



Readiness Fund REDD+ Country Participants Progress Report Template

v. 2018



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. 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 30th 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 **15th July** every year.

SECTION A: NARRATIVE SUMMARY

1. In brief, what were the main REDD+ readiness-related activities delivered within your country during the last year?
 - For example, strategy / policy drafting, stakeholder consultation events, capacity building / training, awareness raising initiatives
 - 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

Main REDD+ Readiness related Activities delivered from July 2018 to July 2019.

Project Co-ordination

Belize has made significant strides in accelerating the process of REDD+ during the last year across all components. Despite challenges, a noteworthy achievement is the establishment of the Indigenous Peoples (IPP) Desk in February 2019, which serves as the catalyst for facilitating feedback from various indigenous groups on activities related to REDD+. The desk also functions as a focal point for dissemination of information and to aid in enabling planning engagement with communities. In addition, a Project Officer joined the REDD+ Co-ordination Unit (REDD+ CU) in June 2019 to provide monitoring and other support for the project.

Details of the various components and what they entailed is captured below;

Project Activities

Communication and Awareness

During the past year, the REDD+ CU has engaged in a great deal of outreach and awareness raising with a broad spectrum of stakeholders. The primary focus of these sessions was to inform stakeholders on what is REDD+ and the roadmap developed by Belize with a view to building stakeholders knowledge and capacity to engage in further dialogue on REDD+, and to garner feedback and recommendations. As a result of the overarching objectives there is Increased Capacity in understanding REDD+ as per UNFCCC Decisions within Forest Department (FD), NCCO (National Climate Change Office), R+CU (REDD+ Co-ordination Unit) and Other MAFFESD (Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry, Environment and Sustainable Development) Departments such as DOE (Department of Environment) , Sustainable Management Unit, KBA project as well as other stakeholders from UoB (University of Belize) , Environmental Research Institute (ERI), MLAs NAVCO, NGOs, among others. The R+CU hosted approximately twenty-two (22) workshops across the country, with a total of 634 participants (34.5% females and 65.5% males). *(Please refer to Section A-4 which captures further information pertaining to these sessions).*

Through the launch of an Indigenous Peoples Desk for REDD+, there are also committees with representatives from different indigenous groups. In addition, the process for the establishment of a Technical Working Group to provide guidance to the Indigenous Peoples in the review of technical documents relating to the Grievance and Redress Mechanism (GRM), Benefit Sharing Mechanism etc.

SESA Process

The SESA process has gathered momentum over the course of the last year as demonstrated by the workshops which have been conducted in relation to the GRM, sensitization of the REDD+ project and the National SESA workshop. A SESA workplan has been developed which includes activities on raising awareness and garnering feedback on REDD+ safeguards, land tenure and GRM processes.

N-MRVS encompassing the following elements;

- **Activity Data (AD)**

It is envisaged that Belize will engage in the development of the 2018 land cover map in the upcoming months to build on the baseline information which was completed in the initial mapping exercise conducted utilizing Sentinel. In continuing the use of the OpenForis/Collect Earth Tool to develop activity data (AD) during the period 2000 - 2018, which by extension aided in strengthening capacity from the four (4) technicians that attended a Rome workshop in January 2018, to around twenty (25) technicians that understood and operated the tool to achieve the establishment of baseline and all other activity data. This is a good achievement within the Belize FD, NCCO and R+CU that has created the basis of the future MRV team under discussion. It also lends to continuity with regard to capacity which is nestled within the implementing agencies. The implementation to collect AD was conducted bearing in mind the five key pillars of REDD+ activities as outlined in paragraph 70, Decision 1/CP16.

In addition, Reviewing of AD following a protocol which included a QC/QA process which involved correction of possible interpretation errors. The team reviewed 21,993 plots of 1km x 1km designed for Belize. A working group session with the objective of providing clarity and collaboration of the processes and the roles of the various implementing agencies for Reporting, Measurement and Verification was conducted to provide a platform for documentation and protocols underpinning the mapping processes moving forward. Parallel to this, the session also established a working group with representatives from FD, NCCO and the REDD+ CU to work in tandem with the Belize National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS).

There was also Analysis of all the AD information to enhance understanding of the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation with focus on the hot spots, and the underlying dynamics such as; when they happened (time), where they

happened (geographical location) and to understand why they happened. The Mapathon to collect AD provided Belize the opportunity to disaggregate AD caused by Natural factors like fires, hurricanes and pests from anthropogenic activities. The nature and scope of the discussion is linked to the increased capacity achieved as mentioned in bullet (1) to understand the process of interpretation of the drivers of deforestation and degradation.

As the procurement process has been completed, the mapping exercise using Sentinel 2 for 2018 is slated to commence in the upcoming months which will further enhance capacity within FD and the R+CU.

- **Emissions Factor**

Belize will be establishing several sampling plots to ascertain the emissions factor for different land uses across the country commencing soon. The methodology for these plots were discussed during the working group sessions conducted on 4th – 5th of July and 10th and 12th of July 2019 with representatives from the FD, NCCO and REDD+ CU among others. Some of the main activities related to emissions factor are as follows:

- Analysis of data collected in these plots will be used to identify which values are going to be used for the GHGi and trying to incorporate as much national information to improve the quality of the GHGi reporting.
- Prepare GHGi tool tailored specifically for Belize corresponding/aligned to AD and IPCC 2006 Good Practice Guidelines to ensure reporting is done in accordance with the UNFCCC stipulations. The GHGi tool uses information from the 51 plots which have been established thus far to estimate National Emission Factors.
- Analysis of Drivers of Deforestation and Forest Degradation including the enhancement of Carbon Stocks in all Protected Areas and Districts of Belize to understand REDD+ potential of Belize using information from the Collect Earth Process.
- Preparation of the GHGi Report to meet BUR requirements aiming to have the basis for the Forest Reference Level of Belize.

FREL

Some of the activities relating to the Preparation of FRL scenarios emanating from the GHGi report with the aim of assisting informed decision making on how to develop the REDD+ strategy consist of:

- The Development of the MRV and Forest Monitoring Systems by FD and R+CU including transforming all GHGi tools to GIS system to enable enhanced visualization. This achievement has been integral in allowing FD to develop their own maps with a great deal of accuracy using GIS.
- The Establishment of new PSP information in Land Use Classification areas where there are gaps in information to estimate National EF, thereby transitioning from use of IPCC default values to a national/specific Tier of Reporting.

REDD+ Strategy

- **Legal and Institutional Arrangements**

An Analysis of National Legislation to understand and determine Forest Dynamics and Land Use Change patterns in Belize aiming to identify policies, decrees, laws, strategies, etc that could undermine a future REDD+ strategy based on information collected during the Collect Earth Mapathon for a period of eighteen (18) years from 2000 to 2018 has been done. This exercise provided useful insight as it was able to capture the main reasons of the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation from a legal perspective. The initial REDD+ Strategy options have been developed outlining several potential options which will be further supported, developed and finalized taking into account all the technical work and the SESA process and related stakeholders' consultations. An Enabling Environment for REDD+ implementation by analysing four

(4) REDD+ projects presented to international private sectors covering almost all main areas of Belize for REDD+ and the Development of a REDD+ Registry and National Accounting tool which will be based on the national MRVS.

Grievance and Redress Mechanism (GRM)

The GRM process commenced in March 2019 and it is still ongoing. The Final outcomes should be ready by September 2019. The Inception Report and Draft of the Context Research Report and Assessment Report have been submitted and are undergoing review by the REDD+ CU. Members of the team conducting the consultancy are scheduled to embark on a mission in the upcoming months to further engage stakeholders in the process.

National Forest Monitoring System

A re-stratification exercise was conducted to select the additional sampling plots which will be added to the existing network in Belize and the development of comprehensive methodology for the other land use classes. There were also discussions and planning for a committee to steer the efforts in documenting and revision of mapping protocols.

4. What were the main REDD+ readiness-related achievements in your country during the last year?

- 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

- 1) The Draft GHGi Report
- 2) The Draft of FRL Report
- 3) Draft REDD+ Strategy – the final product is contingent upon the socialization of the options(Note : to be updated subsequent to the SESA process and socialized among stakeholders before finalization.)
- 4) The MRV system and team which has been institutionalized within MAFFESD.
- 5) Established mechanisms for engagement with Indigenous Peoples through the Indigenous Peoples Desk
- 6) Engagement of Stakeholders in the SESA Process which are reflected in the table below

Date	Details	Total	Female	Male
04-Aug-18	Sensitization on the REDD+ Project	20	4	16
11-Aug-18	Sensitization on the REDD+ Project	23	6	17
12-Aug-18	Sensitization on the REDD+ Project	24	6	18
24-Aug-18	Engagement of the TAA-MLA by the R+CU	10	3	7
25-Aug-18	Sensitization on the REDD+ Project	20	10	10
14-Nov-18	Engaged Stakeholders on Carbon Financing	21	9	12
15-Nov-18	Engaged Stakeholders on Carbon Financing	26	10	16
20-Feb-19	GRM Workshop	7	1	6
21-Feb-19	Discussion on Legal Analysis Findings & Sensitization on the GRM Consultancy	16	6	10
22-Feb-19	Sensitization on the GRM Consultancy	10	1	9
07-Mar-19	To discuss the work plan of the Technical Indigenous Coordinator with the TAA-MLA and BENIC	5		5
05-Apr-19	Sensitization on the REDD+ Project	67	13	54
06-Apr-19	Sensitization on the REDD+ Project & Engagement Strategy with BENIC	28	10	18
29-Apr-19	Sensitization on the REDD+ Project, MRV Process, and Draft REDD+ Strategy	59	23	36
2 & 3 May, 2019	Consulted on GRM	18	5	13
09-May-19	Consulted on GRM & Sensitization on the REDD+ Project	16	8	8
	Consulted on GRM	3		3
23-May-19	Sensitization on the REDD+ Project, and, Introduction of Safeguards in REDD+	72	28	44
18-Jun-19	National SESA Workshop	59	20	39
20-Jun-19	Discussion with the TAA-MLA on the REDD+ Project Implementation	31	12	19
20-Jun-19	Discussion with the TMLRC on land tenure activities of the REDD+ Project	9	7	2
29-Jun-19	Sensitization Maya Youth on the REDD+ Project	90	37	53
Total		634	219	415

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

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

- 1) There is still room for improving the understanding of REDD+, and its components among some stakeholders.
- 2) Technical capacity for conducting REDD+ activities, for example consultants were recruited to guide the Collect Earth Mapathon with the Forestry Department and members of the REDD+CU. While this aided in capacity building, there is still need for further technical support for Belize to reduce dependency and conduct this process wholly by itself.
- 3) Need for greater Institutional Arrangements such as protocols in place for co-ordination and increased synergy between Government agencies. This should be strengthened to address existing financial, technical and administrative gaps.
- 4) Need for revision of Legislation/ land tenure laws within the next five years by National Assembly.

6. What are the main REDD+ readiness-related activities that you hope to deliver 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

- 1) A completed REDD+ Strategy following SESA and stakeholder sensitization
- 2) The Forest Reference Level Final Report
- 3) A holistic MRV and National Forest Monitoring System including collection of emissions factors in non-forest types
- 4) World bank Safeguards Policies and Instruments as outlined in the SESA Process
- 5) Improved understanding of the elements which helps to minimize/alleviate barriers for Institutional Arrangements and REDD+ implementation

SECTION B: READINESS PROGRESS

7. 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	Significant progress
Progressing well, further development required	Progressing well, further development required
Further development required	Further development required
Not yet demonstrating progress	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	X
	Significant progress	
	Progressing well, further development required	
	Further development required	
	Not yet demonstrating progress	
	N/A	
Sub-component 1b: Consultation, Participation and Outreach	Complete	
	Significant progress	X
	Progressing well, further development required	
	Further development required	
	Not yet demonstrating progress	
	N/A	
		The R+CU which comprises of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> REDD+ Director Social Expert Procurement Officer Communication Officer Project Officer Five Junior Technicians Indigenous Peoples Desk (IPP) Technical Co-ordinator
		There have been engagements with stakeholders encompassing students, NGOs, Co-Managers of Protected Areas among others, where presentations have been made to commemorate events such as the REDD+ launch, World Wetlands Day, International Day of Forests etc. and workshops under the purview of the Strategic Environment and Social Assessment (SESA) process. A total of 6,844 promotional items comprising of; pens, pencils, folders, coffee mugs, t shirts, banners, notebooks, caps, bags, bottles, posters and magazines have been procured and are disseminated during the REDD+ launch, school fairs, workshops etc.

Sub-component	Progress rating (mark 'X' as appropriate)	Narrative assessment (briefly explain your rating)
		There are also plans for more materials encompassing billboards, short videos and other items to be prepared in the upcoming year to assist in raising awareness on REDD+ and to conduct surveys to assess the knowledge of participants.
R-PP Component 2: REDD+ Strategy Preparation		
Sub-component 2a: Assessment of Land Use, Land Use Change Drivers, Forest Law, Policy and Governance	Complete	
	X	
	N/A	
Sub-component 2b: REDD+ Strategy Options	Complete	
	X	
	N/A	
Sub-component 2c: Implementation Framework	Complete	
	x	
	N/A	
Sub-component 2d: Social and Environmental Impacts	Complete	
	x	
	N/A	

Sub-component	Progress rating (mark 'X' as appropriate)	Narrative assessment (briefly explain your rating)
R-PP Component 3: Reference Emissions Level/Reference Levels		
Component 3: Reference Emissions Level/Reference Levels	Complete	
	X	
	N/A	
R-PP Component 4: Monitoring Systems for Forests and Safeguards		
Sub-component 4a: National Forest Monitoring System	Complete	
	X	
	N/A	
<p>The National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS) is an ongoing discussion, complemented by the MRVS. In advancing Belize's effort for forest monitoring, and to enhance synergies between FD, NCCO and the REDD+CU, working group sessions are being facilitated on the 'MRVS for REDD+ - Expanding and Mobilizing a Forest Monitoring Network for the NFMS'</p> <p>These sessions aimed to foster better understanding and build capacity in the following areas; Methodology and protocols for mapping and selection of sampling plots and Stratification of Belize according to factors such as rainfall, elevation etc. ,Identification of gaps in the Forest Inventory Planning process, Establishment of Institutional arrangements for Forest Monitoring ,Carrying out data entry and analysis ,Development of field data collection methods for measurements in carbon pools, Understanding quality control and uncertainty ,Understanding and identifying improvements for allometric equations used ,Establishment of comprehensive procedures for data archiving, sharing and documentation.</p> <p>Approximately twenty (20) participants have been engaging in the working group sessions conducted on 4-5 July and 10th and 12th July 2019.</p> <p>It is foreseen that the establishment of the sample plots will be commencing in the upcoming months which will contribute to the National Forest Monitoring System.</p>		
Sub-component 4b: Information System for Multiple Benefits, Other Impacts, Governance, and Safeguards	Complete	
	X	
	N/A	

SECTION C: NON-CARBON BENEFITS

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

Future REDD+ Strategy will aim to include activities which aim to enhance livelihoods pivoting on the SAP 2019-2023 which includes Non-Carbon Benefits. (Please refer to SAP 2019-2023 for the Forest Sector). Ongoing and future technical work and stakeholder engagement will be integrated and lead to the development of a draft REDD+ strategy building on what has been done, with the initial options including; Enhancement of Economic, Social and Environmental benefits of Forests through sustainable utilization of forests by forest stakeholders, maintaining no net loss in forests cover in priority areas, harmonizing and strengthening of forest policy and legislation etc.

9. 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	X	(delete as appropriate)
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If yes, please provide further detail, including attachments and/or references to the documentation that outlines your approach

The proposed initial REDD+ strategy options (which will be further developed taking into account the outcomes of the technical work and stakeholders' consultations) includes the five tenets of REDD+ as outlined in paragraph 70. Decision 1/CP16. A part of REDD+ speaks to Conservation of Carbon stocks and this is inextricably linked to conservation of Biodiversity which is important for Belize (as demonstrated by the amount of areas which have been designated as Protected Areas). According to a report from the National Protected Areas System, there are a total of 103 protected areas¹ ranging from forest reserves, nature reserves, national parks, bird sanctuaries, wildlife sanctuaries² etc., some of which are co-managed by local NGOs. The governance of these areas is also recognised and reflected in the National Protected Areas System Act of 2015.³ These emphasize the sustainable management of forests and by extension the safeguarding biodiversity, which is complemented by projects which are conducted simultaneously with REDD+, such as the KBA, Program for Belize etc.

SECTION D: FINANCE

¹ 'National Protected Areas System Plan', Ministry of Forestry, Fisheries and Sustainable Development – Government of Belize', *Revised Edition March 2015*

² Map of Protected Areas in Belize <http://protectedareas.gov.bz/wp-content/map/NPAS%20Official%20Map%202013.pdf>

³ 'National Protected Areas System Act', 2015 <https://www.nationalassembly.gov.bz/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Act-No.-17-of-2015-National-Protected-Areas-System-Act-2015.pdf>

10. 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	Date committed	Public or private finance?	Grant, loan or other?
\$3,800,000	FCPF Readiness Preparation Grant	03/2017	Public	Grant

11. 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 for 1 year (US\$)	Source	Public or private finance?	Grant, loan or other?
\$92,000	Forestry Department	Public	Other
\$40,000	National Climate Change Office	Public	Other
\$48,800	Government of Belize	Public	Other

SECTION E: FCPF PERFORMANCE

12. 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 central influence on the development our national REDD+ systems and processes				X	
The FCPF's support has improved the quality of our national REDD+ systems and processes				X	
The FCPF's support has improved national capacities to develop and deliver REDD+ projects				X	
The FCPF's support has helped to ensure substantive involvement of multiple stakeholders (including women, IPs, CSOs and local communities in our national REDD+ systems and processes				X	

Comments / clarifications, if appropriate:

The FCPF support has played a fundamental role in providing necessary funds for the operationalization and functioning of the R+CU, and in propelling achievements of deliverables for example the different workshops, acquiring equipment needed and all logistical activities in general. The FCPF funds also supplemented the implementation of the Collect Earth exercise, the legal analysis and the GRM analysis and, involvement of multiple stakeholder consultations. This support has been critical, as without these funds, the multi-faceted discussions and achievements outlined above would not have come to fruition.

13. 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 regularly access FCPF knowledge products to obtain REDD+ related information			X		
FCPF knowledge products are relevant to our REDD+ related information requirements			X		
FCPF knowledge products are sufficient to address all of our REDD+ related information requirements			X		
The FCPF website is a useful resource for accessing FCPF and REDD+ related information				X	

Comments / clarifications, if appropriate:

SECTION F: FINAL COMMENTS

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

A constraint/challenge over the past year has been the slow pace of the procurement procedures. There is need to improve these drastically to avoid significant delays for integral components of the project for example -It should not take more than 12 months as it was the case of the Sentinel 2 Map and FREL bid. This stems in part from a combination in the lack of familiarity of the process and in selecting the appropriate consultants for the processes.