

UN-REDD Africa Regional Knowledge Exchange 2017

Navigating the Transition from REDD+ Readiness to Implementation

Conference Room 9 | UN Office at Nairobi (UNON) | 19-21 September 2017

Context

Navigating the transition from REDD+ readiness to implementation seems to be a common trend among African countries that have been systematically engaged in the REDD+ mechanism over the past years. There are new and increasing international opportunities to finance REDD+ implementation. While accessing to REDD+ finance and embedding forests in national efforts to build low carbon economies remains a challenge many countries in Africa are confronted with, there is a number of emerging experiences and innovations related to the transition from readiness to implementation in the region.

The 2017 UN-REDD Africa Knowledge Exchange aims to contribute to accelerating this transition by providing a space for focused technical dialogue and experience sharing among eleven partner countries in the region. The proposed agenda has fundamentally built on country needs identified in the Global Survey UN-REDD has undertaken with partner countries globally to consult them on the development of its Programme of Work for 2018-2020. Responses from REDD+ focal points were collected between April and June 2017. Out of the 11 focus countries of the 2017 Africa Knowledge Exchange, 9 have responded.

7 out of 9 countries have identified South-South knowledge cooperation and regional knowledge exchanges as highly valuable knowledge instruments to be promoted by UN-REDD. In general terms, the areas in which UN-REDD assistance would benefit countries the most as per the four UNFCCC Warsaw pillars were forest monitoring system (67% of responses) and safeguards information system (SIS - 56% of responses). Support to the design and implementation of REDD+ investment plans figured as a key regional need, which further justifies the focus of this Knowledge Exchange on the transition from readiness to implementation. 7 out 9 respondents have rated investment plans as a highly valuable topic to best support their REDD+ work in the context of UN-REDD future knowledge management and communications offering. Besides, 6 out of 9 countries have rated participation of private sector in REDD+ as a crucial theme in rendering their National Strategies / policies and measures operational alongside support to investment planning and design of national funding mechanisms for REDD+.

The 2017 UN-REDD Regional Knowledge Exchange is an invitation to delve deeper in these identified priorities in a format that privileges spontaneous experience sharing over formal presentations with the purpose of supporting and hopefully catalysing REDD+ implementation in Africa.

Objectives

- Strengthen the REDD+ community of practice in Africa through knowledge sharing, learning and cooperation among partner countries in support of REDD+ advancement in the region.
- Identify the main technical needs for successful completion of REDD+ readiness in the region and capture key lessons on how best countries are seeking to address these needs as they transition to REDD+ implementation.
- Map out emerging experiences with REDD+ implementation in Africa through different sources of financing and identify the main opportunities and challenges countries are confronted with in this space.
- Identify opportunities for future South-South collaboration in the region, including through the UN-REDD Global Programme in 2018-2020.

Participating countries

Two technical experts from eleven UN-REDD partner countries in Africa are invited to participate in the knowledge exchange. The criteria for identifying these countries were: (i) partners that have made considerable progress on REDD+ readiness, and (ii) partners that are working towards implementation by successfully mobilizing different sources of finance, including the private sector. Focus countries are:

1. Côte d'Ivoire
2. Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)
3. Republic of Congo (Congo)
4. Ethiopia
5. Ghana
6. Kenya
7. Liberia
8. Madagascar
9. Nigeria
10. Uganda
11. Zambia

Agenda

UN-REDD Africa Regional Knowledge Exchange 2017 <i>Navigating the Transition from REDD+ Readiness to Implementation</i> Conference Room 9, UN Office at Nairobi (UNON), 19-21 September 2017		
Time	Session	Responsible
Tuesday, 19 September 2017		
9:00-9:10	Welcome remarks	Mette Wilkie, Director, Ecosystems Division, UN Environment
9:10-9:40	Introduction: exchange objectives, participants and expectations from the event	Tony Atah, Moderator
Part 1: Setting the scene: readiness stock-taking		
9:40-11:00	National REDD+ Strategies and Action Plans (NS/AP) National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS) Forest Reference Emission Level/ Forest Reference Level (FREL/FRL) Safeguards Information System (SIS)	DRC Zambia Uganda Ghana Moderator: Elsie G. Attafuah, Head UNDP UN-REDD Africa
11:00-11:20	Coffee-break	
11:20-12:30	Setting the scene: readiness stock-taking (continued)	All Moderator: Elsie G. Attafuah, Head UNDP UN-REDD Africa
12:30-1:30	Lunch	
Part 2: Transitioning from readiness to implementation		
1:30-3:30	Investment Planning	Elsie G. Attafuah, Head UNDP UN-REDD Africa Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Liberia and Zambia
3:30-3:50	Coffee-break	
3:50-4:20	Investment Planning	Bruno Hugel, Global Advisor on National Strategies, UNDP
4:20-4:30	Close of Day 1	Tony Atah, Moderator
Wednesday, 20 September 2017		
8:30-10:30	Access to REDD+ Finance: preliminary experiences on the implementation phase	DRC, Liberia, Ethiopia and Madagascar

		Moderator: Thais Narciso, Regional Technical Advisor for Africa, UN Environment
10:30-10:50	Coffee-break	
10:50-12:50	SIS: design, operation and application	Steve Swan, UN-REDD Global Safeguards Coordinator, UN Environment Group Work
12:50-2:00	Lunch	
2:00-4:00	Reconciling REDD+ monitoring at scale	DRC, Côte d'Ivoire Moderator: Wesley Roberts, NFMS Expert, FAO Group Work
4:30-4:40	Close of Day 2	Tony Atah, Moderator
4:40-5:00	Coffee	
Thursday, 21 September		
9:00-11:00	From reference levels to results reporting: REDD+ under the UNFCCC	Panel of countries that submitted a FREL/FRL to the UNFCCC Moderator: Marieke Sandker, FREL/FRL Expert, FAO
11:00-11:20	Coffee-break	
Part 3: Stock-taking on lessons learned in the exchange and next steps		
11:20-12:20	Concluding plenary: stock-taking on lessons learned in the exchange and next steps	All Moderator: Mihaela Secrieru, Regional Knowledge Management Specialist, UN-REDD
12:20-12:30	Close of the Exchange	Government of Kenya Tony Atah, Moderator
12:30-1:30	Lunch	

ANNEX: Structure of the exchange

The exchange is organized in three parts:

1. Setting the scene: readiness stock-taking

Format: Four speakers - 1 partner country per Warsaw Pillar - will be invited to take part at a round-table conversation in which they will respond to a set of questions (no PowerPoint presentations, please!) followed by an open debate with all participants.

Rationale: The objective of this introductory session is to set the scene of how countries are experiencing the transition from REDD+ readiness to implementation by revisiting completion of the four Warsaw pillars under a critical light. In particular, speakers will be invited to reflect upon the REDD+ readiness aspects they feel need to be revisited as implementation phase takes shape, as well as on the lessons learnt and challenges associated with completing parts of readiness while embarking on implementation at the same time.

Moderator: Elsie G. Attafuah, Head UNDP/UN-REDD Africa

Structure: selected speakers and guiding questions for discussion

i. National REDD+ Strategies and Action Plans (NS/AP): DRC

Proposed guiding questions:

- What are the key REDD+ policies and measures (PAMs) that your country prioritized in the design of the NS/AP?? Since the completion of your NS/AP, have you felt the need to revisit one or more PAMs in order to render them truly 'bankable'? If so, why and how did you go about achieving that?
- The NS/AP is not a "one-off" document or process but needs to be continuously integrated into key policy, programming and financing processes. How are you integrating the NS/AP into key policy, programming and financing processes in your country? What are some of the challenges and opportunities and how do you intend to take advantage of the opportunities concretely?
- How is your country facilitating inter-sectoral coordination to ensure effective and efficient implementation of the NS/AP?
- Do you feel your NS/AP is a useful policy framework to support the delivery of your country's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC)? Is coordinating the financing your NS/AP with NDC implementation efforts an option you are exploring or would like to explore?
- What are the main issues you are confronted with in attempting to render your NS/AP operational? What lessons have you learnt and what would you recommend to countries that are in the process of finalizing their NS/AP?

ii. National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS): Zambia

Proposed guiding questions:

- What were the opportunities and challenges in your national context informing the design of your NFMS?
- What are the main issues (i.e.: financial, technical, and capacity needs) you are confronted with in rendering your NFMS operational and how are you dealing with them?
- Do you have a National Forest Inventory (NFI) for estimating Emission Factors? What are the main factors limiting your ability to complete and institutionalise NFI; capacity gaps, financial limitations, others?
- Do you have a Satellite Land Monitoring Systems (SLMS) for estimating Activity Data? What are the main factors limiting your ability to complete and institutionalise SLMS; capacity gaps, financial limitations, others?
- How is your planning for submission of your Biennial Update Report (BUR)? How is the improved forest information from your NFMS informing your BUR submission?
- How is the thinking on linkages between different Warsaw Pillars in your country? For example, is there any ambition of linking SIS and NFMS (i.e.: NFMS contributing as a main information source for the SIS or NFMS potentially hosting the SIS) or how is the definition of priority REDD+ PAMs in your NS/AP informing considerations for how to render the NFMS operational?

iii. Forest Reference Levels/ Forest Reference Emission Levels (FREL/FREL): Uganda

Proposed guiding questions:

- What is/has been the largest challenge in the process of constructing a FREL/FREL in your country? Why was this a challenge and how have you addressed the challenge?
- What are/have been key considerations for your country in selecting the scale (subnational/national) in the FREL/FREL?
- Which REDD+ activities have you selected in your FREL/FREL and what were the main considerations for selecting these activities?
- What are the linkages between your country's proposed FREL/FREL and your Climate Change Strategy/ Low Carbon Strategy/ National REDD+ Strategy or REDD+ Action Plan?

iv. Safeguards Information System (SIS): Ghana

Proposed guiding questions:

Design of an SIS tends to be the last pillar to be contemplated in REDD+ readiness as it largely builds on previous pillars, most notably the REDD+ PAMs outlined in the National REDD+ Strategy. To date, no country in the world has officially completed the design of its SIS, although many are making progress in rendering UNFCCC guidance on safeguards relevant to their national contexts.

- Where is your country with regards to the design of an SIS; can you summarize the process so far?
- What were the main lessons learnt from the SIS design process thus far; what experiences can be gleaned from the broader safeguards process and that to develop REDD+ PAMs?
- What are the main opportunities and challenges associated with mobilizing and connecting existing national (and subnational) institutions for rendering the SIS operational?
- How have national (subnational) stakeholders been mobilized so far in the design of your SIS; what has been the process of stakeholder engagement in designing the SIS?

2. Transitioning from readiness to implementation

Sub-sections:

i. Investment Planning

Rationale: Many countries, including those in Africa, have shown considerable leadership in implementing REDD+ through investment planning processes aimed at making their NS/AP and other Warsaw framework elements operational. Investment planning helps a country to define, scope and prioritize key investments as well as the associated costs. Amongst others, investment planning is to help facilitate the implementation of policies and measures as well as mobilise the requisite financing and investments associated with the implementation of the NS/AP. It is also intended to provide an outlook for future results based finance phase.

In addition to the above, the investment planning process is also intended to help provide guidance and coordinate sectoral investments, including at the landscape level, noting the number of existing and emerging REDD+ and REDD+ related initiatives in many countries. This is important as the full potential of these ongoing and emerging initiatives would need to be aggregated for the implementation of the NS/AP. Finally, it is worth mentioning that, investment planning processes, constitute a wide range of actions. While the term investment plan may be called differently in others countries, the essence of it is what this session seeks to elaborate.

The overall rationale of the session is to equip countries with information and knowledge on experiences, lessons and overall strategic directions in implementing REDD+ through robust investment planning processes.

Moderator: Elsie G. Attafuah, Head UNDP/UN-REDD Africa

Structure:

- The session will include a PowerPoint Presentation to present a general overview of what investment planning entails, including prioritization of REDD+ investments, costing and budgeting of REDD+ investments, mobilizing public and private finance for REDD+.

establishment of REDD+ financing mechanisms and developing monitoring and evaluation systems for REDD+.

- Case studies from Africa will be presented and discussed including drawing experiences from Cote d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Liberia and Zambia.
- An iterative process of facilitation will be employed, including a talk show to ensure an active plenary session.
- Experiences and lessons from Investment planning processes in Latin America and the Caribbean as well as in Asia and Pacific will be shared by Bruno Hugel, UNDP Global Advisor on National Strategies, through VC.
- Details of some of the elements discussed in this session will be further expanded upon in other sessions of the exchange.

ii. Access to REDD+ Finance: preliminary experiences on the implementation phase

Rationale: The UNFCCC establishes that results-based payments/finance (RBPs) will come from a variety of sources, including public and private, bilateral and multilateral. The Convention further acknowledges market-based approaches may be considered in rendering REDD+ operational. The Green Climate Fund (GCF) is one of the official financial mechanisms under the UNFCCC and is expected to become the go-to institution under the Convention for REDD+ results-based payments/finance. GCF RBP guidance is currently under development. In addition, there is a myriad of other sources of finance currently at play – namely, jurisdictional programmes under the FCPF Carbon Fund and BioCarbon Fund; bilateral initiatives such as on-going agreements between many forested developing countries and either Norway or Germany’s KfW REDD+ Early Movers Programme, and the voluntary carbon markets. Many partner countries in Africa are grappling with access to REDD+ finance through different initiatives and approaches. The UN-REDD Global Survey on its 2018-2020 Programme of Work reviews that 8 out of 9 exchange focus countries expect the GCF to be a priority source of finance for the land-use activities under their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to the UNFCCC. 7 out of 9 countries expect UN-REDD technical assistance, World Bank finance and bilateral agreements to finance land-use mitigation actions under their NDCs. At the same time, the Survey revealed that 6 out of 9 countries felt they would ‘perhaps’ have mobilized domestic and international REDD+ implementation finance by the end of 2018, thus demonstrating a material level of uncertainty related to this theme. The purpose of this sub-section will be to share invaluable emerging experiences on key opportunities and challenges in this space among African partner countries.

Structure: This 2h sub-section will be structured around a round-table discussion and active plenary interaction and discussion.

Moderator: Thais Narciso, Regional Technical Advisor for Africa, UN Environment

Part 2 Sub-section (ii): Access to REDD+ Finance		
15 mins	Ice-breaker: plenary show of hands	Moderator asks countries to raise their hands if they have acceded to each of the following modalities of finance: bilateral agreements, World Bank CF/BioCF, GCF, private sector Moderator invites Madagascar to very briefly elaborate on the following points: (i) modality of access to finance, (ii) main activities financed (PAMs), and (iii) how long it took to structure this modality of finance
75 mins	Round-table discussion (No PowerPoint presentations!)	The following Panellists will respond to questions from the moderator on selected themes: Video message from Tosi Mpanu Mpanu (<i>TBD</i>), Member to the GCF Board, DRC on GCF and REDD+ DRC on Jurisdictional REDD+ Liberia on private sector engagement Ethiopia: Lessons on securing a Norway bilateral agreement
30 mins	Q&A plenary and panel members	All

iii. Safeguards Information Systems (SIS) Design, Operation and Application

Rationale: Since the SIS is the last Warsaw pillar to be contemplated by countries, a number of countries have embarked in REDD+ implementation while developing their SIS. In the UN-REDD Global Survey on its 2018-2020 Programme of Work, SIS was rated the second area where UN-REDD assistance would benefit countries the most. At the same time, completing the design of SIS, and submitting a first summary of information on Safeguards to the UNFCCC, was the area countries felt most confident about progress by the end of 2018. It follows that the purpose of this sub-section is to provide an informative overview of key considerations related to SIS design, operationalization and preparing for results-based Payments (RBPs) based on country experiences. Emphasis will be in creating a community of practice amongst African countries for virtual experience-sharing and consultation as they make progress in this Warsaw pillar.

Moderator: Steve Swan, UN-REDD Global Safeguards Coordinator, UN Environment

Structure:

Part 2 Sub-section (iii): Safeguards Information System (SIS) Design, Operation and Application		
5 mins	Presentation by UN-REDD global Safeguards Coordinator (Steve Swan)	SIS and summaries of information overview
15	Presentation by Zambia	SIS design: an illustrative example from Zambia

mins	Forestry Department (Victor Chiiba)	
10 mins	Q&A	all
60 mins	World Café (participants self-select station; one optional rotation at 30 mins)	3 thematic topics: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. How to design a SIS? (for debutante countries) [Wahida] ii. How to make a SIS operational? (institutional/ political ownership, inter-agency information sharing agreements, institutional capacity development, etc.) [Steve] iii. What to include in a summary of information? (for countries starting implementation) [Thais]
30 mins	'Safeguards FM'	Plenary reporting from group work in radio news bulletin style

iv. Reconciling REDD+ at scale

Rationale: REDD+ is a national scale mitigation mechanism voluntarily adopted by countries across the world. However, several countries have used a subnational approach to implement their REDD+ activities as interim measures, helping countries to test approaches and tools on the field, including FREL/FREL, NFMS, Safeguards, PAM, etc. for potential “+” actions and administrative arrangements of a country.

*Decision 4/CP.15 requests party countries to “establish, according to national circumstances and capabilities, robust and transparent national forest monitoring systems and, if appropriate, **sub-national systems as part of national monitoring systems**”*

*Decision 1/CP.16 requests to develop the following elements: “(b) A national forest reference emission level and/or forest reference level or, if appropriate, as an interim measure, **subnational forest reference emission levels and/or forest reference levels**, in accordance with national circumstances, [...]; (c) A robust and transparent national forest monitoring system for the monitoring and reporting of the activities referred to in paragraph 70 above, with, if appropriate, **subnational monitoring and reporting as an interim measure**, in accordance with national circumstances, [...]”.*

*The decision 12/CP.17165: “Acknowledges that **subnational** forest reference emission levels and/or forest reference levels may be elaborated as an interim measure, while transitioning to a national forest reference emission level and/or forest reference level, and that **interim** forest reference emission levels and/or forest reference levels of a Party may cover less than its entire national territory of forest area”.*

Combining National and subnational REDD+ efforts has become a main challenge for countries that want to move forward from the preparation to the implementation phase, developing Jurisdictional REDD projects. ERP and FIP zones of the FCPF, other jurisdictional projects based on VCS, countries like Côte d’Ivoire where AFD has implemented a REDD+ pilot project, Colombia with a voluntary carbon market

project implemented by ONFI, and DRC where there is a VCS project inside the ERP project are clear examples of the overlap between national readiness and subnational implementation.

Some of the challenge of REDD+ initiatives at multi-scale are:

- Information sharing and learning: sharing information between an organization and the government may not require a direct dialog among them. This makes it difficult for the country to have information on where relevant REDD+ projects are being implemented in their territory and how they can support or inform the national REDD+ process.
- The RBPs/RPF may not be managed by a central fund or financial mechanism, which can cause that resources coming from REDD+ activities have different monetary inputs, hindering the correct implementation of activities and making the carbon market volatile. At the same time, local stakeholders may be confused with having two or three channels of communication, which may generate false expectations about the benefits that REDD+ can bring in the region.
- Projects at subnational scale should manage and minimize leaks and displacement of emissions, which is one of the seven UNFCCC safeguards.
- Finally, different approach of the NFMS and FREL/FRL may result in incoherence and inconsistency of emissions results. So, governments must harmonize methodologies at national and subnational level to avoid gaps or/and double accounting.

Moderator: Wesley Roberts, NFMS Expert, FAO

Structure:

- ➔ Presentation of a real case by a country (DRC case, because of the technical issues/concerns identified, and Côte d'Ivoire based on their experience dealing with multiple subnational projects ensuring the use of common methodologies)
- ➔ Discussion around this case
- ➔ How to take into consideration sub-national project such as ERPD and harmonize? Especially when ERPD was designed before the FREL/FRL at national scale

v. From reference levels to results reporting: REDD+ under the UNFCCC

Rationale: FAO has just released a new publication: “From reference levels to results reporting: REDD+ under the UNFCCC” in 2017 (<http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/f477bd32-d45c-4470-bdf0-3f9333a11221/>). This publication will be presented and a technical discussion will be held on the content of the document.

This publication provides a status report on progress and achievements related to the MRV of REDD+ activities, as well as an update on activities related to countries’ submissions of their Forest Reference (Emission) Levels (FRELs/FRLs). The report also summarizes experiences with the technical assessment process, as of early 2017, and offers an overview of initial REDD+ results reporting and technical analyses of those reports.

Structure: This sub-section will be initiated with an overview presentation summarizing the global progress on FREL/FRL submissions and REDD+ results reporting to the UNFCCC followed by an interactive session where a panel of countries which submitted their FREL/FRL in 2016 or 2017 will answer questions from the audience. After the presentation providing the global state of FREL/FRL and REDD+ results submissions to the UNFCCC, a panel is formed by countries which submitted a FREL/FRL to the UNFCCC. The panel will respond to questions from the audience, sharing experiences and giving advice to countries in the phase of preparing a FREL/FRL. African countries which submitted a FREL/FRL to the UNFCCC in 2016 or 2017 are Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Madagascar, Republic of Congo, Uganda, Tanzania and Zambia.

Moderator: Marieke Sandker, FREL/FRL Expert, FAO

3. Concluding plenary: stock-taking on lessons learned in the exchange and next steps

Rationale: This session aims to be a space for stock-taking of key lessons learned through the event, with a focus on main opportunities and challenges. The objective is to provide an overview of the main technical needs related to concluding readiness and REDD+ implementation efforts in the region while highlighting the main opportunities and challenges associated with them. The session will also aim to consult countries on how best the UN-REDD Programme can continue to support them in the 2018 horizon from a knowledge management perspective.

Structure: The moderator presents one slide on key take-aways from each session in the exchange as well as on participants' views on topics they wished were discussed further or that were not in the exchange (participants will be invited to collate post-its on these themes on the wall throughout the exchange). An open discussion on lessons learned in each part of the exchange and key needs for UN-REDD support going forward will then follow. Participants will be encouraged to share which perceptions they already had that were reinforced during the event and what new insights emerged over the two days of discussion.

Moderator: Mihaela Secrieru, Regional Knowledge Management Specialist, UN-REDD