Cross-cutting effort 'Knowledge and experience sharing, South-South exchanges and advocacy of key forest values'

Context

Knowledge and experience sharing and advocacy communications are key activities for the delivery of the UN-REDD Programme's strategic framework. This cross-cutting component on knowledge management is designed to strengthen support to partner countries in accessing and sharing well-documented, evidence-based REDD+ readiness and implementation knowledge aligned with UNFCCC REDD+ requirements. The combination of in-country presence and well-established global reach allow for the scaling up of knowledge from local experiences into global lessons learned and best practices. This component will contribute to long-term sustainability of results, replicability of approaches, acceleration of progress and far-reaching impact. The component also provides the linkages between all individual thematic global components and country actions: it provides the 'Programme' aspect of the UN-REDD Programme.

Cross-cutting efforts on knowledge management and communications will tailor and disseminate to different target audiences the wealth of experiences, stories and lessons to be produced and collected by the different thematic components (see annexes on private sector, land tenure, indigenous peoples, etc.). In this sense, the cross-cutting and coordination effort constitutes the pivotal element that brings together the different thematic activities of the global component and enables scaling up and cross-fertilization of knowledge and approaches - across countries and agencies. Its role is to support the specialized content producers (partner countries and thematic areas) by systematizing the collection of know-how and converting and elevating their local knowledge into lessons learned and best practices that can be easily accessible and recognizable with thematic and global relevance.

As partner countries move from readiness to implementation, communication efforts will focus on showcasing impact and results to make a case for REDD+ and to advocate for the key role of forests and their value and contribution to sustainable development.

While there are many challenges to scaling up REDD+ and to improving forest and land management (lack of finance and poor governance, especially), one key impediment is the difficulty to access easily digestible REDD+ knowledge and lessons learned. The crucial role of forests in the fight against climate change and the sheer dimension and impacts of deforestation are still poorly known by key decision makers, with negative effects on political and behavioural decisions.

The political will to respond to this challenge is perhaps higher than ever but still not high enough to succeed. The lessons and success stories on REDD+ from more than 30 countries can be harvested and communicated to fill this gap and enable countries to define/refine their REDD+ packages based on experiences and learning.

Rationale and approach

The UN-REDD Programme will work towards increasing and improving its knowledge management and advocacy communications activities, including linking REDD+ with the Sustainable Development Goals in its communication efforts. A better understanding of the issues at hand among target audiences will lead to increased interest, engagement, uptake of successful approaches, advocacy and ultimately increased political will and investments.

The goal for 2018 – 2020 will be to achieve broader reach (both in terms of target audience and countries covered) and improve access to and distribution of REDD+ and forest-related knowledge.

Outputs

1. *Partner countries improve and accelerate their REDD+ actions due to easier access to best practices, tools and lessons learned.*

2. *The role of forests for green economic growth and climate action is better understood and acted upon by policy makers and other relevant actors.*

This will be achieved through a four-pronged strategic approach:

1. *Clear strategic focus*
In order to make the most efficient and effective use of limited resources, we will focus our efforts on fewer high-return activities and thematic areas aligned with the Programme's priorities for 2018-2020.

2. *Scaled up content creation*
Apart from being 'knowledge managers', we need to become storytellers. A priority in the next three years will be to transform locally sourced knowledge into engaging global multimedia stories for a variety of platforms, with a focus on reaching and informing policy-makers.

3. *Improved channels and audience segmentation*
The impact of our content is only as good as our channels and our understanding of our audiences. We will therefore further invest in the UN-REDD Workspace, social media activities and into smart tailoring of our outputs to the needs of the targeted audiences.

4. *Leveraging key events*
Linking with existing Sustainable Development Goals and forest-focused campaigns and events run by partners, such as donors or CIFOR, can be a key instrument for UN-REDD to engage different audiences. We will strengthen our relationship with the IISD SDG Knowledge Hub and Global Landscapes Forum while forging new relationships with other SDG events and campaigns, both in partner countries and globally, and where the events provide a significant opportunity for synergies and amplification of the UN-REDD voice. As in the past, outreach activities will prioritize central REDD+ and SDG events such as the Oslo REDD Exchange, including the anniversary of Norway's key role in supporting international forest and climate action.

Thematic and cross-cutting areas

The work of UN-REDD on the global knowledge management and communication will capture lessons learned, successes, and innovation intended to inspire and assist partner countries and donors in advancing towards full-fledged implementation of REDD+, and results-based payments. The thematic focus will be on the following areas:

- Landscape planning
- Decoupling deforestation and forest degradation from the private and finance sectors
- Forest monitoring systems and MRV

- REDD+ and the Sustainable Development Goals
- Understanding and mainstreaming the Paris Agreement
- Indigenous peoples and REDD+
- Mechanisms to receive and channel REDD+ payments

These thematic areas ensure that the work of UN-REDD on knowledge management and communication cover essential topics in advancing towards results-based payments. Each of these components will be under the aegis of a UN-REDD agency and will generate and harvest knowledge from across the partner countries, which will then be repackaged and made widely available through this cross-cutting component on knowledge and experience sharing, South-South exchanges and advocacy of key forest values.

Target audience

Primary (informed and empowered) audience:

- Policymakers (beyond ministries of environment and forestry – all land use ministries and agencies);

- Practitioners (NGOs and private sector engaged in REDD+ projects and other relevant land use, climate and development initiatives);

- Multilateral banks and other development organizations;

- Civil society groups that are focused on the environment, rural development, indigenous rights, etc.;

- Scientists focused on REDD+ and rural land use management and development;

- Donors and financiers (to influence their spending in forestry and land use)

Secondary audience:

- Interested public (through news media)

Activities

1. Multimedia storytelling

We envision the Programme's knowledge management and communication activities as a REDD+ knowledge hub. All activities will support the main goal of sharing REDD+ lessons learned and best practices with practitioners and decision-makers. This will be done via the production and dissemination of high-quality stories in the form of copy, video and images on REDD+ and other relevant forest and land use topics. Increasingly, we and other organizations experience that compelling stories are a very effective instrument to catch the attention of decision-makers and implementers. Due to its in-country presence, its experience and its collaboration by three specialized agencies, UN-REDD has an ampleness of knowledge, lessons learned and best practices that need to be turned into stories to make them more accessible to decision makers and partner countries. Drawing on the impact of enabling connections between UN-REDD workstreams and country programmes that these easy to understand stories has had previously, this work area aims to continue to enable UN-REDD to have broad outreach and for partners to access more detailed and in-depth knowledge and practices related to their needs.

Central for an efficient content strategy will be a multi-platform approach where content can be repackaged for different uses, audiences and channels, including partner channels such as IISD SDG Knowledge Hub and Global Landscapes Forum.

Concrete activities will entail:

- A full-time dedicated writer with environmental journalism background will, with support from regional and in-country staff, identify, develop and package relevant content, such as lessons learned, into engaging stories.

- Use of multimedia to tell inspiring stories of strategic relevance for UN-REDD tailored to the needs of the professional target audiences. These stories will focus on the human dimension and the concrete impact REDD+ has or the solutions it seeks. They will share best practices and innovative ideas in an engaging way. The videos will be distributed via social media and, whenever possible, national broadcasters in donor and partner countries.

- With communications increasingly becoming visual, increased efforts will go into infographics, videos and images for social media.

Products/results

- Science writer: 20 original pieces per year

- Photojournalist: 3 trips per year; 2-3 multimedia stories and 30 photos per trip

- Video-journalist: 1 trip in 2018, 2 trips in 2019 and 2020 each; 2-3 multimedia stories and 5x 3-minutes videos and 1x 5-minute video per trip

- 6 infographics on key REDD+ progress and facts per year

- All content will be repacked for usage across multiple platforms, such as publications, social media channels, website, Workspace, Academy, blog posts (owned and earned), exhibitions, media pitches and speeches.

2. *South-South knowledge exchanges*

South-South exchanges are among the most effective forms through which participating countries can exchange experiences and learn from each other, ultimately forming a community of practice. They also encourage international partnerships and strengthen local ownership. Knowledge exchanges meet operational knowledge gaps by fostering the sharing of countries' experiences and by doing so demonstrate their added value. The South-South exchanges organized in the past have helped partners to strengthen their skills, capacities and networking, and to use the knowledge acquired to galvanize stakeholders, influence policy reforms and establish more participatory policy dialogues. The selection of countries will be based on a matchmaking exercise, locating countries with learning needs and those that can share lessons.

Because South-South exchanges are more than local events, we will use state-of-the-art communication methods, such as live social video, to reach and engage a global audience. By leveraging the events and their topics for multimedia storytelling we will be able to get a higher return on investment.

Products/results

- 1 South-South knowledge exchange per year (3 days, 20 participants)

- Social media and audio-visual coverage of events, including interviews, live transmission of interesting segments of the events via Facebook, engaging visual presentation (social media cards, infographics and animations) of issues at hand to also engage interested public in participating countries

3. Workspace

The Workspace will remain a core pillar of the UN-REDD Programme learning and knowledge exchange universe. It differentiates from other platforms in that it reflects the participation of 64 Partner Countries and three UN agencies. This two-way exchange supports Partner Countries and the wider REDD+ community in the sharing of lessons learned, best practices, guidelines and other knowledge products. In line with the strategic objective of improved delivery channels we propose to revamp and upgrade this online hub for augmented usability. With improved navigation and structure the Workspace will serve better its purpose as central hub to capture and share good practice, innovations and lessons learned from partner countries and participating agencies. On one hand a comprehensive repository, it stimulates on the other hand a culture of learning and international knowledge exchange and sharing. Run by and for REDD+ implementers and decision-makers, it creates a dynamic community of practice. A closer integration of the REDD+ Academy, which is an ongoing process, will further strengthen the Workspace capacities.

Products/results

- Augmented usability

- Addition of multimedia stories

4. Media relations

The complexity of the REDD+ mechanism makes it oftentimes difficult for journalists, even from top-tier media, to cover progress made and the significance the scheme has to mitigate climate change. Media relations activities will aim to fill the gap by explaining the challenge in a concrete and human-focused way and the solutions that the UN-REDD programme has made gains with and what REDD+ is offering. This will be done via building and maintaining relationships with specialized and top-tier media, and pitching of stories for news and features. The global communications team will also support National Programme communications in various ways, among them in seeking media partnerships to strengthen positive REDD+ coverage and increase awareness of key forest values.

Products/results

- Two media trips to coincide with South-South Knowledge Exchanges for five to eight journalists each, either from relevant regional media or correspondents from global networks.

- Strengthened ties with traditional media organizations that have invested in climate change and land use reporting.

5. Academies

The REDD+ Academy has been a UN-REDD success story in its national and online form. Central for the Programme's activities in this area in the next three years will be to fully integrate the REDD+ Academy and its acclaimed Learning Journals into knowledge management and outreach activities to wider disseminate the knowledge located there and to keep the REDD+ Academy relevant through continuous updating.

National REDD+ Academies will continue to be self-organized by countries, with limited support provided by the UN-REDD Programme, for example by providing, upon request, technical experts as resource persons and by helping in tailoring the online materials to countries' needs.

The UN-REDD lessons learned related to integrated landscape approaches, spatial planning and multiple benefits from REDD+ will be integrated into the forthcoming Landscapes Academy which is being established in partnership between UN Environment, Wageningen University, the Global Landscapes Forum, the Landscapes for People, Food and Nature group (which includes FAO, World Bank, IUCN) and other partners. The Academy aims to offer comprehensive, openly accessible learning and training materials on key aspects of integrated landscape management, including landscape restoration. The Landscapes Academy can benefit from REDD+ lessons, including experiences with spatial planning in partner countries, and integrated landscape approaches to meet multiple sustainable development objectives in a limited spatial area.

Products/results

- Move the REDD+ Academy to a professional learning platform (EdEx) to increase reach, teaching method and usability of the platform

- Keep the content up to date and engaging by adding new stories and lessons learned created by the Programme's content creation component

6. Social media

Social media is a key channel for the Programme to reach and engage its audiences. In 2018 – 2020 we propose to drastically expand and further professionalize our activities leveraging the prioritized content creation efforts. Social media allows the Programme to reach new audiences and maintain engagement with existing ones, be it policy makers, practitioners,civil society or journalists.

Products/results

- Thanks to the suggested content creation activities the Programme will be able to improve its storytelling on the existing platforms (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn) engage on new ones such as Instagram and potentially Medium.

Result framework

Outcome/Output	UN-REDD agency	Timeline (year/s)	Indicators	Baseline
Output across all UN-REDD Results Framework outcomes (1, 2 and 3)[1]: Partner countries			2018 - 2 additional countries have increased their knowledge by participating in a South-South Knowledge Exchange (MoV: knowledge event reports)	2017 number of countries having participated in South-South Knowledge Exchanges

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[1] Knowledge management and communications will support the achievement of every single outcome and output of the UN-REDD Programme Results Framework, as it will be based on the technical work and knowledge from each programme area.

improve and accelerate their REDD+ actions due to easier access to best practices, tools and lessons learned.	UN Environment	2018 - 2020	- Number and length of visits to the Workspace have increased by 10% (compared to 2017) (MoV: Workspace analytics)	2017 number and length of visits to Workspace
			2019 - 2 additional countries have increased their knowledge by participating in a South-South Knowledge Exchange (MoV: knowledge event reports) - Number and length of visits to the Workspace have increased by 20% (compared to 2017) (MoV: Workspace analytics)	
			2020 - 2 additional countries have increased their knowledge by participating in a South-South Knowledge Exchange (MoV: knowledge event reports) - Number and length of visits to the Workspace have increased by 25% (compared to 2017) (MoV: Workspace analytics)	
Output 3.4. The role of forests for green economic growth and climate action is better understood by policy-makers	UN Environment	2018 - 2020	2018 - Number of articles directly linked to the Programme's media relations efforts in top-tier or global environmental media has increased by 100 per cent (compared to 2017) (MoV: media monitoring) - Number of followers across social media platforms has increased by 15% (compared to 2017) (MoV: social media data)	2017 amount of respective articles 2017 social media data
			2019 - Number of articles directly linked to the Programme's media relations efforts in top-tier or global environmental media has increased by 150 per cent (compared to 2017) (MoV: media monitoring) - Number of followers across social media platforms has increased by 30% (compared to 2017) (MoV: social media data)	

| | | | 2020
- Number of articles directly linked to the Programme's media relations efforts in top-tier or global environmental media has increased by 200 per cent (compared to 2017) (MoV: media monitoring)
- Number of followers across social media platforms has increased by 50% (compared to 2017) (MoV: social media data) | |

Annex 2: Risk Management Framework

Risk description	Rating	Mitigation measure
External risks		
Countries shift priorities from REDD+ implementation to broader Sustainable Development Agenda implementation	P= Medium I = Medium	The knowledge management and communications proposal is built around communicating and making accessible REDD+ knowledge but retains enough flexibility to refocus its direction or tools. By working closely with Partner Countries the Programme will be able to foresee such a development in time.
Countries request direct support on external communications (media relations, strategy development etc)	P= Medium I = Low	This has happened sporadically in 2016 and the global team was able to support with strategy review etc. However, the priority of the cross-cutting component is to scale up accessibility of knowledge on a global level and only limited resources can be directed to direct country support.
A changing global discourse on climate change or the role of forests requires stronger advocacy	P = low I = medium	The current cross-cutting plan prioritizes sharing of knowledge among Partner Countries over active advocacy towards a larger audience of decision makers and wider public. The strengths of the communications and knowledge management system developed lies in its ability to quickly adapt to new circumstances, and to retool and expand advocacy efforts if needed.
Media lacks interest in covering UN-REDD content	P = Low I = medium	In our experience media can be interested in covering REDD+ if provided with compelling, relevant and new material. In case we are not able to engage with media to the intended extent we will still reach and engage with target audiences via social media and events.

Risk description	Rating	Mitigation measure
Key audiences are not being reached	P = low I = high	This risk will be mitigated via a precise definition of target audiences and objectives and a regular evaluation of our communication activities, including feedback loops. Activities are designed in a way that they allow for rapid adaptation of activities when needed to better reach the target audience with the right content and message.
Internal		
Thematic areas use proprietary knowledge management channels and tools and do not leverage synergies via cross-cutting channels and tools	P= medium I =medium	The global component has been developed in close cooperation between the three agencies leading on the thematic areas to ensure that tools are intertwined and the Programme is stronger than the sum of its parts in knowledge management dissemination. With its global knowledge management team the Programme has a pro-active practice to mitigate any deficits to close collaboration that might occur over the course of the next three years.
Content is not sufficiently fed into cross-cutting communications channels by technical and regional teams	P = medium I = medium	While technical and country teams understand sharing of content with the cross-cutting function as part of their job description they are not always best suited to identify stories or simply have other priorities. The cross-cutting team will be well positioned to balance this especially through the content creation contractors (writer, photojournalist, videojournalist)

* P: Probability; I: Impact; TBD: To Be Determined