



# Readiness Fund REDD+ Country Participants Progress Report

Lao PDR

v. 2019



## FCPF Readiness Fund: REDD+ Country Participant Annual Progress Report

### About this document

This template is for use by Readiness Fund (RF) REDD+ Country Participants to report their annual progress on REDD+ readiness activities in general, and on FCPF-supported activities in particular. The data provided through these reports represents a central information source for measuring progress against the FCPF's expected results and performance indicators, as articulated within the FCPF Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework.

### Report preparation

Reports cover progress through 30<sup>th</sup> June of each year.

When preparing the report, RF REDD+ Country Participants should draw upon the country M&E system for REDD+ (component 6 of the R-PP) and should consult members of the national REDD task force or equivalent body. Inputs from stakeholders including IPs and CSOs should be integrated, with any divergent views recorded as appropriate. Detailed, indicator-by-indicator definitions and reporting guidance are provided within the FCPF M&E Framework (<https://www.forestcarbonpartnership.org/monitoring-and-evaluation-0>).

### Reporting schedule

Completed reports should be submitted to the FCPF's Facility Management Team (FMT) by **15<sup>th</sup> July** every year.

## SECTION A: NARRATIVE SUMMARY

### 1. In brief, what were the main REDD+ readiness-related activities and achievements delivered within your country during the last year?

- Activities - For example, strategy / policy drafting, stakeholder consultation events, capacity building / training, awareness raising initiatives
- Achievements - For example, x number of individuals attended REDD+ consultations (sex disaggregated, if available), national REDD+ strategy was finalised, government formally adopted national REDD+ related policy/s, NFMS was established, partnership agreement with private sector association signed
- Please be as specific as possible, e.g. name, date and number of participants in consultation events (sex disaggregated, if available), name of policy being drafted, institutions involved in policy drafting

#### Activities

- National REDD+ Task Force meeting held in November 2018 to review the draft NRS. Apart from NRTF members representatives of six Technical Working Groups (TWG), DoF senior staff, representatives from the ER Program provinces and development partners participated in this meeting
- TWG meetings: An annual TWGs meeting was organized in November 2018. The objective of this meeting was to introduce new members and make them aware of REDD+ progress, status and future plans in Lao PDR. As a follow up each TWG held separate meetings of its members to prepare work plans for activities and consultations
- TWG meeting on FREL was held in August 2018 and was open to all interested stakeholders -- Government; INGOs, CSOs, private sector; and educational institutions
- Numerous TWG meeting on Safeguards, Benefit Sharing and Legal Issues

- Public awareness raising on REDD, sustainable forest management and biodiversity conservation through two events: -That Luang Festival in November 2018 in Vientiane. Over 10,000 persons visited the REDD+ Stall to view displays and exhibits; -Elephant Festival in February 2019 in Sayabuly Province. Over 6,000 persons visited the REDD+ Stall
- Provincial REDD+ Task Force meeting on Provincial REDD+ Action Plan (PRAP) in four of six provinces of the ER Programme
- Workshop on integration of PRAP with the Social and Economic Development Plan was organized in Huaphan Province with stakeholders

#### Achievements

- FREL was submitted to the UNFCCC and went through a technical assessment and was approved by the UNFCCC and has been posted on the website <https://redd.unfccc.int/submissions.html?country=lao>
- The Government of Lao PDR (GoL) has approved the new Forest Law 2019 that has new regulations carbon trading and rights and supports REDD+
- The new Land Law 2019 has also been approved by GoL
- The FLEGT consultations and discussions continue and have made reasonable progress towards the VPA
- All safeguards documents have been revised and are in an advanced stage of review and imminent disclosure. These include the SESA, ESMF, EGPF, RPF, and PF. In addition, a Gender Action Plan has also been prepared
- A BSP has been drafted and is under review and is expected to be finalized in Q3 2019
- ERPA preparations remain on track. An assessment note has been finalized, workshop held for key participants, negotiation team being assembled, and options to obtain a legal opinion are being pursued. ERPA negotiations will start in September 2019
- A parallel implementation project valued at US\$ 72 million has been submitted to the GCF and is expected to receive approval in Q4 2019 with implementation to be started by Q2 2020
- The National REDD+ Strategy is currently under review to align it with the recently-approved Forest and Land laws. NRS is expected to be approved during Q4 2019
- Lao PDR has conducted its 1st National M(RV) and it is expected that the REDD+ Technical Annex will be submitted together with 1st Biennial Update Report in Q4 2019
- The National Forest Monitoring System is established and being developed in a step-wise approach. It is now open to the public at <http://nfms.maf.gov.la:4242/nfms/WebMap.aspx>
- Work on setting up a Safeguards Information System (SIS) and to produce a Summary of Information on Cancun Safeguards Implementation has been initiated
- Preliminary discussions have been held with support of a development partner to submit an application for results-based payments to the GCF.

## 2. What were the main REDD+ readiness-related challenges and/or problems during the last year?

- For example, lack of engagement from key stakeholders, political barriers, limited funding

- Pool of professionals with experience of REDD+ requirements and familiarity with Lao PDR makes it difficult to identify appropriate technical assistance that also leads to delay
- ERPA requirements especially with regards to legal aspects are difficult to communicate across key ministries and agencies and takes multiple steps and requires time
- TWG members are Government staff and can often be transferred. This leads to loss of institutional memory and requires additional time and process to provide orientation to TWG members so that they can make a meaningful contribution to specific disciplines

## 3. What are the main REDD+ readiness-related activities that you hope to deliver, and achievements anticipated during the next year?

- For example, hold x consultation events, submission of R-Package to the PC, finalisation of SIS, commission research into REDD+ strategy options

- Finalize and seek GoL approval of the NRS
- Complete and disclose all safeguards documents
- Finalize BSP
- Complete all requirements, negotiate, and sign ERPA
- Submission of BUR with REDD+ Technical Annex
- Establishment of SIS and submission of SOI to UNFCCC
- Review results of MRV and update plans
- Continue to strengthen NFMS capacity
- Establish NPMU and start implementation of GCF project
- Meet all requirements to submit proposal for results-based payments to GCF
- Draft and finalize communication strategy

## SECTION B: READINESS PROGRESS

### 4. Please provide your own assessment of national progress against all REDD+ readiness sub-components:

(Indicator OV.1.B: Number of FCPF supported countries that have in place a National REDD+ Strategy, FREL/FRL, NFMS and SIS; Output 1.3 indicators)

#### Progress rating key:

Complete	The sub-component has been completed
	Significant progress
	Progressing well, further development required
	Further development required
	Not yet demonstrating progress
N/A	The sub-component is not applicable to our process

Sub-component	Progress rating (mark 'X' as appropriate)		Narrative assessment (briefly explain your rating)
R-PP Component 1: Readiness Organisation and Consultation			
Sub-component 1a: National REDD+ Management Arrangements	Complete		<u>Significant progress</u> Lao national REDD+ management arrangements remain stable and the coordination structures are well-established and function efficiently. The REDD+ Division continues to coordinate all REDD+ activities across ministries, agencies, and with Development Partners. All TWGs are active with ToRs and meet to provide advice and inputs as required
		X	
	N/A		
Sub-component 1b: Consultation, Participation and Outreach	Complete		<u>Progressing well, further development required</u> Cumulative assessment indicates that Lao REDD+ has undertaken extensive consultations at the national level but more significantly in the ERPA accounting area. These consultations have been done over the last three years at national, provincial, district, and community level. A key lesson is to use terminologies that are contextual to local communities and easy to communicate; produce simple material in the local language; and use multi-media tools. All these aspects will be addressed in future to strengthen participation and outreach.
		X	
	N/A		

Sub-component	Progress rating (mark 'X' as appropriate)		Narrative assessment (briefly explain your rating)
R-PP Component 2: REDD+ Strategy Preparation			
Sub-component 2: REDD+ Strategy	Complete		<u>Significant progress</u> The NRS was presented to the NRTF in November 2018 and received guidance on the NRS. Given the then ongoing process of revision of forest and land laws the NRTF advised that the NRS should be aligned with the upcoming legislation. As the forest and land laws have been approved the NRS is currently under review to ensure that it is aligned with these new laws. The revised version of the NRS will be submitted to MAF and approval is expected during Q4 2019.
		X	
	N/A		
Sub-component 2a: Assessment of Land Use, Land Use Change Drivers, Forest Law, Policy and Governance	Complete		<u>Significant progress</u> A land use assessment has been undertaken and the data is being analysed with a final report expected in Q3 2019. The results of this report will form the basis for a review of the trends with regards to the drivers and appropriate measures will be taken to update strategies and approaches. The forest strategy is under review and will take note of the results of the land use assessment. The Lao National FREL and FRL for REDD+ was submitted to the UNFCCC and went through a series of technical discussions and assessment. The FREL has been accepted by the UNFCCC.
		X	
	N/A		
Sub-component 2b: REDD+ Strategy Options	Complete		<u>Significant progress</u> The REDD+ strategy options have been identified after analysis and consultations and aim to address key drivers. The NRS incorporates options that will: -promote development of sustainable agriculture; -promote infrastructure development in coordination with forest protection; -transform pioneering shifting cultivation to sedentary cultivation and control forest fires and promote forest restoration; and, -manage commercial tree plantation programmes and forest rehabilitation.
		X	
	N/A		
Sub-component 2c: Implementation Framework	Complete		<u>Significant progress</u> The REDD+ Division continues to coordinate and support the development of the implementation framework. Numerous decrees and GoL decisions have been approved during the last few years and these have also been used to form the legal basis of the BSP. In addition, the Forestry Law 2019 has added new regulations related to emissions reduction and carbon sequestration that further support the implementation framework.
		X	
	N/A		
Sub-component 2d: Social and Environmental Impacts	Complete		<u>Significant progress</u> A comprehensive package of safeguards documents that will address social and environmental impacts has been prepared and is in an advanced stage of review and completion. The package includes the SESA, ESMF, EGPF, RPF and PF. In addition, a BSP has also been prepared and forms part of the ERPA requirements prior to signature of the agreement.
		X	
	N/A		
R-PP Component 3: Reference Emissions Level/Reference Levels			
Component 3: Reference Emissions Level/Reference Levels	Complete		<u>Significant progress</u>
		X	

Sub-component	Progress rating (mark 'X' as appropriate)	Narrative assessment (briefly explain your rating)
	N/A	The Lao national FREL has undergone technical assessment and accepted by the UNFCCC and is posted online <a href="https://redd.unfccc.int/submissions.html?country=lao">https://redd.unfccc.int/submissions.html?country=lao</a> Significant capacity building has been done and both software and hardware has been procured to strengthen the capacity for future RELs.
R-PP Component 4: Monitoring Systems for Forests and Safeguards		
Sub-component 4a: National Forest Monitoring System	Complete	<u>Progressing well, further development required</u> Institutional arrangements are now stable and capacity continues to be built for the NFMS. The MRV road map has been implemented along with the active participation of the TWG. The NFMS has been used to conduct the land use assessment during 2019. Based on review of experience elements of the NFMS will continue to be improved and strengthened.
	X	
	N/A	
Sub-component 4b: Information System for Multiple Benefits, Other Impacts, Governance, and Safeguards	Complete	<u>Progressing well, further development required</u> The development of the ERPA has made an important contribution to enhancing understanding of REDD+ including governance and safeguards. Forest governance continues to be informed by better understanding of drivers and policy and related measures to address these by the GoL. Building on the development of the SESA and safeguards instruments, the national elements are being put in place that includes the development of the SIS and the FGRM.
	X	
	N/A	

## SECTION C: NON-CARBON BENEFITS

5. Does your national REDD+ Strategy or Action Plan include activities that directly aim to sustain and enhance livelihoods (e.g. one of your program objective/s is explicitly targeted at livelihoods; your approach to non-carbon benefits explicitly incorporates livelihoods)?

(Indicator 3.2.b: Number of RF REDD+ Country Participants whose REDD+ Strategies include activities that directly aim to sustain and enhance livelihoods)

Yes

(delete as appropriate)

If yes, please provide further detail, including attachments and/or references to the documentation that outlines your approach:

The NRS provides a suite of intervention options to promote, sustain, and enhance livelihoods and these are further re-enforced in the ERPD and are mentioned in many programmes and sub programmes and interventions namely:

- Demonstrate good practices, and develop diverse livelihood models based on local potentials and provide financing and opportunities for agriculture production;
- Demonstrate good practices and develop various livelihood models based on local potentials, promote and develop local livelihood alternatives through income-generating activities including ecotourism;
- Promote participation of private sector and individuals in applying the commercial and smallholder tree plantation models by households and community in order to compensate or reduce the use of wood from natural forests and to generate income for local people.



6. Does your national REDD+ Strategy or Action Plan include activities that directly aim to conserve biodiversity (e.g. one of your program objective/s is explicitly targeted at biodiversity conservation; your approach to non-carbon benefits explicitly incorporates biodiversity conservation)?

(Indicator 3.3.b: Number of RF REDD+ Country Participants whose REDD+ Strategies include activities that directly aim to conserve biodiversity)

Yes

(delete as appropriate)

If yes, please provide further detail, including attachments and/or references to the documentation that outlines your approach

All programmes and interventions of the NRS are designed to protect biodiversity through reducing or avoiding forest clearing. Two specific programmes aim particularly to protect forest biodiversity by management of forest fires, and promoting forest biodiversity through forest restoration development.

## SECTION D: FINANCE

(Please complete in US\$ ONLY)

7. Please detail the amount of all finance received in support of development and delivery of your national REDD+ readiness process since the date that your R-PP was signed. Figures should only include secured finance (i.e. fully committed) – ex ante, (unconfirmed) finance or in-kind contributions should not be included:

(Indicator 1.B: Amount of finance received to support the REDD+ Readiness process (disaggregated by public, private, grants, loans))

Amount (US\$)	Source (e.g. FCPF, FIP, name of gov't department)	Date committed (MM/YY)	Public or private finance? (Delete as appropriate)	Grant, loan or other? (Delete as appropriate)
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EXAMPLES:

\$500,000	FCPF Readiness Preparation Grant	10/2013	Public	Grant
\$250,000	Ministry of Forestry	01/2014	Public	Grant

\$8,175,000	FCPF Readiness Preparation Grant	8/2014	Public	Grant
\$14,508,000	JICA (through F-REDD Project)	2011	Public	Grant
\$8,320,000	German Gov. (through CliPAD Project)	2011	Public	Grant
\$133,000	SNV	2013	Public	Grant
\$1,059,000	SUFORD	2011	Public	Grant
\$707,000	UN-REDD/FAO	2014-2018	Public	Grant
\$1,650,000	LEAF Project	2011	Public	Grant
\$625,000	RECOFTC	2011	Public	Grant
\$			Public / Private	Grant / Loan / Other
\$			Public / Private	Grant / Loan / Other

8. Please detail any ex ante (unconfirmed) finance or in-kind contributions that you hope to secure in support of your national REDD+ readiness process:

Amount (US\$)	Source (e.g. FCPF, FIP, name of gov't department)	Public or private finance? (Delete as appropriate)	Grant, loan or other? (Delete as appropriate)
\$ 2.4 mil	BMZ (Germany Gov)	Public	Grant
US\$ 72 million	Proposal to GCF for supporting ER-Program	Public	Grant
\$ Exact figure to be confirmed	Result Based Payment Proposal to GCF	Public	Other
\$		Public / Private	Grant / Loan / Other
\$		Public / Private	Grant / Loan / Other
\$		Public / Private	Grant / Loan / Other

## SECTION E: FCPF PERFORMANCE

9. To help build an understanding of the FCPF strengths, weaknesses and contributions to REDD+, please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements:

(Indicator 4.B: Participant Countries' assessment of FCPF's role within and contribution to national REDD+ processes)

Mark 'X' as appropriate

	Completely disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Completely agree
The FCPF's support has had a <b>central influence</b> on the development our national REDD+ systems and processes					X
The FCPF's support has <b>improved the quality</b> of our national REDD+ systems and processes				X	
The FCPF's support has <b>improved national capacities</b> to develop and deliver REDD+ projects				X	
The FCPF's support has <b>helped to ensure substantive involvement of multiple stakeholders</b> (including women, IPs, CSOs and local communities in our national REDD+ systems and processes)				X	

Comments / clarifications, if appropriate:

10. To help assess the usefulness and application of FCPF knowledge products (publications, seminars, learning events, web resources), please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements:

(Indicator 4.3.a: Extent to which FCPF learning, evidence and knowledge products are used by Participant countries)

Mark 'X' as appropriate

	Completely disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Completely agree
We <b>regularly access</b> FCPF knowledge products to obtain REDD+ related information				X	



FCPF knowledge products are <b>relevant</b> to our REDD+ related information requirements				X	
FCPF knowledge products are <b>sufficient</b> to address all of our REDD+ related information requirements				X	
The FCPF <b>website</b> is a useful resource for accessing FCPF and REDD+ related information					X

Comments / clarifications, if appropriate:

## SECTION F: FINAL COMMENTS

11. If appropriate, please provide any further comments or clarifications relating to your work on REDD+ Readiness during the last year:

The development of a sub-national REDD+ programme with the Carbon Fund has been an important learning experience and has enhanced understanding of REDD+ management. Lao REDD+ will continue this process once the ERPA is signed and move to implementation and thereafter to expand the REDD+ programme to the national level.