

Guyana VPA Stakeholder Compliance Outreach

Lessons Learnt Note

Guyana is in the process of developing its Guyana Timber Legality Assurance System (GTLAS). To increase awareness of the system's requirements, the European Forest Institute Technical Assistance Project (EFITAP) supported the Guyana Forestry Commission during 2022 to conduct an outreach programme that included a series of training sessions aimed at increasing the compliance of forest sector operators (FSOs) with forest sector regulations. This 'lessons learnt' note documents:

- **The process conducted** by EFITAP Guyana in carrying out the outreach.
- **The lessons learnt** (what worked, what did not work, etc.) from the outreach team.
- **The recommendations** for implementing similar projects in the future.

The intended audience of this document is the European Forest Institute (EFI), the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), the Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC), and its implementing partners.

1. Background

In 2012, after a series of consultations with internal and external stakeholders, the Government of Guyana (GoG) engaged the European Union (EU) to negotiate a Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA).

Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs) are a central element of the EU's strategy (Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan) in addressing illegal logging. A VPA is a bilateral trade agreement between the EU and a timber-producing country outside the EU exporting to the EU market.

Guyana and the EU concluded VPA negotiations in 2018 and initialled the VPA in November that year. The VPA was signed on 16 December 2022 and ratified in June 2023 by the parties.

The VPA aims to improve forest governance and promote trade in legal timber from Guyana to the EU and globally. Under the agreement, both parties commit to trading only in legal timber products.

To implement the commitments made in the VPA, Guyana prepared a Joint Implementation Framework (JIF) through a multistakeholder process. The JIF provides a mechanism for the Joint Monitoring and Review Committee (JMRC), established under this agreement, to guide and monitor the implementation of the VPA. The JIF covers the period from the initialling of the VPA up to the conclusion of the independent joint evaluation of the operational readiness of the GTLAS, which will inform the parties as to whether FLEGT licensing can commence. The JIF includes priority areas such as developing and operationalising the Guyana Timber Legality Assurance System, reviewing and updating laws, and putting in place a complaints mechanism ahead of FLEGT licensing.

Guyana, with support from its partners, has started work, as outlined in the JIF. The United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (UK FCDO) provided support in the implementation of several forest governance reforms necessary to prepare for VPA implementation through the European Forest Institute Technical Assistance Project (EFITAP). EFITAP worked on achieving 6 agreed project outcomes between January 2020 and June 2024. Specifically, Outcome 5 of EFITAP aimed at increasing Outreach with key stakeholders in preparation for implementation (*This outcome is linked to the ST 6 of the JIF - Stakeholder engagement, coordination, and outreach mechanisms in place*).

As a function, communication, and stakeholder engagement underpin the implementation of the Guyana-EU VPA agreement by encouraging the involvement of all concerned stakeholders, ensuring public access to information, promoting the image of the Guyanese timber and forest sector and the benefits of the Agreement among stakeholders and the wider public.

This brief outlines the multistakeholder learning centred approach taken in conducting the 2022 outreach. It summarises lessons learnt from the outreach team and offers an outline of a best practice model for a conducting stakeholder outreach.

2. Recap of the process of conducting the 2022 outreach

Planning the stakeholder engagement

Understanding potential challenges that Guyana might face in implementing the VPA

With a view to understanding potential challenges in implementing the VPA, the multistakeholder working group responsible for overseeing the FLEGT VPA process—the National Implementation Working Group (NIWG)—was asked to identify perceived challenges that Guyana may face in implementing the VPA. As illustrated by the figure below (poll using menti.com), members of the NIWG identified the ‘cost of implementation’ and ‘compliance with local laws’ as key challenges that forest sector operators (FSOs) in Guyana may face.



Figure 1: Menti results from the NIWG meeting.

A key theme started emerging: *'Understanding the current cost of doing business and how the VPA implementation might impact the cost of doing business (negative and/or positive).'* Understanding and communicating this was seen as an important factor for forest sector operators' (FSOs) support for the VPA and its implementation.

In Quarter 4 of 2021, EFITAP supported Guyana's fourth learning event, which examined 'the costs, benefits, and barriers to compliance' in implementing the legality framework under the GTLAS. The national learning event was informed by discussions from four district-level learning events in Essequibo, Demerara, Berbice, and North-West, and a working paper prepared between October and December 2021 titled *'Improving Compliance in Guyana's Forestry Sector: A Stakeholder Perspective'*.

The working paper prepared and discussion during the learning event provided important information on stakeholders' perspectives on the barriers to compliance within the Guyana legality framework created under the GTLAS. It also identified actions required by the GFC and its partners that would facilitate improved legal compliance in Guyana's forest sector. These actions included: education and awareness raising for FSOs, measures to reduce the high cost of doing business, and measures to reduce other barriers to compliance.

Learning from others

The FLEGT Secretariat had been conducting outreach with stakeholders since the commencement of negotiations under the VPA; GFC had also implemented several actions through the FAO-FLEGT Programme to improve legal compliance, including:

- Improving FLEGT readiness of 69 community forestry organisations through increased awareness of related regulation.
- Improving FLEGT readiness of 23 community forestry organisations through increased awareness of related regulation.
- Supporting forest sector operators' readiness for implementation of VPA process.

A lesson learnt session was organised with GFC and FLEGT Secretariat on past outreach and capacity building actions to understand what worked, what did not work, and what would be recommendations moving forward with outreaches with stakeholders.

Two key recommendations from the session included:

1. The importance of continued collaboration with TLAS agencies to disseminate information on compliance requirements of the various agencies; and
2. Ensuring that information is consistently communicated by the outreach team, especially if the representatives from various agencies change in various locations.

Developing the concept

EFITAP, based on the challenges identified during the 2021 learning event, the lessons learnt session with the GFC and the FLEGT Secretariat, as well as further discussions with the FLEGT Secretariat and the forest governance facilitator, prepared a concept note in collaboration with the FLEGT Secretariat around the theme *Improving Compliance within the Guyana Timber Legality Framework*.

The concept proposed that EFITAP support the GFC to conduct awareness-raising sessions with FSOs in sixteen (16) locations across Guyana allowing stakeholders from various areas to gather at central points. These sessions would aim to improve voluntary compliance by providing stakeholders with much-needed guidance on key forestry sector compliance requirements. Sessions would target:

- Senior representatives and operational staff of government agencies involved in 'compliance and enforcement' within the forest sector, as well as
- Forest sector actors in Guyana including Amerindian and other local communities involved in forest management, and/or the production of wood products, and large, small, and medium sized forest enterprises in Guyana.

It was further proposed that the outreach sessions be led by the FLEGT Secretariat with support from GFC officers, TLAS agencies (Environmental Protection Agency/EPA, National Insurance Scheme/NIS, Guyana Revenue Authority/GRA, and Ministry of Labour/MoL), the forest governance facilitator, and EFITAP. Prior to conducting the awareness raising at the 16 locations, a two-day facilitation training was to be conducted with selected GFC staff and a half-day session with GTLAS agencies.

- **Two-day facilitation training with selected GFC staff.** Selected staff included officers from the GFC's Forest Monitoring Division, GFC's Communities Unit, and the FLEGT Secretariat, and the facilitation training aimed at providing them with a deepened understanding of the GTLAS, strengthening their capacity to communicate

with FSOs in this regard as well as improving their capacity to organize, facilitate, and report on meetings conducted.

- **Half-day session with TLAS agencies.** The aim of this session was to increase agency awareness of the GTLAS and VPA, discuss their role in relation to GTLAS implementation, and introduce the stakeholder engagement plan for the outreach in 2022. This session also aimed at improving dialogue and collaboration between GFC and TLAS agencies to overcome compliance resistance among FSOs and improve compliance.
- **Awareness raising/outreach sessions at sixteen locations across Guyana.** These sessions aimed, amongst other things, to:
 - Build the capacity of private forest sector actors in Guyana, improve compliance and as a result advance business practices that could support access to markets through interactions with peers.
 - Be the groundwork for long-term, sustained actions that will raise the regulatory compliance levels of FSOs. Such actions include effective monitoring, enforcement, corrective measures for non-compliance and continued stakeholder support.
 - Encourage improved compliance among all FSO types thereby creating good examples of forest operations across the sector that can be showcased locally and internationally.
 - Explain compliance requirements of seasonal workers per GTLAS Agency.
 - Provide a half-day capacity building session with FSOs on record and bookkeeping.

The outreach would target 30-35 FSOs at each of the 16 locations including small, and medium sized forest sector operators, Amerindian and other local communities involved in production of timber and timber products.

Note: the approach took into consideration areas not previously reached by the FAO-EU-GFC FLEGT projects to address compliance requirements.

The outreach team would comprise representatives of the GFC FLEGT Secretariat, the forest governance facilitator, GFC field officers trained in facilitation, representatives of GFC's Communities Unit, a representative of GFC's Forest Monitoring Division, representatives of key GTLAS agencies, and EFITAP staff.

Each outreach would be divided into four sessions that included a general session on the GTLAS, followed by a session focusing on specific requirements of GTLAS agencies. This would be followed by a skills development session and, where available, a radio/television station interview/panel discussion in the evening.

Agenda for the outreach sessions at the 16 locations	
Session 1: General session on GTLAS	
1.	Introduction to the Guyana-EU VPA and the GTLAS (including GTLAS activities and impacts on FSOs).
2.	Outline of stakeholder requirements for the Wood Tracking System (WTS) and GTLAS agencies.
3.	Benefits of compliance.
4.	VPA Roadmap – past and current activities.
Session 2: Specific requirements of GTLAS agencies	
GTLAS agencies providing stakeholders with guidance on aspects such as:	
1.	Filling out agency forms – Income Tax, Application for a Certificate of Compliance, Application for Environmental Authorisation.
2.	Computing individual income tax – GRA.
3.	Filing claims (NIS).
4.	Other actions necessary.
Session 3: Skills development	
1.	Record keeping and bookkeeping. - Based on stakeholders' comments during the 2021 Learning Event, stakeholders will have the option to benefit from short introductions on compliance-related record keeping and bookkeeping. (Half-day session)
Session 4: Radio/television station interview/panel discussion	
1.	Where available in the outreach areas.

For purposes of conducting the awareness/outreach sessions, the following materials were to be prepared:

- Annotated agenda and participant agenda (EFITAP)
- Facilitation roll-out (forest governance facilitator)
- Presentation on GTLAS (FLEGT Secretariat)
- Presentations from TLAS agencies (TLAS agencies reps)
- Compliance checklist for data collection (FLEGT Secretariat/EFITAP)
- Presentation on compliance record keeping (Community Development Unit of GFC)
- Presentation on basics of bookkeeping (EFITAP)
- Compliance folder (LD and verifiers, examples of filled forms, registers, claims from TLAS agencies) (FLEGT Secretariat/TLAS agencies/EFITAP)
- Pre- and post-event evaluation forms (EFITAP)
- Attendance register (EFITAP)
- Draft report format for all outreach events (EFITAP)
- Google form to enter pre- and post-evaluation of meetings (EFITAP)
- Communication plan (EFITAP) and scripts for radio/television programme (EFITAP)

Management arrangements for the outreach activities: The events were to be organised by the FLEGT Secretariat, with EFITAP support, and under the leadership of the GFC and the NIWG. EFITAP would support the GFC and the Secretariat in delivering the outreach through support for funding, preparation of outreach materials, and capacity building. The FLEGT Secretariat/GFC would organise, facilitate, and report on all meetings conducted.

Monitoring and oversight of the outreach activities: An oversight committee was to be established, comprising representatives from GFC (FMD at the national and local levels, and the FLEGT Secretariat), EFITAP, NIWG, the forest governance and FLEGT facilitators,

private sector, Indigenous representatives, and a representative from TLAS agencies to oversee and monitor the outreach process.

Modifying the concept

Further discussions with the FLEGT Secretariat and the UK-funded forest governance facilitator resulted in the modification of the concept to include:

1. Visits to individual lumberyards and sawmills to share information on the GTLAS and conduct a compliance assessment of FSOs (sample survey) to determine their compliance level which would feed into the planned outreach sessions, and
2. An outreach with indigenous NGO groups based in Georgetown.

Approving the concept

Prior to organising and rolling out the outreach activities the concept prepared by EFITAP was submitted to, reviewed, and approved by the management of the Guyana Forestry Commission.

Organising the outreach

In organising the outreach, the activities listed below were undertaken to ensure that the agencies were on-board. The outreach team was also prepared and there was continuous engagement, learning, and adjustments to the approach as the outreach was being rolled out.

1. GFC formally requested the participation of the agencies (EPA, MoL, GRA, and NIS) as members of the outreach team.
2. The planned two-day facilitation training with selected officers from the GFC's Forest Monitoring Division, representatives of the Communities Unit, and the FLEGT Secretariat took place from 12-13 April 2022. The training achieved a deeper understanding of the GTLAS requirements and improved the capacity of staff trained to communicate effectively on these aspects during outreach sessions as well as to report on the sessions once concluded.
3. The planned half-day session with GTLAS agencies was held on 4 May 2022, increasing their awareness of the GTLAS and VPA, their role in its implementation, and familiarising representatives with the 2022 stakeholder engagement plan. This improved understanding supported closer coordination between GFC and GTLAS agencies and contributed to an improved system for compliance.
4. Visits were undertaken to individual lumberyards and sawmills from 30 May to 7 June 2022 to share information on the GTLAS and to conduct a compliance assessment of FSOs (sample survey) to determine their compliance level; the result helped to inform the planned outreach sessions that followed between June and October 2022.
5. The GFC/FLEGT Secretariat identified the outreach locations (central points at which FSOs and stakeholders could gather for meetings) based on the information collected during the compliance assessment and information available on FSOs' locations.
6. A draft annotated agenda, a terms of reference for the oversight committee to monitor the outreach, and a communication plan were prepared, and agreement was obtained from GFC on the composition of the outreach team.

7. The first planning meeting with the outreach team was held on 1 June 2022. During this meeting:
 - a. The outreach concept was presented and discussed, including ways to improve the delivery of the outreach.
 - b. Agreement was reached on the composition of the oversight committee to monitor the outreach.
 - c. The proposed agenda for outreach sessions as well as the roles and responsibilities of the outreach team were discussed (facilitation, presentations, report writing, review of reports for quality assurance, reporting to the oversight committee). This included a discussion on the presentations by each GTLAS agency participating in the outreach.
 - d. The facilitation roll-out, including aspects such as room setting, welcome and introductions, ground rules, a standard set of warm-ups to be used, etc., was also discussed.
 - e. The communication plan for the outreach was also discussed, as well as a date set for the dry-run session (testing).
8. The Oversight Committee was established on 8 June 2022 to provide guidance on the organisation and execution of outreaches as well as advise on reporting content and contribute to the review of outreach reports. Additionally, it monitored outreach work to ensure that objectives (e.g. addressing gaps identified) were met and that key beneficiary stakeholders were reached; also, that the GTLAS agencies remained engaged throughout the process. The Oversight Committee included the EU FLEGT-VPA Facilitator, the Forest Governance Facilitator, a representative of the Forest Monitoring Division (FMD) of the GFC, a representative of the FLEGT Secretariat of the GFC, the Assistant Commissioner of Forest from the Communities Unit of the GFC, a representative of the National Implementation Working Group (NIWG), a representative of the National Toshias Council (NTC), a representative of the Forest Products Association (FPA) of Guyana, a representative of the four TLAS agencies participating in the outreach, and the EFITAP Project Manager. It was agreed that members would rotate facilitating/chairing the meeting and the EFITAP Project Manager and the Forest Governance Facilitator would rotate notetaking for the Committee.
9. The first meeting of the Oversight Committee was held on 8 June 2022 during which it reviewed and adopted its terms of reference (ToR) as well as reviewed the draft agenda, the draft communication plan, and key messages to be communicated for the outreach.
10. The outreach team prepared the outreach materials: this included a common branding theme for all materials, Facebook notices on outreaches, banners, presentations, pre- and post-evaluation questionnaires, a bookkeeping manual, participant agenda, participant registration forms, format for outreach reports, Google form to enter feedback from pre- and post-evaluation questionnaires, scripts for radio and television interviews, compliance checklist, photocopies of materials to leave with participants, participants' folders, and a flash drive with relevant materials for participants.

11. Logistics preparations were also made, which included: budgeting for each event, preparing and distributing invitations to forest sector operators at least two weeks in advance of the event and following up with FSOs on their participation two days prior to the event, booking of venues, organising of meals for meetings, organising of transportation and accommodation for the team, booking of time for television/radio interviews, management of finances (payment for services, etc.), coaching of GFC officers trained in facilitation to co-facilitate meetings.
12. Finally, the approach was tested by conducting a dry-run on 16 June 2022 that introduced the Oversight Committee to the outreach team, considered the monitoring and oversight process, and made recommendations for adjustments to the approach where necessary. The planned schedule for the outreach sessions was also shared.

Roll-out of the 2022 outreach

The outreach sessions were rolled out in 14 of the 17 planned outreach events (note: a 17th session was planned with Indigenous NGOs when the concept was modified) across Guyana and included Parika (21 June), Georgetown (23 June), New Amsterdam including radio/television interview (28 June), Springlands (29 June), Orealla (30 June), Linden (19 July), Ituni (20 July), Kwakwani (21 July), Anna Regina (27 July), Moruca (28 July), Mabaruma (11 August), Annai including radio/television interview (23 August), Lethem (24 August), and Madhia (12 October).

Three of the planned outreach sessions were cancelled (Aishalton/Shulinab/Deep South, Kamarang, and Georgetown hybrid event with Indigenous NGOs) due to the unavailability of stakeholders to attend the meetings, and the originally planned Bartica session was replaced by the Madhia session of 12 October 2022. The agenda for the 14 meetings is shown below in Figure 2.

Workshop Opening		
Welcome		Meeting Facilitator
Opening Remarks		FLEGT Secretariat
Pre-Workshop Evaluation		FLEGT Secretariat
Session 1: GFC Overview		
Guyana Forestry Commission		GFC Representative
Session 2: The GTLAS		
The Voluntary Partnership Agreement		
The Guyana Timber Legality Assurance System		FLEGT Secretariat
The Guyana Wood Tracking System		
Snack Break		
Session 3: The GTLAS Agencies		
The Guyana Revenue Authority		GRA Representative
The Environmental Protection Agency		EPA Representative
The National Insurance Scheme		NIS Representative
The Ministry of Labour		MOL Representative
Compliance Benefits (Interactive Session)		All
Lunch		
Session 4: Skills Development		
Record Keeping		GFC Representative
Bookkeeping		EFITAP Representative
Workshop Close		
Post-Workshop Evaluation		FLEGT Secretariat
Closing Remarks		GFC Representative

Figure 2: Agenda for the outreach meetings

The outreach team assigned roles for each person which included, facilitation, communications, note-taking, report writing, presentation, logistics (room-arrangement, meals arrangement, transportation, accommodation, refund of travel and accommodation to participants, and organising television and/or radio interviews).

Monitoring and oversight

Debrief meetings

Debrief meetings were held at the end of each outreach meeting with the outreach team to discuss what went well, what did not go so well, and what could be adjusted to improve the next outreach meeting.

Review meeting with the Oversight Committee

After the first five outreach meetings, the outreach team and Oversight Committee met to present the results of the pre- and post-evaluation from stakeholders for the first five events and reflect on aspects such as presentation, participation, logistics, mobilisation, reporting, M&E, and the team's performance. Recommendations were also discussed for improving outreach in the remaining areas, which included the following:

1. Consider adjusting start time to 08:30 instead of 09:00 to avoid late start of meetings.
2. Consider doing the pre-workshop evaluation during the snack break to avoid losing time.
3. TLAS agencies to consider the introduction of alternates in a timely manner to avoid gaps in the agenda if the representative is unable to attend.
4. Presentations from TLAS agencies to be shared with their respective representatives in the various locations prior to the meeting.
5. TLAS agencies' presenters to use a five-question quiz at the end of each presentation to gauge how stakeholders are understanding what was communicated.
6. Closing remarks to be done after the post-event evaluation to ensure that the form is filled in by participants.

Post-event reporting

Responses from pre- and post-event evaluation forms were entered into Google Forms for each event by the assigned team member, and the report for each event was prepared by the assigned staff from the FLEGT Secretariat and sent to the EFITAP Project Manager for editing. The edited reports were shared with the outreach team for review prior to finalisation. Finalised reports on the events were then publicised on the Guyana FLEGT website.

Reports captured an overview of the outreach meeting conducted and included questions/discussions from stakeholders as well as feedback from the outreach team. The following figure represents an outline of the contents of a typical outreach report.

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This session was cancelled on this date and stakeholders agreed to have it on August 3, 2022.	9
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Figure 3: Typical workshop report content page

Financial accounting and reporting on the events were done by the EFITAP Guyana administrative staff.

Post-event evaluation

A post-event evaluation meeting was held on 21 April 2023 with the outreach team and the Oversight Committee to take stock of the outreach sessions conducted (including preparatory work) as well as to review/evaluate these sessions.

This meeting considered the approaches followed, including the steps during the planning phase (e.g., concept note, planning process, structures used, meetings held, stakeholder identification, etc.), the testing/dry run conducted, as well as the organisation and implementation of the meetings (e.g., logistics, stakeholder preparation, role of presenters/participants, venue and venue set-up, finances, accounting, reporting, communications, etc.).

Slido was then used to gather data and examples around each of the five dimensions considered in the recap of the events: planning, testing, organising, implementation, and follow-up. Data presented on the screen helped stimulate discussions on how future outreach events can be improved. The evaluation data from the outreach events were also considered. The 'Lessons learnt' are documented in the section on lessons learnt.

3. Lessons learnt: Feedback from the outreach team and Oversight Committee and recommendations for future outreach

The 2022 outreach was discussed in the post-evaluation meeting held on 21 April 2023. The post-evaluation meeting was facilitated by the Forest Governance Facilitator in two parts: (1) a question-and-answer session using the Slido tool to anonymously answer questions and stimulate discussions; and (2) a group discussion session in two small groups to reflect on the third question 'What worked less well?' and make recommendations for future outreach meetings.

Results from the questions and answers Slido session

Question 1: How would you rate the 2022 outreach?



Figure 4: Slido results showing how the outreach 2022 was rated

- 87.5% rated the outreach as very good and 12.5% rated it as good.

Question 2: What worked well during the outreach?



Figure 5: Showing Slido results on what worked well during the outreach 2022

- The outreach team identified (i) planning, (ii) logistics, (iii) communication, and (iv) teamwork as things that worked well during the outreach.

Question 3: What worked less well during the outreach?



Figure 6: Showing Slido results on what worked less well during the outreach 2022

- The outreach team identified that (i) timing and (ii) mobilization worked less well during the outreach.

Results from the group discussion session

This session aimed at providing reflections on 'What worked less well during outreach 2022' with practical solutions for addressing these in future outreach sessions.

Group 1 report

- **Timing**
 - Schedules/events: Clashing of meeting and/or venues with other agencies/ministries etc. in a region.
Possible solution(s):
 - During the planning stage, it is important to be aware of national calendar activities, especially the National Toshao Council annual event and the Indigenous Heritage celebration.
 - Identify a point person for Regional Democratic Council/Town Council to provide updates on any activity in area and the type of meeting, to reduce the sharing of stakeholders.
 - Time management: Once off, it affects the entire session, causing loss of interest/focus.
Possible solution(s):
 - Sharing of agenda prior to meeting.
 - Including registration time in agenda.
 - Avoiding packed sessions of information sharing.
 - Sticking to time assigned for presentations and discussions.
 - Departure time to be respected.
- **Team dynamics with a large team rolling out the outreach**
 - Internal: Everyone thinks differently.
Possible solution(s):
 - Leadership figure to lead group in absence of a senior team leader to keep conflicts at minimum in a large team, especially when long trips are required for outreach events.
 - Capacity building of team members to improve professionalism.
 - Respect each other's role.
 - GTLAS agencies: Ensuring team availability for outreach.
Possible solution(s):
 - Having alternates for outreach as there were a few instances where the identified representative of agencies was unable to participate in the outreach meetings.
 - Pre-recorded video sessions as an alternative solution.

- **Mobilisation**

- Participants: Low turnout – reconsideration of mechanisms used for inviting stakeholders.

Possible solution(s):

- Identifying point persons on the ground to assist in mobilising participants in Amerindian communities. A good example of how effective this can be was seen in the Mabaruma Region 1 outreach, where the Community Development Officers and Town Mayor assisted in the mobilisation of the participants.
- Use of phone calls and WhatsApp follow up invitations.
- Respect each other's role.
- Material: Meeting materials to be separated into groups during travel to avoid the materials not arriving in time for the meetings.

- **Participation**

- Gender: High turnout of women at compliance outreach, when men are more involved in timber sector work. Would information from the outreach be communicated to the men who are directly involved in the businesses?

Possible solutions:

- The type of workshop/meeting setting and information sharing should cater for more practical sessions instead of a classroom/workshop setting to encourage men to participate in the sessions.
 - Practical capacity building (use of GPS, map reading, measuring, tagging, etc.). Women are more involved in data transfer (paperwork), record keeping, bookkeeping, etc.).
 - Follow up: Need for closing the loop with participants to show the results of their participation in the meetings.
- Possible solution:
- Follow-up with participants after meetings/workshop by sharing reports.

- **Indigenous NGOs involvement**

- Involvement: Indigenous NGOs' participation in the outreach was not forthcoming, although there was an agreement that there would be a representative of the NGOs to participate in all indigenous peoples' areas/locations.
- Possible solutions
 - Support for effective participation of indigenous groups through capacity building for representation.
 - Increase communication: Emails to update group, reports, and improve on communication.

Group 2 report

Group 2 was asked to add information not already reported by Group 1. The following recommendations were added by the group:

- There should be more face-to-face interactions/other forms of communication with stakeholders prior to the meetings to encourage higher participation in meetings.
- Need for sharing of information (Reports on outreach events).
- The planning team should evaluate the stakeholder types to reduce irrelevant information during meetings.
- Consider capacity building through other organization/agencies (GMSA, NGOs, FPA, etc).
- Evaluate the type of resources/material used.

4. Four basic steps to stakeholder outreach in Guyana: “Experiences from compliance within the Guyana VPA”

The diagram on the next page presents a “best practice” model for conducting stakeholder outreach based on experiences and lessons learnt from the outreach work conducted on compliance during 2022 outreach.

Plan

• **Planning and preparation - Doing the groundwork.**

- Why do you need to conduct outreach? Clearly identify areas where support, understanding and/or reinforcement is required.
- Learn from others engaged in similar outreach work -- what worked, what did not work, what recommendations could be taken on board in designing the planned outreach.
- Prepare a concept note or proposal clearly outlining what area(s) needs reinforcement, what actions are proposed, with whom (stakeholders), when, where, how and by whom (who needs to be involved).
- Engage with relevant institutions (e.g., authorities) on the concept note and obtain the necessary support and endorsement for the planned outreach work.
- Preparation is key to successful implementation -- plan your outreach, compile a detailed checklist of everything required and systematically tick them off once completed.
- Do a dry-run - test and ensure the outreach team understands the messages being communicated, the flow of activities and their roles.
- Ensure that all logistics are organised - including that your stakeholders having adequate notice and information about the outreach.
- Be flexible and open to changes and adapt as required.

1

Do

• **Implement, execute and engineer - En route to accomplishing your outreach.**

- Ensure that you have: i) a good facilitator who is familiar with the topic and stakeholder dynamics, ii) a note-taker and iii) the necessary communication/logistics support available for the outreach.
- Ensure that the venue is appropriately organised so that participants feel comfortable - create an enabling environment.
- Respect your stakeholders' time by ensuring you are there early and end as per the agreed time.
- Ensure that stakeholders leave the outreach feeling satisfied that their time was well spent and they have a better understanding and more information to inform related subsequent actions/decision-making on their part.

2

Check

• **Step back and examine - What is going well and what is not going so well?**

- Do huddle with your team at the end of each outreach session to get feedback on what went well and what could be improved.
- Evaluate feedback from your stakeholders -pre and post- meeting evaluation questionnaires are useful to get an understanding of what stakeholder gather from the meeting and how the meeting was perceived by them.
- If a series of outreach is being done, do take time to do an evaluation with your team halfway through the process (and adjust approach as required - step four - in subsequent sessions).
- Conduct a post outreach evaluation with the team to identify what worked, what did not work and recommendations for future outreaches.

3

Act

• **Re-engineer and remodel - Continuously improve your outreach activities!**

- Document lessons learnt during the previous step (step 3 - check).
- Implement lessons learnt - these will guide you in adjusting, remodelling and improving outreach (midway through and in subsequent outreach)
- Share lessons learnt with implementers of outreach to aid them in improving their respective outreach work.
- Reengineering and remodelling is not the end - it has improved your outreach.
- Consciously improve your outreach (the four steps in a cycle that you can continuously use to improve your work).

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