

## Gender and Cameroon 's REDD+ road map

REDD+ is an international climate change mechanism to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries. REDD+ creates a financial value for the carbon stored in forests, and offers incentives for developing countries to reduce emissions from forested lands and invest in low-carbon paths to sustainable development. REDD+ not only focuses on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, but also recognizes the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks. REDD+ is part of the current UN climate change negotiations (UNFCCC). As this new initiative gains acceptance it is essential to ensure that it delivers benefits to both people and biodiversity.

Over the past two decades climate change has increasingly become recognized as a serious threat to sustainable development, with current and projected impacts on areas such as environment, agriculture, energy, human health, food security, economic activity, natural resources and physical infrastructure. Although climate change impacts will affect all countries, its impacts will be differently distributed among different regions, generations, age classes, income groups, occupations and genders (IPCC 2007). Climate change does not affect women and men in the same way and it has, and will have, a gender-differentiated impact. Women and men's contribution will also be different and equally important (WEDO and UNFPA 2009). Hence all aspects related to climate change (i.e. mitigation, adaptation, policy development, decision making) must include a gender perspective, including REDD+ initiatives.

REDD+ initiatives will have several implications for women and men at the local-community level, comprising significant risks and harmful negative outcomes, as well as potential opportunities for positive outcomes for forest-dependent communities. While REDD+ process provides the opportunity to clarify issues regarding tenure rights and access to forest resources, challenges remain with gender inequalities that limit in access and control to productive resources especially land. Women may not benefit under REDD+ because they lack or have restricted land tenure rights, do not participate fully and effectively in consultations or decision-making process; have limited access and/or control of information, technology and tools; lack access/or control of income-generating forest activities and land tenure rights, and receive unequal benefits due to gender blind benefit sharing schemes. Due to these governance issues, it becomes urgent to bring on board local women, empower them and build their capacities; to ensure that women are involved in all REDD+ related activities; and to contribute to formulation of gender sensitive REDD+ national strategies and pilot projects.

Unfortunately, global deliberations around the development of REDD+ have not fully considered the gender dimension, and only a few pilot projects have taken actions to begin to incorporate a gender perspective. There is a need for specific gender provisions in REDD+ mechanisms; however, this will not be achieved if current REDD+ projects are not engaged in incorporating a gender perspective and generating necessary data to highlight good practices and produce guidelines for other projects. Governments and other REDD+ implementing agencies need support in doing this. In the case of Cameroon, gender equality and women's rights issues have not been addressed in the REDD+ Readiness Plan Idea Note (R-Pin). As Cameroon embarks in the design of its REDD+ National Strategy, the need to foster a gender sensitive REDD+ processes cannot be over emphasized.

Against this background, and under the pro-poor REDD+ process and support from DANIDA, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in collaboration with the

Women’s Environment and Development Organization (WEDO), jointly facilitated a workshop for multiple stakeholders including women organisations, gender experts and policy level people working in forestry and environment on “Mainstreaming Gender Considerations in REDD+ process in Cameroon. The outcome of these participatory stakeholder workshops forms the basis of this “Road Map” to support mainstreaming gender in REDD+ processes in Cameroon.

## Gender differentiated use, access and control of forests

Majority of people in the forest area of Cameroon rely directly or indirectly on the forest for their livelihood as well as medicinal plants and common pool forest resources for meeting essential needs. However, there are gender differences in how men and women relate to forests and forest resources. A summary of results from women’s workshop on “Mainstreaming Gender into REDD processes in Cameroon”<sup>1</sup> shows that there are gender differentiated use, access and control of forest resources (table 1 and table 2).

Women and men carry out different activities in the forest (with some exceptions such as fishing where both are involve in this activity). Interestingly, these activities contribute to different aspects of the household necessities. Men tend to engage in activities that generate cash income while women engage in activities that fulfill basic necessities such as water collection of wood exploitation for their household consumption. As women and men engage in different activities, they visit different sections of the forest. Forest exploitation is closely related to the task and activities of different members of a household.

Because of the differentiated relationship men and women have with the forest, resources from the forest are equally different. They might not be so much on the type, but on the quantities and for what they will be used for. Data provided by the participants clearly shows that in Cameroon there is a gender-differentiated use of the forest that will deliver different benefits to women and men.

**Table 1: Use of forest by women and men**

Category	Activities carried out in the forest
Women	Picking, harvesting, collection of fuel wood, fishing, wood exploitation for home and traditional uses, collection of NTFP for food and medication, subsistence and cash crop farming, forestry, cosmetic, rituals, water harvesting, craft and weaving
Men	Prospection, fishing, touristic guide, wood exploitation for building (homes) or for sale, logging, cash crop production, picking / harvesting, dressing, distraction, rituals, medication, hunting
	Part of the forest visited
Women	Privately owned nearby virgin forests, outskirts of the village, nearby demolished forests, in streams, sacred areas
Men	Everywhere in the forest (inside and at the outskirts), core of the forest
	Resources obtain from the forest
Women	NTFP, wood, animal, raw material for craft work, medicine, fuel wood, food, barks, aquatic products, and for water
Men	Food, medicine, industrial wood / fuel wood, raw material for craft work, fish, trophies, aquatic products, honey, mineral resources.
	Benefits obtain from the forest
Women	NON CASH: Food; health issues: use of medicinal plants; cosmetic products; harmony with nature; cultural benefits

<sup>1</sup> Mainstreaming Gender into REDD Workshop organised by IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature) in collaboration with the Women’s Environment and Development Organisation (WEDO) from 19 to the 21th of September, 2011.

	CASH: Local sales of products from harvest (e.g NTFP); diversified and increased of source of income
Men	NON CASH: Health issues; nutritional benefits; culturally enriching; emotional, psychological and spiritual satisfaction  CASH: Economic benefits and diversification of activities and sources of income

Gender inequalities can affect good forest governance. Inequalities can limit or restrict women in many ways (Table 2). In the case of Cameroon women often dominate the collection and marketing of NTFPs but they do not have security of access to these products or land and natural resources in general. Women’s access to the forest is mostly to undertake daily activities such as picking, harvesting and usage of mangroves, farming, fishing, etc. In some regions, the forest remains the only source for their survival. But, they do not have access to some exploitation modes such as wood for transformation and timber.

A woman has access to forest products in most cases by virtue of her relationship to the men of the family. While still a child, a girl helps her family with crops and collecting NTFPs on land that her father holds in the traditional tenure system. When she gets married, she acquires a share in the forest resources of her mother-in-law and her husband. Women stand the chance of losing these resources if she is divorced or if the husband dies. Land tenure continues to be an issue for women in Cameroon, as weight of tradition remains a major problem for land acquisition by women<sup>2</sup>. By law, anybody can own land in Cameroon, however in practice is a very difficult thing to come by for women.

Participation is also an issue where gender inequalities can be observed. The history of participatory development has shown that despite inclusive language, efforts are not always successful in engaging women. Women are often limited in their access and effectiveness by informal rules, norms, and bias that act as barriers to participation in decision-making. Participants mentioned that when personally invited, women do sometimes participate but in most situations, they do not. This is mostly because the invitations do not take into consideration their daily programme and want to get them at a moment where their schedule is not favorable. More so, when they make the effort to attend at the end of it their point of view is not taken into consideration; this exclusion prevents many women from engaging in future meetings.

**Table 2. Forest Governance issues identified in Cameroon**

Forest Governance Issue	Cameroon
Access to resources in the forest	Yes- Women have access for daily activities; picking/harvesting and usage of mangroves; for agriculture, fishing.  No- Women do not have access to some exploitation modes such as wood for transformation
Access to benefits (cash and non cash) from the forest	Yes- women can obtain products for subsistence and marketing but in small quantities; they can use forest for recreational or spiritual activities  No- Women have less financial benefits due to lack of information on benefits generated from forest exploitation and limited access to meetings on forest management.

<sup>2</sup> Participants mentioned that in Cameroon men will pay a dowry to marry a woman, this creates a sentiment that women below to men. During the discussion on land tenure; based on this experience one of the participant mentioned: How can property own property?

Control over cash generated by activities in the forests	<p>Yes – women will control cash from activities carried out by them; but these benefits are often small and do not improve their lives.</p> <p>No- they will not have control because some activities are carried out only by forest exploiters and authorities (local and traditional).</p>
Opportunity to own land or forests	<p>Yes- by law; but in practice, it is very difficult due to financial limitations and the weight of tradition</p> <p>No- Man’s authority on accessibility to land and they have more facility to access to land than women. Forest land = power, but power is given to men.</p>
Access to and control over tools, equipment, cash/credit, inputs, new technologies	<p>For a poor woman in the village:</p> <p>Yes- she can buy some tools like the machete; yes can have access to traditional inputs</p> <p>No- the cost of equipment is very high (e.g. tractor); no collateral for loans due to their limited revenue; high cost of modern inputs</p>
Opportunity to participant in forest related activities	No- Women do not participate because there are male specific activities which require technics and physical power; stereotypes; women are marginalized in decision making and interests are not taken into consideration
Request to participate in forest projects	<p>Yes- when the woman receives a personal invitation but her daily agenda is not taken into consideration. When present however they are not consulted on decisions.</p> <p>No- the woman is not invited. She lacks information. (Information is only for men); refusal to invite women for she has no interest in taking part in these activities</p>
Opportunity and time to participate in forest projects	<p>No- women prefer to do her agricultural activities than to go to the meetings; projects take a long time and women don’t see the reason to participate immediately</p> <p>Woman already overloaded with house chores and has no time for forest activities</p>

## Risks and Opportunities for women from REDD+ in Cameroon

If REDD+ addressed gender considerations, it could be to women’s advantage, increasing their access to and benefits from REDD+ projects and increasing their visibility as forest managers and leaders for sustainability. However there are both risks and opportunities for women in REDD+ projects. In the case of Cameroon, during a workshop (September, 2011), with representatives from women organizations, one of the main activities aimed to identify and discuss risks, opportunities and challenges that REDD+ could have for women (table 3). One of the main concerns that surfaced was whether REDD+ can further undermine women’s rights to their forests and forest resources.

On the other side, REDD+ might promote opportunities for them to get governments to reform policies and programs to respect women’s rights and integrate their knowledge on forest management. Women need to be recognized as key actors in the REDD+ process, and mechanism should be designed for them to be involved in all decision-making process and projects related to REDD+. Participants also highlighted that the government should recognize

and favor the few pilot projects that promote the effective participation of disadvantaged groups in the REDD+ process.

**Table 3. Risks and Opportunities for women from REDD+ in Cameroon**

Readiness		
Opportunities	Risks	Challenges
The opening of the government to involve all stakeholders	Not taking into account the agendas of women and the use of a methodology that does not guarantee the participation of women	Maintain dialogue with senior government and stakeholders
Existence of backups promoting recognition of women as key player in the REDD+	Women are not warned / informed for better participation	Develop consultation strategies that ensure women's participation
The existence of a few pilot projects that promote the effective participation of disadvantaged groups in the REDD process (eg PRO-POOR)	Low involvement of women and civil society in decision-making bodies	Capacity building of women
Ongoing reform of the forestry law	Persistence of customs and practices discriminatory to women's land and forest tenure	Effective involvement of women in decision-making process
	Failure to take account of gender in forestry and land laws	
	Not taking into consideration women's strategic needs	
Implementation		
Opportunities	Risks	Challenges
Existence of groups and organizations of women and CSO Gender sensitive	Loss of territories and rights of indigenous peoples and other forest dependent communities	Capacity building of women
Existence of the partners involved in the REDD +	Social exclusion and capture profits by men	Transfer of appropriate technologies
Current and proposed reforms (land law and forest)	No adhesion of women to the process	Equitable access to forest resources, the PES
Environmental and social safeguards	Biodiversity Loss	Effective involvement of women in decision-making process
Consolidation		
Opportunities	Risks	Challenges
Capacity building of women in the monitoring, reporting and verification of REDD +	Failure to take into account women on an equal basis with men	Women priorities are taken into account
Creation of monitoring committees, reporting and verification (MRV)	Not taking into account the practical needs of women	Effective involvement of women in decision-making process
Financial Benefits brought by REDD+	Not taking into account the conservation efforts of women	Transfer of new technologies for forest management suitable to women
		Elimination of stereotypes on the role of women in the forestry sector
		Capitalize women's practical experience in forest management

## Gender and REDD+ road map

The Gender and REDD+ roadmap is the product of multi stakeholder process that brought together representatives of women's organizations, gender experts and national level policy makers to discuss country-specific gender issues and propose actions that would lead to gender-sensitive REDD+ national processes.

The process started with a 3-day workshop for representatives from women's organizations and gender experts, followed immediately by a 2-day workshop for national policy makers where representatives from the first workshop were invited to participate. The first workshop for women and members of the civil society had 33 women in attendance and 32 participants attended the second workshop from government ministries and representatives from women's organizations. The process allowed participants to enhance their knowledge, discuss country-specific gender inequalities, identify gender specific risks and opportunities associated to REDD+ and propose concrete actions to address or highlight these risks and opportunities. The first workshop was a capacity building opportunity for the participants, as many had never been invited to discussions or consultations on REDD+. The process aimed to:

- Understand the ecological function of forests in relation to the carbon cycle.
- Comprehend the state of the forests in the world and in Cameroon and acknowledge women's role in the forest sector in Cameroon.
- Understand what is climate change and its differentiated impacts on women and men.
- Comprehend what is REDD+ and its relation with climate change.
- Comprehend what is gender and identify gender considerations in REDD+.
- Understand the REDD+ process in Cameroon and identify women's role/involvement in relation to REDD+ in Cameroon.

The overall objective of the road map is to mainstream gender considerations in the forestry sector and climate change initiatives, paying special attention to REDD+ process, as a means for both men and women to be recognized as important forest stakeholders. Thus, improving women and men's access to information and capacity building; participation; use, control and management of forest resources; rights to land tenure; and equitable sharing of benefits for sustainable forest management leading to the improvements of people's livelihoods.

The road map is divided into three phases in which REDD+ programmes shall be implemented; a) Readiness, b) Implementation and c) consolidation phases. The following tables show examples of activities identified for each of the three phases.

## The Gender and REDD+ Road Map for Cameroon

Tables 4. Specific objectives, actions, timeline, responsible by phase

### READINESS

Objectives	Action steps	Timeline	Indicators of success	Responsible	Possible Source of Resource
1. To support the establishment of a gender and forest task force in Cameroon	<p>1.1 Identify women and gender focused organizations, including representatives of indigenous peoples and grassroots based organizations, interested in/already working on forestry issues</p> <p>1.2 Provide capacity building sessions for these women organizations</p> <p>1.3 Establish contact with the key administration agencies (MINPROFF, MINEP, MINAS, MINFOF, MINEPAT, MINDAF, MINADER, MINEPIA, MINIMIDT, etc) to identify representation in the task force</p> <p>1.4 Establish contact with CSO REDD+ and climate change platform to guaranty proper representation and information flow among the task force and the platform</p> <p>1.5 Appoint a full time coordinator</p> <p>1.6 Mobilize resources to support the activities of the task force</p> <p>1.7 Identify which are the decision making bodies and processes where women need to be represented</p> <p>1.8 Advocate for women inclusion in the decision making bodies and processes previously identified</p>	<p>November 2011 February 2012</p>	<p>Existence of functional gender and forest task force in Cameroon</p> <p>Task force contribution to REDD+ Strategy</p> <p>Specific actions to support information flow to women throughout the country</p> <p>Availability of resources to support the task force and its activities for 3 years</p> <p>Women constituency representation in major decision making bodies and processes</p> <p>Impact of women constituency representation in major decision making bodies and processes</p>	<p>IUCN, WEDO, Administration agencies, CSO REDD+ and Climate Change Platform</p>	<p>Norad, DANIDA, World Bank (e.g FCPF)</p>
2. To build and strengthen women's and gender focused organizations	<p>2.1 Develop training materials on sustainable management of forests and REDD+ issues that are accessible to women.</p> <p>2.2 Conduct a gender sensitive REDD+ sensitization campaign that includes several sessions (via radio, audio-visual, press, flyers, etc), that pays special</p>	<p>February-June 2012</p> <p>June 2012</p> <p>On going</p>	<p>Existence of adapted training materials</p> <p>Four gender sensitive sensitization campaigns carried out</p>	<p>MINEP, MINPROFF, MINAS, CSO REDD+ and Climate Change Platform, MINFOF,</p>	<p>MINFOF, MINEE, MINEPAT, IUCN, WWF, GIZ, COMIFAC; SNV</p>



capacity on REDD+ issues	attention to women's media preferences  2.3 Conduct trainings for local women on forestry and REDD+ issues in each one of the 5 ecological regions of the country <sup>3</sup>  2.4 Identify existing safeguards that mitigate potential impacts on women's rights	May-October 2012  May-October 2012	At least 50 000 people sensitized (where 60% of women receive information)  Number of local women trained on REDD+ issues per region  Available information on gender differentiated use, access and control of forest/ natural resources per region  Mapping of women's concerns, risks and opportunities in REDD+ per region  Safeguards identified	Councils, local NGOs  IUCN, WWF, Local NGOs, WEDO, gender and forests task force	World Bank Councils;
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#### IMPLEMENTATION

Objectives/	Action steps/	Timeline/	Indicators of success	Responsible/	Possible Source of Resource
1.To avoid/mitigate negative impacts of REDD+ initiative on women rights	1.1 Identify existing inequalities and causes of discrimination to women 1.2 Identify legal means of ensuring that rights are not violated 1.3 Build the capacity of the gender and forest task force on safeguard issues related to REDD+ 1.4 Identify potential risks of REDD+ implementation on women livelihoods and their access to resources 1.5 Create safeguards to prevent violation and enhance women rights, with attention to land and natural resource use; full and effective consultation and	mid 2012 Ongoing	Gender and forest task force participate in the design/modification of safeguards  Women specific risks are considered in the design/modification of safeguards  Number of local women aware of their rights and grievance mechanisms  Number of positive legal resolutions that acknowledge women's rights	Gender and forest task force, Civil societies, Traditional authorities, WEDO, UN Women BIC, CCBA,	Donors and implementing partner organization

<sup>3</sup> Trainings will carry out a gender analysis of community forest management (techniques, NTPF, etc)







	<p>participation; fair access to information, education to enable decision-making and consent; and equitable distribution of benefits</p> <p>1.6 Inform local women of their rights, safeguards and build their capacity to use grievance or protocols systems if safeguards are violated</p>		Number of claims presented through the grievance system		
2. Involve women in all REDD+ activities	<p>2.1 Identify activities under the REDD+ National Strategy and target groups per sector of activity</p> <p>2.2 Build the capacity of the gender and forest task force on the activities under the REDD+ National Strategy</p> <p>2.3 Train local women on SFM and other REDD+ activities, such as agricultural techniques with low impact on the environment, afforestation, forestry certification, agroforestry and forestry techniques, NTFP processing</p> <p>2.4 Empower local women to assume leadership roles during the implementation of REDD+ activities through capacity building</p> <p>2.5 Resources are ensured for local women to perform SFM and other REDD+ activities; such as improved agricultural techniques with low impact on the environment, afforestation, forestry certification, agroforestry and forestry techniques, NTFP processing</p>	2012-2013 Ongoing	<p>Number of groups organized per sector of activity</p> <p>Gender and forest task force with knowledge of REDD+ activities</p> <p>Number of women trained on SFM and other REDD+ activities</p> <p>Gender and forest task force develops methodology to build the capacity of local women</p> <p>Number of women participating in SFM, afforestation, forestry certification, agroforestry and forestry techniques, NTFP processing, and adopting improved agricultural techniques with low impact on the environment</p> <p>Number of women's projects funded</p>	<p>MINEP, MINFOF, Implementing Partners Organizations</p> <p>Gender and forests task force</p>	FCPF, UN REDD Private Sector



## Conclusion

The arrangements that will help put in practice the road map will be based upon the existing national structures for gender and REDD+ issues to ensure the desired outcomes.

- *Mapping and strengthening women's networks*
- *Need for institutional collaboration*
- *Need for Capacity Development to mainstream gender into REDD+*
- *Securing tenure rights for women*

This effort has given as a result the first road map on gender and REDD+ in Cameroon. Its principal driving principle was to ensure that both women and men are fully recognized as forest stakeholders, that they have equal opportunity to develop their capacities and to participate, contribute and benefit from the REDD+ initiatives.