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Host government engagement strategy tool

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This guide is designed to be a practical tool to assisting companies in evaluating security contexts and identifying challenges. Users can download a copy of the interactive PDF and complete sections as required for each project.

The fields for user input and checkboxes are shown in light blue:



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1. INTRODUCTION

The security of company operations in a host country depends significantly on the company's engagement and relations with the national security sector. It is therefore important to establish predictable relations with key security actors early on, as inappropriate or under-prepared first consultations with stakeholders can have long-term negative effects on company operations. The *Host government engagement strategy tool* is aimed to support company representatives prepare for these first consultations and establish a strategy for the engagement and communication with security sector representatives.

The engagement strategy has been developed for all extractive companies, from small and medium-sized enterprises to large international companies with established engagement protocols and processes. Some companies may want to only draw on individual sections of the engagement strategy to fill gaps in their preparations for consultations, while others may want to use the tool in its entirety to establish an engagement and communication strategy.

Prior to any in-country engagement processes, companies are advised to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the security sector and security actors. Only a clear understanding of existing capacities and challenges allows for an appropriate engagement with national security actors. As the guidance of the *Host government engagement strategy tool* builds largely on insights gained from security sector assessments, users are advised to first complete the *DCAF-ICRC-IPIECA Host country security assessment guide*. Throughout the document users are advised to revisit findings and insights from the Assessment guide. The icon  marks those instances for visual clarity.

2. ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

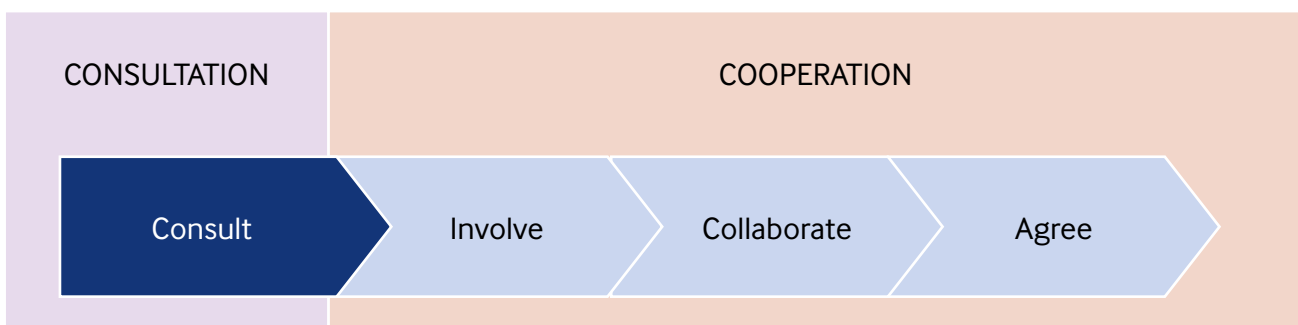
Given the long-term engagement objective, initial meetings with key interlocutors should never be seen as standalone meetings but rather considered as first steps towards constructive and durable relations with the security sector. Successful engagement is based on long-term, formalised strategies that involve representatives at multiple levels (local, regional and national) and often across different departments.

When should the company start engaging with key interlocutors?

There is no definitive answer on when to start engaging with security actors, but security consultations are generally not the first instances of engagement to occur between companies and host governments. A set of (political/business) relations will already have been established and key interlocutors are likely to have been informed about the proposed project prior to any security meeting.

How do initial meetings relate to the long-term engagement strategy?

Initial meetings can be considered as the 'Consultation' phase that allows companies and security actors to share information and concerns, establish a common ground and lead, ideally, to further 'Cooperation'. To create and maintain trust, the confidentiality of information must be ensured throughout the entire process.



While the focus of this tool lies on the initial 'Consultation' phase, it is essential to understand its role in the wider, long-term engagement strategy. If early stakeholder meetings are conducted merely on an ad hoc basis, the company will

likely find itself at odds with one or more security actors during the 'Cooperation' phase. Consider the activities and objectives outlined in the box below for a more detailed overview of an engagement framework.

CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	AGREE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Getting to know the interlocutor Providing and obtaining information on security objectives, needs, resources, challenges and the environment Raising security and human rights concerns Setting out aspirations for cooperation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with the interlocutor on the identification and assessment of security and human rights concerns (e.g. in-country risk assessment) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working in partnership with the interlocutor to find solutions and strategies addressing the problems and threats identified (possibility of engaging third parties and multi-stakeholder meetings) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the company and security actor Obtaining partial agreements on specific issues (e.g. equipment transfers) in absence of MoU
Objective is to:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build trust and foundation for good working relationship Raise awareness of company human rights policies and commitments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen mutual interest and understanding of the security and human rights needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop procedures and plans for identified issues that can be stipulated in a formal agreement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure constructive and durable relations with the security actor Set a framework for the implementation of the agreed solutions and activities

How can a consistent and durable engagement strategy be achieved?

In order to achieve a coherent and sustainable engagement strategy that extends from the 'Consultation' to the 'Cooperation' phase, company representatives need to achieve **two key aims**.

1. Firstly, **company representatives need to identify potential 'champions' with whom they should build trust**. To this end, company representatives should consider building relationships through informal links and environments if culturally appropriate. *'It is important to develop a [personal] rapport before entering into negotiations or difficult discussions'*¹.

2. Secondly, company representatives **need to ensure as much as possible that relations survive political transitions as well as the turnover of staff**. Relations should accordingly be established with a wide range of individuals and departments. *'Engaging only with a small group makes it difficult to establish lasting relationships'*². Additionally, formalised and structured engagements such as workshops, public hearings, and negotiations need to be pursued in parallel to informal relations. Lastly, company representatives should document consultations for institutional memory.

3. AUDIENCE ANALYSIS



Prior to initial consultations, users should conduct an audience analysis to identify relevant information on individual and institutional profiles, positions, and priorities. Key stakeholders should have been previously identified through the stakeholder mapping exercise in the *DCAF-ICRC-IPIECA Host country security assessment guide*. Below, a non-exhaustive list of key institutions with which companies will likely have to engage is provided, but users are advised to complement this list with other stakeholders identified through their mapping exercise³.

While non-statutory security actors (e.g. guerrilla armies, political party militias) are not the focus of this guidance on engagement, it is important to reflect on their possible influences on key stakeholders and interlocutors.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

- Interior ministry
- Defense ministry
- Armed forces
- Police
- Human Rights Commissions and Ombudsman Institutions
- Ministry of Natural Resources
- Civil society (as appropriate)

3.1. Institutional profile

To ensure successful and productive engagement, company representatives must analyse the **institutional and individual** profile of the particular security actor and its representatives. Users should repeat the following analysis for each identified stakeholder.

3.1.1. Relations and experience

An effective consultation strategy requires an understanding of the institutions' internal structures, external relations, interests and relevant experience. To this end, users may want to consider the following aspects:

Institutional relations

- What is the institutional sphere of influence (national, regional, local)? Does it extend to the region of operations/ interest?
- What are the relationships and alliances of the institution with other core or non-statutory security actors? Users should draw upon the 'Mapping exercise' of the *Host country security assessment guide*.
- Do tensions with other core or non-statutory security actors exist? Users should draw upon the 'Tensions & conflicts' section in *Host country security assessment guide*.
- What mechanisms are in place to hold the interlocutor accountable? Users should draw upon the 'Relationships with management, oversight and judicial Institutions' section in the *Host country security assessment guide*.
- What is the interlocutor's organizational structure? Users should draw upon the 'Organizational structure, processes and policies' section in the *Host country security assessment guide*.

Comments:

Institutional experience

- Has the institution been engaged with other extractive operations in the region/country?
- Are reports on this engagement available (publicly or from other companies)? If so, are there human rights concerns that arise in the reports?
- Has the institution shown an understanding or voiced concern for security and human rights issues?
- Do policies on the engagement with extractive companies exist? (If so, are there limitations in the policies that could give rise to security concerns?)

Comments:

3.1.2. Position

Company representatives must further understand how interlocutors may perceive extractive operations in general, as well as operations in a specific area in particular. While it is difficult to pre-determine institutional perceptions, users can draw on their previous evaluation of the legal and socio-political context in the *Host country security assessment guide*, and determine the interlocutor's contextual position.

This section should be revisited and revised after having held an initial round of meetings with the security actor.

To prepare for unexpected interpretations of and/or expectations towards company operations, users should consider the following aspects:



Institutional position

- What are the economic interests of the institution and how may these be impacted by the company operations? Consider issues and factors identified in the 'Socio-economic context' and 'Dynamics at the region of operations/interest' sections in the *Host country security assessment guide*.
- What are the political interests of the institution and how may these be impacted by the company operations? Consider issues and factors identified in the *Host country security assessment guide* sections on 'Political context', 'Social context', 'Conflict and challenges' and 'Dynamics at the region of operations/interest'.
- Is the institution in conflict with other regional actors that are likely to benefit from the proposed operations?
- Does the institution have existing relations with extractive companies?

Comments:

3.2. Individual analysis

In addition to an institutional analysis, users should aim to conduct an individual analysis. While it can be a difficult task to identify information on particular contact persons, it is a worthwhile exercise to undertake since individual interlocutors can be 'champions' or 'spoilers' and greatly influence the success of your engagement strategy. The information should be regularly assessed and updated as interlocutors and circumstances may change.

Relevant information can possibly be obtained through local CSOs, other extractive companies operating in the area, as well as local media. If no insight can be gained, company representatives should at least prepare for the fact that individual interests and priorities may diverge from the institutional position. Consider the following aspects and guiding questions for an individual analysis.

General information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name (<i>correct pronunciation</i>). Socio-political association(s) that may be relevant to the engagement. Language spoken and preferred.
Comments:
Position within the institution
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual's position and title within the institution. Individual's sphere of influence (national, regional, local). Does it extend to the region of operations/interest? Individual's position within the institution's reporting line.
Comments:
Individual experience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How long has the individual been in their current position? In this position, has the individual had prior experience and engagement with extractive companies/operations? If so, can experiences on this engagement be shared with you by other companies or local experts (NGOs, academia, media, etc.)? Has the individual shown an understanding or voiced concern for security and human rights issues?
Comments:
Individual priorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the individual voiced any strong opposition to extractives or international organizations? Has the individual voiced strong opposition to any particular security actor? Has the individual stated relevant priorities/interests? If so, have they been in line with the institutional position?
Comments:

4. TOPICS OF ENGAGEMENT

Having conducted an interlocutor analysis, this section guides users in identifying possible topics of engagement for the initial set of meetings.

The consultation phase serves four complementary purposes:

1. Getting to know the security actor and building the trust required for consistent and durable engagement.

2. Obtaining further security related information.
3. Stating company security needs, human rights policies and commitments and procedures.
4. Raising security and human rights concerns.


In most circumstances, it is best to use the very first meetings to develop a level of trust before raising security and human rights concerns. At the same time, human rights policies need to be emphasised early and in a regular manner.

Topics for discussion during initial meetings will often include:

- Company policies, protocols and plans on safety, security and human rights.
- Adherence to international human rights standards, including the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights (VPSHR).
- Rights and responsibilities of security personnel.

Comments:

The user has already identified **security and human rights concerns** in the *Host country security assessment guide*, which need to be raised in the initial set of meetings. Draw on findings from:

- 
- a. The 'Host country overview' section and consider security and human rights concerns about the legal and socio-political context.
 - b. The 'Security sector assessment' section and consider security and human rights concerns about the institution or its activities.

Security and human rights concerns:

Beginning a conversation on human rights issues can prove difficult at the early stage of building relations. Keeping in mind the cultural and contextual particularities, users may want to consider:

- Referring to relevant events on the news, unless this might generate negative reactions or undermine the trust-building process.
- Providing practical and context-specific case study examples.
- Highlighting national and international legal commitments (see the *Host country security assessment guide* for relevant conventions).
- Raising company commitments on VPSHR and seeking government co-operation on this.

5. COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Raising security and human rights concerns with national security actors will almost always be a sensitive process, despite detailed and thorough preparation. Challenges that may hinder or complicate such attempts include:

- **Disregard:** disregard for concerns raised
- **Conflict:** interpersonal conflict
- **Misunderstanding:** communication and cultural differences

Disregard

To address disregard for concerns raised, consider the following practices:

1. Make the case using arguments tailored to the national/local context. Consider the risk and challenges identified in the previous 'Security assessment' and demonstrate the security, social and economic benefits the proposed procedures can bring.
2. Use the information gained from the legal sections of the *Host country security assessment guide* to build a case that shows how the above procedures enhance the respect for national laws and international treaties and conventions.
3. Highlight relevant case studies from the company's experience in similar environments.
4. Clarify how the company procedures set the proposed operation apart, if a negative perception of international extractive operations persists because of previous operations in the area.
5. Appeal to values such as 'operational excellence', 'best practice' and 'professionalisation' and emphasise the objective of helping security institutions deliver a better service. *'Improved effectiveness is often a key argument for winning local support'*⁴.

Conflict

If tensions arise in the initial meeting, it is important to use assertive but polite behavior to neither affront the interlocutor nor avoid important issues. The following examples help challenge false accusations or information while maintaining a positive approach:

Conflict resolution behavior⁵

- 'I understand you need a solution to that issue...'
- Avoid 'You said.' Try 'My understanding of our conversation was...'
- Don't say: 'You're wrong.' Try 'You may have thought that...'
- Be aware of your own body language; particularly avoid pointing or clenched hands.

Misunderstandings

To avoid misunderstandings due to communication and cultural differences, it may make sense to use an interpreter. The following guidelines can help working with an interpreter.

Using an interpreter⁶:

- Provide as much **information in advance** as possible. Give the interpreter the most current version of any speech or presentation. Include:
 - a transcript, or if you do not have a detailed script, provide a detailed outline;
 - copies of audio-visual presentation;
 - handouts for participants;
 - technical and promotional material regarding the topic or project to be discussed;
 - minutes from previous meetings;
 - information about yourself, and
 - a specialist dictionary or list of obscure and any specialized terminology.
- **Meet the interpreter(s) ahead of time** to answer any questions they may have about terminology and technical language, the meeting process, etc.
- **Do not interrupt** another speaker as only one voice can be heard at a time.
- **Speak clearly, at a regular, moderate speed**. It is tempting to speed up when reading a prepared script. The interpreter cannot go faster.
- **Avoid statistics** or strings of numbers. Their significance is often lost in interpretation.
- **Avoid idiomatic language**, jokes, puns and slang. These are difficult or impossible to translate and usually lose their impact.
- **Speak to the audience**, not the interpreter.
- Use **short, concise, simple sentences** and pause regularly for the interpreter to catch up.
- Allow time for the interpreter to take **additional notes** – particularly if a speech is not tightly scripted, speaking off the cuff or replying to questions.
- **Be sensitive to the local culture**. Follow customary rules of introduction, greeting and other courtesies. Include the interpreter. Use this as an opportunity to feel comfortable working together.

Other useful communication channels that can help avoid misunderstandings may include:

- Booklets, illustration, videos, small scale models.

6. COMMUNICATION STRATEGY TEMPLATE

After having introduced the different elements of an engagement and communication strategy, this section introduces a template that allows the user to establish a communication strategy on a particular topic, issue or

concern drawing on all the elements and insights gained in the previous sections. An example is provided to clarify the use and application of the template.

Topic, issue or concern to raise with the interlocutor:	<i>For example: Moonlighting of security personnel</i>
Detailed information on the topic, issue or concern:	<i>Reports on personnel regularly having a secondary employment affecting their ability to distinguish between their multiple roles and responsibilities - leading to misconduct and human rights violations</i>
Source of the information:	<i>Reports by non-governmental organisation XYZ</i>
Message to get across / objective to achieve:	<i>Acknowledgement of the issue at hand (or proof of otherwise) and willingness to address it – particularly any human rights violations.</i>
Relevant positions and interests of the interlocutor:	<i>Institutional: the institution has publicly denied any human right violations as a result of moonlighting.</i>
	<i>Individual: not known (to be revisited after initial meetings).</i>
Experience, relations and sphere of influence:	<i>Institutional: the security actor is present in the region of interest.</i>
	<i>Individual: the interlocutor is in charge of the national operations and is in a position to take relevant decisions</i>
Other relevant notes on the institution and interlocutor:	<i>Interlocutor speaks fluent English, no translator needed.</i>
Cultural issues to consider:	<i>N/A</i>
Challenges that may hinder or complicate the attempt:	<i><u>Disregard</u> is likely as the issue has been publicly denied before. <u>Conflict</u> is possible if the issue is pushed nonetheless</i>



Strategy to introduce and raise the topic, issue or concern:	<i>The issue can be introduced through reference to recent news reports. Given the prior negative response of the security actor, a neutral and nonjudgmental approach is necessary.</i>
Strategy to address possible challenges:	<i>Rather than referring to the human rights concern of moonlighting, we should appeal to values such as 'professionalisation' and emphasise the objective of helping the security actor to deliver a better service.</i>

¹Addressing Security and Human Rights Challenges in Complex Environments – Toolkit 3rd edition, DCAF and the ICRC (2016: 17), available online at: <http://www.securityhumanrightshub.com/content/toolkit>

²ibid. It is important, however, to note that different individuals of the same institution may represent different positions and priorities.

³For good practices on stakeholder mapping and engagement practices see: Addressing Security and Human Rights Challenges in Complex Environments – Toolkit 3rd edition, DCAF and the ICRC (2016: Challenge I.I.A.), available online at: <http://www.securityhumanrightshub.com/content/toolkit>

⁴OECD DAC Handbook on Security Sector Reform : Supporting Security and Justice (OECD, 2007: 33)

⁵Content of the box published in A Strategic Approach to Early Stakeholder Engagement : A Good Practice Handbook for Junior Companies in the Extractive Industries (IFC, 2014: 108).

⁶Content of the box published in Working With or as an Interpreter: An OSCE Handbook for Fieldwork (OSCE, 2005: 90-93).

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IPIECA is the global oil and gas industry association for environmental and social issues. It develops, shares and promotes good practices and knowledge to help the industry improve its environmental and social performance, and is the industry's principal channel of communication with the United Nations.

Through its member-led working groups and executive leadership, IPIECA brings together the collective expertise of oil and gas companies and associations. Its unique position within the industry enables its members to respond effectively to key environmental and social issues.

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Established in 1863, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) operates worldwide, helping people affected by conflict and armed violence and promoting the laws that protect victims of war. An independent and neutral organization, its mandate stems essentially from the Geneva Conventions of 1949. The ICRC is based in Geneva, Switzerland, and employs some 14,500 people in more than 80 countries. The ICRC is funded mainly by voluntary donations from governments and from national Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

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DCAF is an international foundation established in 2000 on the initiative of the Swiss Confederation, as the 'Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces'. DCAF contributes to enhancing security sector governance (SSG) through security sector reform (SSR). The Centre's work to support effective, efficient security sectors which are accountable to the state and its citizens is underpinned by the acknowledgement that security, development and the rule of law are essential preconditions for sustainable peace. DCAF is guided by the principles of neutrality, impartiality, gender sensitivity and local ownership as the basis for supporting legitimate, sustainable reform processes. DCAF is based in Geneva with permanent offices in Beirut, Brussels, Ljubljana, Ramallah and Tunis. The Centre has over 140 staff from more than 30 countries.

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