

REDD (Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation)



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Summary

CARE believes that the post-2012 climate change agreement must include mandatory social standards and safeguards to ensure that REDD activities:

- **Are effective:** by fully involving local communities, who are crucial in determining the success of forest conservation in the long term;
- **Avoid doing harm:** by protecting against violations of human rights or other negative consequences for poor and marginalised groups;
- **Promote social justice:** by including mechanisms for sharing REDD benefits equitably, with, and also within, indigenous and local communities in developing countries.

CARE places the highest priority on ensuring that gender considerations are understood to be an integral part of the above conditions. The differential implications on women and men must be addressed in the development of all REDD mechanisms.

Social standards and safeguards are necessary whether REDD is financed through market- or non-market mechanisms, though the nature of specific safeguards may be different in different circumstances.

Safeguards and benefit sharing mechanisms for REDD

Given the urgency of keeping global temperature rise as far below 2 degrees as possible, drastic emissions reductions must be a binding part of the post- 2012 climate change agreement. Forest conservation, reforestation, afforestation and forest restoration (collectively known as REDD-plus) in developing countries can contribute to removing carbon from the atmosphere, but this is only meaningful if it is part of a comprehensive emissions reduction commitment.¹

As many as 300 million people, most of them very poor, depend on the world's forests for their daily survival. REDD can support livelihoods, maintain vital ecosystem services, and preserve global biodiversity; but it can also exacerbate inequality and contribute to the violation of the rights of forest dependent people. The risks are accentuated in countries and regions with weak forest governance.

Experience from other forest related projects indicates that indigenous peoples and local communities are:

- critical to the success of activities, though they can also be
- harmed by poorly implemented or conceived projects, and are often
- excluded from receiving a fair share of the benefits.

¹ Most recent estimates of emissions from deforestation in developing countries are around 15% of total emissions, but this understates the importance of forest protection for stabilising climate, since forests also play a crucial role in the hydrological cycle at all scales from local to planetary.

CARE's principal concerns about REDD include, among others

- Indigenous Peoples and forest-dependent communities being denied rights and access to lands and resources essential for their livelihoods.
- Disproportionately negative impacts on women, who are normally responsible for water, firewood and wild forest products as part of the domestic economy, and for whom options for response are limited by lower access to education, cash and authority.
- REDD revenues going mainly to powerful interests within countries and within communities, with few benefits reaching local communities and poor people.

CARE's policy positions on REDD derive from the twin convictions that

- a. Deforestation and forest degradation must be effectively reduced; and
- b. In doing so, the collective and individual human rights of women and men must be respected.

Thus a REDD regime negotiated under the UNFCCC should require national governments to

1. **Involve affected stakeholders** in the setting, implementation and monitoring of REDD policy and programmes, including the preparedness phase. This includes commitment to the **full and effective participation** of civil society and the **free, prior, and informed consent** of indigenous peoples and local communities.
2. **Include specific and explicit provisions on gender** within their REDD programmes, with regard to safeguards, benefit sharing, participation and capacity-building
3. **Report against criteria** for REDD that include not only emissions reductions but also institutional reforms, consultation processes and social impacts. This requires that provisions for **monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) beyond carbon**.
4. Operate a **dispute resolution mechanism** for individuals and communities to address the violation of rights at both national and international levels (in recognition of the international nature of a global REDD regime).
5. Include social and environmental standards and forest governance criteria in any **review of compliance** against which entitlement to REDD financing (funds or market-based) will be assessed. This is particularly relevant when assessing transition of countries from a "readiness" phase to full implementation.
6. Address the **drivers of deforestation** in both tropical forest nations and countries which generate demand for products that lead to deforestation.

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