

REPORT



Evaluation and Verification of the Free, Prior and Informed Consent Process under the UN-REDD Programme in Lam Dong Province, Vietnam

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Evaluation and Verification of the Free, Prior and Informed Consent Process under the UN-REDD Programme: Lam Dong Province, Vietnam

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Views and comments in this report do not necessarily reflect that of RECOFTC or any organization linked to mission members. Opinions and any errors belong to the authors.

Executive Summary

The United Nations Collaborative Program on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (UN-REDD) combines the efforts of three United Nations agencies in supporting countries to prepare for REDD+. At the national level, UN-REDD country programs support a variety of processes that assist in the preparation of national REDD+ strategies and contribute to the preparedness of all forest sector stakeholders for the changes that REDD+ will generate.

As Vietnam was the first country to undertake formal preparations for field-based REDD+ activities, the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme proceeded with the Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) process in Lam Ha and Di Linh districts of Lam Dong Province from January to June 2010. This pilot Vietnamese FPIC exercise was the first of its kind and lessons can be drawn from it for the future implementation of the FPIC process in Vietnam and elsewhere.

The UN-REDD global program identifies nine steps in the FPIC process. In the ninth and final step, an independent international organization is contracted to conduct evaluation and verification (E&V) of the FPIC process. RECOFTC – The Center for People and Forests – was selected to lead this exercise. At the international level, RECOFTC was contracted by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) to develop a toolkit in this context. E&V of the FPIC process under the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme is a first test of the draft toolkit based on experiences in various countries in the region. E&V took place in June 2010, with contributions from experts from RECOFTC and three other organizations in Vietnam.

Findings from the E&V mission indicated that the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme was able to adapt the general guidance from the UN-REDD regional office to the Vietnamese context and local circumstances in Lam Dong Province. Most FPIC principles were adhered to and guidelines on how to undertake E&V were followed with some modifications. Three major issues were highlighted by the mission:

- *Some information could not be provided to local people:* Although the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme attempted to communicate with local people, some information could not be provided, particularly the risks and costs associated with the program.
- *Lack of time for internal discussion in the village:* The timeframe of the village meetings was too short (two hours) to fully inform the villagers about the issues introduced by the facilitation team.
- *Lack of a grievance and review mechanism:* There was no mechanism, independent of the FPIC team, to review any complaint made by local people.

Four immediate actions were recommended:

1. The UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme should discuss the findings with the FPIC facilitation team and check if the mission's findings, or most of them, apply to villages not covered by the E&V. Based on the discussion, it will be decided whether further field E&V is needed.
2. The UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme should review all the information that needs to be provided to local people and compare it with what has already been given to villagers. The missing information, particularly risks and costs associated

with implementation of the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme at the local level, will need to be prepared.

3. Once a proper set of information is prepared, further awareness-raising/information dissemination about the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme for villagers, particularly on risks and costs, should be undertaken in all villages covered in the FPIC process.
4. Together with and during awareness-raising events, the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme should check if there are any complaints or concerns about the FPIC process that remain unspoken or unaddressed among villagers and address them properly.

The E&V mission also made concrete recommendations for UN-REDD to improve the design as well as implementation of the FPIC process.

It should be noted that the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme and RECOFTC piloted the FPIC process and evaluation in a limited timeframe and with modest guidance regarding appropriate procedures. This exercise is the initial step in the UN-REDD global program's experiential learning approach to the FPIC process.

Contents

Acknowledgements	i
Executive Summary	ii
Contents	iv
List of Boxes and Tables.....	v
1 Introduction.....	1
2 Background to the UN-REDD FPIC Process in Vietnam	1
3 Methodology of the Evaluation and Verification.....	4
3.1 Building Blocks of the Evaluation and Verification.....	4
3.2 Evaluation and Verification Approach	5
3.3 The Evaluation and Verification Team and its Work Schedule	7
3.4 Limitations to the Mission	7
4 Main Findings.....	8
4.1 General Findings.....	8
4.2 Evaluation of the Preparation for the FPIC Process	9
4.3 Implementation of the FPIC Process	11
4.4 Verification of the Outcomes of the FPIC Process.....	13
5 Conclusion and Recommendations	14
Annexes	19
Annex 1: Terms of Reference of the E&V Mission	19
Annex 2: List of Contributors to the Development of the Draft Toolkit	23
Annex 3: The E&V Team	24
Annex 4: Work Schedule of the E&V Exercise.....	25
Annex 5: Detailed Findings from the E&V Exercise	26
Preparation for the FPIC Process	26
Implementation of the FPIC Process	32
Verification and Interpretation of the Outcomes of the FPIC Process	39

List of Boxes and Tables

List of Boxes

Box 1: Guiding Steps to Undertake FPIC under the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme	3
Box A1: Eligibility Criteria for Local Facilitators:.....	26
Box A2: FPIC Process in Thon 1 Village of Gia Lam Commune, Lam Ha District.....	34

List of Tables

Table 1: Timeline of the FPIC Process under the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme.....	4
Table 2: Three Building Blocks of FPIC Evaluation and Verification.....	4
Table 3: Villages Covered by the Evaluation and Verification Mission	6
Table 4: Key Information on Visited Villages.....	6
Table 5: Summary of Evaluation Results on FPIC Process Preparation	10
Table 6: Summary of Evaluation Results on FPIC Process Implementation	12
Table 7: Summary of Verification Results on FPIC Process Outcomes	13
Table A1: Members of the Field Evaluation Team	24
Table A2: Limitations to the FPIC Process and Coping Measures	31
Table A3: Key Information on FPIC Outcomes in Visited Villages	40

1 Introduction

The United Nations Collaborative Program on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (UN-REDD) combines the efforts of three UN agencies¹ in supporting countries to prepare for REDD+. It currently consists of nine national country programs and an international program. The international program seeks to build knowledge and consensus about the need for REDD+. At the national level, UN-REDD country programs support a variety of processes that assist in the preparation of national REDD+ strategies and contribute to the preparedness of all forest sector stakeholders for the changes that REDD+ will generate.

As one of the first nine country programs selected by UN-REDD, Vietnam has moved swiftly to develop and implement readiness activities. Vietnam was the first to conduct a Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) process under the UN-REDD Programme. The process started in January 2010 in Lam Ha and Di Linh districts in the pilot province of Lam Dong. By the end of May 2010, two FPIC phases had been completed, covering 53 villages. The third phase was conducted in June 2010 throughout 25 villages.

The FPIC process implemented by the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme included nine steps identified by the UN-REDD global program. As the ninth and last step, RECOFTC – The Center for People and Forests – was selected as an independent international organization to conduct evaluation and verification (E&V) of the FPIC process (see Annex 1 for the mission's Terms of Reference).

At the international level, RECOFTC was contracted by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) to develop a toolkit in the E&V context. A draft toolkit was developed by the end of May and tested in early June. It should be noted that the E&V toolkit was developed specifically for UN-REDD country programs. It should not be considered sufficient for E&V of actual REDD+ implementation programs, although it will inform the development of such processes.

This report presents results of the FPIC evaluation and verification process. Section 2 provides background information to the FPIC process in the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme. Section 3 describes the E&V methodology. In Section 4, the main E&V findings are discussed. Section 5 concludes by providing recommendations for immediate actions by the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme and for future REDD-related FPIC processes.

2 Background to the UN-REDD FPIC Process in Vietnam

As Vietnam was the first country to undertake formal preparations for field-based REDD+ activities, the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme proceeded with the FPIC process in Lam Ha and Di Linh districts in the pilot province of Lam Dong. The FPIC process was conducted in these two districts because of the prevalence of ethnic people: of the 53 ethnic groups living in Vietnam, around 30 groups are found there. Only six groups are actually native to the area while the others migrated from elsewhere during the last few decades.² Within the UN-REDD Programme, the FPIC process was also a pilot activity owing to no prior experience or clear and detailed guidance on how to conduct it. Through

¹ The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

² The contents of this section are based on the materials provided by the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme.

this exercise, Vietnam wanted to draw out lessons for the future implementation of the FPIC process not only in other parts of the country but also overseas.

FPIC is a rights-based principle related to expression of the right to self-determination; associated rights to lands, territories, and natural resources; the right to culture; and the right to be free from racial discrimination. FPIC forms part of the basis of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), which Vietnam became party to in September 2007.

Among the Guiding Principles for the UN-REDD Programme,³ is the belief that FPIC for indigenous peoples and other forest-dependent communities must be adhered to, and is essential to ensuring their full and effective participation in policy-making and decision-making processes within UN-REDD Programme activities. In this context:⁴

- **Free** should imply no coercion, intimidation or manipulation;
- **Prior** should imply consent has been sought sufficiently in advance and respect time requirements of indigenous consultation/consensus processes;
- **Informed** should imply that information is provided that covers (at least) the following aspects:
 - a. The nature, size, pace, reversibility and scope of any proposed project or activity;
 - b. The reason/s or purpose of the project and/or activity;
 - c. The duration of the above;
 - d. The locality of areas that will be affected;
 - e. A preliminary assessment of the likely economic, social, cultural and environmental impact, including potential risks and fair and equitable benefit sharing in a context that respects the precautionary principle;
 - f. Personnel likely to be involved in the execution of the proposed project (including Indigenous Peoples)
 - g. Procedures that the project may entail.
- **Consent:** consultation and participation are crucial components of a consent process. Consultation should be undertaken in good faith, requires time and an effective system for communicating among interest holders. Indigenous Peoples should be able to participate through their own freely chosen representatives and customary or other institutions. The inclusion of a gender perspective is essential. This process may include the option of withholding consent.

To guide the implementation of the FPIC process in the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme, a nine-step approach was recommended (Box 1). As mentioned earlier, the FPIC process proceeded without detailed descriptions for each step, as it was used as a learning opportunity. Lessons learned are expected to inform the further refinement of implementing the FPIC process.

³ Available at: <http://www.un-redd.org/Home/EngagementofIPs/tabid/1033/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

⁴ The following text is an excerpt from the report of the *International Workshop on Methodologies Regarding Free, Prior and Informed Consent* E/C.19/2005/3, endorsed by the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) at its Fourth Session in 2005.

Box 1: Guiding Steps to Undertake FPIC under the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme

Step 0: Preparation

Prior to the actual FPIC process beginning, some preparatory work will be required, including:

- The preparation of a summary of the legal basis for local community engagement/FPIC in Vietnam;
- The preparation of communications materials;
- Advance consultation with provincial and district authorities on the proposed process.

Step 1: Consultation with local officials

The UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme will organize awareness-raising events for provincial, district, and commune leaders to ensure that the principles guiding the UN-REDD Programme and district-level activities are understood.

Step 2: Recruitment of local facilitators

The UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme will recruit local facilitators⁵ to guide the consultation process in each village in Lam Ha and Di Linh districts.

Step 3: Training of local facilitators

The UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme will organize a training event for the local facilitators to ensure that they are fully familiar with the anticipated results and activities of the program and the principles guiding consultations necessary to secure FPIC.

Step 4: Awareness-raising

Each interlocutor will be assigned to a number of villages where the ethnic minorities in whose language they are fluent reside. Each facilitator (or facilitators for villages with more than one ethnic minority) will contact the village head in order to organize an awareness-raising event at a location and at a time that is mutually acceptable to all village heads. They will also agree with each village head the form and timing of events to engage the villagers in their village (for example, whether a single village meeting is appropriate, or whether a multi-stage process is required).

Step 5: Village meeting

The interlocutor(s) will attend the village meeting(s) at the time(s) established in Step 4.

Step 6: Recording decision

Having reached consensus, the villagers will prepare a document, using a template prepared by the UN-REDD Programme, indicating either their consent or non-consent; or otherwise indicate their decision.

Step 7: Facilitators report to the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme

The document recording consent or non-consent of each village will be provided to the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme by each interlocutor, who will also prepare and submit a report summarizing the consultations, highlighting any concerns as to whether there was evidence of coercion or pressure having been brought to bear on the villagers.

Step 8: Verification and evaluation

Independent verification of the FPIC process will be secured by contacting an independent, international organization with specialization in the area of forest–community interactions.

The FPIC process in the two pilot districts took place between January and June 2010 in three phases: Phase 1 in April 2010 (covering 22 villages), Phase 2 in May 2010 (31 villages), and Phase 3 in June 2010 (25 villages) (Table 1). Altogether, 78 villages were covered by the FPIC process.

⁵ Also referred to as ‘local interlocutors’ or ‘motivators’ in UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme documents.

Table 1: Timeline of the FPIC Process under the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme

	Jan-10				Feb-10				Mar-10				Apr-10				May-10				Jun-10			
	W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4
Legal analysis																								
Initial discussion with province																								
Provincial workshop																								
Recruitment of facilitators																								
Prep. of comm. materials																								
District workshops																								
Training of facilitators																								
Commune workshops																								
Village meetings																								
Evaluation and verification																								
Collection of results																								

3 Methodology of the Evaluation and Verification

3.1 Building Blocks of the Evaluation and Verification

The evaluation and verification of the FPIC process under the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme is the ninth step (Step 8 in Box 1). It follows the guidelines provided in the draft toolkit developed by RECOFTC and invited experts from various organizations with working experience on FPIC (see Annex 2). In its current form, the toolkit consists of three essential building blocks (Table 2): Building Block 1 looks at the preparation of the FPIC process; Building Block 2 deals with the implementation of the FPIC process; and Building Block 3 concerns verification of FPIC results. These building blocks are subdivided into issues, and then elements. The toolkit is only a draft version and is meant to be generic; it has to be modified to fit into national circumstances and local conditions. It is important to note that the draft toolkit was not available by the time the FPIC process was conducted in Lam Dong. The UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme did not have clear guidance on how the process would later be verified and evaluated. The FPIC process thus reflected true current understanding of FPIC principles and is therefore more valuable for experiential learning.

Table 2: Three Building Blocks of FPIC Evaluation and Verification

Issues	Elements
<i>Building Block 1: Preparation for the FPIC process</i>	
Issue 1: FPIC facilitation team – suitability and competency	- Language skills - Ethnicity - Gender - Age - Consultation experience - UN-REDD knowledge - Legal knowledge
Issue 2: UN-REDD FPIC process design	- Existing FPIC process guidelines - Understanding the governance context

	- Understanding the national legislative context - Understanding the cultural context - Awareness of the limitations to the process - Incorporating feedback
<i>Building Block 2: Implementation of the FPIC process.</i>	
Issue 1: Initiation of consultation process	- Permission to engage - Local representatives - Meeting arrangements
Issue 2: Decision-making processes	- Ownership of process - Role of representatives - Intra-community consultation - Documentation - Capacity building
Issue 3: Information and communication strategy	- UN-REDD information dissemination - Contents of information - Access to alternative sources - Time allowed
Issue 4: Transparency and 'good faith'	- Indicators of poor process - Information manipulation - Engineering consent - Enlistment of allies - Invalid documents
Issue 5: Grievance and review mechanism	- Accessibility - Independence - Impartiality - Mandate to take action - Representation
<i>Building Block 3: Verification of the FPIC process</i>	
Issue 1: Verification of the outcomes	- Contents of the outcomes - Awareness of the outcomes
Issue 2: Interpretation of the outcomes	- Accuracy of the outcomes - Acceptance of the outcomes - Credibility of the UN-REDD FPIC process

The building blocks constitute the backbone of the evaluation and verification of the UN-REDD FPIC process in Vietnam. Based on this, the FPIC E&V team developed four different sets of survey forms that were used for four groups during the E&V process:

- Team leader of the FPIC process;
- Team members (local facilitators) of the FPIC process;
- Community leaders/representatives;
- Villagers.

3.2 Evaluation and Verification Approach

The E&V team visited two out of the 22 villages covered in FPIC Phase 1, and two out of the 31 villages in FPIC Phase 2. As the scheduled E&V team visit dovetailed with the

start of Phase 3 (the first week of June), E&V did not cover villages under this phase. Nevertheless, the E&V team attended the FPIC process in one village in Phase 3, which occurred during an E&V team field visit. Altogether, the E&V team visited five villages, of which interviews took place in four (Table 3).

Table 3: Villages Covered by the E&V Mission

FPIC phases	Number of villages covered by the FPIC process	Number of villages covered by the E&V team
Phase 1	22	2
Phase 2	31	2
Phase 3 [†]	25	1
Total	78	5

[†] In Phase 3, the E&V team only observed the process in one village. No interviews took place to verify and evaluate the process.

Within a village, interviews were conducted with community leaders/representatives and household representatives (Table 4). Altogether, the E&V team spoke with 73 people in four villages: 14 were community leaders/representatives and 59 were representatives of local households. Only 40 people (29 villagers and 11 representatives) attended the village meetings (Step 5). The rest were not present at the meetings because they were busy or not aware of the event.

Table 4: Key Information on Visited Villages

Village name	Da Hong	K'lieng	Lam Bo[†]	Thon 5
Location	Gia Bac, Di Linh	Son Dien, Di Linh	Phuc Tho, Lam Ha	Da Don, Lam Ha
No. of HH in the village ^{††}	103	107	195	480 (380) ^{††}
Ethnic composition	K'Ho, Kinh	K'Ho, Kinh	K'Ho, Kinh, Nung, Tay	K'Ho, Ma, Kinh
No of people interviewed	15	14	20	24
FPIC facilitation phase	1	2	1	2
Area of forest contracted to HH for protection	1,255 ha	758 ha	1,788 ha	15 ha

[†] Lam Bo village is also known as Thon 6 or Village 6.

^{††} There are 480 households (HH) in Thon 5. Around 100 HH located in a sub-village were not part of the target group for the FPIC process due to the distance to the meeting venues. A separate meeting is planned for the residents of the sub-village.

^{†††} There is variation in the total number of HH in the visited villages presented in the table and those reported by the FPIC team. In Da Hong village, the difference was due to a mistake made by the village headman when he reported to the FPIC team. In Lam Bo, the FPIC team did not include the number of migrant HH, including Kinh and other ethnic groups (when they moved to the village was uncertain). In Thon 5, the difference was not clear to the E&V team.

To cover the greatest possible range of opinions in the village, households for interview were selected regardless of whether they participated in the village meetings or not. The following criteria were taken into account in the sample selection:

- *Age*: Households with mainly elderly people versus young (newly wedded) households;
- *Distance to meeting place*: Households near the meeting place versus those far from it;
- *Gender*: Households interviewed by the E&V team included those headed by women as well as by men;
- *Marginalized groups*: The E&V team met with households from various wealth groups, including the poor;
- *Ethnicity*: Households of different ethnicity within the community.

The E&V team also spoke with members and leaders of the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme's FPIC team. Nine out of 24 of the local facilitators were interviewed, focusing on those who were involved in the FPIC process in the selected villages. There was a need to compare the information provided by the local facilitators with that provided by the villagers (or vice versa).

3.3 The Evaluation and Verification Team and its Work Schedule

Altogether six people were involved in the evaluation and verification of the FPIC process: Three officers from RECOFTC and three officers from other organizations. Annex 3 provides detailed information on the E&V team.

The mission started on 2 June with preparation for the field evaluation in Hanoi. Field work took place over five days in Lam Ha and Di Linh districts in Lam Dong Province. See Annex 4 for a detailed work schedule.

3.4 Limitations to the Mission

The mission faced several constraints:

- *Limited experience*: This was RECOFTC's first attempt at an E&V exercise for the FPIC process. The E&V toolkit was prepared with contributions from participants experienced in FPIC processes in Malaysia, the Philippines, and Indonesia. However, it was only the first draft and the mission was the pilot testing of the toolkit.
- *Time availability*: Preparation for the mission was done at short notice; only two days were allocated to convene the team and two further days to discuss the draft toolkit and adapt it to the Vietnamese context. In addition, time for E&V in the field was also short and the team was only able to visit five villages.
- *Sample size*: Due to limited time and resources (number of team members), the E&V team was only able to visit four out of 53 villages (8%) covered in Phases 1 and 2 of the FPIC process.

4 Main Findings

The section starts with analysis of adherence of the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme to the principles of FPIC and to the guiding steps for FPIC implementation. Subsequently, findings from the mission related to key issues (see Section 3.1) are discussed. For more detailed findings of the mission, see Annex 5.

It should be noted that the FPIC process was an experiential learning process for the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme. Between the first and second (and second and third) phases of the process, the interlocutors and facilitation team incorporated lessons from previous phases, as appropriate, in order to improve the efficiency and accuracy of the FPIC process. This demonstrated a flexible learning approach in keeping with the experimental and innovative nature of the exercise.

4.1 General Findings

Findings related to the principles of FPIC:

- *Free:* The E&V team understood that local people made their own decisions, without any external coercion. However, the lack of time for internal discussion or for accessing alternative information sources means that these decisions may have been premature.
- *Prior:* Local people were informed of the village meeting one day in advance (for villages in Phase 1) and around three days in advance (for villages from Phase 2 onwards). Village officials, particularly village leaders, were informed two weeks before the meeting.
- *Informed:* The UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme used posters, leaflets, brochures, radio, and TV as well as two languages (Vietnamese and K’Ho) for communication. They also learned from lessons in Phase 1 to introduce the mobile communication team in the second and third phases to improve outreach to local people. Nevertheless, the information provided to local people was not sufficient. Information under the ‘Informed’ principle (see item ‘e’, page 2) was generally missing. Most importantly, information on risks and costs for local people to participate in the program was not provided.
- *Consent:* All villagers who attended the meetings were consulted, regardless of gender and religion. Local ethnic groups were interviewed thoroughly, perhaps with more bias, compared to the Kinh and other migrant people.⁶ However, time limits for meetings and no arrangement for internal discussion within the community hampered the activity.

With regard to adherence to the guiding steps outlined in Box 1 it was observed that:

- In general, activities under Step 0 through to Step 3 were carried out as required, although not necessarily in the same sequence. As indicated in Table 1, activities under these steps were mixed and there was no final completion of one step before moving on to the next. The E&V mission did not perceive this as a problem because it was not necessary to complete all activities under one step before starting with the next. The UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme took a pragmatic approach to accomplishing activities under these steps.

⁶ In the case of Lam Bo village, the FPIC mainly focused on the local ethnic group (the K’Ho households) and did not target around 100 households of Kinh and other migrant people (see notes under Table 4).

- Implementation of Step 4 through to Step 6 did not follow the guide. In villages in Phase 1, all activities under these three steps were carried out in one village meeting only. From the second phase, part of the awareness-raising for local people started before the meeting when the mobile communication team arrived and talked with the villagers. Nevertheless, most awareness-raising for local people still took place in the village meeting. Also due to no time for internal discussion among villagers to arrive at a consensus, villagers' consent was obtained via direct voting (raising hands in the first phase and secret balloting from the second phase onwards to avoid the 'crowd effect' that may arise from the former). As a result, Step 6 did not materialize according to the guide. Instead, local facilitators counted the number of votes and told the participants about the outcomes.
- In Step 4, the guide indicates one local facilitator per village (more than one facilitator in villages with mixed ethnicities). In fact, FPIC facilitators always worked in a team of four (or at least three). This proved to be a satisfactory arrangement as the less skillful facilitators were able to learn from their skilled counterparts. In addition, it was easier to manage a large village meeting when there was more than one facilitator.
- Step 7 was generally followed; local facilitators prepared reports for each village covered by the FPIC process and the FPIC team leader prepared a summary report for each phase. However, the village reports generally lacked details on the process of the village consultation, particularly the issues raised by villagers in the course of the meeting.

4.2 Evaluation of the Preparation for the FPIC Process

The UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme made good preparation for the FPIC process in the absence of clear and detailed guidance on how to proceed with each step, although there is obviously room for improvement (see Table 5):

- *FPIC facilitation team:* The FPIC facilitation team members were competent and generally suitable for the task. They had good gender balance and the language skills needed for dialogue with villagers. The facilitators' ethnicities represented the main indigenous groups at the FPIC sites, although they did not reflect all the ethnic groups. The team members were relatively young, but they were considered competent by the villagers. Team members' experience with the participatory approach was weak, but the preparation of the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme before each FPIC phase at the village level made a significant contribution to improving their facilitation skills. Team members' knowledge about the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme was reasonable, although it did not extend beyond the feedback provided by the program's training. Nevertheless, knowledge of the international legal basis of the FPIC process (i.e. UNDRIP) needed better demonstration.
- *UN-REDD FPIC process design:* The design of the FPIC process could be improved. Relevant existing national guidelines for FPIC processes (i.e. documents related to grassroot-level democracy) were well understood by the FPIC team leader; however there was no evidence of their incorporation into the UN-REDD FPIC process. In the FPIC design report, no reference was made to the policy for grassroots-level democracy and related documents. Similarly, the national legal framework related to the FPIC process (e.g. the Forest Protection and Development Law and the National Target Program 135) was well understood by the team leader but some elements of these documents had not been incorporated into the design. The local governance

context was also recognized but the process design had no comprehensive discussion on governance issues. The UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme attempted to address this issue by providing information on K'Ho traditions before the first training to the local facilitators in Phase 1. This information was also included in the facilitators' manual provided at the beginning of Phase 3. The differences between local ethnic groups and other people and their respective customary practices were perceived by FPIC team members, but not in any great detail. The limitations to the FPIC process were not discussed in the design document. However, they were anticipated and addressed through various means (e.g. training courses, the facilitators' manual) as the process evolved. One of the most urgent needs in the process was time for internal discussion as no such time was allocated for this stage in the process design. In addition, a system for recording all views and concerns also warranted attention. Although there was improvement in the reporting format, it was apparent that there was insufficient formal documentation of the whole process, particularly during the village meetings.

Table 5: Summary of Evaluation Results on FPIC Process Preparation

Issues	Elements	Assessment result
Issue 1: FPIC facilitation team: suitability and competency	Language skills	The team communicated directly with local people without translation
	Ethnicity	The team reflected ethnic variation in FPIC villages
	Gender	Gender balance in the team allowed for gender equity in the FPIC process
	Age	The age profile of the team was partly conducive to full disclosure by local people
	Consultation experience	Competency in participatory consultation processes was poor at the inception stage but improved with time.
	UN-REDD knowledge	Team members had a basic understanding of the principles, progress, and current status of the UN-REDD country programs
	Legal knowledge	The team understood the international legal basis of the FPIC process, but only adequately
Issue 2: UN-REDD FPIC process design	Existing FPIC process guidelines	Relevant existing national guidelines for FPIC processes were not incorporated into the UN-REDD FPIC process
	Understanding the governance context	The local governance context was not fully understood by the team and this was reflected in the FPIC process design
	Understanding the national legislative context	The legal framework supporting or affecting the FPIC process was only partly understood and this was reflected in the FPIC process design
	Understanding the cultural context	The team partly distinguished between indigenous peoples and other forest-dependent villages, and their respective customary practices
	Awareness of the	Limitations to the FPIC process were

	limitations to the process	anticipated and addressed, but not in a systematic manner
	Incorporating feedback	A system for recording views and concerns was poorly incorporated into the FPIC process

4.3 Implementation of the FPIC Process

Throughout implementation of the FPIC process, the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme was able to learn from mistakes made and this was manifested in the later stages; modification of the process design may benefit implementation at the village level (Table 6):

- *Initiation of the consultation process:* The FPIC process was initiated relatively well. Although the FPIC team was not invited by local people to the villages on their own initiative, one needs to understand the context in which the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme operated. The program was adaptive to the context to make villagers' participation possible. To inform the villagers of the meetings, various local representatives (e.g. village leaders, traditional headmen, religious heads), who had significant inputs to village life, were asked by the FPIC facilitation team to help. The timing and location of the village meetings were arranged in the most convenient way for the villagers to generate local ownership of the FPIC process.
- *Decision-making processes:* The decision-making process in the FPIC exercise was poor. Due to the rigid meeting structure recommended in the design, local people were not in control over transition between stages of the meetings. Lack of time for intra-community discussion prevented full participation at the meetings. The whole meeting process, particularly decision-making with regard to FPIC, was not fully recorded. Furthermore, reasons why local people could not hold internal discussions were not identified and addressed. In other words, one should not assume that villagers can make an informed decision after only two hours of meeting.
- *Information and communication strategy:* Information about the UN-REDD Programme was disseminated through radio, TV, posters, dialogues, and leaflets. The UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme was able to learn from lessons in FPIC Phase 1 to improve communication and information dissemination activities in Phase 2 (and 3) to ensure optimum awareness among all individuals via mobile awareness-raising teams. In general, the information provided was mostly accurate and relevant to the concerns of local people. Nevertheless, no alternative source of information on UN-REDD was available, nor was there sufficient time for local people to understand the UN-REDD Programme before making decisions at the village meetings.
- *Transparency and good faith:* As mentioned earlier, information provision was not balanced, focusing only on the 'potential benefits' from the program and giving too little (if at all) attention to potential risks and costs related to REDD for local people. In addition, there was no public announcement of the outcome of the village meetings. However, there was no evidence of the UN-REDD Programme being misrepresented throughout the FPIC process; of community representatives or other elites being provided with incentives to deliver consent; or of the FPIC process favoring involvement of individuals or organizations for their political or intellectual perspectives.
- *Grievance and review mechanism:* No grievance and review mechanism was established. The reason was not clear.

Table 6: Summary of Evaluation Results on FPIC Process Implementation

Issues	Elements	Assessment result
Issue 1: Initiation of the consultation process	Permission to engage	The FPIC team was not invited by local people to the village on their own initiative
	Local representatives	The FPIC team communicated through accepted local representatives
	Meeting arrangements	Village meetings arranged in a way deemed most appropriate to villagers
Issue 2: Decision-making processes	Ownership of the process	Local people not in control over the transition between stages of the FPIC process
	Role of representatives	Not relevant for the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme
	Intra-community consultation	There was no time for real internal discussion
	Documentation	The decision-making process was poorly recorded
	Capacity building	The FPIC process did not identify and address why local people could not hold internal discussions. In fact, there was no room for internal discussions
Issue 3: Information and communication strategy	UN-REDD information dissemination	Information about the UN-REDD Programme was disseminated through various media
	Contents of information	The information provided was mostly accurate but insufficient for local people. Information on risks was not provided
	Access to alternative sources	No alternative sources of information on UN-REDD were available
	Time allowed	Insufficient time for local people to understand the UN-REDD Programme before making a decision
Issue 4: Transparency and good faith	Indicators of poor process	Unbalanced information provided No public announcement of outcomes
	Information manipulation	No evidence of the UN-REDD Programme being misrepresented throughout the FPIC process
	Engineering consent	No evidence of community representatives or other elites provided with incentives to deliver consent
	Enlistment of allies	No evidence of the FPIC process favoring involvement of individuals or organizations for their political or intellectual perspectives
	Invalid documents	The documents produced mostly represented the process and/or outcome. However, the documentation was superficial as not all issues were systematically recorded

Issue 5: Grievance and review mechanism	Accessibility	No grievance and review mechanism established
	Independence	
	Impartiality	
	Mandate to take action	
	Representation	

4.4 Verification of the Outcomes of the FPIC Process

Verification of the outcomes of the FPIC process was reported by the FPIC facilitation team. However improvements are still needed to make the outcomes more publicly known (Table 7):

- *Verification of the outcomes:* Verification with local people indicated that meeting outcomes (i.e. voting results) were elaborated mostly clearly and justified reasonably. However, except for people who attended the final round of meetings, no one was informed about meeting results, i.e. they were not disseminated. Moreover, the implications of these results were not clear to the villagers, including those who remained at the end.
- *Interpretation of the outcomes:* Verification also confirmed that the outcomes reflected local people's decisions, including those who did not attend the meetings. Villagers generally accepted the outcomes. Nevertheless, it is extremely important to note that villagers generally thought they had given consent to forest protection. This may not necessarily be a problem, but indicated that the communication and information strategy needed refinement. Furthermore, the feedback mechanism of the FPIC process worked poorly, as the issues raised by the villagers were not systematically recorded and addressed.

Table 7: Summary of Verification Results on FPIC Process Outcomes

Issues	Elements	Assessment result
Issue 1: Verification of the outcomes	Contents of the outcomes	Outcomes mostly clearly elaborated and justified reasonably
	Awareness of the outcomes	Outcomes not widely disseminated and implications not understood clearly
Issue 2: Interpretation of the outcomes	Accuracy of the outcomes	Outcomes definitely reflected local people's decisions
	Acceptance of the outcomes	Outcomes deemed acceptable by villagers
	Credibility of the UN-REDD FPIC process	The feedback mechanism worked poorly Little or no feedback from villagers

5 Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings from the E&V, the FPIC process under the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme mostly adhered to the guiding steps from the UN-REDD regional office and the principles of FPIC. The UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme took into account the country-specific circumstances and the local contexts in Lam Dong Province throughout the whole FPIC process. However, there were three major weaknesses:

1. *Insufficient information provided to local people:* Although the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme used various communication tools to deliver information about climate change, REDD, and the UN-REDD Programme to local people, this did not include information relating to the risks and costs associated with their participation in the UN-REDD Programme.
2. *Lack of time for internal discussion in the village:* The timeframe of the village meetings was very short (two hours) and only 45 minutes were allocated for questions and answers before the villagers had made a decision. No time was allocated after the village meeting for discussion among the villagers about the issues introduced by the facilitation team. Villagers should not be asked to make a decision immediately after an awareness-raising event. Sufficient time must be allowed for internal reflection, discussion, and exploration of other information sources, which would normally take at least several days.
3. *Lack of a grievance and review mechanism:* Although it is not very common in Vietnam for local people to file their complaints through such a mechanism, it is still necessary to have it ready and publicly known to villagers in case any difficulty arises.

The following recommendations are made for immediate action by the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme (also see the subsequent recommendations for improvement of FPIC process design and implementation):

- First, the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme should discuss the E&V mission findings with FPIC facilitation team members and check if these findings or most of them apply to villages not covered by the mission. Although the number of villages that the E&V team visited was limited, the team believes that the findings presented in this report largely represent the situation in other villages, including those in FPIC Phase 3. The facilitators were involved in the FPIC process in all villages and will be able to confirm if the issues raised by the E&V team were also the case in all other villages or if they remained relevant only to the villages visited by the E&V team (or a small number of villages). In the former case, no further field E&V of the FPIC process will be needed. In the latter, the facilitators will need to indicate where the situations differed from the findings of the E&V team and how different they were. Field E&V of the FPIC in a selected number of these villages will then be needed in order to achieve a good picture of the issues that arose during the FPIC process.
- To address the missing information issue, the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme should review all the information that needs to be provided to local people (see the discussion in Section 2) and compare it with that already given to villagers. The missing information, particularly the risks and costs associated with implementation of the UN-REDD Programme at the local level, will need to be prepared. If such information is not readily available within the program, a desk review will be necessary to develop a set of information relevant for local people.

On this basis, communication materials will need to be developed for awareness-raising among local people.

- Once a proper set of information is prepared, further awareness-raising/information dissemination about the UN-REDD Programme for villagers, particularly information on risks and costs, should be undertaken in all villages covered in the FPIC process. Depending on available resources, this should be done in a phased approach and prior to any further activity that will take place in the respective villages. Various means can be used, including but not limited to radio and TV broadcasts, printed material distribution, and direct training/awareness-raising events at the village level.
- Together with and on the occasion of the awareness-raising events, the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme should check if any complaint or concern about the FPIC process (or the FPIC team) has been received that remains unspoken or unaddressed among villagers. Such complaints/concerns need to be addressed properly. If necessary, ensure that complaints can be made anonymously.

The following recommendations are made for future FPIC undertakings:

Preparation for the FPIC process:

- FPIC facilitation team:
 - *Age profile:* The age profile of the FPIC facilitation team members was somewhat young. While this has not been a major problem so far, local people, particularly the elderly, still preferred to speak with older facilitators. There should be a better balance of age in the facilitation team to meet the variation of ages among villagers.
 - *Facilitation skills:* The experience from the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme showed that facilitators were able to learn facilitation skills very quickly through two major arrangements: 1) training at the beginning of the process and a refresher session before the field FPIC in the later phases, and 2) working in a mixed team of skilled and less-skilled facilitators. This lesson should be taken into account for future FPIC undertakings.
 - *Use of civil society organizations:* The UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme should involve local civil society organizations (CSOs) as part of the facilitation team. The experiences and skills that CSOs have in working with local people will be important contributions to the process.
- FPIC process design:
 - *International legal framework:* There was lack of reference to the international legal framework and national obligations with regard to FPIC in the process design document; such information should be presented as background information in the FPIC design in order to align the national process with international contexts.
 - *National guidelines related to FPIC:* Similar to the international legal framework, the national guidelines related to FPIC were not incorporated nor were they even referred to in the process design. For the future, any legal documents related to FPIC at the national level should be reviewed and fully incorporated in the design to create synergy between international principles

and national contexts. Any barrier between the national legal framework and the FPIC process should be highlighted.

- o *Governance contexts:* While it may be too ambitious to expect local facilitators to have full understanding of the governance context in the villages where the FPIC process is undertaken, major governance issues should be elaborated in the process design document. This includes but is not limited to description (including discussion on strengths and weaknesses) of the local informal governance structure versus the formal version and the traditional decision-making process versus the formal system, as well as an analysis of the power relations in practice.
- o *Limitations to the process:* Although limitations to the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme's FPIC process were, to a certain extent, anticipated and addressed, it is recommended that this should be dealt with in a more systematic way and should be integrated in the design process. Limitations should be discussed with local facilitators well in advance of the FPIC process to identify them and measures to be taken to the greatest possible extent. Limitations should be listed in the design document along with measures to address them. Limitations may pertain to time, financial and human resources, information provision, and availability of capacity building.
- o *Feedback and documentation mechanism:* The process itself and feedback received from the villagers at meetings have been poorly documented so far, mainly because this was not directly requested in the design document. The process design should foresee this issue. The whole FPIC process at the village level should be fully documented, particularly any issues raised by the villagers and the responses given by the team so this can be followed by anyone reading through the documentation. Documentation should be done publicly at the meetings; i.e. local people should be informed at the beginning of the process that their views and concerns about the program as well as the answers from the team will be fully recorded. If possible, documentation should be done on large sheets of paper (flip charts) so that villagers can read from the back of the room. At the end of the meeting, flip chart notes should be read out aloud to all participants to check if anything is missing or needs to be changed. Later the notes can be transcribed to A4 paper and a copy should be left in the village.
- o *Time for internal discussion:* It is highly recommended that the process design should include adequate time for internal discussion among villagers. In other words, an additional step (Step 4b) in the process is suggested. After the awareness-raising in Step 4, villagers should have time to for mutual discussion and local facilitators should be available to help if they are needed.
- o *Capacity building for villagers:* While it may be too ambitious to have a comprehensive assessment of the needs of local people for capacity building to fully undertake the FPIC process at the village level, the FPIC design process should identify the major support needed (e.g. facilitation, information, and communication materials) to provide to local people for facilitating their internal discussion. Again, facilitators should be on standby to help villagers if needed.

Implementation of the FPIC process:

- Initiation of consultation processes:
 - *Involvement of local people:* Local people should be involved in the FPIC process as early and as much as possible. It is recommended that they are involved in the selection of date and time for any activities related to FPIC at the village level, e.g. awareness-raising, internal discussion, village meetings to provide consent or non-consent.
- Decision-making processes:
 - *Involvement of local people:* Local people should be involved in the FPIC process as early and as much as possible. It is recommended that they are involved in the selection of date and time for any activities related to FPIC at the village level, e.g. awareness-raising, internal discussion, village meetings to provide consent or non-consent. They should also be involved in the discussion on how much time is needed for them to discuss and come up with decisions.
 - *Intra-community consultation:* In the implementation process local facilitators should apply no pressure on villagers to accelerate the process. Local people should be given adequate time for mutual discussion and arrive at a decision.
 - *Documentation:* Local facilitators should fully document the whole process. See the 'Feedback and documentation mechanism' recommendation.
- Information and communication strategy:
 - *UN-REDD information dissemination:* The UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme tried various media to provide outreach to local people. Nevertheless, the use of these media should still be monitored (e.g. how often the information is broadcast on TV/radio and at what time) so that any dilemma that occurs can be addressed promptly.
 - *Contents of the information:* See recommendation for immediate action on missing information (page 14).
 - *Sources of information:* It is highly advisable that related information be provided by other agencies not related to the UN-REDD Programme. (Local) civil society organizations should be involved in the dissemination of information to provide alternatives to local people as well as the different viewpoints on REDD and the UN-REDD Programme.
 - *Time allowed:* It is reiterated that local people must have sufficient time to understand the information provided and for mutual discussion. Facilitators should never apply pressure on them to hurry decisions.
- Transparency and good faith:
 - *Balanced information:* As mentioned earlier, information should be balanced between opportunities/benefits and challenges/costs for local people to participate in the UN-REDD Programme. In addition, information on risks and costs should be provided for local people to consider before deciding whether or not to give consent.

- *Public announcement of outcomes:* The outcomes of the village-level process should be publicly announced to the whole village soon after the meeting so that people who did not attend are well informed and may make any complaint about the outcomes.
- *Information about the program:* So far villagers have associated UN-REDD Programme activities mainly with forest protection. While this is currently not a problem, comprehensive information should be provided so that villagers have a good understanding of what the program is about before making decisions.
- *Engineering consent:* To prevent powerful figures in the village from influencing the final decision, small group discussions should be held in the intra-community discussion process (Step 4b recommended earlier). Powerful actors in the village should be in one sub-group so that they do not influence discussion in the other sub-groups. At the end of the step, the outcomes of all sub-groups should be compiled and equal weight should be given for each group.
- **Grievance and review mechanism:**
 - A grievance and review or a similar mechanism should be established; it should be publicly known and accessible to all villagers throughout the process. The mechanism should reflect the gender, ethnic, religious, and political balance within the area under the FPIC process. It will not be linked to the FPIC team or any other forces in any way and any decision made from the mechanism must be enforceable.

The outcomes of the FPIC process:

- **Public announcement of the outcomes:** As soon as the village-level process has been completed, the outcomes should be publicly announced to everyone, particularly those who were not involved in the process.

Annexes

Annex 1: Terms of Reference of the E&V Mission

The landmark United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP),⁷ adopted by the UN General Assembly in September 2007, provides a universal framework for action for the international community concerning Indigenous Peoples. In the context of Vietnam, ‘ethnic minorities’ meet the criteria usually applied to the term ‘indigenous peoples’.⁸

Among the Guiding Principles for the UN-REDD Programme⁹ is the principle that free, prior, and informed consent for indigenous peoples and other forest-dependent communities must be adhered to, and is essential to ensuring the full and effective participation in policy-making and decision-making processes within UN-REDD Programme activities. In this context:¹⁰

- **Free** should imply no coercion, intimidation or manipulation;
- **Prior** should imply consent has been sought sufficiently in advance and respect time requirements of indigenous consultation/consensus processes;
- **Informed** should imply that information is provided that covers (at least) the following aspects:
 - a. The nature, size, pace, reversibility and scope of any proposed project or activity;
 - b. The reason/s or purpose of the project and/or activity;
 - c. The duration of the above;
 - d. The locality of areas that will be affected;
 - e. A preliminary assessment of the likely economic, social, cultural and environmental impact, including potential risks and fair and equitable benefit sharing in a context that respects the precautionary principle;
 - f. Personnel likely to be involved in the execution of the proposed project (including indigenous peoples)
 - g. Procedures that the project may entail.
- **Consent** – consultation and participation are crucial components of a consent process. Consultation should be undertaken in good faith, requires time and an effective system for communicating among interest holders. Indigenous peoples should be able to participate through their own freely chosen representatives and customary or other institutions. The inclusion of a gender perspective is essential. This process may include the option of withholding consent.

⁷ <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/drip.html>

⁸ For example, the Working Group on Indigenous Populations established under the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights includes criteria such as *voluntary perpetuation of cultural distinctiveness, which may include the aspects of language, social organization, religion and spiritual values, modes of production, laws and institutions*; and “self-identification, as well as recognition by other groups, or by State authorities, as a distinct collectivity.”

⁹ <http://www.un-redd.org/Home/EngagementofIPs/tabid/1033/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

¹⁰ The following text is an excerpt from the report of the *International Workshop on Methodologies Regarding Free Prior and Informed Consent* E/C.19/2005/3, endorsed by the UNPFII at its Fourth Session in 2005

National Programmes should include activities and resources to support ongoing consultation, engagement and partnership to ensure that national UN-REDD activities take into account current priorities and concerns articulated by representatives of Indigenous Peoples and other forest-dependent communities.

As addressed in the UNDRIP and ensuing FPIC, National Programmes will assess the impact of UN-REDD Programme activities on indigenous peoples' and other forest dependent communities' rights prior to taking decisions on such activities.

The UN Resident Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that the National Programme abides by the UN's Standards and Declarations.

The activities of the UN-REDD Programme that are, or which could be subject to Article 32 of the UNDRIP fall within Outcome 2 of the programme: Improved Capacity to manage REDD and provide other Payment for Ecological Services at the district level through sustainable development planning and implementation. Before undertaking any such activities, a process will be undertaken to provide local communities with the opportunity to provide (or withhold) their free prior informed consent for activities under this outcome.

The process will involve the following steps:

Step 0

Prior to the actual FPIC process beginning, some preparatory work is required. This will include:

- The preparation of a summary of the legal basis for local community engagement/FPIC in Vietnam
- The preparation of communications materials
- Advance consultation with provincial and district authorities on the proposed process

Step 1

The UN-REDD Programme will organize one or more awareness-raising events for provincial, district, and commune leaders to ensure that the principles guiding the UN-REDD Programme and district-level activities are understood.

Step 2

The UN-REDD Programme will recruit sufficient interlocutors to guide the consultation process in each ethnic minority village in Lam Ha and Di Linh districts.

Step 3

The UN-REDD Programme will organize a training event for the interlocutors to ensure that they are fully familiar with the anticipated results and activities of the UN-REDD Programme and the principles guiding consultations necessary to secure free prior informed consent.

Step 4

Each interlocutor will be assigned to a number of villages where the ethnic minorities in whose language they are fluent reside. Each interlocutor (or interlocutors for villages with more than one ethnic minority) will contact the village head in order to organize an awareness-raising event at a location and at a time that is mutually acceptable to all

village heads. They will also agree with each village head the form and timing of events to engage the villagers in their village (for example, whether a single village meeting is appropriate, or whether a multi-stage process is required).

Step 5

The interlocutor(s) will attend the village meeting(s) at the time(s) established in Step 4.

Step 6

Having reached consensus, the villagers will prepare a document, using a template prepared by the UN-REDD Programme, indicating either their consent or non-consent; or otherwise indicate their decision.

Step 7

The document recording consent or non-consent of each village will be provided to the UN-REDD Programme by each interlocutor, who will also prepare and submit a report summarizing the consultations, highlighting any concerns as to whether there was evidence of coercion or pressure having been brought to bear on the villagers.

Step 8

Independent verification of the FPIC process will be secured by contacting an independent, international organization with specialization in the area of forest-community interactions.

The UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme is currently requiring an independent international organization to undertake the requirement under Step 8, above.

Output

The activities of the evaluators will result in a report containing a factual summary of activities undertaken under the contract, and recommendations relating to:

- Whether the process has met the principles of FPIC,
- If not, proposals for improvements that need to be made in order to secure FPIC,
- The cost-effectiveness of the process, and advice as to opportunities to reduce costs and/or time while retaining effectiveness of the process

The report will be written in the English language; and submitted to the UN-REDD Programme in electronic and hard-copy formats.

Timing and Resources

It is anticipated that the verification and evaluation process should require no more than one week for field and Hanoi-based activities, for a team not exceeding four individuals. The field and Hanoi-based activities should be undertaken by 15 June 2010, and a report submitted within three weeks after that date.

Competencies

The international organization should have the following competencies:

- Strong regional or global experience working on natural resources management, and especially community-based management
- Extensive experience with working in Vietnam
- Experience with the design and/or implementation of FPIC processes
- Experience with work on REDD+, and in particular with capacity building of grass-roots organizations related to REDD+
- Extensive networking with other like-minded organizations, involving actual cooperation in on-the-ground activities

Annex 2: List of Contributors to the Development of the Draft Toolkit

Name	Organization	Designation	Nationality
Ramy Bulan	University of Malaya	Associate Professor, Head of Legal Pluralism and Indigenous Law	Malaysia
Joan Carling	Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP)	Secretary General	Philippines
Jennifer Corpuz	Tebtebba Foundation (Indigenous Peoples' International Centre for Policy Research and Education)	Legal Officer	Philippines
Norman Jiwan	Sawit Watch	Head of Department, Social and Environmental Risk Mitigation Initiatives	Indonesia
Yurdi Yasmi	RECOFTC	Senior Program Officer (Conflict)	Indonesia
Celina Yong	RECOFTC	REDD Learning Network Support Officer	Malaysia
Ben Vickers	RECOFTC	Senior Program Officer (Climate Change)	UK
Thomas Enters	RECOFTC	Manager, Regional and Country Analysis and Support	Germany
Susan Mackay	RECOFTC	Manager, Communications	UK

Annex 3: The E&V Team

Altogether, six people were involved in the FPIC evaluation and verification process. However, the field E&V team consisted of only four members (see Table A1). Only two officers from RECOFTC Bangkok participated in the discussions in Hanoi: Dr. Yurdi Yasmi, a senior program officer, explained the toolkit to the field E&V team in Hanoi, assisted in modifying the toolkit, and helped to develop the workplan for the field visit; Dr. Thomas Enters, a unit manager, worked with the field team to discuss data collection in the field and to prepare a presentation for the FPIC regional workshop that took place between 16 and 18 June 2010.

The E&V field team was headed by Dr. Nguyen Quang Tan from the RECOFTC Vietnam Country Program. Other team members came from the Center for Sustainable Development in Mountainous Areas (Ms. Luong Thi Truong), the Center for People and Nature Reconciliation (Ms. Nguyen Thi Hai Van), and the Sub-Center for Ethnic Minorities in Lam Dong (Mr. K'Tip). Team members were balanced in gender and varied in age. Most importantly, the team included two members from ethnic groups in Vietnam; one of whom came from the dominant ethnic group (the K'Ho) in the two UN-REDD districts in Lam Dong and the other was Tay.

Table A1: Members of the Field Evaluation Team

Name	Age	Ethnicity	Gender
Luong Thi Truong	58	Tay	Female
Nguyen Thi Hai Van	24	Kinh	Female
K'Tip	38	K'Ho	Male
Nguyen Quang Tan	39	Kinh	Male

Annex 4: Work Schedule of the E&V Exercise

Date/Time	Content
2 June 2010	Preparation
3-4 June 2010	- Discussion on methodology and detailed plan - Discussion with UN-REDD VN (10-11 am, 3 June) - Agree on methodology and detailed plan with UN-REDD VN (2-3 pm, 4 June 2010)
6 June 2010	- Travel Ha Noi – Lam Dong - Evening: Working with FPIC implementation team (experts and local facilitators).
7 June 2010	- Meeting with DPC of Di Linh District. - FPIC evaluation and verification in Da Hong village (Gia Bac commune) - Evening: Working with FPIC implementation team.
8 June 2010	FPIC evaluation and verification in K'Lieng village (Son Dien commune)
9 June 2010	- A brief presentation on the verification/evaluation results - Travel from Di Linh to Lam Ha - Work with DPC of Lam Ha District. - FPIC evaluation and verification in Lam Bo village (Phuc Tho, commune) - Evening: Working with FPIC implementation team.
10 June 2010	- FPIC evaluation and verification in Thon 5 (Da Don commune). - Evening: Working with FPIC implementation team.
11 June 2010	- A brief presentation on the verification/evaluation results - Working with FPIC implementation team. - Back to Hanoi
14-15 June 2010	- Evaluation team discuss and analyze field data - Prepare presentations for FPIC regional workshop
16 – 18 June 2010	Participate and present findings and lessons learned from field evaluation in FPIC regional workshop in Hanoi¹¹
20 June – July 2010	Report preparation

¹¹ The regional workshop was organized in Hanoi by UNDP in collaboration with the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme in order to develop guidelines for the FPIC process under the REDD project. The E&V team was asked to make a presentation of initial findings and to contribute to the discussion in the workshop.

Annex 5: Detailed Findings from the E&V Exercise

This section presents detailed discussion on the issues and elements being evaluated, as presented in Table 2. It provides a rationale as well as primary justifications for the recommendations made in Section 5.

Preparation for the FPIC Process

Issue 1: FPIC Facilitation Team: Suitability and Competency

Language skills:

Evaluation question: Can the FPIC facilitation team communicate directly with local people without immediate translation?

Assessment: Yes.

Evidence:

- Proficiency in local language was highlighted in the recruitment (see Box A1). During the recruitment process, candidates with local language proficiency were given priority.
- Eight out of 24 local facilitators were from the K’Ho ethnic group (the dominant ethnic group in the two districts). Although local language skills were not mentioned in the application letters of the facilitators as they followed the standard form issued by the state, ethnicity was clearly stated in their CVs.
- Language was not a communication problem during the FPIC process. The facilitators were often divided into six sub-teams to work with communities (one sub-team went to one village). In each sub-team, there was always a member from the K’Ho ethnic group, who could speak K’Ho, and other members who spoke Vietnamese. Although most villagers were fluent in both K’Ho and Vietnamese,¹² FPIC team composition allowed them to switch from one language to another, whichever was more convenient for local people.

Box A1: Eligibility Criteria for Local Facilitators

- University or college graduate. Degree in natural resource management, forestry or related subjects is an asset
- Five years’ experiences in the participatory communication approach
- Be enthusiastic and responsible, and have the ability to work independently and in a team
- Ability to communicate in K’Ho or Ma language is an asset
- Not currently employed as a state official

Ethnicity:

Evaluation question: Does the FPIC facilitation team reflect the ethnic composition of the villages in the FPIC process?

Assessment: Yes, mostly.

¹² Some Kinh and other migrant people appeared to have a problem with the K’Ho language.

Evidence:

- The ethnic composition of the villages includes local ethnic groups (e.g. the K'Ho, and Ma), migrant ethnic groups (e.g. Tay and Nung) and the Kinh. Although not all the ethnic groups in the FPIC area were represented by the FPIC facilitation team, the ethnic composition of the facilitators largely reflected this structure: of the 24 facilitators, eight were K'Ho, one was Tay, and the remainder (15) was Kinh.
- During the recruitment process, priority was given to people from the ethnic groups in the FPIC sites. In the CVs of the local facilitators, ethnicity was indicated.

Gender:

Evaluation question: Does the gender balance of the FPIC facilitation team allow for gender equity in the FPIC process?

Assessment: Yes.

Evidence:

- The FPIC facilitation team had a relatively even gender balance: 11 out of 24 (46%) were women. The sub-teams generally had good balance of 2-2; only one sub-team had three men and one woman.
- Of the interviewed villagers who attended the FPIC meetings (Step 5 in Box 1), no one referred to gender imbalance in the facilitation team. One female respondent did observe that women felt uncomfortable speaking up during the meeting but this was because they felt too shy to speak up in large group or did not have a chance to do so (see Issue 2: Decision-making Processes under 'Implementation of the FPIC Process' later).

Age:

Evaluation question: Is the age profile of the team conducive to full disclosure by local people?

Assessment: Yes, partly.

Evidence:

- The FPIC facilitation team was relatively young. Ages of team members ranged from 23 to 51, with a mean of 31 and a median of 28. Over 62% of the team (15 out of 24) was between 20 and 29, five members (20.8%) were between 30 and 39 and only four (16.7%) were over 40 years of age.
- All respondents who attended the FPIC meeting thought the age of the facilitators was not an issue and that the facilitators were well qualified for the job they were doing. However, some respondents would prefer older facilitators as young people often did not have enough experiences, particularly in working with local people.

Consultation experience:

Evaluation question: Can the team demonstrate competency in participatory consultation processes?

Assessment: Not at the inception stage but team competency improved over time.

Evidence:

- One of the key competencies sought in the recruitment of local facilitators was experience in the participatory approach and this was included in the interview process. Nevertheless, such experience was not explicitly mentioned in either CVs or application letters. Only five applicants mentioned that they had adequate experience for the work of the UN-REDD Programme. In addition, as almost 50% of the team was new university graduates, experience in the participatory approach with local communities was limited.
- Of the eight interviewed facilitators, only one mentioned that the principle of participatory consultation concerned active participation of the local community. Another person considered the local community as the center of the participatory process. The remaining six discussed the four principles of FPIC or the actual process of FPIC at the community level. One of them considered achieving consent from the local community as the main objective of the participatory process.
- To enhance participatory skills, UN-REDD organized a training course in facilitation for all FPIC team members at the beginning of the process (Phase 1). The training was conducted by a trainer known professionally in Vietnam. The first village targeted for the FPIC exercise was the venue for the training. At the beginning of FPIC Phase 2, refresher training on facilitation was also conducted by the same trainer to address the concerns of the facilitators and the issues that emerged from Phase 1.
- Observing the FPIC process in a village in Phase 3, the E&V team was impressed with the facilitation skills of the FPIC team members. Within the limited timeframe of the meeting, the FPIC team members were able to involve villagers in the discussion. Although there was still room for improvement, the facilitators did a good job in facilitating the discussion.

UN-REDD knowledge:

Evaluation question: Do all FPIC team members understand the principles, progress, and current status of the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme?

Assessment: Yes, mostly.

Evidence:

- All the interviewed members of the FPIC team had good understanding about the four elements of the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme to be implemented at the local level; this was part of the leaflet that they had to explain to local people. FPIC team members also had a good grasp of the status of the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme.
- There was still some confusion among FPIC team members about REDD and UN-REDD. Team members also had limited knowledge about the other elements (i.e. those that would not be implemented at the local level) of the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme.

Legal knowledge:

Evaluation question: Does the FPIC team understand the international legal basis of the FPIC process?

Assessment: Yes, but not adequately.

Evidence:

- The team leader of the FPIC process obviously had some knowledge of UNDRIP but in the short interview period he was not able to recall the main points of UNDRIP. In response to the question of the international obligations of the country with regard to FPIC, he only noted that the obligations were the four principles of FPIC and that Vietnam would have to follow all the principles of UNDRIP.
- The senior member of the FPIC team (who also functioned as the co-team leader) did not appear to have adequate knowledge of legal issues relating to indigenous people.

Issue 2: FPIC Design Process

Existing FPIC guidelines:

Evaluation question: Were relevant existing national guidelines for FPIC processes incorporated appropriately into the UN-REDD FPIC process?

Assessment: Yes, partly.

Evidence:

- In Vietnam, the FPIC process was related to the policy on grassroots-level democracy.¹³ However, no reference was made to this policy in the two FPIC synthesis reports and the FPIC preparation report prepared by the FPIC team leader.
- Nevertheless, the leader of the FPIC team appeared to have a clear understanding on the linkage between FPIC and the national policy on grassroots-level democracy during the interview. He indicated correctly that the prominent difference between the two was the involvement of local authorities in the whole process.

Governance context:

Evaluation question: Is the local governance context understood by the FPIC team and reflected in the FPIC process design?

Assessment: No.

Evidence:

- In the FPIC reports prepared by the FPIC team members and those prepared by the team leader, the intra-community decision-making process was not discussed. The aspects of traditional decision-making were not described, nor was there comparison of the shortcomings and strengths of the traditional (i.e. of the major ethnic group in the village) and the official decision-making processes.
- Interviews with members of the FPIC team who facilitated the village meetings showed that there was little understanding of and efforts given to understand the local governance contexts. Interviewed team members appeared to be aware of the differences between the local ethnic people and the others (i.e. migrant ethnic groups and the Kinh). Yet, the knowledge on such differences did not extend very

¹³ Decree 29/1998/ND-CP dated 15 May 1998 and Ordinance 34/2007/PL-UBTVQH11 dated 20 April 2007

far and mainly focused on the issue of language. The interviewed team members had an understanding of the (official) decision-making structure at the village level but none of them appeared to have clear knowledge of the social structure of the local ethnic people compared to that of the Kinh and migrant ethnic villages.

National legislative framework:

Evaluation question: Has the legal framework supporting or otherwise affecting the FPIC process been understood and reflected in FPIC design?

Assessment: Yes, partly.

Evidence:

- During the interview, the leader of the FPIC team indicated correctly that the FPIC process in the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme was not only related to the policy on grassroot-level democracy (as mentioned above) but also the Forest Protection and Development Law and National Target Program 135.¹⁴ Nevertheless, he could not elaborate on how these policies were incorporated in the FPIC process.
- Reference was made in the FPIC preparation report to National Target Program 135 in the FPIC design report prepared by the FPIC team leader but there was no analysis of the linkage between this program and UN-REDD or its FPIC process. No reference was made to other policies.

Cultural context:

Evaluation question: Has the FPIC team distinguished between indigenous peoples and other forest-dependent people, and their respective customary practices?

Assessment: Yes, partly.

Evidence:

- In the FPIC design report, all the ethnic groups (including local ethnic groups, the Kinh, and the migrant ethnic groups) in the FPIC sites were identified and information on the number of people and literacy rate was provided.
- Interviews with FPIC team members indicated that there was understanding of the differences between local ethnic people and others, including villages with mixed groups (as mentioned above). Yet, none of the team members was able to describe any customary practices with regard to forest management in the sites that they conducted the FPIC exercise.
- Nevertheless, village meetings were organized only once for all groups. This meant that all people were treated in exactly the same way and no special arrangements were made for any ethnic groups within villages.

Limitations to the process:

Evaluation question: Were the limitations to the FPIC process foreseen and addressed?

Assessment: Yes, but not in a systematic manner.

Evidence:

¹⁴ The national program on socio-economic development in the extremely poor communes in mountain and remote areas, launched after Decision No 135/1998/QĐ-TTg dated 31 July 1998 of the Prime Minister.

- The limitations to the process were not mentioned or discussed in the FPIC design report. However, in the interview with the FPIC team leader, it became clear that limitations were taken into account (orally) and measures to cope with such limitations were discussed and prepared. Identified limitations and corresponding measures are presented in Table A2.

Table A2: Limitations to the FPIC Process and Coping Measures

Limitations	Response
Communication and facilitation skills of local facilitators	Training in facilitation, including practice at the beginning of Phase 1 and refresher training in Phase 2 Preparation of a handbook for facilitators with helpful hints for facilitating a meeting
Involvement of local (forestry) officials in the FPIC process	Arranging a meeting time (evening or early morning) that was not convenient for local officials; hence they did not want to attend the meeting
Community's limited ability to understand	Pre-prepared questions and answers, using simple language, documented in the facilitator manual Use of a variety of media for communication
Difficult questions asked during the meeting	Asked the local facilitators to write down the questions and send the answers later
Limited time for facilitators to understand cultural contexts of local people	Preparation of a handbook for facilitators, in which the main cultural aspects (history, customary practices, etc.) of the K'Ho were presented. Nevertheless, nothing was done for other groups

Incorporating feedback:

Evaluation question: Was a system for recording views and concerns incorporated into the FPIC process?

Assessment: Yes, but poorly implemented.

Evidence:

- There was insufficient description of a feedback system in the FPIC process, particularly in the synthesis report about Phase 1. However, in the Phase 2 synthesis report, lessons were learned from Phase 1 and there was evidence in the synthesis report that the process had been documented and comments and questions from the villagers had been recorded. In Phase 2, FPIC team members were asked to prepare individual reports about the FPIC process in each village, highlighting the 'most important or interesting' comments/questions that arose during the meetings.
- Nevertheless, a feedback system was not introduced to villagers; comments, questions, and feedback from village meetings were not recorded systematically. Village meeting minutes were always prepared, but this was simply a generic listing of what was done during the process. There was a lack of comprehensive

note-taking of the issues raised in the meeting. This poor documentation and feedback process was partially related to the requirement for FPIC team members to specify in their individual reports only ‘interesting’ issues from the meetings.

- Although a feedback system was not officially introduced to the villagers, 67% of the local respondents who attended the meetings indicated that they saw FPIC team members taking notes during the meetings.

Implementation of the FPIC Process

Issue 1: Initiation of the Consultation Process

Permission to engage:

Evaluation question: Did the FPIC team obtain a clear invitation from the local people themselves?

Assessment: No, the plan to visit the villages came from the UN-REDD team.

Evidence:

- The general schedule for the FPIC process was first proposed by the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme. District authorities and commune authorities then discussed with village heads and fixed the date for the FPIC exercise to take place in each commune. The timing of the village meetings was fixed by village heads, based on their¹⁵ understanding of the availability of fellow villagers.
- For village leaders (including village heads, traditional headmen, and village officials), the FPIC process was announced mainly through the awareness-raising meetings they had with the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme earlier at communes and/or district centers, or from village heads (for those who did not attend the meeting).
- Nevertheless, one needs to understand the Vietnamese context; villagers would have been reluctant to participate in any event if the organizers did not have proper introduction from the local (village or commune) officials, particularly the village head. In this situation, the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme was flexible in adapting to the local context in organizing the FPIC process at the village level.

Local representatives:

Evaluation question: Did the FPIC team communicate through valid representatives of the local people?

Assessment: Yes, mostly.

Evidence:

- Community representatives were largely identified by the village heads. In most cases, these representatives were quasi-government officials (e.g. youth union, women’s union, village extension workers). Informal/traditional representatives were also identified.

¹⁵ Village leaders were male in all visited villages.

Meeting arrangements:

Evaluation question: Were the (initial) meetings arranged in a way to generate local ownership of the FPIC process?

Assessment: Yes, the meetings were arranged in a way that was appropriate for most villagers.

Evidence:

- The timing of the village meetings was fixed based on the availability of most villagers and seemed to fit with many of them. However, this was done by the village heads, not through a participatory process with the villagers.
- The venue of the meetings was within the villages in all cases and this was the villagers' choice. In three of the visited villages, the meetings took place in a public meeting place. In the fourth case, the meeting was held in the homestead of a traditional village leader. In three out of four visited villages, the venue of the meeting was convenient for most villagers (i.e. within a short walking distance). In the fourth village, although two meetings were organized to accommodate the large number of people and their spatial distribution, the meeting venue appeared to be a long way (over 20-minute walk) for those who did not live near the center.

Issue 2: Decision-making Processes

Ownership of processes:

Evaluation question: Did local people have control over the movement between stages of the FPIC process?

Assessment: No.

Evidence:

- The stages of the village meetings were very rigid. In the FPIC facilitators' manual (page 15), the duration for each stage in the meeting was suggested per minute. Although this was not obligatory, FPIC facilitators often followed this recommendation and FPIC meetings ended often within the estimated time of about 120 minutes (see Box A2).
- Although local respondents (village leaders and villagers) did not perceive the time limit given to different stages of the meetings as a problem, they would have obviously benefited more had there been more time in the FPIC process, particularly an additional stage for internal village discussion.

Box A2: FPIC Process in Thon 1 Village of Gia Lam Commune, Lam Ha District

3:10PM: Start of the FPIC meeting

Introduction about the meeting

Social event: singing by FPIC team members and the villagers

3:25PM: Introduction about climate change and forests

3:32PM: Game playing: Oxygen and carbon dioxide in our lives

End of game with introduction about carbon dioxide, climate change, and role of forests

3:45PM: Introduction about the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme

3:55PM: Summary of information presented

4:05PM: Questions and answers through two games. Participants discussed in small groups to find the answers to the questions:

Game 1: What REDD was.

Game 2: What REDD was good for.

4:30PM: Introduction about the need to vote for UN-REDD

Request participants to vote for UN-REDD in the village

4:35PM: The UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme representative gave an introduction about the program and its intended activities at the local level

4:42PM: Participants voted by secret balloting

4:45PM: Presentation of gifts (UN-REDD caps and raincoats) to participants¹⁶

4:50PM: Announcement of voting results

4:52PM: Group photo and end of the meeting.

Source: E&V team

Role of representatives:

Evaluation question: Were community representatives held accountable for their roles in the decision-making process?

Assessment: This question was not relevant for the FPIC exercise in Vietnam as all villagers were invited and had the option to attend the village meetings and cast their votes. Each community representative had one vote, just like any other villager. The community representatives did not make the decision on behalf of the villagers.

Intra-community consultation:

Evaluation question: Were discussions in the community conducive to full participation?

Assessment: No, there was no time for real internal discussion.

Evidence:

¹⁶ Although this practice is more commonly employed by commercial companies (in promoting their products), a cap or a raincoat was a good reminder for the villagers of the UN-REDD Programme.

- There was only one FPIC meeting at the village level and the time designated for discussion was very short (around 30-45 minutes), and with the presence of all facilitators. In fact, this was only meant to be a Q&A session. In the village that the E&V team visited (see Box A2), there was actually very little time for villagers to raise questions or comments as the discussion time was taken up by the game play; which was useful for the FPIC team to check if local people understood the introduced concepts but limited the valuable time for Q&A.
- There was no time for internal discussion within the community, particularly within the households. As consent was sought by the end of the meeting, it was assumed that the decision that each participant made represented the opinion of his/her whole family, which may or may not have been the case. Furthermore, lack of time for internal discussion prevented villagers, particular less powerful groups in the village, from raising their concerns. The women, for example, were too shy to speak up in the big meeting. Small group (facilitated) discussion would have provided a better opportunity for them to raise their concerns.
- The UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme attempted to improve the communication of information about the program before the start of the meeting. In villages in Phases 2 and 3, a mobile FPIC facilitator team was sent to the villages prior to the meetings to talk with villagers about the program and the upcoming meetings. Nevertheless, the number of people that the mobile team could speak to was limited and the villagers hardly linked what they heard from the mobile team with the purpose of the FPIC meeting. Thus, there was often no real intra-community discussion about the UN-REDD Programme before the FPIC meetings.

Documentation:

Evaluation question: Was the decision-making process recorded faithfully?

Assessment: Yes, but poorly.

Evidence:

- In the village FPIC reports prepared by the facilitators and the synthesis reports prepared by the team leader, accounts of the FPIC process at the village level were given. Nevertheless, the decision-making process was not fully documented; i.e. not all the ideas, questions or concerns raised during the meetings were noted down. As mentioned earlier, facilitators were requested to mention in their village reports only the ‘most important/interesting’ things that arose during the meetings. This may have led to the omission of issues that the facilitators may have deemed not important or interesting but may have been of importance to the program. In the village where E&V team observed the FPIC process, there were at least three occasions when the participants raised their concerns but their ideas were not documented in any way.
- Interviewed community leaders agreed that one of the facilitators took notes during the meetings. However, the notes were not shared with the villagers (even orally at the meetings) and no notes were left at the villages after the meetings.

Capacity building:

Evaluation question: Did the FPIC process identify and address gaps in the ability of local people to hold internal discussions?

Assessment: No.

Evidence:

- The FPIC design looked at the issues of literacy and communication (language) at the commune and village level. Nevertheless, these issues were only used for design of the communication strategy in the FPIC process. The UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme did not have any plan/strategy to build villagers' capacity in the process.

Issue 3: Information and Communication Strategy

UN-REDD information dissemination:

Evaluation question: Was information about the UN-REDD Programme disseminated to ensure maximum possible awareness among all individuals?

Assessment: Yes.

Evidence:

- The UN-REDD Programme used a wide range of communication tools to raise awareness among local people. TV, radio, leaflets, and posters were used. In Phases 2 and 3, a mobile facilitator team also came to the villages before the meetings to provide awareness-raising for local people.
- The information was prepared in two languages: Vietnamese and K'Ho. While the use of K'Ho language in printed material did not make much economic sense as less than 5% of the people asked claimed that they were able to read K'Ho, all members of the E&V team were convinced that material in K'Ho could induce a strong sense of ownership of the process among local people. In the end, it was worthwhile to produce the materials in local language(s) but this should not be overused as once people feel ownership of the process, they can perceive that publication in local language does not make much economic sense.
- Nevertheless, no civil society organizations were involved in the dissemination of the UN-REDD information. This limited the sources of information about UN-REDD that villagers could access.
- Furthermore, the frequency that the information was provided to local people was low and the timing was short. In fact, villagers only learned about the program only three days before the meetings.

Content of information:

Evaluation question: Was the information accurate and relevant to the concerns of local people?

Assessment: Yes, the information provided was accurate but insufficient.

Evidence:

- The printed materials provided to local people included: posters about linkage between forests, carbon dioxide, and climate change (only drawings); a poster and

pamphlet about four main activities to be undertaken by the UN-REDD Programme at the local level (drawings and text); and a pamphlet about UN-REDD and the importance of having local people's consent (text with pictures). In all materials, contact details about the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme in Hanoi were provided in case anyone wanted to obtain further information.

- The information did not include forest (cover) and land data or review of local people's rights to forests. Most importantly, there was no information on potential risks associated with UN-REDD Programme activities (at the local level).
- Printed materials, particularly the posters, were not sufficiently self-explanatory. Local respondents, when asked to explain the contents of the posters, were only able to show what was in the drawings but not the messages that the posters conveyed.

Access to alternative sources:

Evaluation question: Were the local people able to obtain information on UN-REDD from alternative sources?

Assessment: No.

Evidence:

- In the materials left for local people, only the contact details of the UN-REDD Programme were provided. Phone numbers of FPIC facilitators and the team leader were also given to the village heads.
- Local respondents confirmed that except for people from the UN-REDD Programme, they did not receive any information from any other source. In fact, they were not aware that there were other sources.

Time allowed:

Evaluation question: Was sufficient time allowed for local people to understand the UN-REDD Programme before making a decision?

Assessment: No, not really.

Evidence:

- There was only one FPIC meeting in the villages and the total duration of the meeting was around two hours. The time for introduction about climate change, forests, REDD, and the UN-REDD Programme was approximately 30-45 minutes. About 30-45 minutes were dedicated for discussion. Villagers needed to reach a decision at the end of this meeting. From Phase 2 onwards, a mobile team visited the villages prior to the meetings to spread the news. This was an improvement from Phase 1. However, the visit of the mobile team could not replace awareness-raising that should have taken place earlier and separately from the meetings where decisions were made.
- Around 35% of the respondents who attended the FPIC meetings said the community had enough time and information to understand about the UN-REDD Programme before they made decisions. Nevertheless, most people (78%) said they did not comprehend the UN-REDD Programme; the remaining 22% said that the program concerned forest protection or generating cleaner air.

- About 45% of the people asked indicated that they would continue to seek information on UN-REDD in the future. Nevertheless, it was not certain to the E&V team if they would actually do this. The rest either said no or were not sure.

Issue 4: Transparency and Good Faith Indicators

Indicators of poor process:

Although no indicators of poor process were developed before the field visit, E&V team members noted the following issues related to the transparency of the FPIC process:

- Unbalanced information on UN-REDD: The information about UN-REDD that local people received (in the printed materials and during the village meetings) only emphasized the program as an opportunity for local people. The challenges for them to join the program were not presented. Most importantly, information on potential risks was not covered in the communication with the villagers as they were viewed as being unable to comprehend such risks.
- Public announcement of FPIC outcomes: After the FPIC meetings, the outcomes were not formally announced by village leaders and the UN-REDD Programme. Only those who attended the meetings knew about the voting results. Those who did not attend the meetings were not informed officially.

Information manipulation:

Evaluation question: Is there evidence of the UN-REDD Programme being misrepresented through the FPIC process?

Assessment: No.

Evidence:

- The E&V team did not see any evidence of the misrepresentation of the UN-REDD Programme throughout the FPIC process. The materials used for communication were consistent with current knowledge about REDD (or REDD+) and UN-REDD.
- One issue often heard among local respondents was that UN-REDD addressed forest protection. The consent given by villagers was mostly for forest protection (for cleaner air and more water). This issue should not be viewed as misrepresentation of the UN-REDD Programme as REDD is a complex issue; it might be a good idea to initially associate it with the simple notion of forest protection as local people are already familiar with it.

Engineering consent:

Evaluation question: Were community representatives or other important influencers of local opinion provided with incentives to deliver consent?

Assessment: No.

Evidence:

- In general, villagers and leaders shared views about the program. The latter, particularly village heads, appeared to know better as they had attended awareness-raising before.

- It should be noted that village leaders could have influenced the decisions of the villagers. Four of the 14 community leaders interviewed (29%) thought they could engineer the participants' decisions to suit their own choice (by talking to villagers before the meetings). Nevertheless, the E&V team did not observe evidence of this.

Enlistment of allies:

Evaluation question: Did the FPIC process favor the involvement of individuals or organizations for their political or intellectual viewpoints?

Assessment: No.

Evidence:

- The E&V team did not find any evidence that the FPIC process was in favor of the involvement of individuals or organizations for their political or intellectual viewpoints.

Invalid documents:

Evaluation question: Do the documents produced through the FPIC process represent the actual process and/or outcomes?

Assessment: Yes, mostly.

Evidence:

- Although it was not possible to consult with the villagers about all the information in the FPIC village reports prepared by the facilitators, the general impression of the E&V team was that the reports represented the actual process and outcomes. What was missing in the reports was information on detailed discussion in these meetings. A number of issues/questions were mentioned in the reports but there was no evidence of proper documentation of the whole process.

Issue 5: Grievance and Review Mechanism

No grievance and review mechanism was established.

Verification and Interpretation of the Outcomes of the FPIC Process

The rate of attendance at village meetings in the four villages where the E&V took place ranged from 44% to 57% of the total village population. Young households and those living further away from the meeting venues were less likely to attend meetings as they were not aware of them or had other priorities. In addition, Kinh and other migrant households often did not attend meetings as the meeting announcement made by the village headmen was in the local language, i.e. K'Ho.

In the four villages, consent was given by most participants at village meetings (see Table A3). In the two villages under FPIC Phase 1 (Da Hong and Lam Bo), consent was given through open voting (raising hands) and the results were only estimated as the facilitators were not able to count all the hands. In the two villages in Phase 2 (K'lieng and Thon 5), a secret ballot was used to avoid crowd effects when people had to raise hands to vote.

Table A3: Key Information on FPIC Outcomes in Visited Villages

Village name	Da Hong	K'lieng	Lam Bo	Thon 5
No. of HH in the village	103	107	195	380
No. of HH attending meetings	58	61	86	214
No. of women attending meetings	43	33	n/a	117
No. of people who voted	n/a	61	n/a	185 ^{††}
No. of people giving consent	100% [†]	59	90% [†]	182

[†] Estimated only, over the total number of people who attended the meeting.

^{††} The rest may have left before the end of the meeting.

Issue 1: Verification of the Outcomes

Contents of the outcomes:

Evaluation question: Were the outcomes of the UN-REDD FPIC process clearly elaborated and reasonably justified?

Assessment: Yes, mostly.

Evidence:

- The outcomes of the village meetings were documented in reports prepared by the facilitator team as well as in the synthesis reports prepared by the team leader. Nevertheless, there was lack of full explanation of the terms of the FPIC outcomes in these reports.
- Local respondents agreed with the decisions made at the meetings. Even those who did not participate in the village meetings, after explanation by the E&V team members, also said they would have given consent to UN-REDD had they been at the meetings.

Awareness of the outcomes:

Evaluation question: Were the outcomes of the UN-REDD FPIC process widely disseminated and their implications understood?

Assessment: No, not really.

Evidence:

- As mentioned before, the outcomes of all the village meetings were documented in village and synthesis reports, available in Vietnamese (and English for the FPIC Phase 1 synthesis report). However, such outcomes were not publicly announced in the villages and at higher levels. The FPIC reports did not discuss the means to circulate the outcomes. The program (orally) stated that it had a plan to disseminate all the results (after July 2010) after completion of the FPIC process.
- The FPIC meeting outcomes were mainly learned by those who attended. Only one respondent who did not attend a meeting knew about it while the rest was not sure or not interested. Those who knew about the outcomes of the meetings thought that the implication was that villagers had agreed to protect the forest.

Issue 2: Interpretation of the Outcomes

Accuracy of the outcomes:

Evaluation question: Do the outcomes reflect the decisions of the local people?

Assessment: Yes.

Evidence:

- Local respondents who attended the meetings confirmed agreement with the outcomes of the meetings. Those who did not attend the meetings, as mentioned before, also said they would have given their consent should they have been there (after having been informed by the E&V team about the content of the village meetings).
- Nevertheless, as the UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme associated its activities at the local level with forest protection, the consent being given was directly connected to forest protection (for cleaner air, more water, etc.).

Acceptance of the outcomes:

Evaluation question: Are the outcomes acceptable to the local people?

Assessment: Yes, mostly.

Evidence:

- Although time for the FPIC process was limited, villagers appeared to accept it. Of the interviewed villagers who attended the village meetings 59% thought the time given to them during the meetings to arrive at decisions was acceptable, 10% disagreed, and the rest did not have any opinion.

Credibility of the UN-REDD FPIC process:

Evaluation question: Did the feedback mechanism work?

Assessment: Yes, partly.

Evidence:

- Feedback on issues raised by local people was done orally during the village meetings. In the village reports prepared by FPIC facilitators, main issues raised during the meetings were listed. However, there was absence of proper documentation of the issues raised and the feedback given. It was not clear from the reports prepared by the facilitators whether the issues they mentioned in their reports had been addressed or if follow up was needed.
- Most villagers who attended the village meetings did not raise any concerns during the meetings. Nevertheless, there were unvoiced issues that remained among the villagers. A female respondent in Thon 5, for example, mentioned that women had questions but did not raise them in the meeting. Also in Thon 5, villagers were concerned about whether they could participate in the UN-REDD Programme when there was not much forest surrounding the village. Such concerns did not appear to be properly addressed.



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