

World Bank - Grant Reporting and Monitoring (GRM) Report

Report to Donor

Ref. TF019203

Reporting Period: 07/01/2019 to 06/30/2020

Printed On:

Report Type: Progress Report

Status: Approved

Assignment: TF019203

Vanuatu REDD+ Readiness Plan Preparation Support

FCPFR - Forest Carbon Partnership Facility

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Summary Information	
TF Status	ACTV
Recipient Country	Vanuatu
Executed By	Recipient
Managing Unit	9269 - SEAE1
Grant Start Date / End Date	04/20/2015 to 12/31/2021
Original Grant Amount	3,600,000.00
Grant Amount	6,100,000.00
Outstanding Commitments	0.00
Cumulative Disbursements	3,773,779.82 as of 06/30/2020
Disbursed 07/01/2019 to 06/30/2020	1,274,988.07
Donor	TF602001 - MULTIPLE DONORS

This GRM report includes the following sections: Overview, Components, Outcome, Execution, Program(FCPFR), Disbursements.

OVERVIEW

Overall Assessments

Grant Objectives:

The objective of the grant is to assist Vanuatu to carry out readiness preparation activities by supporting the preparation of its REDD+ strategy through a participatory and inclusive process and by producing technical and policy advice to help strengthen sustainable land and forest management practices.

Overall progress from 07/01/2019 to 06/30/2020 with regard to Achieving Grant Objectives:

Comment:

During the reporting period, the project made significant progress in all its components covering several major activities such as development of National REDD+ Strategy, conduct of National Forest Inventory, estimation of activity data on forest resources for establishing the National Forest Reference Level, design of the National Forest Monitoring System, and preparation of the Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment and Environment and Social Management Framework through a participatory and inclusive process.

The progress in project activities translated into disbursement of about 21 percent of the total grant during the year and the cumulative disbursement was at 62 percent of the total grant at the end of FY20 (versus 41 percent by the end of FY19).

The REDD+ Unit, Project Management Unit (PMU), and Civil Society Organization (CSO) Platform closely coordinated on project implementation, stakeholder engagement, awareness building and knowledge dissemination. There has been demonstrated improvements in institutional capacity for implementation of REDD+ activities at the national and provincial levels.

The disruptions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and the Tropical Cyclone Harold delayed the National Forest Inventory (NFI), development of National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS), consultations on National REDD+ Strategy and the CSO Platform activities. Due to the short time available for disbursing the remaining grant prior to the project closure and to overcome the disruptions associated with the COVID-19 and the Tropical Cyclone Harold, the Government of Vanuatu requested for extension of the grant by an 18-month period from June 30, 2020 to December 31, 2021, which was approved by the World Bank.

Overall progress from 07/01/2019 to 06/30/2020 with regard to Implementation of Grant Financed Activities:

Comment:

The implementation progress for the grant for the period is considered satisfactory taking into consideration of disruptions to the implementation of project activities from the COVID-19 pandemic and Tropical Cyclone Harold.

Grant follow-up and structure

Description and context of Grant:

The Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) Readiness Plan Preparation Project (hereafter referred to as the "Project") became effective on April 20, 2015 with a US\$ 3.6 million grant from the FCPF Readiness Fund, which assists countries on readiness activities for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, the sustainable management of forests, and the conservation and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries (REDD+). The project was restructured in 2017 to include a new component focusing on the establishment of a National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS), which also included organization of the National Forest Inventory (NFI) after a gap of nearly 30 years, a critical element in the management of Vanuatu's forest resources. In 2018, an Additional Financing grant of US\$ 2.5 million was approved to deepen the scope of activities of the four project components funded through the parent grant.

Expected follow up (if any):

To complete the project activities impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the Tropical Cyclone Harold, the grant was restructured in June 2020 to extend the project closing date by 18 months from June 30, 2020 to December 31, 2021. The Project Development Objectives (PDO), project scope or the safeguard category remain unchanged and no new safeguard policy was triggered.

Comment on follow up:

The grant is in implementation with activities covering all four project components, which are described in detail under the **components** below.

End Date of Last Site Visit:

n/a

During the period, due to travel restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, virtual meetings were organized in lieu of the mission travel for providing implementation support to the project.

Restructuring of Grant:

The grant was restructured in 2017 to include a new component focusing on establishment of a National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS). In June 2020, the grant was extended by 18 months until 31 December 2021.

OUTCOME

Comments on outcome achieved from 07/01/2019 to 06/30/2020

See comments on achievements by component.

Grant Outcome Indicators

No Outcome indicators are defined or used for this grant.

COMPONENTS

Comment on planned and actual Output

n/a.

Comment on component implementation progress

Component 1 - *Institutional Strengthening for REDD+ Management Arrangements at the National and Decentralized levels.*

The National REDD+ unit in the Department of Forestry is the entity responsible for coordination of project implementation and the Project Management Unit (PMU) in the Department of Climate Change is responsible for fiduciary aspects of the project. The REDD+ Unit and the PMU closely coordinate to support project implementation. The REDD+ Unit mobilized support from different national and provincial agencies for REDD+ implementation, organize consultations and multisector dialogue involving several stakeholders. The PMU provided fiduciary support covering financial management and procurement functions as well coordination of financial management, audit and reporting of the project. The REDD+ Technical Committee provided technical advice on project activities. The Provincial REDD+ Technical Committees (PTAC) organized on Santo, Malekula, Efate, Erromango and Tana islands facilitated coordination of a broad range of stakeholders such as women groups, CSO/NGOs, youth organizations, churches, farmer associations and representative of provincial agencies covering forestry, agriculture, livestock, fishery, tourism, environment and rural development. Under the component, consultation activities involving government, non-governmental agencies and other stakeholder groups facilitated the implementation of an inclusive and participatory REDD+ process and contributed to strengthening institutional capacity.

Component 2 - *Strengthening of the stakeholder engagement process at the decentralized level.*

Engagement with diverse stakeholders on national REDD+ priorities is a major priority of the project. The Civil Society Organization (CSO) platform involving several CSOs is engaged in project implementation with the support of Vanuatu Association of Non-Government Organizations). A total of 28 CSO networks have been established on five islands and consultations with CSO members representing diverse stakeholder groups have been organized. Feedback and Grievance Redress Mechanism for REDD+ has been established at the national and provincial levels. The Social and Environmental Safeguards Assessment (SESA) and Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) have been completed. Several trainings and workshops were conducted to strengthen the capacity of stakeholders, including the staff of the Department of Forestry and other government and non-government agencies. As part of communication, consultation and participation subcomponent, activities have been implemented to raise awareness among various stakeholder groups engaged in REDD+; awareness programs using radio, TV and print-media have been operational to generate awareness on REDD+, sustainable forest resources management and climate change. The CSO platform and CSO networks are continuing outreach and awareness activities on REDD+ at national and provincial levels.

Component 3 - Development of a REDD+ Strategy.

The analytical studies to support the preparation of national REDD+ strategy included - drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, REDD+ strategy options, land tenure and carbon rights, Non-Timber Forest Products value chain and benefit sharing mechanism were completed. These studies along with consultations with different stakeholders provided valuable inputs for development national REDD+ strategy. The National REDD+ Strategy is currently in preparation. Upon completion of the draft strategy, it is proposed to organize a national workshop to hold consultations with various stakeholders on the draft strategy. The National REDD+ strategy is expected to be finalized after incorporating the national stakeholder workshop inputs and submitted to the Government of Vanuatu.

Component 4 - Establishment of National Forest Monitoring System.

The implementation of National Forest Inventory (NFI) and National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS) are in progress. The National Forest Inventory to assess the forest resources of the country has been organized after a gap of about 30 years and it is a key milestone in the forest resources management of Vanuatu. The NFI has progressed steadily reaching more than 60 percent of field work overcoming the disruptions associated with the COVID-19 and the Tropical Cyclone Harold. The NFI and NFMS will strengthen Vanuatu's capacity for measurement, monitoring and reporting of forest resources and to demonstrate the country's preparedness for REDD+ implementation. The NFI field work and activity data on forest resources through remote sensing analysis are in progress and form the inputs for establishment of the national forest reference emissions level/reference level proposed for submission to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), a key milestone of the project. The work on forest information system covering database management system and safeguard information system is in progress to support monitoring and reporting of Vanuatu forest resources. The UNIQUE Forest and Land Use consultant team has assisted the Department of Forestry in building technical capacity for implementing NFI and NFMS activities.

EXECUTION

Bank project related to the grant

Project ID / Name:	P124806 - Vanuatu REDD Readiness Plan Preparation
Project Status:	Lending
Global Focal Area:	Climate change
Product Line:	CN - Carbon Offset

Implementing agency and contact details

Agency:	Department of Forestry, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Fishery and Biosecurity, Government of Vanuatu		
Contact:	Rexon VIRANAMANGGA; Brian Philipps		
Address:	Department of Forestry/REDD+ Unit, Agricultural Station, Airport Road, PMB 9064, Vanuatu		
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Website:			

PROGRAM

Program Specific Questions

1. Describe progress in how the Grant activities are being coordinated with other REDD+-related initiatives, including those funded by Describe progress in how the Grant activities are being coordinated with other REDD+-related initiatives, including those funded by others

During the year, GIZ and FAO funded activities complemented REDD+ priorities, strengthened technical capacity of Departments of Forestry, Environment and Agriculture and augmented human resources to support the REDD+ activities. During the second half of FY20, the s COVID-19 pandemic and the Tropical Cyclone Harold disrupted technical assistance activities of some external funding agencies.

2. Describe any important changes in the technical design or approach related to the Grant activities.
None.

3. Describe progress in addressing key capacity issues (implementation, technical, financial management,

World Bank - Grant Reporting and Monitoring (GRM) Report

procurement) related to this Grant.

The project contributed to improve technical and institutional capacity of the Department of Forestry, its coordination with various government and non-government agencies and strengthened financial management and procurement capacity needed for implementing activities under different components.

4. Describe progress in addressing social and environmental issues (including safeguards) related to the Grant. Is the SESA conducted in accordance with the Common Approach?

To assess the environmental and social implications of the REDD+ Strategy, the project supported preparation of the Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA), the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF), Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF), and Process Framework (PF) through consultations involving diverse stakeholder groups. The SESA has been conducted in accordance with the Common Approach.

The Feedback and Grievance Redress Mechanism (FGRM) for REDD+ has been established to seek feedback and address grievances of stakeholders on REDD+ Readiness and implementation of REDD+ Strategy as well as options for benefit sharing mechanism have been outlined.

5. Is the ESMF prepared in accordance with the Common Approach?

Yes.

6. Describe progress in stakeholder consultation, participation, disclosure of information, and the FGRM related to this Grant.

The project facilitated consultation and participation to raise awareness among various stakeholder groups and disseminated information on implementation of REDD+ activities through radio, TV and print-media and facilitated in the establishment of a Feedback and Grievance Redress Mechanism (FGRM) as a means to received feedback and respond to grievances from stakeholders on REDD+ Readiness activities and on REDD+ strategy implementation.

DISBURSEMENTS

Disbursements Summary in USD

Date From	Date To	Planned Cumulative	Planned Period	Actual Cumulative	Actual Period
01/01/2015	06/30/2015	0.00	0.00	185,632.08	185,632.08
07/01/2015	12/31/2015	0.00	0.00	185,632.08	0.00
01/01/2016	06/30/2016	0.00	0.00	362,540.11	176,908.03
07/01/2016	12/31/2016	0.00	0.00	634,327.68	271,787.57
01/01/2017	06/30/2017	0.00	0.00	829,264.86	194,937.18
07/01/2017	12/31/2017	0.00	0.00	1,404,639.54	575,374.68
01/01/2018	06/30/2018	0.00	0.00	1,789,888.48	385,248.94
07/01/2018	12/31/2018	0.00	0.00	1,929,169.24	139,280.76
01/01/2019	06/30/2019	0.00	0.00	2,498,791.75	569,622.51
07/01/2019	12/31/2019	0.00	0.00	3,272,646.69	773,854.94
01/01/2020	06/30/2020	0.00	0.00	3,773,779.82	501,133.13