

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
BDP/EEG - MISSION REPORT SUMMARY
 Date: 20 March 2013



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Approved Mission Itinerary:
 BKK- Phnom Penh/Stung Treng/Siem Reap – BKK

List of Annexes:

Inclusive Travel Dates:
 21 – 26 Jan 2013 (Celina)
 27 Jan – 1 Feb 2013 (Celina, Jen, Tim)
 20 – 22 Feb (Celina)

Key counterpart(s) in each location:

- CO – Lay Khim, Sovanny Chhum, Giacomo Fedele
- REDD+ Taskforce Secretariat Staff – Lun Kimhy, Heang Thy, Peter Iversen (Technical Advisor)

Purpose/Objectives of Mission

- Provide technical support to the (i) ethnic minority/IP reselection process; (ii) formation of a Voluntary Facilitation Committee for the REDD+ Consultation Group (21 – 26 Jan);
- Support scoping exercise to identify potential consensus building mechanisms for forest and land-use disputes in the process of getting ready for REDD+ (pilot for UNDP corporate grievance mechanism) (27 Jan – 1 Feb);
- Conduct capacity building for the facilitation team of the ethnic minority/IP reselection process; and present SE experiences at the CSO REDD+ Network Quarterly Meeting (20 – 22 Feb).

Context

The REDD+ Taskforce Secretariat is currently coordinating the reselection of an IP representative to the Programme Executive Board (PEB), and the Voluntary Facilitation Committee (VFC) for the REDD+ Consultation Group (CG) processes. The former has taken place in four out of 15 provinces, while the latter is set to finalize the members of the VFC. The VFC is expected to guide the formation of the CG, which is tasked to provide feedback and advice to the national REDD+ Taskforce. The reselection process has been adaptive by taking on board recommendations from Nok Ven, the current IP representative to the PEB. Concurrently, the national and international CSOs have started to organize themselves in order to engage with the national efforts to be REDD+ ready.

Cambodia CO has contracted David Fairman from the Consensus Building Institute to assess REDD+ conflict resolution / consensus building mechanisms. The findings are expected to inform the on-going design of a UNDP corporate-level grievance redress mechanism as well as fulfill FCPF requirements.

Summary of Mission Activities/ Findings

A. Ethnic minority / IP reselection process

- The reselection process in Stung Treng province took place on 24 January, and was attended by 21 IPs, of which 6 were female, from 3 districts. Provincial authorities had been invited by the facilitation team to observe the process.
- The program included an overview of the REDD+ readiness in Cambodia; a climate change animation produced by the Global Canopy Programme that had been translated to the Khmer language; and sharing by Nok Ven on the roles and responsibilities of an IP PEB representative, as well as the link between climate change, forests and IP.
- During the nomination process, IPs gathered according to their districts and selected 2 candidates per district for election. An open ballot voting followed after introductions by each candidate. The provincial candidate selected for Stung Treng province was a 25-year old female who won by a landslide. The deciding factors were that she was literate and had attended leadership trainings offered by various on-going projects.
- Observations:
 - Both provincial authorities and IPs had good relationships, with the former supportive of the self-selection process.
 - The climate change animation caught and maintained the attention of the audience.
 - The facilitation team could benefit from capacity building on REDD+ concepts, SE principles, and basic presentation skills.
 - A need to keep the selected provincial candidates informed in the time between provincial and national level elections.

B. Capacity Building for Facilitation Team

- The one-day capacity building event on 21 February was attended by facilitation team members from the Secretariat, as well as Nok Ven.
- Observations:
 - General information about UNFCCC negotiations pertaining to REDD+ was useful. However, more work is required to ensure members can make that link to their current work.
 - Similarly, the session introducing SE principles needs to differentiate principles, objectives and approaches better.
 - Anticipating financial gains as the main incentive from national REDD+ activities, possibly stemming from greater familiarity with the voluntary carbon project in Oddar Meanchey province.
- Field challenges faced by facilitation team:
 - Ability to manage expectations of provincial authorities and IPs in terms of the anticipated benefits from REDD+, mostly in terms of financial gains. Both parties had interpreted the consultative and inclusive reselection process as a high probability for the province and/or communities to be selected as a REDD+ site/beneficiary. Conversely, in provinces without high forest coverage, both parties were asking how they can 'qualify' for REDD+.
 - In relation to the above, having sufficient technical knowledge and understanding of the national REDD+ strategy, and how REDD+ sites are selected.
 - Limited team members to conduct parallel re-selection processes in remaining provinces before the country's national election in June/July 2013.
- The Cambodian Indigenous Youth Association, of which Nok Ven represents, had formed an IP working group on REDD+, made up of 2 focal points per province. In the process, the IP communities had gone through basic awareness-raising about REDD+. The suggestion was therefore to include these focal points when the re-selection process takes place in their province.

C. Voluntary Facilitation Committee for the REDD+ Consultation Group Selection Process

- In December 2012, the Secretariat issued a second public announcement inviting interested candidates to form a VFC.
- During the mission, it was decided that the initial 2 candidates who had answered the first public announcement would convene a meeting with candidates who responded to the second public announcement. From there, the VFC would finalize a terms of reference note that outlined selection criteria for its members, tasks and timeline. It was also expected to guide the selection of the CG members.
- The VFC was formed in response to criticisms by interim CSO PEB representative, Chhith Sam Ath, that the CG selection process was rushed, and seen to be driven by the Secretariat. To their credit, the Secretariat had always emphasized their role as coordinator of the process.
- Followed up with Sam Ath and obtained his feedback to actions introduced in response to concerns he raised at the 3rd PEB meeting in December 2012.
 - While he was appreciative of on-going efforts, it would seem he had a very strong view of the role his NGO (The NGO Forum on Cambodia) would play, especially the IP reselection process; a view not supported by other NGOs or IP organizations.
 - Informed of the NGO Forum's intention to establish a CSO REDD+ Network made up of international and local NGOs working on REDD+. The aim is to share lessons and expertise while presenting a unified representation on REDD+ issues in Cambodia. The first quarterly network meeting was planned for end of February with an invitation extended to the UN-REDD Programme.

D. CSO REDD+ Network Quarterly Meeting

- Shared the Programme's mandate and existing guidelines on SE and FPIC. Questions were raised regarding how the Programme implements the relevant guidelines in Cambodia: ensuring genuine participation and representation by the IP and CSO.
- The Taskforce Secretariat presented the national REDD+ framework and the on-going activities to strengthen SE through IP and CSO representation in the PEB, VFC, CG and Technical Teams, all of which designed to advise and guide the REDD+ Taskforce.
- Observations:
 - A history of mistrust towards the government, and therefore some skepticism directed at current SE activities in the country.
 - Genuine efforts by the CSOs to create a common platform and present consolidated inputs, although it remains to be seen the extent to which they can set their individual differences aside.
 - In the advent of Cambodia as FCPF country, CSOs were wary of bearing the brunt of multiple

overlapping administrative and procedural requirements.

- Interest to learn more about safeguard information systems, how FPIC should be applied, and the contribution CSOs and IPs can make to MRV.

E. Scoping of grievance or dispute resolution mechanisms (DRM) for REDD+ (Celina, Jen, Tim)

- Examples from Oddar Meanchey community forestry and Kulen Promtep community protected area show that local level DRM exist and are largely effective. However, these DRM have limited success addressing conflict with the military and grievances beyond the provincial level.
- Lack of support to establish a separate cross-sectoral DRM for REDD+ at the national level at this point in time, because effectiveness is dependent on the political backing of the person or group assigned to the task. Along the same line, setting up separate DRM within government agencies is discouraged.
- Possibility to design and pilot DRM at provincial level, building on the success of the model in Oddar Meanchey. However, more information is required, e.g., clarity of roles, responsibilities, representation; openness to the role of NGOs; options for independent mediation; available capacity. Results from pilot should inform the discussion behind a national mechanism in the future. This is unlikely to take place prior to July because upcoming national election in June or July may bring some changes to politically-appointed positions.

Follow up actions:

- Feedback to global plans to design a SE training manual.
- Work with Secretariat to
 - informally assess the effectiveness of the one-day training
 - capture key lessons from current SE activities
 - link existing consultation and participation plans by other REDD+ projects
- Explore the possibility of an Institutional Context Analysis, followed by a Participatory Governance Assessment in the lead up to the design and pilot of a provincial DRM.

Distribution List:

- UNDP UN-REDD