



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

Back to Office Report

Submitted by Celina Yong and Aki Kono, UN-REDD

Title Regional Stakeholder Engagement Specialist and Regional Technical Advisor

Date submitted 20 February 2014

1. Practice area: BDP/EEG

2. Mission period (incl. of travel days)

From: 19 Jan to: 24 Jan (Celina), 25 Jan (Aki)

3. Type of mission: Technical backstopping and workshop

4. Clients
UNDP CO

NPD – Anura Sathurusinghe
PMU – Nalin Munasinghe (Manager), Prasad Ranjan Attygalle (UNDP Technical Advisor to the PMU)

5. Purpose of mission

To provide technical oversight and backstopping to ensure timely and coordinated progress of UNDP-led activities and the delivery of quality outputs in the implementation of Sri Lanka's UN-REDD National Programme

6. Documents, materials, resources

- Detailed activity implementation plan for 2014 and reviewed multi-year work plan
- Terms of reference including concept note and ToR of CSO Platform Thinkshop

7. Mission members

Celina Yong, Akihito Kono

8. Costs

UNDP/UN-REDD global budget

9. Brief summary of the mission

The MoE signed the NPD in December 2012, and the National Inception Workshop took place 7 June 2013. The PEB met for the second time in January 2014 since inception to approve the 2014 annual work plan and to review the progress made during 2013. No major issues were raised at that meeting. However, the IP reps, who also attended the PEB meeting for the first time as official members, raised eight key points, which are briefly described below, to be considered by the PEB.

Due to delays during inception, the UN-REDD National Programme in Sri Lanka is now six to eight months behind schedule. The main purpose of this mission was to stocktake the progress made in the UNDP led components in 2013 and help prepare detailed implementation plans for activities in 2014, 2015 and 2016 in order to pick up speed in implementation, and to ensure all activities are fully result-based and sequenced logically to deliver the expected outcomes of the NP.

The mission primarily focused on programming UNDP-led activities for 2014, in particular the analysis of drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, governance and capacity assessment activities, and stakeholder engagement beyond the indigenous peoples (IPs) and civil society organisations (CSOs). Concurrent to the mission, a CSO Platform Thinkshop was held on 23 January with the objective of spurring discussions leading to practical action points on CSO engagement, communications and capacity development.

9.a Findings

Discussion with UNDP and FAO COs

- Strong call from the government of Sri Lanka for projects, programmes and activities to be aligned with Mahinda Chintana, the National Development Policy Framework for 2010 to 2016 and its accompanying investment plan.
- In the development of a national REDD+ program, the Sri Lanka UN-REDD Programme will have to articulate how REDD+ can and will be anchored, and contribute to, the different sectors outlined in the framework.
- In discussion with Beth, FAO-R, the effectiveness of the current part-time CTA arrangement will be reviewed by the end of this year, and an alternative arrangement could be considered if necessary.
- Key constraints and opportunities of the NP were communicated to Lovita, UNDP DCD and Beth.
- Given the need to ensure full and effective participation of all key stakeholders and the upcoming Community-Based REDD+ (CBR+), CO colleagues confirmed and agreed on a need for a national officer to support the work on stakeholder engagement. It was suggested that an officer could be seconded from the Forest Department with expertise and experience in social forestry
- Due to evident lack of project management skills among the PMU staff members, there has been a general agreement to make the key PMU staff members Prince 2 certified. Ananda and Ramitha from UNDP might come up with an adapted version to

avoid the high cost of certification process, and Beth from FAO will also look into how this can be supported through the PMU budget.

- The difficulty to engage international consultants as the External Resources Department of the Government has a very strict screening procedure needs to be factored into activity planning and implementation.
- There is an apparent need to collaborate with the UNDP CO Governance Team, as a short discussion with the Team leader has revealed their in-depth knowledge and expertise on land governance and related justice and socio-economic issues - the report 'Results and Target Oriented Planning' might provide useful information.
- The Governance Team has suggested that the Policy Unit of UNRC would be a good vehicle for addressing many social justice issues that are politically sensitive in the country.

Discussion with Forest Department

- NPD has recently been promoted to Conservator General, and this presents an opportunity to mainstream REDD+ across the department's work and beyond the forest sector, but at the same time, he will have less time to focus on the NP and that poses a risk. He has agreed to appoint an alternate in due course.
- NPD has agreed to include the UN-REDD MPU manager in his staff meeting to give regular updates, and to organize regular technical update meetings between PMU and FD staff

Annual Work Plan 2014

- Due to an oversight by the PMU Manager, the AWP 2014 approved during the 2nd PEB meeting in January 2014 did not reflect the results and recommendations from the National Inception Workshop. Revisions followed by a re-adoption of the AWP will have to be done at the 3rd PEB meeting, tentatively scheduled in May 2014.
- The IP PEB member raised 8 points or expectations related to the Veddahs, ranging from income sources to infrastructure to land rights. The PEB had requested the NPD and PMU to review these expectations in light of the Programme.
- An urgent priority for the PMU Manager is a consolidated workplan and budget for the Programme, disaggregated by 3 agencies. Overall, national coordination of the Programme continues to be challenging, which might be detrimental to the Programme given its delayed implementation.
- Some of the key proposed revisions are:
 - Defer formation of REDD+ Programme Management and Coordination Committee (RPMCC) to Q4 2014/Q1 2015 given that the current PEB membership overlaps with RPMCC's. This provides time for various studies to be completed, while building the capacity of PEB members to be familiar with the Programme and REDD+.
 - Narrow the scope of the Roadmap to strategic policy alignment and positioning of REDD+ in the overall context of the national development agenda – Mahinda Chinthana, and directly build on the institutional review work under Output 1.2.
 - Address overlapping activities in the national programme, and some are for good reasons (e.g. Activities 4.1.1-4, 5.4.2., and 5.4.3 are complementary) and others need to be merged (e.g. Activities 1.2.5 and 1.3.1 are now merged).
 - Refer to the Integrated Strategic Environment Assessments (ISEA) as they might provide useful spatial information datasets and analyses for Output 4.1.
 - Divert some of the activities under Output 4.3 to CBR+ given the neutrality of the CBR+ implementation modality, those socio-politically sensitive activities would be much more appropriate and more effective under CSO- and community-led implementation.
- Ensure a common understanding that the national inception workshop had accepted to defer FPIC guidelines and pilot, and establishing a grievance mechanism (under Output 3.2) to 2015 and 2016, with a view that 2014 will build, consolidate and strengthen consultation, participation, and representation of stakeholders: CSOs, IP, private sector, media, national and provincial authorities.

CSO Platform Thinkshop

- Discussions that took place after a mock TV interview with experts from previous and on-going social and environmental projects revealed undercurrents between the CSO and government counterparts. This took place against a background where land grabbing was occurring in Nilgala Forest, spurring some environmental CSOs to organise a tree ordination ceremony participated by over 50 Buddhist monks.
- One positive outcome was a relatively frank exchange of opinion between both parties regarding perceived roles and responsibilities of civil society and governments. This could potentially be catalysed further through collaborative activities in upcoming Programme activities, with a broader intention to build common ground for substantive engagement for REDD+ and beyond.
- Break-out group discussions saw CSO Platform members reflecting on their strengths, specifically through how they overcame challenges. More importantly, how these strengths should be harnessed and reflected in the CSO Platform Work Plan for 2014 and Operational Framework.

Follow Up on Regional Gender Work

- A short discussion with Dr. Anoja Wickramasinghe to follow up on the recent gender work in Sri Lanka as part of the regional gender initiative has led to an agreement that more studies and promotion of CSO engagement in the topic are needed at this moment, and engaging with policy makers on gender and REDD+ might be a bit premature as there has not been much progress in REDD+ readiness.
- NPD, Dr. Anoja and two staff members from PMU will attend the knowledge sharing event in Bangkok.

9.b Results achieved (key outputs)

- Implementation plan and budget for UNDP-led activities in 2014;
- Monitoring and evaluation measures, including roles and responsibilities;
- Finalized terms of reference for governance and capacity assessment activities; and
- Input for the CSO Platform work plan 2014 and operational framework.

9.c Expected outcomes and impacts

- PMU is aware how the Sri Lanka UN-REDD Programme contributes to the development of a national REDD+ program; and
- Smooth implementation of priority UNDP-led activities in 2014.

10. Key counterparts

- NPD/Conservator General - Anura Sathurusinghe and A.W.W.L. Abeygunasekara (Deputy Conservator)
- FAO Rep – Beth S. Crawford
- UNDP CO – Lovita Ramguttee (DCD), Ananda Mallawatantri (ACD), Ramitha Wijethunga (Env.Prog), Rajendrakumar Ganesarajah (ACD, Govnance), SPG team
- PMU - Nalin Munasinghe, Prasad Adattygalle, and others
- CSO Platform – Hemantha Withanage (Centre for Environmental Justice), M.Renuka Badrakanthi (Weligepola-Balangoda), Thailak Kariyawasam (LOAM), and other
- Gender Expert – Dr. Anoja Wickramasinghe

11. Follow up action matrix

Action to be taken	By whom	Expected completion date
Develop response to 8 expectations raised by the IP representative in the PEB	Celina	Early March
Develop ToR to contract development of private sector engagement strategy	Celina and Prasad	Mid March
Finalise ToR for national stakeholder engagement officer	Ananda, Ramitha and Celina	March
Drivers Study Procurement	Prasad and Ramitha	1 st week of Feb
Draft ToR Roadmap	Aki and Prasad	Q1
Draft ICA ToR	Aki and Prasad	Q2
Draft BDS Study ToR	Aki and Prasad	Q4

12. Distribution list

UNDP UN-REDD