UN-REDD
PROGRAMME

The United Nations Collaborative Programme
on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and
Forest Degradation in Developing Countries

Supporting Inclusive and Effective National Governance Systems for REDD+

UNDP

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Why will good governance be essential to the success of REDD+?

Payments under a REDD+ mechanism are to be made for changes in land use and better stewardship of forest resources. This, however, can only be achieved if the socio-economic drivers of deforestation and degradation are addressed and current users have sufficient confidence in the REDD+ mechanism to change the way they use forest resources. This will not be easy, as current emission-intensive uses of forest resources are often an important source of foreign exchange, energy, food security, new settlements or employment.

In this context good and efficient governance of forest resources and the distribution of benefits will therefore be central to the success of REDD+ policies and measures. If the allocation of forest or carbon rights is opaque and uncertain, if the distribution of benefits is unpredictable, untimely or captured by a few, if lack of enforcement allows free riders to exploit the system, or if corruption is perceived as high, stakeholders will not take the risk of forgoing the income they derive from their current uses of forest resources. Meanwhile, when the rights of forest dependent communities are violated or communities are marginalized, investors, weary of insecure business environments and unpredictable emission reductions, are deterred. In addition, REDD+ systems may have to be robust enough to withstand shocks such as fluctuations in carbon prices, rises in the prices of commodities, changes in governments that could all undermine confidence.

UN-REDD support activities towards effective and inclusive national governance systems for REDD+

The UN-REDD Programme has already begun its support to pilot countries starting to establish governance systems for REDD+, through national UN-REDD Programmes. Under these capacity building for REDD+ readiness, the Programme is supporting governance interventions that governments and national stakeholders have identified as priorities, such as stakeholder consultation & participation and cross-sectoral coordination in REDD+ planning and implementation, and legislative review towards reform and enforcement.

To further these initial steps, UNDP, the leading agency on governance issues for the UN-REDD Programme, is developing a comprehensive approach to support effective and inclusive national governance systems in REDD+ partner countries, including :

- A body of work on monitoring governance safeguards (activities undertaken with FAO)
- Support to transparency and accountability in REDD+ systems - by drawing on the expertise of and activities of UNDP's work on anti-corruption
- Support to REDD+ "policy enablers", initiated using country-led governance assessments (described below), user capacity development, evidence-based policy-making, land tenure systems and strengthened national legislative frameworks.

These governance activities will be tightly linked to the Programme's activities on social standards and benefits. Two elements, that will serve to ensure linkages, are described below:

- **A due diligence tool for applying minimum social standards** has been developed to guide and improve national programme design, secure stakeholder support and increase programme sustainability. This rights-based approach It has been developed to be consistent with the safeguard guidance provided in the UNFCCC's draft AWG-LCA text on REDD+ and has drawn on contributions from a number of initiatives (such as those of the FCPF and CCBA/CARE) and conventions, policies and guidance of the UN system.

  Three inter-related principles of good governance, stakeholder livelihoods and policy coherence each contain criteria and questions to assist users assess potential risks and identify risk mitigation strategies. The good governance principles relate to integrity, transparency & accountability and stakeholder engagement. While this tool is first expected to be applied in the design and implementation of national UN-REDD programmes, the methodology seeks to be flexible enough to be used by diverse stakeholders and throughout different phases of REDD+ readiness. The UN-REDD Programme is currently finalizing a zero draft of the social principles risk assessment tool and will undertake a process to gather formal feedback from REDD+ partner countries, institutional partners and a broader range of stakeholders through its public website.

- Activities to support REDD+ governance processes should rely on a clear picture of a country's REDD governance situation, gaps and needs - as defined through inclusive, participatory multi-stakeholder processes. Towards this goal, the UN-REDD Programme will support the conduct of **nationally owned, multi-stakeholder, inclusive and participatory governance assessments**. This methodology, which has been tested in a number of countries and sectors by UNDP's Oslo Governance Centre, relies on a partnership between government and civil society to identify governance challenges and develop performance improvement processes.

Assessments are both *diagnostic tools* to analyze and obtain credible information and *instruments to mobilize public opinion, create demand for accountability and ensure the leadership of government* in strengthening governance outcomes.

The UN-REDD Programme's approach to governance assessments can open spaces for engagement with stakeholders often absent from decision-making and dialogue, and potentially address status-quo and power blockages, e.g. between large landowners and marginalized or vulnerable groups – including the poor, indigenous peoples and women. Assessments will draw on the existing linkages and processes supported at the country level through on engaging Indigenous Peoples and other forest-dependent communities.

These assessments also produce disaggregated and non-ranking governance indicators, making them different from other "top down" approaches to assessing governance. Emphasis is however put on the *process* of developing these indicators rather than the indicators themselves, based on what stakeholders value, and on the process of establishing an information management system that reinforces domestic accountability over time.