

Investing in Fragile Contexts: Total in Myanmar

Background to Total:

[Total E&P Myanmar](#) (TEPM) is a company with more than 300 employees that has an off-shore gas field which produces gas sold to both Myanmar for distribution in Yangon and to the Thai State for distribution in Bangkok. TEPM operates the Yadana gas field (under a Production Sharing Contract) with a 31.2% interest. The Yadana gas field is located in the Andaman Sea, approximately 60 kilometers south of the Irrawaddy Delta. Most of the 410-kilometer Yadana gas export pipeline lies offshore, with 63 kilometers onshore in southern Myanmar.

Challenges:

Total's presence in Myanmar has been contested by human rights activists and NGOs, who have accused the company of cooperating with the former junta that was accused of widespread human rights abuses. However, in the particular context of Myanmar, ensuring that Human Rights are respected requires reinforced vigilance and commitment.

Role of Total:

- **Partnerships with experts and independent assessments:** Since 2003, TEPM has undertaken Human Rights Training of its employees and relevant stakeholders in Myanmar in collaboration with the Danish Institute of Human Rights and the ILO on good labor practices with a focus on forced labor to raise awareness of the population on their rights. TEPM has also contributed to the implementation of United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) training activities for civil servants and mid-level government officials of Myanmar in various aspects of international law: environmental, trade, labor laws, etc. Further, TEPM engages with the Collaborative for Development Action (CDA), a U.S. non-profit organization expert in community relations and company community conflict. CDA has a programme that helps extractive companies identify and manage the impacts of their activities in complex regions or conflict zones. CDA has issued seven independent reports on our operations in Myanmar which can be accessed directly through the CDA website: <http://cdacollaborative.org/>.
- **VPSHR training:** As a member of the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights (VPSHR), TEPM took steps to make its Myanmar stakeholders more aware of the rules governing security and human rights in the regions where it is operating. In June 2015 the Group and TEPM organized a seminar focusing on the Voluntary Principles guidelines at Yangon. Myanmar Government representatives supported the event with an important and pro-active delegation including the Minister of Security and Border Affairs and Regional Police commissioners. National companies, NGOs and Embassies also constructively contributed to the open discussions throughout the workshop based on practical situations related to security incidents. In organizing the working sessions, TEPM was seeking to foster constructive dialogue with local security forces, the police and the army, as well as with NGOs, other oil companies operating in Myanmar, and private security firms.
- **Lobbying on transparency:** From the very start of discussions about Myanmar's membership of the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI), TEPM has been fully committed to the implementation and success of this initiative through its local and international involvement. TEPM has leveraged its relationship with the government to explain the benefits of EITI for participating countries and companies.

Results and outcomes:

- The VPSHR training aimed to ensure that each person involved in enforcing the security of a region or facility fully understood how to react in the event of forced entry or violence. Concrete scenarios were examined and discussed at the seminars. Participants found the discussion and experience sharing to come out of this first stage highly constructive, and are already thinking about the next steps;
- Myanmar committed to joining the EITI in late 2012 and was admitted as a candidate country by the International EITI Board in July 2014. The country then hosted the following meeting of the International Board in October 2014 in Nay Pi Taw, when participants also visited the Yadana pipeline area and took stock of the CSR initiatives first-hand¹.

Keywords: human rights, security, training, Myanmar

Sector: Oil & gas

¹ See more at: <http://www.total.com/en/media/news/news/total-commended-its-program-myanmar#sthash.6Hf7iG5u.dpuf>