

Report

Capacity Building Training and Working session for the REDD+ Assistants Collective

Berg en Dal
22 – 24 July 2016



INTRODUCTION

In the period 22 – 24 July 2016, the NIMOS REDD+ Project Management Unit (REDD+ PMU) held a capacity building training and working session for the REDD+ Assistants (R+ A). The REDD+ Assistants are joined in the REDD+ Assistants Collective (RAC) - which was set up in 2012 - and are representatives of the local Indigenous populations and Tribal communities, selected by their own communities to be trained in the conceptual understanding of REDD+. The RAC is supporting the advocacy for REDD+ and the Government's plans for implementing REDD+ activities.

During the 3 day training/working session, the main issues addressed were:

1. The draft contract and the terms of reference (TOR) for the REDD+ Assistants with the aim to reach agreement with the RAC on the TOR and draft contract as well as signing of the contract by the respective Assistants
2. Instructions and guidance for developing a workplan by the R+ A
3. The use of phablets to support the work of the R+ A
4. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in September 2015
5. The preparation and organization of community level hearing
6. Gathering of information for sustainable conservation of the forest

DAY 1: 22 JULY 2016

A. Welcome and Opening

The RAC was welcomed by Mr. Eric Sosrojoedo (Logistical Officer) on behalf of the REDD+ PMU and he expressed his appreciation for the participation of the REDD+ Assistants. The participants were subsequently informed about the programme of the training/working session by Mr. Harry Elliioth (REDD+ Assistant). Mr. Elliioth noted that it is important for the REDD+ Assistants to bring all the challenges they encounter in their work to the table at this meeting and discuss measures to address these challenges. Two of the main issues of concern in the local communities are the issuance of logging concessions and the designation of community forest by the Government. He wished the participants a successful meeting.¹

B. Presentation 'The Sustainable Development Goals' (Ms. Peggy Panka, Ministry of Regional Development)

Ms. Panka informed the participants about the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which have been agreed by the world leaders at the UN General Assembly of September 2015. The SDGs are the new set of goals to be implemented in the next 15 years (2016 – 2030) to continue the efforts to realize development in the world. The SDGs build on the Millennium Development Goals - MDGs (2000 – 2015), eight goals aiming at among others reducing poverty that the world leaders committed to achieving by 2015. The new SDGs, and the broader sustainability agenda, go much further than the MDGs, addressing the root causes of poverty and the universal need for development that works for all people.

¹ Due to unforeseen circumstances, Mr. Marlon Hoogdorp, Communications Officer and Mr. Sirito-Yana Aloema, Community Liaison Officer at the REDD+ PMU arrived later to the meeting. Therefore Mr. Sosrojoedo and Mr. Elliioth welcomed the participants and provided opening remarks

One of the key findings of the MDGs evaluation was that there should be an effective broader stakeholders' and local communities' engagement in defining and implementing the SDGs. In the phase of defining the SDGs, a broad range of stakeholders' meetings and consultations were held; including stakeholders at the community level. Seventeen (17) goals have been identified by the world leaders to enhance sustainable development in the world. These goals regards themes such as: ending poverty and hunger; ensure healthy lives and wellbeing; quality education and lifelong learning; gender equality; sustainable water management; inclusive and sustainable employment; inclusive human settlements; sustainable management of forests and eco-systems and reduce inequalities among countries. As mentioned earlier, local communities are important and have an eminent role to play in the implementation of the SDGs. This implies that people should be encouraged to express their views on how they see development materialize; on the other hand everyone should benefit from development. In Suriname, the ministry of Regional Development initiated the process of 'Localizing the SDGs', as a means for raising awareness about the SDGs at local community level and enhance engagement of the local communities; this process is supported technically and financially by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Awareness materials have been developed such as posters, a card games, and the SDGs have been translated in Dutch, Sranan, Kaliña and Okanisi. This initiative provides a mechanism to gather citizen's views on development, which is then documented as a baseline to be used when executing projects at the local community level. Ms. Panka emphasized the need for partnerships when executing projects. She further explained that the development outputs of community level projects contribute to national development. After the presentation, there was an interactive discussion on the concept of sustainable development.

As an example of local initiative that can be linked to the SDGs, Mr. Vincent Aloema (R+ A Galibi) mentioned a tourism project executed in Galibi. Through this project, emphasis was laid on forest conservation as a result of which the forest could be utilized for a longer period of time. This initiative can be linked to the SDGs 8, 12, 15 and 17, which concern sustainable economic growth and productive employment; sustainable consumption and production patterns, sustainable management of forest and strengthened partnerships. In expressing his view on what sustainable development entails, Mr. Hendrik Pai (R+ A Mooitaki) named three (3) key components to consider: Health, Work and Education. In his view, the Government should create conditions to facilitate access of the local communities to the said components; however when the Government does not fulfill this obligation optimally, local communities take up the responsibility to find alternative ways to guarantee access these components. Ms. Josien Tokoe-Aloema (R+ A Galibi) is of the opinion that the ancestors had the knowledge and resources to guarantee sustainable livelihoods and are ready to pass on this knowledge to the next generation. However young people are pursuing their own goals and have limited interest to take over this knowledge. Ultimately it will be about gaining and mobilizing the young people's interest and showing them the (economic) opportunities that lay in the available resources and knowledge. This is how the SGDs could be materialized. Mr. Wilson Willems (R+ A Pusugrunu) noted that the slogan 'we are the forest' ('wij zijn het bos') covers it all. Over the years the ancestors have preserved the resources in the forest and this should be continued. However there is a need for further learning and information sharing to build our skills and capacities. The Government - more specifically the ministry of Regional Development - has the responsibility to support the local communities in achieving sustainable development. Mr. Nelson Adose (R+ A Futunakaba) raised the concern of designating community forest² ('gemeenschapsbos') in the interior areas by the ministry of Regional Development. In these community forests, logging concessions are given to third parties, who are not members of the local communities.

² Forest areas situated around communal land, which are designated as community forest for the tribal people living in the villages and settlements and which serve to cover their own need for food and forestry production, as well as for possible commercial timber exploitation, collection of non-timber forest products and mining of agricultural purposes

These logging practices are destructive for the forest and as a result forest resources used by the local communities are scarcely available. In his view, this is hampering sustainable development for the local communities. This is a crucial point to be considered when we effectively want to reach sustainable development. Mr. Pildas Tawadi (R+ A Kwamalasumutu) supported the concern raised on community forests because it is also a sensitive issue for the Trio communities. The principle of community forests creates division in his view among the communities. The general practice is that forest resources are shared among the communities and with the designation of community forests, tension is created. He emphasizes the need to recognize the land rights which in his view is the means towards realizing sustainable development. Ms. Panka noted the issue raised and informed that the ministry of Regional Development has planned in depth consultations with the relevant actors on their concerns about community forests. Mr. Stiefen Petrusi (R+ A Nieuw Aurora) is of the opinion that although providing access to education to children/youth is essential, he observes in his surroundings that the youth pursues higher education, leave and do not come back to live in the communities. So there is no contribution of these educated young people to the development of the communities itself. The question is how to build the skills of those actually living in the communities to improve their livelihoods. This is the support that the community members need. Ms. Alida Wabe (R+ A Mapane) provided a practical example of the work of the RAC in relation to the SDGs. During the civil war in the 80's, much of the infrastructure (e.g. bridges, roads) was destroyed. In her community, they took it upon themselves to request support from Government and private companies to rehabilitate the infrastructure. The support from the Government was not optimal but ultimately as community they were able to mobilize the support of the mining company Surgold - who works the area - to rehabilitate the road and two bridges. This is the result of a collaborative local community effort and sets an example how important partnerships are. Mr. Louis Biswane (R+ A Pierrekondre) and Ms. Gladys Kabelefodi shares the view that recognition of the land rights is a means for realizing the SDGs. He noted that there are at least three (3) international verdicts through which the State Suriname has been asked to recognize the land rights. The Association of Indigenous Village Leaders of Suriname (VIDS) just launched a media campaign on one of the verdicts (Kalina-Lokono case). On national level, information on the context of land rights will be shared on national level to increase understanding about the issue of land rights in the society. Following the discussions, several REDD+ Assistants urgently asked attention for the issuance of logging and mining concessions by the Government since this is a big cause of destruction of the forests and living conditions. Especially since these concessions are in the hands of third parties who do not live in these areas. For decades the local communities have preserved their living environment but are now experiencing the negative effects of deforestation and forest degradation. The REDD+ Assistants asked the urgent attention of the ministry of Regional Development on the issuance of community forests which is not supported by the local communities. Ms. Josien Tokoe-Aloema (R+ A Galibi) pointed out that the time has come for actions to implement REDD+ and the responsibility that village leaders have to make the REDD+ process successful. Efforts can only pay off if there is mutual respect among the relevant parties and the norms and practices in the local communities are adhered.

C. Presentation 'Organizing community level hearings' (Ms. Anna Lachman-Johannis and Ms. Simona Boldewijn, Ministry of Regional Development)

The presentation served as a guidance for the REDD+ Assistants to organize community hearings (krutu's). In her presentation, Ms. Lachman explained that citizen participation is important since citizens have a shared responsibility in achieving development. Citizens should be duly informed when they are being consulted. Greater involvement of citizens results in an increased understanding and ownership of their development process.

To engage citizens, hearings prove an effective tool. At these hearings, specific themes are discussed and experts and organizations can be invited to share information with the citizen. Ms. Lachman informed the REDD+ Assistants about the two levels of hearings that are held by the ministry of Regional Development, one at resort council level and one at district council level. The organization of hearings at district level is regulated by law and the hearings are public. The resort council level hearing is the first stage for gathering inputs for the drafting of the district plan. At the district council level hearing, all the resort level inputs are reviewed to determine what policy activities are ultimately taken up in the district plan; the plan is also budgeted. To invite the public to the hearings, a wide range of communication methods are used e.g. notices in local newspapers and on the radio and television; social media; brochures; flyers and others methods. In some instances, the Ministry utilizes other mechanisms to engage with citizens e.g. through neighborhood committees or working groups. These apply when it concerns the rehabilitation of a road or other infrastructural works such as a local market. These committees and working groups serve as the contact point for the Government and/or other involved parties and are responsible for the dissemination of information to the citizens in the neighborhoods. The communication structures for these committees and groups should be clear to ensure that citizens know who to turn to for information. The presentation was continued by Ms. Boldewijn; she provided practical tips and guidelines to the REDD+ Assistants to organize and facilitate hearings. Some of the points to take into account when organizing a hearing are:

- Determine the objective of the hearing; who are the participants; what is the agenda and what is the time duration of the hearing
- Determine the approach during the hearing
- Prepare invitations and logistical arrangements e.g. venue, equipment, materials, transportation, consumption etc
- Prepare the documentation needed for the hearing
- Determine who will facilitate the hearing; who will do presentations and assign a note taker

At the end of the presentation, the REDD+ Assistants received a checklist with guidance to organize a hearing; a tool to evaluate the hearing and a format for note taking.

The REDD+ Assistants from their end had some additional points to consider when organizing a hearing e.g. translation should be available to support the citizens full participation; the financial means should be available to organize the hearing; the note taker should have some knowledge about the topics to be discussed at the hearing; the chair of the meeting should have a flexible and open approach to optimize participation and presenters should have eye contact with their audience. The REDD+ Assistants appreciated the information shared on organizing a hearing.

Going back to the work and community engagement that the REDD+ Assistants are responsible for, Mr. Nelson Adose (R+ A Futunakaba) and Mr. Wilson Willems (R+ Pusugrunu) pointed out that it has been about four (4) years that the REDD+ process started; the respective village leaders appointed their delegates - the REDD+ Assistants - to obtain information and knowledge about REDD+ for further sharing in the local communities. The overall impression of the village leaders and the REDD+ PMU is that the Assistants are doing a good job. One critical point remains the issuance of logging or mining concessions by the Government to third parties. The Government should keep its word if she wants to pursue REDD+; people in the communities begin to lose confidence in the REDD+ process because they feel that the Government is not meeting its end of the obligations. This situation impacts the trust and belief in the REDD+ Assistants by the community members and will impede the REDD+ process. Mr. Simons Doea (R+ A Lawa) underlined the need to sensitize members of parliament and the whole Government about REDD+ because their actions e.g. through the issuance of logging and mining concessions and designation of community forests hamper the effective implementation of REDD+. Community members get the feeling that they are being fooled.

D. Discussion ‘Draft contract and Terms of Reference for RAC’, (Mr. Marlon Hoogdorp, Communications officer REDD+ PMU)

Mr. Hoogdorp informed the REDD+ Assistants Collective (RAC) that the REDD+ is a new process and currently implemented in various countries. All countries encounter different challenges during the implementation. REDD+ stands for the countries’ efforts to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and forest conservation as well as sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks. REDD+ can be seen as an instrument to support and promote national dialogue with the local Indigenous populations and Tribal communities to promote awareness and accountability, good governance and regulations. It can also lead to the improvement of the business environment and accelerate decentralization. In Suriname, the National Institute for Environment and Development (NIMOS) is the REDD+ coordinating authority on behalf of the Government. To execute REDD+, a project management unit has been established (REDD+ PMU). In the execution, the REDD+ PMU is supported by the REDD+ Assistants who are joined in the REDD+ Assistants Collective (RAC). The REDD+ Assistants are representatives of the local Indigenous populations and Tribal communities and have been selected by the leaders in their own communities to be trained in the conceptual understanding of REDD+. The RAC will be deployed to effectively involve the local Indigenous populations and Tribal communities, more specifically gather views, ideas and concerns from the local communities on REDD+. Mr. Hoogdorp emphasized the advocacy role of the RAC and encouraged them to keep a positive outlook on the REDD+, despite the challenges they face in the field. To capture the tasks of the RAC/R+ A, a terms of reference (TOR) has been drafted. Also a contract has been drafted which needs to be signed by the R+ A. The TOR forms an integral part of the contract. Mr. Hoogdorp highlighted the scope of work and the conditions to be met by the Assistants. Primarily the Assistants facilitate the local dialogues. They need to develop individual workplans, which have to be agreed upon with the REDD+ PMU. The Community Liaison Officer at the REDD+ PMU is the interlocutor between the Assistants and the PMU. Some of the tasks for the Assistants are:

- i. Organize and execute local dialogues/conversations
- ii. Plan, prepare and execute project activities
- iii. Gather information to support the carrying out of REDD+ studies
- iv. Enhance the awareness and understanding about the REDD+ strategy in the local communities
- v. Report on the planned and executed activities through written reports, voice memos, pictures, video and audio messages)
- vi. Inform the project team (REDD+ PMU) about relevant community dynamics and challenges encountered and/or positive developments in the field

Mr. Hoogdorp referred to a meeting with the Assistants in February 2016 where the suggestion was made to provide them with a monthly financial compensation for their work. However the conditions to be able to provide this monthly compensation were still to be determined. He also emphasized that this compensation should not be seen as a monthly salary. A financial compensation can only be given if there is performance by and measurable results of the REDD+ Assistant. According to the provisions in draft TOR and contract, the Assistants should develop an individual workplan with activities and results to be achieved. This workplan is discussed with the Community Liaison Officer (CLO) of the REDD+ PMU who brings it further for approval to the PMU’s Communications Officer and Project Coordinator. The REDD+ Assistant executes the workplan and reports on the progress made to the CLO. These progress reports are very important for the assessment of the performance by the REDD+ Assistants and result in payment of the monthly financial compensation. Mr. Hoogdorp noted that among others, community hearings are one of the main activities to be taken up in the workplan.

After Mr. Hoogdorp's presentation, the REDD+ Assistants provided feedback. Mr. Hendrik Pai (R+ A Mooitaki) acknowledged that the matter of the financial compensation was raised a few months ago. He was not keen on the approach by the PMU to first draft the TOR and contract and then share with the Assistants. In his view there should have been deliberations first with the Assistants to gather inputs on what is feasible and what could be taken up in the draft TOR and contract. He asked attention for the geographical vastness in the Interior and the cost implications for preparing and organizing community hearings. Costs for gasoline, boats, human resources and other components are high and vary per area. He was concerned that budgets would not be approved. This will impede the smooth implementation and may result in Assistants withdrawing. He is of the opinion that the financial compensation should be paid upfront for the Assistants to do their work. He asked if the UNDP was aware of the provisions taken up in the draft TOR and contract and if they had agreed with these. The REDD+ Assistants Collective is ready to explain to the UNDP what the practical issues when working in the Interior. Mr. Pildas Tawadi (R+ A Kwamalasumutu) endorsed the issues raised by Mr. Pai. Other Assistants supported the statement on the cost implications and availability of budgets. They understand that there are rules to comply with but to be able to fully agree with the draft TOR and contract, the Assistants requested a suspension of the meeting to enable them to discuss the content of the documents and eventually suggest amendments. For clarification, Mr. Hoogdorp emphasized that the monthly financial compensation is not to cover costs for executing activities taken up in the workplan. He also pointed out the terms of reference and the contract are draft documents and can be amended based on inputs received from the Assistants.

Given the request of the RAC, the meeting was suspended to enable the RAC to review and discuss the draft TOR and contract among themselves.

After the session was resumed, Ms. Madhawi Ramdin, Project Coordinator REDD+ PMU addressed the meeting and extended her appreciation to the REDD+ Assistants to take part in this training/working session and their collaboration. She understands the concerns of the Assistants and it inevitable that all issues of concern should be addressed. The REDD+ PMU is in favour of a constructive dialogue to reach an agreement that is satisfactory for all parties. She asked if the Assistants could share their views on the draft TOR and contract. Mr. Harry Ellioth (R+ A Witagron) - on behalf of the Assistants - proposed that the views will be shared tomorrow in the meeting. This was agreed to by the PMU.

The sessions continued giving the representatives of the Foundation for Forest Management and Production Control the opportunity to do their presentation, as scheduled.

E. Presentation 'Gathering information for sustainable conservation of the forest', (Mr. Iflaw Hasselnook and Ms. Mercedes Hardjoprajitno, Foundation for Forest Management and Production Control)

Mr. Hasselnook informed that the Foundation for Forest Management and Production Control (SBB) was established by the ministry of Natural Resources in August 1998. The Foundation is responsible for the implementation of the Forest Management Act of 1992. Since 2005, the SBB is governed under the Ministry of Planning, Land and Forest Management (RGB). The objective of the SBB is 'promoting a sustainable and optimal utilization of the forests of Suriname in general and for timber destined forests in particular by application of the Forest Management Act and other relevant laws and regulations'. The Foundation's responsibilities include the detection of offenses and monitoring compliance with the requirements set by or pursuant to the Forest Management Act.

The tasks of the Foundation are:

- i. Monitoring compliance with the Forest Management Act
- ii. Collecting levies for exploration and concessions

- iii. Monitoring and facilitating production and export of wood, timber and non-timber forest products
- iv. Advising policymakers on forestry matters

The permissions that may be granted under the Forest Management Act for timber harvesting on domain land are:

- i. Exploration permit
- ii. Concessions
- iii. Community forests (previously logging permits were issued)
- iv. Permit the collection of non-timber forest products
- v. Permit for occasional logging

The Ministry of Planning, Land and Forest Management (RGB) approves and issues the aforementioned permissions, except for concessions larger than 50.000 ha; in this case the Ministry requests approval of the Parliament and the permission is issued by the President. With regard to community forests, he explained that the request for designating community forest is done by the village leaders and submitted to the Foundation. The Foundation then seeks advice from departments of the ministry of RGB (to determine for example if the land has been leased or if mining concessions have been issued) as well as advice from the ministry of Regional Development e.g. on the demarcations of the different villages or the population size of the village. The district commissioner acts on behalf of the Ministry and provides the advice. Without the advice of the ministry of Regional Development, the ministry of RGB does not designate community forest. The definition of community forest is: 'forest areas situated around communal land, which are designated as community forest for the tribal people living in the villages and settlements and which serve to cover their own need for food and forestry production, as well as for possible commercial timber exploitation, collection of non-timber forest products and mining of agricultural purposes'.³

Before the Forest Management Act was introduced in 1992, the Timber law of 1947 was applicable. Under this Law, logging permits were issued to the village leaders (in their name) and could only be utilized by the village leaders and their families. Commercial timber exploitation by third parties living outside the village was not allowed. **The community forest however can be utilized by all members of the villages. Under de provision of community forest, commercial timber exploitation by third parties (persons living outside of the villages) is allowed. The community forest is managed by the traditional village authorities;** in some cases a village commission is installed. Following the presentation, Mr. Harry Elliot (R+ A Witagron) asked why the collected levies are not deposited on an account of the SBB. Mr. Hasselnook informed that in the case of community forests, the management of the community forest is done by the traditional village authorities; the Ministry of Regional Development has regulated the procedures for management of community forests and the collected levies in case a concession is issued to a third party in the community forest area. The responsibility is therefore not with the SBB or Ministry of RGB. Mr. Louis Biswane (R+ A Pierrekondre) asked what the duration is of a logging permit and if the logging permit can be transferred to community forest? **According to Mr. Hasselnook, the logging permit was issued for an indefinite period until further notice from the Government. However, the decision was taken that permits issued as of January 2016 were valid for ten (10) years. This also applies when community forest is issued. Transfer of a logging permit to community forest is not possible.**

³ Bosgebieden, die gelegen zijn rondom gemeenschapsgronden en die ten behoeve van in dorpen en nederzettingen wonende en tevens in stamverband levende boslandbewoners als gemeenschapsbos zijn aangewezen en welke dienen ter voorziening in de eigen behoefte aan voedingsmiddelen en bosproductie, alsmede ten behoeve van mogelijke commerciële houtbenutting, inzameling van bosbijproducten en ontginning van landbouwdoeleinden.

Mr. Stiefen Petrusi (R+ A Nieuw Aurora) requested clarification if the SBB is a Government entity; Mr. Hasselnook confirmed this. Mr. Petrusi placed a critical note on the way legislation that concerns the situation and the people living in the Interior areas is drafted and approved. There is no involvement and consultation with the people living in the Interior areas. That is different for the REDD+ process, where the Government has to engage with the Indigenous populations and Tribal communities to proceed with REDD+. As said before, the concept of community forest is not supported by the communities in the Interior areas. A group of traditional village leaders cannot decide for the village, which area of the forest can be used by whom. He is concerned that within the REDD+ process, the Government may decide not to continue engaging the Indigenous populations and Tribal communities, as the Government has been doing in other circumstances. Mr. Hendrik Pai (R+ A Mooitaki) supported Mr. Petrusi's views that a consultation with the people in the Interior areas is necessary before decisions are taken and legislation is approved. This to ensure that the people understand and agree with the policy decisions and legislation.

DAY 2: 23 JULY 2016

On the 2nd day of the training/working session, the SBB continued its presentation and exercise. There was further discussion about the draft TOR and contract and the participants received training on the use of phablets. The also each received a phablet to support their work in the field.

E. Presentation 'Gathering information for sustainable conservation of the forest', (Mr. Iflaw Hasselnook and Ms. Mercedes Hardjoprajitno, Foundation for Forest Management and Production Control)

Ms. Hardjoprajitno continued the presentation and explained that the Forest Cover Monitoring Unit within the SBB, keeps track of the forest coverage. The SBB determines where the forest areas are; how much deforestation takes place and what the causes are of deforestation. One of the methods for tracking forest coverage is remote sensing. Satellite pictures are made of the areas all over the world; the SBB downloads these pictures and uses them to develop the maps and keep track of changes in the structure of these areas. During the session, the Assistants were asked to review the maps of their respective areas and provide additional information relevant to update the maps e.g. the Assistants were requested to advise on the exact location of the villages; if the classification was correct; on deforestation and its causes; agricultural plots etc. The SBB is in the process of setting up a geo portal website which is accessible for the public. The exercise for updating the maps proofed a useful one and the Assistants were able to provide a lot of additional information and details to update the maps. Assistants received a copy of the maps to take along.

F. Session 'Handing over of Phablets' (Mr. Marlon Hoogdorp, Communications officer REDD+ PMU)

To support their work in the field, the Assistants will receive phablets. With these phablets, they can send and receive e-mails and whatsapp messages, make pictures and make video and audio recording. Upon receipt of the phablet, the Assistant will have to sign which states that the phablet is the property of the REDD+ PMU and the Assistant is held accountable for proper use and care of the phablet. The phablet will include a sim card, one month internet connection and prepaid credit. Along with the phablet, the Assistant receives an electronic and solar charger and a bag to carry the phablet. The REDD+ logo is printed on both the phablet and the bag. In response to a question of Mr. Nelso Adose (R+ A Futunakaba), Mr. Hoogdorp informed that there is no clear indication on the lifespan of the phablet.

When there are technical problems with the phablet, the Assistants should discuss this with the REDD+ unit. Mr. Hoogdorp informed the Assistants that the phablet will be handed over to the Assistants today and they will need to sign the receipt form.

After Mr. Hoogdorp's introduction, the REDD+ Assistants pointed out that they need to reach an agreement first with the PMU on the draft TOR and contract before receiving the phablets. Therefore they would like to present the outcome of their deliberations held yesterday.

G. Continued discussion 'Draft contract and Terms of Reference for RAC', (REDD+ Assistants and Mr. Marlon Hoogdorp, Communications officer REDD+ PMU)

Ms. Josien Toekoe-Aloema (R+ A Galibi) presented the outcome of the deliberation among the Assistants on the draft documents, which is as follows: 'We, REDD+ Assistants (Indigenous populations and Tribal communities) have unanimously decided that we will continue the REDD+ activities but under revised conditions to be included in the TOR and contract. If the revision does not take place, the Assistants request a meeting with the UNDP and IDB. The Assistants will appoint their representatives to meet with the UNDP and IDB. On the budgets and payments, the Assistants only wants to negotiate with the Community Liaison Office (CLO) of the REDD+ PMU, Mr. Sirito-Yana Aloema. Mr. Hoogdorp thanked the RAC for their feedback. Ms. Madhawi Ramdin (project coordinator REDD+ PMU) proposed a meeting between the PMU and the Assistants to discuss the revisions that they would like to make in the TOR and contract and the points raised. She clarified that the IDB is not a partner in the REDD+ process, only the UNDP. The REDD+ Assistants nominated a team of five (5) Assistants to meet with the REDD+ PMU.

After the meeting, Ms. Natasia Donoe (R+ A Langoe) presented the results of the meeting. She indicated that it has become clear that the organization of community hearings (krutu's) is not the only condition for receiving the monthly financial compensation. There is a variety of activities that the Assistants can execute e.g. meetings with a small groups of community members or providing information via a local radio programme, as long as these are reported to the PMU. That is the difference with the previous working arrangements where reporting did not take place structurally. This has now been incorporated in the working arrangements. Since the objections have been cleared with the PMU, there is no need for a meeting with the UNDP. Regarding the demand of the Assistants to discuss finances and budgeting only with the CLO; the PMU noted that there are different levels of responsibility in the PMU. The demand will be discussed internally in the PMU to propose a practical solution.

The next step was to revise the text of the draft documents. Three (3) of the Assistants were assigned to support the PMU team with this. Following these developments, the Assistants agreed to receive the phablets. The phablets including a sim card, one month internet connection and prepaid credit as well as a solar and electronic charger were handed over to the Assistants.

H. Working session 'Effective and efficient use of the Phablet', (Ms. Whitney Douglas, Ms. Abigail de Rijp and Mr. Xaviro van Ams, Partners Plus consultancy)

During this sessions, the REDD+ Assistants received training in the basic functionalities of the phablet. The trainers provided instructions and exercised these functionalities with them. All REDD+ Assistants were assigned an e-mail address (gmail) to be used for their work. There were differences in the IT knowledge of the Assistants, nevertheless everyone participated actively and by the end of the session everyone was more or less able to use the phablet. The Assistants commended the trainers for their patience and excellent training and guidance.

I. Continued discussion 'Draft contract and Terms of Reference for RAC', (Mr. Harry Ellioth, REDD+ Assistant and Mr. Marlon Hoogdorp, Communications officer REDD+ PMU)

Mr. Harry Ellioth (R+ A Witagron) was asked to present the revised draft TOR and contract to the Assistants. He started off with the draft contract and highlighted the provisions taken up in the articles.⁴ The contract includes the information of the parties that will sign as well as the considerations namely (i) that the REDD+ Assistants are representatives of the Indigenous populations and Tribal communities; (ii) that the Assistants are the intermediaries of the local communities to liaise with the REDD+ PMU; (iii) that the objective of the REDD+ Assistants Collective (RAC) is to support NIMOS and other REDD+ partners with the execution of REDD+ activities; (iv) that the RAC will be involved in the local dialogues to facilitate execution of REDD+ activities; (v) that the tasks of the RAC is to be carried out according to the agreed upon workplans, approved by the NIMOS General Manager and the REDD+ PMU Project Coordinator; (vi) that with the acceptance of this contract and the related TOR and code of conduct, parties make a significant contribution to the execution of the REDD+ project. Article 1 of the draft contract states that the REDD+ Assistants will perform some services in the context of the REDD+ project and these services are taken up in the terms of reference, which is an integral part of this contract. Article 2 regards the term of the contract commencing on 01 August 2016 until 31 January 2017 (6 months). In article 3, the reporting obligation of the REDD+ Assistants to the Community Liaison Officer of the PMU is regulated. Article 4 states that the monthly financial compensation is SRD 1.000, based on two (2) measurable achievements from the Assistant. Achievements relate to the approved workplans and budgets. Article 5 provides that the REDD+ Assistants should cover their own taxes, insurances and other obligations. Article 6 states that the agreement can be prematurely terminated, taking into account a notice term of two months. The party requesting the termination should sent a written request including the argumentation for terminating the contract. Ms. Josien Toekoe-Aloema (R+ A Galibi) recommended that the full text of the draft contract is also read out, which was done by Mr. Ellioth. **After the contract was read out, Mr. Stiefen Pertusi (R+ A Nieuw Aurora) informed that he would still like to seek advice from his resource persons and leaders before signing.** He needs to revert back to the persons who have delegated him just to be sure he has their approval. Mr. Wilson Willems (R+ A Pusugrunu) supported Mr. Petrusi's request. He is of the opinion that the REDD+ Assistants are accountable to the persons that have delegated them. He trusts the team of REDD+ Assistants that have negotiated with the PMU on the content of the documents and is grateful for their efforts. Yet he needs to consult with his leaders before signing. He recommends that every Assistant receives a copy of the draft documents for a second review. Mr. Wilson asked if Mr. Ellioth agrees with the content of the draft documents. Mr. Ellioth confirmed this, however since two colleagues - who are also village captains - have asked to first seek advice from their leaders and resource persons, this should be taken into account by the PMU and other colleagues. Since the contract will commence on 1 August 2016, there are still some time available.

Mr. Vincent Aloema (R+ A Galibi) noted that the term of the contract is six (6) months; this is exactly the period of the preparatory phase of the REDD+ project. He requested clarification on the six months. According to Mr. Hoogdorp, there will be an evaluation of the working arrangements after the six months, which seemed a sensible period. The evaluation will provide lessons learnt and best practices.

Mr. Sirito-Yana Aloema (REDD+ PMU Community Liaison Officer) assured the Assistants that there is flexibility in the contract. To be able to pay the monthly financial compensation, a procedure needed to be determined how to enable and account for the payment. This is an opportunity to fulfill the request for a financial compensation made a few months ago. If the Assistants perform according to the approved workplan they receive their payment, if not, the compensation cannot be paid.

⁴ It should be noted that the revisions of the text of the draft TIR was done; the text of the draft contract was not revised

Ms. Ramdin (REDD+ PMU Project Coordinator) recommends that all Assistants receive a hard copy of the revised draft documents for their review. The documents will also be shared via mail. Mr. Willems (R+ A Pusugrunu) welcomed this and highlighted again that this review is to make sure everyone agrees to the content of the documents. Mr. Pildas (R+ A Kwamalasumutu) however remarked that he will sign the contract because he agrees with the content of the documents and the work needs to be done. He has been delegated by his leaders to take part in the REDD+ process and he does not want to back without a signed contract. Mr. Hoogdorp suggested to end the session for today since the programme was already beyond the scheduled hours. All Assistants received a hard copy of the revised draft documents as well as via e-mail. The next day they had to advise on their decision.

DAY 3: 24 JULY 2016

On the 3rd day (last day) of the training/working session, the Assistants had to inform on their decision to sign the contract and eventually sign the contract. Instructions and guidance was also provided for the development of the workplan. Closing remarks followed from the General Manager of NIMOS and the Assistants.⁵

J. Continued discussion 'Draft contract and Terms of Reference for RAC', (Mr. Harry Elliioth, REDD+ Assistant and Mr. Marlon Hoogdorp, Communications officer REDD+ PMU)

Mr. Elliioth (R+ A Witagron) informs the meeting that some of the Assistants representing the Tribal Communities will not be able to sign the contract today. They do not want to stop the work, however they need the time to consult with the leaders and resource persons about the documents. They request if the other colleagues could support their view and agree as a collective not to sign. Since there is some time before the entry date of the contract (1 August 2016). However if colleagues would like to sign the contract today, they understand this standpoint completely. Mr. Hoogdorp underscored that the Assistants are free to sign or not sign the contract. Mr. Vincent Aloema (R+ A Galibi) noted that there is no constraint as such in signing the revised contract. The contract concerns the work that has to be done in the preparatory phase and raising awareness in the communities, especially among the young people of what REDD+ is about. We must do this work to support the Government. This also provides the opportunity to address the land rights issue. Mr. Aloema understands the concerns of his colleagues, however he will sign the contract. Mr. Pildas Tawadi (R+ A Kwamalasumutu) informed that he has spoken to his village leader last night to seek his advice. Since the process has been going on for almost four (4) years, he was advised to continue and sign the contract. He supports his colleagues who has requested more time, but he feels that it is time for the next step. If there is a problem during the implementation of the contract, he will deal with NIMOS about it. He will sign the contract, because he wants to go back with a result and start the work. Ms. Josien Toekoe-Aloema (R+ A Galibi) also understands the view of her colleagues but has decided to sign the contract. In her view, the contract is needed to enable the payment of the financial compensation. Also the donor - UNDP - needs evidence when payments are done. She stated that the contract is the own responsibility of the Assistant because of the work they are doing. It is a recognition of the work. The village leaders have delegated the Assistants to support the REDD+ process, therefore she feels the decision to sign the contract is with the Assistants.

⁵ Due to the in depth discussions on the draft contract and TOR, two (2) sessions were canceled: (i) Training communication and reporting and (ii) Financial procedures, rules and regulations

Mr. Nelson Adose (R+ A Futunakaba) also respects the views of his colleagues. However he feels that the 'people' have designated the Assistants and places trust in them. If there is a problem during the execution of the contract, we can write a letter to request changes in the contract. We have been mandated by the 'people' and if we do not continue our work, we bring shame to our 'people'.

Mr. Hoogdorp thanked the Assistants for their cooperation and openness. Since some Assistants have decided to sign the contract today, the PMU will make the administrative arrangements for signing. The PMU will continue its deliberations with the Assistants who will not sign the contract today.

K. Working sessions 'Development of the REDD+ Assistants' workplan', (Mr. Sirito-Yana Aloema, Community Liaison Officer REDD+ PMU)

The Assistants need to develop a workplan to document their activities. One important aspect to take up in the workplan is the stakeholder analysis. The Assistants identify who the different stakeholders are in their communities and report this to the REDD+ PMU who will process the information. **The following field information is needed PMU; this information can be gathered in a period of about four weeks:**

i. Week 1: overview of the village

Who has knowledge about the history of the village; who has knowledge about the forest resources e.g. medicine, hunting, agriculture; who communicates messages in the village; who has contact with people in the city and/or other areas; who coordinates projects in the village and what are the projects about

ii. Week 2: who are the functional groups in the villages

Who are the singers; dancers; performers; female leaders, youth leaders in the village; who is the church pastor

iii. Week 3: Krutu

Who can facilitate community hearings; who can chair these hearings; who would not be in favour of the hearings; who could provide innovative ideas; who could influence decision making in a hearing; who can mobilize for hearings

iv. Week 4: internal dynamics in the villages

Who is good at organizing; negotiating; who can keep an administration

Although proposed to be done in four weeks, the Assistants can gather the information as listed above in the 6 months contract period. The phablets will be an effective tool to document all the activities and report to the PMU. The presentation will be shared with the Assistants.

Mr. Stiefen Petrusi (R+ A Nieuw Aurora) asked how the PMU will know that the work was done properly by the Assistant. Mr. Sirito Aloema noted that the PMU trusts on the ability and truthfulness of the Assistants. Upon receipt of the inputs, he will combine all the information to draft the workplan, which is then discussed with the Assistant for finalization. During the implementation, there will be review, evaluation and adjustments of the workplan as necessary. Ms. Merona Godlieb (R+ A Pokigron) asked if it was still necessary to request consent of the village authorities to organize a community hearing. Mr. Siritio Aloema confirmed this. He noted that it is important to properly budget all activities taken up in the workplan.

After the introduction, the Assistants were divided in working groups to start drafting their individual workplan. They received support from the PMU staff in this exercise.

In the plenary session, two (2) draft workplans were presented.

Sample 1

Month Responsible R+ A	August	September	November	Communities involved
Mr. Stiefen Petrusi Nieuw Aurora/ Sipaliwini	- Make appointments with the local sports teams to agree on a tournament (to promote REDD+) - Provide information about REDD+ through a local radio programme	- Preparation for the sports tournament; prepare the budget - Meeting with other village leaders to discuss and reach agreement for the tournament	- Tournament is held - Evaluation of the tournament with the village leaders and other stakeholders	Nieuw Aurora Guyaba Pikin Slee Tjalikonde
	<i>Reporting</i>	<i>Reporting</i>	<i>Reporting</i>	

Sample 2

Month Responsible R+ A	August	September	November	Communities involved
Mr. Wilson Willems Pusugrunu/ Sipaliwini	- Prepare budget for and discuss with other village captains about a community hearing on REDD+ for the community members living along the downstream Suriname river - Share the message about REDD+ in the Pusugrunu community (flyers etc)	- Preparations for the community hearing - Gather information about stakeholders e.g. the boat manufacturers)	- Community hearing is held - Gather information about stakeholders e.g. medicine men	Commissariskondre Makka Kriekie Missa Libi Nw. Jacobkondre Baling Bilawatra
	<i>Reporting</i>	<i>Reporting</i>	<i>Reporting</i>	

L. Signing of the contracts by REDD+ Assistants

The following REDD+ Assistants signed the contract on 24 July, 2016:

1. Ms. Wabe Alida (Boven Commewijne/Mapane)
2. Mr. Adose Nelson (Futunakaba)
3. Mr. Tawadi Pildas (Kwama)
4. Mr. Neni Johan (Apetina)
5. Ms. Aloema-Tokoe Josien (Galbi)
6. Mr. Aloema Vincent (Galibi)
7. Ms. Godlieb Merona (Pokigron)
8. Mr. Arupa Arnold (Apetina)
9. Mr. Koepoeroe Ainiase (Kwama)
10. Mr. Elloth Harry (Witagron)
11. Ms. Donoe Natasia (Langoe/Boven Suriname)

The contract was signed by the General Manager of NIMOS, Mr. Cedric Nelom and the respective Assistant.

Note: the REDD+ Assistants also received a questionnaire to assess their knowledge about REDD+. This will provide the PMU with a baseline on the knowledge about REDD+ among the Assistants.

M. Closing remarks

On behalf of the Assistants, Ms. Alida Wabe (R+ A Mapane) and Ms. Francisca Jarden (R+ A Saabiyu) thanked the PMU for the training/working session. It was a good learning experience. There is trust in the Assistants in their view and confidence that the work will have a positive effect. Additionally Mr. Vincent Aloema thanked the General Manager of NIMOS for his support. Mr. Wilson Willems wished all his colleagues success with their work.

The General Manager of NIMOS, Mr. Cedric Nelom commended the Assistants on their work and positive attitude. There is a lot of work to be done in his view. The conservation of the forest is a key element. He awaits the final decision of the Assistants that have not signed the contract. Any improvements and recommendations are much appreciated. He requested that if there is any issue in the community, to discuss this with NIMOS.

The session was finally closed with a song performed by Ms. Francisca Jarden.