

## Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) Readiness Mechanism

### National Consultation and Participation for REDD

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This note presents some technical guidance on how to prepare an effective Consultation and Participation Plan

#### Introduction

1. Multi-stakeholder consultation and participation will be critical to the effective implementation of REDD, and it will be an essential feature of the FCPF Readiness Mechanism. Forests are the direct source of livelihood for millions of communities around the world, and as such, forest-related policies should be consulted broadly. In the case of REDD, the need for consultations is even greater given the significant information vacuum at the national and local level regarding this new topic. In addition to informing stakeholders about REDD, consultations will play a key role in designing effective and more sustainable REDD policies and programs.

2. Consultations are held for the following reasons and can help achieve the following goals, which apply to REDD readiness as pursued under the FCPF Readiness Mechanism:

- a. Improve the quality of decision-making process by capturing the experience of specialized civil society organizations and other similar groups;
- b. Tap the knowledge of civil society organizations (CSOs) that work at the community level;
- c. Give voice to the poor and the excluded by consulting with CSOs whose membership comprises such groups;
- d. Promote sustainability for proposed government reforms, projects, programs, and policies;
- e. Appreciate the variety in the needs of different population groups, including gender, ethnic, socio-economic, or geographical variations;
- f. Set the foundation for broad-based participation in the ensuing design and implementation of development interventions; and
- g. Assist governments in increasing transparency, public understanding and citizen involvement in development decision making.<sup>1</sup>

3. Countries participating in the FCPF Readiness Mechanism are expected to implement a Consultation and Participation Plan before and/or while they develop their REDD Strategy.

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<sup>1</sup> Consultations with Civil Society - A Sourcebook (2007)  
<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTRANETSOCIALDEVELOPMENT/873204-1111663470099/20489462/ConsultationsSourcebook.pdf>

## Key Objectives and Principles of Consultation

4. Consultation can be defined as a continuous process of participation of all relevant stakeholders in the decisions throughout the formulation and execution of REDD policies and programs.
5. Consultation should be understood as a means to achieve certain goals and not as a goal in itself. Its basic purpose is to make decision-making more inclusive, transparent and accountable - this ultimately will not only enhance its benefits to locally-impacted people and other stakeholders but also increase REDD's long-term viability. Policies to promote REDD will only be successful with meaningful participation of relevant stakeholders, including vulnerable groups such as forest-dependent communities and indigenous peoples (IPs), women and youth.
6. Here are some key principles to consider:
  - a. Consultations should facilitate access to information. Access to information provides an important guard against arbitrariness in public decision making, and can help enhance transparency and accountability. In the context of REDD, information dissemination at all levels will be a critical pre-requisite to meaningful consultations. 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.
  - b. Consultations should facilitate meaningful participation at all levels. The consultation process should be inclusive and not be seen as top-down process. It is therefore important to establish structures and mechanisms to manage the process which includes a broad range of relevant stakeholders at the national and local level. National REDD committees should have representatives from relevant stakeholder groups with direct participation by indigenous peoples and NGO groups. In addition to setting national committees, participatory forums and structures need to be established at the local level to ensure active engagement of local stakeholders.
  - c. Consultations should facilitate dialogue, exchange of information and consensus building. Effective forest governance within REDD will entail genuine ownership by all relevant stakeholders. This requires time for mutual understanding and the acceptance of goals and strategies; and facilitating collaboration and consensus. It would be important to establish mechanisms for conflict resolution and grievance redress within the wider consultation process.
  - d. Recognizing diverse stakeholders and giving voice to vulnerable groups especially IPs and forest dwellers. Different stakeholders have different stakes and /or interest in REDD and some may be positively or negatively impacted, so the consultation should be held at various levels. Special emphasis should be given to the issue of IPs in relation to land tenure and resource use rights. In many tropical forest countries, land tenure and policy frameworks for IPs are unclear as they often have customary/ancestral rights as opposed to legal rights. The other important issue to consider for IPs and other forest dwellers is that of livelihoods. Thus clarifying rights to land and carbon assets, and introducing better control over the resources will be critical priorities for

REDD plan formulation and implementation. Consultations with IPs and forest dwellers should use wherever possible existing networks and local level institutions. Box1 gives a brief overview of the World Bank Operational Policy 4.10 on Indigenous Peoples, which applies to the FCPF.

- e. Linking consultation processes to planning and decision-making processes. It is critical to have a feedback loop. Information gleaned from the consultation process has to be incorporated into policy design and decision making processes. It is also important ensure the public disclosure of all information and analysis gathered from the consultation process.

Box 1: World Bank Operational Policy 4.10 – Indigenous Peoples

This policy aims to ensure that the development process fully 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. 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.

### Capacity Building

7. In order for the consultations to be meaningful, it is important to build local capacity, especially of IPs and other forest dwellers. This involves providing them with information, knowledge and awareness so that they have a solid understanding of REDD and can engage in the consultations more effectively. The capacity building should focus on three key issues:

- a. Promoting awareness about the impacts of avoided deforestation and forest degradation;
- b. Building understanding of the technicalities of REDD and of trade-offs involved; and
- c. Promoting the active participation of local communities in identifying context-specific solutions and strengthening their role in decision-making and planning processes.

### Elements of an effective Consultation Plan

8. A good consultation process is one that is carefully planned with clear goals and responsibilities agreed to by all institutions involved. To ensure positive outcomes, the scope and objectives must be clarified at the outset and responsibilities should be clearly defined and agreed to by all implementing institutions.

- 9. A good consultation should:
  - a. Effectively provide information to stakeholders about all key issues pertaining to REDD;

- b. Enable different stakeholders to express their particular interests and points of view;
- c. Realistically assess the socio-political and socio-economic context; and
- d. Identify the stakes of different stakeholders.

10. Box 2 summarizes the key questions that should be addressed when preparing a Consultation and Participation Plan. Annex 1 proposes a series of practical steps to design, carry out and learn from consultations.

**Box 2: Key questions for preparing a Consultation and Participation Plan**

- What is the desired outcome of the consultations?
- What are the key issues to consult on?
- Whom to consult (different stakeholder groups)?
- At what level would consultation take place (national level and local level)?
- When would consultations happen?
- What methodologies (workshops, trainings, focus group discussions, etc.) are to be used to reach the targeted audience?
- What are the roles and responsibilities among the government agencies and other partners for consultation? And how will the consultation process be managed?
- What is the budget and timeline for the consultation?
- How will the findings from the consultations be disseminated and used?

## Annex 1: A Practical Guide to Carry Out Consultations

This annex proposes a series of practical steps to design, carry out and learn from consultations. For each step, a checklist in the form of questions is proposed to help assess that the objectives of the step have been met.

### Step 1

#### Define the Desired Outcomes of consultation

A good consultation process is one that is carefully planned and contains clear goals. One of the first steps in assembling the consultation plan would be the preparation of a realistic budget and financial plan.

##### Checklist:

- Are the desired outcomes, as they were specified by the authors, clearly understood by all the authors and others who did not take part?

### Step 2

#### 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. A variety of tools and methods can be used to allow for bottom-up participation and ensure that information is rigorously gathered and fairly presented.

The following methods/tools could be considered for consultation:

- Workshops (at national, regional or local level, with the selection of appropriate time, location, and participation);
- Surveys;
- Focus group discussions at community levels;
- Advisory groups;
- Information and education campaigns.

##### Checklist:

- Is the chosen method suitable for the objective?
- Is the technique appropriate for the size and kind of audience?
- Is the method appropriate for the technical knowledge of the participants?
- Will the proposed method create an environment conducive to open and honest communication with a high level of trust even among the most vulnerable groups?
- Are sufficient budgets allocated to undertake the proposed activities?
- Have participants been informed well in advance?
- Will suitably qualified staff be involved?

### Step 3

#### Define the Issues to Consult on

In the case of REDD, issues for consultation may include:

- Current status of national forests;
- Previous and current policies to halt deforestation and forest degradation;
- Main causes and drivers of deforestation and forest degradation;
- Proposed REDD strategies;
- Inclusive participation in the design and implementation of REDD strategies;
- Institutional, policy and regulatory frameworks;
- Opportunity costs of land use;
- Issues of land use rights/ land tenure systems;
- Issues on forest governance;
- Interests of Indigenous Peoples and other forest dwellers;
- The economic, social and environmental impacts of REDD and the mitigation of risks;
- The role of the private sector;
- Groups likely to gain or lose from REDD activities;
- Equitable and effective distribution of REDD revenues; or
- Existing and future monitoring systems to keep track of forests and forest emissions.

#### Checklist

- Does the Consultation and Outreach Plan include all activities envisaged in the R-Plan?
- Is the list of issues sufficient to provide a comprehensive discussion of REDD in your country?
- Does the consultation plan include a holistic approach to REDD, including all relevant sectors?
- Is the list of issues focused enough to reach the desired outcome of the consultations?
- Does the list of issues correspond well to the consultation method and budget allocation?

## Step 4

### Identify Stakeholders

Countries 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.

Stakeholders may include:

- Government agencies (environment, agriculture, energy, national, state, local, etc.);
- Environmental law enforcement community such as police, prosecutors and environmental enforcement agencies;
- The private sector (loggers, ranchers, energy producers, industry, farmers, agri-business etc.);
- Civil society (NGOs, community associations, etc.);
- Indigenous Peoples and other forest dwellers;
- Local communities, pastoralists, farmers who depend on forests for livelihoods;
- Vulnerable groups (women, youth, etc.);
- Academia

### Checklist

- Are representatives of the public involved in selecting stakeholders?
- Have all potential stakeholders been identified? If not, have the consultations been announced publicly so that all interested parties may participate?
- Have Indigenous Peoples, women, youth and marginalized groups been included?
- Are the proposed consultation methods effective in reaching the target audience?

## Step 5

### Conduct the Stakeholder Analysis

Identify stakeholders affected vis-à-vis REDD strategy(ies).

- How have deforestation and forest degradation affected the affected forest dependent communities and Indigenous Peoples?
- How will the poor and marginalized groups fare in proposed REDD strategy? Are there any threats to their land tenure rights? How to guarantee their participation in REDD revenues?
- What stakeholder interests conflict with project/policy goals?
- What are the relationships between the various stakeholders? Who has power over whom? Who is dependent on whom?
- Who has control over resources?
- Who has control of information?
- Could benefits from REDD activities be captured by elites? What kind of opposition/ distortion of activities by influential stakeholders are to be expected? How to overcome those?

### Checklist

- Are consultations conducted in a socially and culturally appropriate manner?
- Are views of Indigenous Peoples and community forest dwellers and other social groups being recorded?
- Will they be analyzed?
- Will suitably qualified staffs be involved in data analysis?
- Will the data from the analysis feed back into decision making & planning processes?

## Step 6

### Communicate and Reach Out

The communication and outreach strategy should ensure that adequate and timely information is provided to all stakeholders in an accessible language and style. At this stage a choice could be made amongst the various forms of communication media. This could include various mediums of communication such as:

- Printed materials;
- Displays and exhibits;
- Electronic media;
- Informational sessions, etc.;
- Community radios;
- Local drama.

#### Checklist

- Has sufficient information been provided for participants to make informed judgments?
- Has a non-technical summary been provided?
- Is the technical level of the information suited to different stakeholders?
- Are the appropriate language and vocabulary used?

## Step 7

### Feedback & Results Dissemination

This includes:

- Keeping records of all consultations;
- Acknowledging key issues raised during consultations and responding as appropriate; Describing the outcomes of the consultation process and plans for incorporating them in policies and programs;
- Public disclosure of information and maximum transparency of consultation results disclosed (e.g., posting of agenda, consultation location, minutes/final report on website, community radios, and/or existing channels/medium of communication )

#### Checklist

- Are the results of the consultation provided in time to inform decision-makers?
- Are stakeholders informed of the outcomes and how their input was used?