

Outcomes from the First Stakeholder Consultation on the Bangladesh REDD+ Integrity Study¹

Dhaka, Bangladesh, 6 April 2013

1. Background : study objectives

Bangladesh has now finalized its National REDD+ Roadmap, a living document to start implementing activities for strengthening and establishing relevant policies and measures and building REDD+ capacities. In order to assist with these efforts, the Government of Bangladesh is receiving technical support from FAO and UNDP, through the UN-REDD Programme. In addition to technical and policy advice, the Forest Department has requested UNDP's targeted support to "assess risks to a transparent, equitable and pro-poor REDD+ system that are posed by corruption and social impacts, so as to design effective risk mitigation measures, as a contribution to Bangladesh's REDD+ Readiness Roadmap". As part of these efforts, a team consisted of a national consultant and an international UNDP staff, supported by the UNDP Country office and guided by national stakeholders and partners, will undertake a "REDD+ Integrity" study.

This initial consultation, held at Hotel Lake Castle in Dhaka, Bangladesh on 6 April 2013, sought to present the study context and objectives, obtain feedback on the methodology, and gather preliminary recommendations about some key issues.

2. Participants

This first stakeholder consultation gathered a dozen national participants (three women) from academia, NGOs, government, FAO and UNDP. A detailed list of participants is in Annex 1.

3. Presentation

Following welcome and introductory words by Tarik-ul-Islam, Assistant Country Director, UNDP Bangladesh, Estelle Fach, Governance Specialist at UNDP, UN-REDD-Programme and Dr. Danesh Miah, Associate professor, University of Chittagong provided a short presentation. They explained the background for the study, originating from the Government of Bangladesh request in 2012, the reason based on the UN-REDD Guidance on Conducting Corruption Risk Assessments in REDD+. The presentation may be downloaded [here](#).

¹ Prepared by Estelle Fach, UNDP, UN-REDD Programme with Dr Danesh Miah, Chittagong University

4. Feedback and discussions

a) Clarification on the scope and objective of the study

Although the study will clarify key capacity needs and recommendations to strengthen transparency and accountability for REDD+, which itself will contribute to position the country as a potential recipient of REDD+ finance, the study does not seek to determine whether Bangladesh is ready for REDD+ finance, but rather inform and propose recommendations towards that goal.

b) Selecting stakeholders

The selection procedure for key informant interviews needs to be clarified and guidance will be sought from this resource group.

The media, and especially reporters, are an important group to be polled and will be included in the stakeholder groups. Similarly, politicians, who are key drivers of integrity or lack of integrity, should be considered, along with their capacity needs. Engaging political actors to avoid the risk of collusion of interests is needed.

A total of nine focus group discussions (3 from Chittagong Hill Tracts, 3 from Sundarbans area and 3 from Sylhet region) were proposed, with three stakeholder workshops in each region. The discussion focused on an additional place of study. Those were deemed insufficient by stakeholders, who recommended including the Sal forests in Modhupur (central part of Bangladesh), as well as homestead forest areas for focus group discussions and a stakeholder workshop. It was however noted that there is no natural forest in the present homestead forest areas.

c) Depth

In order to effectively reach citizens, it was recommended to look into other means than web-based online questionnaire to reach broader range of citizens: look into mobile technology.

The need to ensure statistical significance was highlighted. For example, a target number of respondent for the anonymous survey should be determined, taking into account time constraints, and the number of individual interviewed should be sufficient. Consulting with statisticians was proposed.

The differences between the methodology for key informant interviews (KII), focus group discussions (stakeholders from the same group and with the same interests) and workshops (variety of stakeholders) were clarified. It was also clarified that the objectives of the workshops would be, after conducting the Focus group discussions and the interviews, to review these preliminary results and initiate thinking about recommendations to tackle the priority risks.

d) Using existing information

Examining the Climate Resilience fund has issues already. A proper mapping of integrity and procedures of these institutions is needed

Examining frameworks and systems (such as the Right to Information Act) was also recommended.

e) Other considerations

General recommendations included:

- Ensuring that the study is focused on actions and recommendation for various actors in the short, medium and long term;
- Ensuring that the study includes a mapping of the capacity and capacity needs of various actors and institutions to drive integrity in REDD+

5. Conclusion and next steps

Recommendations were taken on board, while recognizing the need to work within limited time constraints given the ongoing overall national REDD+ readiness process.

With this pioneer study, as well as the related UN-REDD targeted support study on social impact assessment, Bangladesh is contributing to the global process on REDD+. This trendsetting study is more a starting point than an end point, and its recommendations should inform future funding proposals towards more comprehensive efforts. This effort would require a number of stakeholders to contribute, in and outside the forest sector.

The participants informally agreed to form a **Resource Group** that would guide the study at different stages of its elaboration. This could include, as per their availability and capacities:

- Provide recommendations on key informants to be interviewed
- Respond to targeted questions from the national consultant regarding specific risks analyzed or recommendations formulated
- Review and provide feedback on the interim draft report (end of May 2013)
- Participate in the final validation workshop in June 2013

Annex: Participants list

Name	Title and institution	Email address
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