

READINESS TO ENGAGE: STAKEHOLDER EXPERIENCES FOR REDD+ REPORT BRIEF

WHY ENGAGE STAKEHOLDERS?

Programs focusing on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forest and enhancements of forest carbon stocks (REDD+) need to work closely with **REDD+ stakeholders**: those who have interests in, or will be affected by, REDD+ strategies, programs, and projects.

Meaningful involvement of stakeholders is a means to achieve more sustainable policies, programs and projects that reflect stakeholder priorities, knowledge and ownership of implementation. Thus effective stakeholder engagement leads to better results.



Photo Credit: Nancy Diamond

Moreover, legal and policy frameworks for REDD+ should be informed by participation rights enshrined as basic human rights in many national constitutions and legal frameworks, as well as by international law and multilateral environmental agreements. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) specifies that Parties must "promote and cooperate in education, training and public awareness related to climate change and encourage the widest participation in this process, including that of non-governmental organizations." The 2010 REDD+ Cancun Safeguards specifically highlight the need for stakeholder engagement in REDD+. Civil society actors envision early, ongoing and authentic stakeholder engagement in program-level REDD+.

REVIEWING STAKEHOLDER EXPERIENCE IN REDD+

This brief highlights key issues from a report, *Readiness to Engage: Stakeholder Experiences for REDD+*, commissioned by the Forest Carbon, Markets and Communities (FCMC) program. The full report can be found at www.fcmcglobal.org.

The desk review covers national, sub-national and nested stakeholder engagement experiences, good practices and lessons learned. It also gives feedback on how stakeholder engagement can be enhanced throughout the REDD+ strategy preparation and programming cycle. The study is

designed for government, donor, non-governmental organization and civil society organization staff and other actors designing and implementing REDD+ activities.

The study focuses on national, sub-national and nested (meaning the sub-national may “nested” in, or linked to, national processes) stakeholder engagement experiences, rather than project-level work with stakeholders. It provides feedback on how stakeholder engagement can be enhanced throughout the REDD+ strategy and programming cycle.

TYPES OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The study found that stakeholder engagement in REDD+ can be categorized according to four major types, by convener objectives and by increasing levels of power sharing between government and other stakeholders:

- **Type A – Information Sharing and Capacity Building** including transparent information sharing, capacity building and dialogue opportunities for a wide range of both stakeholders and rights holders who have limited understanding of REDD+ concepts, donor objectives and government plans
- **Type B – Analysis of Issues** via general-invitation consultation meetings, appointing expert members to working groups, and public online opportunities to review technical reports
- **Type C – Negotiation, Consensus-Building and Consent** around problem definition, priority setting, REDD+ processes, social and environmental impact assessment and monitoring, initiation and implementation procedures for consent and grievance resolution, benefit distribution arrangements and direct participation in decision-making
- **Type D – Oversight and Monitoring Roles** with governments for the overall readiness planning (e.g., national working groups), priority setting, budget allocations, benefit distribution systems, implementation approaches, impact monitoring and grievance mechanisms

While legal frameworks have improved and governments are increasingly holding information sharing and capacity building meetings, **challenges remain to engage stakeholders in other ways, and to understand how different types of stakeholder engagement may be needed at different points in the REDD+ process** (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Four types of REDD+ stakeholder engagement

OBJECTIVES	WHAT	WHEN
TYPE A: Socialization and Learning	Stakeholders receive information on concepts and plans and develop capacity for educated dialogue.	Readiness early stages, but done as needed.
TYPE B: Analysis of Problems to Establish Baselines	Stakeholders solicited for information on ecological, socioeconomic, governance/policy issues via open meetings, document reviews and participation in invitational working groups.	Primarily Readiness activities but updates as needed.
TYPE C: Consensus Building and Consent	Stakeholders invited to jointly define problems, solutions, priorities. Governments/projects respect community consent decisions.	Readiness (strategy development, SESA, FPIC, benefit distribution, grievance procedures) and Implementation.
TYPE D: Oversight/Monitoring Roles	Stakeholders invited to serve on committees for oversight/monitoring for insights, transparency and equity.	Both readiness and implementation stages.

At all scales, authentic stakeholder engagement can only take place when there is sufficient political will to share power, build trust, commit resources and invest in human capacity.

Governments that are slower to adopt stakeholder engagement risk losing buy-in and synergies with other conservation and development actions.

ENGAGEMENT OF SPECIFIC STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

To date, in many REDD+ stakeholder engagement efforts, participation of key groups – such as women, indigenous peoples, or the private sector – has been limited. Little attention has been given to engaging marginalized groups, including ethnic and caste social minorities, as well as the very poor, the elderly or youth and the disabled. Experience shows, however, that stakeholder balance creates a better platform for achieving meaningful results.

WOMEN:

At all levels of REDD+ discussions and capacity building, women and gender advocates have been underrepresented, despite international and national commitments to gender equality. While more common in REDD+ pilot projects, gender analyses and gender monitoring are still uncommon in national readiness studies. Gender integration guidance (see FCMC training report: http://www.fcmcglobal.org/ses_resources.html) is available for community-based REDD+ pilot projects, but lacking for national and regional government REDD+ planning activities.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES & OTHER FOREST-DEPENDENT COMMUNITIES:

Although government engagement with indigenous and other forest-dependent communities predates REDD+, in many parts of the world these groups remain underrepresented at national and sub-national levels. Most engagement of indigenous stakeholders is taking place within a project context at the local level. A challenge of REDD+ is to build local knowledge and negotiation skills for indigenous and forest-dependent communities.

PRIVATE SECTOR:

Private sector actors with potential stakes in REDD+ are not a uniform group with homogenous interests. Even within the same sector, opinions and strategies differ. The extent of private sector involvement in multi-stakeholder REDD+ processes is unclear and difficult to monitor. Civil society is concerned about inadequate analyses of private sector roles.

Figure 2: Engagement practices

	Thumbs Up	Thumbs Down
General	Smaller groups meeting over time, active learning Advance notice, travel funds Open access, participation options	Poor tracking of women's participation, few gender advocates Too few trained facilitators Trust issues with Forest Dept. & CSOs
Type A [most common]	Government and civil society providing information/capacity National/local CSO networking	Socialization ≠ consultation Stakeholder analysis done too late Gender missed in stakeholder analysis
Type B	Analyses by civil society Participatory data collection for governance and SESA.	Closed-door expert analyses Analyses of deforestation drivers.
Type C	Allowing adequate time Note-taking & feedback loops Consensus – SESA and FPIC	Unclear benefits and distribution Unclear grievance procedures Unclear FPIC interpretation
Type D	Civil society leadership Independent monitoring option	Minimal CSO participation on standing committees

CONCLUSIONS AND KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

It is important to **recognize stakeholder diversity and hear the voices** of forest-dependent and vulnerable groups. A broad range of relevant stakeholders at national and local levels must be included in REDD+ processes. More can be done by countries during REDD+ development and implementation, especially Readiness Preparation and national REDD+ strategies, to clarify how risks will be mitigated and benefits distributed, and how to share oversight and monitoring responsibilities.

Figure 3: Methods for stakeholder engagement

Support is needed in capacity building for facilitators and stakeholders across countries, including targeted capacity building for specific groups, and scalable donor support for local capacity building modalities must be prioritized. A **much wider range of methods** for stakeholder engagement can and should be employed (Figure 3).

Continued donor support for stakeholder engagement is critical, but donor requirements and guidance may be insufficient for governments to routinely include stakeholder engagement.

<p>Type A</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Stakeholder mapping •Public hearings & public comment •Open house •Listening sessions •World café methods •Focus groups •Surveys •On-line dialogue blogs 	<p>Type C</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Sustained Dialogue •Search for Common Ground •Consensus agreement meetings •Settlement agreements/Negotiations •Delphi methodology •FPIC
<p>Type B</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Topic/Issue hearings, assemblies •Invited advisory working groups, task force (permanent or temporary) •National or community issues forum •Deliberative planning - charrettes, scenarios, <i>Appreciative Inquiry</i> •Citizen juries/panels •Study circles •Document review 	<p>Type D</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent REDD+ Oversight Committees (National, sub-national) •Committees/Teams for monitoring impacts and resolving grievances •Participatory monitoring •Independent monitoring •Partnerships

For REDD+ to be effective over the long term, **governments should address the procedural rights** of stakeholders to be informed, engage with stakeholders on general topics and progress to stakeholder engagement on issues **of substantive rights** to land, resources, livelihoods and other potential REDD+ benefits, as well as roles in social impact and other monitoring.

Very little systematic monitoring of stakeholder engagement experiences, lessons learned and promising practices for REDD+ processes is being done by donors or others. As REDD+ countries implement their stakeholder consultation and participation plans, donors should review and support these plans and the results of stakeholder input. If collected, this information could be shared across countries. Countries that are leaders in stakeholder engagement could help to create peer pressure so that other countries aim to live up to international standards for the quality and extent of stakeholder engagement. Support by donors for strengthening civil society, particularly at sub-national levels, will be critical. **The international REDD+ community has an important continuing role in promoting stakeholder engagement as an ongoing process** throughout REDD+.

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