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Title Regional Stakeholder Engagement Specialist

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1. Practice area: BDP/EEG

2. Mission period (incl. of travel days)

From: 5 to: 9 May

3. Type of mission: Technical backstopping

4. Clients

UNDP CO

PMU

CSDM – Ms Luong Thi Truong, Ethnic Minority representative in the PEB

5. Purpose of mission

To provide technical oversight and input to the National Preparatory Meeting of Ethnic Minorities (EM) from 7 to 8 May, and the National EM Dialogue on 9 May 2014 Hanoi

6. Documents, materials, resources

7. Mission members

Celina Yong

8. Costs

UNDP/UN-REDD global budget

9. Brief summary of the mission

As part of on-going efforts to strengthen the full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples (IP) or Ethnic Minorities (EM) in national REDD+ processes in Asia-Pacific, the UN-REDD Programme based in the Asia-Pacific Regional Center in Bangkok, Thailand, is collaborating with a regional IP group – Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) to conduct a series of dialogues in three countries: Bangladesh (3 to 6 June 2014), Myanmar (29 April to 2 May 2014) and Viet Nam (7 to 9 May 2014). These dialogues consist of a national preparatory meeting among the EM, followed by a one-day dialogue between the EM with the relevant government agency leading REDD+, and the Programme.

The meetings in Hanoi, hosted and coordinated by CSDM, were attended by over 33 participants representing 10 EM groups. Ten of the participants are women. Approximately half of the participants were members of the Vietnamese Thai Network on Indigenous Knowledge (VTIK) run by CSDM. The national programme provided financial support for participants from six pilot provinces, but Ha Tinh province was unable to send participants as they were busy preparing for a Norwegian mission.

The key objectives of the events were to nominate an alternate EM representative to the PEB; determine a suitable national platform or network to coordinate EM consultation and participation in the Programme and beyond; brief assessment of the concerns, challenges facing the EM, together with opportunities for engagement, with clear steps forward. Not all these objectives were realised, especially the first. Instead, it was consensually agreed, that each UN-REDD Programme pilot province will nominate one to two EM representatives for two purposes: create a selected pool of human resources to mentor and build capacity in REDD+; and support Ms Truong in her role as EM PEB member. The nomination and selection process at the provincial levels needs to be designed and implemented with care, ensuring the principles of self-selection, authentic representation, transparency, and accountability are respected, while adhering to necessary official requirements.

Lessons learnt such as protocol requirements; coordination; proper selection of participants; gender balance; and strategic facilitation of discussions should inform future similar events. Nonetheless, the experience contributed towards creating an open environment where frank exchanges can continue take place among the EM themselves, and between the EM and the Programme.

9.a Main Findings

Preparatory Meeting, 7 to 8 May

- a. The capacity and familiarity with REDD+ among participants varied, including those from the 6 pilot provinces. As such, there was limited success in facilitating focused discussions on engagement strategies in REDD+ internally, and with relevant stakeholders such as government agencies. In the future, selection criteria for participants should be more focused on factors such as dependency on forests, basic familiarity with REDD+, so as to differentiate from general awareness raising activities. It was agreed that capacity and awareness at sub-national levels should be strengthened.

- b. The intention to nominate an alternate representative to the PEB was primarily unsuccessful because
 - EM participants at an earlier selection meeting on 28 March did not clearly specify whether an alternate of EM origin is a pre-requisite. As a result, there was a strong push for Mrs Hien from CERDA to fulfil this role. This was a nomination that originated from participants with prior involvement in CERDA's projects. It raised concerns as international and regional IPs fought hard to represent themselves in the international, regional and national REDD+ process, as opposed to a CSO or NGO working on EM issues. Mrs Truong will consult with EM groups for guidance;
 - Most participants did not really represent EM communities; instead are either individuals or loosely formed affiliations with organisations working on EM issues. There was general reservation to volunteer for the position because of a lack of clear mandate or permission from local authorities.
- c. Instead, the consensus was for each of the six pilot provinces to nominate two to three EM representatives to support Mrs Truong in her role as PEB member. It will help build a pool of EM representatives who can fully and effectively participate in Phase II of the Programme, and beyond.
- d. VTIK will function as the national platform for EM in REDD+. There was general agreement that the scope of VTIK roles and responsibilities will expand to REDD+, and include members from other provinces in the country, especially the six pilot provinces. Participants prepared specific terms of reference, and work plan for VTIK in this aspect. They will initially utilise existing communication channels and improve where necessary. This was a welcomed move given that VTIK has a proven track record in engaging with EM groups, albeit at a smaller scale.

National EM Dialogue, 9 May

- a. Participants welcomed the opportunity to discuss their concerns and recommendations directly with the PMU, noting the latter's openness and willingness to engage. This has created a dynamic of good will that should be cultivated. Invited guests included representatives from CEMA and NGOs such as ActionAid, Pan Nature and Forest Trend.
- b. Dr Cuong was unable to attend the dialogue due to a conflicting commitment, but nonetheless provided guidance to Mr Viet Dung, Communications Officer designated to represent the PMU. The well-crafted response to the participants' collective concerns, needs and recommendations was well-received.
- c. These concerns are categorised into communications, capacity building, and rationale for participation. Each was reviewed against related outputs in the ProDoc, and where available, details of proposed activities, and opportunities for collaboration highlighted. Noteworthy are calls to ensure livelihood security; clarity of rights over land and forest; recognition of customary laws and practices that are collective by nature.
- d. Thirteen recommendations were presented, including study tours to Lam Ha and Di Linh; availability REDD+ materials in local languages and other formats. Some were beyond the scope of the Programme, but could potentially be considered and/or addressed in the broader national context.
- e. Mrs Truong will spend the next few months to consult with VTIK members, particularly representatives from six pilot provinces to develop a detailed Work Plan with outcomes, outputs, indicators and logframe, for her role as PEB member.

Discussion with UNDP CO

- a. Authorities in six pilot provinces should be informed that Ms Hop and Mrs Truong have been selected as respective CSO and EM representatives in the PEB. CO can facilitate with PMU to inform VNFOREST, who will in turn notify the relevant provincial authorities.
- b. While CEMA and provincial CEMA chapters need to be included in this process, the actual level of involvement needs to be determined, taking into account their availability, capacity and effectiveness.
- c. As for identifying two to three representatives from six pilot provinces to support Mrs Truong as PEB member, CO and APRC will assist her to develop a concept note which will illustrate a nomination and selection process that is cognizant of national circumstances and internationally accepted principles.
- d. On-going discussions regarding the establishment of a STWG on EM will take place against a backdrop of reviving the REDD+ TWG and six STWGs. A common position needs to be reached soon to ensure concerns and outcomes from subnational activities are closely integrated into national policies.

9.c Results achieved (key outputs)

- Concept note of proposed nomination and selection process for EM representatives from six pilot provinces, resulting in better support for Mrs Truong in her role as PEB member.
- An upcoming detailed Work Plan of how EM will be consulted and contribute to the Programme.
- Revised ToRs
 - 5.2.1 – Conduct study on the traditional knowledge and practices on forest management and sharing the study results with a set of recommendations on the measures to replicate good practices and knowledge
 - 5.3.2 – Conduct studies and disseminate available reports/information on the roles of women, ethnic minorities and local communities in forest sector
 - 5.3.3 – Support to develop gender equity action plan for forestry sector and support gender equity strengthening when and where appropriate

- 5.3.4 – Develop roadmap / guidelines to ensure full and effective stakeholder participation in REDD+, especially the local communities and ethnic minorities people based on appropriate consultation manner

9.d *Expected outcomes and impacts*

- More effective participation of EM in the Programme, with lessons learnt to be shared nationally, regionally and globally.

10. Key counterparts

- UNDP CO – Dao Xuan Lai, Ngo Thi Loan, Pham Minh Thoa
- PMU – Pham Manh Cuong (NPD), Hoang Viet Dung (Communications Officer)
- EM – Luong Thi Truong, The Center for Sustainable Development in the Mountainous Areas (CSDM)
- AIPP – Joan Carling, Lakpa Nuri Sherpa

11. Follow up action matrix

Action to be taken	By whom	Expected completion date
Revise ToRs for Activities 5.2.1, 5.3.2, 5.3.3 and 5.3.4	Celina	19 May
Notification from VNFOREST to provincial authorities regarding selected CSO and EM representatives in the PEB	PMU, VNFOREST, facilitated by Loan/Thoa	31 May
Formation of STWG on EM	Thoa, Loan	On-going
Develop concept note for the selection of EM representatives from six pilot provinces	Truong, Thoa, Loan and Celina	End of Q2
Meeting and dialogue reports to be submitted to AIPP as project coordinator, to be shared with relevant national counterparts	Truong, Lakpa and Celina	June – July

12. Distribution list

UNDP UN-REDD, UNDP CO, PMU