

FORESTRY COMMISSION

REDD-plus SECRETARIAT

REDD-PLUS COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

FINALISED DOCUMENT

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Reduction of Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation Plus (REDD+) is a global initiative for combating climate change through reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and the conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks particularly in developing countries.

The underlying factor is that global deforestation and forest degradation is estimated to contribute 20 per cent of global greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions annually. This human induced greenhouse gases are causing global warming, according to the forth Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Assessment Report released in 2007. The report called for global tangible actions to reduce GHG.

The GHG reduction targets for countries to act on were set by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Kyoto Protocol.

Responsibility for climate change should involve all at all levels: governments, business enterprises, communities and individuals. Several tools including regulations, taxes and subsidies, can be applied by governments, to motivate all actors to alter their behaviour in ways that can reduce GHG emissions and promote climate change mitigation. However, these tools can meet apathy, passive resistance or even active opposition.

Therefore, effective communication on all aspects of climate change policy is essential to gain public support and thus reduce GHG emissions. Article 6 of the UNFCCC highlights the importance of climate change communication to the general public and of engaging stakeholders on related issues. It also outlines the responsibility of the participating countries to develop and implement educational and public awareness activities on climate change and its effects, ensure public access to information, and promote public participation in addressing the issues.

In recent years, REDD+ issues are among priority issues discussed by the international community at international climate change conferences. The 16th Conference of Parties of the UNFCCC in Cancun, Mexico, prepared the stage for a nationally –driven phased process for the further development of a REDD + mechanism for developing countries. The framework involves a three-phase process for the further development of a REDD+ mechanism for developing countries as follows:

- 1) Development of national strategies or action plans and capacity building
- 2) Implementation of national strategies or action plans that could involve REDD+ pilot projects
- 3) Results-based REDD+ with financing likely to include both market and non-market mechanisms

Developing countries including Ghana are being assisted through various funding mechanisms such as the Forest Carbon Partnership Fund (FCPF) to work in accordance with these schedules. As part of the preparation activities for REDD+ implementation, seven pilot areas have been selected in five regions namely – Western, Central, Eastern, Ashanti and

Brong-Ahafo. Here, project based activities are to be implemented by government and private sector agencies, local and international NGO/CSOs.

Effective communication is critical to secure public appreciation, participation and ownership of the REDD+ process and activities in Ghana. Effective communication will enable the REDD Secretariat to accomplish its goals of:

- i. Raising the public profile of the National REDD+ Programme nationally, regionally and locally with all identified audiences, and
- ii. Ensuring effective lobbying and advocacy with critical stakeholders
- iii. Employing an effective communication approach useful for excellent expectation management.

The cross-cutting nature of REDD+ implies the involvement/participation/interests of a wide range of stakeholders/sector as indicated in the R-PP. Each of these major stakeholders and sectors have perspectives concerning the national REDD+ process as captured in the R-PP – “Stakeholders within and outside of the Government have very different expectations with respect to the benefits and risks associated with REDD+. Local stakeholders are concerned about fair benefit sharing, while the Government confronts the challenge of enacting broad policy reforms without the assurance of eventual rewards from emission reductions or other environmental benefits.” These perspectives and expectations do have relevance and implications for the Communication Strategy and Action Plans.

The R-PP further identified key areas for consultation that are also relevant for consideration in the development of communication activities. They are as follows:

1. Scope and nature of REDD+ (information sharing)
2. Potential Components of REDD+
3. The R-PP Process, including:
 - REDD+ Consultation & Participation Plan
 - Consultation Structures
 - Responsibilities for consultation and participation
4. Coordination with other land-use management programmes’ consultation processes
5. Cross-cutting Issues including:
 - Land Use Rights / Land Tenure Systems
 - Forest Governance
 - Benefit Sharing systems
6. Coherence with other initiatives (VPA, NLBI, GFP, etc)

Moreover, consultations held during the initial stages of the preparation of the R-PP revealed two major challenges namely: (i) the general lack of access to information on the Ghana’s REDD+ process, and (ii) the large number of concurrent forest-related consultation processes taking place in the country. As a result the R-PP identifies some key principles for future REDD+ consultations.

These include the need to:

- i. Engage all stakeholders significantly affected by, involved in the implementation of, or otherwise interested in REDD+, regardless of sector
- ii. Build on existing consultation & participation achievements and structures. (e.g. the review of the Forest Development Master Plan, civil society platforms established

- for contribution to the VPA, a range of Forest Forums that are already in place, and platforms established by civil society organizations and NGOS, such as Forest Watch Ghana, Tropenbos and others.)
- iii. Be sensitive to stakeholders' needs for time and other resources (including capacity building & feedback processes – effective planning and spearheading of consultations and information sharing are critical in this area)
 - iv. Be tailored in providing information that is accessible and enables participation
 - v. Be sensitive to the need for continuous evaluation at multiple levels
 - vi. Be participatory and focused in the determination of goals
 - vii. Be sensitive to the need for conflict resolution and management process
 - viii. Be sensitive to the need to manage expectations

A study commissioned by IUCN on “Understanding Forest Dependency for Redd+,” established some more issues that also have communication implications. They include i.) a clear understanding about the role that forests already play in people’s livelihoods is very crucial for making the right choices; ii.) uncertainty about the fate of local communities under REDD+ implementation; and iii.) low level of knowledge of REDD+ process among local community members in REDD+ pilot areas.

Therefore, an effective Communications Strategy will help to give the REDD+ project in Ghana the visibility that it deserves, create the needed understanding about the role forests play sustaining the livelihoods of people and improve the knowledge of REDD+ in pilot communities, among other things. Thus, communications will inevitably be a central factor to the success of the overall project.

This strategy presents a dynamic approach to using communications to facilitate the attainment of the goal of the National REDD+ set out in the R-PP document as to secure:

“collective ownership of the process to develop strategies that reduce emissions through deforestation and degradation (REDD) and to support conservation, sustainable forest management, and the enhancement of forest carbon stocks (the plus in REDD+).”

The purpose is to ensure that *“all stakeholder groups have a better understanding of REDD+, how it relates to Ghana and what roles, responsibilities and opportunities they have within Ghana’s efforts”*

By combining contemporary communications techniques with traditional tools, the Strategy will enhance information sharing among stakeholder communities, enhance private sector involvement, result in high-level engagement and policy influence, and create a higher profile for REDD+ in Ghana

2.0 GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 Goal:

To enhance communication with different stakeholders to raise awareness and knowledge management on climate change and REDD+ issues in the country.

2.2 Objectives:

The Strategy seeks to achieve the following three objectives:

1. To enhance understanding of climate change and REDD+ concepts, carbon financing and forest conservation among different stakeholders to increase their understanding of and participation in REDD+.
2. To enhance understanding of forest related policies and environmental issues among forest adjacent communities and other stakeholders in Ghana.
3. To strengthen relationship and communication with the Ghanaian news media to enhance wider coverage of climate change and REDD+.

3.0 SETTING THE SCENE

3.1 Background

REDD+ is generally a broad term for the global initiative comprising a range of actions to combat climate change through reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and the conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks particularly in developing countries. The initiative has created opportunities for nation-wide preparations for its development including the implementation of pilot projects in developing countries such as Ghana.

As a country, Ghana presents an enabling environment for REDD+ development in the areas of:

- *Enabling environmental, social and rights-based policies and frameworks backed by legislation;*
- *Decentralised natural resource management capable of instituting local-level REDD+ projects; and*
- Capacity building at all levels including CSOs, research and academia, public institutions, private sector, traditional authorities and local communities.

Following the acceptance of the Government of Ghana REDD Readiness Plan Idea Note (R-PIN) by the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) in 2008, several activities have been initiated aimed at strengthening the country's preparation for REDD+ under the direction of the Forestry Commission. These include:

- Formulation of the Ghana Readiness Preparation Proposal(R-PP)
- Establishment of the REDD+ Secretariat at the FC
- Formation of National REDD Steering Committee (NREG)

The Communication Audit of the REDD+ process revealed an existing vibrant communication structure involving key partners like the REDD+ Secretariat, the private

sector, big NGOs, CSOs, and CBOs, who target different stakeholders within their constituencies. The Audit also revealed some gaps in the REDD+ communication process as follows:

- Pilot implementing organisations have different levels of communication capacity that is affecting delivery of communication activities on the ground (See Communication Audit Report for details).
- Segmented focused communication resulting to the exclusion of other stakeholders e.g attention on traditional authorities to the neglect of community members;
- Limited/lack of logistics including finance has restricted communication activities in some pilot areas;
- Communication activities are too much focused on pilot areas to the neglect of the general public who have both direct and indirect impacts on REDD+; and
- There is a lack of a well coordinated effective communication in the REDD+ process

Therefore, this Strategy document presents the view that communication must be a central driver for the REDD+ process in Ghana and must be adopted as a management priority.

And in line with meeting the aims of the consultancy as stated in the ToRs, the Strategy is crafted in a way as to:

- iv. Raise the public profile of the National REDD+ Programme nationally, regionally and locally with all identified audiences;
- v. Ensure effective lobbying and advocacy with critical stakeholders; and
- vi. Present an effective communication approach useful for excellent expectation management.

3.2 Situational Analysis Based on Communication Audit Findings

Based on the Communication Audit undertaken by the Consultant, the following salient findings provided direction for the development of the Strategy:

- It is evident that the National REDD+ Secretariat is determined to make an important, significant and effective contribution in preparing the country for the project;
- The Secretariat is clearly committed to playing a strong leadership role for REDD+ in Ghana;
- However, in spite of the work undertaken to date, there remains quite limited awareness of REDD+ among some of key stakeholders;
- Overall, the National REDD+ project has a much lower profile in Ghana than it should have;

- The REDD+ project has yet to execute a communications strategy to give it the presence that it rightly deserves in Ghana particularly in the pilot areas;
- Key stakeholders are expressing the need for receiving considerably more information about REDD+ in Ghana, the progress it is making, the rationale for the pilots, and other critical matters, in more detail and on a more regular basis;
- There is need for clarification on the sometimes conflicting interpretations about what REDD, REDD+, and the National REDD+ project, and this leads to confusion among some important audiences such as the media;
- It is apparent to many important key stakeholders that a proactive communications programme is much needed, and long overdue;
- There is a significant appetite for information on the National REDD+ project;
- A common view expressed among NGOs/CSOs/CBOs in particular is that there is too much dependence on formal platforms like working groups, and that other forms of communications need to be established;
- There are concerns about the possible negative impacts on the socio-economic lives of pilot communities and indeed local communities;
- There is a perception that REDD+ is not a panacea for the forestry sector;
- There is significant skepticism about the REDD+ process to deliver in Ghana; and
- There is a challenge of the REDD+ project rising above skepticism and existing negative perceptions

3.3 The Current External Context

The Knowledge sharing opportunity:

Worldwide communications are undergoing change driven by the rapid spread of high-speed internet access, digital media and the development of new platforms and methodologies. Proven digital media tools, such as academic and issue-based listserves and blogs, can now be combined with more recent innovations, including social media platforms, issue-based online community sites and blogging, for broader stakeholder reach.

At the same time, new packagers and distributors of information - specialized development websites and open access portals - can be optimized, targeted and used in tandem with traditional communications models, such as conferences, seminars, symposiums, workshops, focus group discussions and monitoring services, to allow adaptation and redirect efforts to maximize impact and reach.

Current trends of employing social marketing strategies and the promotional mix tools can be fully cashed in to supplement general awareness creation of REDD+ in the country.

3.4 The Internal Context

Current status of REDD+ communication:

Due to the complexities of issues relating to REDD+ including land tenure and tree rights, diversity of stakeholders and stakeholder interests, communication has played a major role right from the formulation stages of the R-PP in 2009 to date.

The REDD+ Secretariat has been spearheading the communication process ever since the preparatory begun in 2009, as documented in the R-PP document.

The communication process has been/is being done through information sharing in stakeholder consultations, participation and engagement through workshops, seminars and focus group discussions. Zonal meetings have been organised on REDD+ to consult segmented stakeholders and where the Secretariat lacked capacity, it had involved capable CBOs who facilitated the engagement on REDD+ particularly at the local community level.

The formation of the National REDD+ Steering Committee is also contributing significantly the REDD-plus communication process, as representatives brief their constituents about what is discussed at the meetings (or are expected to brief constituents). Thus, there exists a structure that allows information sharing and feedback on REDD+ that enriches the discussions and decision-making process on REDD+. For instance, Civic Response that represents civil society on the Steering Committee interacts regularly with members of Forest Watch (Coalition of NGOs/CBOs on forestry related issues) to discuss pertinent issues with them. Also as part of the communication efforts, IUCN a key partner in the Ghana REDD+ process, has developed information, communication and education materials on various aspects of REDD+ and distributed to stakeholders. IUCN has also created a platform that discusses pertinent REDD+ related issues including pro-poor and gender dimensions of the initiative. The media, which is a key partner in publicising events and issues, has also been involved in the process by being invited to cover REDD+ related activities whether they are organised by the Secretariat or other stakeholders/partners.

In addition to these, a section of the FC website is devoted to REDD+ related issues. But as it is, new and social media platforms for raising social debates and engagement on issues are yet to be tapped.

Also, there is little emphasis on generating high-profile communications products such as jingles and branded advertising messages that can reach the general public without compromising the integrity of the issues. The trend, probably because of funding, time and priority issues, has been towards producing fewer products targeting selected stakeholders.

4.0 ASPIRATIONS AND PRINCIPLES

4.1 Aspiration

The most significant and powerful development outcomes will be achieved by bringing pertinent REDD+ issues, research outputs and products directly to stakeholders in partnership with other related public institutions, NGOs/CSOs/CBOs, and private sector. Consequently, the R-PP document identifies key areas for stakeholders consultations as:

1. Scope and nature of REDD+ (information sharing)

2. Potential Components of REDD+
3. The R-PP Process, including:
 - a. REDD+ Consultation & Participation Plan
 - b. Consultation Structures
 - c. Responsibilities for consultation and participation
4. Coordination with other land-use management programmes' consultation processes
5. Cross-cutting Issues including:
 - i. Land Use Rights / Land Tenure Systems
 - ii. Forest Governance
 - iii. Benefit Sharing systems
6. Coherence with other initiatives (VPA, NLBI, GFP, FIP, etc)

Thus, the R-PP, proposes integrated approaches that link the generation of new knowledge with those who will benefit from it, to produce positive change. This Communications Strategy complements the R-PP and presents a dynamic approach to using the knowledge generated to achieve real development impact.

Providing authoritative, unbiased, high quality and engaging information on REDD+ will also establish the initiative as a visible and credible force in development, and inform policy, practice and public discussion. This renewed approach will engage audiences, integrate communications with research and raise the impact of communication tools. It will further build support among key constituencies for REDD+ in ways that will raise its overall effectiveness.

These will make ongoing operational work on REDD+ more effective, contribute to upscaling and outscaling, and generate direct impact. Making communication and knowledge-sharing priorities clear and roles explicit will greatly increase the value of REDD+ and improve general performance.

Building on existing achievements communication-wise, this Strategy has a clearly defined goal that relates directly to the goals of the R-PP. The Strategy combines contemporary communications methods with traditional tools, to raise stakeholder appreciation of REDD+ and engender support for the process.

4.2 Core communication principles

The following communication principles served as a guide in designing appropriate communication approaches for the REDD+ process and will further serve as critical elements for successful communication. Thus, effective communications should therefore be seen by

the REDD+ Secretariat as a central management component, with the following five elements required in order to achieve the desired results:

Clear Vision

The entire concept of Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation is complex and it is therefore important that the Secretariat projects a clear and distinctive vision that can be easily understood by all stakeholders.

Unique Concept

REDD+ is unique as an innovation that is providing incentives for actions and measures targeted at addressing drivers of deforestation and forest degradation. The associated benefits include both carbon and non-carbon.

Workable

Given its technical complexity, the REDD+'s objectives must be seen as feasible and practical, and stakeholders need to be convinced of this accordingly.

Benefits

The benefits that REDD+ will bring to each of the stakeholder groups must be clearly and convincingly projected if their support and participation is to be fully acquired.

Managing Expectations

Stakeholder groups need to be assured that the REDD-plus objectives are attainable and the reasonable stakeholder expectations can be met. This can be achieved through inclusiveness, transparency and timely information dissemination.

4.3 Key Areas for the Strategy

To achieve a successful REDD+ programme in Ghana the following focal areas in relation to communication should be given attention:

Public relations and image building

The communications strategy should serve to propagate the vision for REDD+ while establishing and maintaining a positive image and brand identity for REDD+ concept.

Media relations

It is important for positive awareness around REDD+ to be raised among all stakeholders through the Ghanaian media.

Issues and Knowledge management

The complexity of REDD+ necessitates constant and careful interaction with stakeholders and assessment of a wide range of issues including feedback from various constituents. It is important to acknowledge indigenous knowledge in the context of REDD+.

4.4 Key Messages

As explained earlier in this document, messages must be tailored to specific stakeholders groups. While there are some common points for all, there are also key content elements specific to each group:

General Public, National, Regional and Local Government and related institutions:

The Programme has a clear vision and is delivering significant and tangible, environmental, economic and social benefits to the country and the pilot areas, while contributing to the nation's commitment to play its role in mitigating climate change

Media (national, local, and possibly international)

The project is supported by the Government of Ghana and World Bank and is the primary source of information on all matters related to REDD+ in Ghana

NGOs/CSOs/CBOs/Gender Advocates and Youth (existing & potential partners, and key influencers)

The REDD+ project is designed to provide maximum possible benefits to the local communities where the pilots are implemented, and is helping with Civil Society capacity building and the empowerment of people

Local communities

The project works with society to address the needs of local people, with the expectation that real, long-term benefits will be delivered that have true meaning for communities

Academia and related research and educational institutions

Best practice demonstrations of the REDD+ is delivered by the project in Ghana

Private sector actors

The projects brings stability and long-term sustainability of benefit to all, including the private sector; and there is a strong business case for cooperation

Development Partners

The project provides practical solutions to climate change mitigation and helps prepare Ghana for REDD+ implementation.

4.5 Identified Communication Tools:

Mass Media:

- Media coverage of REDD+ activities that have relevance for the public,
- Television – REDD+ focus documentaries, discussion programmes, flash messages, feature news stories on REDD+,

- Radio – REDD+ focus magazine programmes, discussion programmes, jingles, radio features using national, regional, rural and community FM stations
- Newspapers – Commissioned feature articles, supplements/pullouts, advertisers notices
- Street announcements – to precede events especially in the rural areas
- Newsletters and news bulletins
- Websites/intranet, email messages, social media platforms
- Press releases, media briefings, press soirees, editors dialogue, media training sessions, field trips, study tours, special one-on-one interviews,
- On-line ‘Media Centre’
- Opinion editorials

Public Events:

- Conferences, rallies, workshops, durbars, forums, celebration of special day, meetings, roundtable discussions, partners rallies, publicity campaigns, cross country road show, participation in exhibitions,

Publications/Informational materials

- Newsletters, news bulletins, brochures, fact sheets, posters, hand bills, booklets, bill boards, project specific souvenirs, FAQs, speaking points, video clips, documentaries, photo and video library,

5.0 MANAGING THE COMMUNICATION

Effective delivery of the Communications Strategy is dependent on management prioritisation and commensurate staff resources. It is vital that Communications is seen as a central function in the project implementation and its role to the attainment of overall goal of REDD+ be valued in the light of the following:

- Communications resource should be used strategically and tactically, with it being central to everything being done.
- Communications should be involved right from the outset of each initiative.
- Communications thinking needs to be further encouraged with a focus on pro-activity and creativity.
- A strong communications presence needs to be established in pilot areas to augment the work being done on the National REDD+ project. But then the project also needs to strengthen its communication presence if possible by engaging a Communications Officer to spearhead the activities in collaboration with the Public Relations Unit and the proposed REDD+ Communication Focal Persons Team.

6.0 MEASURING IMPACTS (MONITORING & EVALUATION)

Measurement of the results of communication will be built into communication activities at various levels, using tools such as:

- Track response to REDD+ newsletters, bulletins and other informational materials through a feedback mechanism including contacts for further information, comments and suggestions from readers, opinion polls, etc
- Collect and interpret detailed web usage information
- Number of documents downloaded from website
- Increase in social media followers, their feedback and comments
- Assessment of media interest reflected by number of articles published, radio and television features
- Service level assessment
- Conduct impact assessment surveys to track whether the public/pilot communities have been influenced or engaged as intended and what the result is
- Conduct customer satisfaction surveys.

*Results from these activities will inform the Secretariat and partners about the progress and impact of REDD-plus communications. It will further enable the making of informed decisions as to whether to continue the implementation of scheduled activities or re-design new ones.

7.0 COORDINATION

7.1 Knowledge management and organizational collaboration

Knowledge sharing has become part of the way the REDD+ project operates; new processes to encourage the capturing and sharing of knowledge are being built into core REDD+ activities. Knowledge management will make information more easily accessible to key stakeholders and communications will make that process easier by packaging and developing information outputs.

7.2 Scaling up and scaling out

Communications will support the REDD+ project in scaling up and scaling out its work. As well as increasing the output and use of communication products, active research will be needed to understand how best to deploy communication strategies in support of scaling up and out activities, such as the cocoa agroforestry work.

8.0 RISK MANAGEMENT

Communicating is necessarily a public enterprise, with consequent reputational risks, especially in dealing with difficult issues, such as the handling of tenurial issues and benefits sharing. Some obvious risks are listed in the Table below, with indications of how to handle them.

Communications risk management

Risk	Action
Striving for high visibility attracts critical attention	Emphasize the importance of RED+ in public communications over the importance of institutions
Partners actions/inactions compromise REDD+ profile	Collaborate with other partners at the highest level to develop an equitable compromise between partners consolidation and project visibility
News articles published with incorrect or misinterpreted information	<p>Preventative: Establish cordial relations with media that enables journalists crosscheck for accuracy before publication of feature articles</p> <p>Remedial: request the right of response, letter to the editor, publication of correction, etc.</p>
Inadequate resources to meet communication demands	Prioritize communications work against a clear and tested set of criteria
Digital divide discriminates against developing countries	Adopt the most suitable means of communication for the audience so that the less well-connected can benefit

ANNEX 1 ACTION PLANS TO IMPLEMENT THE STRATEGY

Introduction:

The strategy makes communication an integral part of the REDD+ process and is fundamental to achieving the significant development impact that the funding agencies and development partners are demanding. To implement the strategy successfully will require the following:

- A management and institutional recognition of the contribution that communication can make to implementing REDD+ and its outputs to stakeholders;
- A commitment to assigning budgetary allocation to communication activities, to allow partners to achieve clear outcomes and impact from their work;
- The REDD+ Secretariat should keep track of all REDD+ communication activities carried out by partners (including potential partners) through the establishment of a REDD+ Communication Data-base; and
- The REDD+ Secretariat (FC) should endeavour to procure the services of qualified persons/firms to implement those aspects of the strategy for which it lacks or has inadequate capacity to undertake.

In order to successfully implement the strategy, the REDD+ process in Ghana must ensure that the communication plan has to be:

- Proactive – taking the lead in generating positive media coverage and reaching out to audience;
- Consistent – there should be uniformity and consistency in message delivery by REDD-plus communicators; and
- Coordinated – timing and phasing of activities to maximise impact and reach in tandem with other REDD+ related communication activities.

The Approach:

Objective 1: To enhance understanding of climate change and REDD+ concepts, carbon financing and forest conservation among different stakeholders to increase their understanding of and participation in REDD+.

Audiences

General public, relevant government institutions (especially frontline staff of the Forestry Commission), private sector, NGOs/CSOs/CBOs, traditional rulers and local communities, policy makers, decision makers, research and academia, media and development partners.

Core Activity	Action Plans	Responsibility	Remarks
Raise awareness of the REDD+ brand/image in Ghana that people can easily identify with	<p>1. Procure an Advertising and PR Agency</p> <p>2. Advertising and PR Agency to design promotional campaign to:</p> <p>- create awareness about REDD+ in Ghana through activities including</p> <p>i.) REDD + cross country road show, ii.) drama and theatre, and iii.) radio jingles, radio presenters announcements, flash messages on TV</p>	<p>1. REDD + Secretariat/Forestry Commission</p> <p>2. Advertising and PR Agency</p>	The idea is to popularise the REDD-plus concept in the country
Develop a series of synthesis reports that provide authoritative information to policy- and decision makers on development, policy issues and analysis related to REDD+.	<p>1. Publication of synthesis reports of REDD-plus on quarterly basis.</p> <p>2. Synthesize complex information into simple form; packaging of information to different stakeholders</p> <p>3. Undertake media campaign to publicise the reports</p>	<p>1. REDD + Secretariat/Steering committee</p> <p>2. REDD+ Secretariat/Comm. Focal Persons Team</p> <p>3. REDD+ Secretariat/Comm. Focal Persons Team</p>	
Disseminate simple communication products directly to specific target groups	<p>1. Produce and assemble simplified communication products such as policy briefs, posters, factsheets, FAQs etc.</p> <p>2. Distribute products to</p>	<p>1. REDD+ Secretariat/Comm. Focal Persons Team</p> <p>2. REDD+</p>	

	<p>targeted stakeholders</p> <p>3. Develop a regular hard copy and electronic newsletter periodical</p> <p>4. Produce video clips and comprehensive documentary on the REDD+ process in Ghana</p> <p>5. Utilise social media and SMS initiatives</p>	<p>Secretariat/partners</p> <p>3. REDD+ Secretariat/Comm. Focal Partners Team</p> <p>4. REDD+ Secretariat</p> <p>5. REDD+ Secretariat</p>	
Develop REDD+ dedicated web-site	<p>1. Stimulate regular comments on specially created REDD+ blogs about related issues in Ghana</p> <p>2. Train staff or engage an expert to maintain and manage it</p>	<p>1. Trained staff or engaged personnel</p> <p>2. REDD+ Secretariat/Forestry Commission</p>	
Institute an annual national REDD+ forum	Create platforms where REDD+ issues will be shared	REDD+ Secretariat/Steering Committee/Comm. Focal Persons Team	
Coordinate communications activities	Form communications focal team drawn from partner organisations	REDD + Secretariat	Alternatively, in order not to overburden the Secretariat and enable it to focus on its key technical assignments, the proposal is to engage/contract a firm with environmental communications expertise to handle the implementation and coordination of the entire strategy
Funding: Communication budget and project funds			
Expected Outputs: Synthesis reports, opinion pieces, newsletters, media features, websites and blogs, high-level presentations, social media and SMS initiatives			

Objective 2: To enhance understanding of forest related policies and environmental issues among forest adjacent communities and other stakeholders in Ghana.

Audiences

Relevant parliamentary select committees including leadership of the house, policy and decision makers, staff of FC in the various forest districts, traditional rulers, Municipal/District Assemblies, gender and youth groups

Tactics	Action plans	Responsibility	Remarks
Lobby target audiences in the REDD+ process	1. Focus group discussions aimed at providing insight into how the process fits into their political/administrative goals and objectives/agenda 2. Prepare and present policy briefs and updates to target audiences 3. Organise radio discussions to elicit public understanding and support	1. REDD+ Secretariat/Partners 2. REDD+ Secretariat/Partners 3. REDD+ Secretariat/Communication Focal Persons	This is geared towards securing the active support of all key stakeholders including frontline staff of FC in the forest districts
Create awareness of REDD+ potentials and benefits in pilot communities/areas	1. Undertake community sensitisation outreach programmes in pilot communities and areas targeting all segments of the population 2. Establish grievances committee in pilot areas to resolve all REDD+ related conflicts	1. Pilot implementing organisations 2. Pilot implementing organisations/REDD+ Secretariat	The sensitization should be all encompassing utilizing rural participatory approaches in discussion where necessary
Adopt concept for a REDD+ knowledge-sharing approach	1. Develop a database of all organisations/institutions involved in REDD+ 2. Conduct research to establish communication flow, knowledge sharing and learning opportunities	1. REDD+ Secretariat 2. Consultant	Secretariat will have to consider contracting a consultant to handle activities 2 & 3

	<p>among partners</p> <p>3. Based on research findings develop a structure for information and experience exchange as well as learning and partnership activities among these partners</p> <p>4. Pilot and demonstrate knowledge sharing and learning activities</p>	<p>3. Consultant</p> <p>4. REDD+ Secretariat/partners</p>	
Assess the impact and usefulness of the intranet and websites, with follow up redesign or modification	Conduct research to ascertain impact and level of use, make recommendations for modification	Consultant	
Funding: Communication budget and project funds			
Products: Policy briefs, quarterly updates			

Objective 3: To strengthen relationship and communication with the Ghanaian news media to enhance wider coverage of climate change and REDD+.

Audiences

General public, relevant government institutions, private sector, NGOs/CSOs/CBOs, traditional rulers and local communities, policy makers, decision makers, research and academia, media and development partners

Tactics	Action Plans	Responsibility	Remarks
Create advocacy and media outreach programmes on REDD-plus	<p>1. Develop media contact plan which outlines the most desired and influential media outlets for targeted, and proactive contacts for publicity</p> <p>2. Create, maintain and constantly update a media</p>	The REDD+ Secretariat	These activities have been structured in a way as to foster appropriate and effective media relations for enhancing the feasibility of the project

	<p>data base, which records reports filed when contacts are made. This will be used as a guide for making proactive contact with journalists with the aim of generating more coverage.</p> <p>3. Organise editors dialogue to create and strengthen relations with managing editors to enhance reportage on REDD+</p> <p>4. Organise regular media briefings and one-on-one sessions journalists on REDD+</p> <p>5. Issue press releases periodically to update media on new developments on REDD +</p> <p>6. Establish media ambassadors for REDD + to communicate effectively on issues</p> <p>7. Organise training on REDD+ for media</p> <p>8. Organise field trip and study tour for selected media persons</p>		
Funding: Communications/project budgets			
Products: Press releases, opinion pieces, media features, radio and TV discussions, websites and blogs, social media and SMS initiatives, interviews and speaking opportunities			

Details of the Activity Plan and Estimated Budget

Updated Activity Schedule

Activities	Timeframe				Estimated Budget in US \$	Remarks
	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Cross-cutting		
Engage PR and Advertising Firm with environmental communication expertise through direct referral					72,000	The Firm will handle implementation and coordination within a three-year period
PR and Advertising Firm to develop REDD + branding and image profiling publicity campaign					No cost	
Develop a database of all organisations/institutions involved in REDD+					No cost	
Develop a media contact plan which outlines the most desired and influential media outlets					No cost	This is to aid targeted and proactive contacts for publicity
Launch REDD+ branding/image profiling publicity campaign					60,000	It is expected that the campaign will utilize a combination of advertising, PR and media tools including road show
Develop, maintain and manage website devoted to REDD+					2,000.00	
Create communications focal persons team pooled from partner organisations					3,000.00	The team will assist in implementing cross-cutting communication activities. This should consist of institutions/organizations involved in REDD+
Identify a small group of people as media 'ambassadors' for REDD+.					3,000.00	They should represent a range of different areas of expertise and trained to talk effectively to selected media houses
Identify writers to develop at least quarterly synthesis simplified					3,000.00	

reports on REDD+						
Produce and assemble simplified communication products such as policy briefs, posters, factsheets, FAQs, one-page media briefers, etc.					5,000.00	
Conduct research using surveys and interviews to establish communication flow, knowledge sharing and learning opportunities among partner organisations					10,000.00	
Based on research findings develop a structure for information and experience exchange as well as learning and partnership activities among these partners					3,000.00	
Organise annual training/field trip on REDD+ for media					15,000.00	
Establish community grievances committees to resolve conflicts					3,000.00	
Sponsor/facilitate sponsorship for at least three selected media persons to participate in and cover international REDD+-related conferences					10,000.00	
Institute an annual national REDD-plus forum					65,000.00	
Produce video clips/comprehensive documentary on the REDD+ process in Ghana					20,000.00	This can be aired on selected television stations, at religious gatherings, community durbars etc. to facilitate public education on REDD +
Distribute communications products to target audiences					3,000.00	At workshops, durbars, special events
Develop a regular hard copy and electronic quarterly newsletter					15,000.00	
Prepare and present policy briefs and updates					3,000.00	

to target audiences						
Organise focus group discussions tailored to provide target audiences with insight into how the process fits into their political/administrative goals and aspirations					20,000.00	Such focus group discussions/trainings should also target frontline staff of the FC in the various forest districts. On-going trainings should be up-scaled to cover all categories of frontline staff including those at head office
Create, maintain and constantly update a media data base, which records what reports have been filed when contacts are made.					3, 000.00	This should be used as a guide for making proactive contact with journalists with the aim of generating more coverage and publicity
Organise strategic periodic media briefings, one-on-one and group sessions for selected journalists					10, 000.00	This is to update media persons on REDD + developments and provide catalysts for articles to be published/reports to be filed
Undertake community sensitisation outreach programmes in pilot communities and areas, targeting all segments of the population					8,000.00	
Where feasible, establish weekly community radio tutorials to update communities on REDD+ related issues					5,000.00	
End of year press soirees					10,000.00	This serves as an effective platform for interacting with the media
Total Estimated Budget: 439,000.00						

ANNEX 2 REDD+ COMMUNICATION AUDIT REPORT

Overview:

As part of the process towards developing a National REDD+ Communication Strategy, a communication audit was conducted to ascertain the exact communication situation on the ground regarding REDD+ and to further provide the basis for the development of appropriate strategies and action plans.

The Communication Audit focused on the following:

1. Analyse the existing communication structure for REDD-plus in order to identify existing gaps
2. Establish the level of knowledge of local communities on REDD-plus
3. Ascertain the communication capabilities of organisations selected to implement the pilots
4. Assess the interests and importance of each of the stakeholder groups for REDD-plus
5. Identify and disaggregate audiences that need to be reached
6. Identify the most effective communication channels to reach each of the stakeholder groups
7. Develop means to monitor and evaluate the communication process

The findings contained in this report are basically as a result of interaction with some representatives of the key stakeholders at the national, institutional, civil society and community levels. The recommendations that follow are to address the gaps that have been identified.

Identified & Disaggregated Stakeholders:

Civil Society

- CBOs (e.g. Fire volunteers, economic groups)
- CRMCs, DFFs, RFFs, NFF
- National & International NGOs
- Traditional Authorities – Chiefs, Land priests etc.
- Professional Associations – Ghana Institute of Foresters,
- Trade Unions, Associations, FOSSA, Students' Unions,
- Research & Academic organisations
- Religious bodies
- Gender advocates
- Youth groups

Media

- Electronic (National, regional & district)
- Print (National, regional & district)

Other:

GNA

On-line

State Level

- The Executive
- Cabinet
- Parliament
- Judiciary
- Ministries:
 - Land & Natural Resources
 - Foreign Affairs
 - Finance & Economic
 - Food & Agriculture
 - Environment, Science & Technology
 - Local Government & Rural Development
 - Education
 - Energy

Statutory Level

- Forestry Commission
- Lands Commission
- Water Resources Commission
- Energy Commission
- Internal Revenue Service
- National Development Planning Commission
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Savannah Accelerated Development Authority
- Ghana National Fire Service
- Customs Excise & Preventive Services
- Immigration Service
- Office of the Administrator of Stool Lands
- Ghana Investment Promotion Centre
- Ghana Cocoa Board
- Meteorology Service
- National Commission on Civic Education
- National Biodiversity Council
- MMDAs

Private Sector

- AGI Assoc of Ghana Industries
- Wood Industry- GTMO, DOLTA, GTA, GATEX, FAWAG, Woodworkers Association
- Mining Industry – Chamber of Mines, Small Scale Miners Association
- Fuel wood & Charcoal Burners Associations (producers, transporters, consumers)
- NTFP gatherers (Hunters, Fishers, Fuel wood collectors)
- Farmers Large & small scale
- Services - Investment/Buyers, technical experts, carbon consultants

Development Partners:

- All relevant development partners

Perceptions of Key Stakeholders

This part captures the interests/perspectives of key sectors/stakeholder groups about REDD+ in Ghana. The stakeholder groups indicated here were identified for engagement within the consultation process as captured under the R-PP.

Key Stakeholder Groups	Position	Expectation from REDD+	Interests in REDD+
Government	State and statutory level with a focus on cross sectoral linkages	Vibrant REDD+ process with national recognition and acceptance	REDD+ and its relation to climate change mitigation and adaptation, positive environmental and social impact; economic benefits, land use planning
Private Sector	Predominantly those within the timber industry and wood workers associations but also those involved in charcoal production, agriculture, and finance	Clear land tenure arrangement, established tree rights, availability of trees as resource, defined carbon rights	REDD+ and its related business benefits and opportunities, enhanced relations with local communities
NGO/Civil Society	Focus on forest fringe communities participation and benefits	Enhancement of community livelihood under REDD+	REDD+ and its relation to climate change mitigation, social and economic benefits, development support and expertise, land use planning
Development Partners	Governance, participation, transparency and accountability	Commitment to REDD+ process at the highest levels and ensuring values for money	REDD+ and its relations to climate change mitigation; positive environmental and social impacts;

			economic benefits
Traditional Authorities	Custodians of customary lands & representatives of people	Clear benefits sharing arrangements	REDD+ and its economic and environmental benefits, development support and expertise, alternative livelihoods, infrastructural development
Other Vital Sectors			
Gender	Gender mainstreaming and inclusiveness	Inclusion of gender considerations to enhance efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of REDD+ programmes	REDD+ and its economic and environmental benefits, development support and expertise, alternative livelihoods, infrastructural development
Youth	Engagement and involvement in pertinent processes	Youth concerns captured in REDD-plus	REDD+ and its economic and environmental benefits, development support and expertise, alternative livelihoods, infrastructural development
Media	Publicity	Easy access to REDD+-related information	REDD+ and its relation to climate change mitigation, positive environmental and social impacts, economic benefits

Key Findings in relation to Audit focus

Status of Communication on REDD+

- The Audit unveiled an existing, vibrant and on-going communication platform on REDD+.
- The REDD+ Secretariat has been spearheading the communication on REDD+ ever since the preparatory process begun in 2009, as documented in the R-PP.
- The communication process has been /is being done through information sharing in stakeholder consultations, participation and engagement through workshops, seminars and focus group discussions.
- Zonal meetings have been organised on REDD+ to consult segmented stakeholders and where the Secretariat lacked capacity, it had involved capable CBOs to facilitate the engagement on REDD+ particularly at the local community level.
- The formation of the National REDD+ Steering Committee is also contributing significantly to the REDD+ communication process, as representatives brief their constituents about what is discussed at the meetings (or are expected to brief constituents).
- There exists a structure that allows information sharing and feedback on REDD+, that enriches the discussions and decision-making process on REDD+. For instance, Civic Response that represents civil society on the Steering Committee interacts regularly with members of Forest Watch (Coalition of NGOs/CBOs on forestry related issues) to discuss pertinent issues with them. Also as part of the communication efforts, IUCN a key partner in the Ghana REDD+ process, has developed information, communication and education materials on various aspects of REDD+ and distributed to stakeholders. IUCN has also created a platform that discusses pertinent REDD+ related issues including pro-poor and gender dimensions of the initiative.
- The media, which is a key partner in publicising events and issues, has also been involved in the process by being invited to cover REDD+ related activities whether they are organised by the Secretariat or other stakeholders/partners.

Stakeholder Appreciation of REDD+

The level of knowledge of stakeholders about REDD+, depends to a large extent on the particularly stakeholder group to which an individual belongs. The Audit revealed that appreciation of REDD+ among stakeholders was dependent on certain factors as follows:

- Where a group exists that is actively involved in REDD+, people in the area tend to be highly knowledgeable of the initiative;
- Where NGOs/CSOs/CBOs undertake REDD+ awareness activities, people are knowledgeable about it;
- Where a public/private institutions/NGOs are implementing a REDD+ related activity, people are knowledgeable about it
- Where a traditional ruler, opinion leader, political leader is knowledgeable about REDD+, some of the people in the area are likely to know about the initiative; and
- Where the local media (community radio) is active in publicising REDD+ related issues;

This holds true for some communities in the Wassa Amenfi West District of the Western region, which is one of the REDD+ pilots, where IUCN is spearheading the implementation. Due to its effective awareness creation activities in the area for some time now, the people have a high level of appreciation for REDD+ related issues and are in readiness for its implementation.

But it must be noted that the identified factors are not exclusive determinants of the levels of appreciation of REDD+ among stakeholders, as established by the Audit.

For the purposes of the Audit two areas within two pilots namely – Nkoransah (representing the transition zone) and Bedum (representing the high forest zone) were selected to represent the two major ecological zones where the seven pilots are being implemented.

In the Nkoransah in the Bring-Ahafo area where VicDoris is implementing its REDD+ project, the Traditional Council is very much aware of REDD+, what it means, why the initiative is being implemented and what it means for them. Members are also aware of the relationship between REDD+ and climate change. Therefore, they are willing to release land for the purpose of exclusive tree-planting as part of the REDD+ activities. This followed an interactive workshop organised by VicDoris for the chiefs.

However, the people of Nkoransah are unaware about REDD+ and do not even know that such an initiative is to be implemented in their traditional area. What they do know and fully understand is the changing weather – erratic rainfall, increasing heat and longer dry spells. Some of them have plantations, but have regretted planting trees because according to them this activity is not lucrative. Therefore, they are thinking of destroying the trees and planting other food crops. They are however willing to use the trees for REDD+ provided they will be well compensated for a certain negotiated period. On the form and mode of compensation, they maintained that since they will no longer have access to their land, they must be compensated for the loss of the land and then further given an annual compensation for the loss of profits they would have made annually if they were cultivating other crops. However, the chiefs insisted that individuals who want to engage in REDD+ must first seek their consent as custodians of the land. But the people differed on that because in their view the chiefs did not represent them. So, if they have issues, they would rather go to court than seek redress through the traditional council.

Both the chiefs and people claimed that there has not been any active NGO/CSO/CBO activity in the area. Neither, has the area actually felt the impact of the Forest Services Division. This is because the Division has no office in the area and officers are far removed from direct contact with the people. They have gotten assistance in tree-planting from the now defunct Pioneer Tobacco Company that used to operate in the area. Across section of the people felt they do not feel the impact of the FSD because there is no forest in Nkoransah area. They admitted that charcoal production, illegal logging and yam cultivation have been the major causes of deforestation in the area. They agreed the wanton destruction of trees has even affected the “Seneya” tree whose felling was forbidden traditionally, because it aids crop yields and once this particular tree is on ones farm, bumper harvest is assured.

The story is different in the Bedum area of the Central region where Portal Ghana limited is operating. The firm has been operating in the area for about 15 years now engaging in afforestation and the chief of the area is a committed to cultivating trees. Hence, the elders and people in the area are deeply committed to afforestation. However, they are unaware of the linkage between afforestation and REDD-plus. Awareness in that regard has not yet been created. But it can be said that because of the high level of appreciation of tree planting among the people, they are in readiness for REDD-plus.

Even though, the scope of the Audit was restricted to the pilot areas, implementing institutions and key partners such as Development Partners and government ministries, a random check with the general public (unspecified audience) indicated that they have not heard about REDD+. If the desire of the REDD+ Secretariat for REDD+ to become a household word in Ghana is to be realised, then the general public must be reached.

Summary of Communication Capabilities of Pilot Implementing Organisations

All the organisations have some level of communication capabilities with experiences in undertaking diverse communication activities such as durbars, workshops, facilitating community radio discussions and establishing platforms for dialogues.

But the Audit revealed that organisational capabilities are linked to availability of resources – logistics and funding. So, while, those with ample resources are already sensitising their pilot communities about the project, others have not because of lack of resources.

Summary of communication Capabilities of non-REDD-plus pilot Implementing Organisations

The Audit revealed the existence of non-REDD+-pilot implementing organisations that are seriously engaged in REDD+ communications activities with their respective constituents. For instance, Civic Response is involved in building the capacity of local NGOs/CBOs to educate grassroots communities on REDD+ related issues. A Rocha is focused on working with CREMAs of some national parks in the Northern and Volta regions to build their capacity to adapt to climate change.

Observations and Recommendations

Observations

- National REDD+ Secretariat is determined to make an important, significant and effective contribution in preparing the country for the project;
- In spite of the work undertaken to date on REDD+, there remains quite limited awareness of the project among some key stakeholders in the country;
- Lower project profile of REDD+ in Ghana than it should have
- The REDD+ project presence yet to register in the country
- Key stakeholders are keen to receive more information about REDD+ in Ghana, the progress it is making, the rationale for the pilots, and other critical matters, in more detail and on a more regular basis;
- People want to understand the linkage between REDD+ and climate change;
- There is need for clarification on the sometimes conflicting interpretations about what REDD, REDD+, and the National REDD+ project, and this leads to confusion among some important audiences such as the media;
- Absence of a proactive communications programme affecting project visibility;

- There is a significant appetite for information on the National REDD+ project;
- NGOs/CSOs/CBOs are concerned about too much dependence on formal platforms like working groups, and that other forms of communications need to be established;
- There are concerns about the possible negative impacts on the socio-economic lives of pilot communities and indeed local communities;
- People see REDD+ as another opportunity for government to take over their lands;
- Perception that REDD+ is not a panacea for the forestry sector;
- Quite significant skepticism about the REDD+ process to deliver in Ghana;
- How will REDD+ project rise above skepticism and existing negative perceptions; and
- There is goodwill on the part of development partners to support the REDD+ process in Ghana.

Recommendations

- Formulate and implement effective communication strategy for REDD+ as a matter of urgency;
- Prepare/produce elaborate but simplified information communication and education materials for distribution to stakeholders
- REDD+ should have a brand and image identity that people can easily identify and associate with
- Utilise social marketing techniques to popularise REDD+ in Ghana
- Pilot implementing organisations that are ill resourced should be assisted (resourced) to undertake community sensitisation in their respective areas
- Use both formal and informal platforms to engage stakeholders on REDD+
- Build strategic media relations for the purpose of enhancing publicity on REDD+ process in the country
- Identify vulnerable groups such as tenants farmers in pilot areas and identify measures to ensure that they benefit from REDD+
- Keep communication channels open with marginalized and vulnerable groups through structured dialogues
- Establish a strong monitoring system to track the impact of REDD+ communication activities on stakeholders
- Strengthen decision making processes and transparency through governance training for community leaders
- Build the capacity of communities to advocate for their rights in relations to REDD+
- Develop a grievances resolution mechanism.

ANNEX 3: INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. Target: Steering Committee Members

Primary information about REDD+ communication

- Why should REDD+ be communicate in the first place?
- What do you want to communicate about REDD+?
- Who should do the communication?
- Will everyone receiving the information?
- Will they understand it?
- Which communications channels are most effective for REDD+?

What is the current communication situation for REDD+

- Has REDD+ been communicated before?
- Who did the communication and to whom?
- What communications channels were/are being used, formal and informal?
- Are your current communications channels under-communicating or over-communicating (information overload)?
- What information is being communicated and what is the quality of that information like?
- Are the messages accurately relaying the information you wish to give?
- Are there any constraints or bottlenecks
- What feedback are you receiving and does it include negative/positive feedback, possibly with incidents or experiences outlined?
- In what direction/s is communication taking place – downwards, upwards, and sideways or matrix?

2. Target: General Stakeholders

This has been adopted from the R-PP's identified areas requiring information sharing and consultation:

- What is REDD + (basic information sharing)
 - Where does REDD+ come from
 - What are the issues being negotiated internationally
 - What are the implications at national level
- Incentives from REDD+
 - Ways for Ghana to engage in a REDD+ mechanism
 - What benefits could be available to different stakeholders

- Land Use Rights / Land Tenure Systems
 - What would be potential implications of REDD+ benefits within the existing legal context
 - Would elements need to be included in a functioning REDD+ mechanism within the Ghanaian context
 - What impacts could potential revisions have
 -
- Forest Governance
 - What would you like to see in REDD+ to make it complimentary with existing initiatives in forest governance
- Benefit Sharing systems:
 - Are you aware of any existing benefits sharing systems within the forestry/land sector
 - If yes are they working/If no can you suggest a system for benefits sharing
 - How could REDD+ make use of existing benefit sharing agreements
 - What systems of benefit sharing could be appropriate and provide maximum benefits
- Potential REDD+ projects and activities
 - What activities could be included under REDD+
 - Do you know of any REDD+ related activities
 - What are the benefits/limitations of the different REDD+ activities