



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
FOR STAKEHOLDER MAPPING IN ARGENTINA
RFP # VPSHR220-1

Issued by
The Secretariat for
The Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights Association (VPA)
and
The Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights Initiative (VPI)

Revised Version: November 18, 2024

1. Overview and Purpose

1.1 Overview

The Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights (VPSHR or simply Voluntary Principles) are an internationally recognized set of principles that guide companies on how to conduct their security operations while ensuring respect for human rights.

The Voluntary Principles were created in 2000 when companies, governments, and NGOs committed to work together to address security-related human rights abuses and violations in the extractive sector. Today, the Principles help companies in various industries.

To promote the implementation of the Principles, the Voluntary Principles Initiative (VPI) was created. The Initiative is comprised of over 75 members including companies, governments, and non-governmental organizations that share best practices and mutually support the implementation of the Principles. For additional information, please visit: <http://www.voluntaryprinciples.org/>.

The Voluntary Principles Association (VPA), with whom the successful bidder will formally enter into a contract, is the formal not-for-profit legal entity, domiciled in the Netherlands, designed to address the basic administrative and financial needs of the Voluntary Principles Initiative (VPI). The VPA is governed by the Articles of Association and the Board of Directors.

The Secretariat, located in Ottawa, Canada, is responsible for the day-to-day business of both the VPI and the VPA.

1.2 Context – In-Country Working Groups

While the VPI includes members from around the world, in select instances, In-Country Working Groups (ICWGs) have been created to facilitate effective and enhanced country-level implementation.

ICWGs can improve in-country stakeholder coordination and engagement between governments, companies and Civil Society Organizations; support constructive dialogue on the ground; build capacity to identify and address local, in-country challenges related to implementation of the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights; and facilitate the identification of joint solutions.

Members of the VPI are evaluating the possibility of creating a new multi-stakeholder Working Group in Argentina to support implementation of the VPSHR in the country, share best practices, raise awareness related to security and human rights best practices, and to enhance collaboration between government representatives, NGOs, and companies operating in the energy, mining, and agriculture sectors.

1.3 Note on Terminology

The term “extractives and harvesting sectors” in this document refer to, at a minimum, the energy, mining, and agriculture sectors in Argentina. The research should at a minimum cover energy, mining and agriculture sectors, however if relevant, could also include other sectors such as forestry and fisheries.

1.4 Purpose

The purpose of this consultancy is to:

- Identify the appropriate national and local stakeholders from all levels of governments, companies, and civil society that have significant activities in the extractives and harvesting sectors in Argentina or are involved in addressing human rights issues related to business operations in the extractives and harvesting sectors in the country.
- Research recent human rights incidents and systemic problems relating to the provision of private and public security.
- Identify local civil society organizations with the organizational capacity, activities, and mandate to potentially serve as Secretariat of a new ICWG.
- Identify potential partnerships with other multi-stakeholder initiatives operating in the country relating to business and human rights or the extractives and harvesting sectors, including the Extractives Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) in-country multi-stakeholder groups.

For details on the purpose, scope of work and report requirements, please see Appendix A.

2. Timeline and Notifications

Publication of RFP	Monday November 11, 2024
Deadline for Submission of Questions	Monday November 25, 2024
Publication of Answers to Questions on website	Thursday November 28, 2024
Proposal Due date	Thursday December 12, 2024
Review and evaluation	Friday December 13 – Friday December 20, 2024
Notification of Shortlisted Bidders, Negotiation and Award notification	Monday December 23, 2024 – Friday January 10, 2025
Expected starting date of new contract	Monday February 3, 2025

Please note that these dates are subject to change at the discretion of the Secretariat.

2.1 Submission of Questions & Publication of Answers

Please send any questions regarding the RFP to tenders@voluntaryprinciples.org
 Responses to questions will be posted on the VPI website according to the timetable.

3. General Requirements

3.1 Communications

The Secretariat is the official point of contact for the bid process. Any questions or other communications must be directed to the tenders@voluntaryprinciples.org
 Any communication with parties not expressly named in this RFP may result in the disqualification of your organization from further consideration.

3.2 Eligibility

Bidders must meet the following eligibility requirement:

- a) Any individual, civil society organization (CSO) or consultancy firm is eligible to bid, so long as the consulting team lead is a resident of Argentina, or a majority level of effort is provided by residents of Argentina (with residence in Argentina during the time of consultancy). Resident of Argentina (with residence in Argentina during the time of the consultancy).
- b) High degree of fluency in English.
- c) Proven ability to draft documents and communicate in English, with a high degree of proficiency.

4. Required Format and Submission

4.1 Proposal Responses

Proposal responses should be organized and submitted in accordance with the instructions in this section. Responses should be organized as follows:

- I. Technical Proposal
- II. Detailed Budget
- III. Signed Declaration (Annex B)

I. TECHNICAL PROPOSAL

The technical proposal should respond to Annex A: Report Requirements by describing the following:

- a) CV(s) for the consultant or each member of the consulting team, demonstrating relevant expertise and ability to deliver the project.
- b) A proposed methodology for carrying out the work, as described in Appendix A.
- c) An estimated timetable for implementation.

II. DETAILED BUDGET

The Bidder should provide a separate document related to the pricing of its proposal.

All proposals must address the following financial requirements:

- a) All prices should be quoted in USD, excluding VAT and other taxes.
- b) Bidders are strongly encouraged to submit proposals calculated on a fee basis including the following (as applicable):
 - Daily rates applicable to each consultant in the proposal
 - Number of days of expected work for each consultant
 - Any other costs that may be incurred
- c) The Bidder shall describe its invoicing schedule
- d) Bids should not exceed \$20,000 USD (twenty thousand American dollars).

III. SIGNED DECLARATION

The Declaration in Annex B must be signed by a duly authorized representative of the bidder and included in the bid.

4.2 Electronic Submission

Proposals shall be submitted electronically in pdf format to the Secretariat at tenders@voluntaryprinciples.org. Submissions should include the RFP number in the subject line. Please attach Technical and Budget Proposals as separate pdf documents.

4.3 Receipt by Bid Due Date

The Evaluation Team must receive the Proposal no later than 5:00pm EST on the Proposal Due Date set forth in Section 2.0 of this RFP.

4.4 Bidder Contact Information

Bidder is to enter its correct entity name and full address in their Proposal, followed by the signature and designation of the person authorized to bind the Bidder in this matter, and the date. The name and title of each signatory shall be typed or clearly printed below the signature.

4.5 Declarations

Each Bidder shall include a signed Declarations form (Annex B) confirming that they meet the eligibility requirements and will comply with VPA expectations regarding proper conduct. To avoid any potential conflicts of interest, any successful bidder must disclose any and all commercial relationship(s) with existing VPI participants and VPA members and propose a plan for mitigation.

5. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be assessed by the Evaluation Team according to the following criteria:

1. General knowledge of Argentina the extractives and harvesting sectors.
2. Experience in working on social impacts of the extractives and harvesting sectors projects or stakeholder engagement, human rights, government relations, or another relevant field.
3. Likelihood that the proposed methodology will result in an effective Stakeholder Mapping report.
4. Overall value for money, appropriateness of the budget and the implementation timetable.

Proposal evaluation will be weighted 80% technical and 20% financial. Financial proposals will only be scored if the bidder receives a minimum score of 70% upon evaluation of the technical proposal.

6. Reservation of Rights

This RFP should in no way be construed as an offer of purchase, but rather is a request for services, products, fees, and expenses information, which will assist the Evaluation Team (on behalf of the VPA) in selecting a vendor for supplying the scope of services listed in the RFP. The VPA reserves the right to alter the timeframes published in this RFP. The VPA hereby assumes no financial responsibility, direct or indirect, for the cost of preparing any proposals, or amendments thereto. The VPA has the right to retain all proposals submitted in response to this RFP. The VPA makes no commitment in or by virtue of this RFP to purchase any services.

7. Debriefing

An unsuccessful bidder may request a debriefing within 10 business days of award notification.

Annex A: Report Requirements

Deliverables:

The consultant will produce a written Draft and Final Report in English, including all the components detailed below.

The Final Report should incorporate comments provided by the VPI Secretariat upon review of the draft report.

The Final Report should be no more than 45 pages (including annexes) and include the following:

- A two-page Executive Summary of findings and conclusions.
- Conclusions and findings of the stakeholder mapping.

Report components:

- a) Provide an overview of the state of human rights in Argentina with special emphasis on recent human rights incidents and systemic problems relating to the provision of private and public security activities.
- b) Describe specific industries within the extractives and harvesting sectors in Argentina; indicate where the main production hubs are located, identify companies with concessions and operations, etc.
- c) Describe any reports of security-related human rights incidents in the extractives and harvesting sectors (confirmed or not), if any. Describe any company-community tensions or conflicts or broader conflicts in extractives and harvesting areas.
- d) Identify key Argentinian Government stakeholders from the federal and state levels of government which are potentially relevant to improve human rights compliance among public and private security providers that work in and around energy, mining, and agriculture, including ministries, Secretaries, and other public servers regulating or working with mining, petroleum, agriculture, human rights, public security (police, military), private security regulation, interior ministries, etc. Provide relevant information for potential focal points such as Ministry/Organization, branch/section, name, position, responsibilities and contact information.
- e) Identify as many as possible state-owned, national and international companies in the industries of energy, mining, and agriculture with relevant operations in Argentina. The consulting team should provide organizational information on relevant stakeholders from relevant corporate departments, such as Human Rights, Sustainability, ESG, and Security. Details should include organizational information such as name, department, section, and position.
- f) Identify Civil Society Organizations, including NGOs, business associations and academics, which are currently or have been previously involved in human rights issues related to business operations in the extractives and harvesting sectors, or more specifically human rights issues relating to security, or organizations representing community, Indigenous, or other groups with

concerns relating to business and human rights particularly in the energy, mining, and agriculture sectors. Provide relevant information for potential focal points such as names, organization, position, responsibilities and contact information.

- g) Provide detailed information about reputable local Argentinian civil society organizations working in human rights, business and human rights, security and human rights, and community concerns around extractives and harvesting projects. Please include information about their expertise, organizational capacity, geographical regions where they operate, activities and mandate.
- h) Identify local civil society organizations with the organizational capacity, activities, and mandate to potentially serve as Secretariat of the new ICWG.
- i) Identify other relevant, likeminded, multi-stakeholder groups or initiatives operating in Argentina related to business and human rights, security and the energy, mining, and agriculture sectors such as the Extractives Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) in-country multi-stakeholder groups, along with key contact persons in these initiatives.
- j) Provide an initial scoping of potential priority issues for a new working group. If possible, including responsive activities that a new working group could undertake.

The report should be drafted in English.

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Annex B: Declaration

We, the undersigned, offer to provide the services for the Stakeholder Mapping in accordance with your Request for Proposal No. VPSTR220-1 and our Proposal. We are hereby submitting our Proposal, which includes the Technical Proposal and Financial Proposal.

We hereby declare that we meet all eligibility requirements as set out in section 3.2. We declare that we have a corporate sexual harassment policy in place or will have one before entering any contract that may result from this process.

We hereby declare that our firm, its affiliates or subsidiaries, including any joint venture/consortium /association members (as applicable):

- a) will comply with all applicable laws in our jurisdictions of registration and operation, including, without limitation, laws against bribery of foreign officials;
- b) have no conflict of interest and/or any potential conflict has been declared (e.g. a commercial relationship with a member of the VPA) and a plan for mitigating provided;
- c) have not declared bankruptcy, are not currently engaged in bankruptcy or receivership proceedings, and there is no judgment or pending legal action against them that could impair their operations in the foreseeable future;
- d) undertake not to engage in illegal practices, including but not limited to corruption, fraud, coercion, collusion, obstruction, funding of terrorism, or any other practice that exposes the VPA to undue financial, operational, reputational or other risk;
- e) are not under sanction for an offence involving fraud, bribery or corruption imposed by a government or an international organization; and
- f) are not engaged in practices or transactions that would violate the sanctions laws and regulations of the United Nations, the European Union, or the United States.

We declare that all the information provided, and statements made by us in this Proposal are true and we accept that any misinterpretation or misrepresentation contained in this Proposal may lead to our disqualification and/or sanctioning by the VPA. We offer to provide services in conformity with the Bidding documents and in accordance with the Statement of Work. Our Proposal shall be valid and remain binding upon us for 120 days upon receipt. We understand that you are not bound to accept any Proposal you receive.

We declare that any supplier or subcontractor to be used in connection with this project shall be contractually required to make representations substantially similar to the declaration set out herein.

I, the undersigned, certify that I am duly authorized to sign this Declaration on behalf of the Bidder.

Name:
Title:
Date:
Signature: