

Guidelines on Stakeholder Engagement in REDD+ Readiness

With a Focus on the Participation of Indigenous Peoples and Other Forest-Dependent Communities

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This note presents guidance on the key elements of effective stakeholder engagement in the context of REDD+ readiness for the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility and the UN-REDD Programme, with an emphasis on the participation of Indigenous Peoples and other Forest-Dependent Communities. It outlines 1) principles for effective participation and consultation; 2) operational guidelines; and 3) practical “how-to” guidance on planning and implementing consultations.

Introduction

1. The Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) and the UN-REDD Programme assist developing countries in their efforts to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+)¹ by building national capacity for REDD+ activities, and testing a program of performance-based incentive payments in certain pilot countries. The two programs are supporting a REDD+ readiness mechanism to assist countries put in place a number of building blocks (measurement, reporting and verification system; reference scenario; REDD+ strategy and national management arrangements for REDD+) that will enable them to participate in future systems of positive incentives for REDD+.
2. REDD+ has the potential to deliver several benefits to Indigenous Peoples and other forest-dependent communities, including the sustainable management of biodiversity, the provision of alternative livelihoods, equitable benefit sharing of revenues generating from emissions reductions, etc. However, if not done appropriately, it also presents risks to livelihoods, culture, biodiversity, etc. For REDD+ programs to succeed in the long term, these risks have to be identified, reduced and mitigated, and stakeholders have to be involved at the formulation and implementation stages.
3. Stakeholders are defined as those groups that have a stake/interest/right in the forest and those that will be affected either negatively or positively by REDD+ activities. They include relevant government agencies, formal and informal forest users, private sector entities, Indigenous Peoples and other forest dependent communities.
4. This note presents guidance applicable to the UN-REDD Programme and FCPF on the key elements of effective stakeholder engagement in the context of REDD+. It aims to outline: (i) principles for effective participation and consultation; (ii) operational guidelines; and (iii) practical “how-to” guidance on planning and implementing consultations.
5. This guidance focuses on a particular category of stakeholders, who are often legal and/or customary rights holders: *Indigenous Peoples and other forest-dependent communities*. These stakeholders are often not engaged in public decision-making processes, yet they depend on forests for their social and economic livelihoods as well as cultural and spiritual well-being. As such they may be

¹ REDD+ means reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, sustainable management of forests, and conservation and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries.

more vulnerable than other stakeholders in the context of formulation and implementation of REDD+ activities. At the same time, they have a special role to play in REDD+ given their traditional knowledge and relationship to the forest and their presence on the ground.

Importance of Indigenous Peoples

6. Both the FCPF and UN-REDD Programme recognize the importance of Indigenous Peoples and are committed to applying specific policies to safeguard their rights and interests. Both also recognize that for REDD+ to be implemented, participating countries should comply with applicable international treaties and national law.
7. In the context of the UN-REDD Programme ², countries that have adopted the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) will be expected to adhere to the principle of free, prior and informed consent (FPIC).³ It is critical for UN-REDD Programme countries to ensure that:
 - a. Activities that may potentially impact Indigenous Peoples and other forest dependent communities, shall follow a human rights based approach and shall adhere to UNDRIP, the UN Development Group Guidelines on Indigenous Peoples' Issues, and the International Labour Organization Convention No.169;
 - b. FPIC shall be adhered to, and is essential to ensuring the full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples and other forest dependent communities, in program activities and policy-making and decision-making processes (see Annex 1 for more details).
8. In the context of the FCPF, activities affecting Indigenous Peoples are governed by the World Bank Operational Policy 4.10 on Indigenous Peoples (see Annex 2 for more details), which is one of the ten Safeguard Policies of the World Bank.⁴ This policy aims to ensure that the development process fully

² For the UN-REDD Programme, such international instruments include: UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP); UN Common Understanding on the Human Rights Based Approach to Development Cooperation; UN General Assembly Programme of Action for the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (UN General Assembly Resolution 60/142); General Recommendation XXIII on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination; UN Development Group's Guidelines on Indigenous Peoples' Issues; the International Labour Organization's Convention 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries (1989); UN Framework Convention on Climate Change; UN Convention on Biological Diversity.

³ The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, adopted by the 61st session of the United Nations General Assembly on September 13, 2007, can be accessed at <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/declaration.html>

⁴ The objective of these policies is to prevent and mitigate undue harm to people and their environment in the development process. The effectiveness and development impact of projects and programs supported by the Bank has substantially increased as a result of attention to these policies. Safeguard policies have often provided a platform for the participation of stakeholders in project design, and have been an important instrument for building ownership among local populations. The Safeguard Policies include Environmental Assessment (OP 4.01), Natural Habitats (OP 4.04), Forests (OP 4.36), Pest Management (OP 4.09), Dam Safety (OP 4.37) Physical Cultural Resources (OP 4.11), Involuntary Resettlement (OP 4.12), Indigenous Peoples (OP 4.10), International Waterways (OP 7.50), and Disputed Areas (OP 7.60). Detailed information is available at www.worldbank.org/safeguards.

respects the dignity, human rights, economies, and cultures of Indigenous Peoples. The policy calls for the recipient country to engage in a process of free, prior, and informed consultation, and the Bank provides financing only where free, prior, and informed consultation results in broad community support to the project by the affected Indigenous Peoples. It has been noted that where this process is properly applied, it can be viewed as substantially equivalent to FPIC. Where under national law or practice the FPIC standard has been adopted, the said standard will also be applied. The Policy includes measures to:

- a. Avoid potentially adverse effects on the Indigenous Peoples' communities; or
- b. When avoidance is not feasible, minimize, mitigate, or compensate for such effects. Operations are also designed to ensure that the Indigenous Peoples receive social and economic benefits that are culturally appropriate and gender and inter-generationally inclusive.

Principles of Effective Stakeholder Engagement

9. The common guiding principles for effective stakeholder engagement that underpin both the FCPF and UN-REDD Programme include:

- a. Consultations should be premised on transparency and facilitate access to information. In the context of REDD+, information dissemination at all levels and in a culturally appropriate manner, is a pre-requisite to meaningful consultations. Stakeholders should have prior access to information on the proposed consultation activities. Public awareness and information, education and communication campaigns are important vehicles for ensuring that key stakeholders understand the objectives of REDD+ and their role in the process, and can make informed and substantive contributions to the formulation of REDD+ strategies and policies.
- b. The consultation process should include a broad range of relevant stakeholders at the national and local levels. It is important that participatory structures and mechanisms exist to manage the process. For example, national REDD+ committees should include representatives from relevant stakeholder groups, including Indigenous Peoples and civil society (see Annex 1 for more details). Beyond the national level, participatory fora need to be established (or existing ones used) at the local level to ensure active engagement of local stakeholders. Special emphasis needs to be made when consulting with Indigenous Peoples to recognize their own existing processes, organizations and institutions, e.g., councils of elders, headmen and tribal leaders; Indigenous Peoples should have the right to participate through representatives chosen by themselves in accordance with their own procedures and decision-making institutions. It is also important to ensure that consultations are gender sensitive.
- c. Consultations should start prior to the design phase, and be applied at every stage of the REDD+ process including planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting and with adequate lead time since decision-making among some local communities may take time and be iterative. The consultation process should also occur voluntarily. Sufficient time is needed to fully understand and incorporate concerns and recommendations of local communities in the design of consultation processes.

- d. Consultations should facilitate dialogue and exchange of information, and consensus building reflecting broad community support should emerge from consultation. In the case of Indigenous Peoples, such consensus should include support from the community as expressed by their leaders. This requires time for mutual understanding and agreement on goals and strategies.
- e. Mechanisms for grievance, conflict resolution and redress must be established and accessible during the consultation process and throughout the implementation of REDD+ policies and measures.
- f. The diversity of stakeholders needs to be recognized and the voices of vulnerable groups must be heard. Different stakeholders have different stakes and/or interests in REDD+ and some may be positively or negatively impacted, so the consultation should be held at various levels.
- g. Special emphasis should be given to the issues of land tenure, resource use rights and property rights. In many tropical forest countries, land tenure and policy frameworks for Indigenous Peoples are unclear as these often have customary/ancestral rights that are not necessarily codified in, or consistent with, national laws. Another important issue to consider for Indigenous Peoples and other forest dwellers is that of livelihoods. Thus clarifying rights to land and carbon assets, including community (collective) rights, and introducing better access to and proprietary control over the resources will be critical priorities for REDD+ formulation and implementation. Consultations with Indigenous Peoples and other forest dependent communities should use existing networks and local level institutions wherever possible.
- h. There should be records of consultations and a report on the outcome of the consultations that is publicly disclosed in a culturally appropriate form, including language. Furthermore, consultation processes should clearly document how views gathered through the consultation process have been taken into account and, where they have not, explanations provided as to why.

Operational Guidelines for Participation and Consultation

10. The Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP) template contains specific guidelines to assist a REDD+ Country organize itself for becoming ready for REDD+. With respect to participation and consultation, the R-PP template provides specific guidelines on national readiness management arrangements and stakeholder consultation and participation.⁵

11. The FCPF is using the Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) to integrate key environmental and social considerations into REDD+ readiness by combining analytical and participatory approaches. The SESA allows: (i) social and environmental considerations to be integrated into the REDD+ Readiness process, in particular the REDD+ strategy; (ii) participation in identifying and prioritizing key issues, assessment of policy, institutional and capacity gaps to manage these priorities and recommendations, and disclosure of findings in the REDD country's progress report on Readiness preparation ; and (iii) an Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) to be put in place to

⁵ The R-PP template is available in English, French and Spanish at www.forestcarbonpartnership.org.

manage environmental and social risks and to mitigate potential adverse impacts (see more details in Annex 3). The SESA guidelines have been integrated into the R-PP template.

12. As outlined in the UN-REDD Programme Guidelines on Stakeholder Engagement (see Annex 4), the UN-REDD Programme adheres to the United Nations human rights principles of Participation and Inclusion as well as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). The UN Common Understanding on the Human Rights Based Approach to Development Cooperation identifies participation and inclusion as key human rights principles that should guide the programming process and development cooperation. In Article 19, UNDRIP requires States to “consult and cooperate in good faith with the Indigenous Peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent...”. Countries that have signed on to the UNDRIP will be expected to adhere to the principle of FPIC (see Annex 2 for more details on FPIC).

13. Among the formal reference frameworks of the FCPF, FIP and UN-REDD Programme, common elements apply to all three initiatives when it comes to practical steps on how to conduct consultations. The next section outlines these steps, which are also illustrated in Figure 1.

Practical Steps for Carrying out Effective Consultations

1- Define the desired outcomes of consultations

14. A good consultation and participation process is one that is carefully planned and contains clear goals. One of the first steps in assembling the Consultation and Participation Plan is the preparation of a realistic budget and financial plan. This should be done by the National REDD+ Committee or the agency(ies) or committee(s) responsible for REDD+ policy design.

2- Develop a Consultation and Participation Plan and request endorsement through a national stakeholder workshop

15. A national level workshop should be held to initiate the consultation and participation process. The workshop should include a broad range of local and national stakeholders (please see Step 5). The goal of this workshop is to review and assess the Consultation and Participation Plan proposed by the national government. This draft plan includes the elements contained in Steps 3-8 below. It is important to ensure that the initial consultation phase has clear objectives and timeframes to avoid raising undue expectations on the part of local communities.

3- Select the consultation and outreach methods

16. The most effective consultations are custom-designed to place and purpose and provide for adequate budgets and human resources. A variety of stakeholder engagement methods can be used for consultations to allow for bottom-up participation and ensure that information is rigorously gathered and fairly presented, such as workshops, surveys, and focus groups. The communication and outreach methods should ensure that adequate and timely information is provided to all stakeholders in an accessible language and style. Various forms of communication media such as printed materials,

electronic media, community radio, and local plays and drama can be used to disseminate information as widely as possible.

4- Define the issues to consult on

17. The key issues should broadly correspond to the R-PP components. In the case of REDD+, issues for consultation may include (but are not limited to):

- *Current status of national forests ;*
- *Main causes and drivers of deforestation and forest degradation;*
- *Past and present policies to halt deforestation and forest degradation, where they have succeeded and where they have not;*
- *Issues of forest governance;*
- *Inclusive participation in the design and implementation of REDD+ strategy;*
- *Proposed REDD+ strategy;*
- *Institutional, policy and regulatory frameworks;*
- *Opportunity costs of land use;*
- *Land rights (user and property rights) and land tenure systems;*
- *Rights to the carbon;*
- *Design of benefit-sharing systems for equitable and effective distribution of REDD+ revenues;*
- *Interests of Indigenous Peoples and other forest dwellers;*
- *Economic, social and environmental impacts and risks of REDD+ and the mitigation of risks;*
- *Role of the private sector;*
- *Groups likely to gain or lose from REDD+ activities;*
- *Design of monitoring systems to keep track of forests and forest emissions.*

5- Identify stakeholders

18. The planners need to identify the groups that have a stake/interest in the forest and those that will be affected by REDD+ activities. The stakeholder groups should have appropriate knowledge about the issues to be consulted upon. If their existing level of information and knowledge is not sufficient, proper steps should be taken to provide information, prior to the start of the consultations. It is important to ensure that the process of selecting stakeholders is transparent so that all interested parties may participate. Particular attention needs to be given to the inclusion of Indigenous Peoples and other forest-dependent communities, women and other marginalized groups. Stakeholders may include:

- Government agencies (environment, agriculture, energy, transportation, finance, planning; national, state, local, etc.);

- Environmental law enforcement agencies;
- Civil society (NGOs, community associations, etc.);
- Indigenous Peoples and other forest-dependent communities;
- Local communities, pastoralists, farmers who depend on forests for livelihoods;
- Vulnerable groups (women, youth, etc.);
- Private sector (loggers, ranchers, energy producers, industry, farmers, agri-business etc.);
- Academia.

6- Establish grievance redress mechanism

19. The consultation process should define specific grievance and grievance redress mechanisms. This could include both local and national level conflict management systems, provided they are accessible and affordable.

7- Conduct the consultations

20. Consultations should be held with relevant stakeholders at different levels. This should include: Consultations with national/local government stakeholders; separate consultations with Indigenous Peoples and forest dependent communities ensuring geographic and regional balance; and consultations with key private sector organizations. It is important to ensure that consultations are conducted in a socially and culturally appropriate manner at national, sub-national and village and community levels. Adequate time should be given for the consultations and the facilitators need to be trained in advance to ensure that they manage the consultation and record views appropriately.

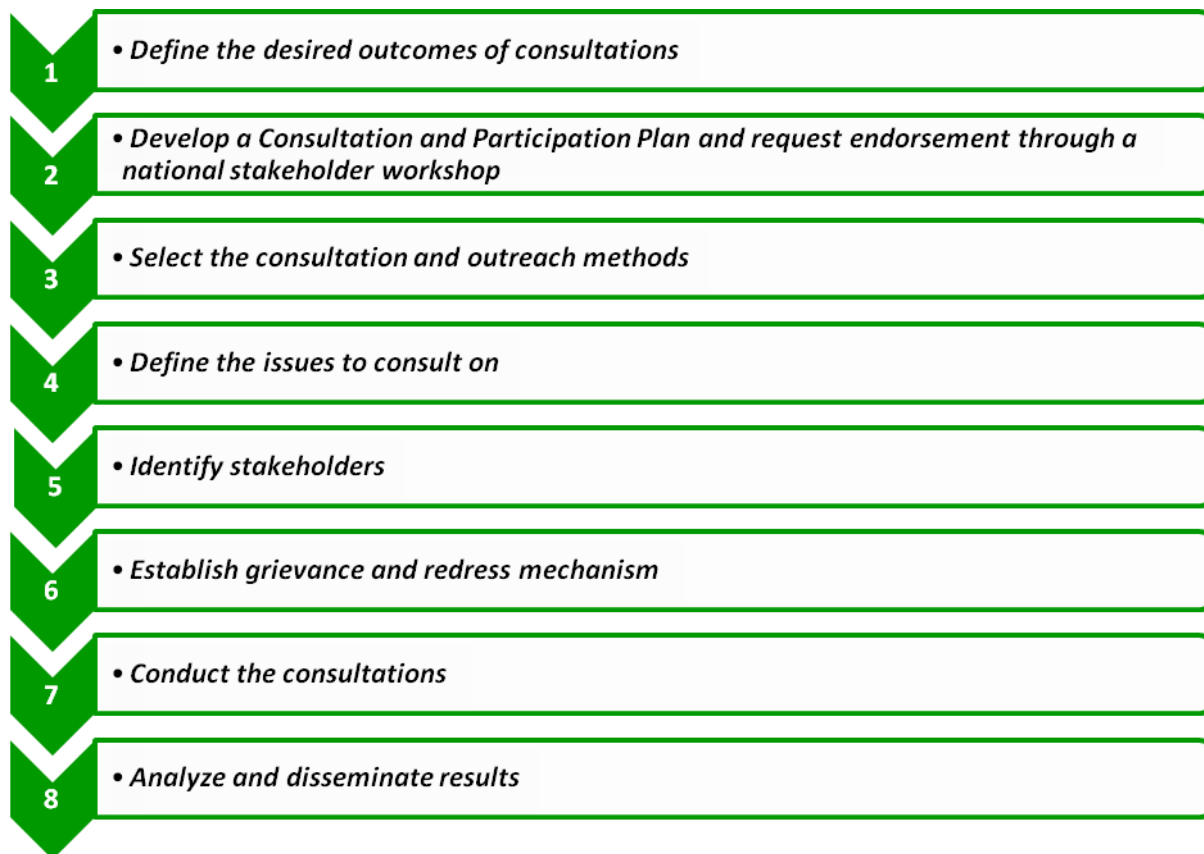
8- Analyze and disseminate results

21. The findings from the various consultations should be analyzed, reported and discussed once again in a national forum with representative stakeholder groups. It is important that staff are trained in data analysis, and that the data analysis feeds back into the decision-making process. Providing timely feedback is also important to sustain interest in and commitment to the process.

22. The national forum should achieve the following: present the government's proposed Consultation and Participation Plan, including the issues covered under steps 3-7 above; report the findings of all the consultations; acknowledge key issues raised during consultations and respond as appropriate; and describe how the outcomes of the consultation process will be incorporated into REDD+ strategy and programs. In addition, the findings of all the consultations should be disclosed through existing communication channels, including government websites, written press and national and community radios.

23. A summary of the eight steps is provided in a schematic form in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Schematic of Consultations Steps



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