 of their security personnel including General Security Forces and their surveillance and Pipeline Facilities Team.

LITE is currently partnering with international donor agencies such as National Endowment for Democracy (NED) and Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) to provide capacity building for Nigerian military that are members of the Joint Task Force (JTF) on human rights and security and sensitize oil producing community members on the VPs. These projects provide platform for multistakeholder dialogues and mutual cooperation among stakeholders in the extractive sector thereby reducing cases of human rights abuses and insecurity

Cordaid, a Dutch International NGO, has also come on board in late 2013 to support LITE-Africa to help build and enforce measures of corporate accountability, including increasing state practices on business and human rights principles and standards and ensuring the Nigerian government and Oil companies commit to the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights.

HIGHLIGHTS: NED UPDATES ON STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITIES OF SECURITY FORCES ON THE VOLUNTARY PRINCIPLES ON SECURITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE NIGER DELTA (SCSFVP) - PHASE II



Military officer asking questions during the VP sensitization at the Military Barracks

Introduction

SCSFVP in the Niger Delta is in her second phase, complementing the successes recorded during the pilot phase and building on the challenges and lessons learnt. This intervention was designed with the aim to strengthen the capacity of security forces that operate in the Niger Delta by equipping them with human rights framework to guide their work and actions.

What has been done?

VP Sensitization in military barracks

Sensitization on the VP on security and Human Rights have been carried out in the two military Barracks (3 and 19 Battalion) in Delta State. The workshop created a platform for interaction and sharing of ideas among participants to explore ways of supporting security sector agencies to respect Human Rights while carrying out their lawful duties. Sixty five (65) military personnel including five (5) female and sixty (60) males participated in the both workshops. The workshop was highly participatory and interactive and participants

promised to share knowledge gained with others who were not opportune to attend

VPs Sensitization for the Senior Police Officers in Delta:

The workshop provided a common understanding of the basic principles of the VPs, the Nigerian constitutional provision on human rights and the universal declaration of what constitutes human rights and abuses, thereby looking at the policy framework guiding security sector operations in relation to human rights issues in areas of their Operations. It was a huge success as the police officers in the state now have more knowledge on what Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights is all about. The Divisional Police officers promised to sensitize the police men and officers under their divisions.

What's next?

1. Provide ongoing support to the Police and Military on adopting a common Human Rights abuse reporting mechanism and human rights coordination
2. In the last quarter of this project, LITE-Africa will facilitate a one-day step down of information in Police Divisions led by past beneficiaries of this project to be able to share their learning among their colleagues. This session is designed to support sensitization and awareness creation on issues of human rights and rule of law. Project stickers, posters and fliers will be distributed during this session.
3. Facilitate CMG second meeting to share more experience on a way forward and harmonized arrangement on the upcoming evaluation in the communities
4. Project Evaluation in the project communities

HIGHLIGHTS: AUSAID—UPDATES ON ENGAGING ALL STAKEHOLDERS ON THE VOLUNTARY PRINCIPLES ON SECURITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN NIGERIA

Introduction

This is a one-year project that aims to increase the awareness of the VPs in the Nigeria through trainings, workshops and advocacy meetings and persuade the Nigerian Federal Government to sign on to the VPs through a VP Call to Action. The implementation of this project by LITE Africa will not only persuade the Nigerian government to sign on to the VPs but facilitate businesses to operate with a human rights perspective, which will help improve relationships amongst all stakeholders.

What has been done?

Awareness session on VPs in Military Barracks

LITE-Africa carried out sensitization workshop for the military officers of the 3 Battalion and Nigerian Army, Effurun Barracks and 19 Battalion Koko on Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights. Sixty four (64) military personnel including five (5) female and Twenty-Six (59) males participated in the workshop. The workshop was highly participatory and interactive as the participants exhibited a high level of commitment ensuring their contribution towards the reduction of human rights violation and abuse.

Awareness session on VPs in Police divisions

Sensitization workshop have been carried out in 4 police divisions across delta state (Ebrumede, B-division, Ogbe Ijoh, and Ovwian Police division). A total of 136 Police officers have been sensitized so far. The objective of this workshop was to sensitize Police Officers on the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights and to ensure the members of the Police Force operate within human rights framework in the course of their operations.

International VP Call to Action Conference

The Call to Action Conference on the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights was held in Abuja, Nigeria on the 26th of February. See more details on page1.

What's next?

- 1, Awareness sessions on VPs in 6 police divisions in Delta State
2. Conduct interview on the VPs with community members through TV, radio and social media outlet



Military Personnel at the Awareness Session in 19 Battalion Koko.



Police officers at the Awareness Session at B-Division, Warri

HIGHLIGHTS: OXFAM NOVIB LIVELIHOOD AND GOVERNANCE (ONLAG)



Handover of Trainings Materials to Facilitator of ONLAG Adult Literacy Training at Gbokoda Community.

(Delta and Bayelsa States); and to achieve 30% women's participation in local governance structures.

What has been done?

Adult Literacy Class kick off

Training materials have been handed over to facilitators of the adult literacy classes in the 19 project communities and lectures have begun in some of these communities.

What's Next?

1. Facilitate adult education training in 18 existing communities for 950 participants within a period on 6 months
2. Support the establishment of processing centers in 4 model communities; 2 in each LGAs of Isoko South and Yenagoa.
3. Provide fish fingerlings to 7 cooperatives from 7 communities in Warri North and Southern Ijaw LGAs
4. Administration of microcredit in project communities
5. Ongoing BDS technical support services to established cooperatives in 19 communities
6. Facilitate a 4 day value addition training on cassava and groundnut processing for 360 participants in 9 old communities in Isoko South and Yenagoa LGAs.

Introduction

LITE-Africa with funding from Oxfam Novib is implementing a five-year project entitled Oxfam Novib Livelihood and Governance in the Niger Delta (ONLAG). This project is in two phases. The pilot phase of 2 years (2010-2011) and second phase of 3 years (2012-2014). This project takes a two-pronged approach to community development by strengthening both the livelihoods and leadership capabilities of beneficiaries. Implemented in 19 communities of the Niger Delta, ONLAG consciously focuses its activities on women, who comprise 75% of beneficiaries.

The effective implementation of the program in the project communities via a well developed project framework and vast commitment has revealed the tremendous impact where women are engaged and centralized in the development process. This also corroborated with the business enhancement and expansion as a result of various business support services experienced in the course of implementation.

Objectives

The overall objective of the project is to: develop sustainable means of livelihood for at least 6,480 women and youth; achieve greater transparency and accountability of government, oil industries and other stakeholders in four Local Government Areas (LGA) – (Isoko South, Southern Ijaw, Warri North and Yenagoa LGAs) of two States



Educational Packs for Participants of the ONLAG Adult Literacy Class

HIGHLIGHTS: GMoU ACTIVITIES



Executive Director of LITE-Africa with Governor Emmanuel Uduaghan of Delta state



Keffes RDC Booth at the GMoU Fair

Leadership Initiative for Transformation and Empowerment (LITE -Africa) has been involved in the Global Memorandum of Understanding (GMoU) processes with Chevron Nigeria Limited (CNL) providing mentoring and oversight support to two Regional Development Councils (RDCs); Egbema Gbramatu Community Development Foundation (EGCDF) and KEFFES Regional Development Foundation (KRDF)

On Thursday 6th February 2014, Government and Community stakeholders involved in a GMoU with Chevron, celebrated the successes recorded so far in the implementation of the agreement through a GMoU Fair and Exhibition and LITE-Africa was a part of it. The event which had notable dignitaries in attendance including the Delta State Governor Emmanuel Uduaghan and his Imo State counterpart, Owelle Rochas Okorocho, was held at Transcorp Hotels Abuja.

Through LITE-Africa's mentoring, KRDF and EGCDF have completed and commissioned over 39 and 44 projects respectively

which were showcased at the fair. These include the rural electrification project, water project at Foropa Community and renovated cottage hospital in KRDF and the Benikrukru community health centre and Tselkelwu Community Public toilet in EGCDF.

Governor Uduaghan expressed delight in his keynote address, saying the results achieved by the GMoU so far have surpassed the state government's imagination. The pioneer chairman of Egbema Gbaramatu Central Development Foundation Dr. Ikem Tolar, said the implementation of the GMoU has helped to build a bridge of understanding, trust and commitment to improving the quality of life of the people.

LITE-AFRICA IS OFFERING AN INTERNATIONAL CERTIFICATE COURSE ON BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN SUB-SAHARAN

Since the emergence of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, businesses, global leaders as well as human rights advocates are now scrambling to search for the appropriate paradigm within which businesses would not only stop having an adverse impact on human rights, but will, in fact, protect and promote them. Therefore, ensuring staff and personnel have these requisite skills to champion human rights will allow businesses and other organizations to reap significant benefits.

What will it entail?

This certificate course will critically examine sections on:

- ◆ Introduction to Business and Human Rights
- ◆ UN Guiding Principles, Remedy Frameworks
- ◆ Conducting human rights due diligence
- ◆ Human rights obligations of businesses
- ◆ Operating in a high risk and armed conflict environment
- ◆ Human rights reporting and accountability
- ◆ Voluntary Principles of Security and Human Rights.

Who can attend?

This training is designed for :

- ◆ Companies
senior and mid-level executives with responsibility for governance, security, corporate affairs, human resources, corporate social responsibility, procurement, and senior corporate counsel and company secretaries.
- ◆ Government
Top level and middle level security operatives, top level directors, deputy directors, assistant directors or senior Officials of government department and agencies, legal and procurement departments whose function is regulation, monitoring, enforcement, legal counselling, and policy development
- ◆ NGOs
Senior Executives, Programme Managers, Training Managers, Human Rights Advocates and Senior Programme Officers

What are the training dates?

- ◆ Warri, Nigeria- April 21-25, 2014
- ◆ Accra, Ghana- July 9-13, 2014
- ◆ Kampala, Uganda- November- 6-10, 2014

Who are the Facilitators?

Dr Nadia Bernaz- Middlesex University, UK

Dr Nadia Bernaz is Senior Lecturer in law at Middlesex University, Programme leader of the pioneering MA Human Rights and Business and Adjunct Lecturer of the Irish Centre for Human Rights. She holds a PhD in international law from Paul Cézanne University (Aix-Marseilles, France). She is part of the Business and Human Rights Working Group of the British Equality and Human Rights Commission, as well as the European Society of International Law Interest Group on Business and Human Rights.

Joel Bisina,- Executive Director of LITE-Africa,

Joel Bisina is a human rights advocate who has been a victim of human rights violation by security operatives in Nigeria. He has designed and implemented many Human Rights and Conflict Management training programs in the past. He holds a Masters in Public Administration and an Advanced Certificate in Human Rights, Peace and Development from American University Summer Peace and Development Institute in Washington DC, USA.

What is the cost?

Tuition fee for participants: US\$ 1200 (Bulk rates available). The fees cover accommodation, training materials, tea break and lunch.

How can I register?

To be able to book your slot in [Nigeria](#), [Ghana](#) or [Uganda](#), please click here for the [registration form](#) for the training_at an email your completed for to office@lite-africa.org.

For more inquiries, please email office@lite-africa.org or call us at +234 (0), 703490 3679, 8033473171, United States desk enquiry, +1914-806-3562.

Feedback from Participants

"As a police officer, this training is very timely and I will surely put all I have learnt to good use in order to improve on my performance on duty. I will also impact other officers with the knowledge gained." - Tekena

"This training workshop has indeed provided us with the opportunity to learn, interact and share ideas and we are indeed grateful because what we learned will go a long way in helping us to do our job better and also make us responsible citizens"- Joshua-CNL

"So much has really gone wrong in the system a lot needs to be done and it is all of us that can join hands together to achieve it. Therefore I will implore each and everyone of us to put good use of what we have all learned here today to change the country for the better"- Mathew-CNL

HIGHLIGHTS: CORDAID – VPs ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT: STRENGTHENING CSOs CAPACITY TO PROMOTING VOLUNTARY PRINCIPLES ON SECURITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS AS AN ACCOUNTABILITY TOOL IN NIGERIA

The VPs Accountability project funded by the Catholic Organization for Relief and Development Aid (CORDIAD) is a one year project(October 1, 2013-September 30, 2014) with an overall goal to strengthen the Nigeria CSO Coalition on Business and Human Rights to build and enforce measures of corporate accountability, including increasing state practices on business and human rights principles and standards and ensuring the Nigerian government and Oil companies commits to the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights.

Objectives

The project has two specific objectives:

Objective 1:

To increase the awareness of the VPs and provide a platform for engagement in Nigeria through trainings and workshops

Objective 2:

To enhance advocacy skills of community members and

CSOs to persuade oil companies and the Federal Government to effectuate the VPs

Project Activities

1. Consultative meetings with CSOs, relevant Federal Government Ministries, Police and Army authorities in Abuja about VPs programs in Bayelsa State
 2. Facilitate a one day Business and Human Rights forum in Port Harcourt for 25 participants comprising of community members, Oil company officials, security officials, strategic government agencies, and CSOs
 3. Support two meetings in Port Harcourt for the CSO Coalition on Business and Human Rights in the Niger Delta to reinforce coordination of VP efforts across Nigeria
 4. Facilitate a two-day training on VP advocacy for 25 participants comprising of 5 CSOs , 5 Police Officers, 5 Military Officers, 5 civil defence officials and 5 Federal Government Officials in Abuja
 5. Support awareness session on VPs in 2 communities in Bayelsa state and 2 communities in Delta state for a total of 200 participants.
- Support high level advocacy to Government officials and key stakeholders on the need for Nigerian government to sign up to the VPs.



The Leadership Initiative for Transformation and Empowerment (LITE-Africa), formerly known as the Niger Delta Professionals for Development (NIDPRODEV), is a Nigerian non-governmental organization (NGO) operating in Nigeria since 1999 with a mission to facilitate community and human development, foster good governance and create inclusive and diverse networks and collaborations in the Niger Delta and beyond. LITE-Africa has 5 board members, who are all Nigerian, and 25 staff members located in the Niger Delta region and in the United States.

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