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**“Full and Effective Participation” in the UNFCCC
REDD+ Implementation in Cambodia**

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1 Global Forest Governance in the Context of Climate Change

Tropical forests are among the most important and complex ecosystems on Earth. They provide a wide range of environmental services, including biodiversity conservation, water supply management, carbon sequestration, flood control, and protection against soil erosion and desertification.¹ About 10 million people worldwide are employed in forest management and conservation, and it is estimated that 1.6 billion people – including more than 2,000 Indigenous cultures – depend on forests for their livelihoods.² Similar to other natural resources, tropical forests have also been under increasing pressure from human activities. They continue to disappear at an alarming rate, leading to substantial decreases not only in biodiversity, but also in the carbon contained therein.³ This decline in forested areas has also negatively affected the livelihoods of forest-dependent communities.⁴

Starting with the 2007 Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Parties identified the provision of incentives to developing countries to develop and implement policies and/or measures that would contribute to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation as an important means to address climate change. This initiative is now known as REDD+, which stands for **R**educing **E**missions from **D**eforestation and **F**orest **D**egradation, and **(+)** the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries.⁵ For its policy proponents, REDD+ is based on the simple notion that countries that are willing and able to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation by strengthening or establishing new forest conservation institutions and policies should be financially compensated for doing so.⁶

Since the 2007 COP, the UNFCCC has adopted decisions on several political and technical requirements that have guided the development and implementation of REDD+ policies and measures in participating countries. These include the adoption of a three-phased approach to REDD+ implementation, ending with results-based payment; national forest monitoring systems addressing drivers of deforestation and forest degradation; the establishment of a REDD+ fund; the adoption of social and environmental REDD+ safeguards; and the coordination of support for the implementation of activities in relation to mitigation actions in the forest sector by developing countries, including

¹ Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, *Ecosystems and human well-being: A framework for assessment* (The Island Press, 2003).

² World Bank, *World Development Report: Inclusive Green Growth: The Pathway to Sustainable Development* (The World Bank Group, 2012).

³ UN-REDD Programme, *UN Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (UN-REDD): Framework Document* (UN-REDD, 2008)

⁴ World Bank, n. 3 above.

⁵ UN-REDD Programme, *Beyond Carbon: Ecosystem-based Benefits of REDD+* (UN-REDD, 2010).

⁶ A. Angelsen et al. (eds.), *Analyzing REDD+: Challenges and choices* (Center for International Forestry Research, 2012);

N. Pheakkdey and D. Kulakowski, 'Natural forest disturbances and the design of REDD+ initiatives', 33 *Environmental Science and Policy* (2013), 332

institutional arrangements.⁷ Academic research on these various REDD+ topics has also been prolific and diverse throughout the last decade, ranging from the scientific calculation of biodiversity and carbon benefits that could come through REDD+,⁸ to discussions on justice and equity in REDD+ governance.⁹ To sum up, as a concept, REDD+ could be considered a success because it has ushered in a new approach to global environmental governance, enabling participating countries to address tropical deforestation and forest degradation, along with global climate change issues, with large-scale result-based funding as its defining characteristic.¹⁰

The possibility of substantial international funding to address deforestation and forest degradation, climate change, and associated issues has attracted more than 50 countries, piloting over 300 REDD+ projects.¹¹ However, serious concerns have been raised that REDD+ may exclude rural forest dependent local communities and Indigenous people from policy-making and benefit sharing, and even drive them away from the forests.¹² In developing countries, hundreds of millions of rural poor, including Indigenous peoples, are estimated to depend on forests for their subsistence and income.¹³ Since most of them lack forest tenure, they may not be able to claim their rights for customary territories and resources, or participate in decision-making processes. Thus, REDD+ has the possibility to induce heavy restrictions or bans over local use of forests for the very aim of carbon sequestration.¹⁴ In addition to these potential social risks, REDD+ may cause adverse impacts on forests that provide vital ecosystem services, such as clean water, the prevention of soil erosion, and the conservation of biodiversity. For instance, in the absence of appropriate environmental safeguards, REDD+ may be used

⁷ Decision 1/CP. 16, The Cancun Agreements: Outcome of the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention (UN. Doc. FCCC/CP/2010/7/Add.1, 15 March 2011); Decision 12/CP. 19. The timing and the frequency of presentations of the summary of information on how all the safeguards referred to in decision 1/CP.16, appendix I, are being addressed and respected (UN. Doc. FCCC/CP/2013/10/Add.1, 31 January 2014).

⁸ J. Busch *et al.*, 'Structuring economic incentives to reduce emissions from deforestation within Indonesia' 109:4 *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* (2012) , 1062; N. Harris *et al.*, 'Baseline Map of Carbon Emissions from Deforestation in Tropical Regions' 336:6088 *Science* (2012), 1573.

⁹ Schroeder, Heike and Constance McDermott. 2014. "Beyond Carbon: Enabling Justice and Equity in REDD+ Across Levels of Governance". *Ecology and Society* 19 (1): 31

¹⁰ Angelsen, Angelsen, Maria Brockhaus, William Sunderlin, and Louis Verchot, eds. 2012. *Analyzing REDD+: Challenges and choices*. Bogor, Indonesia: Center for International Forestry Research.

¹¹ CIFOR (Center for International Forestry Research). 2014. *Forests and Climate Change: The Global Comparative Study of REDD+*. Accessed date: July 10, 2014: <http://www.forestsclimatechange.org/redd-map/>.

¹² Angelsen, Angelsen, Maria Brockhaus, William Sunderlin, and Louis Verchot, eds. 2012. *Analyzing REDD+: Challenges and choices*. Bogor, Indonesia: Center for International Forestry Research.

¹³ World Bank. 2012. *World Development Report: Inclusive Green Growth. The Pathway to Sustainable Development*. Washington D.C.: The World Bank Group.

¹⁴ Beymer-Farris, Betsy and Thomas Bassett. 2012. "The REDD menace: Resurgent protectionism in Tanzania's mangrove forests." *Global Environmental Change* 22 (2): 332–341.

as a rationale for the conversion of natural forests into monoculture plantation forests, which may damage the function and quality of ecosystem services, as well as lead to the loss of biodiversity.¹⁵

2 Rationale and Structure of the paper

To address the potential social and environmental risks associated with the implementation of REDD+ activities, the UNFCCC has adopted various decisions. In particular one of the clauses under the Cancun Agreements¹⁶ and the Warsaw Framework for REDD+¹⁷ states that to be eligible for result-based payments under the UNFCCC framework, REDD+ countries must ensure the “full and effective participation” of relevant stakeholders, in particular the participation of the local communities and Indigenous peoples, throughout the implementation of REDD+ activities. However, given that UNFCCC decision texts often lack detail, leaving room for interpretation by participating countries, one might ask: What constitutes “full and effective participation” under the UNFCCC framework? How do relevant stakeholders in a REDD+ implementing country, especially local communities and Indigenous peoples, define “full and effective participation”? What steps can REDD+ participating countries take to ensure “full and effective participation”? What are the key lessons learned from those steps?

In this context, this paper explores the extent to which relevant REDD+ stakeholders, including both state and non-state actors, and in particular local communities and Indigenous peoples, have fully and effectively participated in the implementation of REDD+ activities in Cambodia since 2007. On the one hand, this paper examines what state actors in Cambodia define as full and effective participation in REDD+ implementation, while on the other hand, it explores experiences and interpretations of what constitutes full and effective participation by non-state actors. Therefore, in addition to analyzing the national approach to stakeholder participation in REDD+, this paper presents results from empirical fieldwork, conducted in Cambodia from July 2013 to July 2014, with two groups of non-state actors. These groups have been established to ensure that relevant stakeholders, in particular local communities and Indigenous peoples, participate in REDD+ implementation in Cambodia. These two groups include: the Cambodia Civil Society Organizations on REDD+ Network (CSO-REDD+ Network) and the Cambodia REDD+ Consultation Group (CG).

Methodologically, analyses of this research were based on data collected from July 2013 to July 2014 in Cambodia, using qualitative methods such as key informant semi-structured interviews (N: 60), policy observations (N: 30), focus group discussions (N: 4), and extended archival review. The semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions offered a first-hand account of the criteria that state

¹⁵ Angelsen, Angelsen, Maria Brockhaus, William Sunderlin, and Louis Verchot, eds. 2012. *Analyzing REDD+: Challenges and choices*. Bogor, Indonesia: Center for International Forestry Research.

¹⁶ United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. 2010. Decisions on Cancun Agreements (UNFCCC 2010/ Decision 1/CP. 16): http://unfccc.int/meetings/cancun_nov_2010/items/6005.php.

¹⁷ United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. 2013. Decisions on Warsaw Framework (UNFCCC 2013/ Decision 12/CP. 19): http://unfccc.int/meetings/warsaw_nov_2013/meeting/7649.php.

and non-state actors used to define “full and effective participation”, whereas policy observations (e.g. meetings, consultations, workshops and trainings) provide information on the participation and engagement of the relevant stakeholders. Finally, archival research was conducted for two main reasons: (1) to validate, compare, and contextualize information gathered through interviews, focus group discussions, and policy observations; and (2) to add to the study information that would not be appropriate or feasible to collect through interviews or observations, either because of the political sensitivities of the topics, or time constraints.

The main argument of this paper posits that representation does not equal representativeness when it comes to full and effective participation by relevant stakeholders in the implementation of REDD+ activities in Cambodia, especially participation by local communities and Indigenous peoples’ representatives in the two non-state actors groups. This argument indicates the need for more work on dissemination, communication and capacity building strategies with and for representatives of the two groups, in particular for the representatives of local communities and Indigenous peoples in the CG. Prior to arriving at this insight, the paper will address the four questions raised earlier in the introduction. First, the paper reviews the key decision texts from the UNFCCC on the thematic elements that constitute “full and effective participation” in REDD+ implementation. Next, the paper presents findings from empirical fieldwork conducted in Cambodia, starting with a brief overview of the evolution of REDD+ in Cambodia, followed by a discussion of the differences in what state institutions in charge of implementing REDD+ and non-state actors involved in the two non-state actors groups define as “full and effective participation” in REDD+ implementation. This discussion also analyses the steps that Cambodia, as one of the leading REDD+ participating countries in the region, has taken to ensure “full and effective participation”. The paper concludes by highlighting key findings and lessons learned from this research.

3 “Full and Effective Participation” under the UNFCCC Framework

The focus of this section is on reviewing the key decision texts from the UNFCCC on the thematic elements that constitute “full and effective participation” in the implementation of REDD+ activities in participating countries. The goal of this section is to draw out a list of criteria that define “full and effective participation” according to the UNFCCC decisions. As mentioned earlier, REDD+ started at COP 16 in Cancun, where countries were encouraged to contribute to mitigation action in the forest sector by undertaking activities that are deemed appropriate and in accordance with the country’s capabilities and national circumstances. These activities include: reducing emissions from deforestation, reducing emissions from forest degradation, conservation of forest carbon stocks, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks (Decision 1/ CP.16/ Para.70). These activities could be summed up as REDD+ activities.

Furthermore, Decision 1/ CP.16 established that the safeguards referred to in Decision 1/CP.16/ Annex I/ Para. 2 should be promoted and supported throughout the implementation of REDD+ activities. One of the principles mentioned in Para. 2 regarding these safeguards stipulates that participating

countries must ensure the full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders, in particular Indigenous peoples and local communities, in the actions referred to in paragraphs 70 and 72 of Decision 1/ CP.16 (see Box 1 for original text). Although the UNFCCC does not in particular define what thematic elements constitute “full and effective participation”, the UNFCCC has adopted guidelines (Decision 1/ CP.16; Decision 12/ CP.17; Decision 12/ CP.19) on how countries should develop Safeguard Information Systems to provide information on how full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders, in particular Indigenous peoples and local communities, have been addressed and respected along with the other six safeguards principles mentioned in Box 1.

Box 1: Cancun Agreements, Appendix I (Decision 1/CP.16)

When undertaking the activities referred to in Para. 70 of this decision, the following safeguards should be promoted and supported:

- a. That actions complement or are consistent with the objectives of national forest programmes and relevant international conventions and agreements;
- b. Transparent and effective national forest governance structures, taking into account national legislation and sovereignty;
- c. Respect for the knowledge and rights of indigenous peoples and members of local communities, by taking into account relevant international obligations, national circumstances and laws, and noting that the United Nations General Assembly has adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;
- d. The **full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders**, in particular indigenous peoples and local communities, in the actions referred to in paragraphs 70 and 72 of this decision;
- e. That actions are consistent with the conservation of natural forests and biological diversity, ensuring that the actions referred to in paragraph 70 of this decision are not used for the conversion of natural forests, but are instead used to incentivize the protection and conservation of natural forests and their ecosystem services, and to enhance other social and environmental benefits;
- f. Actions to address the risks of reversals;
- g. Actions to reduce displacement of emissions.

For example, Decision 1/ CP.16 mentioned that to obtain results-based finance, REDD+ countries should have a system for providing information on how REDD+ safeguards are being addressed and respected. A year later, Decision 12/ CP.17 suggested that the safeguards information systems should: (1) be country-driven and implemented at the national level; (2) build upon existing systems, as appropriate; (3) be consistent with the guidance in Decision 1/ CP.16; (4) be transparent and flexible to allow for improvements over time; and (5) provide transparent and consistent information that is accessible by all relevant stakeholders and updated on a regular basis. Furthermore, Decision 12/ CP.17 encouraged REDD+ countries to start providing a summary of information on how all of the REDD+ safeguards are being addressed and respected throughout the implementation of the activities. Recently, Decision 12/CP.19 adopted in 2013 specified that the summary of information on safeguards

should be provided periodically in the national communications to the UNFCCC or on a voluntary basis, via the UNFCCC's web platform.

As noted above, it is up to the country to interpret these UNFCCC decision texts. Therefore, an attempt to distill a generic set of thematic elements or criteria that would constitute “full and effective participation” in REDD+ implementation would not be viable. In this context, the paper now turns to explore how these decision texts have been interpreted and applied within the context of REDD+ implementation in Cambodia.

4 “Full and Effective Participation” in REDD+ Implementation in Cambodia

There are two main parts in this section of the paper. The first part traces the evolution of REDD+ implementation in Cambodia with a focus on the institutional arrangements and coordination established to oversee and decide on REDD+ activities to be implemented. In this part, the paper also identifies the criteria that the state institutions in charge of REDD+ in Cambodia define as “full and effective participation”. In the second part, the paper discusses findings on the criteria that non-state actors, which include members of the CSO-REDD+ Networks and CG, used to define “full and effective participation”.

4. 1. The Evolution of REDD+ in Cambodia

“Cambodia strongly supports the inclusion of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emission reduction from forest conservation and avoided deforestation in post-Kyoto regimes.”

His Excellency Dr. Mok Mareth, at COP 13 in Indonesia, 2007

Following His Excellency Mok Mareth’s remark (then Minister of Environment) at the 2007 COP in Indonesia, the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) started to implement REDD+. Since then Cambodia has been making significant progress towards establishing national level coordination and arrangements to implement REDD+ activities. Similar to other countries, Cambodia is following the three phases of REDD+ implementation, which include (1) readiness, (2) implementation, and (3) performance-based payment. As of July 2014, Cambodia is at the very end of the readiness phase and conversations have started amongst the various groups of stakeholders on how and when Cambodia should move to phase 2. The following figure (Figure 1) illustrates the three phases of REDD+ in Cambodia. The figure also includes information on activities and the funding sources for each phase. In addition, the main REDD+ institutional coordination and arrangements in Cambodia include: Cambodia REDD+ Taskforce, Cambodia REDD+ Taskforce Secretariat, REDD+ Technical Teams, and REDD+ Consultation Group, illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 1: The Three Phases of REDD+ Implementation in Cambodia

Phase 1: Readiness Phase



Activities may include:

- National REDD+ strategy development, including:
 - o Identification of drivers of deforestation and degradation and barriers to REDD+
 - o Identification of REDD+ policies and legislative action
- National consultations
- Institutional strengthening
- Pilot REDD+ demonstration activities and voluntary carbon market projects

Funding sources: Donor-based grants

Phase 2: Implementation Phase



Activities may include:

- Land tenure and governance reforms
- Forest law enforcement
- Improved forest management
- Sustainable agriculture
- Protected area law enforcement
- Sub-national demonstration

Funding sources: Donor-based grants, payments from funds and sales of carbon credits on markets

Phase 3: Performance-based Payments Phase



Consistent with performance contracts:

Payments are made upon verified achievement of agreed benchmarks, including reduced or avoided greenhouse gas emissions. Reference scenario is established and monitoring system is in-place.

Funding sources: payments from funds and sales of carbon credits on markets

Source: Royal Government of Cambodia and UN-REDD Programme (2011)

Cambodia REDD+ Taskforce

The membership of the Cambodia REDD+ Taskforce is composed of 10 representatives from seven ministries, whose mandate is to manage the development of REDD+ readiness. The seven ministries represented in the Taskforce include: (1) the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), (2) the Ministry of Environment (MoE), (3) the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF), (4) the Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction (MLMUPC), (5) the Ministry of Interior (Mol), (6) the Ministry of Rural Development (MRD), and (7) the Ministry of Industry, Mines and Energy (MIME). The overall responsibility of the Taskforce is to manage the national REDD+ programme, coordinate national REDD+ activities, ensure government coordinated responses, and integrate REDD+ into national development planning processes.¹⁸ Amongst other mandates, the Taskforce is responsible for reporting key decisions to national bodies, in particular the National Climate Change Committee. As a formal government body, non-government members cannot be part of the Taskforce. However, non-government stakeholders may be invited to join Taskforce meetings and can participate through the Consultation Group and Technical Teams.¹⁹

Taskforce Secretariat

The Taskforce Secretariat serves the Taskforce and the REDD+ Technical Teams by providing day-to-day technical advisory support and administrative assistance.²⁰ The Secretariat is chaired by the Forestry Administration (FA) with the General Department of Administration for Nature Conservation and Protection (GDANCP) serving as the vice-chair, and is composed of staff from FA, GDANCP and the Fisheries Administration (FiA), international and national advisors, and support staff. The lead representatives from FA and GDANCP are responsible for the management of workplans and budgets for their respective agencies.²¹

REDD+ Technical Teams

Four REDD+ Technical Teams, established by the REDD+ Taskforce, are tasked with the responsibility to develop technical recommendations on particular key issues. Those four technical teams include: (1) safeguards technical team, (2) benefit sharing technical team, (3) demonstration technical team, (4) monitoring reporting and verification / reference emission level (MRV/REL) technical

¹⁸ Royal Government of Cambodia and UN-REDD Programme. 2011. *United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries*. Phnom Penh, Cambodia: National Programme Document.

¹⁹ Royal Government of Cambodia and World Bank's FCPF. 2013. *Forest Carbon Partnership Facility REDD+ Readiness Project*. Phnom Penh, Cambodia: National Project Document.

²⁰ Royal Government of Cambodia and UN-REDD Programme. 2011. *United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries*. Phnom Penh, Cambodia: National Programme Document.

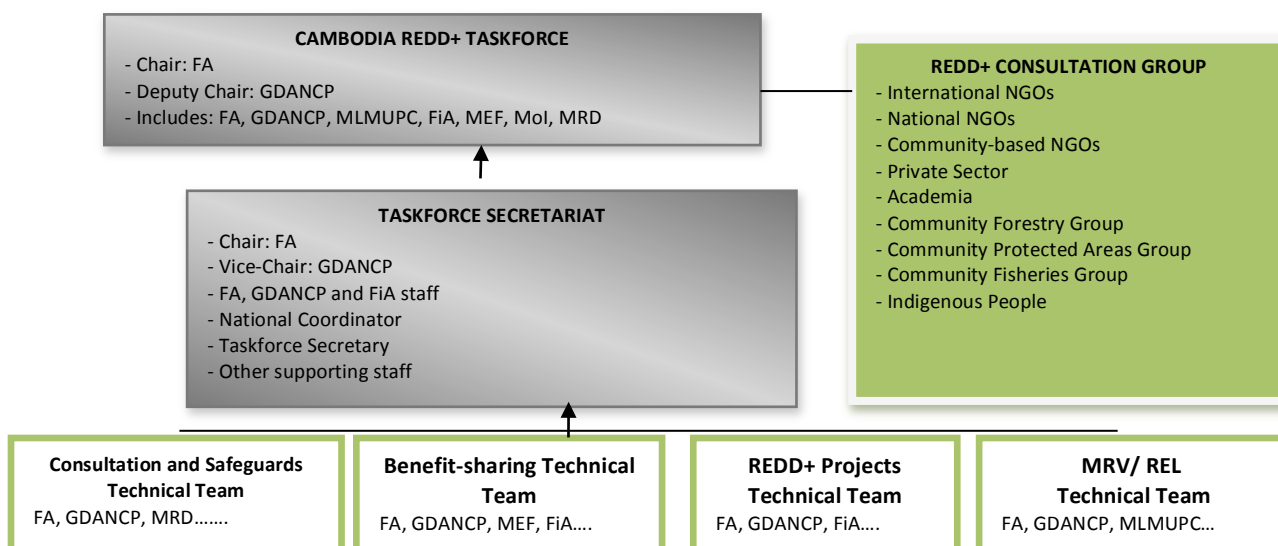
²¹ Royal Government of Cambodia and World Bank's FCPF. 2013. *Forest Carbon Partnership Facility REDD+ Readiness Project*. Phnom Penh, Cambodia: National Project Document.

team.²² Members of these technical teams include technical officers from different line agencies responsible for the issue under discussion, as well as other stakeholders, which include civil society and Indigenous peoples' representatives. Non-governmental members have been drawn from organizations represented in the REDD+ Consultation Group.²³

REDD+ Consultation Group (CG)

The CG, established in August 2013, includes two elected representatives from each of the nine non-state sectors in Cambodia. Those nine sectors include: international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), national NGOs, community-based NGOs, private sector, Indigenous peoples, academic institutions, community forestry, protected area community, and community fisheries.²⁴ Members of the Taskforce and Taskforce Secretariat meet with the CG on a monthly or bi-monthly basis to review progress and provide comments on the National REDD+ Readiness process. The Taskforce sends reports and decisions to the CG for their comments, and responds to comments raised. The CG members may also be invited to join Taskforce meetings whenever appropriate.²⁵

Figure 2: Institutional arrangements for REDD+ in Cambodia



Source: Royal Government of Cambodia and World Bank's FCPF (2013)

²² Royal Government of Cambodia and UN-REDD Programme. 2011. *United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries*. Phnom Penh, Cambodia: National Programme Document.

²³ Royal Government of Cambodia and World Bank's FCPF. 2013. *Forest Carbon Partnership Facility REDD+ Readiness Project*. Phnom Penh, Cambodia: National Project Document.

²⁴ Royal Government of Cambodia and World Bank's FCPF. 2013. *Forest Carbon Partnership Facility REDD+ Readiness Project*. Phnom Penh, Cambodia: National Project Document.

²⁵ Royal Government of Cambodia and UN-REDD Programme. 2011. *United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries*. Phnom Penh, Cambodia: National Programme Document.

“Full and Effective Participation” as seen by the state

At the national level, current principles and approaches to stakeholder consultations are built on those proposed in the Cambodia Readiness Plan Proposal on REDD+, also known as “the Roadmap”. The Roadmap was developed by the interim REDD+ Taskforce and representatives from non-state institutions during the period of January and September 2010. The principles and approaches as defined in the Roadmap are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Principles and Approaches to Full and Effective Stakeholders Participation

Principles	Approaches
The process should be transparent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of clear work plans and a decision-making matrix that illustrates when and by whom decisions should be made available; - Publication of minutes of meetings; - Clear demarcation of the roles of different groups; - Clear monitoring and evaluation framework.
The process should be inclusive engaging all relevant stakeholders with sufficient support targeted to vulnerable groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Representatives from each stakeholder group should be involved in the development of strategies; - All stakeholders should have the opportunity to comment on draft policies that will impact their livelihoods; - Information should be presented in a way that is both comprehensive and comprehensible to all; - Information sharing events focused on gaining both information on existing perceptions and local approaches to forest governance as well as sharing information on REDD+.
The process should maintain fair representation of different groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Groups should be allowed to select their own representatives; - Training and support should be provided to representatives.
The process should allow for groups to be held accountable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clear idea of the Roles of different constituents should be presented - Respect different positions; - Develop Complaint Mechanism for consultation process; - Develop Conflict Resolution Mechanisms where they do not exist.
The process should be iterative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop Response Mechanism; - Ensure continued feedback.
The process should ensure the availability of information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of a REDD+ website; - Materials should be developed and are appropriate to different stakeholders, including: glossary of terms in Khmer, image based awareness raising materials, video information.

The process builds on existing processes and structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The process should build on the capacity established by existing processes, organizations and/or networks; - Consultation should be integrated into implementation of existing programs such as the National Forestry Program; - Consultation and information sharing should be done by a range of stakeholders within their own constituencies.
The process should be timely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It should be sensitive to time needs of various stakeholders; - Information should be provided sufficiently in advance for all stakeholders to access information; - Stakeholder should be provided with sufficient information and training in advance of consultation.
The process should be adequately resourced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of clearly budgeted workplans for activities; - Provide funding for grassroots education and communities consultation; - Provide funding for education and consultation with local government.

Source: Royal Government of Cambodia and UN-REDD Programme 2011

Overall, at the national level, Cambodia has been making significant progresses toward achieving these principles. The country has also been at the forefront of innovative use of communications to increase participation of relevant stakeholders in the REDD+ Readiness process. Semi-structured interviews with key informants and archival data indicated the following achievements as representatives of stakeholder engagement initiatives undertaken by the Cambodian REDD+ Taskforce Secretariat.

1. Development and implementation of REDD+ Communications Strategy;
2. On-line survey of all partners concerning perceptions of awareness raising needs for different stakeholder groups;
3. Compilation of communications materials produced by all partners in Cambodia, and establishment of a multi-partner review committee to ensure that such materials are accurate and of adequate quality;
4. Publication of several products that are of global relevance, including a REDD+ Glossary, REDD+ FAQ, a REDD+ Training Manual, etc;
5. Operate a state-of-the-art national REDD+ website, with regular updates on a wide range of key policy documents and meeting minutes (see, REDD+ Taskforce meeting minutes at <http://www.cambodia-redd.org/>).

4.2. “Full and Effective Participation” as defined by non-state actors

As mentioned in section 2, in addition to analyzing the national approach to REDD+ participation, this paper empirically examines the experiences of members of two groups of non-state actors that have been established for the purposes of ensuring that relevant stakeholders participate in REDD+ implementation in Cambodia. This paper defines non-state actors as those that are not affiliated with state institutions. They include for example: the private sector, local communities, indigenous peoples, international/national/local NGOs, and academic institutions. The two groups that this paper analyzed are: the CG and the CSO-REDD+ Network. The main rationale for examining these two groups was due to the fact that the CSO-REDD+ Network was established and run by a group of 26 CSOs that have been working on climate change, natural resource management, forest governance, and community development across Cambodia. Unlike the CG (see description in section 4.1), the CSO-REDD+ Network do not have any formal connection to the REDD+ institutional arrangements and coordination as outlined in Figure 2. Furthermore, while the CSO-REDD+ Network is self-administered by its members, the CG is administratively supported by the Cambodia REDD+ Taskforce Secretariat, which comprises of technical staff from the 7 ministries that are members of the REDD+ Taskforce and contract staff from the UN-REDD Programme and World Bank's FCPF in Cambodia.

Based on data from focus group discussions, interviews, meeting observations and archival documents, Box 2 summarizes the key roles that informants suggested should be performed by non-state actors, especially by those representatives in the CG to ensure full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders.

Box 2: Roles of Non-state Actors in REDD+ Implementation

- Monitor the development and implementation of REDD+ policies and activities, paying particular attention on impacts to local communities and indigenous peoples;
- Communicate concerns from local communities and indigenous peoples to the national REDD+ coordination and arrangements, using the established platform (See Figure 2);
- Support advocacy and debates on the impacts of REDD+ on local communities and relevant stakeholders;
- Strengthen capacity and cooperation amongst non-state actors to ensure accountability and transparency in the implementation of REDD+ activities on the ground;
- Conduct and advocate results from action-based research on the impacts of REDD+ activities in local communities and indigenous peoples;
- Specific for the CG, the 18 non-state actor representatives must seek to collect inputs/concerns from their constituents and communicate these inputs to the national REDD+ coordination and arrangements (See Figure 2).

In addition, Box 3 presents the thematic elements that members of the CG and CSO-REDD+ Network identified as some of the main obstacles for achieving full and effective participation in REDD+ implementation in Cambodia.

Table 3: Obstacles for Full and Effective Participation, seen by Non-state Actors

- Lack of commitment from members of the CSO-REDD+ Network or from representatives of the CG;
- Policy documents needing inputs from the CG representatives are too technical to comprehend given the limited time allocated for the CG to understand the documents, communicate the messages to their constituents, collect and process those input, and communicate these messages to the REDD+ Taskforce;
- Communication plans and strategies for representatives of the nine sectors in the CG are still under-development. Thus, all 18 representatives are still limited in their abilities and resources to disseminate and receive information on policy documents to be consulted with their constituents;
- Language use in communication channels on REDD+ (via either meetings or documents) is mainly English. About 40 percent of the CG representatives (8 out of 18 members) and most of the CSO-REDD+ Network members do not speak English. Although English-Khmer-English interpretation/ translation services are provided, almost all informants complained about the very poor quality of the services, resulting in members of the two groups, in particular the CG, not being able to act as the boundary organizations that communicate concerns from their constituents to the established REDD+ national structured (see Figure 2), vice versa;
- Local authorities participate in REDD+ decision making processes and consultative meetings, but they do not disseminate those knowledge to their constituents as planned;
- A majority of informants also complained about:
 - o The contradictory messages amongst REDD+ “capacity building” initiatives,
 - o The lack of training skills amongst the trainers (some of whom were brought from outsides through international NGOs),
 - o The overwhelming numbers of “overlapping and contradictory” trainings by NGOs;
- Lack of cooperation among non-state actors due to competition for funding.

5 Discussion

At the international level, REDD+ is about providing financial incentives for developing countries to improve forest governance while at the same time addressing the impacts of climate change. REDD+ is significant because of two main reasons. The first reason is that other forms of land use are more valuable in the near and medium term than forests. And, the second is the inability of existing legislations and regulations to halt deforestation in developing countries.²⁶ There are many solid building blocks or decision texts from the UNFCCC regarding full and effective participation by relevant stakeholders in REDD+ implementation, but more efforts are still required to realize these texts. As

²⁶ World Bank. 2011. *Annual report for the World Bank's Forest Carbon Partnership Facility for fiscal year 2011*. Washington D.C.: The World Bank Group.

Angelsen and colleagues²⁷ point out, while REDD+ may be a new concept, its success will depend on how it can integrate existing instruments and lessons learned to form new policy approaches that allow effective management of natural resources and sharing of benefits and burdens. It is important to note that although REDD+ can create incentives that address poverty-related drivers at the individual and institutional levels, it cannot be expected to be the primary tool for poverty reduction. Finally, significant amount of time and resources are still required to implement REDD+ activities. REDD+ requires financial resources, competent staff, and institutional capacity to come together in a timely manner. Political timing is also crucial to sustain these international progress made thus far.

At the national level, the political commitments in support of REDD+ implementation have been very strong in Cambodia. As discussed in earlier section, the RGC has been very active to coordinate amongst key forest related institutions such as the FA, MoE and FiA as well as relevant institutions such as the Ministry of Economy and Finance and Ministry of Interior to establish various REDD+ coordinating institutions (see Figure 2) to oversee the development and implementation of policies and measures required for full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders. It should be noted that the RGC has been very strategic in terms of not casting REDD+ as the potential solution to all forest and climate change related problems in the country. For example, while on the one hand REDD+ is becoming more visible in various government policy documents as one of the potential solutions to climate change and forest governance in Cambodia, it has never been presented as the only solution. This balancing act is noticeable providing the uncertainty of REDD+ at the international level. This is very much in line with the lesson documented by the World Bank²⁸ which basically argued that if REDD+ is to evolve and achieve its promise to mitigate global climate change, these lessons suggest it needs some time, some space and some flexibility to be fairly experimented with over the next few years.

The paper does acknowledge the advancements made at the international and national level in regards to policies and measures to promote full and effective participations by relevant stakeholders, in particular local communities and indigenous peoples, in REDD+ implementation. However, based on analyses of the two case studies – the CG and CSO-REDD+ Network, it is clear that at the implementation level, representation does not equate with representativeness when it comes to full and effective participation in REDD+ implementation in Cambodia. This is an important aspect to be considered especially for the CG. Although there are nine different sectors represented in this group, the need for effective and efficient process of two-way communications between each member and his/her constituent so that sectoral concerns – not individual member's concerns or interests – are communicated to the REDD+ Taskforce is still not functional. Except for the national NGO representatives, who are also members of the CSO-REDD+ Network, none of the members from other

²⁷ Angelsen, Angelsen, Maria Brockhaus, William Sunderlin, and Louis Verchot, eds. 2012. *Analyzing REDD+: Challenges and choices*. Bogor, Indonesia: Center for International Forestry Research.

²⁸ World Bank. 2011. *Annual report for the World Bank's Forest Carbon Partnership Facility for fiscal year 2011*. Washington D.C.: The World Bank Group.

sectors in the CG has disseminated information that was given to them by the REDD+ Taskforce to their constituents, albeit the understanding was that such dissemination and consultation would occur (See Box 3 for the justifications). On the other hand, the CSO-REDD+ Network has been very effective in terms of gathering inputs from their members on REDD+ policy documents, preparing written responses on those documents, and submitting or presenting those responses to the institutions described in Figure 2. The CSO-REDD+ Network has been able to do what it does because members of this network are some of the country's most prominent experts on climate change, development and REDD+.

6 Lessons Learned / Recommendations

Various lessons can be drawn from Cambodia's experiences with full and effective participation in REDD+ implementation. First, the consultation processes relating to the objectives of, and channels for, stakeholder participation of state and non-state actors must be well planned and adequately resourced. It is crucial that information for consultation with different stakeholders be presented in a manner that is comprehensive and easily comprehensible (for example, by double-checking translations, and by providing quick synopses of the documents). Second, there is no doubt that awareness raising and consultation within and across government agencies and across sectors is critical. However, it is important to ensure that messages regarding various aspects of REDD+, and, in particular, on the full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders, are consistent amongst REDD+ trainers and facilitators. Third, while local communities and indigenous peoples may require additional support in understanding, communicating and responding to the issues on which they are to be consulted, it is also essential to ensure that inputs from them are adequately and appropriately represented in the policy documents.

Finally, based on the above lessons, it is clear that more work is needed on dissemination, communication and capacity building strategies with and for both state and non-state actors. This work is particularly needed with respect to the 18 representatives in the CG, since they serve as the boundary partners connecting state and non-state actors in Cambodia. It is also important to be cautious about the real costs of full and effective participation, in order to determine who should participate and in what realms, as well as the most appropriate mechanisms to achieve dissemination, communication, dialogue and capacity building. Experiences from other natural resource governance projects indicate that the real cost of implementing a project should be measured in time, human terms, and financial resources.