

CONSULTATION PROTOCOL WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Consultation Protocol

The need for a clear consultation protocol was discussed with the Toledo Alcaldes Association on 16th August, 2013. The following is an output of that meeting.

Step 1 – Making Contact

a. Contact with the Toledo Alcaldes Association:

The TAA must be notified and involved when major development is being proposed that will affect villages and Maya people's well-being. The President of Toledo Alcalde Association must be contacted first especially since the REDD+ initiative affects multiple villages. The President will then inform the Executive Committee of Association. The Association will then contact all other Alcaldes in all Mayan communities at an Alcaldes assembly. They noted here that if Executive members are individually contacted without the knowledge of the President, then they are in no position to honour an invitation or request.

b. Contact at the village level:

If the development is focused on a particular village then the Alcalde is the access point to the village. It is the Alcalde that convenes the village for a village meeting. Chairmen and Alcaldes keep each other informed. Chairmen cannot call village meetings. When chairmen need a village meeting, they notify the Alcalde who calls the meeting.

Step 2 - Information Sharing

All correspondence to the President of the Alcalde Association and to individual Alcaldes must be in writing. The delivery of messages and information during consultation events must be in the local language (Q'eqchi or Mopan). The purpose of the meeting/workshop or event must be clearly stated in the letter to the Chairman of the Association or Alcalde of the village of interest. Supplemental materials should be included along with the correspondence. IPs have the right to choose their own technical support and relevant information must be promptly shared so that leaders have the proper time to understand all relevant information.

Step 3 – Timing of Notice

Any notice of meetings and other events must be given at least 7 calendar days in advance. Longer notice periods are preferable, especially for major developments or initiatives. This is to allow the association or the Alcaldes time to plan, manage their attendance and seek technical assistance where necessary.

Step 4 – Venue of Meetings

The meeting or consultation event must be held at the community center or where not available in a public place where attendance by community members is not inhibited by the location of the venue.

Step 5 – Decision-making Processes

Decisions on behalf of the community in indigenous communities are done collectively at

Village Meetings called by the Alcalde. The Village Meeting is the fundamental decision making authority that is usually by consensus or majority decision. This process is called ‘se komonil’. When the Alcalde receives information or request he passes it on to the community members and they in turn tell the Alcalde what to do. The collective decision of the community is transmitted back to the external agency by the Alcalde. Decisions of the communities must be recorded in writing.

At the Toledo Alcaldes Association, the General Assembly is the fundamental authority for decision making. The executive body carries the decision of the assembly. The individual Alcaldes register their vote on an issue based on the directive of the village meeting on a specific issue.

R-PP Consultation

There is a need to bring other Alcaldes in an assembly. The Alcaldes and Chairman are the recognized and respected leaders in the communities so they must be invited to participate.

Other participants

In an effort to ensure that the voices of the IPs are placed on the record for this initial consultation of the R-PP, the Association decided that the following persons and entities should be engaged:

- The TAA Executive on behalf of the 38 Maya villages
- Members of the TAA on behalf of their respective villages
- Maya Leaders Alliance (MLA) as the on-going technical support team of the TAA.
- MLA/TAA Attorney – at any time at the request of the TAA.
- Village Council Chairpersons of indigenous villages only.

Note. Other local NGOs, indigenous or otherwise are not necessary and will not be engaged to provide technical assistance during consultations with TAA.