



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

Back to Office Report
Submitted by Celina Yong, UN-REDD
Title Regional Stakeholder Engagement Specialist
Date submitted 17 March 2014

1. Practice area: BDP/EEG

2. Mission period (incl. of travel days)
From: 4 to: 7 March

3. Type of mission: Technical backstopping

4. Clients
UNDP CO

PMU – Vathana Khun (Head of REDD+ Taskforce Secretariat),
Peter Iversen (CTA), Lun Kimhy (Coordinator), Heang Thy
(Communications Officer)

5. Purpose of mission
To review the performance of the Consultation Group (CG);
conduct preliminary background work on the establishment of a
Gender Group; and ensure the development of a Consultation and
Participation plan is on track.

6. Documents, materials, resources

7. Mission members
Celina Yong

8. Costs
UNDP/UN-REDD global budget

9. Brief summary of the mission

9.a Background

The REDD+ Consultation Group (CG), established through a self-selection process in August 2013, was designed as a platform to represent and provide civil society input to the REDD+ Taskforce (TF) in the development and implementation of a national REDD+ strategy. Although it has met four times, reports have revealed that the meetings have not provided substantive feedback to the TF. There have now been queries by the TF regarding the purpose and relevance of the CG. Furthermore, a majority of the representatives have not made genuine efforts to provide information and solicit feedback from their constituencies, focusing instead on individual or organisational viewpoints.

Parallel to this, RECOFTC Cambodia was awarded a contract to develop materials and deliver training, predominantly to the TF, CG, and Technical Teams. Another component of that contract was the development of a Consultation and Participation plan that will, among others, contain the work plan, and information and feedback mechanism of the CG. Emphasis was placed on a plan for the three community networks (forestry, fisheries and protected areas), and the indigenous peoples, in recognition that these groups face greater logistical and implementation challenges.

The TF in its recent meeting also requested the Secretariat to put together recommendations for the establishment of a Gender Group, partly in response to recommendations from the joint gender studies by LEAF, UN-REDD and WOCAN.

9.b Main Findings

- CG
 - The initial work plans proposed during the first national workshop conducted by RECOFTC Cambodia were developed based on unclear guidance from the training facilitators, and without a clear link in the relationship between CG and TF.
 - Met with RECOFTC Cambodia to ensure the development of a Consultation and Participation Plan for the CG is based on a well-defined scope, with clear linkages to the TF.
 - The Communications Officer had drafted a handbook comprising the function, rules, roles, responsibilities and general evaluation of members' performance. Currently reviewed by the NPD, more content may be required for the section on rules.

- Recommendations to establish a Gender Group
 - Visits to the Ministry of Interior (MOI) and Ministry of Women Affairs (MOWA) corroborated with findings from the joint study.

The key challenges revealed during the gender audit conducted by MOI are the lack of analytical and application skills to mainstream gender into the various sectors, and a lack of ownership among ministries.

- It is proposed that a Gender Group be established as a separate group of at least 12 persons, but each will be designated to one of the four technical teams. Recommended members are the Committee for Climate Change from MOWA, the various focal points from the Gender Mainstreaming Action Group from TF members' ministries, and pioneers in the civil society.
 - A further recommendation is to include a representative from MOWA as a member of the TF.
- Role of Nok Ven, IP representative in the PEB and the CG
 - There are reports that Nok Ven has been misrepresenting himself to the IPs in the provinces, e.g., naming himself as a co-chair of the PEB, and a board member of Cambodian Indigenous Youths' Association.
 - Having completed his term with NTFP-EP, a regional NGO focused on sustainable livelihoods from non-timber forest products, he is supposedly working for the Senate, based in Phnom Penh.
 - If reports are indeed accurate, it will damage efforts to ensure IPs are fully empowered to participate in the national REDD+ process, including upcoming work on CBR+.
 - Subsequent corrective action to be taken needs to be developed with guidance from influential regional IP representatives, and be implemented with due care.

9.c Bilateral Discussions

- Moeko Saito Jensen, CO
 - One of the recommendations from the preliminary review of safeguards was to identify priority areas that need to be strengthened. The Safeguards Technical Team had proposed to do this through three regional workshops – upland, lowland and coastal areas.
 - In the review of the World Bank's Free, Prior and Informed Consultation, vis a vis UN-REDD's Free, Prior and Informed Consent, the authors had suggested that key stakeholders be allowed to choose their preference between these two.
 - Clarified that it is not an either-or option, but rather consent is built on consultation and participation. Agreed to prepare a short concept paper outlining the relationship between the principles of consultation, participation and consent; and highlighting where consent is explicitly required.
- Teng Rithiny, a CG member and former Voluntary Facilitation Committee member, representing NGO Forum
 - Stated that the Chair of the CG, Mr Sophak from the academic group, does not provide strong leadership to guide the CG.
 - So far, discussions within CG meetings have focused more on procedural issues and lack of financing as opposed to substantive discussions regarding agenda items. There continues to be a confusion regarding the roles of the CG.
 - Agreed to take on a stronger role to guide the Chair, and indirectly the CG.
 - Shared that as the coordinator CSO REDD+ Network, they are taking the initiative to conduct trainings for network members to incrementally build understanding about REDD+ in the country context.
- Nguon Pheakdey, Royal University of Phnom Penh lecturer, PhD candidate with Clarks University, intern at RTS
 - The Seima Protection Forest REDD+ project, initiated by WCS, achieved a Community Agreement as evidence of consent given by the communities. It has also been seeking validation and verification from CCB standard.
 - However, the auditors have recommended a new round of consultation process take place based on the following findings:
 - Communities were unable to fully explain what they gave their consent for. Instead, they gave their consent in recognition of the role of the Village Head and their relationship with WCS.
 - They were supposedly not provided with the negative impacts of the project. Materials and discussions focused instead on using positive impacts such as tenure security, improved forest conditions and improved livelihoods through better access to non-timber forest products.
 - This emphasized the role a national FPIC guidelines can play to ensure good faith consultations, and negotiations are carried out with due diligence.

9.d Expected Outputs

- Revised concept note for the establishment of a Gender Group;
- A Consultation and Participation Plan that clearly outlines steps to be taken by the TF, CF and Technical Teams.

10. Key counterparts

- UNDP CO – Moeko Saito Jensen
- UNDP PMU – Peter Iversen (CTA), Lun Kimhy (Coordinator), Thy Heang (Communications Officer)

11. Follow up action matrix

Action to be taken	By whom	Expected completion date
Review development of Consultation and	Celina, RTS	End of June

Participation Plan by RECOFTC Cambodia		
Revise concept note on Gender Group	Celina	Immediately after mission
Seek advice from AIPP and NTFP-EP regarding Nok Ven	Celina	Q2
Strengthen section on internal rules in the Handbook for CG	Celina	Before end of March
Develop a concept note on the principles of consultation, participation and consent	Celina, Jen Laughlin	By end of March
12. Distribution list		
UNDP UN-REDD		