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EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES: USAID SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPES SECTOR GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

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HOW TO USE THIS GUIDANCE¹

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) designed this guidance document to provide a practical tool for USAID missions and operating units (OUs) to more effectively engage and partner with Indigenous Peoples in sustainable landscapes (SL) program activities. Consideration of Indigenous Peoples' own development priorities and facilitating their participation in program design and implementation through well-structured communication, consultation, and engagement strategies helps foster local solutions to local development challenges as envisioned in the [Journey to Self-Reliance](#). By effectively engaging Indigenous Peoples in SL activity design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, OUs can advance USAID's priority areas while accounting for Indigenous Peoples' needs, capacities and interests. This engagement can mitigate adverse impacts on indigenous communities, avoid conflicts that can delay, diminish or derail benefits derived from forest, land-use, and water management efforts, Natural Resource Management (NRM), and/or greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction activities, and lead to the sustainable management of Indigenous Peoples' lands, and land and resource tenure security.

This sector guidance document is based on desktop research about SL related issues among Indigenous Peoples, international standards, and USAID program experiences. It is also based on interviews with USAID development professionals. This guidance complements and is informed by the programming guidance within the [USAID Policy on Promoting the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) (PRO-IP) and is one part of USAID's collection of sector-specific guidance documents on engagement with Indigenous Peoples.

The PRO-IP recognizes that development programming has not always benefitted Indigenous Peoples who in many contexts remain marginalized, discriminated against, and located in isolated areas without adequate access to infrastructure and basic services. Consistent with the principles set forth in the [Journey to Self-Reliance](#) framework, the PRO-IP aims to ensure that USAID effectively engages and partners with Indigenous Peoples to help them enhance their livelihoods and build a brighter, self-reliant future. This SL sector guidance is intended to be used together with other USAID planning and programming tools, including USAID's new [Social Impact Assessment Toolkit](#) (Social Impact Assessment Framework, Screening Tool, Sample Social Impact Assessment Statement of Work, Consultation Handbook, and Inclusive Development Analysis) and [Environmental Impact Assessment](#) process.

Sustainable landscapes as a USAID sector is multifaceted, and SL programming by USAID missions and OUs can be utilized to address various challenges to promote sustainable land use practices that reduce GHG emissions. This guidance addresses a particular aspect of that challenge² – SL programming as experienced by Indigenous Peoples. This guidance identifies development challenges, lessons learned, and best practices related to sustainable landscapes to help USAID better engage Indigenous Peoples and define activities that support livelihood development. Guidance documents prepared for supporting the implementation of the PRO-IP for the following other sectors are relevant and inter-related:

¹ To access references, use the electronic version of the document with hyperlinks embedded.

² Challenges faced by Indigenous People (e.g., issues of discrimination based on age, sexual orientation, ability, gender, ethnicity, gender-based violence, and land rights violations) are also faced by non-Indigenous vulnerable groups. The prevalence of these issues is high among Indigenous Peoples and may unevenly affect individuals within a People. The potential for and impacts of exclusion, marginalization, and jeopardy are typically, but not always, higher for Indigenous Peoples. In this guidance, gender, conflict and land rights are cross-cutting themes while other types of vulnerability, such as age discrimination, are beyond the scope.

biodiversity, energy, agriculture and food security, education, enhancing livelihoods, global health, and democracy, human rights, and governance.

INTRODUCTION: USAID, SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPES, AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Of the world's 370 million Indigenous Peoples, more than [70 million are dependent on forests](#) for their livelihood. Approximately [22 percent of the Earth's surface and 80 percent of global biodiversity](#) lie within their traditional lands. The PRO-IP notes that Indigenous Peoples have legal recognition or ownership to only about 20 percent of the global area currently under customary management, leaving 80 percent of it with weak or absent land rights, and thus vulnerable to insecurity, appropriation, deforestation, and other forms of illegal resource extraction. Additionally, much of the world's remaining tropical forests [lie within areas that are legally owned or customarily managed by Indigenous Peoples and other community groups](#); multiple studies demonstrate that in these areas, [deforestation rates are lower](#) and [carbon storage higher](#).

USAID's SL sector provides funding to promote sustainable land use practices, with both private and public sector entities, that result in a net reduction in GHG emissions or increase in carbon sequestration.³ Within the broad technical scope of the SL directive and the context of the PRO-IP, there are many ways in which USAID Missions and OUs can use SL funding to support Indigenous Peoples and their development goals, across the differentiated landscapes and ecosystems that represent their lands. These can include protecting and restoring mangroves, grasslands, wetlands, and tropical forests, improving sustainable forestry practices, silvopastoral systems and agricultural lands to improve livelihoods, reforestation and restoration, protecting ecosystems, and strengthening resilience while reducing GHG emissions.

USAID recognizes that, in addition to forests, there are other ecosystems whose tree cover and soil also provide important carbon sequestration and storage ecosystem services, such as tropical grasslands and rangelands. However, much of the emphasis of this SL guidance document focuses on forested

IDENTIFYING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

The context and circumstances of Indigenous Peoples varies in the different countries and regions where USAID works. In some countries, Indigenous Peoples constitute a small minority within the population, while in others they are the majority. In some countries, Indigenous Peoples have legal recognition and are able to maintain their distinct identities, spiritual practices, and customary relationships with their lands, yet in others their very survival is at risk. The terminology used to describe them also varies, with many countries refusing to acknowledge them as Indigenous Peoples.

Recognizing this variation, USAID does not have a single, standardized definition of Indigenous Peoples. Instead, USAID (like other international and inter-governmental organizations) identifies Indigenous Peoples based on a set of criteria which may be present depending on the region or country in which Indigenous Peoples are located. These criteria include: self-identification as distinct social and cultural group; recognition of this identity by others; historical continuity with pre-colonial and/or pre-settler societies; collective attachment to territories and their natural resources; distinct language or dialect; and/or resolve to maintain and reproduce their ancestral environments and systems as distinctive peoples and communities.

³ The joint State Department and USAID [Operational Guidance](#) defines SL programs as those that promote: sustainable land use practices through the development of low emissions development plans and/or Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD+) strategies; improved data and analytical tools; monitoring, reporting, and verification systems; enabling laws and policies; effective implementing institutions; social and environmental safeguards; economic incentives; and demonstration activities.

landscapes, because in USAID countries prioritized for SL funding that also have significant indigenous populations, SL funding prioritizes avoiding, reducing, and/or minimizing forest loss (deforestation) and forest degradation, because it is the land-use change that will result in the most significant net reductions of GHG emissions. Within this context, SL funding is often used for a variety of objectives, including strengthening indigenous tenure security for environmental management objectives, addressing the drivers of deforestation, and improving environmental governance of community-based monitoring, supporting sustainable livelihoods, and community-based forestry, agroforestry and silvopastoralism. Furthermore, landscape-based support for the SL objectives of reducing deforestation and GHG emissions often promotes the development objectives of Indigenous Peoples. Reducing or avoiding deforestation and promoting sustainable land use practices positively contribute to many of the development challenges Indigenous Peoples face related to sustainable forest management, land use practices, and their broader conservation efforts.

CHALLENGES/KEY ISSUES

USAID programs in many countries promote sustainable land use practices that improve outcomes both for Indigenous Peoples as well as for forest conservation. This section draws attention to the array of challenges associated with programming SL funding in support of Indigenous Peoples. Applying the [PRO-IP](#) will help OUs address many of these challenges and better align USAID SL priorities and objectives with Indigenous Peoples' self-determined development.

Environmental governance and law enforcement processes are often weaker and poorly enforced in the remote, forested, sparsely populated, and less developed regions where indigenous lands or other customary land arrangements are typically located

- Deploying resources and building and maintaining capacity in these areas can be comparatively more costly and operationally challenging, particularly since these areas are often characterized by weak state presence and higher levels of corruption and illegality. Overlapping jurisdictions and poor coordination among authorities can lead to multiple land use categories on a single tract of land (e.g., timber harvesting, mining or hydrocarbon exploration/extraction licenses within an indigenous territory), further complicating land tenure processes and presenting additional risk, delay and uncertainty as Indigenous Peoples seek tenure security.
- Weak, poorly managed, or corrupted environmental governance processes negatively impact Indigenous Peoples, their lands, and their livelihoods, even in those countries where indigenous land rights are recognized⁴. These environmental governance processes occur at all levels of governance and address technical issues often prioritized for SL-funded support. Examples include:
 - National level – forest monitoring, inventories, and oversight; environmental law enforcement; free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) and consultations;
 - Regional level – extractive industry licensing, social and environmental impact assessments, issuance of forest titles and concessions, jurisdiction and enforcement of land use categories, and the establishment and management of protected areas and indigenous territories; and

⁴ For example, the Republic of Congo constitutionally recognized the rights of Indigenous Peoples (albeit, recently: October 2015). Article 16 of its Constitution guarantees and provides promotion and protection of the rights of Indigenous Peoples. However, the [International Working Group for Indigenous Affairs \(IWGIA\)](#) contends that in the Republic of Congo, “the indigenous population continues to suffer discrimination and marginalization.”

- Local level – coordination mechanisms between indigenous governance and local authorities, community-based monitoring and oversight, patrolling/local enforcement, and capacity gaps of indigenous and local government organizations.

SL-funded activities for Indigenous Peoples and their territories often face numerous landscape- or ecosystem-wide natural resource technical challenges

- [Deforestation research](#) and spatial analyses demonstrate that as unregulated or poorly planned development advances into remote areas (e.g., roads, infrastructure, extractive industries), deforestation typically follows; a dynamic that can disproportionately affect indigenous lands due to their comparatively remote locations. These developments incentivize further land conversion and deforestation that contributes to a downward cycle of natural resource depletion and diminished ecosystem services (forest carbon, climate regulation, hydrological cycles, etc.).
- Many of the most intact primary forests (i.e., less deforested) and other critical carbon sinks are isolated and less accessible. They also often correlate or overlap with areas of great biological significance and indigenous diversity. For example, the very few remaining stands of mahogany in the Amazon Basin are almost exclusively found [in largely inaccessible areas \(e.g., protected areas and indigenous lands\) of the Amazon border regions](#), far from roads and large rivers – [areas that also have](#) the highest levels of both biological and indigenous diversity. As the valuable timber and other natural resources are depleted from more accessible areas, these less accessible biodiverse and carbon-rich areas and the Indigenous Peoples that live there become more vulnerable to and threatened by illegal logging, land grabs and other illicit activities.
- Uncontacted Indigenous Peoples and those living in voluntary isolation or initial contact are [particularly vulnerable](#) as their lands are located in areas that, by definition, are isolated. For example, estimates indicate that there are at least 70 uncontacted tribes across the Amazon Basin, with [the highest numbers in Brazil and Peru](#) along their isolated Amazon border regions. Their isolation makes government enforcement more challenging, and increases their vulnerability to disease, impacts from unregulated land-use change, environmental contamination (e.g., [mercury contamination from alluvial gold mining](#)), and illegal activity from mining, ranching, drug and wildlife trafficking and logging, activities that either directly cause or are drivers of deforestation and thus contribute to increased GHG emissions.

Co-programming SL funding with biodiversity funding can lead to various technical, monitoring, and reporting challenges

- OUs often choose to co-program SL and biodiversity funds, particularly when programming SL funding for activities that aim to support Indigenous Peoples, their territories, and other forested areas. This can present challenges for activity design, implementation and reporting, particularly in those USAID missions and OUs where there are overlaps between those prioritized for SL funding, that also have significant lands under indigenous management, and that are also priorities for biodiversity funding. The table below highlights these convergences among those OUs that are prioritized for SL funding, are also biodiversity priorities, and have significant area designated for indigenous or customary lands; the gray rows represent the greatest convergence of factors.
- Under these circumstances it is important to incorporate USAID’s design, implementation, monitoring, and reporting requirements and restrictions of both SL and biodiversity funding. USAID’s [Biodiversity Policy](#), [Biodiversity Code](#), [Biodiversity and Development Handbook](#), [Integrating Biodiversity and Sustainable Landscapes in USAID Programming](#) (which contains specific guidance on the intersection of biodiversity and sustainable landscapes considerations)

and the [Effective Engagement with Indigenous Peoples: USAID Biodiversity Sector Guidance Document](#) can all be useful resources.

USAID SL FUNDING PRIORITIES AND INDIGENOUS LANDS							
USAID Mission/Regional Program	SL Funding Priorities (FY17)	Biodiversity Priority (Tier)	Indigenous/Community Lands (formal)	Indigenous/Community Lands (informal)	Area (MHa) Ind. Lands	Carbon Stored (MtC)	Notes
LAC REGION							
Guatemala	X	2	16.58%			447	
Mexico	X		52.02%		101.13	2,837	
Colombia	X	I	33.87%		37.58	5,486	
Peru	X	I	34.81%	26.2%	35.29	2,995	
Brazil		I	23.3%	N/A	114.63	17,424	
South America Reg.	X	I	~33%*				RAISG , WWF
AFR REGION							
DRC	X	I	0%	86.4%	195.88*	9,119	* Unofficial area estimates
Zambia	X		67.5%		39.21	3,679	
Madagascar	X	I	11.9%	64.1%	44.62*		Gov't recognition of customary land; * Unofficial estimates
Malawi	X	2					
CARPE	X	I					
W. Africa	X						
ASIA REGION							
Vietnam	X	I	N/A	N/A			53 recognized ethnic minorities (13.4m, 14% popn.)
Cambodia	X		3.33%			33	24 recognized IPs (400,000, 2-3% popn.)
Philippines	X	I	21.34%		1.65	542	IPs est. at 10-20% pop; 10.3-20.6 m)
Indonesia	X	I	0.5%	22.5%	42.86	7,068	Unofficial area estimates. 1,128 recognized IPs 50-70m; 20-28% popn.

Sources: [IWGIA](#), [Landmark](#), [RRI](#), USAID's [Foreign Aid Explorer](#)

Informal community norms for forest tenure security and related natural resources use may not adequately protect the rights of indigenous women.

- The [literature](#) on indigenous women's land rights and natural resources management demonstrates that [indigenous women and men use and benefit from forests differently](#) and have substantially differentiated roles in [forest use, management, and decision-making](#). Land and natural resources rights for women are often not adequately protected, and usually even less so for indigenous women. Furthermore, laws, regulations, and indigenous or communal tenure practices designed to redress these differences are often limited to women's *access and use* of natural resources rather than a more expansive approach to extend rights to the *control and/or management* of natural resources. Similarly, in most countries prioritized for USAID SL funding,

indigenous [women's rights to participate in decision-making](#) around the use, management, conservation, and inheritance of forests and other community-based tenure regimes (CBTR) are not adequately codified or protected under national law and when they are, there is often a significant gap between land and forest tenure laws and the tenure practices and norms of Indigenous Peoples.

- Disparities between women's and men's land and natural resources rights are often [greater among indigenous communities](#). Unless these differences are intentionally addressed through programming or host-country government interventions, such as statutory protections ensuring women's rights and/or advocacy for relevant policy reforms, OI support to CBTRs may result in disenfranchising the rights of women. For example, [one recent global survey](#) of 80 different CBTRs found that 81 percent of them do not adequately address gender in decision-making and/or fail to acknowledge women's voting rights in their decision-making bodies. The study concluded that "stronger protections for women's tenure rights are closely associated with more robust statutory recognition of community-based forest tenure." Thus, even when indigenous community forest tenure is recognized, it requires special attention to ensure those community ownership structures recognize women's rights and economic independence.

Obstacles to ensuring tenure security for Indigenous Peoples' lands can hinder forest conservation and management efforts

- [Indigenous Peoples have legal rights to 22 to 31 percent of tropical forests](#) in low and middle-income countries. Deforestation and forest degradation rates are [significantly lower](#) on these indigenous lands. Conversely, forest degradation rates are higher in those areas where tenure security is weakest. Current estimates are that lands managed by Indigenous Peoples and communities contain [22 percent of the total forest carbon stored](#) in 52 tropical and subtropical countries, [an amount equivalent to 33 times the global energy emissions of 2017](#). Yet one-third of these lands lack tenure security.
- When Indigenous Peoples lack tenure security, incentives are not conducive to forest conservation for carbon storage or for Indigenous Peoples' lands and livelihoods. As clear title is often a prerequisite to receive the benefits of forest dependent livelihoods and payment for ecosystems services (PES), lack of investment in the formalization of Indigenous Peoples' land rights can undermine effective forest stewardship and lead to increased deforestation. An additional related risk for Indigenous Peoples is that as PES, REDD+ and/or other forms of forest carbon-related activities become more prevalent and add considerable value to the land, it could create perverse incentives to either restrict the advancement of indigenous tenure security for forested lands or title these areas to the State or other powerful actors.
- Although the bulk of evidence points to the causal link between stronger tenure security and reduced deforestation/degradation and reduced GHG emissions, advancing the legal recognition of Indigenous Peoples' land rights faces implementation barriers in many countries, arising from lack of political will, resources, and complex legal and bureaucratic hurdles. The formalization of indigenous land tenure can be difficult,

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES POLICIES OF RELEVANT ENVIRONMENT SECTOR DONORS

Several multi-/bilateral donors and stakeholder platforms whose work and funding priorities are relevant for Indigenous Peoples and SL also have Indigenous Peoples policies that in some cases explicitly prioritize improving stakeholder engagement and the connections between forest tenure security and Indigenous Peoples. See the following examples: [Green Climate Fund](#), [UN-REDD](#), [IADB](#), [ADB](#), [GEF](#), [African Development Bank](#), [Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative](#), and [REPALEAC \(The Network of Indigenous and Local Populations for the Sustainable Management of Central African Forest Ecosystems\)](#).

costly, and time consuming, [in many countries averaging 15–17 steps involving five to seven government agencies](#). Latin America leads other regions in the formal/legal recognition of indigenous land rights, as Asia and Africa (despite some progress in recognizing customary land rights) lag behind.

These challenges function as drivers for conflict and are exacerbated by unsustainable, poorly planned, or unregulated land use practices (i.e., illegal logging, extractive industries, infrastructure development) and overlapping land use categories

- Road and hydropower dam construction, along with the activities of extractive industries (mining and hydrocarbons), often occur on or adjacent to indigenous territories without adequate consultation of Indigenous Peoples. These and other forms of infrastructure development frequently act as threat multipliers leading to additional incursions, deforestation, and critical losses of forest habitat that contribute to increases in GHG emissions, which are counterproductive to SL objectives. They also are drivers of social conflict which can further marginalize Indigenous Peoples and weaken their collective attachment to their territories and surrounding natural resources. The PRO-IP recognizes that uncontacted Indigenous Peoples and those living in voluntary isolation or initial contact are often even more vulnerable to these threats.
- [A recent study](#) of 6,345 indigenous territories in the Amazon Basin and threats from six types of infrastructure development, showed that only eight percent of indigenous lands are not threatened by any infrastructure activities. Forty-one percent of the territories are threatened by one, 32 percent threatened by two, and 14 percent are threatened by three infrastructure activities. Indigenous lands are particularly vulnerable to these threats and their drivers when they have weaker or unrecognized tenure security.
- There are several notable examples in USAID countries where significant conflicts related to indigenous lands developed, in turn shaping the direction of and/or context for USAID programming. In 2008, the [Colombian Constitutional Court struck down the forestry law](#) for lack of sufficient prior consultation. In 2009 [in Bagua, Peru there was violent conflict](#) between the state and indigenous communities over the potential opening up of indigenous lands for extractive industries, resulting in the deaths of 32 people⁵. Brazil also saw conflict arise between government authorities and Indigenous Peoples around the issue of the environmental management of their traditional lands, due to government actions taken to weaken forest and other environmental regulations, and incursions from roads, extractive industries, and hydroelectric dams (e.g., the [Belo Monte hydroelectric dam project](#)). Most recently in the [Democratic Republic of Congo \(DRC\)](#), violence erupted between local Indigenous Peoples and Park Rangers of the Kahuzi-Biéga National Park over land use (for charcoal development, driven by extreme poverty) within the park boundaries that contain their traditional lands.

Barriers to effective stakeholder engagement and adequate consultations can exacerbate development challenges and undermine SL programmatic outcomes

- Inadequately planned, resourced or monitored stakeholder engagement and consultation processes often fail to meaningfully incorporate the views of Indigenous Peoples in activity design and implementation. They may come too late in the process to effectively address structural problems and thereby only address the direct impacts. Ineffective stakeholder engagement and consultations contribute to poor project outcomes and can result in unintended consequences that foster conflict (see examples above) by broadening the

⁵ See also: <http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1903707,00.html>

disenfranchisement and development gaps that Indigenous Peoples already face and/or exacerbating some negative environmental impacts to indigenous lands, including deforestation.

- Ongoing and effective two-way communication with Indigenous Peoples is essential for stakeholder engagement, consultations, and successful SL outcomes, yet stark differences in language, cultural norms, practices, traditions, and beliefs can make this vital communication between USAID staff, implementing partners, and indigenous counterparts exceptionally challenging. USAID/Guatemala staff noted that norms, practices, beliefs, intergenerational dialogue, shared cultural memory and trauma, and/or reconciliation processes can also negatively impact communication, not only between Indigenous Peoples and other development stakeholders, but also importantly between and within indigenous groups.

LESSONS LEARNED: USAID CASE STUDIES

The following USAID programs provide important lessons learned for working with Indigenous Peoples in the SL sector.

TABLE 1. BIOREDD+ PROJECT – COLOMBIA (2011 – 2015)

Program Overview: BioREDD+ was USAID/Colombia’s flagship \$30 million environmental program; at the time, it was one of USAID’s largest bilaterally-funded environmental programs. It had three components – climate change mitigation, biodiversity conservation, and alternatives to small-scale gold mining. USAID designed the project to support the biodiverse and highly threatened forest of the Choco-Darien ecoregion of Colombia’s Pacific coast by mitigating climate change, conserving biodiversity, and strengthening environmental governance. In partnership with the Government of Colombia (GOC), BioREDD+ supported 18 collectively-tenured Afro-Colombian and indigenous communities to conserve their forests and indigenous culture by working with them to develop eight REDD+ projects and accompanying sustainable livelihood activities.

Theory of Change	Activities	Implementation Challenges	Successes	Lessons Learned
BioREDD+’s official purpose was to “reinforce Colombian efforts to sustainably manage and use environmental assets in mitigating and adapting to climate change, preserving biodiversity, and promoting economic growth.” BioREDD+’s theory of change also recognized three pillars of community development, all of which are required to succeed in REDD+:	BioREDD+’s official purpose was to “reinforce Colombian efforts to sustainably manage and use environmental assets in mitigating and adapting to climate change, preserving biodiversity, and promoting economic growth.” BioREDD+’s theory of change also recognized three pillars of community development, all of which are required to succeed in REDD+:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Engagement: REDD+ project development on Afro-Colombian and indigenous collectively tenured lands takes a long time. USAID/Colombia committed over 15 years of support for natural forest management, sustainable forestry and livelihoods, and other related forest carbon activities with the Afro-Colombian and indigenous forest communities of the Choco-Darien through a legacy of projects. USAID support included the Más Inversión para el Desarrollo Alternativo Sostenible (MIDAS) project (natural forestry component), transition funding to local organizations to provide continuity of community support, BioREDD+, additional transition funding to local organizations, and the current five-year project, the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BioREDD+ turned forest conservation into economic opportunities for the Choco communities by supporting a project portfolio of eight Verified Carbon Standard (VCS) REDD+ projects (covering over 700,000 hectares) that included both carbon assets and NTFP value chains like cacao, coconut, and açai. The project developed the value chain activities as a partnership between private sector entities (e.g., agribusinesses) and the communities, generating revenue and employment for the communities, securing their long-term buy-in. To develop the forest carbon component, Bio-REDD+ worked with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration’s (NASA’s) Jet Propulsion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community-based approaches to forest carbon/REDD+ activities with Indigenous Peoples take a long time. They require a significant commitment of time and resources from USAID missions and OUs, typically well beyond the normal USAID project cycle. To safeguard the multi-stakeholder commitment needed in order to ensure the certifiable results that are required over the long term for successful forest carbon/REDD+ projects, sustained, frequent, and iterative stakeholder engagement is required at all levels, from the

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Theory of Change	Activities	Implementation Challenges	Successes	Lessons Learned
<p>natural resource base; and wealth increased community-wide to reduce the economic necessity to cut trees.</p>	<p>community-wide on the natural resource base; and wealth increased community-wide to reduce the economic necessity to cut trees.</p>	<p>Páramos and Forests Activity (awarded in March 2018).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marketing BioREDD+ Carbon Credits in a Globally Depressed Carbon Market: BioREDD+ did not meet its carbon finance leverage target, as the project was ultimately unable to market and sell the carbon credits prior to the end of the activity, likely due to the deterioration of the voluntary market for carbon credits during the life of the project. The failure to meet the \$9 million leverage target (zero percent achievement) was a reflection of a weak REDD+/forest carbon global market and a paucity of international funding in the voluntary carbon sector, factors outside the manageable interests of either BioREDD+ or USAID/Colombia. This support now continues under the Páramos and Forests Activity which is engaging with the Colombian domestic regulated carbon market for additional support. 	<p>Laboratory to establish the carbon baselines, certify them under the VCS-Gold Standard, and developed a tool to track forest degradation. USAID also developed the first Development Credit Authority carbon guarantee to an investment fund as an incentive to market carbon credits. Finally, Bio-REDD+ and USAID/Colombia also supported the Stand For Trees web platform and communications campaign, which aimed to support individual action to curb deforestation by purchasing individual REDD+ credits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participating communities and other stakeholders widely appreciated BioREDD+’s sustainable livelihoods and biodiversity activities. Combined, these BioREDD+ efforts provided forest communities with sustainable livelihoods that had forest conservation as the core activity, while also supporting the GOC climate goals. 	<p>community level to local non-governmental organizations, host country governments (local, regional, and national), the private sector, and the international community of donors and carbon finance stakeholders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Given the lengthy timeframe, successful complementary sustainable livelihood activities are needed to secure community buy-in and sustained engagement in forest carbon activities.

TABLE 2: SUPPORTING FORESTS AND BIODIVERSITY – CAMBODIA⁶ (2012 – 2018)

Program Overview: USAID/Cambodia’s Supporting Forests and Biodiversity (SFB) project, a \$25 million cooperative agreement with co-programmed sustainable landscapes and biodiversity funding, delivered meaningful results to improve conservation, environmental governance, forest management, and livelihood outcomes in two forest landscapes to mitigate climate change and conserve biodiversity. Within the two landscapes of Prey Lang and the Eastern Plains, SFB improved the participation of local communities, Indigenous Peoples and other stakeholders, in forest management decisions.

Theory of Change	Activities	Implementation Challenges	Successes	Lessons Learned
<p>SFB’s theory of change emphasized social inclusion: “Lasting change requires action across multiple geographic scales with the participation of the full range of stakeholders.” Based on the SFB official goal and objectives, it could also be described as:</p> <p>If effectiveness of government and key natural resources managers at national and subnational levels to sustainably manage forests and conserve biodiversity is enhanced (Objective 1), and if constructive dialogue on forest management and economic development at the national and subnational levels is improved (Objective 2), and if equitable economic benefits from the sustainable management of forests are increased</p>	<p>SFB implemented activities in the two targeted landscapes across six different activity areas: protected areas and biodiversity; environmental education and awareness; land tenure and constructive dialogue; livelihoods; gender; and collaborative landscape management. The specific SFB activities and results involving Indigenous Peoples were primarily community-based forest management, indigenous</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While Cambodia officially supports forest conservation, government-granted economic land concessions frequently lead to increased deforestation, increased insecurity, land seizures, and—in some cases—eviction of forest-dependent communities. These tenure-insecure families and communities migrate for lack of opportunity, often contributing to deforestation elsewhere. • ICTs and community forest management require an array of complex and lengthy technical assistance before forest management activities can begin, including area identification, registration, legalization, demarcation, forest inventories, and a forest management plan. The SFB Mid-Term Evaluation noted “it can take years to deliver the needed training and technical input to support the approach, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thirteen of the 41 community-based land titles that SFB successfully advanced were for indigenous communities. SFB also supported 18 community forests and 10 community protected areas. For example, the ICT process with a Bunong indigenous community resulted in the titling of 650 hectares to 72 families, in turn supporting their efforts to reduce land invasions and deforestation while generating income from NTFPs and ecotourism, strengthening biodiversity, and mitigating climate change. • USAID FrontLines reported that SFB brought community and government representatives together in a constructive dialogue to “foster trust between all stakeholders needed to make forest conservation work.” SFB also provided training in community forest management, sustainable collection, use and commercialization of NTFPs, and ecotourism development. • SFB supported Open Development Cambodia, an open data web platform that serves as an online platform to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although community management of NTFPs can improve incomes, effective strategies are needed to strengthen market access, support sustainable natural resource extraction, and reinvest portions of revenue in conservation activities if these interventions are to lead to improved outcomes for both forests and communities. • SFB found that levels of indigenous community governance capacity had a significant impact on the success of securing long-term tenure. Those indigenous communities with stronger governance capacity (i.e., adequate capacity to communicate both within their community and externally with

⁶ Sources include: [Supporting Forests and Biodiversity Final Report](#) (Winrock), [SFB Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan](#) (Winrock), [SFB Mid-Term Performance Evaluation](#), (Integra LLC), and USAID Frontlines “[New Generation Now ‘Living with Confidence’ in Cambodia’s Endangered Forests](#)”

TABLE 2: SUPPORTING FORESTS AND BIODIVERSITY – CAMBODIA⁶ (2012 – 2018)

Program Overview: USAID/Cambodia’s Supporting Forests and Biodiversity (SFB) project, a \$25 million cooperative agreement with co-programmed sustainable landscapes and biodiversity funding, delivered meaningful results to improve conservation, environmental governance, forest management, and livelihood outcomes in two forest landscapes to mitigate climate change and conserve biodiversity. Within the two landscapes of Prey Lang and the Eastern Plains, SFB improved the participation of local communities, Indigenous Peoples and other stakeholders, in forest management decisions.

Theory of Change	Activities	Implementation Challenges	Successes	Lessons Learned
(Objective 3); then conservation and governance of the Eastern Plains and Prey Lang landscapes will improve (Goal).	community land titles (ICTs), and livelihood support.	[and that] the legal protection offered is only weakly enforced.”	access and visualize Cambodian development data. SFB’s support included new interactive map layers detailing registered Cambodian collective and indigenous lands in both English and Khmer languages.	authorities, and to understand the legal aspects of the titling process) were better able to secure title and counter threats to their land and resources.

TABLE 3: THE REDD+ ALLIANC – MEXICO

Program Overview: [The USAID Mexico REDD+ Alliance](#), implemented by The Nature Conservancy in conjunction with the Rainforest Alliance, the Woods Hole Research Center, and Espacios Naturales y Desarrollo Sustentable, worked with the Mexican government, civil society, and local communities in the rural sector to address drivers of deforestation and implement sustainable land use practices and strategies that encourage the protection of forests and ecosystems. The overall objective was to mitigate climate change and help communities increase their incomes through more efficient use of their land and forests, reducing deforestation and forest degradation through the promotion of sustainable farming, ranching and forestry practices. The team implemented activities in several landscapes across Mexico (priority action areas for REDD+, or PAAs), including in the states of Oaxaca and Chiapas, which it selected because they maintain significant, unique, and threatened forests and are home to many indigenous and forest-dependent communities.

Theory of Change	Activities	Implementation Challenges	Successes	Lessons Learned
<p>The Mexico REDD+ Alliance worked at three scales (local, state, and national), with a practice-to-policy approach designed to test tools and models at the local level and that provide lessons learned to inform and refine state and national strategies. This multi-level work fostered local involvement in implementing strategies to reduce deforestation and promote sustainable production, as well as influenced public policies for REDD+ and sustainable land-use at national and state levels.</p>	<p>Mexico REDD+ Alliance activities included: implementing climate-smart rural development models and promotion of best practices (sustainable farming/ranching, and low-carbon forestry) that improve livelihoods and conserve forests; supporting the establishment of a national REDD+ system and sub-national REDD+ models in key states; and promoting and supporting knowledge transfer and capacity building, especially in rural and indigenous communities and government entities. More so than other activities, the knowledge transfer and capacity building component had an explicit intent to benefit Indigenous Peoples and other smallholder forest-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indigenous and other rural smallholder and forest-dependent communities are often called upon to undertake forest carbon related activities, yet traditionally do not have access to the education needed to make informed decisions about their lands and forests. The climate curriculum’s long-term success required continued communication and follow-up. Encouraging rural schoolteachers to participate in the climate change workshops and gaining their long-term support for the curriculum development and rollout was difficult given frequent strikes and the long distances between communities and workshop locations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transformed land use practices on 6,307 hectares in 86 rural communities, including ejido and indigenous lands, through the REDD+ field projects. These activities promoted conservation agriculture, agroforestry, silvopastoral, and sustainable forest management production methods, and ultimately improved forest conservation on over 13,000 hectares of priority forests. Supported the consultations for the National REDD+ System, in which 12,245 Indigenous and Afro-descendent People and 5,468 ejido residents participated. Promoted community-based climate change education through the creation and distribution of the Forest Conservation and Climate Change Curriculum for rural school teachers, designed to promote awareness of forest and climate change issues for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers often have a critical leadership role within Mexican indigenous and smallholder rural communities, and therefore can be important advocates for change, promoting increased climate change awareness and generating support for REDD+ activities at the local level. Customized and culturally appropriate climate change education materials, adapted to local contexts to explain complicated issues like carbon sequestration, deforestation drivers, unsustainable land use practices, and climate impacts, can help establish a baseline of community-level support needed for sustainable land-use and forest management practices that form the basis of successful REDD+ activities. Success for the Mexican National REDD+ System that supports Mexico’s efforts to meet its climate change

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Theory of Change	Activities	Implementation Challenges	Successes	Lessons Learned
	dependent communities. The project developed a community-based climate change educational curriculum, using the Forest Conservation and Climate Change Curriculum Toolkit , to “ensure that indigenous and smallholder communities receive the knowledge needed to make informed decisions about their natural resources and actively participate in REDD+ discussions and actions.”		rural schoolchildren, with a particular emphasis on indigenous and smallholder communities.	mitigation commitments starts locally. It is built upon raising awareness, advocating, and building capacity for sustainable land use and community-based forest management practices. To sustain these efforts and promote scalability, monitoring, reporting and verification methods, social and environmental safeguards, and inclusive approaches to stakeholder engagement must be adapted to local contexts, particularly when working with indigenous and other smallholder forest dependent communities.

BEST PRACTICES

Opportunities to enhance SL programming for Indigenous Peoples need to be developed in the context of their broader territorial and sociocultural context. Below are some best practices that can contribute to success in partnering with Indigenous Peoples to implement SL-funded activities and mitigate risks of any unintended negative consequences. These best practices recognize that SL activities with Indigenous Peoples need to serve SL objectives and be appropriately differentiated to effectively link with cultural identities, territorial visions, and traditional norms and practices.

Develop improved assessment, engagement, and consultation approaches.

- The [PRO-IP](#) notes that if there are risks of adverse impacts on the rights, livelihoods, culture, lands and territories, natural resources, or sacred sites, or of relocation, OUs should seek the FPIC from indigenous communities for project or activity implementation (including mitigation measures) in accordance with international standards.
- There is a plethora of global standards, guidance and tools that USAID OUs can deploy to improve consultation and engagement with Indigenous Peoples, including those found below. International standards on FPIC and other relevant consultation standards can be found in key instruments, such as the [International Labor Organization Convention 169 – Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention \(1989\)](#), the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#), and international “soft” law guidance documents, such as the [Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure \(2012\)](#) and the [Akwé: Kon Voluntary Guidelines \(2004\)](#). [USAID’s Indigenous Peoples Consultation Handbook](#) presents concrete guidance for engaging with Indigenous Peoples in a transparent and inclusive manner, ensuring meaningful participation. [The Free, Prior and Informed Consent Primer](#) highlights the various phases of FPIC and relevant steps in each phase that should be followed to ensure FPIC is respected. Additionally, specific FPIC guidance for Indigenous Peoples related to SL-related technical issues (community forestry, avoided deforestation, REDD+, etc.) include: [Free Prior, and Informed Consent in REDD+](#) (Center for Peoples and Forests), [Training Manual on FPIC in REDD+ for Indigenous Peoples](#) (Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact and the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs), the [FPIC360 Tool](#) from Equitable Origin, and the [United Nations-REDD Guidelines on FPIC](#).
- OUs should consider developing specific strategies and approaches that address the issues pertinent to the locations in which they operate. [USAID/Guatemala’s Indigenous Peoples Engagement Strategy](#) presents a compelling model that other missions could follow and tailor to fit their own contexts. It is designed to dovetail with the mission's Country Development Cooperation Strategy and several of its guiding implementation principles are relevant to SL programming priorities, particularly (3) emphasis on community-driven sustainable development,

SELF-GOVERNANCE OF INDIGENOUS CUSTOMARY TENURE

“Indigenous peoples and other communities with customary tenure systems that exercise self-governance of land, fisheries and forests should promote and provide equitable, secure and sustainable rights to those resources, with special attention to the provision of equitable access for women. Effective participation of all members, men, women and youth, in decisions regarding their tenure systems should be promoted through their local or traditional institutions, including in the case of collective tenure systems. Where necessary, communities should be assisted to increase the capacity of their members to participate fully in decision-making and governance of their tenure systems.”

— Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security

and (4) fair use/recognition of indigenous land, territories and resources. USAID/Colombia also established clear strategies for engagement with Indigenous Peoples, including strategies for co-creating activities and [annual program statements \(APSs\)](#) for direct awards in collaboration with Afro-Colombian and indigenous organizations.

Do no harm, as a principle.

- Putting into practice the principle of “do no harm” requires a [comprehensive understanding of the linkages](#) among land tenure, gender, and generational dynamics affecting various Indigenous Peoples. As stated in the USAID [Issue Brief on Tenure and Indigenous Peoples](#), “assistance to Indigenous Peoples through strengthening tenure security requires attention to issues and limiting factors with which Indigenous Peoples identify when they produce their own long-term plans for development...Therefore, development efforts should address the specific needs of Indigenous Peoples while ensuring that well-intentioned initiatives do not inadvertently harm these communities.”
- In isolated forest areas where uncontacted indigenous groups and those living in voluntary isolation may be located, USAID should support and advocate for host country “no contact” policies. The [PRO-IP](#) notes that, “USAID should support efforts to recognize, respect and protect their lands and territories, health and cultures. The Agency should not fund or support projects that could lead to undesired contact or that could potentially have negative impacts on the lands and resources of Indigenous Peoples.”
- [Guidance from the USAID Forest Carbon, Markets and Communities \(FCMC\)](#) project notes that “(t)he concept of ‘social and environmental soundness’ (SES) encompasses a range of different issues, approaches, methodologies, interventions and monitoring. This approach includes the establishment of safeguard policies, identification of tools and methods, best practices standards and assessment of impacts, as well as utilization of participatory and inclusive approaches to the identification, design, appraisal, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of interventions and broad stakeholder engagement.” Strong SES safeguards and standards can enable SL programming for Indigenous Peoples to go beyond the “do no harm” principle of mitigating risk to support “do good” outcomes, in terms of investing in specific and positive co-benefits for indigenous and other forest dependent communities, such as tenure benefits, revenue-sharing of forest carbon, and the development of user-friendly decentralized environmental monitoring and mapping tools for Indigenous Peoples, their livelihoods, and their territories.
- There are ample technical resources and guidance (and training) available on SES safeguards/standards and environmental and social impact assessments, including USAID’s [REDD+ Social Safeguards and Standards Review](#), USAID’s [Stakeholder Engagement in the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment \(ESIA\) Process](#), [Developing Social and Environmental Safeguards for REDD+: A Guide for a Bottom-Up Approach](#) (Forest Trends), and [Safeguards in REDD+ and Forest Carbon Standards](#) (ClimateFocus).

Promote approaches that empower Indigenous Peoples in programming.

- Missions and OUs should involve Indigenous Peoples directly in the design and implementation of SL-funded activities. [USAID/Colombia’s co-creation mechanisms](#) (applicable to APSs or broad agency announcements) and USAID’s South America Regional Environment Program [Amazon Indigenous Rights and Resources Request for Information](#) provide relevant examples. Empowerment of and partnership with Indigenous Peoples are key objectives and operating principles in the PRO-IP, which states, “partnerships could include partnering and co-creating with Indigenous Peoples in all stages of the project design process including the development of methodology for an Inclusive Development Analysis, the design of consultation processes, the

drafting of the program descriptions and scopes of work and the design of any communications that target indigenous audiences.”

- Consider using mapping and geographic information systems (GIS) to contribute to transparency about indigenous land rights and reduce conflicting claims.
 - The goal of [SERVIR Amazonia](#), the SL-funded Amazon Basin focused hub of the USAID and NASA global [SERVIR network](#), is to “improve local capacity to harness satellite data and geospatial information to foster sustainable natural resource management throughout the Amazon.” The SERVIR Amazonia team of regional partners and staff, whose mission is *Connecting Space to Village: Geospatial Information for Improved Environmental Decision Making in the Amazon*, includes an indigenous advisor/subject matter expert and developed specific approaches to engage Indigenous People’s groups to assure both active representation and participation in the co-development process.
 - The [Tenure and Global Climate Change Paraguay Chaco activity](#) successfully supported Indigenous Peoples groups in Paraguay in consolidating indigenous land claims to help investors and commodity firms better understand risks associated with how existing or planned investments overlap with claims. This activity involved the creation of a web platform, called [Tierras Indígenas Paraguay](#), which increased availability of geospatial data on a public-oriented platform in order to boost the visibility of indigenous lands and inform due diligence activities that reduce social and environmental risks.
 - A [USAID/Brazil partnership with Amazon Conservation Team, Google Earth, and Open Data Kit \(ODK\)](#) empowers and mobilizes indigenous communities to map their territories and better manage and monitor over 1.6 million hectares of their lands. The activity builds the capacity of indigenous and *quilombo* peoples to use innovation and technology to efficiently manage their land and preserve their culture. Google Earth enables forest-dependent communities to map features of their territories, while ODK supports data collection and management, allowing users to study specific communities, understand their socioeconomic profile, and develop their own life plans that guide the management of their lands.
 - The [Monitoring of the Andean Amazon Project \(MAAP\)](#) is a project of the organization Amazon Conservation dedicated to near real-time deforestation monitoring and threats analysis in Peru, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Bolivia. The goal is to distribute important technical information through deforestation alerts and analyses in a timely manner and in an easy to understand format to an audience of policy makers, civil society, researchers, the media, and the public at large.

Invest in strengthening indigenous tenure of forests.

- Improving indigenous forest tenure security should be a priority for SL funding given its relatively lower costs and high benefit. In addition to the evidence supporting lower rates of deforestation and higher rates of carbon storage on indigenous lands, [various estimates](#) also show that over time the per-hectare costs of government policies, institutions and programs to secure and manage indigenous lands is a small fraction ([about one percent](#)) of the benefits derived from ecosystem services (including carbon storage). This reinforces the notion that strengthening indigenous forest tenure (typically prioritized by Indigenous Peoples as collective rights/community-based property rights, as opposed to individual title) represents a low-cost, high-benefit investment for SL programming, despite the paucity of a robust global market for forest carbon. There are several helpful online environmental monitoring and mapping tools (see

adjacent text box) that provide access to and synthesize data relevant for Indigenous Peoples and SL programming that can help to spatially pinpoint deforestation, estimate GHG emissions or carbon storage, visualize impacts from threats and their drivers on indigenous lands, and understand how other factors such as land tenure security, infrastructure development, and environmental governance/land use categories can affect change (positive or negative) on indigenous lands.

Promote inclusive approaches for improving environmental governance.

- USAID is developing and/or supporting programming in Peru, Guatemala, and elsewhere to support environmental justice, improved environmental law enforcement, and strengthened prosecution of environmental crimes. For example, support for Indigenous Peoples “control and oversight committees” to reduce land invasions and illegal logging (CVC according to its initials in Spanish) is an integral part of the environmental governance component of the USAID Securing a Sustainable, Profitable and Inclusive Forest Sector in Peru Activity (PRO-BOSQUES). Active community participation in the CVC in and around their collectively titled indigenous forests ensures not only more effective and accurate monitoring of indigenous forests, but also fosters market inclusiveness by their participation in forest value chains and supports Government of Peru efforts to develop and scale up its National Forest and Wildlife Information System, a national forest title, permitting, and legal timber tracking information system.
- Where the granting of land or forest concessions may lead to involuntary displacement or resettlement of Indigenous Peoples, the [USAID Guidelines on Compulsory Displacement and Resettlement in USAID Programming](#), can be a helpful resource.

Support sustainable livelihoods and land use practices for Indigenous Peoples.

- OUs should support differentiated approaches for indigenous livelihoods that promote sustainable land use practices and contribute to reduced GHG emissions from deforestation while contributing to positive outcomes for forest conservation and sustainable use of forest resources (both timber- and non-timber based). These differentiated approaches should allow Indigenous Peoples (and women within indigenous communities) to evaluate and equitably benefit from value chain opportunities/approaches.
- Third-party certification for forests, forest carbon, and commodities can be an important tool, both for advocating for strengthened indigenous land, forest and natural resource rights and for enhancing indigenous livelihoods through improved market access, among other benefits. Examples of third-party certification include the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), Sustainable Forest Initiative (SFI), Verified Carbon Standard (VCS), Climate Community Biodiversity Standard (CCB), Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO), Organic, and Fair Trade. Notably, some certification systems have internal bodies, guidelines or differentiated programming specifically for Indigenous Peoples (e.g., [FSC](#), [SFI](#), [CCBA](#)). However, despite their mostly positive contributions, impacts from certification schemes are quite limited. Current estimates are that

USEFUL ONLINE TOOLS & RESOURCES

[Global Forest Watch](#): The premier online platform providing unmatched data and tools for monitoring forests. GFW allows anyone to access near real-time information about where and how forests are changing around the world.

[LandMark's Mapping Tool](#): An interactive online platform providing maps and critical data on indigenous lands and other types of collectively held lands.

[Yale's Forest Atlas](#): The Global Forest Atlas highlights issues facing the world's forests, with a focus on the two largest tropical forest regions of the world, the Amazon and Congo Basins.

[Tenure Data Tool](#) (Rights and Resources): Tracks the ownership of (and changes in) the world's forests, comparing changes in forest tenure in the 52 most highly forested countries.

only about [10% of global forests are certified, 92% of which are in the Northern Hemisphere](#). Also, because certifications schemes are [largely voluntary and market-driven, not statutory – instead having to operate within existing national legal frameworks](#), *under no circumstances should they be considered a meaningful substitute for legal recognition and strengthening of indigenous land/forest tenure.*

- Community-based forest enterprises (CBFEs) and engagement with the commercial forestry sector can result in disproportionately lower shares of economic returns for Indigenous Peoples on their forestry activities and other forest-dependent livelihoods. However, sustainable livelihood activities for Indigenous Peoples, such as community-based forestry (both timber and non-timber) enterprises, when well-designed and implemented, can yield both important benefits both for Indigenous Peoples and improved SL outcomes. Activities should build upon [USAID’s learning from conservation enterprises](#) and the evidence-based recommendations from the [CBFE Guidance developed under the USAID Productive Landscapes Activity](#):
 - Successful CBFEs share four elements in common: secure land use rights, strong organizational governance and management, a viable and well-organized business model, and numerous partnerships with value chain actors;
 - Continuity of support: Successful CBFEs have “substantial, prolonged, direct and explicit subsidy or investment from the public sector”; and
 - Greater success occurs in those areas with less deforestation. This points toward the aforementioned importance of environmental governance and law enforcement.

Promote win-win SL partnerships between committed private sector champions and Indigenous Peoples based on responsible, equitable, and sustainable land use practices.

- Successful forest carbon activities, CBFEs, and sustainable livelihoods with Indigenous Peoples require sustained commitment and funding, both of which can easily expand well beyond the boundaries of USAID’s typical project timeline and investment levels. Long-term relationships with private sector entities and other value chain stakeholders are necessary to sustain the technical, organizational, and financial capacity requirements and leverage the funding needed to bring value chain and forest carbon products to market.
- USAID’s [Operational Guidelines for Responsible Land-Based Investment](#) provides key guidance on conducting due diligence, stakeholder engagement and mapping, and contract negotiations. The guidelines highlight how various international standards and performance standards call for the private sector to recognize, respect, and protect the land and resource rights of local communities, Indigenous Peoples, and others who hold legitimate rights to these assets. The guidelines state that “when a project fails to take adequate account of local land and resource rights, it can impose significant costs on local people, and on the project. It can inadvertently lead to costly delays, work stoppages, protests, and, in some cases, violence. Investors can face legal actions and suffer financial, brand, or reputational harm.”

Encourage a differentiated approach to monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) for SL activities that are designed to benefit Indigenous Peoples and their lands.

- There are numerous examples of SL-funded activities that are directly or indirectly benefiting Indigenous Peoples, their lands, and their livelihoods, or take place within regions with significant Indigenous populations or Indigenous territories, that are not specifically measured, analyzed, or learned from. This critical gap in data and understanding hinders informed environmental decision-making, effective learning, and knowledge management about how Indigenous Peoples benefit from and how they contribute to SL programming. MEL plans should go beyond simply disaggregating Indigenous beneficiaries in indicator results counts to developing innovative

measures of Indigenous Peoples benefits from and contribution to SL programming. For example, USAID/Peru, through its PRO-BOSQUES project, recently developed the [Indigenous Empowerment Index](#), which establishes a baseline across more than 20 indicators (including community and social benefits of forest livelihoods) to track changes in indigenous empowerment as a result of PRO-BOSQUES support to increase inclusivity and participation in sustainable forest value chains in the Peruvian Amazon.