



VPSHR

VOLUNTARY PRINCIPLES
SECURITY
AND HUMAN RIGHTS

IN MOZAMBIQUE BULLETIN

PLATFORM FOR DIALOGUE ON BUSINESS, SECURITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN CABO DELGADO



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SECURITY, STABILITY, AND RIGHTS:

Advancing the voluntary principles in Mozambique's extractive industry



Introduction

The extractive industry plays a crucial role in Mozambique's development, particularly in the exploitation of mineral resources such as graphite, gas, rubies, and other precious minerals. However, resource extraction has often led to severe human rights violations, par-

ticularly when companies fail to respect the rights and livelihoods of local communities. In this context, the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights (VPSHR) emerge as a critical framework to ensure responsible and sustainable extraction practices. The VPSHR provide a

globally recognized standard that guides companies, governments, and civil society organizations in implementing human rights-centered security practices.

Since 2021, the Centre for Democracy and Human Rights (CDD), the Ministry of Justice, Constitutional and Religious Affairs (MJACR), and the

Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF) have been at the forefront of VPSHR implementation in Mozambique. Their efforts focus on ensuring that extractive companies operate ethically and respect the rights of the communities in which they operate, fostering stability, justice, and sustainable development.

Transforming the Extractive Sector: The Strategic Role of CDD, MJACR, and DCAF

The partnership between CDD, MJACR, and DCAF has been instrumental in advancing the VPSHR framework in Mozambique. Together, these institutions serve as the secretariat for both the National Working Group in Maputo and the Provincial Technical Working Group in Cabo Delgado, ensuring that the country's extractive sector adopts ethical and rights-based approaches to security.

In Cabo Delgado, where extractive projects intersect with armed conflict, systemic human rights abuses, and deepening socio-economic inequalities, the need for urgent action is undeniable. The partnership's focus on incorporating VPSHR

into government policies—with DCAF providing technical expertise—is shifting Mozambique's extractive sector from a history of exploitation to a future of responsible and accountable governance.

This collaboration has been pivotal in holding corporations accountable, fostering transparency, and ensuring community participation in decision-making processes. The implementation of VPSHR is not merely about compliance; it is about transforming Mozambique's economic growth model into one that prioritizes human dignity and community well-being.

Cabo Delgado: A Battleground for Rights, Resources, and Stability

Cabo Delgado, one of Mozambique's most resource-rich provinces, is also one of its most volatile. The province has become the epicenter of conflict-driven displacement, post-election unrest, labor disputes within extractive industries, and rising extremist violence. These crises compound existing inequalities, exposing communities to systemic human rights violations, land dispossession, and militarized corporate security.

At the core of this crisis lies the question of who truly benefits from resource extraction. Despite billions of dollars in foreign investments, local communities remain marginalized, facing insecurity, joblessness, and environmental degradation. This has intensified anti-government and anti-corporate sentiments, further escalating tensions.

To address these urgent challenges, corporations, the government, and civil society organizations must work together. The adoption of VPSHR as a mandatory standard, rather than a voluntary commitment, would strengthen the ability of stakeholders to prevent violence, hold violators accountable, and protect vulnerable communities.

Ensuring Community Voices Are Heard: The Pemba Strategic Meeting

A pivotal step towards inclusive governance took place on February 21, 2025, in Pemba, where representatives from civil society, government, and international partners convened to assess the state of VPSHR implementation and explore pathways for strengthening human rights protections. Facilitated by CDD, MJACR, and DCAF, the meeting prioritized:

- Amplifying community voices: Ensuring that affected populations directly shape security and human rights policies.
- Strengthening the Cabo Delgado Work-

ing Group: Enhancing multi-stakeholder cooperation to ensure accountability in the extractive sector.

- Building trust and collaboration: Encouraging companies, civil society, and government agencies to engage in transparent and constructive dialogue.

By fostering an environment of collective problem-solving and rights-based security governance, this meeting set a precedent for inclusive, sustainable development in Mozambique's extractive industry.

The Impact of VPSHR: Strengthening Social Responsibility and Stability

Adopting the VPSHR framework has far-reaching implications for companies, the government, and civil society:

- **For companies :** VPSHR enhances corporate accountability, minimizes negative social and environmental impacts, and strengthens the social license to operate.
- **For the government:** Implementing VPSHR reinforces Mozambique's human rights commitments, reduces conflict

risks, and creates a more attractive environment for ethical investment.

- **For civil society:** VPSHR provides a platform to advocate for systemic change, monitor corporate and state behavior, and empower local communities.

By embedding human rights, transparency, and accountability in the extractive industry, VPSHR fosters a climate of trust, stability, and long-term economic resilience.

Conclusion: A Call for Action Towards Sustainable and Ethical Resource Governance

The journey towards a just and responsible extractive sector in Mozambique is still unfolding, but the foundation laid by CDD, MJACR, and DCAF is a milestone in the country's history of resource governance. The February Pemba meeting proved that multi-stakeholder engagement is key to ensuring that the benefits of Mozambique's natural wealth are equitably distributed and that security measures do not come at the cost of human rights.

The fight for transparency, corporate accountability, and community empowerment is not an abstract ideal—it is a necessity for Mozambique's long-term peace and prosperity.

The time to act is now. Human rights cannot be an afterthought in development. The VPSHR framework must become an enforceable standard, ensuring that every Mozambican benefits from the wealth beneath their feet—without fear, displacement, or violence.



MISSÃO:

Inspirar e impulsionar ações para proteger os direitos humanos, fortalecer a democracia e promover a justiça.


MISSION:

Inspiring and driving actions to protect human rights, strengthen democracy, and promote justice.

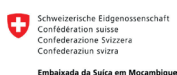
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