

REPORT ON NATIONAL
STAKEHOLDER
ENGAGEMENT ON BENEFIT
SHARING PLAN AND
UPFRONT ADVANCE
PAYMENT

1/1/2020

**REPORT ON NATIONAL STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ON BENEFIT SHARING
PLAN AND UPFRONT ADVANCE PAYMENT
NOVEMBER 02 - 03 2020 AT FC AUDITORIUM**

INTRODUCTION

Consistent with REDD+ implementation in Ghana, a National Stakeholder engagement was organized to sensitize stakeholders on the finalized Benefit Sharing Plan (BSP) arrangements and use of Upfront Advance Payment (UAP) of the Emission Reductions Payment Agreement for the Ghana Cocoa Forest REDD+ Programme. Even though the Forestry Commission would manage the funds, the UAP would be used to undertake different activities involving the different stakeholders. This UAP would be accounted for, under the expected Forestry Commission's share of benefits from Emission Reductions (ERs) payments.

PURPOSE OF ENGAGEMENT

To sensitize and update key stakeholders on the benefit sharing arrangements for the Ghana Cocoa Forest REDD+ Programme and discuss implementation plan for the GCFRP.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To sensitize stakeholders on the agreed percentage and commensurate benefits due them according to the BSP;
2. To explain the modalities of receiving payments; Upfront and Actual.
3. To update stakeholders on the rationale for the UAP and the utilization thereof.
4. Discuss the GCFRP implementation planning and progress in context of meeting first monitoring report requirements

Approach-National Stakeholders Engagement

Two (2) rounds of engagements were held from 2nd-3rd November, 2020. On each day, there was a strict adherence to the COVID 19 protocols (wearing of face mask, washing of hands with soap under running water and the use of alcohol based hand sanitizer). The agenda is attached as Annex I.

The first day's meeting was planned for the National REDD+ working group and various technical sub-working groups, whose members are drawn from representative institutions. The technical sub working groups are Safeguards, Gender, MRV, Policy & M&E Sub-Working Groups. The 2nd day had representatives from the Private sector, CSOs and NGOs. Other stakeholders from the FC were also strategically included. There was a total number of 63 participants.

PROCEEDINGS

The Programme started at 10:20am each day with an opening prayer from a volunteered participant. These were followed by a welcome and opening remark by the Director, Climate Change (Ms. Roselyn Fosuah Adjei). She mentioned that meetings were going to be brief and expected to update participants on the modalities of the Benefit Sharing Plan and the Upfront Advance Payment.

PRESENTATIONS

Mr. Thomas Gyambrah made the presentations on the following thematic areas;

1. Benefit Sharing Plan (BSP) and
2. Activities under the Upfront Advance Payment

1. Presentation on the BSP

The Manager, MRV and Programmes introduced participants to what the Benefit Sharing Plan (BSP) is and its purpose. He mentioned the following as the purpose of the BSP:

- It elaborates an equitable benefit sharing mechanism that is intended to effectively distribute carbon and non-carbon benefits
- It describes the various beneficiaries, their eligibility, roles and responsibilities while specifying the scale and modalities for distribution.
- It describes the type of benefits to be transferred to the beneficiaries, the timing of the distribution, and the conditions (roles and responsibilities) to be satisfied for the payment of the benefits, and the appropriate indicators for monitoring, measuring and verifying compliance with modalities for distributing benefits to beneficiaries.

He mentioned that extensive stakeholder consultations were undertaken (30 focus group discussions with 413 individuals and 27 interviews) to arrive at the conclusions made for the BSP. He proceeded by explaining the different types of benefits in the BSP. He explained carbon benefits as monetary or non-monetary goods, services, or other benefits related to performance-based payments received under the ERPA; and non-carbon benefits as financial benefits (in kind) produced by or in relation to the implementation or operation of the ER Programme, other than those that directly derive from performance-based payments for ERs. He then introduced participants to the various carbon and non-carbon beneficiaries, the type of benefit, the description of benefits and source of benefits. The Manager used pictorial presentations to summarise the path for distribution of the UDS 50 million among stakeholders. He ended his presentation by giving the way forward:

- Consultancy service procured to develop Fund Flow Mechanism underway.
- Another Consultancy to develop the governance structures of the remaining 4 HIAs
- Develop both environmental and social indicators for HIAs to access benefits
- Develop monitoring reports

2. Presentation on the Upfront Advance Payment

The Manager, MRV and Programmes started his presentation by introducing participants to what ERPA is. He stated that ERPA indicates the condition of sales and purchases between the government of Ghana and the World Bank for any potential Emission Reductions from the Ghana Cocoa Forest REDD+ Programme. He mentioned that there are four reporting periods within the ERPA, which are 2019, 2020/2021, 2022/2023, and 2024 respectively. He updated participants on two achievements in line with the ERPA: fulfilment of the three conditions of effectiveness (Benefit Sharing Plan, signing of Framework Agreement, declaration on Legal Transfer of Title) and the receiving of the Upfront Advance Payment (UAP). On receiving the UAP, a work plan with outlined activities was developed. He stated some of the approved activities under the work plan as enrichment planting, provision of Shade Trees (Trees on Farm), Modified Taungya System (MTS) plantation, monitoring of activities, recruitment of additional staff, support FGRM operationalization and additional/alternative livelihoods.

He ended his presentation by giving the way forward:

- Implementing and reporting on all activities
- Develop monitoring reports for activities

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON BSP PRESENTATION (2ND NOV, 2020)

Q1. Mr. Ashiadey asked why MMDAs do not benefit monetarily.

Ans. Madam Roselyn answered that the whole carbon payment will come in as cash, but farmers are the only beneficiaries receiving monetary benefits. FC will receive monetary payment for law enforcement. MMDAs on the other hand will receive non-monetary payment.

Q2. Mr. Dadzie asked why Traditional Authorities' benefit has changed from 2% to 3%

Ans. Mr. Brown said the 2% is a percentage that would be accrued from the programme as a whole, whereas the 3% is the allocation as part of the 69% to the non-government beneficiaries

Q3. Mr. Ashiadey asked who authorizes the disbursement of BSP funds?

Ans. The percentages are fixed so that there will be no difficulty especially for the government beneficiaries. However, for the HIA Account, a fund flow mechanism is being designed where an account shall be opened to receive HIA funds.

Q4. Mr. Ashiadey asked about the mechanism for allocation of benefits under the UAP for FC?

Ans. Ghana negotiated for the UAP which is available for Least Developed Country (Ghana not qualified). An amount of 1.3 which will be deducted from FC component of future benefits operational activities.

Q5. Does the fixed cost include field monitoring?

Ans. Yes it includes some monitoring activities.

Q6. Madam Mercy asked for clarification on COCOBOD 7.5% and MMDAs 7.5% benefits as Cocobod is a co-proponent

Ans. There was an appraisal done for each of the institutions implementing the GCFRP. COCOBOD is using the programme to implement or leverage their sustainability programme therefore the 7.5%. COCOBOD stands to gain from other non-carbon benefits from the implementation of its projects/programmes.

Q7. Mr. Kofi Boateng asked that the narratives for the fixed cost be explained further.

Ans. The World Bank has its own terminology and this is carbon finance terminology.

Q8. Mrs. Abruquah asked what benefits farmers/communities stand to gain from the programme.

Ans. Mr. Gyambrah responded that the farmer groups will benefit from inputs supply, etc (registered farmers). The communities' benefits will be community projects which the entire community will benefit from.

Q9. Mr. Chris Berko asked the number of years the programme will last.

Ans. There are four reporting periods. Therefore, six (6) years

Q10. Dr. Foli asked how benefits will be achieved based on standard scenarios

Ans. We are now trying to work out the various scenarios. The NRS will call on stakeholders to assist with the development.

Q11. Mr. Sasu Oppong said there is the need to be clear on how much is spent for activities under the UAP by the PMU.

ans. There is an implementation Committee, with members from Forest Services Division, Wildlife Division, Environmental Protection Agency, the Resource Management Support Center, World Cocoa Foundation and the National REDD+ secretariat who together developed the work plan and subsequently got approval from the World Bank. The committee shall also develop the activity plans for the approved work plan.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON UPFRONT ADVANCE PAYMENT

Q1. Mr. Adayobo (NDPC) asked the institution which the Emission Reductions (ER) report is being prepared for since it will feed into Ghana's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)

Ans. The report would primarily be presented to the Carbon Fund for verification and payments. However, all key stakeholders (both direct and indirect beneficiaries) shall be consulted in the preparation of the report. They would also have access to the report as this would be disclosed.

There is the need to have an effective communication strategy to assist all levels of stakeholders understand and appreciate the monitoring reports.

SUGGESTIONS

- There should be a deliberate communication to inform stakeholders who may not be involved in the preparation of the monitoring report.
- There should be a comprehensive budget for the preparation of the monitoring reports.

DAY 2 (3RD NOV, 2020)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWER ON BSP

Q1. Forest enhancement was not mentioned in the presentation. How is that featured in the UAP activities?

Ans. Enhancement activities includes MTS, Trees on farm and enrichment planting which are all part of activities in the UAP.

Q2. One CSO member pointed out that the introduction session mentioned CSOs, NGOs, Private Sectors as beneficiaries, however there is no clear allocation of benefit for them.

Ans. The role of CSOs, NGOs cannot be ruled out in the REDD+ since CSO played a key role from inception phase, through implementation up to date. However, during the consultative process, stakeholders including CSOs settled on the list of beneficiaries.

Q3. Why are traditional authorities receiving physical cash?

Ans. The communities recommended that Traditional authorities (TAs) receive physical cash. The reason is that they are land owners, TAs play a key role in advocacy on land issues. The payment also serves as ‘drink money’ which is normally honored in cash payments

Q4. Are we making provision so that women benefit from the programme? Through advocacy more women come on board.

Ans. The programme advocates for at least 40% female representation. In coming up with Executives for the Juabeso Bia HMB for instance, 50% women representation was advocated for and realized.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON UAP

Q1. One participant asked why majority of the UAP funds is being used for operational activities and not benefit farmers?

Ans. First of all, if Ghana fails to achieve ERs, it is the FC who will bear that responsibility. However, shade trees are supplied to farmers for restoration activities which forms part of their benefit under the UAP. The Modified Taungya System (MTS) benefit farmers in both long and short term. In a nut shell, farmers are the direct beneficiaries of the UAP.

Q2. Why is it that the UAP is going to the FC whereas the whole programme is to be benefited by all? And how long will the fund flow mechanism take for finalization?

Ans. The programme is results based which has an input and output level activities. Farmers benefit is mainly at the output level. The fund flow mechanism is a work in progress.

Q3. One participant also asked whether the first ER report for 2019 is ready

Ans. The report is a work in progress. A new methodology has been adopted to revise the FRL and once completed, it will be disclosed to the public.

Q4. A question was asked on whether the monitoring report will be disclosed publicly?

Ans. Yes it will be a public document on the FC website and the SIS web platform.

Q5. Since the ERPA is signed and the period for submission of ER report is agreed, would there not be any penalty for delaying the submission beyond the reporting periods?

Ans. No, the new methodology for the Forest Reference Level (FRL) which is work in progress is being discussed with the World Bank. Therefore the submission period would not attract any penalty.

Next Steps

- Continuous stakeholder engagement on the BSP
- Undertake capacity building workshop on the BSP in 3 HIAs (Sefwi wiawso-Bibiani, Juabeso-Bia and Kakum) between 12th - 20th November, 2020.

Concluding Remarks

The meetings ended successfully with closing remarks by the Director CCD who thanked stakeholders for their active participation and contributions in making the meetings a success. She entreated all stakeholders to stay connected with the REDD+ process in working together to achieve its set objectives.

Annex 1

AGENDA

**STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIVE MEETING
ON THE UPFRONT ADVANCE PAYMENT FOR THE GCFRP
FORESTRY COMMISSION'S AUDITORIUM, ACCRA
2nd & 3RD NOVEMBER, 2020**

10:00 - 10:20am **Arrival/Registration**

10:20 - 10:25am **Opening Prayer**

10:25 – 10:35am **Welcome Address and Opening Remarks by the Director, CCD**

10:35 - 11:00am **Presentation on the BSP by Thomas Gyambah**

11:00-11:25am **Presentation on ERPA (Upfront Advance Payment) by Thomas Gyambah**

11:25 – 12:00noon **Questions & Answers by All**

12:00 -12:10pm **Next Steps- Director, CCD**

12:10-12:20pm **Closing Remarks**

12:20pm **Closing & Lunch**

ATTENDANCE SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS
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ENGAGEMENT AT FC AUDITORIUM, ACCRA, 2ND TO 3RD
NOVEMBER, 2020

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DAY 1, (02/11/2020)

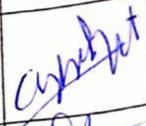
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