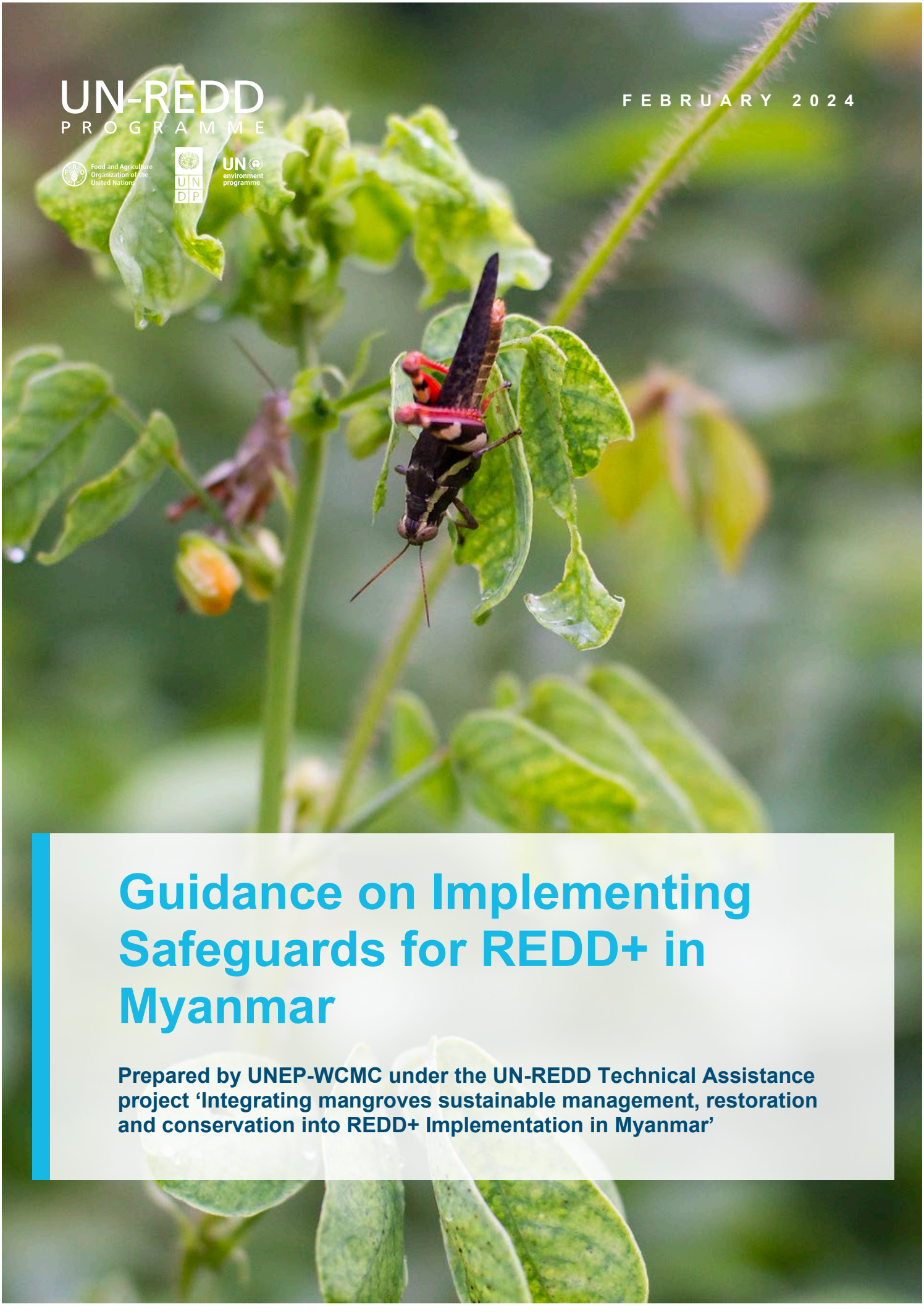

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Guidance on Implementing Safeguards for REDD+ in Myanmar

Prepared by UNEP-WCMC under the UN-REDD Technical Assistance project 'Integrating mangroves sustainable management, restoration and conservation into REDD+ Implementation in Myanmar'

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Acronyms and abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
CF	Community Forestry
CFE	Community Forestry Enterprises
CFI	Community Forestry Instructions
CFUG	Community Forest User Groups
CIFOR	Centre for International Forestry Research
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
EAOs	Ethnic Armed Organisations
ECC	Environmental Compliance Certificate
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EMP	Environmental Management Plan
ESA	Environmental and Social Assessment
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation
FCPF	Forest Carbon Partnership Facility
FPIC	Free, Prior, and Informed Consent
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanism
ICCA	Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas
IEE	Initial Environmental Examination
KNU	Karen National Union
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MC	Monitoring Committee
MONREC	Forest Department
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NCA	Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NRS	National REDD+ Strategy
PA	Protected Area
PaMs	Policies and Measures
PLRs	Policies, Laws and Regulations
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
SIS	Safeguards Information System
SOI	Summary of Information on safeguards
ToC	Theory of Change
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration on the Right of Indigenous Peoples
UNEP-WCMC	United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UN-REDD	United Nations Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
UPDJC	Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee
VFV	Vacant, Fallow and Virgin
VPA	Voluntary Partnership Agreement
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

Part 1: Summary for REDD+ Planners and Implementers

About this Document

This guidance document has been prepared to help planners and practitioners at the sub-national level in Myanmar to follow best practices for safeguards when planning, carrying out, monitoring and reporting on REDD+ actions. Although design for REDD+ action, the guidance may also be relevant for applying safeguards to other projects and initiatives in the forest sector, such as community forestry and restoration.

REDD+ refers to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, conserving, and enhancing forest carbon stocks and sustainably managing forests in developing countries. REDD+ actions, also known as policies and measures (PaMs) can be understood as actions taken to achieve REDD+ objectives and as such, they drive the implementation of REDD+ within countries. REDD+ actions can take many forms, ranging from policy reforms to on-the-ground interventions, such as establishing community forests, improving management of protected areas, or supporting farmers to implement climate-smart agriculture. REDD+ actions can also pose a range of risks or negative impacts, such as reducing access to forest resources for local communities, as well as potential benefits, such as supporting alternative livelihoods and promoting biodiversity conservation. Safeguards are aimed at promoting the positive impacts of actions, and reducing the risks or negative impacts.

Applying REDD+ safeguards can help to:

- Ensure the quality and integrity of REDD+ implementation;
- Improve the sustainability of REDD+ actions, results and finance over the long-term;
- Align REDD+ with broader national goals and programs;
- Meet the requirements for UNFCCC and for donors, helping to facilitate access to REDD+ finance and results-based payments; and
- Build confidence among partners and stakeholders that REDD+ is meeting expectations of environmental sustainability and social equity.

This guidance document focuses on requirements and best practice most relevant to Myanmar's national safeguards approach, which was developed through a national participatory process during 2016-2020. It covers concepts and approaches that are useful for integrating safeguards into various aspects of REDD+ planning and implementation, and it has a special focus on REDD+ actions involving community forestry and mangrove conservation, restoration, and sustainable management. It provides step-by-step guidance on each stage of applying the safeguards to REDD+ actions and similar projects, setting out a safeguards approach to inform socially and environmentally sustainable planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.

There are a wide range of topics and related best practices to consider in REDD+ planning, implementation, and safeguards, from promoting gender equity and social inclusion, to improving land tenure arrangements, to sustainability standards for forest management and plantations, and respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities.[1] Some REDD+ actions in Myanmar may also be developed in line with regulations, standards, and procedures, such as the Community Forestry Instructions (2019), international forest certification standards, the Biodiversity Conservation and Protected Areas Law, and so on. It is the responsibility of REDD+ planners and

[1] For the purposes of this guidance, we use the term 'indigenous peoples and local communities' as it appears in Myanmar's safeguards documents (e.g. National Safeguards Clarification), though note that internationally 'Indigenous Peoples' is also commonly used, as is 'Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities' (IPLCs).

implementers to ensure that they are following the relevant regulations and applying best practice for the development and implementation of their REDD+ actions.

This guidance is based on Myanmar's national safeguards approach (see Part 2), as well as best practice guidelines from Myanmar and international sources. It has been developed using an iterative, participatory approach, incorporating stakeholder feedback, to ensure it meets the needs of its users.

The guidance is split up into two parts:

Part 1: Summary for REDD+ Planners and Implementers that gives a brief overview of the safeguards process, and

Part 2: More detailed best practice guidance on applying REDD+ safeguards in Myanmar**.** The latter has seven chapters, as follows:

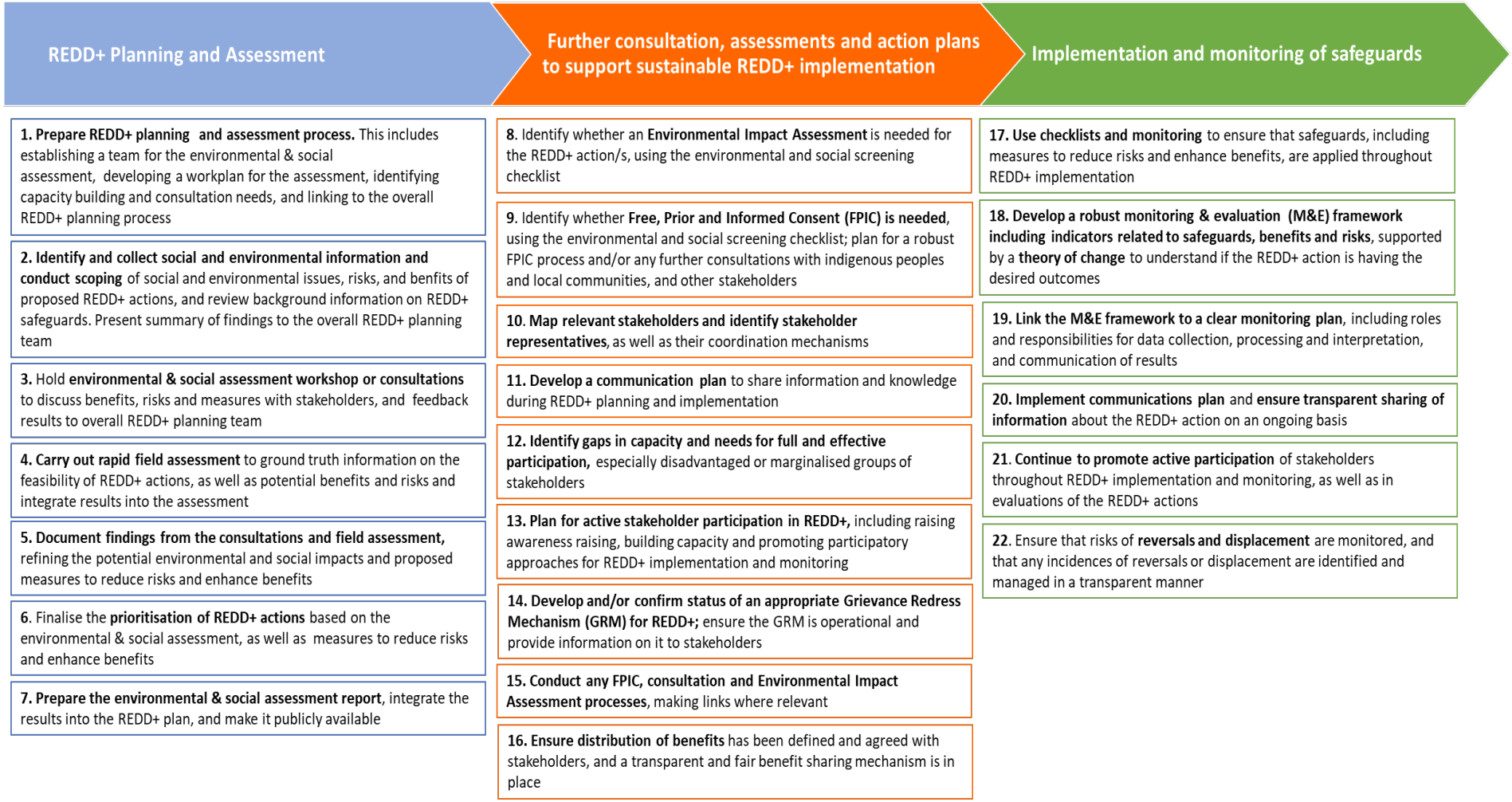
- **Chapter 1: REDD+ Planning and Assessment of Impacts –** introduces the planning process for REDD+ actions, including the importance of consultation and safeguards-oriented environmental and social assessment to avoid negative impacts while enhancing other co-benefits.
- **Chapter 2**: **Free Prior and Informed Consent, and Grievance Redress Mechanisms –** introduces two key safeguards instruments, FPIC and GRM, including relevant guidelines for developing and applying these in the Myanmar context.
- **Chapter 3: Stakeholder Participation, Capacity Building and Benefit Sharing –** provides an overview of why including stakeholders in the REDD+ process and building their capacity is important, introduces approaches to ensure this inclusion, as well as the importance of equitable and transparent benefit sharing for REDD+.
- **Chapter 4: Transparency, Information Sharing and Communications –** provides guidance on transparency and accountability for REDD+, as well as promoting communications and information sharing.
- **Chapter 5: Natural Forest, Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, and Conservation –** introduces key concepts and approaches for ensuring that REDD+ actions promote the conservation of natural forests, biodiversity, and ecosystem services.
- **Chapter 6: Reversals and Displacement –** introduces concepts and approaches related to risks of reversals and displacement.
- **Chapter 7: Monitoring and Evaluation –** explains why the monitoring & evaluation of safeguards is important and how the results should be used.

Each chapter introduces key concepts and background information on the relevant safeguards topics, along with more detailed best practice guidance on steps and procedures that should be followed to ensure robust REDD+ planning and implementation, in line with the safeguards. Each chapter also provides lists of relevant policies, laws, and regulations in the Myanmar context, as well as useful resources and practical examples. In addition, several specific tools and templates have been developed to support REDD+ planners and implementers.

The main tools accompanying this guidance are a set of checklists covering the key safeguards topics and procedures. These checklists are referred to in each chapter and should be used by REDD+ planners and implementers to check whether they have undertaken key steps and procedures in the REDD+ process related to the safeguards, such as conducting an impact assessment or mapping natural forests. The checklists also help to gauge the quality of safeguards application, e.g. the extent to which different stakeholder groups have been engaged. Filling out the checklists will also support monitoring and evaluation of the REDD+ action/s at a later stage, recoding some key information about REDD+ planning and implementation.

Figure 1 below provides an overview of the steps set out in the guidance, as an overall, suggested process for applying the safeguards to REDD+ planning and implementation.

Figure 1: Overview of suggested process for applying the safeguards to REDD+ planning and implementation in Myanmar



Overview of the suggested process for applying the REDD+ safeguards

Introduction

This summary provides an overview of the process of applying best practices for social and environmental safeguards for REDD+ actions in Myanmar. It is intended to guide users through a step-by-step process of applying safeguards over the lifetime of their REDD+ project, from the planning stages to implementation and monitoring and evaluation. Users can use this overview to navigate to relevant chapters in Part 2 of this guidance document, for more in-depth information and guidance on specific safeguards topics.

REDD+ planning and assessment

The first stage of the safeguards process is planning of REDD+ actions and assessing the social and environmental risks and benefits, as well as assessing the feasibility of REDD+ actions. This is covered in detail in Chapter 2 of this guidance. The objective should be to coordinate with and strengthen the overall REDD+ planning process. There should be a strong emphasis on stakeholder participation and other safeguards principles including the protection of human rights, transparency, and information sharing.

1. The first step is to ***prepare the REDD+ planning and assessment process*** through establishing a team who will be responsible for undertaking an environmental and social assessment (ESA) to inform the design of REDD actions and planning out safeguards-related activities. A clear work plan of activities related to fulfilling safeguards requirements in the REDD+ process should be clearly laid out and linked to the overall planning process. This might include activities related to identifying capacity building needs (see Chapter 1), both for the implementation team to be able to apply safeguards principles and for the stakeholders to enable full and effective participation (see also Chapter 3 on participation).
2. Once a clear workplan for safeguards processes is determined and an ESA team has been established, the team can start to ***identify and collect social and environmental information,*** and to conduct the ***initial scoping of environmental risks and benefits.***
3. After an initial desk-based review of available data and information has been carried out, the process to enable a more in-depth study into identifying potential environmental risks and benefits should begin. Potential risks and benefits identified through the scoping process should be discussed and verified with stakeholders who should be able to contribute effectively to further identify risks and benefits of REDD+ actions through an ***environmental and social assessment workshop or consultations.***
4. For further verification and to ground truth findings from the desk-based scoping and stakeholder workshops, a ***rapid field assessment is carried out.*** This will also help to further determine the feasibility of REDD+ actions.
5. ***The findings of the consultation, rapid field assessment and desk review should then be documented***, refining the environmental and social assessment and proposed measures to reduce risks and enhance benefits.
6. These findings can then feed into the selection and **prioritisation of *REDD+ actions*** , including measures to enhance benefits and reduce risks of these actions
7. Then the ***environmental and social assessment report is prepared***, which integrates the results of these processes and provides the analysis of potential risks and measures to enhance benefits and reduce these risks. The results are presented to the REDD+ implementation team and integrated into the REDD+ plan. The report should be made publicly available and readily accessible.

Further consultation, assessments, and action plans to support sustainable REDD+ implementation

Once the environmental and social assessment is complete, REDD+ planners should determine if any other assessments and processes are required prior to implementation:

8. Identify whether a formal environmental impact assessment (EIA) is needed based on the funder, donor or national requirements; details on the requirements related to EIA in Myanmar can be found in Chapter 1).
9. ***Determine whether Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) is needed,*** details of which can be found in Chapter 2, and if so, plan for a robust FPIC process. Environmental and social screening (Checklist 1.2) is also a useful tool to help to understand whether an EIA or FPIC is required.
10. To implement REDD+ in a participatory manner, ***identify all relevant stakeholders and representatives***. A stakeholder mapping exercise can help to ensure you have identified all relevant stakeholders. ***Stakeholder representatives should be chosen by their stakeholder groups***.
11. A ***communication plan should be developed*** to enable the sharing of knowledge and information during REDD+ planning and implementation to all key stakeholder groups. Guidance on information sharing and communications, including how to develop a communication plan, can be found in Chapter 4.
12. To have full and effective participation, it may be necessary to build knowledge and capacity among stakeholders. Therefore, a key step to enable this is to ***determine what capacity building needs there are and how you plan to close these gaps*****.**
13. ***Plan how to actively involve stakeholders so they can participate in REDD+.*** This can include participation in planning, decision-making, consultations, and awareness raising, as well as in implementation of activities, and monitoring and evaluation.
14. Stakeholders should have ***access to an appropriate mechanism to raise complaints*** should they arise**,** which can be provided through a ***Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM)*** (Chapter 2). This mechanism or channel should be in place and operational prior to implementation of REDD+, and information on the function of the GRM should be readily available and distributed to stakeholders.
15. Conduct any ***EIA and/or FPIC processes that are required for the REDD+ action/s.*** Full information on EIA requirements can be found in Chapter 1 and detailed guidance on FPIC processes can be found in Chapter 2.
16. There should be a ***transparent procedure and agreement on the distribution of any benefits*** arising from the REDD+ action/s, which can be monetary and non-monetary benefits (see Chapter 3).

Implementation and monitoring of safeguards

Environmental and social safeguards, including measures identified to reduce risks and enhance benefits, now need to be fully implemented and monitored alongside REDD+ actions. Chapter 7 provides full information on monitoring and evaluation.

17. Use the ***checklists and monitoring processes*** for REDD+ to ensure that that safeguards and any measures for risk mitigation and benefit enhancement are being fully implemented and adequately monitored.
18. ***Develop a robust monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system, supported by a theory of change***, which shows the process and steps through which the REDD+ action/s has the desired impact, as well as risks and assumptions that may need to be monitored. ***Include indicators on safeguards in the M&E framework*****,** including for monitoring any measures in place to reduce environmental and social risks and enhance benefits***.***
19. The ***M&E framework should be linked to a clear monitoring plan*****,** outlining data collection frequency and responsible parties - who will do what and when.
20. ***Implement your communication plan*** to ensure transparent sharing of information among stakeholders about REDD+ implementation and results.
21. Throughout implementation of REDD+ actions, ***continue to promote active participation of stakeholders, including in monitoring and evaluation*** (see Chapter 3 on stakeholder participation and Chapter 7 which looks at participatory M&E for REDD+).
22. The M&E framework should also include the ***monitoring of incidences of reversals*** (where initial successes in reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation are subsequently reversed and emission return to what they were before) ***and displacement*** (where GHG emitting activities are not stopped completely but rather move to a different location)**.** (See Chapter 6 for more information on reversals and displacement).

Part 2: Best practice guidance on applying REDD+ safeguards in Myanmar

Overview of REDD+ and REDD+ safeguards in Myanmar

REDD+ and forests in Myanmar

Myanmar still has large tracts of natural forest but suffers from high rates of deforestation and forest degradation. Different studies and information sources provide different figures for the extent of forests in Myanmar and the rates of deforestation. According to the FAO Forest Resource Assessment for Myanmar, in 2010 the country had 31.44 million ha of forest, which had declined to 28.54 million ha in 2020.[2] Myanmar's Forest Reference Emissions Level document estimates annual deforestation at 428,984 ha per year during 2005-2015, amounting to annual emissions from deforestation during this period of 53,807,463 tonnes of CO_2e per year.[3]

Forests in the country are distributed over three climatically distinct regions: tropical, subtropical, and temperate with eight major forest types; the most abundant forest type is the Tropical Mixed Evergreen and Deciduous Hardwood Forest, which is known for the occurrence of teak and other valuable timber species. Myanmar also has the largest area of mangroves in Asia, concentrated in the Ayeyarwaddy Delta, Rakhine and Tanintharyi regions[4] (see Box 1 below for more information).

As part of efforts to combat deforestation and forest degradation, Myanmar began work on REDD+ in 2011, with support from the UN-REDD Programme and led by the Forest Department, focusing on developing capacities to participate in REDD+ under the UNFCCC. REDD+ is an initiative created under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to reduce anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and to promote the conservation and enhancement of forest carbon stocks and the sustainable management of forests. It offers developing countries incentives for taking action to reduce or reverse carbon emissions from forests. Myanmar's National REDD+ Strategy (NRS) was drafted in 2019[5], setting out proposed Policies and Measures (PaMs) for REDD+ implementation. The four objectives of the proposed NRS are:

- Reducing deforestation and related carbon emissions by 30% by 2030;
- Enhancing forest carbon stocks by 90 million tonnes of CO2e by 2030;
- Reducing degradation in existing over exploited forests; and
- Preventing future forest degradation and conserving forest carbon stocks, particularly in protected areas.

[2] FAO (2020) Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020: Myanmar, https://www.fao.org/3/cb0030en/cb0030en.pdf
[3] MONREC (2018) Forest Reference Level (FRL) of Myanmar. Revised submission, November 2018, https://redd.unfccc.int/files/revised-myanmar_frl_submission_to_unfccc_webposted.pdf
[4] Hamilton, S. E. and Casey, D. (2016) 'Creation of a high spatio-temporal resolution global database of continuous mangrove forest cover for the 21st century (CGMFC-21)', *Global Ecology and Biogeography*, 25(6), pp. 729–738. doi: 10.1111/geb.12449.
[5] REDD+ Myanmar (2019) National REDD+ Strategy Myanmar, Draft, August 2019.

Box 1: Mangrove forests in Myanmar

Myanmar has the largest area of mangroves in Asia, concentrated in the Ayeyarwady Delta, Rakhine and Tanintharyi regions, with approximately 299,700 ha of mangroves over the three regions[1]. However, mangroves in Myanmar are under pressure from both natural and anthropogenic disturbances resulting in deforestation and degradation. The main drivers of this include agricultural expansion, fuelwood harvesting, charcoal production and the construction of shrimp ponds for aquaculture. Mangroves are important for society due to their multiple benefits, including protection of coastal areas from storms and tsunamis, support to coastal fisheries, shoreline stabilisation, as well as timber and non-timber forest products[2] [3] [4]. They also store large amounts of carbon, especially within sediment, which offers great value in contributing to international efforts to address climate change. Mangrove conversion and degradation results in the loss of sediment carbon, for instance, the conversion of mangroves to fishponds could result in the loss of 90% of carbon from the top 3 m of soil[5]. Therefore, the conservation and restoration of mangrove forests in Myanmar can contribute towards climate mitigation targets, although the fact that large areas of mangroves fall outside of the legally defined 'forest land' means it is challenging to implement REDD+ in mangrove areas.

The UN-REDD Programme ''Integrating mangroves sustainable management, restoration and conservation into REDD+ Implementation in Myanmar'' project aims to support mangrove communities to reduce GHG emissions and improve sustainable livelihoods in six districts with mangrove forests, focusing on: institutional strengthening and capacity building; improved data on mangroves, including carbon and non-carbon benefits; and piloting of community forestry and livelihoods interventions. This safeguards guidance has also been developed through this project.

[1] Hamilton, S. E. and Casey, D. (2016) 'Creation of a high spatio-temporal resolution global database of continuous mangrove forest cover for the 21st century (CGMFC-21)', Global Ecology and Biogeography, 25(6), pp. 729–738. doi: 10.1111/geb.12449
[2]Das, S., and Vincent, J.R. 2009. Mangroves protected villages and reduced death toll during Indian super cyclone. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences 106(18): 7357-7360
[3]Brander, L.M., Wagtendok, A.J., Hussain, S.S., McVittie, A., Verburg, P.H., de Groot, R.S., and van der Ploeg, S. 2012. Ecosystem service valuation for mangroves in Southeast Asia: A meta-analysis and value transfer application. Ecosystem Services 1: 62-69.
[4]Alongi, D.M. 2014. Carbon cycling and storage in mangrove forests. Annual Review of Marine Science 6: 195-219.
[5]Kauffman, J. B., Heider, C., Norfolk, J., & Payton, F. (2014). Carbon stocks of intact mangroves and carbon emissions arising from their conversion in the Dominican Republic. Ecological Applications, 24(3), 518–527. *https://doi.org/10.1890/13-0640.1*

Myanmar's REDD+ goals are aligned with its commitments under the UNFCCC Paris Agreement. The country's first Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), submitted to the UNFCCC in 2015, presented a vision for achieving climate resilient, low-carbon, resource efficient and inclusive development, and set out mitigation targets in both the forest and energy sectors, as well as adaptation targets across eight sectors, including forests and biodiversity. Myanmar's updated NDC of mid-2021 maintains inclusion of the forest and land use sector, a conditional mitigation target of reducing deforestation by 50% by the year 2030, and an unconditional target to reduce deforestation by 25% by the year 2030. Its adaptation actions include those related to ''sustainable natural resources management that enhances the resilience of biodiversity and ecosystem services to support social and economic development of the local and indigenous/ethnic communities while also delivering carbon sequestration''.[6]

There are a wide range of REDD+ actions set out in Myanmar's draft NRS, several of which we focus on as case examples in this guidance. These include:

- Expand the number and area of Community Forests and support the development of Community Forest Enterprises
- Implement incentivized community monitoring and other forms of independent monitoring programmes
- Implement the Myanmar Reforestation and Rehabilitation Programme, incentivizing private sector and community plantations, including fuelwood plantations

6 The same NDC was submitted to the UNFCCC by the State Administration Council (SAC) and the National Unity Government (NUG); with the SAC version displayed on the UNFCCC website. This is the version referred to in this document.
https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/ndcstaging/PublishedDocuments/Myanmar%20First/Myanmar%20Updated%20%20NDC%20July%202021.pdf

- Engage with Ethnic Armed Organisations (EAOs), political leaders, representatives of ethnic people, NGOs, and religious leaders to develop cooperation on sustainable forest management
- Revise protected area governance processes, supporting diversification of protected area categories

This guidance has been developed with support from the UN-REDD project "Integrating mangroves sustainable management, restoration and conservation into REDD+ Implementation in Myanmar'', and hence has a focus on how the safeguards should be applied in REDD+ actions on the ground, especially those relevant to mangrove communities.

The Cancun Safeguards

The main aim of REDD+ is to reduce the rise of GHG concentrations in the atmosphere through maintaining and enhancing forests in developing countries, along with the carbon they store. In addition to the direct benefits for climate change mitigation, well planned REDD+ actions can simultaneously lead to further benefits for society and the environment. For example, REDD+ may help to conserve forest areas that host a high number of animals and plants, improve livelihoods for forest-dependent communities, and enhance services provided by nature, such as water regulation. However, if REDD+ actions are not well-planned, implemented and monitored, they could pose risks to people and nature, leading to potential trade-offs. Therefore, potential negative and unintended consequences of REDD+ actions, such as displacement of pressure on resources to elsewhere, and conflict around access to resources and land tenure, must be prevented.

Safeguards are measures that aim to avoid these risks (do no harm) whilst also promoting the desired benefits from REDD+ actions. The Cancun Safeguards are a set of seven safeguards that were adopted in 2010 at the 16th Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC. Through the process of effectively applying these safeguards, assurance is given that the REDD+ actions will not have a negative impact on environmental sustainability and social equity.[7] The Cancun Safeguards are broad principles, covering key environmental, social and governance issues (please see Figure 2 below for an overview).

There are three UNFCCC requirements related to the Cancun Safeguards for countries participating in REDD+:

1. Safeguards must be addressed and respected throughout REDD+ implementation[8];
2. Countries must periodically submit a Summary of safeguards information (SOI); and
3. A national-level Safeguards Information System (SIS) must be developed and operationalised.

[7] See also: UN-REDD Programme Safeguards Coordination Group (2016) Concept brief: Country approaches to safeguards. Technical Brief 02. UN-REDD Programme, Geneva. http://bit.ly/CASgds

[8] The UNFCCC decisions on safeguards include no definition of what is meant by 'addressed' and respected'. However, a widely accepted working definition is that 'addressing safeguards' means to put relevant policies, laws and regulations (PLRs) and institutional arrangements in place to support REDD+ actions being implemented in line with the safeguards, while 'respecting safeguards' means to apply the safeguards in practice during the implementation of REDD+ actions, leading to positive outcomes on the ground.

Figure 2: Cancun Safeguards (Source: Myanmar UN-REDD Programme)

Other relevant safeguards frameworks

REDD+ can be funded from a range of sources, and implemented by a range of organisations and stakeholders, from local community-based actions through to national-scale policy reforms. In some cases, additional safeguards frameworks will be a condition for particular REDD+ programs and projects, besides meeting the safeguards requirements of the UNFCCC.

For example, the Green Climate Fund (GCF) is a funder of REDD+ readiness and implementation and makes results-based payments. The GCF has an Environmental and Social Policy, revised in 2021[9], detailing how the fund considers environmental and social risks and impact in decision making and operations, and requires the agencies supporting GCF projects (known as Accredited Entities) to apply their own safeguards polices, which must meet or exceed the GCF's Environmental and Social Policy. The World Bank specifies its safeguards requirements in its Environmental and Social Framework[10], while the Asian Development Bank (ADB) has its own environmental and social safeguards requirements under its Safeguards Policy Statement.[11] Another key standard for jurisdictional REDD+, including safeguards, is the Architecture for REDD+ Transactions - The REDD+ Environmental Excellence Standard (ART-TREES).[12]

[9] Green Climate Fund. *Revised Environmental and Social Policy*. Available: https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/revised-environmental-and-social-policy.pdf
[10] World Bank. *Environmental and Social framework*. Available: https://www.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/environmental-and-social-framework
[11] Asian Development Bank. *Safeguard Policy Statement*. Available: https://www.adb.org/documents/safeguard-policy-statement
[12] https://www.artredd.org/trees/

REDD+ safeguards in Myanmar

As part of its REDD+ efforts, Myanmar has worked on developing a national safeguards approach, involving participation of government agencies, NGOs, communities, and other stakeholders. The national safeguards approach is built on relevant policies, laws, and regulations in the country, as well as additional instruments and procedures to ensure that REDD+ actions are appropriately developed and implemented. The safeguards approach was developed through a series of key steps and outputs, which include:

- **Myanmar Safeguards Roadmap**: Developed in 2017, this document sets out the individual steps for the development of Myanmar's safeguards approach, their respective objectives and timelines, and responsibilities for their implementation. *Roadmap: English | Myanmar*
- **Benefits and risks assessment:** Finalised in 2019, this participatory assessment at national and subnational levels identifies the potential benefits and risks of proposed REDD+ actions in Myanmar. *Summary document: English*
- **Review of policies, laws and regulations (PLRs):** Also finalized in 2019, this review analysed the degree to which the safeguards for REDD+ are already addressed by existing PLRs in Myanmar, as part of a wider policy review related to REDD+. *Summary by safeguard: English; Full report: English*
- **Clarification of the safeguards***:* The Myanmar National Safeguards Clarification was developed in 2019, interpreting the meaning of the Cancun Safeguards in the Myanmar context. More information on this document is provided below. *Clarification document: English | Myanmar*
- **National Approach to the REDD+ Safeguards:** Finalised in 2020, this document sets out Myanmar's national approach to the safeguards, including the steps followed to develop the approach, and key features and mechanisms. *National Safeguards Approach document: English | Myanmar*
- **Design of Myanmar's REDD+ Safeguards Information System**: This 2020 document describes the information needs, information structure, proposed indicators, and suggested content of Myanmar's SIS, as well as the proposed institutional arrangements and process for operationalising the SIS. *Report: English | Myanmar*
- **First Safeguards Summary of Information (SOI):** Myanmar submitted its first Summary of information to the UNFCCC in early 2020, which summaries how the Cancun safeguards are being addressed and respected. *SOI report: English | Myanmar*
- **SIS webpage***:* An interim SIS webpage was developed in 2020 and is available at http://sis.myanmar-redd.org/ in English and Myanmar languages.

Forming a key element of Myanmar's national safeguards approach, the national safeguards clarification consists of 7 principles (aligning with the Cancun Safeguards and considering other relevant safeguards frameworks) (see Box 2 below). These principles are supported by 29 criteria, setting out the expectations for how REDD+ should be planned and implemented in Myanmar, and then by a series of indicators to help track progress, i.e. how the safeguards are being addressed and respected.

Box 2: Principles of the National clarification of the Safeguards for Myanmar

- **Principle A)** REDD+ Policies and Measures in Myanmar should complement or be consistent with the objectives of national forest programmes and relevant international conventions and agreements
- **Principle B)** REDD+ Policies and Measures in Myanmar should support transparent and effective national forest governance structures, taking into account national legislation and sovereignty.
- **Principle C)** REDD+ Policies and Measures in Myanmar must be designed and implemented to respect the knowledge and rights of indigenous peoples[1] and members of local communities[2].
- **Principle D)** REDD+ Policies and Measures in Myanmar must be designed and implemented with the full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders, in particular indigenous peoples and local communities. All groups who may be affected by the Policies and Measures should be considered relevant stakeholders.
- **Principle E)** REDD+ Policies and Measures in Myanmar should be consistent with the conservation of natural forests and biological diversity, ensuring that they do not lead to the conversion of natural forests, but are instead used to incentivize the protection and conservation of natural forests and their ecosystem services, and to enhance other social and environmental benefits.
- **Principle F)** REDD+ Policies and Measures in Myanmar should be designed and implemented to avoid or minimize risks of reversals. The term 'reversal' describes a situation where initial successes of a REDD+ PaM are reversed at a later date, and the trajectory of emissions returns to business-as-usual. This can happen for example when the forest that has been conserved or restored through a REDD+ measure is subsequently destroyed. Reversals of the success of REDD+ PaMs can occur due to external factors (such as fluctuations in international markets or climate change), or due to flaws in the design of PaMs (e.g. when an intervention is not financially sustainable in the long term).
- **Principle G)** REDD+ Policies and Measures in Myanmar should be designed and implemented to avoid or minimize displacement of emissions. Displacement of emissions occurs when a REDD+ PaM successfully reduces emissions from one source or in one area, but at the same time causes increased emissions from another source or area.

[1] A clear and specific definition of 'indigenous peoples' needs to be agreed through a comprehensive stakeholder dialogue process involving key government departments and representatives of ethnic peoples. The definition should be based on thorough analysis and review, and take into account relations to the natural environment as well as culture. If there is disagreement, the criteria of self-determination should prevail.
[2] When 'members of local communities' are identified, care should be taken not to exclude persons who have been displaced by conflict or natural disaster.

Full text of the national clarification available online: English | Myanmar

Additional resources on REDD+ and REDD+ safeguards

In addition to the list of Myanmar safeguards documents and resources above, here are some general resources on safeguards for REDD+:

- REDD+ Academy. Developed by the UN-REDD Programme, this free online course seeks to enable systematic, focused capacity development on REDD+, including one module on safeguards. In addition to taking the course, you can choose to download the lessons in pdf format and study the course offline at your own pace.
- UN-REDD web site safeguards pages. These provide an overview of the Cancun Safeguards, safeguards requirements and UN-REDD resources.
- UN-REDD Brief: Country approaches to safeguards. This technical brief introduces and explains country or national approaches to the Cancun Safeguards.
- UN-REDD Brief: REDD+ Safeguards Information Systems - Practical Design Considerations. This technical brief introduces key elements of SIS design.
- UN-REDD Brief: Summaries of Information – Initial experience and recommendations. This brief discusses country experiences and lessons learned from development of initial summaries of information.
- Myanmar REDD+ website safeguards page. This subpage of the Myanmar REDD+ website provides some introductory information on safeguards and links to relevant resources.

Chapter 1: REDD+ Planning and Assessment of Impacts

Key Concepts

- **REDD+ planning** refers to the development of action plans that set out the objectives, interventions, timeline, and other important aspects for implementing REDD+, often in a particular geographic area or site.
- **Assessment of impacts** refers to the process of considering and analysing the potential implications of an action for people and their environment.
- **REDD+ Actions** (Policies and Measures (PaMs)) are the actions or interventions taken to implement REDD+, e.g. establishing a community forest or promoting forest certification may be REDD+ PaMs.
- **Multiple benefits** of REDD+, also known as co-benefits, are the range of social, environmental, and other benefits that may be delivered by REDD+, beyond carbon.

Myanmar Safeguards Criteria Related to Planning and Assessment of Impacts

Criterion A1 Consistency with the objectives of relevant national policies and programmes	**Criterion A2** Consistency with the objectives of relevant international conventions and agreements as well as the strategies and plans for their implementation	
Criterion B1 Transparent planning and implementation, with comprehensive information made available to stakeholders	**Criterion B4** Consideration and filling of gaps in data availability and implementation capacity during planning	
Criterion C1 Avoidance of involuntary resettlement and respect for the rights of Indigenous peoples and local communities to land and resources	**Criterion C2** Taking into account existing land uses, including undocumented rights, to avoid negative impacts on vulnerable stakeholder groups, and support clarification of use rights	**Criterion C3** Respect for customary practices and cultural heritage of Indigenous peoples and local communities

Criterion D1 Active participation of stakeholders in planning and implementation, and support for stakeholder groups with low capacity to participate through capacity-building and other appropriate arrangements		**Criterion D2** Informed, equal and proportionate participation of stakeholder representatives, with appropriate legitimation and communication between representatives and their stakeholder group		
Criterion E1 Reliable mapping of natural forests and no conversion of natural forests to other uses	**Criterion E2** REDD+ planning based on sound information on social and environmental impacts	**Criterion E3** Selection, design, and implementation to avoid or minimize negative impacts and enhance positive ones	**Criterion E4** Environmental and social benefits supported through appropriate selection, design, and implementation	**Criterion E5** Capacity-building and transparency measures to ensure that environmental and social objectives are considered in land use- or management planning
Criterion F1 Analysis of risks of non-permanence included in feasibility/impact assessment		**Criterion F2** Identified risks of non-permanence addressed in selection, design, and implementation		
Criterion G1: Analysis of risks of displacement included in feasibility/impact assessment		**Criterion G2:** Identified risks of displacement addressed in selection, design, and implementation		

Numerous criteria in the Myanmar national safeguards approach are relevant to the planning process for REDD+ actions and the assessment of their potential impacts. These criteria cover a wide range of aspects, from consistency with objectives of national forest programmes (Criterion A1), data availability (Criterion B4), respect for the cultural heritage and customary practices (Criterion C3), stakeholder participation (Criterion D1), to addressing risks of reversals (Criterion F2) and displacements (Criterion G2). Because planning and assessment is linked to so many criteria, they form the most crucial steps in ensuring that safeguards are addressed and respect for REDD+ planners and implementers.

1.1 Background information: REDD+ planning and assessment of impacts in Myanmar

REDD+ actions (also known as ''policies and measures'', PaMs) can take place both on the national level and subnational level and are usually set out in different types of plans. A **robust REDD+ planning process** is essential in developing feasible and sustainable REDD+ actions, that include stakeholder perspectives and that can deliver the expected carbon, social and environmental benefits, while avoiding or minimising negative impacts.

At the national level, a National REDD+ Strategy describes the proposed REDD+ actions for implementing REDD+. In some countries, REDD+ Investment plans are also developed, setting out the strategy for implementation and financing of REDD+. At the subnational level, different types of REDD+ plans may be developed, such as provincial or regional REDD+ plans and even site-level REDD+ plans. In some cases, rather than undertaking separate REDD+ specific planning, REDD+ actions can also be integrated into other plans, such as forest management plans, green development plans or the work plans of relevant institutions or projects.

In the case of Myanmar, a key overarching REDD+ plan has been developed - the draft **National REDD+ Strategy (NRS).** Building on the NRS, Myanmar also began work on a **REDD+ Investment Plan** in 2020, to promote effective and timely implementation of the NRS and to establish a framework for investment in REDD+ that aligns with broader development and climate change priorities. At the subnational level, REDD+ planning and implementation is expected to occur at several scales, including:

- Programs or policies taking place across multiple states and regions (e.g. the Myanmar Reforestation and Rehabilitation Programme);
- Programs or projects taking place in particular ecosystems or regions (e.g. Central Dry Zone, Chindwin River Basin);
- Development of REDD+ action plans for certain jurisdictions (e.g. proposed EAO-led REDD+ action plans)
- Integration of REDD+ into particular existing planning processes (e.g. District Forest Management Plans, DFMPs);
- Measures taking place at district or site level (e.g. establishment of community forests or indigenous and community conserved areas, ICCAs).

In addition to consideration of the existing plans that may be relevant for REDD+ actions, and the planning context, there are also expectations that REDD+ planning in Myanmar will include **appropriate assessment of potential social and environmental impacts**, also referred to as potential benefits and risks of REDD+. Some REDD+ actions may require formal assessment processes, such as an Environmental Impact Assessment, or specific assessments and plans to meet donor requirements (e.g. gender action plan based on a robust gender analysis). However, even for REDD+ actions that do not require these procedures, a participatory and comprehensive assessment of its possible impacts is required according to the Myanmar national safeguards approach.

There are also requirements related to the promotion of multiple benefits during the planning and implementation of REDD+, as outlined in the criteria above. REDD+ actions should be designed together with stakeholders in ways that identify and then reduce risks and enhance benefits. This links to the robust assessment of environmental and social impacts during the planning stage. The **multiple benefits of REDD+, also known as co-benefits and non-carbon benefits**, are the range of social, environmental, and other benefits that may be delivered by REDD+, beyond its immediate goal of reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The ability of REDD+ actions to contribute to these multiple benefits beyond carbon will support the ongoing and long-term sustainability of REDD+; in addition, in some cases, it may help to market high quality carbon credits

or emissions reduction units.[13] Myanmar's proposed NRS includes the generation of non-carbon benefits as one of its core principles, noting that[14]:

''Forests provide a wide range of social, environment and economic benefits. Climate action will not undermine the other benefits provided by forests and will maintain benefits that are threatened by ongoing forest loss, and, where possible, enhance them. Such benefits identified in the SIS development process include wellbeing of poor/vulnerable groups, more sustainable livelihoods, gender equality, social peace, and stability, and increasing habitat connectivity. It will also ensure that the National REDD+ Strategy contributes to Myanmar meeting SDG targets.''

The priority multiple benefits that are identified as part of this assessment will likely differ depending on the REDD+ actions involved, the location/s and the context. The Myanmar national safeguards approach does **highlight several key co-benefits** that REDD+ implementers should keep in mind[15] and seek to promote through their REDD+ actions. These benefits include:

- promoting land rights and/or clarifying tenure
- enhancing the wellbeing of poor, vulnerable and/or marginalized groups (e.g. poor households, women, ethnic groups, youth, elderly)
- supporting sustainable livelihoods of indigenous peoples and local communities
- enhancing gender equality
- supporting social peace and stability
- protecting areas of high value for biodiversity or ecosystem services (in particular, conservation of soil and water resources)
- increasing habitat connectivity (e.g. for threatened wildlife species)
- reducing or reversing land degradation
- reducing pollution (e.g. air and water pollution)
- building the capacity of government staff and local stakeholders (e.g. to implement existing laws, to participate in decision-making and to adopt sustainable land use practices).

As part of the development of its National REDD+ Strategy, Myanmar carried out a national-level participatory assessment of potential benefits and risks of REDD+. This outlines a range of benefits and risks that may result from the NRS, as well as proposed measures to reduce risks and enhance benefits, and can provide a useful resource for REDD+ planners and implementers.[16]

[13] For example, the first GCF pilot program for REDD+ results-based payments included a 2.5% premium for projects delivering non-carbon benefits (https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/terms-reference-pilot-programme-redd-results-based-payments.pdf)
[14] REDD+ Myanmar (2019) National REDD+ Strategy Myanmar, Draft, August 2019.
[15] Based on the full list of potential benefits and risks associated with REDD+ identified in Myanmar's national-level benefit and risk assessment (2019): http://www.myanmar-redd.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Myanmar-benefits-and-risks-summary-by-safeguards-July-2019.pdf
[16] Summary of Myanmar REDD+ benefits and risks by safeguard, 2019, http://www.myanmar-redd.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Myanmar-benefits-and-risks-summary-by-safeguards-July-2019.pdf

1.2 Best practice for REDD+ planning and assessment of impacts

In planning for REDD+, it is essential that REDD+ actions are designed and planned for that are i) **feasible and sustainable** and ii) address direct and underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation, while also delivering the expected carbon, social and environmental benefits. Planning for REDD+ must recognize that landscapes have multiple competing uses and users. In every implementation area there will likely be **multiple stakeholders**, each with their own needs and priorities, as well as multiple sectors with competing interests. Furthermore, environmental conditions will vary, and some REDD+ actions will not be suitable for all settings. Therefore, an **integrated planning approach** is beneficial where the ecological and socio-economic circumstances, as well as various stakeholder needs and land uses, are considered. The aim should be to consider and prioritise competing uses in an organised and effective way to achieve a sustainable outcome, including by minimising the negative impacts and promoting benefits. Where possible, REDD+ planning should coordinate with, or complement and strengthen, any relevant existing planning processes (e.g. land use plans, forest management plans, socio-economic development plans).

Since multiple stakeholders are involved and affected by REDD+ actions, it is important to include them in the planning process, including in identifying potential risks and benefits. This will help to ensure that the plan is optimised and well thought out, considering costs, benefits, trade-offs, as well as potential solutions. To facilitate **full and effective participation of stakeholders**, all relevant groups should be represented, and **the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities** should be recognized and respected (including via a Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) process where needed; see also Part 3 of this guidance). **Assessment of potential risks and benefits** is also crucial to developing environmentally and socially sustainable, as well as feasible, REDD+ actions. This may involve participatory assessment during the planning process, as well as assessments mandated by regulations (such as Environmental Impact Assessments – see Box 3 below).

The use of **best available data and information-sharing** is essential in an evidence-based, transparent, and participatory REDD+ planning process. Plans should be based on sound data – which can be qualitative as well as quantitative – about the forests and environmental and socio-economic context of the area, as well as the expected impacts, co-benefits, and risks of the actions. Information should be shared with relevant stakeholders, and capacity built for stakeholders to participate in the planning process. The planning process can be assisted by mapping (e.g. using spatial analysis and/or participatory mapping techniques), to understand the local context, forest condition and competing land uses, and identify risks and opportunities for maximising benefits.

Box 3. Myanmar's Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Procedure

Any projects having the potential to cause **''adverse impacts''** are required to undertake an Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) or Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), or to develop an Environmental Management Plan (EMP), and to obtain an Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) in accordance with the EIA Procedure (2015).

The **National Land Use Policy (2016)** also suggests that an EIA should be conducted for all projects that involve a change of land category, lease of government land or land acquisition, given the potentially significant impacts that this could have on the environment and local communities.

There are several **indicative thresholds or characteristics** of projects set out in Annex 1 of the EIA Procedure, which would require a project to conduct an IEE or EIA. In addition, the Procedure states that an EIA is required when judged by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation to have likely "adverse impacts''. The Ministry also decides if an **EMP is required**.

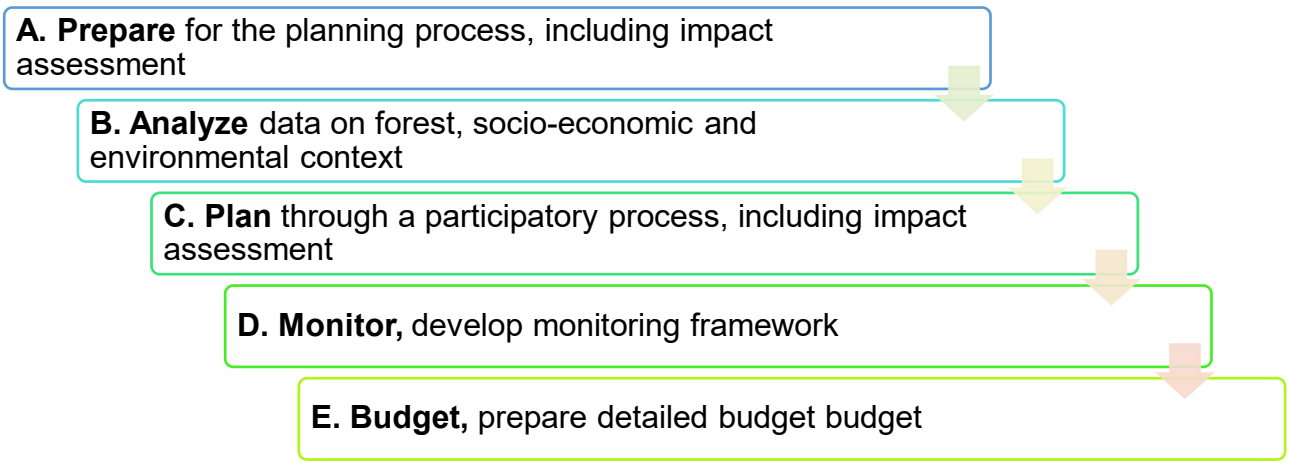
If it is deemed that an **IEE or an EIA is required,** then the project proponent should select experts (to be verified by the Ministry) to conduct the investigation or assessment. The Procedure sets out the requirements of these reports, which are submitted to the Ministry for review. For an IEE, this will either be approved, and the Ministry will issue an **Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC)** and conditions, or it may decide that an EIA is required. If an EIA is approved, an ECC with conditions will also be issued, which is disclosed to the public. The project proponent must then comply with the ECC, its conditions and an Environmental Management Plan (EMP).

In the case of **REDD+ actions**, there are several forest sector and related projects listed in the annex of the EIA Procedure, such as forestry operations, plantations, and agricultural activities. REDD+ project proponents can refer to the list of project thresholds and characteristics and submit their projects to the Ministry for a final determination if an IEE or EIA is required.

Planning for REDD+ actions

The following sections will provide step-by-step guidance on a robust REDD+ planning process (see Figure 1 in Part 1 of this Guidance for overview), including the environmental and social assessment of the potential impacts of REDD+ actions. Although presented as a series of **six separate steps**, **some of these steps will overlap and feed back into each other,** especially analysis and planning steps. This process described below is also based on planning for REDD+ actions from the beginning of their development; it may be necessary to adjust the steps in the process for REDD+ actions that have already being partly determined, e.g. selecting areas or more detailed planning for particular REDD+ actions (e.g. prior to setting up a community forest or defining areas under the Myanmar Reforestation and Rehabilitation Programme). The process could be applied to planning for individual actions (e.g. restoring an area of mangroves) or for larger-scale or broader planning encompassing a set of actions in a particular area (e.g. in a district or region).

Figure 3: Flow diagram of a robust planning process for REDD+ (adapted from the Sub-national REDD+ Action Plan manual[17])



A) Prepare

- **Establish or identify a team** for the planning process and identify responsibilities; assess what types of training or capacity building is needed for the team and build this into the workplan. At least one member who is familiar with REDD+ should be considered, and to support the environmental and social assessment (ESA), the inclusion of environmental and social expertise is recommended (see Box 4 below for an overview on ESA). **Develop a workplan** setting out the planning process, including key tasks, responsibilities, and timeline. The workplan should allow for sufficient time for data/information collection and analysis, ESA, capacity building, consultation processes, and finalisation and approval of the plan, and should take into account the available budget.
- **Collect data**: different types of data and information may be needed, depending on the type of REDD+ action under consideration and the location, and noting that some data may be unavailable or difficult to access. At a minimum, data should be collected on current forest and land uses (including informal use and use by different stakeholder groups i.e. disaggregated by sex, age, and other relevant socio-demographic categories) and related trends, formal and informal land and forest tenure, socio-economic trends, population/demographic characteristics (including key stakeholder groups such as indigenous peoples, local communities, women, farmers, etc.), conservation priorities and areas, environmentally sensitive areas (e.g. river bank vegetation, peatlands) and future land-use/development plans in the area. It is also important to consider what existing plans you may link to, or use as a vehicle for REDD+, e.g. district forest management plans or protected area plans may be relevant. Where possible, spatial data or maps can add value to this process and can feed into participatory mapping exercises.
- **Prepare for consultations and a participatory process**: determine the consultations and wider participatory process needed for REDD+ planning, which may depend on the stage of the planning process and the scope/scale of the actions, and identify the most appropriate ways to engage key stakeholders. Participatory processes are not inclusive by default, but require active measures to ensure that all stakeholders can participate equitably in the planning process. It's important to be aware of barriers that may impact the participation of different stakeholder groups (e.g. unequal power dynamics between groups, lack of time due to household/farming responsibilities, financial barriers) and to identify solutions for mitigating those barriers. It is critical to engage and consult all the relevant stakeholders who have a vested interest in the REDD+ initiative, to ensure that their needs, knowledge, and perspectives are taken into account, particularly those stakeholders who tend to be marginalised and underrepresented in consultation processes. Engaging all relevant

[17] Richards, M., Bhattarai, N., Karky, B., Hicks, C., Ravilious, C., Timalsina, N., Phan, G., Swan, S., Vickers, B., Windhorst, K., Roy, R. (2017) Developing sub-national REDD+ action plans: A manual for facilitators. ICIMOD Manual 2017/13. Kathmandu: ICIMOD

stakeholders will also provide more robust information on the likely benefits and risks of proposed REDD+ actions as well as helping to contextualise the planned activities according to the local context and needs. Moreover, the full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders will increase the legitimacy and sustainability of REDD+. A participatory process for REDD+ planning may include participatory workshops, but also other methods, such as sharing documents and information, focus group discussions, community/field visits, online comment periods, etc. It is important to consider suitable methods for sharing information, taking into consideration literacy levels, language requirements, and the best channels for reaching target stakeholders, especially indigenous peoples, local communities, and those in remote areas.[18] You may also need to factor in conflict sensitivity and the safety of local stakeholders participating in the process. A stakeholder analysis or mapping exercise (see Chapter 3 of this guidance) should be undertaken to ensure all relevant groups are identified, and that marginalised and vulnerable stakeholders are included in the process (e.g., women, ethnic groups, disabled people, elderly, youth, etc.). Identify workshop and field visit facilitators (e.g., from the core planning team or partner organisations), and ensure they receive training/capacity building on the REDD+ planning approach if needed. The workplan for the overall planning process should also include a schedule of activities, tasks, timelines and expected outputs for the ESA within this broader planning process.

B) Analyse

- **Desk-based analysis and scoping:** Depending on the stage of the planning process and the type of data collected during the preparation step, data review and/or analysis may be needed to identify the key forest trends, including deforestation and forest degradation as well as protection and restoration patterns, drivers of these changes, land use patterns and rights, and key stakeholders and other initiatives/projects in the target area. Including local authorities and other stakeholders in the information collection and analysis process (e.g. requesting data or inputs from key actors, compiling of statistics, preparing maps, including participatory maps) is also a good way to develop capacity and buy-in for the REDD+ planning process. For the ESA, this data and information will be used to provisionally identify environmental and social issues and potential risks and benefits posed by the REDD+ actions being considered.
- **Other scoping for the ESA may include:** Checking the proposed actions **against the Myanmar national safeguards clarification** (see the overview provided in Part 2) to see what key safeguards issues may be relevant to the actions, and potentially the Cancun Safeguards for an international perspective. It is also helpful at this stage to refer to the Myanmar national REDD+ benefits and risks assessment19, to better understand the types of benefits and risks that should be considered.

[18] As noted in Myanmar's national safeguards clarification, a clear and specific definition of 'indigenous peoples' does not yet exist at national level; such a definition needs to be agreed through a comprehensive stakeholder dialogue process involving key government departments and representatives of ethnic peoples. The definition should be based on thorough analysis and review and take into account relations to the natural environment as well as culture. If there is disagreement, the criteria of self-determination should prevail. In addition, when 'members of local communities' are identified, care should be taken not to exclude persons who have been displaced by conflict or natural disaster.

[19] Summary of Myanmar REDD+ benefits and risks by safeguard, 2019, http://www.myanmar-redd.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Myanmar-benefits-and-risks-summary-by-safeguards-July-2019.pdf

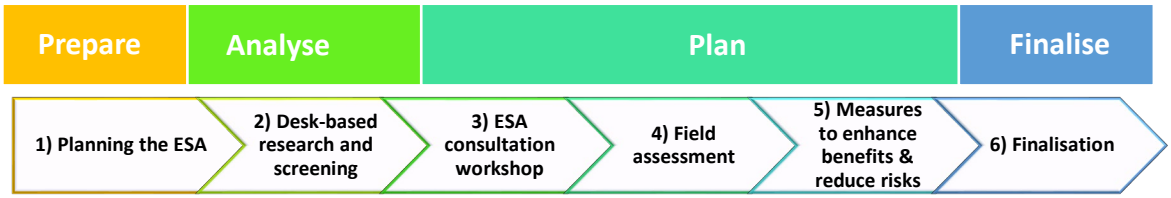
Box 4. Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental and social assessment (ESA) is an essential element of the overall planning process for REDD+. It aims to **analyse the potential environmental and social benefits and risks** of the specific REDD+ actions being considered for the area. While a generic analysis of the potential impacts of REDD+, including benefits and risks, is often carried out at national scale during the preparations for REDD+ in a country, it is still important to conduct appropriate assessment at the subnational scale, when planning for REDD+ actions in particular areas.

The ESA should be **integrated into all the steps of the overall planning process** (though it is important that the findings of the ESA are documented effectively, which may call for a separate report). The ESA may be started at the stage, when possible, REDD+ actions have been identified and their feasibility and potential impacts are being assessed, or it could occur as part of a later stage of planning, e.g. for ensuring that REDD+ actions that have already been selected are designed in an environmental and socially sustainable way. ESA elements can fit into all stages of the participatory planning process, from ensuring the collection of adequate information on potential benefits and risks, including how these may affect different groups, to discussing benefits and risks with stakeholders during planning workshops, to utilising the assessment findings to refine the design of REDD+ actions. This is because the findings of the ESA are crucial to prioritising and further developing REDD+ actions, e.g. actions that are not very beneficial or that have high levels of risk may be abolished during the planning process, while actions with low risks and high levels of possible benefits may be prioritised.

In some cases, REDD+ actions may also require types of assessment, based on national regulations or donor requirements, such as **Environmental Impacts Assessment (EIA), Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), gender assessment,** and so on. In these cases, it is recommended to check at a relatively early stage as to whether an EIA or another type of assessment is needed, and to integrate this into your ESA plans (e.g. to avoid duplication).

The diagram below shows a suggested six step process for carrying out an ESA to inform REDD+ planning in Myanmar, and how they fit within the overall planning process:



- **Maps** can be a valuable contribution to understanding the potential impacts of REDD+ actions; these may include maps of villages or settlements, land use and ownership, conservation areas, natural forests, etc. Field verification of this information, and/or validation with stakeholders, is also important to check for additional considerations and check the validity of the maps (see step 4 below). Additional efforts should also be made to collect information on informal or customary arrangements in the area, e.g. customary tenure or use rights, which may not be captured in official documents.
- This scoping stage should result in a **provisional list of possible benefits and risks** for the REDD+ actions, as well as sufficient background information to feed into the subsequent stages of the ESA, particularly the next step – an ESA workshop. Any key gaps in information should be recognized and prioritised for discussion with local stakeholders.
- An **environmental and social screening** step is also recommended at this stage, provided there is sufficient information about the REDD+ actions under consideration. There may be some REDD+ actions that will require further assessment, such as an Environmental Impacts Assessment, or regulatory requirements, as well as FPIC and other procedures. This step involves filling out an environmental and social screening form (see section 1.4 below on tools) to ensure that any actions requiring these additional procedures are identified, and so efficient ESA, FPIC and other processes can be planned.

- **Participatory analysis:** ideally analysis of the key information, trends and options will occur through a participatory process, integrating the knowledge and perspectives of a diverse and representative range of stakeholders, authorities, and experts. Through the REDD+ planning workshops, field visits and focus group discussions, jointly identify and prioritise problems or drivers of deforestation and degradation, and barriers for conservation, restoration, and sustainable management; jointly develop the solutions or actions to address these problems and barriers; and explore the expected social and environmental impacts of the REDD+ actions. REDD+ planning processes should be inclusive as well as participatory, i.e. efforts should be made to ensure that the perspectives of marginalised and vulnerable groups are included (see above).

C) Plan

The planning step involves several key activities, depending on the stage of planning for the REDD+ actions under consideration, as well as the scope and scale of the actions and the resources available. The key activities include the following:

- **ESA consultation process**: Following the scoping stage, a consultation process should be organised to discuss the potential environmental and social impacts (i.e. risks and benefits) of the REDD+ actions with relevant stakeholders and experts. This is often done in the form of a workshop, and ideally this is integrated into the overall planning process, rather than a separate/stand-alone consultation. However, other consultation options can be explored as well, depending on the local circumstances (such as discussions linked to existing forums, like regular town/village meetings, and finding ways to involve stakeholders/experts though online/desk-based review). Some important considerations for the consultation process include:
  - Any ESA consultation should make sure to **engage the relevant stakeholders** identified for the REDD+ action, and to actively promote the participation of marginalised and vulnerable groups, such as women, minority ethnic groups, disabled people, youth, and the elderly. Specific methods to ensure their full participation may be needed, such as focus groups, engagement of local resource persons, interviews with key informants and use of local languages. Also seek to involve people with locally relevant environmental and social expertise in the consultation.
  - The consultation should **present clear information** on the purpose of the ESA, the REDD+ actions under discussion, and the results of the initial scoping of benefits and risks. Maps and background information may form useful inputs to the participatory process.
  - Through discussions and exercises (e.g. group work) the participants should **prioritise the identified impacts (or benefits and risks)** that are most relevant from their perspective, add missing impacts, fill in more information (e.g. on who is likely to be affected), and **discuss measures to reduce risks and enhance benefits.** Templates or forms (see example Table 1 below) can be used to guide this process, or less structured discussion using flipcharts and other methods. Maps can also be used to record potential locations suitable for particular action, particularly to promote beneficial and low risk actions. Please see the section on resources below for relevant tools. Special attention should be paid to identifying potential benefits and risks, and measures to reduce risks and enhance benefits, for **topics that are of high priority in Myanmar,** such as those affecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities (Safeguard C), conservation of natural forests, biodiversity, and ecosystem services (Safeguard E), and risks of reversals and displacement (Safeguards F and G).
  - The information from the ESA consultation should be recorded and integrated into a revised list of potential environmental and social impacts, affected groups, and proposed measures to reduce risks and enhance benefits (including choice of approaches or locations for the actions). This information will also be fed into the wider planning process, to inform the selection, design, and spatial allocation of REDD+ actions.

Table 1: Example of a simple benefit and risk assessment table

REDD+ action	Location	Potential Benefit/Risk	Likelihood (L/M/H)	Stakeholders affected	Enhancement/ Mitigation Measures
Mangrove reforestation: planting mangrove seedlings with community involvement	District / Township / Community	Benefit: Expanded mangrove habitat for wildlife, including fish nurseries	M	Fishers (men & women); tourists; environment protection agency	Prior assessment by mangrove ecologist Focus on areas under protection
		Risk: Farmers lose portion of livelihoods if reforestation areas move under protection	H	Shrimp and rice farmers; agricultural agency	Extension services/support to shift to higher value ''mangrove shrimp''

- **Identifying** measures **to reduce risks and enhance benefits:** as mentioned above, the ESA should set out specific measures to reduce any identified risks or negative impacts, and to enhance benefits or positive impacts. This means that proposals should be made in relation to each REDD+ action as to how and where it may be implemented in order to maximise the delivery of co-benefits and minimise any risks. Further considerations for this step are:
- The **measures proposed can take a range of forms**, such as building on existing procedures or programs (e.g. agricultural extension or training programs); applying identified safeguards instruments (e.g. EIA, FPIC, etc.); linking to other REDD+ actions (e.g. linking a forest protection action to a sustainable livelihoods action); defining more strictly how the REDD+ action should be implemented (e.g. choosing the target stakeholders to reach particularly vulnerable communities); or proposing additional activities to enhance positive impacts (e.g. adding a biodiversity surveying component to a forestry survey).
- In the case of risks, the '**mitigation hierarchy'**[20] may be a useful tool, which involves a ranking of approaches. Ideally, adverse social and environmental impacts are avoided, but where avoidance is not possible, risks are to be minimized, and any remaining potential negative impacts mitigated to acceptable levels; lastly, compensation or offsetting may be considered for any remaining impacts. Activities with substantive risks that cannot be adequately mitigated or compensated should not be allowed to take place.
- It is important to provide **sufficient information** about the proposed risk reduction/benefit enhancement measures and to **make sure that they are feasible**. This means specifying what each measure involves, including any capacity building/training that will be needed, who will be responsible, whether the measure is linked to other activities (e.g. an existing or planned livelihoods scheme that could be linked to the REDD+ action), and how costs will be covered.

[20] For example: https://www.forest-trends.org/bbop/bbop-key-concepts/mitigation-hierarchy/; https://wwf.panda.org/wwf_news/?362819/First-Things-First-Avoid-Reduce--and-only-after-thatCompensate

- **Field assessment:** A field assessment should also be part of the planning process, and for greater efficiency, any field visits should aim to cover a range of topics and meet multiple objectives such as ground-truthing forest condition, assessing feasibility of proposed actions, facilitating more consultation on proposed REDD+ actions, and further analysing potential environmental and social impacts. It also provides an **important opportunity to inform local communities and particularly vulnerable groups**, such as ethnic minorities, about proposed REDD+ actions and to **discuss potential impacts and livelihoods issues** related to forestry, agriculture, fisheries, and other relevant sectors (i.e. an important element of the stakeholder engagement process). It is important to gain a grassroots perspective on how particular REDD+ actions may impact forests, and local communities and other stakeholders. The process for the field assessment could include the following:
  - A **suitable number of sites** should be selected for the field assessment. Depending on the scale of the planning process, these should be representative of the most relevant environmental and/or agroecological conditions and socio-economic contexts (e.g. presence of different ethnic groups, situations of high poverty). Sites may also be prioritized where there are likely to be more risks/benefits occurring, or that have the potential for high-level risks/benefits, and where it is possible to assess a range of different issues and interventions (e.g. having different types of forests and land use where different REDD+ actions are proposed).
  - In the field, **discussions can be undertaken with local authorities and communities, and potentially other relevant stakeholders** (e.g. those who have been difficult to engage in the planning process so far) and ensuring equitable representation. Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) techniques such as participatory mapping (see Box 5 below), key informant interviews and focus group discussions can be applied to understand better how proposed activities may be implemented and explore the potential impacts (see section on resources below).
  - Before the field assessment, the team should **make sure to prepare**: background information on the sites and the proposed actions; lists of key people to consult with/interview and locations to visit; interview/group discussion guidelines or protocols; and any materials needed to facilitate discussions, e.g. maps, charts/tables, photographs.
  - The information collected during the field assessment should be carefully recorded and the key findings fed back into the planning process and the ESA, especially should the findings indicate that there may need to be adjustments to the design and/or location of the REDD+ action or involve serious stakeholder concerns or conflicts.
- **Prioritising and further planning for REDD+ actions**: building on the results of consultations, ESA, and field assessment, prioritise the solutions identified and select the REDD+ actions or interventions for inclusion in the plan, along with the areas where they should be implemented (noting that in some cases, e.g. where actions are already prioritised, this may focus on identification of locations or further planning). The selected REDD+ actions should be based on the data and evidence analysed, and the participatory inputs from stakeholders, i.e. actions should be chosen that are most likely to address drivers of deforestation and degradation, or barriers to conservation and enhancement, as well as the understanding of likely social and environmental impacts. For the selected REDD+ actions, further work may be needed to fully assess the conditions under which they are feasible, what resources and enabling frameworks will be needed to implement them, and who should be involved; this may include discussions and review with experts, further mapping/prioritisation of proposed areas for actions, and field visits for ground-truthing and local consultations.
- **Finalising the ESA:** Once the potential environmental and social risks and benefits of the proposed REDD+ actions in the local context have been analysed and prioritised, and measures to reduce risks and enhance benefits proposed, the ESA should also be finalised, and the results integrated into in the overall REDD+ plan. In addition to discussing and communicating the ESA with the wider REDD+ planning team, it may be useful to prepare a summary of key recommendations and to ensure that relevant materials, such as field assessment reports, maps, and tables of benefits and risks are fully available to the planning team. It is essential that the ESA informs the final selection, design, and location of REDD+

actions, the budgeting for those actions, and the M&E framework. The team conducting the ESA should therefore be closely involved in the preparation of the REDD+ plan and have a decisive say in its finalisation. The form of the final ESA may depend on what is considered most useful and appropriate for the planning process, e.g. tables of benefits & risks, an ESA report, etc.

D) Monitor

- **Monitoring and evaluation framework**: a REDD+ plan should include an appropriate framework for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of the actions; for complex interventions and interventions which are new to the area this may involve the development of a ''theory of change'' (a tool that is often used to help design projects and activities, as well as M&E frameworks, by setting out the expected impact of the actions and the pathways to achieve that impact), and preparation of proposed indicators for monitoring. M&E should include environmental and social aspects identified through the ESA, to ensure that the potential risks and benefits of the actions will be tracked as well as any measures designed to reduce risks or enhance benefits. Chapter 7 of this guidance covers theory of change and M&E in more detail.
- **Resources for monitoring**: consider the feasibility and efficiency of the M&E plan, such as what data is already available for monitoring and what gaps may need to be filled; it is important that sufficient resources are allocated to ensure that regular M&E can be carried out. Participatory M&E, i.e. involving stakeholders in monitoring processes as well as the evaluation of the plan, should be included where possible.

E) Budget

- Based on the further development of the proposed actions and understanding of the needs to implement them, a detailed budget should be prepared for the REDD+ actions/plan. This should consider implementation costs for the actions, as well as costs for supporting application of the safeguards, capacity building for stakeholders, communications, and M&E, and may consider what financing may already be available from complementary sources.

F) Finalise

- **Final review and consultation**: the plan has likely evolved from what was discussed during the earlier consultations, and so a final process to review and validate the proposed REDD+ plan should be organised. How this is done may depend on the local context and planning requirements, but may include a final workshop, online review period, or other methods. Highlighting the ESA findings and how they have been integrated into the design of REDD+ actions should also be part of the final consultation/review for the overall REDD+ plan, providing an opportunity for this wider group of stakeholders to learn about the potential environmental and social impacts and how they have been addressed in the plan, and to provide feedback.
- **Approval process**: depending on the context, a certain process may need to be followed for approval of the plan (e.g. by local authorities, a government department, or multi-stakeholder committee). It is important to be aware of the approval process needed and allow time for it to take place.
- **Sharing and communicating:** the final, approved REDD+ plan should be shared transparently with key stakeholders and the public, including in appropriate languages.

Addressing gaps in information and capacity to support REDD+ planning and assessment

Given the requirements to base REDD+ planning on the best available information, assessing the availability of information, as well as information collection and compilation, are essential steps in the REDD+ planning process (as outlined above). Where possible, REDD+ planners should collect nationally and locally available and up-to-date information on forests, land use, biodiversity, stakeholder groups, community needs and other factors relevant to the REDD+ actions under consideration, utilising sources such as official statistics and reports, as well as participatory approaches.

In some cases, there may be gaps in the available data, a lack of data at a useful scale, or challenges in accessing data. Apart from official national and local sources, some options for sourcing data to support the REDD+ planning process and communications about REDD+ include:

- Participatory generation of information, e.g. participatory mapping of the local area, documenting local knowledge on wildlife and forest issues, stakeholder surveying, etc.
- National and regional non-government information platforms, such as the Myanmar Information Management Unit, One Map / CDE, Open Development Mekong, Servir Mekong, and the UN-REDD Lower Mekong Region list of digital resources, and others.
- International information platforms, such as Global Forest Watch, UN Biodiversity Lab, Hand in Hand Geospatial Platform, and Risk and Resilience Portal Decision Support System, among others.

In addition to ensuring a solid information base for REDD+ planning, REDD+ planners should also consider capacity building needs for the organizations and stakeholders involved in their REDD+ actions at an early stage. Ideally, the necessary investments in awareness raising, training and institutional strengthening will be **identified and budgeted for during the planning stage**, and thus reflected in any REDD+ plans developed. However, in some cases additional capacity needs will become apparent during implementation, and adjustments to plans may be needed.

As noted in the safeguards criteria listed above, REDD+ planners and implementers should identify and pay particular attention to **stakeholder groups with low capacity to participate** (which may differ depending on the local contest, e.g. poor households, groups without documented land rights, etc.). Appropriate arrangements should be put in place to provide opportunities to these stakeholders and to build their capacity to participate in REDD+ planning as well as in the actions themselves. These may include targeted materials for awareness raising in suitable formats and local languages, specific capacity-building events and training, and opportunities to learn by doing. In addition, consideration should be given to the design of the REDD+ actions to ensure that they are tailored to the context and stakeholders involved, e.g. ensuring that activities to support sustainable livelihoods are tailored and accessible to vulnerable stakeholder groups most in need of support.

Wherever possible, Myanmar's safeguards approach calls for stakeholders (especially members of indigenous peoples and local communities), to be **offered the opportunity to participate in REDD+ implementation and monitoring** (such as contributing to planting, patrolling, monitoring, livelihoods schemes, and so on, depending on the nature of the actions concerned). Participation of this kind will likely require **capacity building and other supportive mechanisms** to be in place, such as training, provision of equipment, setting up of cooperatives or networks, and so on, with due consideration of local preferences, traditions and languages, and specific needs (such as safety, accessibility for disabled participants, agricultural and household schedules, etc.).

It is also important to note that capacity building and knowledge transfer should not be a one-way activity, with local communities and stakeholders receiving training and knowledge from external experts. The planning and implementation of REDD+ actions also offer an opportunity to bring in the **knowledge and expertise of indigenous peoples and local communities**, should they so wish. Options to draw on traditional or local knowledge and practices, and any potential links to benefit sharing, should be integrated into the planning process (as described above) and should be subject to FPIC if relevant (see Chapter 2).

To properly understand the capacity development needs for implementation of a REDD+ action, as well as opportunities to build capacity and integrate local knowledge, REDD+ planners and implementers should consider use of available tools and approaches, including **capacity or training needs assessments, and development of specific capacity building action plans**, ideally from the planning stage. Chapter 3 on stakeholder participation provides additional information and guidance on capacity building for REDD+.

1.3 Key Policies, Laws and Regulations Related to Planning and Assessment

The following section outlines some of the key policies, laws, and regulations in Myanmar relevant for the planning of REDD+ actions, and assessment of social and environmental impacts.

Overarching national and subnational planning documents should be referred to by the REDD+ planning team to ensure that the proposed actions are in alignment with these plans, and in some cases, could be embedded or linked to them (e.g. District Forest Management Plans, or plans for major projects in the area). REDD+ planning teams should also be familiar with the laws and regulations relevant to their actions, especially where these set out requirements related to planning (e.g. establishing a protected area or setting up a community forest). Regulations such as the EIA Procedure (2015) and Ethnic Rights Protection Law (2015) also set out some general requirements for new projects.

Examples of overarching planning documents

- National REDD+ Strategy (final draft, 2019): Sets out the objectives and planned actions for REDD+ in Myanmar.
- Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan (2018-2030): Vision of economic growth and sustainable development in Myanmar to 2030. The plan is structured around 3 Pillars, 5 Goals, 28 Strategies and 251 Action Plans, aligning with the SDGs.
- National Forestry Master Plan (2001-2031): Outlines forestry plans for the period, including conservation and protection, sustainable harvesting of teak, restoration, watershed management, law enforcement and the promotion of fuelwood substitutes.
- Agricultural Development Strategy (2018-2023): Aims to set out clear priorities in the agricultural sector in the short, medium, and long term. It consolidates existing plans across various sectors for a systematic approach to operationalise agricultural policy implementation, and to coordinate activities to build dialogue with domestic and foreign investors

Subnational planning documents

- Myanmar District Forest Management Plans: DFMPs are prepared every 10 years by the district forest offices, with the current phase being 2017-2026, aiming to guide forest management at the district level.
- Protected Area Management Plans: a PA management plan is a document which sets out the management approach and goals, together with a framework for decision making, to apply in a specific protected area over a given period of time.[21] The Biodiversity Conservation and Protected Areas Law (2018) has some provisions related to activities in protected areas (see below), but rules for the implementation of this law and detailed guidance are not yet available (as of early 2023).
- Community Forestry Plans: it is required under the Community Forestry Instructions (CFI, 2019) that a management plan is developed in order to receive CF certification. The Community Forest Management plan must include details of intended CF activities including specified permitted timber harvesting and abide by the Forest Law. Please also see the Standard Operating Procedures for Community Forestry (Technical document no.10).
- Township/District Land Use Plans: are set out under the National Land Use Policy (2016) and would ideally be developed through an integrated land use planning process; as of 2022 some

[21] See: https://www.iucn.org/resources/publication/guidelines-management-planning-protected-areas

district land use plans have been developed, but these are not yet being consistently developed across the country.

Policies, laws and regulations:

- National Land Use Policy (2016): aims to harmonize existing laws and plans and governs land use planning, including chapters on 'Planning and Drawing Land Use Map', 'Zoning and Changing Land Use', 'Changing land use by Individual application', 'Monitoring and Evaluation', and 'Research and Development' (noting however that regulations to fully operationalise the policy are not yet in place) It requires that agencies "Develop and implement jurisdictional land use plans with sub-national participatory and gender-equitable land-use planning"; Chapter VIII covers land tenure security and the recognition of customary rights.
- Vacant, Fallow, or Virgin Land Law (2012): defines Vacant, Fallow and Virgin (VFV) land, which can include land with forest; it also sets out who can obtain the right to cultivate such lands, the rate of security fees, the conditions under which VFV land can be used or cultivated, as well as support provided to those who have the right to cultivate or utilise this land.
- Law Amending the VFV Lands Management Law (2018): states that the Central VFV Lands Management Committee may issue permission to cultivate or utilize VFV lands for business purposes, including for domestic and foreign investors, for periods of 30-70 years. Citizens, private investors, farmers, government entities and NGOs can apply to lease VFV lands for agricultural development, mining, and other permitted purposes through long-term leases on state land.
- Biodiversity Conservation and Protected Areas Law (2018): aims to implement the biodiversity strategy of Myanmar and policy for the conservation of Protected Areas; carry out the protection and conservation of wildlife, wild plants, ecosystems and migratory animals in accordance with the International Conventions agreed by Myanmar; regulate trade of wildlife and wild plants or their parts, derivatives or products; protect geo-physically unique areas, endangered wildlife and wild plants and their natural habitats; contribute to natural scientific research and environmental education activities; and protect wildlife and wild plants by establishing zoological and botanical gardens. The Biodiversity Conservation and Protected Areas Law sets out activities allowed in protected areas, procedures for the establishment of protected areas, allows for community-co-management, and calls for a system for Payments for Ecosystem Services.
- Environmental Conservation Law (2012): sets out the basic principles and gives guidance for systematic integration of the matters of environmental conservation in the sustainable development process; conservation of natural and cultural heritage for the benefit of present and future generations; restoration and protection of ecosystems; and to promote cooperation between Government departments, Government organizations, international organizations, non-government organizations and individuals in matters of environmental conservation.
- Forest Law (1992 amended 2018): this requires that the Law should be implemented in accordance with the government's forestry and environmental conservation policy, as well as international agreements relating to the conservation of forests and of the environment.
- The Forest Rules (1995 updated 2019) set out rules to: constitute a Reserved Forest and Protected Public Forest; manage Forest Land; establish of forest plantation or private plantation; require the permission for extraction of forest produce or the removal of forest produce and complements the CFI (2019) on rules about community forestry.
- The Environmental Conservation Law (2012), the Environmental Conservation Rules (2014) and the EIA Procedure (2015) together set out the mandates and processes for EIAs and the development of Environmental Management Plans (EMPs). The EIA Procedure states that all development projects, including those in the forest sector and those being implemented by government, are to follow the EIA Procedure. The Annexes to the Procedure include some guidance on which projects are likely to require an IEE or EIA. Draft Guidelines for Public Participation in Myanmar's EIA Process were finalized in 2017 by a multi-sector working group but have not yet been formally adopted.

- Ethnic Rights Protection Law (2015): Sets out the rights of ethnic groups, including the right to their customs, culture and heritage, religion, and norms; right to equal opportunity and education; right to preserve traditional medicine; and right to participate in legislation in relevant state/region.
- Community Forestry Instructions (CFI) (2019): Set out the procedures to set up Community Forests, with the objectives of providing basic needs from timber and non-timber forest products for local communities; enhancing employment and income opportunities for local communities; increasing forest cover through sustainable utilisation; and promoting participatory forest management systems.
- The Myanmar Development Assistance Policy (2018) sets out procedures for the review and approval of development assistance, which requires the responsible government entities to ensure that the grant/loan is in line with the Myanmar Development Assistance Policy, relevant sector plans, and consistent with/ complementary to other ongoing and planned initiatives.

1.4 Tools on Planning & Assessment of Impacts

- **Checklist 1.1: Planning and consultation processes.** This checklist sets out the best practice requirements for planning and consultations for REDD+ actions in Myanmar. People in charge of developing REDD+ plans can use this checklist to ensure they are carrying out steps that follow the safeguards in their planning process.
- **Checklist 1.2: Environmental and social screening and impact assessment.** This checklist is another key tool for the planning and assessment stage of REDD+ actions. It can be used to screen proposed REDD+ actions to determine whether more comprehensive assessment and/or formal assessment procedures such as EIA are needed, and to guide a robust environmental and social assessment process for all REDD+ actions.
- **Checklist 1.3: Carbon and non-carbon benefits.** This checklist aims to ensure that REDD+ actions are designed and implemented in ways that promote the delivery of multiple social and environmental benefits, in line with Myanmar's relevant safeguards criteria.

1.5 Additional Resources on REDD+ Planning and Impact Assessment

- Developing subnational REDD+ action plans: manual for facilitators (ICIMOD, 2018): prepared for facilitators working with planners and stakeholders in the development of subnational plans for REDD+ and featuring lessons from pilot subnational REDD+ action plan experiences in Vietnam and Nepal.
- UN-REDD Brief: Land use planning and integrated approaches to REDD+ (2021): shares lessons learned from promoting integrated land use planning for REDD+ and looks at emerging opportunities.
- ADB Brief: Safeguarding Myanmar's Environment (2017): provides an overview of Myanmar's EIA system and ADB technical assistance in this area.
- Summary of Myanmar REDD+ benefits and risks by safeguard (2019): introduces potential REDD+ benefits and risks identified in Myanmar at national scale.
- UN-REDD Benefits and Risks Tool (BeRT): provides generic templates for assessing potential benefits and risks of REDD+, including a spreadsheet tool and user guide.
- FAO Participatory Rural Assessment (PRA) Tool Box: gives an introduction to PRAs and detailed guidance on 13 PRA tools.
- CIFOR Guide to Participatory Tools for Forest Communities (2006): provides guidance on participatory tools that have been adapted and developed for use with forest communities.
- Participatory Techniques For Community Forestry. A Field Manual (IUCN, WWF, AusAID): covering the use of participatory techniques for specific tasks within community forestry.
- CIFOR (2019) Technical guidelines for participatory village mapping exercise provides guidance on developing maps with the participation of local communities.
- Draft Guideline on Public Participation in Myanmar's EIA Processes (2017) provides an indication of the type, level and approach to public participation expected to give effect to the requirements for meaningful public participation in the EIA Procedure.

Case Study for Chapter 1: REDD+ planning & assessment of impacts for a mangrove community

Village M is a small community of around 70 households in the Ayeyarwady Delta. Despite growing pressures from the expansion of agriculture and infrastructure, and a recent spike in deforestation, the local area still includes a sizeable area of mangroves, as well as some other coastal vegetation, shrimp farms and some small tourism businesses. Most community members gain their livelihoods from fishing, trading and agriculture. Key concerns in the community include maintaining local livelihoods, while also preventing large tracts of forest and agricultural land being used for infrastructure projects. Some community members are also concerned by the increasing problems with coastal erosion and declining fish stocks. Community leaders have been in discussion with a local NGO about **developing a REDD+ plan** for the community, linked to the development of a new District Forest Management Plan (DFMP) and funding for REDD+ provided by an international donor.

The local NGO forms a **REDD+ working group**, inviting representatives from the local authorities, including one from district level, community representatives, other community-based organisations, the local women's union, and a Mon ethnic group organisation to join. After learning about the process to develop a new DFMP, the working group decides to develop **a REDD+ plan to identify actions that can be included in the DFMP, and a workplan for the process** is prepared, in line with the timeline for the new DFMP.

The working group begins by **collecting and compiling information** on the community area, including accessing statistics on forest status, land use, socio-economic conditions, and demographic trends from the local authorities and the Central Statistics Office. A national scale map of changes in forest is found, though the resolution at the community scale is poor. There is also a significant lack of data on drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, tenure, and biodiversity and ecosystem services, in the local area. The working group decides to add a **participatory mapping exercise** to their plans for a first consultation workshop. In addition, the NGO selects a safeguards expert to begin **scoping the potential environmental and social impacts** of REDD+ in the area, and to **screen the proposed actions** to see whether an EIA or FPIC will be needed. This shows that **FPIC will be needed** before implementation can begin, and that the Community Forestry Instructions requirements will need to be met.

The working group, with resources from the NGO, hold **two consultation workshops with the wider community including local ethnic group representatives, women, elders, and youth** to develop the draft REDD+ plan. The first workshop focuses on identifying the **problems**, such as drivers of forest change and livelihood challenges, and proposing **solutions**, including using participatory mapping to identify important areas of land use for the community. The second workshop involves **assessing the potential benefits and risks** of the proposed solutions, and any measures to reduce the risks and enhance the benefits.

Based on the workshops, the working group decides to visit three key sites for **further field work**, including an area proposed for establishing a community forest, a group of households' dependent on fishing, and a degraded forest area where restoration has been proposed. Following field visits and focus group discussions on the feasibility of the actions and on their potential impacts, the findings are integrated into the draft REDD+ plan for the community. This draft plan is shared with some experts as well as the district level authorities for their review.

The safeguards expert has now **drafted an ESA report**, using the workshop and field visit results. A **final workshop** is organised to present the ESA findings, as well as the updated REDD+ plan, and to seek recommendations from the community. There are still concerns regarding livelihoods and the restoration proposal in particular.

The plan is finalised with **a budget and monitoring framework** and shared with the district level for their information. The NGO publishes the plan in three languages on their website (Myanmar, Mon, English), and attention now turns to raising funds and implementing the plan.

Chapter 2: Free Prior and Informed Consent, and Grievance Redress Mechanisms

Key Concepts

- **Free, Prior and Informed consent (FPIC)** is a principle protected by international human rights standards that allows indigenous peoples and local communities to withhold or give consent to a project that may affect them or their territories, and allows them to withdraw consent at any stage, in a manner that is free from coercion, prior to the beginning of activities and well-informed.
- **Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM)** refers to an organizational system or resource established to receive and address concerns about the impact of policies, programs, projects and operations on external stakeholders. The stakeholder input handled through such a system and procedures may be called "grievances," "complaints," "feedback," or another functionally equivalent term.

Myanmar Safeguards Criteria Related to FPIC and GRM

Criterion C1	Criterion C2	Criterion C3	Criterion C4	Criterion C5	Criterion C6
Avoidance of involuntary resettlement and respect for the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities to land and resources	Taking into account existing land uses, including undocumented rights, to negative impacts on vulnerable stakeholder groups, and support clarification of use rights	Respect for customary practices and cultural heritage of indigenous peoples and local communities	Impacts on rights of indigenous peoples and local communities requires consent and compensation through process of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC)	Fair and transparent benefit sharing mechanism	Grievance Redress Mechanism developed with agreement of indigenous peoples and local communities and is operational

All six criteria from the Myanmar national safeguards clarification of Safeguard C "REDD+ Policies and Measures in Myanmar must be designed and implemented to respect the knowledge and rights of indigenous peoples and members of local communities" are relevant to FPIC and GRM. These aim to ensure that the design and implementation of REDD+ recognizes, respects, and includes indigenous peoples and members of local communities and their knowledge in mutually agreed ways.

2.1 Background information: FPIC and GRM

Safeguard C in Myanmar's national safeguards clarification stresses the importance of recognising and respecting the knowledge and rights of indigenous peoples[22] and local communities[23]. Rights covered under this safeguard can be wide ranging, and include rights to land, territories, and resources, as well as cultural and other human rights. The respect for rights to land and forest resources, especially including customary and undocumented rights, has been highlighted throughout the development of Myanmar's safeguards approach, and no involuntary resettlement is allowed due to REDD+. The safeguards approach also calls for respect for traditional knowledge and cultural heritage and includes promotion of equitable benefit sharing.

Myanmar has developed several approaches to help REDD+ planners and implementers to recognize and respect for the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, which include two key instruments discussed in this chapter:

- **Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC)**: FPIC has been integrated into Myanmar's national safeguards approach for REDD+, under Safeguard C, and is used in other policies and programs in the country. The UN-REDD Myanmar Programme has drafted and piloted FPIC Guidelines[24] for REDD+ projects, while the Forest Department (MONREC) and the Ministry of Ethnic Affairs have also prepared a set of FPIC guidelines.
- **Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM):** in addition to some complaints procedures and GRMs already established for certain sectors and projects in Myanmar, a REDD+ GRM has been proposed for the country[25], linked to the draft FPIC Guidelines for REDD+. Although not finalised, the proposed GRM features can provide a guide for REDD+ planners and implementers.

2.2 Guidance on Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC)

What is FPIC?

Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) is enshrined in international conventions and declarations, and is a key feature of Myanmar's national safeguards approach,. FPIC is a principle protected by international human rights standards that state, 'all peoples have the right to self-determination' and – linked to the right to self-determination – 'all peoples have the right to freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development'. It is a right that allows indigenous peoples and local communities to withhold or give consent to a project that may affect them or their territories and allows them to withdraw consent at any stage[26], in a manner that is free from coercion, prior to the beginning of activities and well-informed. Recognized in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), FPIC also gives indigenous peoples and local communities the right to contribute to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of a project/ activity.

There are several policies, laws and regulations in Myanmar that set out rights and responsibilities relevant to FPIC, which are described in more detail in section 2.5 below. These include, for instance: the Ethnic Rights Protection Law (2015) which states that development works, major projects, and extraction of natural resources in the areas of ethnic groups require informing and coordinating with the respective ethnic groups; and the EIA Procedure (2015), which states that international good practice should be applied for projects that involve involuntary resettlement, or that could have adverse impacts on indigenous people.

[22] A clear and specific definition of 'indigenous peoples' needs to be agreed through a comprehensive stakeholder dialogue process involving key government departments and representatives of ethnic peoples. The definition should be based on thorough analysis and review and take into account relations to the natural environment as well as culture. If there is disagreement, the criteria of self-determination should prevail.
[23] When 'members of local communities' are identified, care should be taken not to exclude persons who have been displaced by conflict or natural disaster
[24] Draft Myanmar FPIC Guidelines (December, 2019), available in English & Myanmar
[25] For more information on the development of the proposed REDD+ GRM, see also: Myanmar UN-REDD Programme's REDD+ GRM Workshop Report and the full PLR Review report.
[26] Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) (2016) Free Prior and Informed Consent: An Indigenous Peoples' right and a good practice for local communities; and FAO (2021) Free, Prior, and Informed Consent webpage: https://www.fao.org/indigenous-peoples/our-pillars/fpic/en/

A process for FPIC for REDD+ has been under development in Myanmar, with guidelines developed based on the Global UN-REDD programmes FPIC guidelines.[27] In addition, the Stakeholder Engagement Guidelines for REDD+ include a checklist to determine whether an activity needs FPIC (see also Chapter 3 on stakeholder participation; and the Environmental and Social Screening form, as provided in Checklist 1.2). FPIC guidelines were also developed by the Forest Department (under MONREC) as part of standard operating procedures for the establishment of new protected areas, and by the Ministry of Ethnic Affairs.

Principles and best practice for FPIC

The best practice principles and steps in this section are based on the draft Myanmar FPIC guidelines[28] as well as the Myanmar guidance for stakeholder engagement[29], and the UN-REDD Programme guidelines on FPIC.[26]**Error! Bookmark not defined.**

The following definition is adapted from the UN-REDD Programme guidelines on FPIC:

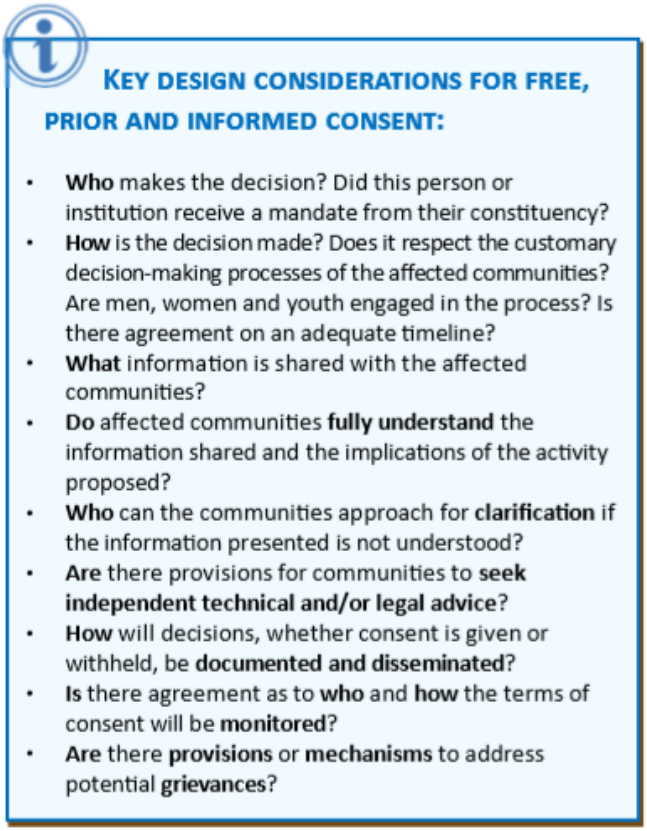
- **Free –** consent is given voluntarily without "coercion, intimidation or manipulation[30]
- **Prior -** consent is sought sufficiently in advance of any authorization or commencement of activities"[31]
- **Informed –** stakeholders are provided with the full range of relevant and necessary information in a clear and accessible format before seeking consent[32]
- **Consent -** A collective decision is made by right-holders and reached through the preferred decision-making processes of the affected peoples or communities. Consent must be sought and granted or withheld according to the unique formal or informal political-administrative dynamic of each community.[32]

The FPIC process in practice

In Myanmar, all subnational-level REDD+ actions are likely to require FPIC from rights-holders[33] in areas where they are to be implemented. The **need for FPIC for a particular REDD+ action should first be confirmed** through environmental and social screening (Checklist 1.2) or use of the FPIC Appraisal Checklist in the Stakeholder Engagement Guidelines.[28]

[27] UN-REDD Programme Secretariat (2013). *Guidelines on Free, Prior and Informed Consent*. Available: https://www.uncclearn.org/wp-content/uploads/library/un-redd05.pdf
[28] Myanmar REDD+ Programme (2019). *Guidelines for an approach to ensure FPIC in implementation of Myanmar's National REDD+ Strategy and other initiatives affecting forests. Draft 0.* Available: http://www.myanmar-redd.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/D0-National-FPIC-Guideline-Dec-2019-English.pdf
Available: http://www.myanmar-redd.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/D0-National-FPIC-Guideline-Dec-2019-English.pdf
[29] Myanmar REDD+ Programme (2016). *Guidelines for Stakeholder Engagement in Policies and Programmes for Sustainable forest management and REDD+*. Available: http://www.myanmar-redd.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Guidelines-of-Stakeholder-Engagement-.pdf
[30] UNPFII at its Fourth Session in 2005
[31] Ibid., at 46(i).
[32] UN-REDD Programme Secretariat (2013). *Guidelines on Free, Prior and Informed Consent*. Available: https://www.uncclearn.org/wp-content/uploads/library/un-redd05.pdf
[33] Rights-holders are those whose rights are potentially affected by the REDD+ program, including holders of individual rights and indigenous peoples and others who hold collective rights (REDD+-SES glossary of terms). These are different from stakeholders, which include groups that have a stake/interest/right in the forest and those that will be affected either negatively or positively by REDD+ activities (UN-REDD Programme, 2012). Available: https://www.un-redd.org/resources/glossary

Figure 4: Key design considerations for FPIC according to the Myanmar Guidelines for Stakeholder Engagement



Once it has been determined that FPIC should be applied, REDD+ implementers can refer to the Myanmar REDD+ FPIC Guidelines, or if preferred, the Forest Department FPIC guidelines, or the Ministry of Ethnic Affairs procedure. The following steps are based on the Myanmar REDD+ FPIC Guidelines (see also Box 5 below).

The FPIC process at site level should involve all community members that are affected by the REDD+ project. This will need to be approached with a level of effort that ensures that all rights holders are reached but is feasible in terms of costs. For larger-scale actions involving numerous communities, rights holders may need to be represented by community selected representatives. For example, village tracts are local but not too numerous, so in many settings it may be appropriate to work with representatives selected at the level of village tracts. It is important to ensure gender equality and inclusion of other minorities in this representation, and existing community groups can be utilised to this effect. Communities should select their representatives and may decide to consider the following factors while doing so: relevant knowledge of REDD+, experience in forest management, relevant knowledge on rights and duties, relevant knowledge on laws, traditional knowledge held, and level of influence and standing in the community.

The process should take the form of a series of consultation events. It may be possible to combine part or all of these consultations with key steps in the REDD+ planning process, depending on the scale of the planning process and the community preferences. The consultations should disseminate information to ensure:

1. **Knowledge and understanding -** to make sure that indigenous peoples and local communities have the necessary knowledge and understanding of key REDD+ concepts and principles to enable full and effective participation.
2. **Understanding of benefits and risks** – to make sure that indigenous peoples and local communities understand the potential impacts of the project and have the opportunity to identify and discuss benefits and risks (which may also be linked to the environmental & social assessment process). In addition, communities should be able to seek advice from an external source to avoid bias from information shared by the REDD+ project, which may tend to focus on the benefits of the project.

To ensure the process is **free,** the process, timeline and decision-making structures should be determined by the communities themselves, as well as publicly available.

FPIC should be initiated at least 3-5 months **prior** to the planned start of the proposed REDD+ action**.** The FPIC process results should be made available to all communities involved, together with a record of when and how the activities related to the FPIC process were conducted, and any findings.

During the process to seek consent, key information should be provided on the REDD+ action, implementation plans and measures; safeguards application; role of traditional knowledge and practices; proposed benefit sharing; and any plans for capacity building, to ensure that consent is

informed. Information can be disseminated in an array of different formats but should be appropriate for the intended audience (see also Chapter 4 on information sharing and communications). Keeping stakeholders informed should be a continuous process, with updates being provided if and when new information becomes available.

Box 5: Key considerations for FPIC processes in Myanmar

The draft Myanmar REDD+ FPIC Guidelines[1] set out a series of key considerations / steps for carrying out an FPIC process:

1. Determine the capacity and information needs of the lead agencies and rights-holders that need to be addressed before the FPIC process can take place
2. Decide whether the process will require a facilitator and, if so, who it should be
3. Determine with the communities where and how the consultations will take place, and a timeline for the proposed consultation process to seek FPIC
4. Use the appropriate language/s and media for information sharing and distribution
5. Decide how decisions will be taken by the community in accordance with their traditions and customs, and whether special measures have to be adopted to ensure the participation of women and any vulnerable groups within the community
6. Set out the geographical territory and communities that the decision will cover
7. Determine in what form FPIC will be given, recognized and recorded
8. Clarify the roles of others in the process, including local government officials, EAO officials, independent observers and other rights-holders
9. Identify methods of verifying the process including, where relevant, participatory monitoring arrangements
10. Determine the terms and frequency of review of the agreement(s) to ensure that conditions are being upheld
11. Ensure a process is in place for voicing complaints and seeking recourse on the FPIC process and proposed policy or activity

[1]Myanmar REDD+ Programme (2019). Guidelines for an approach to ensure FPIC in implementation of Myanmar's National REDD+ Strategy and other initiatives affecting forests. Draft 0. Available: http://www.myanmar-redd.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/D0-National-FPIC-Guideline-Dec-2019-English.pdf

2.3 Guidance on Grievance Redress Mechanisms

The implementation of REDD+ as well as other forest sector projects will have impacts on the dynamics of exchanges between groups of people and potential conflict over the use of timber, land, and other valuable resources in forested areas. According to best practice for REDD+, a system should be put in place to handle complaints and deal with information requests on impacts of measures from stakeholders. This is known as a grievance redress mechanism (GRM). GRMs are important as they allow stakeholders to air their concerns, and ensure these concerns and opinions are heard and considered in the design and application of actions. Although the national REDD+ GRM is not yet finalised and operational, REDD+ planners and implementers should make provisions for grievance redress within their REDD+ actions or projects, ideally agreed with stakeholders during the FPIC process.

The Joint FCPF/UN-REDD Programme GRM Guidance Note[34] defines GRMs as organizational systems and resources established by national government agencies (or, as appropriate, by regional and municipal agencies) to receive and address concerns about the impact of their policies, programmes, and operations on external stakeholders. The stakeholder input handled through these systems and procedures may be called "grievances", "complaints", "feedback" or another equivalent term.

34 Joint FCPF/UN-REDD Programme Guidance Note for REDD+ Countries: Establishing and Strengthening Grievance Redress Mechanisms, June 2015.

Such a mechanism should be available to stakeholders from the early stages of REDD+ implementation and should be able to reach all groups, including those that are geographically, culturally, and/or economically isolated or excluded. GRMs do not have to be new; existing mechanisms or channels may also be able to fulfil this function. The review of policies, laws, and regulations relevant to REDD+ in Myanmar included a review of existing GRMs and made a number of proposals regarding a GRM design for REDD+.[35] There are around 22 existing PLRs in Myanmar that stipulate in some way the need for mechanisms that encourage communication and resolution of concerns and complaints. These include provisions in the Myanmar Investment Law (2016), Ethnic Rights Protection Law (2015), National Land Use Policy (2016), Settlement of Labour Disputes Law (2012), among others. However, the legal framework lacks a clear, formal definition of 'grievance' and different laws use different terms; for example, the VFV Land Law mentions ''disputes'', but this term or similar is not mentioned in the Forest Law.

Informal dispute resolution mechanisms and practices are also common among several ethnic groups in Myanmar, in areas where strong traditional and customary practices help to defend the rights of people to obtain access to information and to participate in environmental decision-making. As a result, informal local 'laws' exist that promote and encourage negotiations through a mediator. These informal mechanisms are not recognized at the national level, but they do reflect GRM principles including accessibility, transparency, legitimacy, and predictability.

A number of development projects (such as the World Bank-supported ''National Community Driven Development Project'') and private sector companies have also implemented GRMs, although models vary across sectors, meaning that different frameworks and guidelines have been used, ranging from International Finance Corporation performance standards to the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

Proposed GRM features for Myanmar

Discussions with government and non-government stakeholders[36] in Myanmar have indicated various types of existing and potential conflicts and disputes expected to be relevant to REDD+. These could be related to:

- **Land tenure**: for example, disputes over use of land in reserve forests; disputes between the Forest Department and other departments; or disputes triggered by unclear land ownership; lack of formal/officially recognized tenure for some communities; lack of a clear framework on compensation if use rights are removed; unclear processes for permissions and concessions; lack of clear boundaries between state forest land, private and community lands, etc.
- **REDD+ implementation**: for example, conflicts between officials and powerful stakeholders; conflict between communities/individuals and law enforcement agencies; disputes over lack of benefit sharing or rights to land; concerns over risk of harm to people if interfering in illegal timber trade, etc.

A GRM for REDD+ in Myanmar has been proposed, which would aim to address concerns that are raised in connection with REDD+ promptly and fairly. The GRM is considered an important element of an effective FPIC process, meaning that a channel or mechanism should be in place during an FPIC process. It can also serve as a mechanism through which suggestions for improvements in REDD+ implementation or administration can be submitted at later stages. Some key principles that were set out for the proposed Myanmar REDD+ GRM include:

- Dealing with grievances at the lowest level possible, i.e. only escalating to higher levels of authority if a satisfactory solution can't be found;
- Objectively and fairly dealing with grievances that involve parties in different positions/power situations;
- Functioning and reporting promptly and continuously, while also being cost-effective;

[35] Myanmar UN-REDD Programme (2019) Review of policies, laws and regulations (PLRs): Summary by safeguard; and Myanmar UN-REDD Programme (2018) Review of Legal and Policy Frameworks for REDD+
Implementation in Myanmar. Both available at: https://www.myanmar-redd.org/resources/reports
[36] For example, during workshops on the PLR review and GRM in March and August 2018: see workshop report.

- Providing communication materials/information in languages understood by communities; and
- Developing further targets/key performance indicators together, with input from communities.

The proposed design of the REDD+ GRM includes features such as grievance officers, the provision of training on the GRM to grievance officers and REDD+ implementing agencies, awareness raising with communities, and establishment of a grievance database. Following recommendations from a national workshop in March 2019, it was decided to conduct an FPIC and GRM pilot at the village tract level. This was carried out in 10 village tracts of Paung Township, Mon State, in 2019. The results from the pilot study are intended to be reflected in the final design of the REDD+ GRM and the development of related guidelines/materials.[37]

2.4 Key Policies, Laws and Regulations Related to FPIC and GRM

This section highlights a number of policies, laws and regulations that are relevant to FPIC and GRM in Myanmar; REDD+ planners and implementers should refer to these regulations to guide their REDD+ actions, in particular relating to requirements for certain sectors/activities such as land use, ethnic rights, resettlement and so on.

- The EIA Procedure (2015) does not specify an FPIC requirement but stipulates that for any projects that involve involuntary resettlement, or that could have adverse impacts on indigenous peoples, until national procedures governing have been issued by the responsible ministries, international good practice shall be applied. Where a project causes people (indigenous or non-indigenous) to be displaced, the project proponent is responsible to support affected persons until they have regained at least their former level of socio-economic stability.
- The EIA Procedure (2015) states that Environmental Management Plans (EMPs) should set out the complaints and grievance management mechanism for the project in question. The draft Guidelines for Public Participation in Myanmar's EIA Process (2017) also propose that public participation plans for EIA processes include complaints management and grievance redress mechanisms.
- Procedures for settling disputes in relation to land use rights and compensation are provided in the Farmland Law (2012), the Law Amending the VFV Lands Management Law (2018), the Land Acquisition Act (1894) and the new draft Land Acquisition, Resettlement and Rehabilitation Law, the Forest Law (2018) and the Protection of Biodiversity and Protected Areas Law (2018).
- According to the Investment Law (2016), business investments that may affect the traditional culture and customs of the ethnic groups should not be permitted, and all investors should respect and comply with the customs, traditions, and traditional culture of the ethnic groups.
- The National Land Use Policy (2016) requires that agencies "Develop and implement jurisdictional land use plans with sub-national participatory and gender-equitable land-use planning"; Chapter VIII covers land tenure security and the recognition of customary rights. It also states that that land-related laws should be amended so that persons affected by land acquisition receive the right to invest in the respective project.
- Myanmar's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) 2015-2020 includes goals related to traditional knowledge, and access and benefit sharing (e.g. Target 18). A National Competent Authority for the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization has also been established, and a Draft Policy Framework for implementing the Nagoya Protocol is under preparation, along with Guidelines for the Protection of Traditional Knowledge, an Ethical Code of Conduct for research and a Community Protocol.

[37] For example, the GRM design has been integrated into the Myanmar REDD+ FPIC Guidelines (Draft, December 2019), http://www.myanmar-redd.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/D0-National-FPIC-Guideline-Dec-2019-English.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2WrzV0JWeCyOYkn0sy7ASkJNed8ImrtCVegWJk1NBVruvfS55YZcr7op8

2.5 Tools for FPIC and GRM

- **Checklist 2.1: FPIC.** This checklist is based on the draft Myanmar REDD+ FPIC guidelines and proposed GRM; it will help REDD+ planners and implementers to carry out an appropriate FPIC process.
- **Checklist 2.2: GRM.** This checklist is based on the draft Myanmar REDD+ FPIC guidelines and proposed GRM; it will help REDD+ planners and implementers to make sure grievance redress is provided for in their REDD+ actions.

2.6 Additional resources on FPIC and GRM

FPIC:

- Myanmar REDD+ FPIC Guidelines (Draft, December 2019): An initial draft of guidelines for the application of FPIC in relation to REDD+ in Myanmar. *FPIC Guidelines document: English / Myanmar*
- UN-REDD Programme Guidelines on Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC): Outlines a normative, policy and operational framework for UN-REDD Programme partner countries to seek FPIC. *Document: English*
- Free, Prior, and Informed Consent in REDD (RECOFTC and German Development Agency (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH), 2011): Discusses the importance, process and guidance for FPIC in REDD+.
- IIED (2012) Community Protocols: Describes a process for development and implementation of community protocols on genetic resources, protected areas and forests, as well as guidance on FPIC, some of which can also be applied in REDD+.
- Know Your Rights Related to REDD+ (CIEL, 2014): Guide for local communities and indigenous leaders to understand their rights related to REDD+.

GRM:

- Myanmar UN-REDD Programme (2018) REDD+ GRM Workshop Report: Summarises feedback, comments, and recommendations documented during REDD+ workshops on PLR Review, GRM design and REDD+ implementation.
- Joint FCPF/UN-REDD Programme Guidance Note for REDD+ Countries - Establishing and Strengthening Grievance Redress Mechanisms: This document proposes an approach to strengthen in-country capacity for activities on grievance resolution to be carried out during the REDD+ Readiness phase.

Case study for Chapter 2. FPIC for communities participating in a community forestry REDD+ action

Since the development of the REDD+ plan for Village M (see Chapter 1), it has been decided to move forward with the establishment of a community forest in one section of the local mangrove forest. As this area is reserved forest, the proposal is feasible. However, the **environmental & social screening** done during the planning process indicates that this action would affect the livelihoods and access to resources for community members, as well as their customary practices. So, a **Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC)** process is needed, and the working group decide to link it to some other procedures for setting up the community forest.

With support from the NGO, the working group organizes a **kick-off meeting** with community representatives including women's groups and vulnerable parties to determine how the FPIC process and the establishment of the community forest should proceed. This means deciding the timeline, who should be involved, the information needs of the rights holders, and the location of the different consultation events**.** It is decided that the process will be facilitated by a local CSO who has been active in the initial REDD+ planning process too.

Information is disseminated, in Myanmar and Mon languages, in frequently visited locations in the community, in the form of written notices and public loud-speaker announcements. A short video is also created to provide information on climate change, REDD+, the proposed community forest, and the FPIC process. The local CSO also makes sure to publicize their **grievance redress hotline** for any complaints and feedback about the process.

As the community forest only affects one community, Village M, it's decided to conduct FPIC and start the community forestry process at the village level, building on the discussions that already occurred at the planning stage. An **initial consultation** is conducted with the community elected village representatives, where information is shared on climate change and REDD+, as well as the proposed establishment of a community forest and Community Forest User Group and recapping how the FPIC process works. At this meeting, the villagers also agree **how decisions will be made and documented, and how they will achieve equitable representation of different groups**. Representatives of women's groups, fishers, and Mon and other ethnic groups are included in the discussions**.** After some feedback via the hotline, the CSO also reaches out to the local youth committee.

A **second consultation** is then held, focusing on the proposed establishment of the community forest, including the requirements set out in the Community Forestry Instructions, the rights and responsibilities of the Community Forest User Group, and the possible content of a management plan. The likely impacts of the community forest, including on those who currently use forest resources, and **how benefits could be equitably shared**, are also discussed. Follow up discussions are held with particular groups, including the fishers, who requested further information on how the measure will affect their access to fisheries and livelihoods.

When the community reaches a consensus and decide to go ahead with the community forest, a **decision document recording the consultation and its outcome** is prepared, using a template from the Myanmar REDD+ FPIC Guidelines. The next steps will be to choose the members of the Community Forestry User Group and to prepare the documents needed to register a community forest with the authorities.

Chapter 3: Stakeholder Participation, Capacity Building and Benefit Sharing

Key Concepts

- **Stakeholder participation** refers to the involvement of people who may be affected by a decision or activity, or can influence its implementation, in decision-making, and design and implementation of activities.
- **Capacity building** can be defined as the process of developing and strengthening the skillsets, knowledge base, abilities, processes and resources of organizations, communities, and individuals.
- **Benefit sharing**, in the context of REDD+, refers to the distribution of monetary and non-monetary incentives and rewards that are drawn from the benefits achieved through REDD+, including results-based payments.
- **REDD+ coordination and implementation arrangements** refers to the structures and arrangements to be put in place to coordinate REDD+ at national and subnational level, and to manage its day-to-day implementation.

Myanmar Safeguards Criteria Related to Stakeholder Participation, Capacity Building and Benefit Sharing

Criterion B3 Strengthened coordination on policies and plans related to land use, with consideration of social and environmental objectives	**Criterion B4** Consideration and filling of gaps in data availability and implementation capacity during planning	**Criterion C.5** Fair and transparent benefit sharing mechanism
Criterion D1 Active participation of stakeholders in planning and implementation, and support for stakeholder groups with low capacity to participate through capacity-building and other appropriate arrangements	**Criterion D2** Informed, equal, and proportionate participation of stakeholder representatives, with appropriate legitimation and communication between representatives and their stakeholder group	**Criterion D3** Stakeholders provided opportunities to participate in implementation and monitoring of REDD+
Criterion E3 Selection, design and implementation to avoid or minimize negative impacts and enhance positive ones	**Criterion E5** Capacity-building and transparency measures to ensure that environmental and social objectives are considered in land use- or management planning	

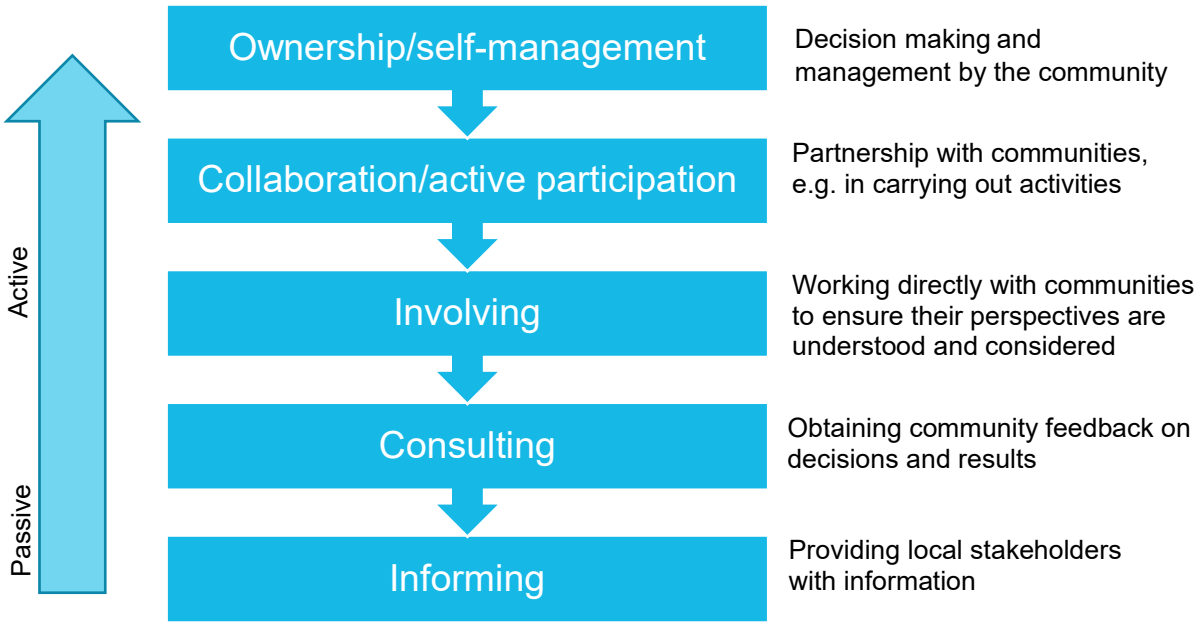
Seven criteria in the Myanmar national safeguards clarification across Safeguards B, C, D and E aim to achieve full and effective stakeholder participation, capacity building for REDD+ planning and implementation and transparent benefit sharing. Other key requirements of these criteria include the promotion of coordination mechanisms and consideration of social and environmental objectives in land use planning, as well as the need to ensure informed, proportionate, and responsive participation of appropriate stakeholder representatives.

3.1 Background: Stakeholder Participation, Capacity Building and Benefit Sharing for REDD+ in the Myanmar Context

As noted in Chapter 1 of this guidance on planning, it is critical to engage and consult all relevant stakeholders at all stages of REDD+, from planning through to implementation and monitoring. Full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders will increase the legitimacy and sustainability of REDD+. As such, arrangements for inclusive participation, capacity building and information sharing must be put in place, especially to allow participation of people from local communities, ethnic groups, and marginalised societal groups.

There are different levels of participation, ranging from informing and consulting stakeholders, to more active forms of involving, collaborating and empowering stakeholders, as shown in Figure 5 below. Myanmar's Safeguard D Principle calls for the full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders, in particular indigenous peoples and local communities, and notes that all groups who may be affected REDD+ actions should be considered relevant stakeholders. This suggests that stakeholder participation for REDD+ should encompass the more active levels of participation.

Figure 5: Different potential levels of stakeholder participation



Past REDD+ efforts in Myanmar have developed a number of guidelines to promote the full and effective participation of stakeholders, which include:

- **Guidelines for Stakeholder Engagement in Policies and Programmes for Sustainable Forest Management and REDD+:** Developed in 2016, this document provides practical guidance and tools to improve the quality and effectiveness of stakeholder engagement, including: identifying types of engagement, planning engagement processes, identifying stakeholders, managing events and communications.
- **The REDD+ Knowledge Management and Communications Strategy** was developed initially in 2015 by the Myanmar UN-REDD Programme, and a revised Strategy was developed in 2019. The Strategy supports the sharing of knowledge generated during REDD+ implementation among partners and key stakeholders, setting out communications objectives, key messages, target audiences and channels.

At the national level, the NRS also proposes several bodies to coordinate the country's REDD+ programme, including a National Coordination Unit and a multi-sector REDD+ Taskforce. At sub-national level, the agencies and organisations implementing REDD+ actions will be responsible for day-to-day implementation and coordination with the national level. However, Myanmar's national safeguards approach also includes several criteria related to **how REDD+ actions should be coordinated**, aiming to promote transparency and accountability, strengthened cross-sector coordination of land use and land use planning, and proper consideration of social and environmental objectives.

The need for **capacity building** to support participation and the effective and sustainable implementation of REDD+ is also reflected in Myanmar's proposed NRS and in its national safeguards approach. Within the NRS, a cluster of REDD+ actions are focused on awareness, capacity development and training, including actions to build the capacities of government and other agencies to support stakeholders implementing REDD+, as well as awareness raising and training activities directed at the stakeholders in REDD+ actions themselves, among others. Some of the specific topics/activities prioritised by the NRS for capacity building and training are:

- Sustainable timber harvesting
- Environmental and social impact assessment
- Rural income generation (including Community Forestry Enterprises)
- Plantation establishment and maintenance
- Inclusive and fair participatory processes and conflict mediation
- Assessment of risks of emissions displacement and reversals
- Incorporation of environmental and social factors in land use planning
- Training of Protected Areas staff and Forestry Police.

Please also see Chapter 1 for information on assessing and addressing capacity needs in the planning stage.

In the REDD+ context, benefit sharing mechanisms consist of a system to determine who received benefits, why, under which conditions, how much and for how long. On **benefit sharing in Myanmar**, there is no specific legislation explicitly on this topic, and a fully developed benefit sharing mechanism for REDD+ is not yet in place. However, there are a number of relevant laws and regulations (see section 3.6 below) and the proposed NRS sets out principles for benefits sharing for REDD+, including: fair and equitable sharing of benefits; full transparency; based on broad stakeholder consultation; and capable of transferring benefits to all relevant stakeholders. REDD+ implementers must ensure that they enable fair, equitable and transparent sharing of benefits aligned with Myanmar's safeguards approach.

The following sections will provide more information on these arrangements and associated best practices for promoting stakeholder participation in REDD+ implementation, capacity building to support participation and the sustainable implementation of REDD+, as well the transparent and fair sharing of benefits associated with REDD+.

3.2 Guidance on Stakeholder Engagement, Participation, and Coordination

Stakeholder Engagement and Participation

As set out in Myanmar's national safeguards approach and the criteria listed above, REDD+ actions must be planned and implemented with the active participation of relevant stakeholders. This means seeking ways to engage stakeholders in planning and designing REDD+ actions, as well as providing opportunities for stakeholders to contribute to the implementation of actions, and to their monitoring and evaluation. A wide range of stakeholder engagement and participation methods can be used to achieve this, including capacity building and training, which can form an important component of participation.

The following principles and steps are adapted from Myanmar's Guidelines for Stakeholder Engagement in Policies and Programmes for Sustainable Forest Management and REDD+, which aim to promote effective participation from relevant stakeholders in REDD+. As noted in the guidelines, the following are generic recommendations, which can and should be adapted to fit the needs and context of the REDD+ process under consideration. The Stakeholder Engagement Guidelines suggest **eight core steps** to effective engagement as shown in Figure 6. In the following section, we build upon these steps to describe best practice principles for promoting stakeholder participation in REDD+.

Figure 6: Eight core steps for stakeholder engagement (Stakeholder Engagement Guidelines, 2016)

Identifying the purpose and type of participation in REDD+

- Clearly define the objectives and intended outcomes of the engagement or participation of stakeholders, i.e. what it is supposed to achieve? For example, are you seeking people's feedback on the design of an action (as in the planning stage), or are aiming to secure direct contributions to its implementation? This can include defining the desired level of participation, from more passive to more active.
- Consider developing an outline or a concept note for the participation process; ideally this should be developed at the planning stage for the REDD+ action, and may be especially useful for REDD+ actions that will rely heavily on stakeholder involvement, such as community forestry, protected area co-management, joint patrolling/law enforcement, and sustainable livelihoods schemes. A concept note should set out the initial objectives, the type and level of participation, and the proposed approach to secure and promote stakeholder participation.

Identifying structures and/or mechanisms to support participation

- This aims to identify, or if needed establish, the necessary structures or mechanisms to support and guide stakeholder participation. In some cases, structures or bodies may already exist (e.g. the REDD+ Taskforce, a local working group or committee, etc.), to help guide and coordinate activities. There may be existing mechanisms or schemes that can be utilised, e.g. existing agricultural extension services, or community forestry. In other it may be necessary to develop a structure or mechanism to facilitate stakeholder engagement and participation.

Identifying stakeholders

- Stakeholders should be identified comprehensively and transparently, a process that is often referred to as "**stakeholder mapping**." Most likely, stakeholder mapping will also occur as part of the planning process for REDD+ actions (see Part 2). Such analyses have been done for REDD+ in Myanmar at the national level in the past (see Stakeholder Engagement Guidelines for an example), as well as in other projects and programs, which may provide a useful starting point for more specific and in-depth stakeholder mapping. See also Box 6 below.
- Suggestions to guide stakeholder identification include being as comprehensive and inclusive as possible; using tools or approaches to categorise stakeholders (e.g. an ''interests/influence matrix''); seeking to ensure the legitimacy of stakeholder representatives; recognising inter-stakeholder relations and power dynamics, histories, and conflicts; working with partners to identify stakeholders; and identifying champions who can facilitate engagement. Box 7 below also provides additional information about gender equitable stakeholder participation.
- REDD+ implementers will also be responsible for ensuring the legitimacy and accountability of any stakeholder representatives engaged in the planning and/or implementation of specific REDD+ actions. This means putting in place processes to ensure that stakeholder representatives are representative of their constituencies and have been selected in a fair and transparent manner. Clearly defined and agreed to ''terms of reference'' for stakeholder representatives (e.g. for participation in working groups) is one way to set out roles and responsibilities.

Plan for participation and integrate it into REDD+ actions

- To ensure full and effective participation in REDD+ actions, it is essential that stakeholder participation is planned for and integrated into the design and implementation of REDD+ actions. This may include designing activities so that local stakeholders can contribute more easily, ensuring that capacity building is included into plans, and facilitating access to the necessary resources, such as expertise and equipment. Planning should also be informed by the identification of context-specific potential risks and opportunities, barriers to participation and other stakeholder needs to enable effective participation.
- Also consider the strategies or approaches that could add particular value or leverage additional resources, such as: partnership strategies (e.g. links with other partners/initiatives in the area), communications and information sharing to increase impacts; conflict sensitivity analysis and/or conflict prevention strategy may be needed in some contexts; and specific approaches to ensure equitable participation of marginalised and vulnerable groups.

Box 6: Stakeholder mapping

Stakeholder mapping is a tool to help to identify stakeholders that should be involved in a process or activity, as well as the rights and duties of stakeholders in engagement processes. Stakeholder mapping for REDD+ in Myanmar was conducted at the national level during the development of the NRS but could also be a useful tool in identifying location specific stakeholders at the intervention site. An effective stakeholder mapping exercise will help with the development of an effective engagement or participation strategy.

Once the area of influence of the REDD+ action has been defined, stakeholder mapping aims to identify stakeholders and the interests they present, their influence, capacity to engage, resources available to them, and their preferred means and mode of communication, as well as the relationships between different actors. It can be useful to present this in a few formats, such as a table as demonstrated below[1] and/or as a diagram showing linkages between actors.

Disaggregation of stakeholders should be detailed enough to ensure that they are grouped according to their interests and labels are not too generic. Factors such as gender, age, and ethnic and cultural background could influence this, causing differences in their concerns on impacts, desired mitigation measures and benefits distribution of REDD+ actions.

Table: Stakeholder analysis matrix[2]

Name/group of Stakeholders	View of project			Impact			Influence		
	Positive	Negative	Neutral	High	Medium	Low	High	Medium	Low
X	x			x				x	
Y		x			x				x
Z			x	x			x		

[1] Climate Investment Funds (CIF) (2018). How to implement stakeholder mapping into the programmatic approach of the Climate Investment Funds. Washington D.C.: Climate Investment Funds (CIF) c/o World Bank.

[2] ICMM, 2012. Community Development Toolkit, p. 60. Available: https://www.icmm.com/website/publications/pdfs/social-performance/2012/guidance_community-development-toolkit.pdf

Preparing stakeholders and building capacity

- Having well-prepared stakeholders can lead to increased participation and the improved likelihood of successful engagement; it is particularly important to pay attention to the capacity needs and opportunities for participation of disadvantaged groups, which may differ according to the local context, such as women, ethnic groups, displaced persons, and remote communities.
- It is important to identify any capacity gaps that might hinder participation and ways to fill these gaps. Depending on the gaps identified, these may include developing materials to increase awareness; building trust between key stakeholder groups or actors; institutional strengthening for certain stakeholder groups; training sessions; co-development of REDD+ actions with stakeholders; and ''learning-by-doing'' through joint implementation (section 3.3 below covers capacity building in more detail).

Box 7: Promoting gender responsiveness in REDD+

Gender considerations can be incorporated throughout the REDD+ process, in order to promote equitable engagement and opportunities for men and women, and boys and girls to participate in and benefit from REDD+ actions. The following core elements should be considered[1]:

- **Gender sensitive/specific assessment** involves integrating gender considerations into any of the assessments relevant to REDD+ (e.g. analysis of drivers, environmental and social impact assessment, etc.). Through this, it is possible to better understand gender-differentiated roles and needs (e.g. related to livelihoods or resource access) within the community as well as the gender differentiated impacts and risks of the proposed activities. By establishing this gender baseline, it will become possible to identify areas of improvement for gender equality and inclusion for example, within the Theory of Change and stakeholder engagement plans
- **Awareness raising and capacity building** is needed to ensure stakeholders have a firm grasp on the concepts of gender equality and women's empowerment, which is crucial for gender mainstreaming. This could include awareness raising on the importance of integrating gender equality concepts into REDD+ and providing stakeholders with concrete guidance on how a gender perspective can be mainstreamed within various REDD+ work streams.
- **Gender responsive participation** means ensuring that people of all genders can participate fully and meaningfully in REDD+ institutions, events, and processes. Gender balance in REDD+ activities should be representative of society; therefore, women should form roughly 50% of participants (the UN Economic and Social Council suggests at a minimum that women make up 30%). Ensuring gender balance may require the REDD+ planning team to implement proactive measures, since women often face multiple barriers to participation.
- **Gender responsive monitoring** aims to ensure that gender aspects are monitored, e.g. to see how much budget is being allocated to gender-related activities and assess whether and how women are benefiting from REDD+ actions. This requires gender-related indicators to be incorporated into the monitoring framework accompanied by collection of qualitative and quantitative gender-disaggregated data

[1] UN-REDD Programme Secretariat (2017). UN-REDD Methodological Brief on Gender. Available: https://www.uncclearn.org/wp-content/uploads/library/unredd_methodological_brief_gender_final.pdf

Manage opportunities, processes, and events

- Stakeholder participation in REDD+ will ideally involve long-term, ongoing participation (e.g. tree planting, employment, patrolling), as well as specific events for consultation, training, and outreach. The Myanmar Stakeholder Engagement Guidelines provide detailed information on planning for, running and following up on public events, such as identifying facilitators, involving the media, and managing conflicts or disagreements.
- It is essential to record and capture the processes and results of stakeholder engagement and participation (for example, what activities were completed, who was involved, etc.), and monitor and evaluate their quality. This may be done through a variety of means, e.g. stakeholder surveys, event evaluation forms, mid-term reviews, etc., and should involve disaggregating data on participation by social group (e.g. women, men, youth, ethnic groups).

Communicate results

- Good stakeholder engagement also includes clear, prompt, and meaningful communications with stakeholders, and considers aspects such as language, literacy, and access to communications channels.
- Strategies for communicating with stakeholders include promptly sharing the outputs of particular activities and events; providing regular updates (e.g. newsletters, social media); sharing media reports; and sharing lessons learned from the process. Efforts should also be made to keep stakeholders engaged, i.e. beyond particular events, for example by inviting further participation as other engagement opportunities develop. (See also Chapter 4on information sharing and communications).

Assess the process and outcomes of stakeholder participation

- It is important to review the successes and challenges of stakeholder engagement and participation processes; documenting the experiences can inform adaptive management, helping to improve REDD+ actions for the future.
- Assessing stakeholder participation may include capturing information from event/stakeholder evaluations; evaluating the process against the monitoring framework, or key criteria for full and effective participation; jointly evaluating the process and lessons learned with stakeholders; and exchanging information and experiences with other REDD+ initiatives and programs.

Participatory approaches in REDD+ implementation

Given the emphasis on stakeholder participation in the Myanmar national safeguards approach, and in the NRS, it is crucial that stakeholders have opportunities to be involved in REDD+ on an ongoing basis, i.e. beyond initial consultation and the planning stage. **Participation during the implementation stage can take multiple forms** – for example, stakeholder representatives can be involved in the coordination, decision-making, overseeing and monitoring of REDD+; stakeholders can also play an active role in the implementation of the actions themselves (depending on the type of activities).

Participation in REDD+ promotes a more transparent process, while also supporting national and local ownership, fair benefit sharing, and more sustainable REDD+ actions that are tailored to stakeholder needs and priorities. It is important to note that while broad stakeholder participation in planning, coordination and monitoring is possible for all types of REDD+ actions, not all stakeholders may be in a position to actively participate in the implementation of REDD+ actions; for example, if actions are implemented in remote areas, or if not, many workers are needed for some activities. In cases where it is difficult for all stakeholders to participate directly, **equal, and proportionate participation of stakeholder representatives** with relevant knowledge and skills and appropriate

legitimation by their group should be sought, and the duties of representatives towards their stakeholder group should be defined.

Stakeholders from or representing groups such as indigenous peoples, local communities, women's groups, and vulnerable and under-represented groups, should be given the opportunity to participate in actual implementation of REDD+ actions or similar projects. Attention should be given to stakeholders with unclear land tenure status / without documented land rights, as well as displaced persons, to avoid excluding these groups from participation or benefit sharing. There are a number of **key participatory approaches for implementation**, which are reflected in the NRS, that REDD+ implementers may wish to prioritise for their REDD+ actions:

- **Community Forestry (CF)**, including establishment of community forestry enterprises (CFEs) and community plantations: Myanmar's Community Forestry Instructions (CFI, 2019) define community forestry as "all sustainable forest management and utilization activities, in which the local community itself is involved" Community Forest User Groups (CFUGs) can request a land lease of 30 years (that can be renewed) to establish new plantations or to manage existing forests with the objective of creating employment and income opportunities (for subsistence or commercial purposes), providing food, stabilizing the ecosystem, or improving the environmental conditions. In addition to the CFI, CFUGs should also follow Myanmar's legislation on land use, such as the Forest Law and Forest Rules, as well as the Standard Operating Procedures for Community Forestry, which complement the CFI The CFI also allow CFUGs to set up Community Forestry Enterprises (CFE) to engage in "harvesting of wood and non-wood forest products, foods, and value-added products from the community forest, and trading them in the local and international markets in accordance with the standing laws, or business conducting local community-based tourism".
- **Co-management of protected areas**: The Protection of Biodiversity and Protected Areas Law (2018) allows for co-management of protected areas between protected area (PA) authorities and local communities, and the definition of buffer zones to allow certain development activities. Collaborative management between communities, government departments and PA staff may include a management board and regular meetings. Increasing opportunities for the local communities in and around PAs to share knowledge and participate in management activities by 2020 was a target of Myanmar's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) 2015-2020 (national target 1.4).
- **Indigenous and Community Conserved areas (ICCAs):** The Protection of Biodiversity and Protected Areas Law of 2018 recognizes community conservation areas as a valid type of protected area, in line with the concept of Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas (ICCAs) used internationally. Recognition of an area as a community conservation area can confer a higher level of tenure security especially in areas where land records are incomplete or outdated, or for land uses for which no land use certificates can be issued, such as shifting cultivation. Some EAOs have equivalent processes under which landscapes that include shifting cultivation can be recognized as ICCAs.
- **Respect for indigenous and local knowledge, and cultural heritage:** Cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and customary practices (including locally specific and accepted practices) of indigenous peoples and local communities should be respected throughout the planning and implementation of REDD+. This can be promoted, for example, through participatory planning processes, and the use of instruments such as FPIC and GRM. In this context, cultural heritage includes tangible or intangible heritage, place-based, movable, and immovable heritage and beliefs. Specifically related to genetic resources, Myanmar's NBSAP 2015-2020 sets a list of seven actions (actions 16.1.1 to 16.1.7) aiming to develop a legal framework for access and benefits sharing that recognizes and protects indigenous knowledge, in alignment with the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing. A National Competent Authority for the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol has been established and a draft policy framework for implementing the Nagoya Protocol is under preparation (as of 2022), with Guidelines for the Protection of Traditional Knowledge. In addition, an Ethical Code of Conduct for research and a Community Protocol are also being developed.

- **Community-based and participatory monitoring and evaluation (M&E):** this refers to the active involvement and engagement of communities, stakeholders, and other actors at different levels within M&E processes for REDD+ actions (see also Chapter 7 on M&E).

Future REDD+ implementing agencies and organisations will be responsible for promoting the legitimacy and accountability of stakeholder representatives engaged in the planning and/or implementation of specific REDD+ actions. A number of policies, laws and regulations exist within the country to guide the development and implementation of certain participatory approaches, such as co-management and community forestry. There are also a wide range of technical guidance documents, materials and resources that have been developed to support participatory approaches, in particular community forestry, protected areas management and the integration of Indigenous and local knowledge into conservation and climate change activities. A selection of such resources is provided in section 3.5 below.

REDD+ coordination and implementation arrangements

As noted above, Myanmar's NRS proposes a number of bodies to coordinate the country's REDD+ programme at national and sub-national levels, while the national safeguards approach also includes criteria related to how REDD+ actions should be coordinated during implementation. When establishing the arrangements for coordinating and implementing REDD+ actions, such as working groups, implementation units, steering committees, etc., the following factors should be considered:

- The implementation of REDD+ actions should aim to **strengthen transparency and accountability**. Implementation arrangements should be based on clear mandates for the organisations involved and should be documented transparently. For example, terms of reference for any working groups or steering committees should be prepared, clearly stating roles, responsibilities, and procedures. In addition, the allocation of funds for REDD+ actions should be in line with relevant regulations, with appropriate record-keeping and reporting of funds received and expenditure.
- Where possible, REDD+ implementation should **strengthen coordination on land use and land use planning**. This includes coordination between sectors involved in land use planning (e.g. different departments, such as environment, agriculture, and infrastructure), between different geographic areas (e.g. districts, states, regions), and if applicable, with ethnic groups and/or EAOs. This means that for REDD+ actions involving land use (and most do), the implementation arrangements should promote integrated land use planning and management and seek to engage the various sectors and organisations that play a role in land use decision-making.
- As part of this integrated approach to land use planning and management, **social and environmental perspectives and objectives** should also be considered. This means giving adequate representation to agencies and organisations responsible for social and environmental issues within implementation arrangements and ensuring that social and environmental information is included in the REDD+ planning process (see also Chapter 1 of this guidance).
- Where possible and appropriate, REDD+ coordination and implementation bodies should **build on existing arrangements**; these may include land use planning committees, township committees, other existing project mechanisms, stakeholder platforms, etc.
- The design of REDD+ coordination and implementation arrangements also provide an opportunity to promote inclusiveness. REDD+ implementers should **ensure the appropriate participation of women, ethnic groups and other key stakeholder groups** directly in the REDD+ action as well as within implementation bodies, such as working groups and steering committees. This may include setting quotas or targets for the representation of groups, such as women, as well as working with partners and organisations to facilitate a self-selection process for representatives (e.g. for ethnic groups and indigenous peoples). The same principles should apply to the participants in the REDD+ action itself (as described above).

3.3. Guidance on Capacity Building for REDD+

REDD+ planners and implementers should consider capacity building needs for the organizations and stakeholders involved in actions at an early stage. Ideally, the necessary investments in awareness raising, training and institutional strengthening will be **identified and budgeted for during the planning stage**, and thus reflected in any REDD+ plans developed (see Chapter 1 of this guidance). However, in some cases additional capacity needs will become apparent during implementation, and adjustments to plans may be needed.

As noted in the safeguards criteria listed above, REDD+ implementers should identify and pay particular attention to **stakeholder groups with low capacity to participate** (which may include women, poor households, ethnic groups, and groups without documented land rights). Appropriate arrangements should be put in place to provide opportunities to these stakeholders and to build their capacity to participate in REDD+ actions. These may include targeted materials for awareness raising in suitable formats and local languages, specific capacity-building events and training, and opportunities to learn by doing. In addition, consideration should be given to the design of the REDD+ actions and the capacity building to support it to ensure they are tailored to the context and stakeholders involved, e.g. ensuring that activities to support sustainable livelihoods are tailored and accessible to vulnerable stakeholder groups most in need of support

Wherever possible, Myanmar's safeguards approach calls for stakeholders (especially members of local communities), to be **offered the opportunity to participate in REDD+ implementation and monitoring** (such as contributing to planting, patrolling, monitoring, livelihoods schemes, and so on, depending on the nature of the actions concerned). Participation of this kind will likely require **capacity building and other supportive mechanisms** to be in place, such as training, provision of equipment, setting up of cooperatives or networks, and so on, with due consideration of local preferences, traditions and languages, and specific needs (such as safety, accessibility for disabled participants, agricultural and household schedules, etc.).

It is also important to note that capacity building and knowledge transfer should not be a one-way street, with local communities and stakeholders receiving training and knowledge from external experts. The development and implementation of REDD+ actions also offers an opportunity to bring in the **knowledge and expertise of local communities and indigenous peoples**, should they so wish. Options to draw on traditional or local knowledge and practices, and any potential links to benefit sharing, should be integrated into the planning process (Chapter 1 of this guidance) and should be subject to FPIC if relevant (Chapter 2).

In order to properly understand the capacity development needs for implementation of a REDD+ action, as well as opportunities to build capacity and integrate local knowledge, REDD+ planners and implementers should consider use of available tools and approaches, including **capacity or training needs assessments, and development of specific capacity building action plans** (see section 3.7 on additional resources).

3.4 Guidance on REDD+ Benefit Sharing

Benefit sharing, or the distribution of incentives and rewards based on REDD+, is a critical component of REDD+ planning and implementation, and can apply to other forest sector projects too (e.g. community forestry). According to the FCPF, ''equitable and transparent benefit sharing arrangements ensure that all stakeholders, including indigenous peoples and communities, are fairly recognized and rewarded for their role in reducing emissions, including through forest conservation and sustainable forest management''.[38] It is important to note that benefits can be monetary (e.g. cash payments) or non-monetary (e.g. capacity building, equipment, alternative livelihoods support) and can be shared with individuals or communities, as well as with contributing organisations.

[38] See: https://www.forestcarbonpartnership.org/redd-benefit-sharing

Although there is no specific legislation in Myanmar explicitly dealing with REDD+ benefit sharing, a number of laws and regulations are relevant, such as the Community Forestry Instructions (2019) and the Law of Protection of the Farmer Rights and Enhancement of their Benefits (2013) (see section 3.6 below). Myanmar does not yet have a fully developed benefit sharing mechanism or scheme for REDD+, though initial work has begun. According to the proposed NRS, the benefit sharing scheme is to comply with the following principles:

- **Fair and equitable sharing of benefits**, as well as "pro-poor", meaning that benefits accruing to poorer stakeholders are proportionately greater than those received by wealthier or institutional stakeholders;
- **Full transparency**, meaning that all data and information used to calculate benefits, including the methodology used, should be fully available;
- Based on broad stakeholder consultation;
- Capable of transferring benefits to **all stakeholders**, governmental and non-governmental, including EAOs.

Even without a fully operational scheme at national level, REDD+ implementers must ensure that they have **put in place arrangements for fair, equitable and transparent sharing of benefits from REDD+.** In particular, REDD+ implementers need to meet the expectations of Myanmar's safeguards approach, which demands that **where indigenous peoples and local communities contribute to the implementation of REDD+ actions, or where REDD+ actions have an impact on their territories**, they should be offered a fair share of the benefits through a transparent mechanism. Efforts should also be made to ensure the role of people without documented rights to land and resources is considered. Benefit sharing arrangements for REDD+ should be discussed as **part of the FPIC process** (see Part 3 of this guidance).

A wide range of guidance and resources related to benefit sharing is available (please see section 3.7 on additional resources below for a selection).

Different types of REDD+ actions, projects or programs may require different approaches to benefit sharing, and may make use of **existing schemes** where possible, such as provisions for benefit sharing as part of community forestry (e.g. as set out in the CFI, 2019), payments for ecosystem services schemes, or benefit sharing arrangements built into protected area co-management. Box 8 below sets out some basic steps for developing benefit sharing arrangements, based on an online guide developed by the FCPF.[39]

[39]FCPF. Designing benefits sharing arrangements: A resource for countries, https://www.forestcarbonpartnership.org/bio-carbon/en/index.html

Box 8: Designing benefit sharing arrangements

Equitable, fair, and transparent benefit sharing arrangements ensure that all stakeholders, including rights-holders, local forest dependent communities, ethnic groups, youth, women, and vulnerable groups, are **recognized and rewarded** for their role in the REDD+ action.

A **stakeholder analysis or mapping** can be done to identify all groups that are critical to addressing the drivers of emissions and ensuring the success and sustainability of the REDD+ action. This exercise will also allow to understand their needs, interests, capacities, rights, and histories and conflicts. (see Box 6 for more information on stakeholder mapping).

With the groups of stakeholders defined, **comprehensive and, if needed, iterative stakeholder consultations** should take place to identify who among the rights-holders and stakeholders will receive benefits, i.e. the **beneficiaries**, and what **kind of benefits** (monetary and/or non-monetary) they would be interested in receiving, i.e. **participatory identification of benefits**. These consultations should **ensure social inclusion,** addressing barriers for participation of marginalized and/or vulnerable groups, such as women, youth, ethnic groups, and others.

Throughout the design of benefit sharing arrangements and consultations, **clear communication** is important to **manage stakeholders' expectations** on expected results and associated risks related to the REDD+ actions, as well as the timeframe for the implementation of both the action and the benefit sharing arrangements.

The consultations should also discuss and define **how benefits will be distributed**, e.g. whether they will be equally or proportionally distributed **by beneficiary group**, whether they will cover costs, whether they will be linked to performance, and how to make sure that they will be distributed through a **fully transparent benefit sharing mechanism** (meaning that all data and information used to calculate and allocate benefits, including the methodology used, is fully available).

The discussions and outcomes of stakeholder consultations should be **documented** for **monitoring the effectiveness** of the consultations and to provide information for **adaptative management**, and **publicly disclosed** to **promote transparency** and **build trust**.

Based on: FCPF's online guide ''Designing benefits sharing arrangements: A resource for countries'', *https://www.forestcarbonpartnership.org/bio-carbon/en/index.html*

3.5 Tools to Support Stakeholder Participation, Capacity Building and Benefit Sharing

- **Checklist 3.1: Stakeholder participation, capacity building and coordination arrangements**. This checklist sets out the key criteria for REDD+ planners and implementers to comprehensively consider and promote full and effective stakeholder participation (including building capacity if needed), as well as establish appropriate coordination arrangements.
- **Checklist 3.2 Benefit sharing.** This checklist aims to ensure that equitable and transparent benefit sharing arrangements are developed or utilised for the REDD+ action, in line with relevant safeguards criteria.
- Capacity development plan template is provided in Annex 1.
- Simple guidance and template for a communications plan is provided in Annex 2.

3.6 Key Policies, Laws, and Regulations Relevant to Stakeholder Participation, Capacity Building and Benefit Sharing

Some of the key policies, laws, and regulations (PLRs) in Myanmar relevant to stakeholder participation, capacity building and information sharing are outlined below. REDD+ planners and implementers may refer to these to guide stakeholder participation plans, or some specific participatory models (such as community forestry). Following these, summaries about key bodies relevant to REDD+ coordination are presented.

Participation

- The National Land Use Policy (2016): specifies that the preparation, revision and updating of land use plans and maps "shall be carried out using an inclusive participatory approach and in consultation with local stakeholders, including men and women". It requires that agencies "Develop and implement jurisdictional land use plans with sub-national participatory and gender-equitable land-use planning".
- The National Land Use Policy (2016): also states that all individuals, communities, and organizations should have equal rights to access accurate and complete information related to land. Land Use Committees[40] should base proposals for land use changes in appropriate areas on approved and updated information from the land use planning process, and stakeholders should be provided with precise and correct land information to use in deciding on land allocation for national development, environmental conservation, land use planning and investment.
- The Protection of Biodiversity and Protected Areas Law (2018) allows for co-management of protected areas between protected area authorities and local communities, and the definition of buffer zones to allow certain development activities, relevant for participation in REDD+ actions in/around protected areas.
- Community Forestry Instructions (2019): The CFI set out substantial participation opportunities and responsibilities for communities as well as aim to enhance employment and income opportunities for communities, and are thus relevant to REDD+ actions involving community forestry and Safeguards D. The CFI outline the responsibilities of Community Forest User Groups (CFUGs), as well as the support available from the Forest Department, such as to improve capacity of local communities through technical and socio-economic training. The CFI also specify which persons qualify for participation in a CFUG (e.g., direct beneficiaries, with gender equity), and grant members a right to compensation for the loss of trees and crops due to development projects being implemented in their area. Standard Operating Procedures (Technical document no. 10) for Community Forestry complements the participatory approach of the CFI.
- The Ethnic Rights Protection Law (2015) states that the ethnic groups are entitled to participate as 'representatives in legislation' of the relevant Region or State and Self-Administered Area; it also sets out the right of ethnic groups to preserve their cultural heritage and requires ethnic groups to be informed about major projects in their areas, and for coordination about these projects to take place.
- The EIA Procedure (2015) requires project proponents to arrange for appropriate public consultation throughout all phases of the EIA process (Guidelines for Public Participation in Myanmar's EIA Process were drafted in 2017).
- The Conservation of Biodiversity and Protected Areas Law (2018) allows for co-management of protected areas between protected area authorities and local communities, and the definition of buffer zones to allow certain development activities. It also recognizes the role of local communities in conserving nature by listing Community Conserved Protected Areas as one of the seven categories of Myanmar's protected areas.

[40] E.g. Self-administered Division or Self-administered Zone, District, Township, Village-tract or Ward Land Use Committees, comprising members from government departments and organizations, farmers, local ethnic groups, experts, women and elders.

REDD+ coordination

There are a number of bodies that are relevant to the coordination of REDD+ at the national and subnational levels, though as of 2022, these different bodies and institutions have differing levels of implementation and activities. These include:

- The National Environmental Conservation and Climate Change Central Committee (NE5C), which has a mandate to provide guidance on national activities to tackle climate change issues, and to manage and coordinate all climate change related activities; REDD+ falls under the purview of the Climate Change Mitigation and Adaption Working Committee.
- The REDD+ Task Force, which has supervised the implementation of all REDD+ Readiness activities.
- The National Land Use Council, which was established to implement the National Land Use Policy and related laws, with membership of the relevant Union Ministers and Chief Ministers of the Regions or States. The National Land Use Council shall establish State/Region Land Use Committees and these shall play an important role in coordinating land use between various sectors. Committees are also to be established at local levels, including Self-administered Zone Land Use Committees, District Land Use Committees, Township Land Use Committees, Village-tract and Ward Land Use Committees.
- The Coastal Resources Management Central Committee, which guides the development and implementation of policies, strategies and regulations related to national-level integrated coastal resource management, supervises collection of information on coastal resources, and provides guidance on the development of an Integrated Coastal Resources Management Programme.
- Township Planning and Implementation Committees (TPICs)/Township Management Committees (TMCs), which are chaired by Township General Administrative Department s(GAD).
- The Supervising Committee for Consultation on Forest Rules at State and Region Levels, which was formed in 2019 to reach the local level during the development of the new draft Forest Rules, with members from the Forest Department and international and national NGOs.
- The working committee on 'Policies on Land and Environmental Affairs' established under the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC), with representatives from EAOs, the Tatmadaw, Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, political parties and the Ministry of Planning and Finance. A working group on land and environment for EAOs that are NCA signatories (NCA-S) was also established.

Benefit sharing

- The Community Forestry Instructions (2019) support benefit sharing within Community Forest User Groups and set out provisions related to the sale of products from community forests.
- The Law of Protection of the Farmer Rights and Enhancement of their Benefits (2013) sets out a framework for delivering benefits to farmers, as it aims to support farmers through appropriate access to finance, technology, market and information access, rights to small plots, and recovery from natural disasters.
- Myanmar's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) 2015-2020 includes goals related to traditional knowledge, and access and benefit sharing (e.g. Target 18). A National Competent Authority for the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization has also been established, and a Draft Policy Framework for implementing the Nagoya Protocol is under preparation, along with Guidelines for the Protection of Traditional Knowledge, an Ethical Code of Conduct for research and a Community Protocol.

3.7 Additional Resources

Stakeholder participation and capacity building:

- Myanmar Guidelines for Stakeholder Engagement in Policies and Programmes for Sustainable Forest Management and REDD+ (2016): Aim to improve the quality and effectiveness of stakeholder engagement by providing a practical tool on the design and implementation of stakeholder engagement processes for REDD+.
- UN-REDD Programme website stakeholder engagement pages: provide overview of key concepts of stakeholder engagement
- Joint UN-REDD / FCPF Guidelines on Stakeholder Engagement in REDD+ Readiness, with a focus on the participation of Indigenous Peoples and other forest-dependent communities (2012): Combines UN-REDD programme and FCPF guidance on Stakeholder engagement in order to support a more efficient and unified process for operationalizing REDD+ actions in countries where both programmes are active.
- UN-REDD Methodological Brief on Gender (2017): Outlines the approach of the UN-REDD Programme on promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, including guidance and entry points.
- Mainstreaming Gender into Forestry Interventions in Asia and the Pacific (RECOFTC; FAO, 2016): A Training Manual developed to enhance knowledge and skills in gender mainstreaming, including gender analysis to promote socially inclusive forest management.
- Draft Guideline on Public Participation in Myanmar's EIA Processes (2017) provides an indication of the type, level and approach to public participation expected to give effect to the requirements for meaningful public participation in the EIA Procedure.

Participatory approaches

- RECOFTC Community forestry participatory assessment: A guide for practitioners (2020): guide on conducting participatory assessment of community forestry with community forestry user groups
- RECOFTC Brief (2018) Community Forestry Enterprise development in Myanmar through socially responsible business approaches, which is based on findings from a series of sub-national and national multi-stakeholder workshops organized between July and November 2018, on the experiences of community forestry enterprise (CFE) development and private sector partnership in Myanmar
- FAO community-based forestry webpage
- IUCN (2013) Governance of Protected Areas: From understanding to action provides concepts, methods and tools to understand PA governance and promote improvements in it
- IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas Best Practice Guidelines for Protected Area Managers Series and capacity development webpage
- ICCA Consortium/IUCN (2012) Bio-cultural diversity conserved by indigenous peoples and local communities: examples and analysis offers advice about ICCAs, addressing governments, civil society organizations, indigenous Peoples and local communities engaged in collaboration, support and joint learning about ICCAs
- Territories and areas conserved by indigenous Peoples and local communities (ICCAs): ICCA Registry website and ICCA Consortium
- ICCA Consortium (2021) Strengthening your territory of life: guidance from communities for communities sets out 7 "self-strengthening elements" for communities, each with guiding questions, tools and examples.
- Myanmar Community Forestry implementation guideline (*no author/date*): https://www.burmalibrary.org/sites/burmalibrary.org/files/obl/Community_Forestry_Implementation_Guidel.pdf

REDD+ coordination & implementation arrangements

- UN-REDD Programme webpage on forest governance
- UN-REDD Programme REDD+ Academy Learning Journal for Module 6 on Good Governance
- RECOFTC (2018) Applying a Rights-based Approach in Forest Governance: this manual uses forestry as its context but the sessions lend themselves to any area of natural resource management.
- International Forestry Review (2021) Special Issue: Multi-stakeholder forums in forestry includes seven research papers on the operation and outcomes of multi-stakeholder forums in different countries.
- CIFOR Brief (2021) Tools to improve inclusion in multi-stakeholder forums provides a theory of change and two tools to help practitioners focus their inclusion efforts, providing step-by-step instructions on how to apply these tools in a Multi-stakeholder Forum setting.

REDD+ benefit sharing

- FCPF and BioCarbon Fund online platform on Designing benefit sharing arrangements - A resource for countries: a set of guidance, tools, resources and case studies for the design and implementation of benefit sharing arrangements for emission reductions programs, as well as other results-based land use initiatives.
- CIFOR Factsheet on REDD+ Benefit Sharing (2014)
- UN-REDD Programme REDD+ Academy Learning Journal for Module 4 on Allocation of Incentives
- The Forests Dialogue (2014) Country Options for REDD+ Benefit Sharing provides an overview of results from an initiative that examined how best to design and implement REDD+ incentive schemes to deliver tangible benefits to the poor and vulnerable
- WWF (2021) Comparative Analysis of Benefit Sharing Mechanisms in REDD+ Programs

Case Study for Chapter 3: Stakeholder participation and capacity building in the mangrove community

As part of the REDD+ planning process with **Village M**, the REDD+ working group conducts a **stakeholder mapping exercise and refers to the ESA** to identify the relevant stakeholders to involve in planning, but also potentially in the implementation of REDD+ actions in the future.

The stakeholder mapping as well as the initial consultation with the community on REDD+ highlights two important considerations:

- In the past, **women and ethnic groups** in the area have had fewer opportunities to participate not just in planning and decision-making but also in activities on the ground and livelihoods schemes.
- Local community members will play a vital role in the future implementation of REDD+ actions, such as community forestry, but have **not received much training in these fields in the past**.

The working group decides to develop **a brief stakeholder engagement plan** to help ensure that under-represented groups have sufficient opportunity to participate in REDD+ planning and in future REDD+ actions, including a communications plan to share information. They also decide to include a capacity building activity as **a core part of the proposed REDD+ action plan**, with an emphasis on building local capacity to manage the community forest, to develop forestry businesses, and advocate for community priorities.

A rapid **capacity needs assessment** is carried out to support planning, in order to identify gaps in knowledge related to REDD+ processes, including FPIC, as well as key technical topics related to forestry, land use and agriculture in and around the village. It finds that there are some gaps in knowledge that would **hinder effective participation in REDD+ even at the planning stages**. The team decide that a key starting point is to run some introductory discussions on key REDD+ concepts and themes, including concepts around gender equality, as part of the overall capacity development action plan. They focussed on including more women in the process by recommending at least 30% of participants be women.

Chapter 4: Transparency, Information Sharing and Communications

Key Concepts

- **Transparency:** referring to the conduct of activities in an open way, in which stakeholders or citizens have timely access to accurate information about laws, policies, procedures, decisions and activities that affect them.
- **Accountability:** a principle according to which a person or institution is responsible for a set of duties and can be required to give an account of if / how these duties have been carried out; it can also refer to the extent of clarity about the role of various institutions and actors in decision-making, and the responsiveness of institutions or people in authority to stakeholders and citizens.

Myanmar Safeguards Criteria Related to Transparency, Information Sharing and Communications

Criterion B1 Transparent planning and implementation with comprehensive information made available to stakeholders	**Criterion B2** Inclusion of actions where possible that strengthen transparency, accountability, and rule of law
Criterion C5 Fair and transparent benefit sharing mechanism	
Criterion D.1 Active participation of stakeholders in planning and implementation, and support for stakeholder groups with low capacity to participate through capacity-building and other appropriate arrangements	
Criterion E5 Capacity-building and transparency measures to ensure that environmental and social objectives are considered in land use- or management planning	

Five criteria in the Myanmar national safeguards clarification across Safeguards B, C, D and E aim to promote fully transparent planning and implementation of REDD+ actions. That includes sharing comprehensive information during planning and implementation, including benefit sharing (Criteria B1, C5), strengthening transparency in the forest sector (Criterion B2), ensuring active participation of stakeholders and building their capacity as needed (Criterion D1,) and applying transparency measures so that land-use or management planning is in aligned with environmental and social objectives (Criterion E5).

4.1 Background: Transparency, Information Sharing and Communications for REDD+ in the Myanmar Context

Transparency in planning and implementation, as well as appropriate information sharing and communications, form another vital component of legitimate and sustainable REDD+ actions and similar projects in the forest sector. As such, mechanisms to ensure transparency and accountability and information sharing with stakeholders must be put in place.

As noted by the EU FLEGT Facility, transparency is an important component of good forest governance for the following reasons:

- ''It underpins legality, accountability, legal clarity, and participation
- It reinforces credibility
- It limits opportunities for corruption
- It enables independent scrutiny of the sector
- Markets increasingly need to understand supply chains and their impacts
- It makes the rights and responsibilities of forest stakeholders clear''.[41]

REDD+ actions in Myanmar are to be planned and implemented in a transparent manner**.** This means that decision-making should be based on clear criteria and evidence, that financial transparency and accountability should be ensured, and that comprehensive information should be made available to stakeholders in an appropriate form. Planning and carrying out communications for REDD+ forms an important component of transparency and information sharing. Past REDD+ efforts in Myanmar have developed a number of guidelines and tools to promote transparent information sharing and communications, which include:

- **Guidelines for Stakeholder Engagement in Policies and Programmes for Sustainable Forest Management and REDD+:** Developed in 2016, this document provides practical guidance and tools to improve the quality and effectiveness of stakeholder engagement, including: identifying types of engagement, planning engagement processes, identifying stakeholders, managing events and communications.
- **The REDD+ Knowledge Management and Communications Strategy** was developed initially in 2015 by the Myanmar UN-REDD Programme, and a revised Strategy was developed in 2019. The Strategy supports the sharing of knowledge generated during REDD+ implementation among partners and key stakeholders, setting out communications objectives, key messages, target audiences and channels.
- **Communications materials for REDD+:** A range of materials in Myanmar language as well as English have been developed to support communications and information sharing on REDD+, including REDD+ FAQs, posters/fliers, information notes and others.

The following sections will provide more information on best practices for transparency, information sharing and communications.

[41] EU FLEGT Facility, VPA Unpacked: https://www.vpaunpacked.org/transparency

4.2 Best Practice Guidance on Transparency, Information Sharing and Communications

As noted above, transparency, information sharing and communications feature strongly in the criteria of Myanmar's national safeguards approach, and are considered essential to a transparent, effective and participatory REDD+ process. The main expectations related to transparency, information sharing and communications for REDD+ include:

- **REDD+ actions should be designed in a way that strengthens transparency, accountability, and rule of law in forest governance**. REDD+ actions should promote transparent forestry operations (e.g. through sustainable forest management, certification, sustainable harvesting, etc.), integrated and participatory land use planning; transparent awarding of concessions for forest and land use; and application of legal requirements such as EIA and SEA, that also contribute to transparent decision-making around forest and land use.
- Making information about REDD+ actions and REDD+ safeguards available to stakeholders during planning and implementation, including on:
  - Details of planned actions, including: their objectives, expected impacts and benefits, risk reduction measures, locations, expected changes in land use, and funding;
  - General information on REDD+ that stakeholders need to understand and participate, as well as information on REDD+ safeguards;
  - Information on available complaints and feedback mechanisms (e.g. on any GRM, see Chapter 2); and
  - Information from monitoring and evaluation, and reporting on REDD+ actions, such as financial information, and information on the results of REDD+ implementation (see Chapter 7 on M&E).

  It is the duty of the organization responsible for the REDD+ action to ensure that this information is made publicly available (as stated in Myanmar safeguards criterion B1).
- Ensuring that REDD+ planning is based on the best available information and evidence, as discussed in Chapter 1 of this guidance.
- **Should there be deficits in available information and stakeholder capacity for the planning and implementation of** REDD+, these gaps should be considered, and strategies to fill gaps and address such deficits should be applied (see also Chapter 3 on stakeholder participation).
- **Information sharing and communications should use appropriate communications formats and channels** for reaching stakeholders**,** considering language requirements, cultural norms and traditions, and capacities (including access to different communication channels).
- **Stakeholder representatives also play an import role in the flow of information;** they should be made aware of their roles and responsibilities, including to share information with their stakeholder group and get feedback from them.

A number of approaches and resources can help REDD+ planners and implementers to meet expectations for transparent and effective information sharing and communications, some of which are highlighted below

Communications plans

A communications plan can help to support the sharing of information and knowledge during REDD+ planning and implementation among partners and key stakeholders. A broader communications strategy has been developed at the national level for REDD+ in Myanmar (see above) which can provide guidance on the development of project-specific communications. A communications plan sets out the rationale for communications and information sharing for REDD+, as well as proposed approaches, timelines, activities, and budgets, and can cover both internal and external communications:

- Internal communications focus on improving communication and collaboration within the team and with key stakeholders;
- External communications focus on wider stakeholders and other audiences that may not yet be engaged in REDD+.

Developing a communications plan at the early stages of a REDD+ action helps to: ensure that requirements related to information sharing are understood by everyone on the team and are planned for; determine how to engage and communicate with target audiences; and mitigate communication risks (e.g. failing to engage a key stakeholder group or to secure the desired level of participation). A communications plan should also be regularly monitored and updated, so that it responds to each stage of the REDD+ process. Key sections of a communications plan are described below:

- **Introduction**: Contextualise the plan by describing the context and the overall impact it is working towards,
- **Outcomes**: Develop a vision statement or criteria for what successful communications look like.
- **Objectives:** Set objectives that the communications activities should achieve, contributing to the overall outcomes or vision statement.
- **Target audiences**: Identify the main audiences for the communications efforts (potentially linking to stakeholder mapping, see Chapter 3).
- **Key messages**: State the key messages that you wish to convey to your target audiences.
- **Channels**: Determine which communications and information sharing channels are appropriate to the identified key messages and target audiences
- **Activities and outputs**: Identify communications activities and products, as well as the timeline to deliver them
- **Monitoring and evaluating**: Define ways to track and evaluate your communications efforts, (e.g. stakeholder evaluation, social media analytics, etc.) and ensure this information is being compiled).

4.3 Tools to Support Transparency, Information Sharing and Communications

- **Checklist 4.1: Information, communications and transparency**. This checklist sets out the key criteria and steps for REDD+ planners and implementers to ensure appropriate and transparent information sharing and communications as part of their REDD+ actions.
- Tool: Simple guidance and template for a communications plan is provided in Annex 2.

4.4 Key Policies, Laws, and Regulations Relevant to Transparency, Information Sharing and Communications

Some of the key policies, laws and regulations (PLRs) in Myanmar relevant to transparency, information sharing and communications are outlined below. REDD+ planners and implementers should refer to these to guide the development of mechanisms to ensure transparent REDD+ actions, as well as information sharing with relevant stakeholders.

- The Forest Law (2018) makes provision for legal prosecution of any forestry staff members engaged in corruption or breaking the law. In relation to accountability, the Forest Law also sets out procedures for the granting of licences for the extraction of forest products by commercial enterprises. Community Forest User Groups can also have their use certificate revoked if they fail to comply with the Forest Law, with the rules and obligations set out in their management plan or with their duties on record-keeping and reporting.
- The Anti-Corruption Law (2013; amended 2018) aims to improve governance, promote government integrity and accountability, and carry out anti-corruption initiatives. The law establishes an anti-corruption commission (ACC), supported by working committees and working groups, which is tasked with investigating and preventing cases of bribery, and it sets out penalties for corruption offences.
- The National Land Use Policy (2016): states that all individuals, communities, and organizations should have equal rights to access accurate and complete information related to land. Land Use Committees[42] should base proposals for land use changes in appropriate areas on approved and updated information from the land use planning process, and stakeholders should be provided with precise and correct land information to use in deciding on land allocation for national development, environmental conservation, land use planning and investment.
- The EIA Procedure (2015) requires project proponents to arrange for appropriate public consultation throughout all phases of the EIA process (Guidelines for Public Participation in Myanmar's EIA Process were drafted in 2017).
- The Ethnic Rights Protection Law (2015) and its accompanying Rules (2019) include a provision that project developers, including investors, must share complete information on their project activities with communities.
- The Land and Revenue Act (1879) has provisions on information sharing and transparency on how land acquisition processes are managed, and on information in relation to land that is required for public purposes.
- The Forest Law (1992 amended 2018) covers the responsibilities of the Forest Department, including collection and dissemination of forest resources information, and inventory activities; and the State Forest Policy (1995) sets out that inventory data should be used to support forest management.

[42] E.g. Self-administered Division or Self-administered Zone, District, Township, Village-tract or Ward Land Use Committees, comprising members from government departments and organizations, farmers, local ethnic groups, experts, women and elders.

4.5 Additional Resources

Transparency and accountability

- VPA Unpacked: this is an online resource on FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreements, describing the concepts (such as transparency, accountability, legality, etc.) and different aspects of VPAs, and is available in Myanmar language.
- UN-REDD Participatory Governance Assessments for REDD+: Analysing and addressing governance challenges are key to addressing underlying causes of deforestation as well as to identify and mitigate shortcomings and risks in current governance systems and structures.
- The Myanmar Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (MEITI): established in 2015 within the Ministry of Planning and Finance (MOPF) to support the implementation of EITI in Myanmar, which includes timber.
- Governance of Forests Initiative Toolkit, which consists of a conceptual framework for defining forest governance and a comprehensive set of indicators for measuring and assessing forest governance.
- Tools for Civils Society Action to Reduce Forest Corruption (2005): examines the approach of Transparency International (TI) to fighting corruption and considers how it could be applied in the forest sector, providing a repository of possible tolls and approaches.

Information sharing and communications

- Communications materials for REDD+: A range of materials in Myanmar language as well as English have been developed and compiled by the Myanmar REDD+ Programme to support communications and information sharing on REDD+. In addition, civil society organisations in Myanmar have also developed resources, such as these communications materials from POINT (https://www.pointmyanmar.org/en/publication-category/poster?page=1).
- A number of communications and stakeholder engagement platforms related to REDD+ in Myanmar have already been established. In addition, REDD+ planners and implementers may make use of their own existing platforms and networks as ways to share information and reach out to stakeholders. Some notable platforms include:
- During the Readiness phase, several REDD+ specific coordination bodies were set up, such as the REDD+ Taskforce and Technical Working Groups (TWGs), which included members from different government departments and organizations in order to strengthen cross-sectoral coordination and sharing of information on REDD+. A REDD+ Stakeholder Network of more than 60 members was also established.
- The Myanmar REDD+ website (https://www.myanmar-redd.org/) and social media pages, including Facebook and Twitter.
- The Myanmar interim SIS webpage, which shares available information on safeguards (https://sis.myanmar-redd.org/)

Case study for Chapter 4: transparency and information sharing

The REDD+ planning group in Village M wanted to make sure that the planning and implementation of activities were as transparent as possible. This meant keeping community members and other stakeholders informed at every stage of the process.

During the planning stage, a **communication plan** was developed, identifying a number of different engagement strategies to involve different stakeholder groups, as well as target audiences for communication, based on the stakeholder mapping exercise (see Chapter 3).

Based on the communication plan, during the planning process, **general information on REDD+ and safeguards** was disseminated in various languages and using different communication channels and formats to ensure a basic understanding among stakeholders. **Stakeholder representatives** were also given an introduction to their role and the intended flow of information, and then helped to share key information on the planning process, including the dissemination of the ESA results, and information on the complaints and feedback mechanism.

During implementation, stakeholder representatives continued to play a key role in sharing information with stakeholders. In addition, other communication activities were carried out, based on the communication plan, to promote community engagement in REDD+ and to share information on the implementation of activities and their results. **Social media channels** proved to be an important way of communicating with people as well.

A periodic **survey** – set up as part of the monitoring plan – also asked questions about access to information, knowledge and participation opportunities. After the first year, this survey indicated that information and opportunities were **not reaching women** in the community as effectively as men. The team decided to adjust activities to make them more accessible for women, e.g. scheduling at appropriate times and locations for women to join.

As well as information sharing, transparency was a key concern for effective and sustainable community forestry in Village M. To promote transparency, community representatives helped to develop the **community forest management plan**. A Community Forest User Group (CFUG) with an agreed management committee was established, consisting of interested community members whose livelihoods depend on the mangrove forest.

The CF management plan **clearly set out the activities** for the next 5 years, including restoration, conservation and sustainable use of forest products, and zones where different activities are permitted. The plan also covered **how the benefits from the CF will be distributed**; it was decided that funds shall be allocated to members proportionally as income, with a percentage being reinvested into the CF.

An **auditing team** was set up, as required by the Community Forest Instructions, to monitor and evaluate the CF activities (including records of planting, tending, harvesting and benefit sharing) and its financial matters. A CFUG bank account was opened by the chairman, the secretary and the treasurer of the CFUG management committee, and at least 2 of them must be present to sign any bank transactions. The treasurer keeps a detailed account of CF incomes and expenditures, which are regularly reported to the management committee.

Chapter 5: Natural Forest, Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, and Conservation

Key Concepts

- **Natural** forest can be defined in different ways by countries; FAO defines it as a forest that is composed of indigenous trees and not classified as a forest plantation*.
- **Biodiversity** is the total diversity of all organisms and ecosystems at various spatial scales (from genes to entire biomes). Myanmar's Conservation of the Biodiversity and Protected Areas Law (2018) defines biodiversity as the "variability among living organisms from all sources including terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems, and the ecological complexes of which they are parted. This expression also includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems".
- **Ecosystem services** are "the benefits people obtain from the environment. Ecosystem services are the transformation of natural assets including soil, plants and animals, air and water, into things that we value. They can be viewed as provisioning such as food and water; regulating, for example, flood and disease control; cultural such as spiritual, recreational, and cultural benefits; or supporting, like nutrient cycling, that maintain the conditions for life on earth"**.

* https://www.fao.org/3/y4171e/y4171e10.htm
** A Glossary of Term Related to Forests and Climate Change (2017)

Myanmar Safeguards Criteria Related to Natural Forest, Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, and Conservation

Criterion E1 Reliable mapping of natural forests and no conversion of natural forests to other uses	**Criterion E2** REDD+ planning based on sound information on social and environmental impacts
Criterion E4 Environmental and social benefits supported through appropriate selection, design and implementation	**Criterion E3** Selection, design and implementation to avoid or minimize negative impacts and enhance positive ones

Four criteria in the Myanmar national safeguards clarification of Safeguard E are relevant to the conservation of natural forest, biodiversity and ecosystem services and the promotion of benefits related to biodiversity and ecosystem services. These criteria aim to ensure that no conversion of forests to other land uses takes place (Criterion E1), that negative impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem services and the environment more broadly are minimized (Criteria E2 and E3) while positive impacts are enhanced (Criterion E4).

5.1 Background: Conserving Natural Forests, Biodiversity, and Ecosystem Services

REDD+ actions are primarily aimed at tackling the ongoing climate crisis. However, well-planned and implemented actions represent good opportunities to also promote benefits for the environment and society. REDD+ actions can promote the conservation and protection of natural forests, enhance the local biodiversity, and ensure the long-term maintenance of ecosystem-services. In addition, REDD+ actions are also an opportunity to improve local livelihoods and promote an inclusive society.

Safeguard E mandates that REDD+ actions should avoid the conversion of natural forests to other uses and should instead incentivise protection of natural forests and their ecosystem services, whilst enhancing other environmental and social benefits. This should be considered in the selection and prioritisation of actions, with priority given to those that have positive impacts on forests and other ecosystems, as well as benefits for stakeholder well-being. This can be achieved through combining actions that complement each other in their expected risks and benefits, including the careful consideration of the location and design of actions.

A number of policies, laws and regulations in Myanmar have been developed to promote forest and wider environmental conservation, as well as protections and sustainable use of biodiversity. Myanmar's legal framework regulates the conversion of forests to other uses through various laws, including the Law Amending the Vacant, Fallow and Virgin (VFV) Lands Law (2018), the Forest Law (2018), the Investment Law (2016) and Investment Rules (2017), and the EIA Procedure (2015). Different rules may be applied in areas under the control of EAOs and mixed management areas. For example, the Karen National Union (KNU) has its own investment permitting/licensing systems as well as land use policy, and a KNU forestry policy is in draft form (as of early 2022). There are also a range of instruments that promote conservation of natural forests, and their biodiversity and ecosystem services, including the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP, 2015-2020)[43], the Biodiversity Conservation and Protected Areas Law (2018) and National Forest Policy (1995). More information on relevant policies, laws and regulations is provided in section 5.3 below.

5.2 Guidance on Protecting Natural Forests, Biodiversity, and Ecosystem Services

REDD+ is often understood to be primarily beneficial to forests. However, inappropriate selection and design of REDD+ actions can also lead to negative impacts. Therefore, care must be taken in REDD+ planning and implementation to ensure that actions do not harm natural forests, as well as the biodiversity and ecosystem services of forests, but rather promote their conservation and sustainable use, as well as environmental benefits (as required by Safeguard E).

Myanmar does not currently have a formal definition for ''natural forests'', although the term is used in various laws and regulations, and the 2015 Myanmar Forest Resources Assessment Report does include FAO definitions relevant to natural forests. In addition, the National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS), which is under development, is designed to map and measure forests and relevant forest related attributes, including natural forests, and will be the primary

[43] Available at: https://www.cbd.int/doc/world/mm/mm-nbsap-v2-en.pdf

information source to produce data for relevant UNFCCC reporting. For the purposes of this guidance, natural forest is understood to be a forest composed of indigenous trees and that is not classified as a forest plantation.[44] In addition, REDD+ planners and implementers may refer to best practice guidelines and standards for managing natural forests and plantations, such as the FAO Planted Forests Voluntary Guidelines.

Within Myanmar's national safeguards approach, as noted above, there are criteria related to the conservation of natural forest, and promotion of benefits for biodiversity and ecosystem services, which REDD+ actions are expected to support, as listed above. Key considerations for REDD+ planners and implementers include the following:

- As noted in Chapter 1 of this guidance on REDD+ planning and assessment of impacts, before REDD+ actions are implemented, it is important to understand the status and trends in relevant forest areas. The **distribution of natural forests in the area covered by the action should be mapped reliably** (e.g. using national data, recent satellite data or another method). Particular attention should be paid to forests outside of the ''permanent forest estate'', i.e. which may not have a clear, existing management category or protection.
- The potential impacts of the REDD+ action on natural forests, biodiversity, and ecosystem services in the area, whether they are positive or negative, are an important topic for the environmental **and social assessment** carried out during the planning stage. It is essential that data is collected about these potential impacts and that they are discussed with relevant stakeholders. The assessment, **together with an environmental and social screening** (Checklist 1.2), should capture these potential impacts as well as the proposed measures to reduce risks and promote benefits.
- In some cases, REDD+ actions may require **additional assessment and approvals related to environmental impacts** (e.g. EIA and associated requirements for Environmental Management Plans (EMPs). (See Chapter 1 of this guidance, and Checklist 1.2, for more information).
- Myanmar's national safeguards approach states that no conversion of natural forests to other land uses (including into plantations) should be allowed as part of a REDD+ action. This includes measures directly resulting in conversion of natural forest (e.g. converting degraded natural forest to a plantation) or measures indirectly contributing to conversion (e.g. through displacement of land use change, such as support for sustainable agriculture leading to an expansion of agriculture into natural forest areas). Risks related to the conversion of natural forests should be identified during the planning process and the environmental and social assessment, and measures developed to avoid or minimise these risks as far as possible (see Chapter 1 on planning and impact assessment).
- In addition to risks related to conversion or damage to natural forests, the REDD+ planning stage should also consider any risks to **other natural ecosystems, and opportunities to contribute to their conservation**, which may be important for conservation as well as local livelihoods and preferences (e.g. peatlands, natural grasslands, wetlands, etc.). This is also relevant to addressing and respecting Safeguard A, which aims to align REDD+ in Myanmar with other policies and conventions, such as conservation of wetlands.
- As noted in Chapter 1's discussion on multiple benefits, REDD+ actions should be selected, designed and implemented in ways that **avoid or minimize negative impacts but also enhance positive ones**. The priority multiple benefits identified for REDD+ in Myanmar (see Chapter 1) include a number of benefits specifically related to **biodiversity and ecosystem services**, such as: protecting areas of high value for biodiversity or ecosystem services (in particular conservation of soil and water resources); increasing habitat connectivity (e.g. for threatened or priority species);

[44] https://www.fao.org/3/y4171e/y4171e10.htm

reducing or reversing land degradation; and reducing pollution (e.g. air and water pollution). The identification of benefits and risks related to biodiversity and ecosystem services, as well as measures to enhance these benefits and reduce risks, needs to occur during the planning stage for REDD+, e.g. via the environmental and social assessment. At the planning stage, for instance, conservation actions can be designed and located in areas of higher conservation value, or measures proposed to ensure that restoration actions also contribute to the enhancement of biodiversity and ecosystem services.

- **Approaches and methods** to support efforts to identify potential benefits and risks to biodiversity and ecosystem services, and to develop measures to enhance these benefits and reduce risks, may include:
  - Working with a specialist organisation (e.g. in conservation) or experts during the REDD+ planning stage, to inform the environmental and social assessment and ensure that biodiversity and ecosystem services are appropriately considered;
  - Seeking inputs and feedback from agencies responsible for environmental protection and biodiversity conservation in Myanmar, as well as reviewing key policies and reports in this area;
  - In addition to mapping natural forests, also mapping and/or quantifying key biodiversity and ecosystem service factors in the REDD+ area, such as: areas important for biodiversity conservation, including protected areas, Key Biodiversity Areas[45], high conservation value forests, etc.; mangrove forests; other important ecosystems, such as wetlands, grasslands and peatland sites; water provisioning areas, such as water sources, rivers, etc.; habitat for key wildlife species; areas providing important non-timber forest products; and forests playing a role in protection from coastal erosion, landslides, etc. (section 5.4 below on additional resources also includes some global platforms for mapping/data).
  - Working with indigenous peoples and local communities to identify, map and prioritise areas they consider important for biodiversity and ecosystem services, including cultural and spiritual ecosystem services/sites.
  - Designing REDD+ actions, as well as accompanying measures to reduce risks and enhance benefits, may also look for opportunities to incentivise conservation and to link with other conservation programs and projects. For instance, these may include options like payments for ecosystem services , biodiversity surveying and monitoring, and sustainable livelihoods activities with wider benefits for the environment.

In addition to identifying the possible impacts on natural forests, biodiversity, and ecosystem services, and designing REDD+ actions and measures to promote benefits and reduce risks, it is also essential to ensure that these aspects are integrated into the monitoring and evaluation framework (see also Chapter 7 on M&E).

[45] For more information on KBAs: https://www.birdlife.org.au/projects/KBA

5.3 Key Policies, Laws, and Regulations Relevant for Conservation of Natural Forests, Biodiversity, and Ecosystem Services

This section outlines some of the key policies, laws, and regulations in Myanmar relevant for avoiding negative impacts and enhancing positive ones of REDD+ actions related to the conservation of natural forests, biodiversity, and ecosystem services, as well as promoting multiple benefits. REDD+ planners and implementers should be especially aware of relevant forest sector regulations for forest planning, management, and conversion.

- There are no Myanmar PLRs that explicitly ban the conversion of natural forests to another use (such as plantations)[46], though some measures such as the Bago-Yoma logging moratorium may be relevant. Hence it is essential that REDD+ planners and implementers take steps to avoid natural forest conversion, in line with safeguard E. Forest conversion is regulated through a number of different related laws and regulations, including the Law Amending the Vacant, Fallow and Virgin (VFV) Lands Law (2018) and the Forest Law (2018), which requires Ministerial approval for any development activities proposed in reserved forest areas or forest areas outside of reserved forest.
- Although not common for REDD+ actions, if the land in question is to be used for investment purposes, investors must also obtain the endorsement of the relevant Investment Committee, and a change in land use may also require an investment permit under the Investment Law (2016) and Investment Rules (2017).
- Under the EIA Procedure (2015), a planned change in land use may meet the criteria for requiring an EIA (see Chapter 1 on impact assessment, as well as the background information on criteria provided in Checklist 1.2).
- Different rules may be applied in areas under the control of EAOs and mixed management areas, such as the Karen National Union's (KNU) investment permitting/licensing systems and land use policy, and draft KNU forestry policy.
- National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) (2015-2020) sets out 20 targets that collectively aim (among other things) to raise public awareness of the values of biodiversity, reduce the direct pressures on biodiversity and promote its sustainable use, and improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species, and genetic diversity.
- Biodiversity Conservation and Protected Area Law (2018) regulates the protection, conservation and trade of wild fauna, wild flora, and the protection of "geo-physically unique areas, endangered wild fauna and wild flora and their natural habitats".
- Forest Law (1992 amended 2018) defines ''forest land'' as lands constituted as reserved forests or declared as protected public forests under this law. It also highlights the importance of conserving and protecting forests and aims at preventing the dangers of destruction of forests and biodiversity, including by controlling timber extraction.
- National Land Use Policy (2016): calls for integrated land use plan and further states that in the development of land use plans, "agricultural and ecological conservation zones" should be established to encourage protection of land resources and the environment.

[46] Myanmar UN-REDD Programme (2019) Policies, Laws and Regulations (PLRs) that can help to address the Cancun Safeguards for REDD+ in Myanmar: Summary by safeguard

5.4 Tools to Support Conservation of Natural Forests, Biodiversity, and Ecosystem Services

- **Checklist 5.1: Natural forests, biodiversity, and ecosystem services, and conservation.** This checklist sets out the key criteria and steps related to conservation of natural forests, biodiversity, and ecosystem services during the implementation of REDD+ actions.
- See also Checklist 1.2 on environmental and social screening and impact assessment.

5.5 Additional Resources

- UN-REDD Programme Brief: Planning for REDD+ Benefits Beyond Carbon
- Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) webpage on REDD+ and biodiversity benefits
- UN-REDD Programme webpage on multiple benefits, including:
  - Mapping tutorials and toolbox: Geographic Information Systems training materials and tools to support the planning of REDD+ activities that deliver multiple benefits.
  - Multiple Benefits Country Resources Hub
- TESSA: Toolkit for Ecosystem Service Site-Based Assessment gives guidance on low-cost methods to evaluate the benefits people receive from nature at particular sites, in order to generate information that can be used to influence decision making
- ValuES is an online platform that analyses existing approaches to ecosystem service assessment and valuation and identifies best practice case studies and lessons learned
- There are a range of repositories of global/regional datasets and platforms to assist in mapping or analysing forests, biodiversity and ecosystem services, including but not limited to:
  - Global Forest Watch
  - Compendium of guidance on key global databases related to biodiversity-related conventions
  - UN Biodiversity Lab
  - Servir Mekong
  - UN repository of resources for understanding social and environmental trends in the forest sector.

Chapter 6: Reversals and Displacement

Key Concepts

- **Reversals** refers to a situation where initial successes of a REDD+ action are reversed at a later date, and the trajectory of emissions returns to business-as-usual.
- **Displacement** of emissions occurs when a REDD+ action successfully reduces emissions from one source or in one area, but at the same time causes increased emissions from another source or area.

Myanmar Safeguards Criteria Related to Reversals and Displacement

Criterion F1 Analysis of risks of non-permanence included in feasibility/impact assessment	**Criterion F2** Identified risks of non-permanence addressed in selection, design and implementation	**Criterion F3** National Forest Monitoring System allows detection and management of reversals	**Criterion F4** Design of future REDD+ actions reflect lessons learned on reversals
Criterion G1 Analysis of risks of displacement included in feasibility/impact assessment	**Criterion G2** Identified risks of displacement addressed in selection, design and implementation	**Criterion G3** National Forest Monitoring System allows detection and management of emissions displacement	**Criterion G4** Design of future REDD+ actions reflect lessons learned on displacement

Several criteria in the Myanmar national safeguards clarification across Safeguards F and G aim to avoid reversals (or non-permanence) of the achievements of REDD+ and the displacement or leakage of emissions. These criteria set out requirements including thorough analysis of potential risks of reversals and displacements (Criteria F1 and G1), the integration of measures to avoid/reduce these risks in the design and implementation of REDD+ actions (F2 and F3), the ability to detect and manage reversals and displacements in the NFMS (F3 and G3), and the inclusion of lessons learnt in the design/revision of REDD+ actions (Criteria F4 and G4).

6.1 Managing Risks of Reversals and Displacement

The Cancun Safeguards F and G deal with two concepts specific to climate change mitigation and REDD+. These are reversals and displacement of GHG emissions. These two concepts have been defined in Myanmar's national safeguards clarification[47] as follows:

- Principle F: REDD+ actions in Myanmar should be designed and implemented to avoid or minimize risks of **reversals.** The term 'reversal' describes a situation where initial

[47] National clarification of the UNFCCC REDD+ safeguards (Cancun Safeguards) for Myanmar, 2019: English; Myanmar

successes of a REDD+ action are reversed later, and the trajectory of emissions returns to business-as-usual. This can happen for example when the forest that has been conserved or restored through REDD+ is subsequently destroyed. Reversals of the success of REDD+ actions can occur due to external factors (such as fluctuations in international markets or climate change), or due to flaws in the design of the actions (e.g. when an intervention is not financially sustainable in the long term).

- Principle G: REDD+ actions in Myanmar should be designed and implemented to avoid or minimize **displacement of emissions**. Displacement of emissions occurs when REDD+ successfully reduces emissions from one source or in one area, but at the same time causes increased emissions from another source or area.

Risks of reversals and displacement were assessed on a general level during the national-level benefits and risks assessment[48] carried out during the development of Myanmar's National REDD+ Strategy (NRS). Some of the key risks identified during this assessment are as follows, though other risks may exist for REDD+ actions in particular areas and contexts:

Risks of reversals

- Improved efficiency, productivity or profitability of non-forest land uses (e.g. agriculture or plantations) or commercial activities (e.g. charcoal production) could result in an unintended incentive for expansion of cultivated land or overexploitation of forest resources, thus potentially reversing the success of actions, as well as any positive impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem services.
- Private smallholder plantations may not be maintained over the long term, as political will and support may change, and a lack of continued awareness raising programmes for small holders may mean that practices are not sustained.
- Unsuccessful investments in alternative livelihoods, improved agricultural practices or alternative sources of energy may force farmers to expand cultivated areas or resort to unsustainable practices to make up for losses (especially if their investment was based on credit).
- If advanced/efficient technology is promoted for energy, cooking or agriculture/plantations, initial successes may be reversed if equipment fails, and users lack knowledge, funds, or access to parts to repair or replace it. Frequent shortages of electricity or difficulties in accessing fuel may also lead to users abandoning the new technologies.

Risks of displacement

- If actions do not consider demand for agricultural products, crop cultivation and livestock grazing could just be displaced to other areas, leading to conversion or degradation of forest or non-forest ecosystems, and negating the success of actions, as well as any associated benefits for biodiversity and ecosystem services; for example, establishment of plantations on arable land could lead to displacement of crop cultivation into forest areas.
- Alternative fuels may themselves have a high carbon footprint, cancelling out some or all of the emission savings from reduced use of fuelwood and charcoal; for example, increased land demand for the production of biofuels or alternative feedstocks for charcoal production could lead to forest conversion; improved access to LPG or electricity could encourage increased consumption of fossil fuels with associated emissions.
- Measures to reduce demand for timber may lead to overall increased emissions and other environmental impacts such as pollution, e.g. if timber is replaced with concrete or steel as a building material.
- Strengthened law enforcement in some areas may lead to increased demand for illegally or unsustainably sourced forest products/ commodities from other places (either within Myanmar or abroad).

[48] Summary of Myanmar REDD+ benefits and risks by safeguard, 2019, http://www.myanmar-redd.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Myanmar-benefits-and-risks-summary-by-safeguards-July-2019.pdf

6.2 Best Practice Guidance on Managing Risks of Reversals and Displacement

Myanmar's national safeguards approach includes criteria related to reducing and managing the risks of reversals and displacement. For a specific REDD+ action, the **risks identified during the planning phase should be adequately considered** in the implementation phase. During implementation, the measures to reduce the identified risks should be put into place, i.e. as with measures to promote multiple benefits above, **measures that have been developed to reduce risks of reversals and displacement should be integrated into implementation plans**, including the budget and monitoring framework.

A **range of strategies and measures can be used to reduce risks of reversals and displacement**, depending on the REDD+ action in question and the context. These can include, but are not limited to:

- Designing REDD+ actions in ways that reduce these risks, e.g. embedding the action in formal land use planning and other legal instruments, which may make unplanned land use change more unlikely or difficult in the future; developing alternative sources of income for stakeholders affected by land use restrictions; ensuring adequate training, equipment and enabling conditions to maintain the action; and considering impact of the REDD+ action on supply and demand of goods, e.g. if the action is likely to reduce supply of certain resources such as fuelwood or animal fodder, identify ways to reduce demand or transition to more sustainable alternatives.
- Ensuring robust consultation and participation of local communities and other stakeholders, so that they are fully informed about the action, have contributed to its design, and are supportive of it, e.g. through an FPIC process, establishment of coordination mechanisms, etc.
- Promoting equitable and inclusive implementation of the action, so as not to alienate or exclude particular stakeholder groups, e.g. by providing opportunities for disadvantaged groups to participate and ensuring even and fair law enforcement.
- Developing and deploying a transparent and equitable benefit sharing mechanism, to ensure that rights holders and stakeholders are appropriately rewarded and/or incentivised throughout the lifetime of the REDD+ action.

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) (as described in Chapter 7) also plays an important role in reducing the risks of reversals and displacement during the implementation phase of REDD+ actions, by providing a way to detect incidents and respond to them. Myanmar's future National Forest Monitoring System will aim to detect and report on any occurrence of reversals and displacement, supporting an identification of the causes and appropriate response measures to any such occurrences. The lessons learned from such analyses would also be incorporated into the regular review of the NRS. In addition to monitoring at the national level, **REDD+ implementers should ensure that their own monitoring frameworks for REDD+ actions are considering risks of reversals and displacement, and monitoring results are used to inform adjustment of actions if needed** (see Chapter 7).

6.3 Key Policies, Laws, and Regulations Relevant to Addressing Risks of Reversals and Displacement

The following section outlines some of the key PLRs in Myanmar that are relevant for addressing the risks of emissions reversals or displacement.

- PLRs related to land use planning and establishment of protected areas, such as the National Land Use Policy (2016), the Forest Law (2018), the Agriculture Development Strategy and Investment Plan (2018-19 – 2022-23), and the Biodiversity and Protected Areas Law (2018), can help to secure forest areas, including newly established forests, against future deforestation or indirect land use change, and are thus relevant for efforts to reduce displacement or reversal risks.
- The 10-year logging ban imposed for the Bago-Yoma region is an interim measure that could also play a role in preventing reversals, though may contribute to displacement of pressures leading to logging to other forest areas.
- The EIA Procedure (2015) also covers the identification of possible impacts of projects on livelihoods, as well as environmental impacts. This information can provide a good basis for identifying risks of displacement or reversals, as well as measures to reduce such risks, for REDD+ actions that require an EIA.
- Initiatives to combat illegal logging, such as the development of a FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreement (FLEGT-VPA) or efforts to enhance cross-border cooperation on timber legality with China, can also help to reduce the risk of emissions displacement.

6.4 Tools to Support Managing Risks of Reversals and Displacement

- **Checklist 6.1: Reversals & displacement**. This checklist sets out the key criteria and steps for REDD+ implementers to manage risks of reversals and displacement.

6.5 Additional Resources

- UN-REDD Programme (2017) Framework for Clarifying the Cancun Safeguards presents an indicative list of key issues that countries may wish to consider when clarifying the Cancun safeguards, including issues pertinent to Safeguards F and G.
- FAO Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) Toolbox has modules including links to tools, case studies and further reading related to SFM
- UN-REDD Programme webpage on National Forest Monitoring Systems and Forest Reference Levels
- Myanmar Forest Reference Emissions Level, submitted to the UNFCCC and revised in 2018
- Forest Carbon Partnership facility (FCPF) support tools for REDD+ ''measurement, reporting and verification'' (MRV)

Chapter 7: Monitoring and Evaluation

Key Concepts

- **Monitoring** is the process of systematically collecting and analysing data and information in order to detect signs of change in relation to a baseline.
- **Evaluation** is the process of examining the monitoring data collected in order to understand what difference an intervention has made and what lessons can be learned.
- **Reporting** in the context of this guidance refers to the compilation of information, e.g. based on M&E of REDD+ actions and the safeguards, to report to the government and other national level audiences, donors and/or the international community.
- **Participatory M&E** refers to the active involvement and engagement of communities, stakeholders and other actors at different levels within M&E processes

Myanmar Safeguards Criteria Related to Monitoring and Evaluation

Criterion D3 Stakeholders provided opportunities to participate in implementation and monitoring of REDD+
Criterion E6 Monitoring includes tracking of social and environmental impacts, risks and benefits

Two criteria in the Myanmar national safeguards clarification across Safeguards D and E are relevant to the monitoring of REDD+ actions. These aim to promote an inclusive monitoring process (Criterion D3) and to ensure the appropriate monitoring of potential social and environmental impacts (Criterion E6). Although not explicitly on monitoring, Safeguard B's emphasis on transparency and information sharing is also relevant here.

7.1 The Importance of Monitoring, Evaluating, and Reporting for REDD+

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is essential to the success of any intervention, including REDD+ actions. Myanmar's national safeguards approach has several requirements related to M&E (see below) and monitoring the process and outcomes of applying safeguards should be considered an integral part of overall M&E of REDD+ implementation. Information from the monitoring of REDD+ actions is critical for the effective and sustainable implementation of REDD+ in Myanmar. Monitoring and evaluating the implementation of REDD+ actions and the benefits and risks associated with them can indicate whether the desired impacts and benefits are being achieved, the potential risks are being avoided or managed, and whether any adaptation in the action's design or implementation is needed.

At the national scale, Myanmar has planned to develop **a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework for the country's implementation of REDD+**. In the future, such a framework could compile information on the progress and results of implementation of REDD+ actions and generate lessons learned for future adjustments of the REDD+ programme. This M&E framework could also be used to provide some information to Myanmar's future **Safeguards**

Information System (SIS) (see below) and would interact with the **National Forest Monitoring System** (also under development).

The **National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS)** plays an important role in monitoring the results of REDD+. While the main role of the NFMS in REDD+ monitoring is to provide information on achieved results in terms of GHG emission reductions and removals, it will also track changes in forest distribution and condition, drivers of forest change, and other aspects. Reporting of REDD+ results to the UNFCCC is the responsibility of MONREC (e.g. in a REDD+ Technical Annex to a Biennial Update Report for submission to the UNFCCC).

Myanmar's **Safeguards Information System (SIS)** is envisaged as the primary vehicle for compiling, analysing, and sharing national level information on how the safeguards are being addressed and respected during the implementation of REDD+. As described in Part 1 of this guidance, Myanmar has been developing a fully operational SIS – an interim webpage is already available in Myanmar language and English (https://sis.myanmar-redd.org/), presenting initially available information on the safeguards, as well as the SIS design and proposed indicators. In the future, a full SIS database may be developed. **Monitoring information from REDD+ actions would provide a vital contribution to the SIS**, particularly on how safeguards are being respected, or implemented on the ground at the subnational level.

Another key element in terms of reporting on the safeguards at the international level is the **Safeguards Summary of Information**. As described in Part 1 of this guidance, countries participating in REDD+ under the UNFCCC are required to regularly submit Summaries of Information – usually in the form of a report – on how the safeguards have been addressed and respected, in order to be eligible for results-based payments.[49] Myanmar submitted its first Summary of Information[50] to the UNFCCC in early 2020, which was focused on the country's national safeguards approach, how safeguards are addressed in the legal and institutional framework, and initial information on how they are respected. In the future, Myanmar's summaries may focus more on how safeguards are being respected during REDD+ implementation.

7.2 Best Practice Guidance on Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting

As noted above, robust M&E is essential for the success of REDD+ actions and for contributing to the understanding and reporting on REDD+ impacts and the safeguards. REDD+ implementers in Myanmar need to ensure that they conduct M&E of their actions, as well as safeguards elements, and they need to consider the criteria related to M&E in the Myanmar safeguards approach. The following steps should be considered in developing M&E:

1. Developing a robust M&E framework for REDD+ actions

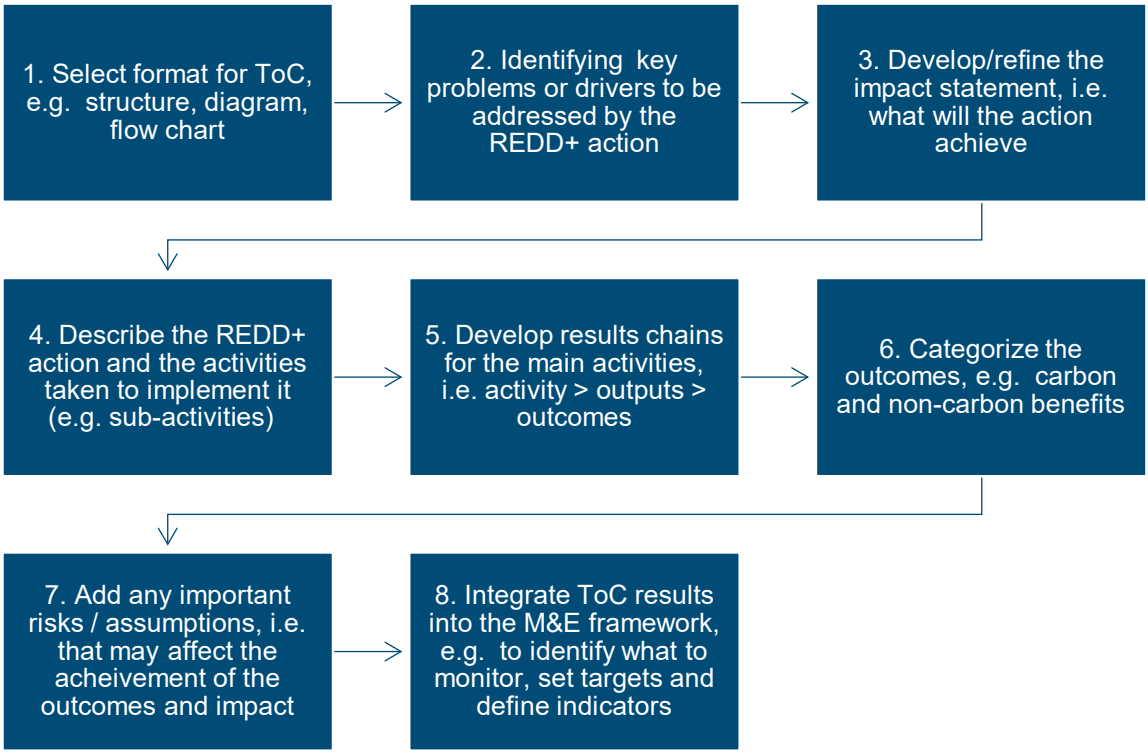
At the planning stage, REDD+ implementers should develop an M&E framework for their REDD+ actions (see Chapter 1 of this guidance), which should be included in any REDD+ plan; where possible, this may draw on the **''theory of change''** developed for the REDD+ action. A ''theory of change'' (ToC) is a tool that is often used to help design projects and activities, i.e. it supports the development of activities that are supposed to deliver a particular impact, and it can also inform the development of M&E frameworks.

[49] The information on how the safeguards are being addressed and respected should be provided in a way that ensures transparency, consistency, comprehensiveness and effectiveness. Developing countries are encouraged by the UNFCCC to incorporate the following elements: information on national circumstances relevant to addressing and respecting the safeguards; description of each safeguard in accordance with national circumstances; description of existing systems and processes relevant to addressing and respecting safeguards, including SIS, in accordance with national circumstances; and information on how each of the safeguards has been addressed and respected, in accordance with national circumstances. See UN-REDD Programme brief on summaries for more information: https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/34007/InfoSG.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

[50] Myanmar First Summary of Information on the safeguards (2020): available in English and Myanmar

A ToC is a description or illustration of why an activity or measure will be effective, showing how change happens in the short, medium, and long term to achieve an intended impact. It can be shown in a visual diagram, as a narrative, or both. Typically, to develop a ToC, a back-casting approach is used, i.e. starting with the desired impact and working backwards to define outcomes, outputs, activities. A ToC approach is especially helpful in clarifying the pathways from the measures (e.g. the REDD+ action, community forestry, etc.) to the expected impacts (e.g. carbon and non-carbon benefits). Making these pathways clear will also help to refine and prioritise a set of indicators that are most appropriate to measuring the expected impacts. Figure 7 below shows the basic steps to developing a ToC, while Annex 3 provides more detailed guidance.

Figure 7: Steps in developing a Theory of Change



The next step is the development of **proposed indicators for the M&E framework**, and the identification of data sources and methods to track those indicators (also known as ‘’means of verification’’). Indicators offer several advantages as a tool for M&E:

- Indicators can provide a clear and straightforward way of identifying key aspects to monitor and to structure an M&E framework;
- Indicators make it possible to determine whether an action is achieving its objectives;
- Using standard indicators across multiple sites or activities can support comparison between actions, sites, states/regions and countries on REDD+ achievements.

There are three main types of indicators, and ideally a M&E framework will use a mix of these different types:

- **Process indicators**, which monitor whether particular sub-activities, processes, or procedures have been carried out, and in what way, *e.g. training events held, number of people trained.*
- **Output indicators**, which monitor particular products or outputs, e.g. reports produced, FPIC processes implemented, seedlings planted.
- **Impact/Outcome indicators**, which monitor the overall impact of actions on greenhouse gas emissions, the environment, local communities, and governance structures, *e.g. whether there has been an increase or decrease in forest cover; whether land and forest governance has improved.*

Indicators should be clear, and measurable at different spatial and temporal scales. **Features of a good indicator** include:

- Specific and well defined: everybody has the same understanding of what should be measured.
- Valid: there is a proven link between the indicator and the topic to be assessed.
- Measurable and realistic: there is a method for collecting the information, and it is feasible/affordable to do it.
- Easy to interpret and explain: for example, it should be clear whether an increase or decrease in the indicator value is good or bad.

There is a range of resources available to guide the development of robust indicators, some of which are listed in section 7.5 below. Indicator development is often initiated by preparing a long list (e.g. starting from topics identified through the ToC and consultation). This list is then refined and shortened by prioritizing the most useful indicators, e.g. based on feasibility, information availability, relevance to key issues for adaptive management, and feedback from further consultation. A simple table format like the one shown below is often helpful for developing and refining indicators.

Table 2: Example indicator table

Indicator	Indicator type	Indicator category	Data source	Method
Number of participants in community forestry enterprise (CFE) training	Process	Capacity building	Training records	Total number of participants; and number by: CFUG gender
Number of CFEs established through project support	Output	Socio-economic	Registered CFEs; and reports by CFUGs	Total number of CFEs established in State/Region; and Number of CFEs established by CFUGs who participated in training
Proportion of community forestry benefits distributed to disadvantaged groups among CFUG members	Outcome	Benefit sharing	Reporting by CFUGs	Total amount of revenues of CFUGs per year; Proportion distributed to members per year; Proportion distributed to a) female headed households, and b) ethnic group households

When developing the monitoring framework, it is also important to consider feasibility and the resources available for M&E. Sufficient resources should be allocated to ensure that regular M&E can be carried out, including monitoring of safeguards. Options such as utilising existing sources of data, as well as participatory M&E (i.e. involving stakeholders in monitoring and evaluation processes, see Box 9 below), should be included where possible.

Finally, once the M&E framework has been developed and before REDD+ implementation begins, REDD+ implementers should record the pre-implementation baseline, i.e. the starting point for each indicator, for a baseline year. For instance, the baseline for the number of people trained in REDD+ may be 0 in some communities. However, there is likely to already be a baseline for hectares of forest under protection status. Filling in the baseline is an important step, and it can also help to ''pilot'' or test the feasibility of the indicators.

2. Including indicators for safeguards monitoring

The M&E framework developed for REDD+ actions also needs to include environmental and social aspects, to ensure that the potential risks and benefits of the actions will be tracked as well as any risk mitigation measures, and that information is collected for reporting on safeguards. Safeguards indicators should therefore be included in the overall M&E framework.

For this purpose, the indicators for safeguards monitoring should ideally be linked to the indicators already proposed for Myanmar's national safeguards approach, i.e. as part of the country's SIS. To support this, **a set of generic safeguards indicators drawing on the proposed SIS indicators** has been developed for use by REDD+ implementers (see table in Annex 4). These safeguards indicators cover the key safeguards processes and procedures to be followed (e.g. information sharing, FPIC, benefit sharing) as well as the expected outcomes in terms of social and environmental benefits. The indicators should be used in the following way:

- Refine and add to the indicators. Start by reviewing the safeguards indicators in the context of the REDD+ action/plan, the environmental, social, and socio-economic situation of the areas selected for implementation, and the identified benefits and risks. Do the indicators need to be adjusted at all, e.g. to make them clearer? And do new indicators need to be added, to fully capture important social and environmental issues in the REDD+ context? For example, you may wish to add detail to some of the indicators to make them more specific to the social groups in your area, such as specifying which ethnic groups will be involved, or in which languages materials should be produced. It is important that REDD+ implementers follow the generic indicator set as much as possible, to promote a standard approach to monitoring the safeguards across the country and that comparable information is being collected.
- Identify information sources and methods. As with the more general M&E framework for the REDD+ action, you will need to identify the sources of information for each indicator, as well as the methods for collecting and processing this information. Some of this information may be available from external sources (e.g. baseline income in the local area), via implementation of REDD+ actions (e.g. amount of benefits generated), while others rely on primary data collection by the REDD+ implementer (e.g. outcome of FPIC process, or number of training provided). The checklists developed for this guidance have been designed to align with the safeguards indicators and help to record the information that will be needed for the indicators. The table describing the generic safeguards indicator set also includes likely or suggested sources and methods, but these may differ from action to action, or site to site. For example, some townships may already be collecting data on CFUGs, while for others this may be a gap. A pre-implementation baseline should a be identified for the safeguards indicators in the same way as for the wider M&E framework.
- Plan and provide training. As mentioned above, M&E should be properly budgeted for, with the necessary human and other resources included in the budget for the REDD+ action. This includes safeguards monitoring. Monitoring should be conducted on a

regular basis (e.g. a minimum of once per year), and planned ahead, for example to align with community calendars, and to ensure the necessary resources are available. Capacity building on the safeguards requirements for the REDD+ action as well as the monitoring approach should also be provided to the staff/team involved.

3. Planning for monitoring

Once a final M&E framework has been developed, and the safeguards indicators integrated, a clear plan for how monitoring shall take place needs to be agreed. Factors to consider when planning how to implement M&E include:

- Frequency: The frequency of collection of data (e.g. biannually, annually, monthly, daily) will depend on the indicator being monitored, data availability and expected reporting on the REDD+ action and safeguards. Generally, impacts are often monitored less frequently than outputs or processes, which may need to be tracked more closely.
- Arrangements for data collection: It is important to specify who will collect the data and ensure that any necessary training or equipment is provided.
- Consider participatory M&E: How you implement M&E may depend on the type of indicators you have, as well as the methods identified. Myanmar's safeguards approach calls for stakeholder participation in the monitoring of REDD+, i.e. not just in REDD+ planning and implementation. Box 9 below outlines some basic features and options for participatory M&E.
- Data processing and interpretation: Some indicators may require processing of primary data, e.g. compiling figures from different sites, or overlaying maps/spatial data. Some may also require interpretation or review to understand whether progress has been made towards a particular target or outcome. For example, it may be necessary to review trends in external factors to assess whether a change in the state of biodiversity is likely to be attributable to the REDD+ action.

4. Evaluation processes

In addition to monitoring, evaluation is critical to the ongoing adaptive management and success of REDD+ actions. At the national level, regular review and evaluation was planned for the National REDD+ Strategy (NRS). At subnational level, REDD+ implementers also need to **ensure that they have planned for, carry out, and transparently shared results of the evaluation of their plans/actions**. The timing and approach used for evaluation may be defined by donor/funding agreements, which may specify details such as mid-term reviews, the involvement of external evaluators, and evaluation workshops. In addition, Myanmar's national safeguards approach also indicates that evaluation processes should consider the following:

- Participation: evaluation processes should include participatory elements. Key stakeholders, especially communities affected by REDD+ actions, indigenous peoples and ethnic groups, and vulnerable stakeholders, should be provided with the opportunity to contribute to the evaluation of REDD+. This can be achieved through a number of methods, such as interviews, field visits, online and face-to face surveys and workshops. Additional efforts may be needed to ensure that remote communities or vulnerable groups receive the same opportunity to contribute as other stakeholders.

Box 9: Participatory M&E in REDD+

Participatory monitoring and evaluation (M&E) refer to the active involvement and engagement of communities, and wider stakeholders and actors in M&E processes at different stages. It is a subset of a broader category of participatory approaches which aim to enable and empower people to share and enhance their knowledge through their involvement in different processes[1].

This approach marks **a shift from more traditional top-down forms of management,** where processes such as monitoring are handled by external experts, and stakeholders are less involved. A participatory approach to M&E can allow stakeholders to contribute to the design of methods, collection and analysis of data, and evaluation (e.g. by helping to define success criteria).

Participatory M&E has **benefits compared to conventional M&E**: 1) It can yield better data and information by incorporating local knowledge and increasing spatial-temporal coverage; 2) It increases fairness by involving stakeholders in decisions that affect them; and 3) It can encourage ownership and long-term sustainability of actions, by raising awareness of impacts and benefits and increasing the likelihood of continuation into the future[2].

However, these benefits are not guaranteed, and participation in M&E needs to be carefully considered to ensure it is **meaningful and feasible**. For example, participatory M&E often tries to integrate many different types and sources of data and information, which can present challenges[3]. It also often requires more time and resources to set up, especially in terms of capacity-building and ensuring uptake of good practices. However, once in place, participatory M&E processes can have lower resource needs as less involvement of external experts is required.

There are **different levels of participation in M&E**, which range from more passive (providing stakeholders with information) to active (collaboration and active participation of communities in identification of methodologies, data collection and analysis)[4]. All levels and types of participation in M&E are valid and the preferred option will depend on the activities involved, the context and stakeholder groups. A key element in any context is to be clear of the purpose of the participation in M&E - what you are aiming to achieve.

There are many different approaches and methods for participatory M&E, and the **following factors must be considered in deciding the most suitable**: 1) the project area and logistics (e.g. number of languages, number of stakeholders etc.); 2) the purpose of the participation; 3) expectations of stakeholders, project managers and other key actors; and 4) the available time and resources[2].

In order to be successful, participatory M&E should: 1) involve all stakeholders in M&E; 2) provide capacity development to support effective participation; 3) be based on agreed priorities and important factors to monitor; 4) use appropriate and feasible methods; and 5) allow collective evaluation of the findings and whether or not the objectives are being met[3].

[1]Chambers, R. (2010). A Revolution Whose Time Has Come? The Win-Win of Quantitative Participatory Approaches and Methods. *IDS Bulletin*, 41(6), 45–55.
[2]CARE (2014) Participatory monitoring, evaluation, reflection and learning for community-based adaptation: PMERL. A revised manual for local practitioners. London: CARE International. Available at: https://careclimatechange.org/pmerl/
[3]Guijt, I. (2014). Participatory Approaches, Methodological Briefs: Impact Evaluation 5, UNICEF Office of Research, Florence.
[4]Napier, N., Simister, N.,Jain, N. (2020). Participatory M & E. *INTTRAC*. https://embed.kumu.io/bf45fc206df2845fba5b86009dce0b7f#me-universe/the-me-universe

- Inclusion of social and environmental issues: evaluation processes should examine whether the anticipated social and environmental benefits have been achieved, as well as whether any negative impacts have occurred. Any incidences of reversals and displacement, and the lessons learned from these, should also be assessed.
- Providing lessons learned for adaptive management: evaluation processes should generate useful lessons on what has gone well, and where actions have underperformed. Recommendations and concrete measures to improve the design and implementation of REDD+ actions, to remedy negative impacts, and to further enhance benefits, should be an output.

Reporting and Communications

Reporting requirements for REDD+ actions in Myanmar will vary according to the programs, projects and funders involved, and national level reporting requirements (e.g. feeding into M&E of the NRS) have yet to be fully defined.

In the future, there may also be expectations for REDD+ implementers at subnational level to **provide information feeding into the national level SIS,** especially related to how safeguards are being applied on the ground. This reporting will be structured around the SIS indicators (as reflected in the minimum safeguards indicators, Annex 4).

Safeguards information collected by REDD+ implementers can also make a **valuable contribution to the communication of outcomes from REDD+**, e.g. to key stakeholders and target audiences (see also Chapter 4 on information sharing and communications). The results of safeguards M&E should be transparently shared with stakeholders, including indigenous peoples and local communities.

7.3 Key Policies, Laws, and Regulations Relevant to M&E

The following section outlines some of the key policies, laws, and regulations in Myanmar that are relevant for monitoring and evaluating REDD+ actions.

- For REDD+ actions that require an EIA, the project proponent must also carry out regular monitoring of social and environmental impacts following instructions from the EIA Procedure (2015). The project proponent shall submit monitoring reports to MONREC, in line with a schedule in the Environmental Management Plan or periodically as prescribed. MONREC, relevant departments and organizations have the right to conduct monitoring of project activities to check compliance.
- The Community Forestry Instructions (2019), which requires that the CFUG must monitor and report on CF activities, including planting, tending, harvesting and benefit sharing, as well as a detailed account on income and expenditures.
- The Forest Law (1992 amended 2018) also has some relevance for monitoring, as it covers the responsibilities of the Forest Department, including collection and dissemination of forest resources information, and inventory activities; and the State Forest Policy (1995) sets out that inventory data should be used to support forest management.

7.4 Tools to Support Monitoring & Evaluation

- **Checklist 7.1: Monitoring and evaluation.** This checklist sets out the key criteria and steps for REDD+ implementers to develop and apply a robust M&E framework for their REDD+ actions.
- **A generic safeguards** M&E indicators table is provided at Annex 4 and should be used in conjunction with Checklist 7.1.

7.5 Additional Resources

Monitoring & evaluation

- The ICIMOD (2017) manual Developing Sub-National REDD+ Action Plans includes information and guidance on the 'Theory of Change' approach and developing monitoring plans.
- United Nations Development Group (2011) Results-based management handbook: Harmonizing RBM concepts and approaches for improved development results at country level is targeted at UN staff at country level but provides an overview of key concepts and approaches for results-based management and monitoring.
- UK Environmental Observation Framework (2012). Understanding citizen science and environmental monitoring provides a synthesis of citizen science projects to better understand citizen science and environmental monitoring.
- CIFOR (2008) Participatory Monitoring in Tropical Forest Management reviews experiences in participatory monitoring, summarizes concepts, challenges and lessons learned, and presents a matrix of case studies, methods, and tools as a quick reference guide.
- RECOFTC Citizens' Monitoring in Forestry Toolbox was designed to enable citizen-based monitoring of community forestry, with information categorized according to five livelihood capitals: natural, financial, physical, human, and social.
- CIFOR (2019) Participatory Monitoring in Forest Communities to Improve Governance, Accountability and Women's Participation explores how participatory monitoring can help communities and partners to identify governance issues and problems and improve women's participation, based on action research from 2011 to 2015 in Nicaragua.
- International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) (2017) Brief on Knowledge-based Participatory Action Research is part of the 'Better Evidence in Action' toolkit
- UN-REDD Programme (2013) Participatory Biodiversity Monitoring for REDD+: Considerations for national REDD+ programmes, including a case study in Viet Nam.
- The REDD+ Knowledge Management and Communications Strategy supports the sharing of knowledge generated during REDD+ implementation among partners and key stakeholders, setting out communications objectives, key messages, target audiences and channels.

Case study for Chapters 6 & 7 – Participatory M&E for community forestry

During the creation of the management plan for Village M's Community Forest, it is decided that it would be beneficial to invite participation from the community in the design and implementation of the **Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) framework**. This will help to gain knowledge and local insights on the best sites to monitor, allow more comprehensive data collection and inform the evaluation of impacts.

Soon after registration of the CF, **an M&E plan** is developed by the working group and the CF User Group (CFUG) to decide the most appropriate level of participation at different stages, the exact activities, and who will be involved. It is decided that all relevant stakeholders should be informed about the M&E activities and results to raise awareness on the importance of tracking progress. Some representatives would be selected for active participation in monitoring, including gathering information on NTFPs distribution, encroachment, forest quality and participation in CFUG activities, among other topics. It is also decided that the wider community should have the opportunity to participate in the evaluation process, through consultation.

During the following months a **training session for CFUG and other local community members** are held, covering topics related to monitoring forest extent and condition, forest resources such as NTFPs, livelihoods, and the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation identified in the first consultation workshop. During the training, participants also discuss how the M&E framework would incorporate records of illegal activity identified and decide on steps to pursue legal action (if needed) against this.

The list of the participants in M&E is organised by gender, age, ethnic group, and tenure status and is used to check for **inclusive participation**. A low participation of young villagers is noted, which prompts the working group to talk to the local school about involving local **school students** to share knowledge about the social, biological, and climatic importance of forests and involve them in monitoring the quality and biodiversity of the CF and surrounding forest areas.

After the first year, a workshop is held in Village M to **evaluate the activities** that have taken place in the CF. The monitoring results show that the CF has been successful compared to other similar initiatives, with improvements recorded in reduced encroachment. However, there are some gaps, such as in the capacity of the CFUG and community members to sustainably harvest and market forest products; unsustainable harvesting could lead to degradation of the forest in the future, which would represent **a reversal of their achievements so far**. And there is still a need for more people to get involved in the CF. Therefore, it is decided to promote the CF activities within the community through a short video, sharing the positive results, in the hope of inspiring more community members to participate. Discussions also start with the local NGO about increasing the support to CFEs.

The M&E framework also covers the **CFI requirements on M&E**, providing the secretary of the Management Committee (MC) and the MC the information needed to fulfil their reporting obligations, such as keeping records of **planting, tending and harvesting and benefit sharing activities** (to be checked by authorities once every three months), and submitting the CF's **annual progress report** within two months after completion of the fiscal year. The framework also sets up **periodic CFUG meetings** to go over the **financial accounts** and review **fund allocation** (e.g. what proportion of funds is distributed to members, spent for community development, or used as a revolving-fund and reinvested in the establishment of forest plantations).

The working group in collaboration with the MC **integrates the information** collected on CF **into the overall M&E for the REDD+ plan**, including the safeguards indicators. They also produce a briefing note in Myanmar and Mon languages to **share their results and the lessons learned** throughout the process.

Annexes

Annex 1. Capacity Building Plan Template

Building institutional strength and capacity a core part of many REDD+ actions.

The most widely recognized definition of capacity development or strengthening was published by the United Nations Development Programme in 1997: “the process by which individuals, organizations, institutions and societies develop abilities (individually and collectively) to perform functions, solve problems and set and achieve objectives.” Where capacity is defined as: “Capacity: The overall ability of the individual or group to perform their responsibilities. It depends not only on the capabilities of the people, but also on the overall size of the task, the resources which are needed to perform them, and the framework within which they are discharged.”

Once the REDD+ planning process has identified REDD+ actions, and how they will be implemented, and once the capacity building or training needs of key stakeholders have been identified, a capacity building plan can help to prioritise activities to develop the necessary skills and knowledge, and help to schedule these activities and allocate resources.

Capacity building plans should be developed with attention to feasibly, considering costs, target audiences, and the responsibility of stakeholders and individuals identified. Any constraints to the plan should be recognized and acknowledged.

Below is a **basic template** for a capacity building plan:

Template Legend

Capacity Building Outcome: *The desired results related to capacity development.*

Capacity Building Objective: *Specific steps to reach the desired capacity-related outcomes*

Activities*: Specific actions to reach each capacity-building objective*

Deliverable: *Specific products/outputs or capacity development assets that will be a result of the activity (i.e. workshop, training, guidance doc., assessment report, participant feedback, etc.)*

Budget*: Financial resources allocated to each activity*

Responsible Party*: Individuals / organisations responsible for delivering / implementing / overseeing each activity*

Partners*: Partner individuals/organisations who will support the delivery of activities*

Indicators*: Evidence to show/prove you have achieved this activity*

A hypothetical example has been added to the template below as a guide only.

CAPACITY BUILDING PLAN TEMPLATE									
Capacity Building Outcome(s)					**TIMELINES**				
Capacity Building Objective #1 *E.g. local communities have skills and knowledge to support long-term restoration of mangroves*	**Deliverables**	**Budget**	**Responsible Party**	**Partners**	**Q1**	**Q2**	**Q3**	**Q4**	**INDICATORS**
Activity 1.1 *Community-led research/inventory of local restoration techniques and training course*	Corresponding deliverable 1.1 *Training course on prioritised local techniques*	*USD 10,000*	*NGO XY*	*Village M CFUG; UNESCO*		x	x		*XX male/XX female community members trained; xx local techniques integrated into restoration action plan….*
Activity 1.2	Corresponding deliverable 1.2								
Activity 1.3	Corresponding deliverable 1.3								
Capacity Building Objective #2									**INDICATORS**
Activity 2.1	Corresponding deliverable 2.1								
Activity 2.2	Corresponding deliverable 2.2								
Activity 2.3	Corresponding deliverable 2.3								
Capacity Building Objective #3									**INDICATORS**
Activity 3.1	Corresponding deliverable 3.1								
Activity 3.2	Corresponding deliverable 3.2								
Activity 3.3	Corresponding deliverable 3.3								

The evolution of a capacity building plan into a **broader capacity building strategy** is also important to consider if appropriate to your REDD+ actions. For example, if there are significant, long-term capacity needs to address in order to promote the sustainability of REDD+. A strategy further identifies long-term and underlying capacity needs or gaps, and can delineate the methods and means necessary to achieve the objectives in more detail. It can also build on the overall Theory of Change for the REDD+ action/s, e.g. focus on addressing underlying barriers to the success of REDD+ (see Annex 3 on ToC).

Capacity building strategy components include:

- Capacity-strengthening needs/gaps
- Objectives and description of the strategy
- Tools and techniques used in capacity building interventions
- Action plan and feasibility analysis
- Monitoring and evaluation plan
- Challenges and constraints identified

Annex 2: Basic Guidance on Communications Planning

Sourced from Myanmar REDD+ Guidelines for Stakeholder Engagement[51]

A typical communications strategy contains the following elements:

- Introduction/background

  What is the context and purpose for your communications strategy?

- Audiences

  Who are the key or target audiences you want to reach? Be specific, e.g. rather than general public, you may wish to target rural residents, urban residents or students.

- Key Messages

  What are the most important pieces of information/ messages you want to convey?

- Key focus areas/objectives

  What do you want to achieve though the communications strategy? Which areas are most important to focus on given your objective?

- Communications delivery mechanisms

  What are the most effective modes of communication given your target audience? Which methods of communication are most prolifically used in the locality?

- Communication roles

  Who is responsible for development, design, and delivery of key materials and messages?

- Action Plan

  What materials will be developed, in what format and when will they be delivered to key audiences?

A basic table template for a communications action plan can look like this:

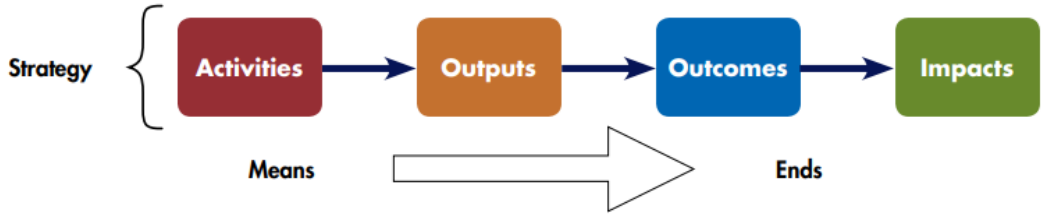
Intended Communications Result: e.g. Increased stakeholder confidence in REDD+ processes					
Action	**Audience**	**Lead**	**Deliverable**	**Timeline**	**Key performance metrics**
E.g. produce and distribute newsletter, posters, and brochures, participate in local radio interviews	E.g. women, forest-user groups, NGOs		E.g. 4 posters, 20 interviews		Number of persons reached

[51] Myanmar REDD+ Programme (2016). *Guidelines for Stakeholder Engagement in Policies and Programmes for Sustainable forest management and REDD+.* Available: http://www.myanmar-redd.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Guidelines-of-Stakeholder-Engagement-.pdf

Annex 3. Basic Guidance on Theory of Change

A **Theory of Change (ToC)** is a widely used approach in project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. It helps to establish causal linkages, to build a hypothesis for how an intervention, like a REDD+ action, will achieve its desired goal. A ToC is a description or illustration of why an activity or measure will be effective, showing how change happens in the short, medium and long term to achieve an intended impact. This is usually presented in the form of a flow diagram (see Fig. 1) or solution tree, but can also take other forms, such as a narrative. Typically, to develop a ToC, a back-casting approach is used, i.e. starting with the desired impact and working backwards to define outcomes, outputs, activities.

Figure 1: Basic illustration of Theory of Change diagram



In the context of REDD+, a TOC analysis can be a useful tool in multiple ways:

- Initially, it can help to ***identify the most strategic actions*** for reducing deforestation and degradation (and associated emissions) and determining barriers to scaling up enhancement, conservation and sustainable management activities.
- It can be a useful for ***ensuring transparency*** in REDD+ processes as it provides a clear illustration and pathway of intended activities, outputs, outcomes, and impact.
- Since it is relatively straight forward and intuitive to interpret, developing the ToC can be useful to ***enable stakeholder participation.***
- Making these pathways clear will also ***help to refine and prioritise a set of indicators*** that are most appropriate to measuring the expected impacts - including which indicators looking at nearer-term outcomes can be used as proxies for understanding longer-term impact. These indicators form the basis of adaptive management, through monitoring if the REDD+ action is having the desired impact and adapting as needed.
- As part of the TOC, ***risks and assumptions are identified.*** These can be monitored to determine if assumptions hold true and whether any risk mitigation measures are needed.

Steps for developing the ToC (see also Fig. 2 below)

1. Prepare a **format** for the ToC diagram / flowchart. For example, you may wish to prepare the diagram in PowerPoint or another application to make it easy to edit and share. Most ToC diagrams are flow charts, and move from left to right, i.e. starting with measure and corresponding activities on left and working towards impact on right. An example of a ToC related to REDD+ is provided in the ICIMOD/UN-REDD subnational REDD+ manual.
2. Begin by identifying the key deforestation and degradation drivers and barriers to enhancement/conservation/management activities and context for the site/s, considering also the findings of the ESA. For example:
   - What key deforestation and degradation drivers is the action supposed to address? E.g. direct drivers like specific land use that replaces or degrades forest; and in-direct drivers such as insecure land tenure.
   - What are the deforestation and degradation status and trends? Is deforestation projected to increase or decrease or other important changes in the future?

- What are the key barriers to improved forest management? E.g. economic, social, institutional, and technological barriers to improved forest management that may be contributing to higher or lower levels of deforestation and degradation.

~~3.~~ **Develop/refine the impact statement**. Ensure that the **impact/overall goal** of the REDD+ action under consideration is clearly described, and that it refers to the relevant deforestation drivers identified in the previous step.

4. Describe the **REDD+ action and the key sub-activities** undertaken to implement it. I.e. what activities would communities / other actors undertake to put the measure in place? These activities may include a range of activities directly related to the measure, or more indirectly implemented to support it, for example: planting; formation of community group; fisheries enhancement; training; fundraising, etc.
5. Once you have identified the main/key activities, develop a **results chain** for each of these - noting that it is best to prioritise/select activities that are directly associated with the action.

   The result chain should include:

   - short description of the activity (e.g. capacity building on mangrove rehabilitation for local community);
   - the major outputs of the activity (e.g. manual developed; training course provided; 30 people trained; CF management plan produced; planting initiated);
   - the expected immediate outcomes of the activity (e.g. improved capacity of community; x ha mangroves planted, etc.); and
   - the expected intermediate outcomes, i.e. those that will ultimately lead to the overall impact of the measure (e.g. degraded mangroves restored, reducing soil erosion, and contributing to carbon sequestration/increasing carbon stock, whilst also providing increasing support to fisheries and supporting community livelihoods).
6. **Categorize these outcomes** according to the key areas of interest for this REDD+ action. These should be the same categories that you will use to develop or categorize indicators for monitoring, such as:
   - Climate change mitigation (i.e. reduced emissions/enhanced removals)
   - Forest outcomes (i.e. changes in forest covet/quality)
   - Risk/Co-benefit (biodiversity/ecosystem health)
   - Risk/Co-benefit (economic)
   - Risk/Co-benefit (health)
   - Risk/co-benefit (governance)
   - Risk/Co-benefit (other)
   - Contextual (e.g. conditions in the area/site)

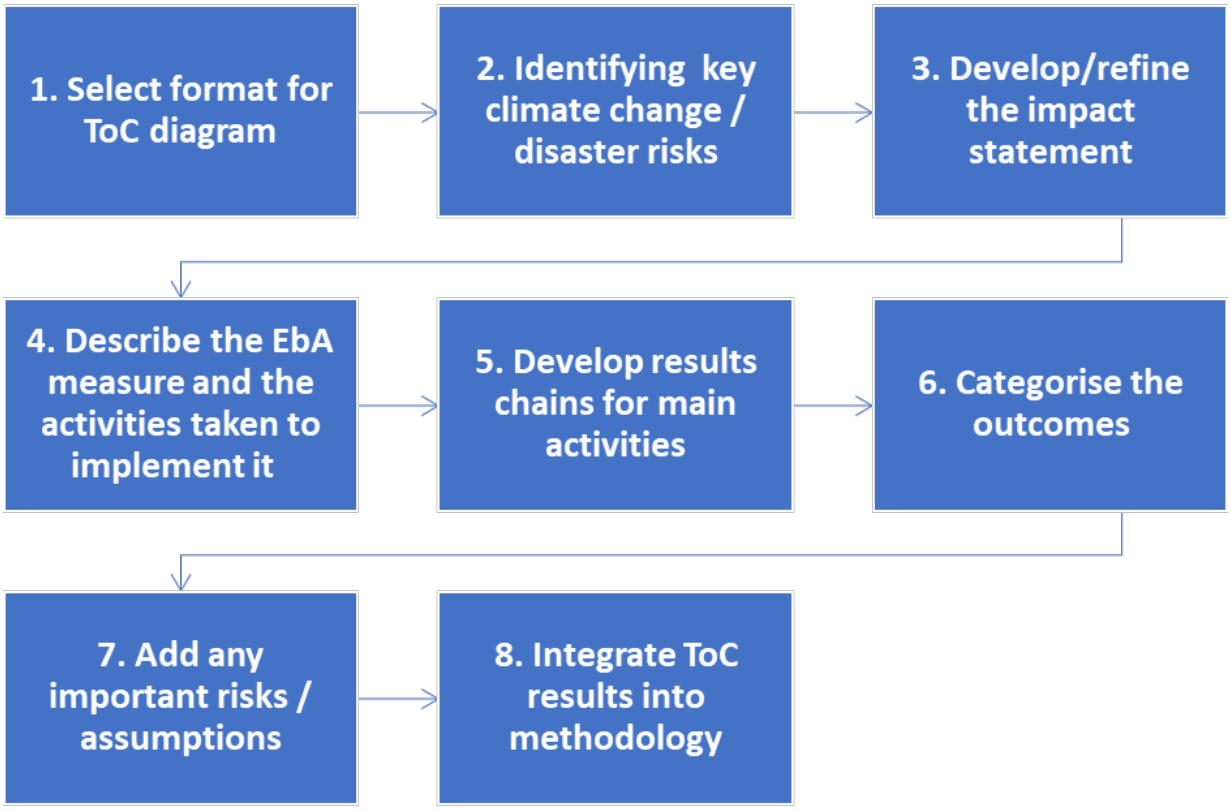
   Some examples:

Example outcome	Example category
Reduced deforestation rate	Forest outcome (improved cover/quality) Climate change mitigation (reduced GHG emissions) Co-benefit (ecosystem health)
Reduced soil erosion due to mangrove rehabilitation	Forest outcome (improved cover/quality) Co-benefit (climate change/disaster risk reduction) Climate change mitigation (increased removals)
Improved fish catch	Co-benefit (income/job security)
Improved habitat for fish & other aquatic species	Co-benefit (biodiversity/ecosystem health)
Loss of income from mangrove timber and NTFPs	Risk (income/livelihoods)
Income levels for households	Contextual

7. Next, add any **important risks / assumptions** that may influence the expected impacts of the actions to the diagram. For example:
   - Assumption: Without the REDD+ actions, deforestation/degradation would increase at the site.
   - Assumption: Communities will be willing to be involved in training and implementation.
   - Risk: Traditional shrimp cultivation will continue to be adversely affected by infrastructure development from elsewhere and therefore economic incentives for CF provided by shrimp farming are reduced.
   - Risk: Mangrove seedling survival rate is low.

Finally, make sure that the results of the ToC are **reflected in M&E**. One of the main ways to do this is through the indicator table; use the same categories above to categorise your indicators. Ideally, your indicators will be linked to the outcomes you have identified in your results chains.

Figure 2: Step-by-step refinement of the Theory of Change



Annex 4: Generic set of Safeguards Indicators for REDD+ Actions in Myanmar

This table has been developed based on the proposed indicators for Myanmar's safeguards information system. It provides a generic set of safeguards indicators to be used by REDD+ implementers to monitor and track progress against the safeguards; these indicators should be adapted as needed, and additional indicators should be added as per the needs/context of the REDD+ action/s in question (e.g. to reflect agreed measures to reduce risks / enhance benefits). Some indicators may be marked ''not applicable'', if not relevant to the REDD+ action/s (e.g. indicators on specific activities such as restoration, law enforcement, etc.). Monitoring of the safeguards should be carried out together with the full M&E for the REDD+ action/s, e.g. on an annual basis.

Myanmar safeguards criteria	Proposed indicators	Indicator Type	Possible Means of Verification	Baseline	Reporting period 1	*Comments/ notes*
Principle A. REDD+ Policies and Measures in Myanmar should complement or be consistent with the objectives of national forest programmes and relevant international conventions and agreements						
A1. REDD+ Policies and Measures (PaMs) in Myanmar should be designed and implemented so that they are consistent with the objectives of relevant national policies and programmes, including those related to forestry, climate change, environmental management, land use, biodiversity conservation, disaster risk reduction, sustainable development, human rights, workers'	A1.1. Objectives of REDD+ action/s are aligned with the objectives of relevant national policies and programs	Process	Objectives of REDD+ action/s compared with objectives of key policies & programs (available here: http://sis.myanmar-redd.org/safeguard-information/safeguard-a/)			*Yes/no statement, with list of relevant policy objectives*
	A1.2. Contribution to conservation by the REDD+ action/s: - Area (in ha) of protected areas (including community conserved areas) established - Area (in ha) of priority sites for conservation supported (e.g. improved management)	Result				

Myanmar safeguards criteria	Proposed indicators	Indicator Type	Possible Means of Verification	Baseline	Reporting period 1	*Comments/ notes*
rights, transparency and gender equality. Potential conflicts between the objectives of national policies and programmes and REDD+ should be identified and resolved.	A1.3. Contribution to sustainable agriculture and livelihoods by the REDD+ action/s: - Number of farmers receiving support - Number of beneficiaries of sustainable/alternative livelihoods support - Number of companies/households with access to microfinance/credit	Result				
	A1.4. Contribution to poverty alleviation by REDD+ action/s: - Proportion of poor households in the REDD+ implementation areas (change on annual basis) - Number of poor households receiving incentives / support / benefits linked to REDD+	Context Result				
	A1.5. Contribution to improved governance by REDD+ action/s: - Number of integrated planning instruments (and area covered by such instruments), supported through the REDD+ action - Support to impact assessment and associated capacity building (e.g. for EIA/SEA) (e.g. funding allocated)	Result				

Myanmar safeguards criteria	Proposed indicators	Indicator Type	Possible Means of Verification	Baseline	Reporting period 1	*Comments/ notes*
	A1.6. Contribution to clarified tenure / rights by REDD+ actions: - Area declared as community conservation area, community forest, and/or for which land use certificates have been issued through REDD+ action/s	Result				
A.2: REDD+ Policies and Measures in Myanmar should be designed and implemented so that they are consistent with the objectives of relevant international conventions and agreements, such as the CBD, UNCCD, UNFCCC, CITES, the Ramsar Convention, CEDAW, UNDRIP, UN Convention against Corruption, international policies and initiatives, such as the SDGs and FLEGT, as well as national strategies and plans for the implementation of these commitments.	A2.1. List of SDG goals and targets supported by the REDD+ action	Process	List nominated by REDD+ implementer, based on target level of SDGs, with reference to: https://sdgs.un.org/goals			*Yes/no statement, with list of relevant SDGs*
	A2.2. Contribution to UNFCCC / Nationally Determined Contribution by REDD+ action/s: - TCO2E reduced / removed - Proportion of national GHG emission reduction target	Result	MRV of REDD+			
	A2.3. Contribution to wetlands/Ramsar by REDD+ action/s: - Area of Ramsar sites and or ASEAN/nationally recognized wetlands sites which receive added protection / improved management / restoration	Result				
	A2.4. Contribution to restoration by REDD+ action/s: - Area of mangroves restored/reforested - Area of forest land restored/reforested	Result				

Myanmar safeguards criteria	Proposed indicators	Indicator Type	Possible Means of Verification	Baseline	Reporting period 1	*Comments/ notes*
	A2.5. Contribution to ''Forest law Enforcement, Governance & Trade'' (FLEGT) from REDD+ action/s (if applicable/relevant): - Number of border control operations/activities among local authorities, communities and/or with neighbouring countries supported - Number of trade agreements (e.g. with companies, other countries) developed for legally/sustainably produced timber and/or other forest products	Process				
	A2.8. Contribution to gender equality from the REDD+ action/s: - Number of gender-responsive extension services and/or capacity development programs supported - Number of women / female headed households receiving incentives / support / benefits linked to REDD	Result				
Principle B. REDD+ Policies and Measures in Myanmar should support transparent and effective national forest governance structures, taking into account national legislation and sovereignty						
B1. REDD+ Policies and Measures in Myanmar	B1.1 Communications plan for the REDD+ action/s has been prepared	Process	Link/document for plan			*Yes/no statement*

Myanmar safeguards criteria	Proposed indicators	Indicator Type	Possible Means of Verification	Baseline	Reporting period 1	*Comments/ notes*
should be implemented in a transparent manner; this means that decisions relating to the selection and location of activities, the involvement of stakeholders and the distribution of benefits and burdens should be based on clear criteria and well documented, financial accountability should be ensured, and comprehensive information should be made available to stakeholders in an appropriate form during planning and implementation. The types of information that should be shared include information on: the planned measures (objective, expected impact, benefits, funds, activities, risk reduction measures, etc.); existing land use and expected change; relevant PLRs; general information on the REDD+ concept; and information on complaints and feedback mechanisms. It is the duty of the organization responsible for the REDD+ Policy or Measure to ensure that the	B1.2 Information channels for sharing information with stakeholders during planning & implementation of REDD+: - List/description of information channels (or methods/approaches) identified/used to share information - Number of languages information is provided in	Process				*List/ description of information channels; list of languages used*
	B1.3 Information on the REDD+ action has been made publicly available, e.g. online (provide link), on display in communities: - Environmental & social assessment and/or EIA/IEE - REDD+ action plan - FPIC documents	Process	Links to relevant documents; evidence of community noticeboards, etc.			*Yes/no statement*
	B1.4. Information on REDD+ funding and expenditure has been transparently shared with stakeholders	Process	Financial information available online (link); evidence of financial information shared via other channels (e.g. reports)			*Ideally publicly available*
	B1.5. Number of received and number of resolved grievances relating to transparency/information sharing in the implementation of REDD+ action/s	Result	GRM			

Myanmar safeguards criteria	Proposed indicators	Indicator Type	Possible Means of Verification	Baseline	Reporting period 1	*Comments/ notes*
information is made publicly available.						
B2. Where applicable, REDD+ Policies and Measures should include actions that strengthen transparency, accountability and rule of law in forest governance, including in relation to forestry operations, land use planning and management planning, awarding of concessions, and application of legal requirements such as EIA and SEA.	B2.1. Resources allocated by the REDD+ action/s to activities supporting transparency, accountability and/or rule of law in the forest sector: a) sustainable/transparent forestry operations (e.g. certification, SFM, harvesting) b) land use planning (e.g. integrated land use planning, DFMPs) c) land use management (including VFV lands, regulation of concessions) d) capacity building for EIA & SEA	Process	Budget/plan for REDD+ action/s			
	B2.2. Trends in appropriate legal actions and penalties against legal infractions in the forest sector through the REDD+ action/s (if applicable/relevant)	Result				
B3. REDD+ Policies and Measures should strengthen coordination on policies and plans related to land use across sectors, between	B3.1 Multi-sector coordination bodies established/adapted for the REDD+ action/s	Process				*Description of any multi-sector coordination body established or used*

Myanmar safeguards criteria	Proposed indicators	Indicator Type	Possible Means of Verification	Baseline	Reporting period 1	*Comments/ notes*
different levels of government and across borders / with EAOs, including by fully operationalizing existing coordination bodies, making sure that social and environmental objectives are given adequate weight in the process.	B3.2 Proportion of key stakeholder groups represented in the coordination body or bodies: - Government - Non-government/CSO - Women - Local communities - Indigenous peoples and/or ethnic groups - Youth - Other relevant groups (please specify)	Result				
	B3.3 Number and coverage (in hectares) of any land use plans or planning instruments developed or supported through the REDD+ action/s	Result				
	B3.4 Number and coverage of land use plans and land use planning instruments developed through the REDD+ action/s that demonstrably (with documentary evidence) took into account social and environmental objectives	Result				
	B3.5 Number of action plans and/or cooperative activities related to land use developed with EAOs and/or ethnic groups	Result				
B4. When REDD+ Policies and Measures are planned, availability of data and institutional/ stakeholder capacity for their effective implementation should be	B4.1 Assessments carried out for effective planning & implementation of the REDD+ action/s: - Data availability / needs - Stakeholder mapping - Stakeholder capacity needs	Process	Link/documents prepared for assessments			*List/description of assessments carried out*

Myanmar safeguards criteria	Proposed indicators	Indicator Type	Possible Means of Verification	Baseline	Reporting period 1	*Comments/ notes*
considered and identified deficits should be addressed.	B4.2 Number of measures resulting from the assessment(s) to identified and then implemented to collect or obtain access to data	Process				
	B4.3 Measures implemented to build capacity of stakeholders to participate in the REDD+ planning process: - Amount of funding allocated to address identified capacity deficits - Number of measures implemented to support stakeholders with low capacity/means to participate - Percentage of funding to support stakeholders with low capacity/means to participate	Result				
	B4.4 Number of participant days in capacity-building events/programs carried out in planning phase, disaggregated by participant group: - Government - Non-government - Local communities - Indigenous peoples and/or ethnic groups - Women - Youth - Other (please specify)	Result				

Myanmar safeguards criteria	Proposed indicators	Indicator Type	Possible Means of Verification	Baseline	Reporting period 1	*Comments/ notes*
Principle C. REDD+ Policies and Measures in Myanmar must be designed and implemented to respect the knowledge and rights of indigenous peoples and members of local communities						
C1. REDD+ Policies and Measures must avoid involuntary resettlement and respect the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities to use land and resources (this relates to statutory rights as well as locally recognized and customary rights).	C1.1. Number of REDD+ action/s determined to need an FPIC process (based on appropriate screening)	Process	E.g. completed screening checklist			
	C1.2. Number of REDD+ actions for which documentation exists showing appropriate conduct of FPIC process	Process	E.g. FPIC checklist and record of decision			
	C1.3. Number of people who participated in the FPIC process for the REDD+ action/s, by: - Total number of participants - Community members - Women - Indigenous peoples and/or ethnic groups - Youth representatives - Other groups (please specify)	Process				
	C1.4. Cases of voluntary resettlement have been agreed as part of FPIC for the action(s) (Y/N) If yes: - Number of communities affected - Number of households/individuals affected - Number of women/female headed households - Number of Indigenous peoples and/or ethnic group households - Other groups (please specify)	Result				

Myanmar safeguards criteria	Proposed indicators	Indicator Type	Possible Means of Verification	Baseline	Reporting period 1	*Comments/ notes*
	C1.5. Amount of compensation agreed and disbursed for cases of voluntary resettlement, by recipient group: - Community/ies - Households/individuals - Women/female headed households - Indigenous peoples and/or ethnic group households - Other groups (please specify)	Result				
	C1.6. Cases of voluntary restriction of use rights (including locally recognized/ customary rights) agreed as part of FPIC for the REDD+ action(s) (Y/N) If yes: - Area affected (in ha) - Number of communities affected - Number of households/individuals affected - Number of women/female headed households - Number of Indigenous peoples and/or ethnic group households - Other groups (please specify)	Result				
	C1.7. Compensation for restricted use rights agreed (Y/N) If yes: - Description of monetary / non-monetary compensation agreed - If monetary, amounts dispersed based on categories above (see C1.6)	Result				

Myanmar safeguards criteria	Proposed indicators	Indicator Type	Possible Means of Verification	Baseline	Reporting period 1	*Comments/ notes*
	C1.8. Number of received and number of resolved grievances relating to resettlement and rights to use land and resources	Result				
C2. REDD+ Policies and Measures should take into account existing land uses and avoid negative impacts on vulnerable stakeholder groups without documented rights to use land and resources (such as communities with customary land tenure), and where possible should support the fair and transparent clarification of use rights, avoiding risks of elite capture. EIA/SEA should be conducted for REDD+ actions where applicable.	C2.1 Environmental and social screening form completed for REDD+ action/s (y/n)	Process	Completed screening form/s			
	C2.2. Appropriate environmental and social assessment carried out for REDD+ action (see also indicator E2.1.) (y/n) - Evidence of environmental and social assessment completed - Evidence of IEE/EIA/SEA processes completed (if applicable) - Area covered by relevant assessment/s	Process	Links/reports for assessments conducted			
	C2.3. Documentation to show that procedures to identify existing land uses (including by users who do not hold land use certificates or other official documents), to consider those uses in planning, and to avoid negative impacts from changes in land use, have been applied	Process	E.g. in assessment and/or FPIC documents			
	C2.4. Area of land on which use rights (including locally recognized and customary rights) have been clarified, enhanced or given official recognition through the REDD+ action/s, including area per: - Communal tenure - Household/individual tenure - IPs/ethnic groups - Women/female headed households - Other groups (please specify)	Result				

Myanmar safeguards criteria	Proposed indicators	Indicator Type	Possible Means of Verification	Baseline	Reporting period 1	*Comments/ notes*
C3. REDD+ Policies and Measures must be designed and implemented with respect for the cultural heritage* and customary practices of indigenous peoples and local communities. **** Including tangible and intangible heritage, place-based, movable and immovable heritage and beliefs***	C3.1. Number of indigenous and/or community conserved areas established and/or supported through the REDD+ action/s	Result				
	C3.2. Number of management plans (e.g. for protected areas, forest management, community forestry) supported through the REDD+ action that include sustainable use of traditional knowledge and practices	Result				
	C3.3. Percentage of local community members who state that REDD+ has had a neutral or positive impact on cultural heritage, by: - Indigenous peoples and/or ethnic groups - Women - Other groups (please specify)	Result	Survey – see also C5.2			
	C3.4. Number of received and number of resolved grievances relating to respect for cultural heritage and customary practices	Result	GRM			
	C3.5 Issues/impacts related to cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and customary practices have been demonstrably (with evidence) discussed in FPIC process for the REDD+ action/s (Y/N)	Process				
	C3.6 Description of agreements reached regarding access/utilisation and benefit sharing in relation to cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and customary practices	Process				
C4. Where impacts on the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities cannot be avoided without	C4.1. — link to indicator on FPIC (C1.2)	Process				
	C4.2. – link to C1.5. on compensation for resettlement and C1.7. on compensation for restrictions on use rights	Result				

Myanmar safeguards criteria	Proposed indicators	Indicator Type	Possible Means of Verification	Baseline	Reporting period 1	*Comments/ notes*
compromising the success of a Policy or Measure, consent needs to be obtained and appropriate forms of compensation must be offered and agreed through meaningfully implemented processes of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC).	C4.3 Number of received and number of resolved grievances relating to compensation for negative impacts caused by REDD+ action/s on indigenous peoples' and local communities' rights	Result	GRM			
C5. Where indigenous peoples and local communities contribute to the implementation of REDD+ Policies and Measures, or REDD+ Policies and Measures have an impact on their territories, they should be offered a fair share of the benefits through a transparent mechanism.	C5.1. A fair and transparent benefit sharing mechanism is demonstrably (with evidence) in place for the REDD+ action/s (y/n)	Process	Link/documentation of any benefit sharing plan/mechanism			
	C5.2. Percentage of local community members who state that REDD+ has had a positive impact on their wellbeing, by: - Indigenous peoples and/or ethnic groups members - Women - Other groups (please specify)	Result	Survey			*Survey may be used to address other indicators as well, depending on what questions/topics are included*
	C5.3. Number of people participating in and receiving incentives/benefits via community co-managed monitoring programmes (if applicable/relevant)	Result				
	C5.4. Number of received and number of resolved grievances related to benefit-sharing / distribution of benefits	Result				
	C5.5. Number of people/ beneficiaries receiving benefits/incentives for quantifiable benefits, per year: - Community members (average per person)	Result				

Myanmar safeguards criteria	Proposed indicators	Indicator Type	Possible Means of Verification	Baseline	Reporting period 1	*Comments/ notes*
	- Women/female headed households - Indigenous peoples and/or ethnic groups - Businesses - Other (please specify)					
	C5.6 Trends in the type and extent/total benefits being shared per year: - Monetary benefits - Non-monetary benefits	Result				
C6. A functional Grievance Redress Mechanism, developed with the agreement of indigenous peoples and local communities, must be provided to address and resolve any concerns related to impacts of REDD+ Policies and Measures on the rights of indigenous peoples and members of local communities.	C6.1 An appropriate and accessible GRM is demonstrably (with evidence) in place for the REDD+ action/s and has been communicated to stakeholders	Process	Link/documentation on GRM; evidence of communication to stakeholders			
	C6.2 Number of grievances received, and number of grievances resolved, disaggregated by topic: - Consultation/planning process - Stakeholder participation/representation - Information sharing/transparency - FPIC process - Rights to forest, lands and resources - Benefit sharing - Implementation of REDD+ action - Other topics (please specify) -	Result	GRM			
	C6.3 Number of grievances received, and number of grievances resolved, disaggregated by type of complainant: - Women/female headed household - Indigenous peoples and/or ethnic groups - CSO/NGO - Other groups (please specify)	Result	GRM			

Myanmar safeguards criteria	Proposed indicators	Indicator Type	Possible Means of Verification	Baseline	Reporting period 1	*Comments/ notes*
	C6.4 Average time taken for cases to be resolved (disaggregated by topic and complainant group)	Process				
	C6.5 Average satisfaction of complainants with the outcome of the process (disaggregated by topic and complainant group)	Result				
Principle D. REDD+ Policies and Measures in Myanmar must be designed and implemented with the full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders, in particular indigenous peoples and local communities. All groups who may be affected by the Policies and Measures should be considered relevant stakeholders						
D1. The participation of stakeholders in planning and implementation of Policies and Measures should be actively sought, and stakeholder groups with low capacity to participate (such as women, poor people, small ethnic groups, groups without documented land rights) should be supported through appropriate arrangements (e.g. capacity-building, choice of suitable communication formats, taking into account language requirements and traditions).	D1.1. Number of persons involved in implementation and/or monitoring of the REDD+ action (disaggregated by gender, ethnic group, etc.): - Government - Non-government - Indigenous peoples and local communities - Women - Private sector - Other (please specify)	Result				
	D1.2. Capacity-building activities/measures to support participation of stakeholders in REDD+ planning, implementation and monitoring	Process				*Description/list of capacity building activities*
	D1.3 Number of participant days in capacity-building events/programs during REDD+ implementation (e.g. workshop, training, piloting exercise), by participant type: - Government - Non-government - Indigenous peoples and local communities - Women - Other (please specify)	Result				

Myanmar safeguards criteria	Proposed indicators	Indicator Type	Possible Means of Verification	Baseline	Reporting period 1	*Comments/ notes*
	D1.5. Measures implemented to build capacity of stakeholders to participate in the REDD+ implementation and monitoring: - Amount of funding allocated to address identified capacity deficits - Number of measures implemented to support stakeholders with low capacity/means to participate - Percentage of funding to support stakeholders with low capacity/means to participate	Result				
	D1.6 Average satisfaction ratings of training recipients, disaggregated by recipient group - Government - Non-government - Indigenous peoples and local communities - Women - Other (please specify)	Result				
	D1.7. Number of received and number of resolved grievances relating to participation in REDD+	Result	GRM			
D2. Where direct participation of stakeholders in the planning of a Policy or Measure is not feasible (e.g. due to the large area over which the PaM is to be implemented), the equal and proportionate participation of stakeholder	D2.1. The participation of stakeholder representatives in REDD+ planning and implementation has been equal and proportionate (i.e. appropriate representation of govt, non-govt, local community, Indigenous peoples and/or ethnic groups, women, and other groups)	Result	Lists and numbers of stakeholder participants in planning process, in coordination bodies, in implementation activities, in training programs, etc.			*Yes/no statement with supporting evidence*
	D2.2. Terms of reference have been prepared and circulated to clearly set out roles and	Process	Evidence of ToRs circulated			

Myanmar safeguards criteria	Proposed indicators	Indicator Type	Possible Means of Verification	Baseline	Reporting period 1	*Comments/ notes*
representatives with relevant knowledge and skills and appropriate legitimation by their group should be sought, and the duties of representatives towards their stakeholder group should be defined. Stakeholder representatives should be made well aware of their roles and responsibilities. They should share information with their stakeholder group and get feedback from them.	responsibilities, and required knowledge and skills of stakeholder representatives					
	D2.3. Evidence of two-way communication between representatives and their stakeholder groups taking place, e.g. - Reports/briefings - Meetings - Media reports - Social media postings	Result				
	D2.3 Number of received and number of resolved grievances relating to the selection and performance of stakeholder representatives	Result	GRM			
D3. Where stakeholders, in particular members of local communities, can play a meaningful role in the implementation and/or monitoring of Policies and Measures (taking into account the nature of the Policies and Measures), they must be offered the opportunity to participate (this may entail a need for capacity-building and establishment of supportive mechanism, networks, etc.,	D3.1 The REDD+ action/s have been demonstrably (with evidence) designed to allow stakeholders to take on an active role in implementation and/or monitoring	Process				*Include list of participatory approaches (e.g. community forestry, participatory M&E etc.)*
	D3.2 – link to D1.1 on participation in actions	Result				
	D3.3 Ratio/percentage of people who have received capacity-building and number who have then become involved in implementation and/or monitoring: - Number who participated in capacity building (D1.3) - Number who have participated in the action (D1.1)	Result				

Myanmar safeguards criteria	Proposed indicators	Indicator Type	Possible Means of Verification	Baseline	Reporting period 1	*Comments/ notes*
taking into account language requirements and traditions).	D3.5 Number of received and number of resolved grievances relating to participation in REDD+ - link to D1.7	Result	GRM			
Principle E. REDD+ Policies and Measures in Myanmar should be consistent with the conservation of natural forests and biological diversity, ensuring that they do not lead to the conversion of natural forests, but are instead used to incentivize the protection and conservation of natural forests and their ecosystem services, and to enhance other social and environmental benefit						
E1. Before REDD+ Policies and Measures that could have an impact on natural forests are implemented, the distribution of natural forests in the area covered by the PaM should be mapped reliably, with particular attention to forests outside of the permanent forest estate. No conversion of these forests to other land uses (including into plantations) should be allowed; risks of indirect conversion (e.g. through displacement of land use) should be minimized as far as possible.	E1.1 The REDD+ action/s has demonstrably (with evidence) carried out/utilised reliable mapping and/or analysis of natural forests, including forests outside of the official forest area, for planning prior to implementation:	Result	Evidence of mapping/analysis of natural forests			
	E1.2 Risks of direct and indirect conversion of/damage to natural forests and other natural ecosystems (if relevant) related to the REDD+ action have been integrated into the assessment of environmental and social impacts	Process	Environmental & social assessment report / EIA			
	E1.3 If any risks were identified, the REDD+ action/s has demonstrably (with evidence) identified and put in place measures/procedures to reduce risks of conversion/loss of natural forests	Process				
	E1.4 Number of incidences of natural forest or other natural ecosystem loss attributable to REDD+ action/s, and area affected	Result				
	E1.5 What outcomes have occurred for natural forests in the implementation area on an annual basis: - trends in natural forest cover (in hectares) - trends in natural forest quality/integrity	Context Result				

Myanmar safeguards criteria	Proposed indicators	Indicator Type	Possible Means of Verification	Baseline	Reporting period 1	*Comments/ notes*
	E1.4 Number of received and number of resolved grievances related to the (direct or indirect) conversion of natural forests and or other natural ecosystems because of the REDD+ action/s	Result	GRM			
E2. Planning of REDD+ Policies and Measures (both at the level of REDD+ strategies or programmes and at the level of individual policies or measures) should be based on sound information about their potential positive or negative social and environmental impacts, including impacts on important areas for biodiversity and ecosystem services; this may require analysis or collection of new data. Cumulative effects, landscape-scale impacts and indirect impacts should be included in the analysis.	E2.1 Appropriate environmental and social assessment carried out - link to C2.2	Process				
	E2.2 Documentation of environmental & social assessment process is available demonstrating good practice with regard to: - Data collection and analysis, including analysis of potential impacts on important areas for biodiversity and ecosystem services, cumulative effects, landscape-scale impacts and indirect impacts; - Adequate consideration of possible social and environmental benefits (with a focus on the priority benefits listed in E.4); and - Provision of clear recommendations for the design, location and implementation of the REDD+ action/s drawing on the potential impacts identified	Result	Environmental & social assessment report; EIA/IEE (if applicable); REDD+ plan			
E3. REDD+ Policies and Measures should be selected, designed and implemented in a way that not only avoids or minimizes negative impacts but also enhances positive ones. This may involve prioritization of some REDD+ actions over others or	E3.1. Documentation of planning and assessment for REDD+ action/s is available which can demonstrate that the outcomes/recommendations of assessments were incorporated into the planning, for example by - Selecting, prioritizing and/or combining REDD+ actions to reduce risks and enhance potential for benefits	Result				

Myanmar safeguards criteria	Proposed indicators	Indicator Type	Possible Means of Verification	Baseline	Reporting period 1	*Comments/ notes*
combining REDD+ actions in a complementary way. Stakeholders from all relevant sectors should be involved in identifying the best ways to increase the positive impacts of REDD+.	- Incorporating risk reducing/benefit enhancing features into REDD+ actions design or introducing complementary measures to reduce risks/enhance benefits - Targeting locations to enhance benefits/reduce risks (e.g. focusing on high biodiversity areas or areas with vulnerable populations)					
	E3.2. Documentation of planning and assessment for REDD+ action/s available/publicly available to show that: - A participatory process was applied in the environmental & social assessment - Views were sought from stakeholders of all relevant sectors about the best ways to increase positive impacts from REDD - Stakeholder views were demonstrably reflected in the planning for the action	Result				
	E3.3 Number of persons involved as stakeholders or stakeholder representatives in the environmental and social assessment, by participant group: - Government (including relevant sectors) - Non-government - Women - Indigenous peoples and local communities - Other (please specify)	Result				

Myanmar safeguards criteria	Proposed indicators	Indicator Type	Possible Means of Verification	Baseline	Reporting period 1	*Comments/ notes*
	E3.3. Evidence that the implementation of the REDD+ action followed the actions agreed during the planning process for enhancing positive impacts and minimizing negative impacts (*Indicators developed for the specific agreed measures should be considered and inserted here*)	Result				
E4. Priority benefits to be supported through appropriate selection, design and implementation of REDD+ Policies and Measures include promoting land rights, enhancing the wellbeing of poor, vulnerable and/or marginalized groups, supporting sustainable livelihoods of indigenous peoples and local communities, enhancing gender equality, supporting social peace and stability, protecting areas of high value for biodiversity or ecosystem services (in particular conservation of soil and water resources), increasing habitat connectivity, reducing or reversing land degradation, reducing pollution, and	E4.1. Promotion of land rights/clarified tenure - link to indicator C2.4	Result				
	E4.2. Sustainable livelihoods, including wellbeing of poor/vulnerable groups: - Link to A1.3. Contribution to sustainable agriculture and livelihoods - Link to A1.4. Contribution to poverty alleviation - Average household income inside and outside of REDD+ area, annually - Perceived wellbeing of survey respondents in REDD+ areas, disaggregated by stakeholder group - link to indicator C3.3	Result				
	E4.3. Gender equality: - Gender breakdown/number of women participants in REDD+ activities – link to indicator D1.1 - Perceived wellbeing of survey respondents in REDD+ areas, disaggregated by gender - link to indicator C3.3	Result				

Myanmar safeguards criteria	Proposed indicators	Indicator Type	Possible Means of Verification	Baseline	Reporting period 1	*Comments/ notes*
building the capacity of government staff and local stakeholders (e.g. to implement / comply with existing laws, to participate in decision-making and to adopt sustainable land use practices). ***NB – these indicators are based on the prioritised benefits identified in Myanmar's safeguards approach and several options/examples are provided under each; REDD+ implementers should ensure that the indicators they select reflect the benefits expected through their REDD+ action/s. This may mean adapting/adding to these indicators under E4***	- - Benefit sharing to women/female headed households – link to indicator C5.5 - Link to A2.8. Contribution to gender equality					
	E4.4. Social peace and stability: - Coordination/land use planning with EAOs – link to indicator B3.5 - - appropriate management of grievances – link to C6 indicators - Number of court cases and/or incidences of violent conflict over land use within/outside of REDD+ area	Result				
	E4.5 Protection of areas of high biodiversity/ecosystem services value: - Improvement in forest cover and/or quality in REDD+ area, including inside/outside protected areas – link to E1.5 - conservation measures carried out through REDD+ action/s – link to indicator A1.2	Result				
	E4.6 Restoration, reduced land degradation and connectivity: - Hectares of forest restored in REDD+ implementation areas, including: a) inside/outside of protected areas b) in areas at risk of land degradation/erosion	Result				

Myanmar safeguards criteria	Proposed indicators	Indicator Type	Possible Means of Verification	Baseline	Reporting period 1	*Comments/ notes*
	c) in corridors or areas that have a connecting function between existing forests, in particular protected areas - Forest conservation/SFM measures carried out in areas at risk of land degradation/erosion					
	E4.7. Reducing pollution and promoting other environmental benefits: - Number of households with access to electricity in REDD+ implementation areas - Number of households participating in sustainable agriculture programmes - data on average inputs of fertiliser/pesticides on farms in REDD+ areas	Result				
	E4.8. Building the capacity of stakeholders: - capacity building participation – link to indicators under B4 and E5	Result				
E5. REDD+ Policies and Measures that involve land use or management planning should be supported by capacity-building and transparency measures to ensure that environmental and social objectives are appropriately considered and not neglected due to a lack of data, awareness or understanding or a competing interest in short-term economic benefit.	E5.1 Number of capacity-building events/programs for integrated land use planning including consideration of environmental and social objectives: - Number of events, by type/topic of event - Number of participant days in capacity building, by participant type	Result				
	E5.2 Participation in capacity-building for REDD+ planning – link to indicator B4.5	Result				
	E5.3 Number of land use plans/planning instruments that reflect environmental and social considerations and area covered (in hectares) - link to indicator B3.4	Result				

Myanmar safeguards criteria	Proposed indicators	Indicator Type	Possible Means of Verification	Baseline	Reporting period 1	*Comments/ notes*
E6. Monitoring of REDD+ Policies and Measures should include regular tracking of social and environmental impacts against a pre-implementation baseline, taking into account the possible benefits and risks identified during the planning stage, as a basis for continued improvement of REDD+ practice.	E6.1. Number of indicators in the monitoring framework of the REDD+ action that monitor social and environmental impacts of REDD+ and number where data has been collected	Process / result	M&E framework			
Principle F. REDD+ Policies and Measures in Myanmar should be designed and implemented to avoid or minimize risks of reversals						
F1. When the feasibility and potential impacts of proposed REDD+ Policies and Measures are analysed, an analysis of risks of non-permanence should be included; this should consider the possibility of unintended incentives (e.g. by land use becoming more profitable), as well as risks linked to long-term funding, legal security or external influences like climate change or socio-economic change.	F1.1. Risks of reversals/non-permanence have been demonstrably integrated into assessment for the REDD+ action/s, including risks related to unintended incentives, long-term funding, markets, and external factors	Result	Environmental & social assessment report; REDD+ plan			
F2. Where risks of non-permanence have been identified, these should be	F2.1 Adjustments or accompanying measures have been demonstrably (with evidence) identified to reduce reversal risks and	Result	Environmental & social assessment report; REDD+ plan			

Myanmar safeguards criteria	Proposed indicators	Indicator Type	Possible Means of Verification	Baseline	Reporting period 1	*Comments/ notes*
addressed through appropriate selection, design and implementation of Policies and Measures.	integrated into planning for the REDD+ action/s					
	F2.2 Documentation showing that identified measures to reduce reversal risks were carried out during implementation of the REDD+ action/s	Result				
	F2.3. Land use plans/planning instruments supported through the REDD+ action – link to indicator B3.3	Result				
F3. The National Forest Monitoring System should be designed to allow the detection and management of reversals. ***NB – this indicator applies to the NFMS at national level. However, until the NFMS is operational, REDD+ implementers will be expected to put in place monitoring of forests for their REDD+ action/s***	F3.1. Documentation available of method/procedures for detecting and managing reversals (including any links to national systems, such as NFMS)	Process				
	F3.2. Incidences of reversals: - Number of incidences of reversals detected and area affected - Number of incidences of reversals addressed through subsequent management steps and area covered	Result				
F4. Lessons learned from the detection of reversals should be reflected in the design of future Policies and Measures.	F4.1. Documentation available of results/lessons learned in management of reversals	Process				
	F4.2. Description of changes/modifications to REDD+ actions to avoid future incidences of reversals	Result				

Myanmar safeguards criteria	Proposed indicators	Indicator Type	Possible Means of Verification	Baseline	Reporting period 1	*Comments/ notes*
Principle G. REDD+ Policies and Measures in Myanmar should be designed and implemented to avoid or minimize displacement of emissions						
G1. When the feasibility and potential impacts of proposed REDD+ Policies and Measures are analysed, an analysis of risks of displacement of emissions should be included; this should consider the possibility of indirect land use change (land use shifting from one area to another), as well as the overall impact of a PaM on greenhouse gas emissions (e.g. even REDD+ actions that successfully reduce deforestation could have an adverse impact on emissions if land use is shifted to other ecosystems that are rich in carbon, e.g. peatlands, or if wood-based fuels or products are replaced with alternatives that themselves cause high emissions).	G1.1. Risks of displacement have been demonstrably integrated into assessment for the REDD+ action, including those related to indirect land use change, shifts of pressures to non-forest ecosystems and shifts to emissions from non-land-based sources such as fossil fuels	Result	Environmental & social assessment report; REDD+ plan			
G2. Where risks of emissions displacement have been identified, these should be addressed through appropriate selection, design and implementation of Policies and Measures.	G2.1 Adjustments or accompanying measures have been demonstrably (with evidence) identified to reduce displacement risks and integrated into planning for the REDD+ action/s	Result	Environmental & social assessment report; REDD+ plan			
	G.2.2. Documentation showing that identified measures to reduce displacement risks were	Result				

Myanmar safeguards criteria	Proposed indicators	Indicator Type	Possible Means of Verification	Baseline	Reporting period 1	*Comments/ notes*
	carried out during implementation of the REDD+ action/s					
	G2.3. Sustainable livelihoods schemes – link to E4.2 indicators	Result				
	G2.4. Land use plans/planning instruments supported through the REDD+ action/s – link to indicator B3.3	Result				
G3. The National Forest Monitoring System should be designed to allow the detection and management of emissions displacement caused by indirect land use change. ***NB – this indicator applies to the NFMS at national level. However, until the NFMS is operational, REDD+ implementers will be expected to put in place monitoring of forests for their REDD+ action/s***	G3.1. Documentation available of method/procedures for detecting and managing displacement (including any links to national systems, such as NFMS)	Process				
	G3.2. Incidences of displacement: - Number of incidences of displacement detected and area affected (including any non-forest ecosystems) - Number of incidences of displacement addressed through subsequent management steps and area covered	Result				
G4. Lessons learned from the detection of emissions displacement should be reflected in the design of future Policies and Measures.	G4.1. Documentation available of results/lessons learned in management of displacement	Process				
	G4.2. Number of changes/modifications to REDD+ actions to avoid future incidences of displacement	Result				