11. INTRODUCTION TO STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

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KEY MESSAGES

- In the context of REDD+ activities, stakeholders are individuals or groups which have a stake, interest or right in the forest that will be affected either negatively or positively by REDD+ activities;
- The importance of stakeholder engagement is ingrained within the various UNFCCC decisions;
- Stakeholder engagement is embedded as a safeguard but through creating enabling conditions for a participatory process, will need to underpin a country’s approach to developing accountable, transparent and effective safeguards;
- There are a number of tools that are useful when carrying out a stakeholder engagement process;
- Free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) is a key component of effective stakeholder engagement and consultation;
- A national feedback and grievance redress mechanism needs to be effectively available, and if necessary strengthened, as part of the country's REDD+ institutional arrangements.
INTRODUCTION

This module describes the importance of stakeholder engagement in REDD+ processes, as well as tools and entry points to promote stakeholder engagement.

The module includes explanations about:

- What is meant by a stakeholder in the context of REDD+;
- What is the rationale for stakeholder engagement in REDD+;
- How to engage stakeholders in REDD+ activities;
- What Free, Prior and Informed Consent is in the context of REDD+;
- What Grievance Redress Mechanism is in the context of REDD+.

WHO OR WHAT IS A STAKEHOLDER?

In the context of REDD+, stakeholders are individuals or groups which have a stake, interest or right in the forest that will be affected either negatively or positively by REDD+ activities. While the list below is not exhaustive, and may vary from country to country, some examples of stakeholder groups include:

- Relevant government agencies;
  - Once a commitment has been made towards REDD+ outcomes, the government becomes pivotal in making sure that the country is able to follow Convention guidance;
  - REDD+ contains both technical and policy-related issues, cutting across multiple sectors, and between national and sub-national levels. Sustainable REDD+ activities often require collaboration across and between different ministries such as, among others, finance, planning, agriculture, land, natural resources or forestry.
- Private sector entities;
  - Actors in the following sectors can be relevant to REDD+: agriculture, timber, mining, infrastructure, and forest carbon, in other words, those sectors with a potentially high impact on the dynamics of land use and land use change;
- Civil society organizations (CSOs);
  - The United Nations defines CSOs as non-state actors whose aims are neither to generate profits nor to seek governing power. CSOs unite people to advance shared goals and interests. REDD+ must ultimately come from within and be owned by a country and its citizens. CSOs therefore have vital roles to play as participants, legitimates and endorsers of government policy and action, as watchdogs of the behaviour of other public and private REDD+ stakeholders, and as collaborators in REDD+ efforts;
- Indigenous peoples (women, men and youth);
  - In recognition of the diversity of indigenous peoples, the United Nations does not have an official definition, and instead lists criteria to describe indigenous peoples. Fundamental to the identification of indigenous peoples is the criterion of self-identification. Indigenous peoples have historical and intricate relationships with their lands, territories and resources. REDD+ efforts as such, need to recognise that forests have multi-functional values and roles for indigenous peoples;
- Forest-dependent communities;
  - The UN-REDD Programme’s Guidelines on Free, Prior and Informed Consent defines forest-dependent communities as those that would not satisfy the criteria listed for indigenous peoples. However, it recognises that these communities may also have economic and non-economic relationship with the forests, and be impacted by the ecosystem functions the forests provide, such as clean water;
  - Formal and informal forest users (women, men and youth). FAO defines formal forest users as those explicitly acknowledged by the state and which may be protected using legal means or de jure rights. Conversely, informal forest users are those that lack official recognition and protection;
- Smallholders;
  - FAO defines smallholders as those who owns, manages or uses forests or have limited resource endowments, which are considered “small” compared to others in their region.

These last four groups and individuals are those with potentially the most to gain or lose through REDD+.

**Reflection Point**

Can you think of any other groups associated with forests in your own country that might be considered stakeholders?

**What is the basis for stakeholder engagement in REDD+?**

**What does the UNFCCC say about stakeholder engagement?**

The importance of stakeholder engagement is ingrained within the various UNFCCC decisions: Decision 4/CP.15 (2009) in Copenhagen, Decision 1/CP.16 (2010) in Cancun, Decision 12/CP.17 (2011) in Durban, and Decision 15/CP.19 (2013) in Warsaw. In particular, Paragraph 71 of Decision 1/CP.16, also known as the Cancun Agreements, requests countries to have the following elements in place for REDD+ implementation, and to access results-based payments or results-based finance:

- A national strategy (NS) or action plan (AP) (discussed in Module 4);
- A national forest reference emission level (FREL) and/or forest reference level (FRL) (discussed in Module 6);
- A robust and transparent national forest monitoring system (NFMS) for monitoring and reporting of the five REDD+ activities (discussed in Module 5);
- Safeguard information system (SIS) (discussed in Module 7).

![Figure 11.1 Design elements of readiness for REDD+ implementation](image)

Source: UN-REDD Programme

As is shown below, there is a clear reference to stakeholder engagement of the inclusion of specific stakeholders in decisions pertaining to all the above-mentioned elements.
NATIONAL STRATEGY OR ACTION PLAN

UNFCCC Decision 1/CP.16, para 72 (Cancun) requests developing country parties:

“when developing and implementing their national strategies or action plans, to address, inter alia, the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, land tenure issues, forest governance issues, gender considerations and the safeguards identified in paragraph 2 of Appendix I to this decision, ensuring the full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders, inter alia indigenous peoples and local communities”

(Note: our emphasis).

SAFEGUARDS

UNFCCC Decision 1/CP.16, Appendix I (Cancun) states the following:

- Safeguard (b) recognizes the importance of “transparent and effective national forest governance structures, taking into account national legislation and sovereignty”;
- Safeguard (c) specifies “respect for the knowledge and rights of indigenous peoples and members of local communities, by taking into account relevant international obligations, national circumstances and laws, noting that the United Nations General Assembly has adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples”;
- Safeguard (d) focuses on "the full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders, in particular indigenous peoples and local communities, in actions referred to in paragraphs 70 and 72 of this decision";
- Safeguard (e) specifies that “actions are consistent with the conservation of natural forests and biological diversity, ensuring that actions referred to in paragraph 70 of this decision are not used for the conversion of natural forests, but are instead used to incentivize the protection and conservation of natural forests and their ecosystem services, and to enhance other social and environmental benefits.”

PRIVATE SECTOR AND OTHER STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT IN DRIVERS

UNFCCC Decision 15/CP.19 (Warsaw):

“Encourages Parties, organizations and the private sector to take action to reduce the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation;”

“Also encourages all parties, relevant organizations, and the private sector and other stakeholders, to continue their work to address drivers of deforestation and forest degradation and to share the results of their work on this matter, including via the web platform on the UNFCCC website. “

SAFEGUARD INFORMATION SYSTEMS (SIS)

UNFCCC Decision 12/CP.17 (Durban):

This summary of information, drawn from the Safeguard Information System (SIS) “...should take into account national circumstances, recognize national legislation and relevant international obligations and agreements, respect gender considerations, and:

I. Be consistent with the guidance identified in decision 1/CP.16, appendix I
II. Provide transparent and consistent information that is accessible by all relevant stakeholders and updated on a regular basis;
III. Be transparent and flexible to allow for improvements over time;
IV. Provide information on how all of the safeguards are being addressed and respected;
V. Be country-driven and implemented at the national level;
VI. Build upon existing systems, as appropriate.

MONITORING AND REPORTING

Decision 4/CP.15 (Copenhagen)
The preamble sets the frame by “Recognizing the need for full and effective engagement of indigenous peoples and local communities in, and the potential contribution of their knowledge to, monitoring and reporting of activities”.

Further, para. 3 operationalizes this commitment and “Encourages, as appropriate, the development of guidance for effective engagement of indigenous peoples and local communities in monitoring and reporting”.

**Reflection Point**

Does your country have these elements in place? To what extent were these elements based on strong stakeholder engagement?

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**Box 11.2 Why is stakeholder engagement important in REDD+?**

The various decisions of the UNFCCC listed in the section above recognise that REDD+ is complex, multi-faceted, and cuts across many sectors beyond forestry.

To put it simply, the nature of REDD+ could exacerbate negative social and environmental risks such as:

- Turn natural forests into plantations;
- Lead to inequitable benefit sharing;
- Cause land speculation, land grabbing and land conflicts;
- Facilitate elite capture of international funds;
- Worsen existing inequalities (e.g., gender).

For indigenous peoples and forest-dependent communities, in particular it could mean being:

- Excluded from decision-making;
- Excluded from their customary lands and prevented from pursuing traditional forest-based livelihoods and spiritual practices.

Therefore, in order for REDD+ to be catalytic and contribute to national development objectives, it requires engagement with different stakeholders at different times for different purposes. This could lead to the following opportunities:

- Improve forest management, governance and enforcement;
- Create space for authentic and equitable engagement and decision-making;
- Increase food security through strengthened traditional livelihoods and generation of additional resources for indigenous peoples (including women, men and youth) and forest dependent communities;
- Shape private sector operating models as well as explore public-private collaborations that contribute to achieve REDD+ results;
- Incorporate knowledge from indigenous and non-indigenous forest dependent communities in managing natural resources.

In summary, full, effective and equitable stakeholder engagement in REDD+ can promote:

- Relevance, improving the validity of REDD+ readiness and implementation;
- Ownership, increasing the chance of acceptance for REDD+ strategy and implementation;
- Accountability, improving forest governance;
- Relationships, constructively avoiding and managing conflicts and building new relationships;
- Innovation, encouraging innovative ways to decouple economic growth from unsustainable resource use.
Can you think of an instance where the inclusion of indigenous peoples in the decision-making process has ensured a better decision was taken?

Why do you think it’s so important for National Strategies or action plans to especially consider the needs and rights of indigenous people?

**STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND NATIONAL STRATEGIES OR ACTION PLANS**

Under the UNFCCC, countries are required to develop an NS/AP to describe how emissions will be reduced and/or how forest carbon stocks will be enhanced, conserved and/or sustainably managed.

For this to succeed, national-level policy reforms and measures that tackle the main drivers of deforestation and forest degradation are essential to efficiently catalyse, coordinate and support subnational efforts and public and private actors, as well as to ensure the coherence of policies and measures.

So what are the key issues at stake? A national strategy or action plan that is not developed through full, effective and equitable participation of stakeholders could, for example:

- Put the sustainability of interventions for REDD+ activities at risk because of minimal national ownership;
- Fail to accurately identify all the drivers of deforestation;
- Increase the risks of grievances, and affect subsequent implementation;
- Negatively impact indigenous peoples’ and forest dependent communities’ rights to lands, territories, resources, and procedures;
- Fail to benefit from beneficial traditional management and knowledge practices, including among women, men and youth;
- Fail to understand the underlying motivations of private sector behaviour and an identification of the obstacles for change, leading to limited effectiveness to reduce emissions.

**STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND REDD+ SAFEGUARDS**

With these possibilities in mind, the Cancun Agreements covering REDD+ safeguards have been designed to minimise the risks and maximise benefits from a country’s implementation of REDD+ activities. Stakeholder engagement is embedded as a safeguard, most tangibly in safeguard d) “the full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders, in particular IPs and local communities,...”, but also in safeguards b) and c). More importantly, stakeholder engagement itself, through creating enabling conditions for a participatory process, will need to underpin a country’s approach to developing accountable, transparent and effective safeguards.

Box 11.3 summarises the seven safeguards. Please refer to Module 7: Safeguards for more information on the REDD+ safeguards and the UN-REDD’s conceptual framework for support on country approaches to safeguards.

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**Box 11.3 Recap of Safeguards Framework from Module 7**

The framework proposed by UN-REDD builds on what is in UNFCCC decisions and is intended to provide help to countries in determining how to respond to these agreements.

The framework first helps to define what a country approach to REDD+ safeguards might look like (i.e. the main components) which, in the UN-REDD Programme view, can be helpful for countries to better understand the outcomes they might be aiming for. It can be thought of as having two core components that ensure social and environmental risks from REDD+ are reduced and that benefits are enhanced:

1. Addressing and respecting safeguards through the implementation of relevant policies, laws and regulations (PLRs): These PLRs establish the ‘content’ of the safeguards – in other words, what needs to be adhered to in the implementation of REDD+ activities.
2. Safeguard Information System (SIS): A safeguard information system (SIS) is defined here as the collection and provision of information on how REDD+ safeguards are being addressed and respected throughout implementation of REDD+ activities.

Along with these two core components - and supporting them - are the various formal and informal institutions and processes and procedures needed in order to design and implement effective approaches to safeguards. Institutions, for example, will play a role in ensuring the fair and effective design of the REDD+ safeguards approach, the implementation of PLRs, and the operation of the SIS. Processes and procedures include aspects that may not be captured in formal PLRs, such as consultation processes, strategic assessments and information dissemination and communication. This also will include, for example, data collection and analysis that may be needed to address and respect the safeguards (e.g., defining and mapping the natural forests). Another example of a process that may be a potentially integral component of national approaches to safeguards is a national-level grievance mechanism. The second part of the framework helps to define the main considerations and steps in developing a country approach to safeguards.

**FIGURE 11.4 REMINDER: THE SEVEN REDD+ SAFEGUARDS**

a. Policy alignment (national and international)

b. Forest governance structures (transparent and effective)

c. Respect for the knowledge & rights IP & members of local communities

d. Full and effective participation of stakeholders (especially IP & local communities)

e. Conservation of natural forests & biodiversity & enhancement of other social and environmental benefits

f. Actions to address the risks of reversals (Permanance)

g. Actions to reduce the displacement of emissions (Leakage)

Source: UNFCCC Decision 1/CP.16, Appendix I (Cancun)

One of the key initial steps to ensure that all seven Cancun safeguards are addressed is to clarify them in the country context. Each safeguard can be further broken down into core components or associated key issues that will help to determine if a country has addressed and/or respected the safeguard.

The key issues highlighted below are specifically related to stakeholder engagement, and is not exhaustive.

Safeguard (b) recognizes the importance of “transparent and effective national forest governance structures...” Here, relevant stakeholder engagement issues include:

- Transparency and access to information equitably among all stakeholders;
- Rule of law and access to justice and effective remedies for women, men and youth;
- Systems for feedback, oversight and accountability.
Safeguard (c) specifies "respect for the knowledge and rights of IPs and ... local communities, by taking into account relevant international obligations ... noting that the UNGA has adopted the UNDRIP". Here, relevant stakeholder engagement issues include:

- Defining IPs and local communities;
- Respecting “knowledge” and cultural heritage;
- Rights to land, territories and resources, self-determination, compensation, benefit-sharing, free, prior and informed consent (FPIC, covered in more detail below).

Safeguard (d) focuses on "the full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders, in particular IPs and local communities, in REDD+ actions." In this case relevant stakeholder engagement issues include:

- Legitimacy and accountability of representative bodies;
- Participatory mechanisms for consultation, participation and consent;
- Access to justice and grievance mechanisms.

**Reflection Point**

What is the role of Safeguards and Safeguard Information Systems (SiS – see module 7) in relation to ensuring stakeholder engagement?

**Stakeholder Engagement and REDD+ Implementation Phases**

As was covered in *Module 2: Understanding REDD+ and the UNFCCC*, UNFCCC Decision 1/CP.16 (Cancun) recommended that “… the activities undertaken by Parties […] should be implemented in phases...”. As a reminder, these phases are illustrated in Figure 11.5.

![Figure 11.5 Phases of REDD+ Activities](source: UN-REDD Programme)

Stakeholder engagement is fundamental to the success of all three phases of REDD+. Within the Readiness phase it is important to create and strengthen enabling conditions that will result in continuous stakeholder engagement in REDD+ implementation leading to results-based actions at both national and sub-national levels. In all three phases, stakeholder engagement includes dealing with issues such as:

- Access to procedural rights;
- Access to, and distribution of information;
- Legitimate representation bodies or platforms;
- Access to participation and capacity to participate;
• Systems for decision-making;
• Access to justice and grievance mechanisms.

With specific reference to indigenous peoples and local communities, their substantive rights to the following need to be established:

• Lands, territories and resources;
• Self-determination;
• Compensation;
• Benefit-sharing;
• Participation;
• Free, prior and informed consent.

Here are some entry points where these enabling conditions can potentially be established:

• Through representation on the REDD+ Steering Committee or equivalent;
• By strengthening existing or traditional platforms for engagement and representation among and between different stakeholder groups, e.g., multi-stakeholder platforms;
• Build capacity for self-selection processes for IPs, forest-dependent communities and civil society organisations;
• Build capacity of indigenous peoples and local communities, including women, men and youth, to implement and/or monitor demonstration activities;
• Set aside funds for indigenous people and civil society organisations to design and manage their own activities;
• Carrying out Strategic Environmental and Social Assessments (SESA) of the proposed policies and measures for REDD+ implementation;
• Enabling joint land use planning and territory demarcation between different government agencies, as well as with indigenous and non-indigenous forest-dependent communities.

**Box 11.6: What is the difference between consultation, participation and stakeholder engagement?**

Stakeholder engagement typically refers to processes and methods employed to increase the level of participation, leading to decision making, ownership and implementation (see figure below).

Consultation and participation are often used interchangeably. As the figure below illustrates, consultation is one among many types of engagement, typically as a means to exchange information and views. While ranked higher on the participation scale than information sharing, it does not usually confer any form of decision-making. Full and effective participation therefore implies increasing opportunities as well as capacity to be involved in direct decision making.

**Useful tools for stakeholder engagement**

There are a number of tools that are useful when carrying out a stakeholder engagement process. This section looks at a number of these.

**Stakeholder Mapping and Analysis**

Stakeholder Mapping and Analysis is a useful tool which can be used to identify who should be engaged in relation to REDD+, and to what extent.

It usually considers two components, interest and influence. Depending on the desired outcomes, stakeholder mapping and analysis can be as broad or as narrow as needed; and can be used to identify stakeholders at all levels.

The findings from the mapping and analysis may be used to:

• Identify key government ministries that will need to be engaged;
• Identify other key stakeholder groups and their representative institutions;
• Develop plans to address the issues of legitimate representation bodies or platforms;
- Assess where access to substantive rights of IPs and local communities need to be strengthened;
- Develop a consultation and participation plan.

**Gender Analysis**

A gender analysis (conducted either as a separate analysis or as part of a larger socio-economic study or stakeholder analysis) is ideally carried out during programme design to identify national policies and strategies and the local context in which stakeholders operate, around various REDD+ activities.

Such an assessment would also analyse the stakeholders’ (including women, men and youth) roles, needs, priorities and opportunities within their given socio-economic and political context.

Depending on scope and depth, it would also help identify the gender-defined differences in access to and control over resources, power dynamics between women and men, and different social, economic, and political inequalities and opportunities faced by women and men in areas potentially and/or affected by any particular strategy or intervention. It would also provide sex disaggregated baseline data for monitoring.

**Box 11.7: Gender Sensitive REDD+**

It is crucial to ensure gender sensitivity around any stakeholder engagement processes. Women and men’s specific roles, rights and responsibilities, and knowledge of forests, shape their experiences differently. Socio-economic, political and culture barriers can limit women, youth and other marginalised groups’ ability to participate equally in consultations or in decision-making (e.g. lower literacy rates, ability to speak openly in meetings, etc.) Thus, there needs to be explicit and deliberate efforts in stakeholder engagement processes to ensure it is wide reaching, as well as ensures active presence, participation, and equitable engagement of women, men and youth from various stakeholder groups in all phases of REDD+. This requires both means and opportunity for active and sustained engagement that extends beyond attendance at meetings and consultations to also include capacity building, knowledge exchange and engagement in REDD+ national processes and projects.

As the UN-REDD Guidance Note on Gender Sensitive REDD+ highlights (p.12):

“This inclusive and equitable stakeholder participation, as well as ensuring that REDD+ processes are gender sensitive, are crucial elements in implementing effective and efficient REDD+ strategies, and more broadly, achieving sustainable development. In particular, meaningfully capturing the views, experiences and priorities of both men and women in REDD+ activities at all stages, including REDD+ readiness, has been identified as a main contributor to success.”

**Capacity Building Needs Assessment (CBNA)**

CBNA is intended to identify the core individual and institutional competencies, encompassing knowledge, skills and abilities that key stakeholder groups should possess to engage effectively in REDD+.

CBNA should build on the findings from the stakeholder mapping and analysis and any gender assessment, particularly those related to the prioritized stakeholder groups.

Results from CBNA could complement the communications strategy by identifying what information is needed and when, and how it should be best communicated.

**Box 11.8: Considerations when Assessing the Stakeholders’ Capacity to Participate**

- What types of knowledge, skills and abilities are needed to engage in the different phases of REDD+?
- What knowledge, skills and abilities already exist among different stakeholder groups, for example, traditional knowledge among indigenous peoples to manage natural resources? How and where will it be integrated into the REDD+ processes?
- What are suitable and effective ways to build knowledge, skills and abilities among different stakeholder groups?
REFLECTION POINT

Does your organisation have sufficient capacity to ensure stakeholder engagement? Are there any skill gaps? What capacities should be developed?

COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION

Is important to make sure that the difference between consultation and communication is understood. Figure 11.9 shows how these two activities fit within the different possibilities for engagement.

![Figure 11.9 Five Types of Engagement Based on Degree of Participation]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree of Participation</th>
<th>Types of Engagement</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LOW</td>
<td>Empowerment</td>
<td>Transfers control over decision making, resources &amp; activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joint decision making</td>
<td>Joint collaboration with shared control over a decision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>Joint activities without decision making authority and control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consultation</td>
<td>Two-way flow of information &amp; exchange of views</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Information sharing</td>
<td>One-way flow of information</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from the UN-REDD Guidelines on Free, Prior and Informed Consent, January 2013

It is important to note that awareness-raising and sharing information is not consultation, but is part of communication. However, communication is critical to an effective REDD+ consultative process.

Communication strategy should clearly:

- Identify desired outcomes;
- Identify different target audiences and dissemination channels;
- Identify key messages and adapt to different target audiences;
- Adopt different types of tools; printed, audio-visual, performing arts, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 11.10: Some Considerations When Developing Communications Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- What is the literacy level of different stakeholder groups, in particular indigenous peoples and forest dependent communities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Is information about REDD+ adapted to the audience’s knowledge and ability to understand?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Is this information packaged in a culturally and contextually appropriate manner?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Are there provisions for stakeholders to obtain further clarification of the information or materials presented?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Reflection Point**

Does your organisation have a communication strategy established? Who is the main target of the strategy?

**Consultation and Participation Plans**

A consultation and participation plan brings together results from the stakeholder mapping and analysis, gender analysis and capacity building needs assessment, to:

- Identify the expected outcomes and objectives of engagement;
- Identify, assign and segregate types of engagement for different key stakeholder groups;
- Determine tools and activities to engage;
- Identify steps to strengthen the self-selection of legitimate representation bodies and the decision making process, where necessary.

**Box 11.11: Principles of Consultation, Participation and Consent**

Effective stakeholder engagement requires consultation, participation and consent. Each of these is underpinned by important principles:

**Participation**

Full participation focuses on ensuring all relevant groups are represented and free to express their ideas and opinions. The consultation process should include a broad range of relevant stakeholders at the national, sub-national and local levels. The diversity of stakeholders needs to be recognised. In particular the voices of indigenous, forest-dependent and vulnerable groups (e.g. women, youth, poor and ethnic minorities) must be heard. Consultations leading to giving or withholding consent should be carried out in accordance with the UN-REDD Programme Guidelines on Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) (please refer to section on FPIC).

**Mutual Understanding**

Mutual understanding implies that different stakeholders are willing to listen to and discuss different groups’ interests, opinions and needs. They do not necessarily have to agree with other groups’ opinions, but at least have listened to and understood these different perspectives. More often than not, there are different power relations among stakeholders that need to be addressed to ensure full participation.

**Shared Responsibility**

Shared responsibility is the key to developing and ensuring sustainable agreements. This is likely to take place only when there is full participation and mutual understanding, leading to a willingness to engage and implement identified solutions. Agreements identified will be based on a full understanding of a capacity to implement the agreements.

**Inclusive Solutions**

Inclusive solutions are the result of open and balanced negotiations of different interests, opinions and needs among different stakeholders. These solutions build on what each stakeholder group is willing to trade off in return for an agreed set of actions with well-defined roles and responsibilities. Solutions that are linked to planning and gender equitable decision-making processes will be more sustainable in the long run.

Source: Adapted from the Joint FCPF and UN-REDD Programme Guidelines on Stakeholder Engagement in REDD+ Readiness

The “Joint FCPF and UN-REDD Programme Guidelines on Stakeholder Engagement in REDD+ Readiness” suggest the steps found in Figure 11.12 for the consultation and participation process. The steps are not linear and may be iterative, and reordered depending on the country contexts. More information on each of these steps can be found in the aforementioned document.
Define the desired outcomes of consultations
A good consultation and participation process is one that is carefully planned, has a clear mandate, and articulates the objectives and desired outcomes of the consultation. This should be placed in the context of overall REDD+ readiness, clarifying why the consultation was considered necessary, how it fits within the broader scope of planned activities, and how the outcomes will be used towards expected REDD+ readiness activities.

Identify stakeholders
The consultation planners need to identify the groups that have a stake/interest in the forest and those that will be affected by REDD+ activities. Stakeholder mapping and gender analysis are useful tools for this purpose. It is important to ensure that the process of selecting stakeholders is transparent so that all interested parties may participate and that all stakeholders are provided with equal opportunity to engage and contribute to outcomes. Where appropriate, particular attention needs to be given to the inclusion of IPs and other forest-dependent communities, women and other marginalized groups. Should decisions need to be made, then legitimate representatives of stakeholder groups should be identified and their mandate ascertained.

Define the issues to consult on
The key issues should broadly correspond to the desired outcomes identified in the first step that can be related to R-PP components and/or the components of the UN-REDD National Programme Document.

Define the terms of the consultation
Ideally, any consultation should be guided by a clear elaboration of the process and elements of the consultation. All stakeholders should know how the consultation process will be conducted and how the outcomes of the consultation will be used, including the rights and responsibilities of the different stakeholders. These terms should be understood and agreed upon by all stakeholders.

Select the consultation and outreach methods
The most effective consultations are custom-designed to place and purpose and provide for adequate budgets and human resources, including expert facilitation. 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. When consulting with IPs, the selected methods and time should respect their customary practices.

**ENSURE THAT STAKEHOLDERS HAVE SUFFICIENT CAPACITY TO ENGAGE FULLY AND EFFECTIVELY IN CONSULTATIONS**

Certain stakeholders may require capacity building or training in advance of a consultation to ensure that their understanding of the issues and ability to contribute are sufficient; this need should be identified in the terms of the consultation. Results from a CBNA will be useful to inform the types and contents of capacity building exercises.

**CONDUCT THE CONSULTATIONS**

Consultations should be held in accordance with the terms of the consultation as agreed upon and any deviations from this should be discussed with and agreed upon by stakeholders. Consultation planners should be aware of power balance and gender dynamics between stakeholders, and be prepared to introduce measures to address emerging issues during the consultations.

**ANALYZE AND DISSEMINATE RESULTS**

The findings from every consultation should be analyzed, reported and discussed with representative stakeholder groups. It is important that the data analysis feeds back into the decision-making process. On completing a consultation: develop a report or findings; 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.

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**BOX 11.13: CONSIDERATIONS IN DESIGNING AN EFFECTIVE CONSULTATION AND PARTICIPATION PROCESS**

The consultation process should occur voluntarily. Timely information dissemination at all levels and in a culturally appropriate manner is a pre-requisite to meaningful consultations. Information should be easily accessible and available to all stakeholders (including women, youth, and marginalised groups). Stakeholders should have prior access to information on the proposed consultation activities before the design phase of activities that may impact them. Sufficient time is needed to fully understand and incorporate concerns and recommendations of local communities in the design of consultation processes.

Some guiding questions to consider:

- Are meetings held at a time where both women, youth and men can participate (with consideration given to whether men only or women’s only meetings are necessary)?
- Are there provisions to address grievances, disputes or complaints?
- Are consultations with indigenous peoples being carried out through their own existing processes, organizations and institutions, e.g., councils of elders, headmen and tribal leaders?

**REFLECTION POINT**

Have you designed a consultation and participation process before? What were the lessons you have learnt?
Figure 11.14 shows how these steps can be implemented.

**Figure 11.14 IMPLEMENTATION OF A PARTICIPATION OR CONSULTATION PROCESS**

The objectives for engagement serve to achieve the immediate and desired intermediate outcomes of the programme. Upon identification, the types of engagement, as illustrated in Figure 11.9, will be informed by the results from stakeholder mapping and analysis. Correspondingly, suitable communications tools such as printed materials and media, and activities are determined.

**FREE, PRIOR AND INFORMED CONSENT**

A key component of effective stakeholder engagement and consultation is free, prior and informed consent (FPIC). FPIC is a norm or standard that supplements and is a means of effectuating substantive rights of indigenous peoples such as the rights to: property, participation, non-discrimination, self-determination, culture, food, health, and freedom against forced relocation. As stated by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, States are required to respect “free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples in all matters covered by their specific rights.” This includes REDD+ activities and/or policies that may have an impact on their lands, territories and/or livelihoods. Consent is a collective “Yes” or “No” through a decision-making process which is:

- **Free** from coercion, intimidation or manipulation;
- **Prior**, before any authorization or commencement of activities, with time for consideration;
- **Informed**, people having all relevant information needed to make a decision.

**WHEN IS FPIC REQUIRED?**

The specific characteristics of the consultation procedure that is required will necessarily vary depending upon the nature of the proposed measure and the degree to which it may impact underlying rights. It should be noted that every element which requires collaboration or consultation with, or input from any stakeholder must respect the principles of FPIC.

The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) recognizes several situations in which the State is under an obligation to not just seek, but secure the consent of the indigenous peoples concerned. Particularly relevant to the UN-REDD Programme, States must consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free and informed consent prior to:

- Relocating an indigenous population from their lands;
- Taking “cultural, intellectual, religious and spiritual property”;

Source: Adapted from “Consultation, Participation and Communication for REDD+ Readiness” presented during Forest Carbon Partnership Facility Workshop on Capacity Building for Social Inclusion in REDD+ Readiness, 30 April to 3 May 2013, Bangkok, Thailand.
• Causing “damages, takings, occupation, confiscation and uses of their lands, territories and resources”;
• “Adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures”;
• Approving “any project affecting their lands or territories and other resources, particularly in connection with the development, utilization or exploitation of mineral, water or other resources”.

Relevant UN monitoring bodies have also interpreted a number of binding conventions and treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) (1976), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) (1966) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) (1965) as affirming that the States must secure consent from indigenous peoples through their own freely identified representatives or institutions, more generally with respect to any decisions “directly relating to their rights and interests” and in connection to: mining and oil and gas operations (extraction of subsurface resources); logging the establishment of protected areas; construction of dams; development of agro-industrial plantations; resettlement; compulsory takings; and any other decisions affecting the status of their land rights.

For more on international human rights instruments as well as international jurisprudence and evidence of State practice on, please refer to the associated Legal Companion of the UN-REDD Programme Guidelines on FPIC.

The UN-REDD Programme has developed a non-exhaustive checklist to support partner countries in thinking through whether or not an activity will require FPIC in the context of their REDD+ work.

**Table 11.15 Checklist for appraising whether an activity will require FPIC**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Will the activity involve the relocation/resettlement/removal of an indigenous population from their lands?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Will the activity involve the taking, confiscation, removal or damage of cultural, intellectual, religious and/or spiritual property from indigenous peoples/forest dependent community?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Will the activity adopt or implement any legislative or administrative measures that will affect the rights, lands, territories and/or resources of indigenous peoples/forest-dependent community (e.g., in connection with the development, utilization or exploitation of mineral, water or other resources)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Will the activity involve mining and oil and/or gas operations (extraction of subsurface resources) on the lands/territories of indigenous peoples/forest-dependent community?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Will the activity involve logging on the lands/territories of indigenous peoples/forest-dependent community?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Will the activity involve the development of agro-industrial plantations on the lands/territories of indigenous peoples/forest-dependent community?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Will the activity involve any decisions that will affect the status of indigenous peoples'/forest-dependent community’s rights to their lands/territories or resources?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Will the activity involve the accessing of traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Will the activity involve making commercial use of natural and/or cultural resources on lands subject to traditional ownership and/or under customary use by indigenous peoples/forest-dependent community?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Will the activity involve decisions regarding benefit-sharing arrangements, when benefits are</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FPIC and Forest Dependent Communities (FDC)

The UN-REDD Programme Guidelines of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (2013) acknowledge the right of forest-dependent communities to effectively participate in the governance of their nations. To ensure this, at a minimum the Guidelines require States to consult forest-dependent communities in good faith regarding matters that affect them with a view to agreement.

Appreciating that international law, jurisprudence and State practice is still in its infancy with respect to expressly recognizing and requiring an affirmative obligation to secure FPIC from all forest-dependent communities, the Guidelines do not require a blanket application of FPIC to all forest-dependent communities.

That said, the Guidelines soberly recognize that, in many circumstances, REDD+ activities may impact forest-dependent communities, often similarly as indigenous peoples, and that the circumstances of certain forest-dependent communities may rise to a threshold such that it should be seen as a requirement of States to secure FPIC when an activity may affect the communities’ rights and interests.

The Guidelines require States to evaluate the circumstances and nature of the forest-dependent community in question, on a case by case basis, through among others a rights-based analysis, and secure FPIC from communities that share common characteristics with indigenous peoples and whose underlying substantive rights are significantly implicated.

Reflection point

Does your country make provisions for free, prior and informed consent when it engages with indigenous peoples?

How does it work?

Dealing with Grievances

The introduction of REDD+ in participating countries is likely to have a significant impact on the dynamics of conflicts over forest resources, and on land, oil, gas, minerals and other valuable resources in forested areas. Applying robust social and environmental safeguards and following effective and gender responsive stakeholder engagement processes should reduce the risks of complaints or conflicts related to REDD+. Also, the Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) process has been designed to proactively assess risks and help with the design of management plans, when it is inevitable that there will be potential adverse impacts and trade-offs will be needed.

However, even with good planning, unanticipated impacts and conflict may still arise, so mechanisms need to be in place to manage and respond to grievances from affected people.

A national feedback and grievance redress mechanism needs to be effectively available, and if necessary strengthened, as part of the country’s REDD+ institutional arrangements. Such a mechanism needs to be available to REDD+ stakeholders from the earliest stages of Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP) implementation in order to facilitate handling of any request for feedback or complaint by any REDD+ Readiness stakeholders, with particular attention to providing access to geographically, culturally or economically isolated or excluded groups.

Once established or strengthened, effective Grievance Redress Mechanisms (GRMs) can help REDD+ countries accomplish several objectives in both the Readiness and Implementation phases:
• Identify and resolve implementation problems in a timely and cost-effective manner: As early warning systems, well-functioning GRMs help identify and address potential problems before they escalate, avoiding more expensive and time consuming disputes;

• Identify systemic issues: Information from GRM cases may highlight recurring, increasingly frequent or escalating grievances, helping to identify underlying systemic issues related to implementation capacity and processes that need to be addressed;

• Improve REDD+ outcomes: Through timely resolution of issues and problems, GRMs can contribute to timely achievement of REDD+ objectives;

• Promote accountability in REDD+ countries: Effective GRMs promote greater accountability to stakeholders, positively affecting both specific activities and overall REDD+ governance.

WHAT IS A GRIEVANCE REDRESS MECHANISM1 AND WHAT IS ITS PURPOSE?

Definition: GRMs are defined as organizational systems and resources established by national government agencies (or, as appropriate, by regional or municipal agencies) to receive and address concerns about the impact of their policies, programs and operations on external stakeholders. The stakeholder input handled through these systems and procedures may be called “grievances,” “complaints,” “feedback,” or another functionally equivalent term.

GRMs are intended to be accessible, collaborative, expeditious, and effective in resolving concerns through dialogue, joint fact-finding, negotiation, and problem solving. They are generally designed to be the “first line” of response to stakeholder concerns that have not been prevented by proactive stakeholder engagement. GRMs are intended to complement, not replace, formal legal channels for managing grievances (e.g. the court system, organizational audit mechanisms, etc.). Stakeholders always have the option to use other, more formal alternatives, including legal remedies. It is important to emphasize that national GRMs are not intended to replace the judiciary or other forms of legal recourse. The existence of a GRM should not prevent citizens or communities from pursuing their rights and interests in any other national or local forum, and citizens should not be required to use GRMs before seeking redress through the courts, administrative law procedures, or other formal dispute resolution mechanisms.

Purpose: GRMs act as recourse for situations in which, despite proactive stakeholder engagement, some stakeholders have a concern about a project or program’s potential impacts on them. Not all complaints should be handled through a GRM. For example, grievances that allege corruption, coercion, or major and systematic violations of rights and/or policies, are normally referred to organizational accountability mechanisms or administrative or judicial bodies for formal investigation, rather than to GRMs for collaborative problem solving.

REDD+ countries are expected to establish or strengthen GRMs based on an assessment of potential risks to forest-dependent communities and other stakeholders from REDD+ programs and activities. Since the purpose is to provide an accessible, rapid, and effective recourse for these stakeholders, it is essential to design and implement the GRM in close consultation with them.

International partners that are directly involved in REDD+ implementation should also be closely involved in GRM design and implementation. It may be appropriate, and in some cases necessary, for those international partners to participate directly in resolving grievances arising from activities they support, within the framework of the GRM itself and/or directly through their own mechanisms.

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FIGURE 11.16 THE STEPS INVOLVED IN A GRIEVANCE RESOLUTION MECHANISM

Source: FCPF/UN-REDD Guidance Note on Establishing and Strengthening GRMs, May 2015

Detailed explanation for each step is available through UNDP².

REFLECTION POINT

Does your country have grievance redress mechanism(s)? If yes, how does it work? If not, why not?

ENGAGING WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Engagement with the private sector can occur in different ways, that range from government adoption of policies and measures that contribute to transforming private sector operating models to the identification of possible public-private collaborations that contribute to achieving REDD+ results. There are some practical issues which need to be taken into consideration when working with the private sector.

A “perception gap” can exist in the understanding of the same issues between public and private sector actors. This perception gap can be addressed through the convening of public-private dialogues that can contribute to informing the development of REDD+ programmes and strategies. Many private sector actors in key economic sectors still have a limited understanding of REDD+ and about its potential implications on their operating models.

By engaging with private sector actors it may also be possible to understand what some of the main factors behind "business-as-usual" private sector behaviour are and identify how REDD+ interventions can help shape private sector operating models to become more sustainable.

It is also possible to work with private sector “champions”, who can contribute to REDD+ objectives by for example:

- Improve commodity purchasing policies to align with REDD+ objectives;
- Reduce financing to activities contributing to deforestation or forest degradation.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, it is important to remember that the quality and degree to which the principles of consultation, participation and consent are applied determines the likelihood of a successful REDD+ implementation with enhanced and gender equitable benefits to the affected peoples and communities.

CASE STUDY

EXERCISES

1. It is important to note that awareness raising and sharing information is not consultation, but is part of communication. However, communication is critical to an effective REDD+ consultative process. The “Joint FCPF and UN-REDD Programme Guidelines on Stakeholder Engagement in REDD+ Readiness” suggest following these steps in the consultation and participation process.

Number the steps below in the correct order.
2. Fill in the blanks

F__________ from coercion, intimidation or manipulation
P__________ before any authorization or commencement of activities, with time for consideration
I__________ stakeholders having all relevant information needed to make a decision.
C__________