



# Field Testing the ‘Theory of Change’ Approach to Social Impact Assessment of REDD+ Projects: Case Studies from Brazil, Guatemala and Peru

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*REPORT TO WORLD BANK PROFOR (“Pro-Poor REDD – How will we know?”  
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Photo: Oscar Maldonado

FOREST TRENDS WITH SUPPORT FROM THE CLIMATE, COMMUNITY AND BIODIVERSITY ALLIANCE  
(CCBA) AND RAINFOREST ALLIANCE

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## 1. Introduction and acknowledgements

This is a report of three case studies to test out a methodology of social impact assessment (SIA) of REDD+ projects, undertaken as part of the project “Pro-Poor REDD – How will we know?” Project ID 7152226. These three case studies form a key part of the process of developing the Social Impact Assessment (SIA) guidance for REDD+ project proponents, building on Version 1.0 of the “Manual for Social Impact Assessment of Land-Based Carbon Projects” (Richards and Panfil, 2010) – or “SIA Manual” for short - developed with the support of PROFOR and other donors.

The main section of the report describes the methodology used in the case studies, discusses what worked well and less well, identifies key gaps, and focuses on how the methodology could be improved for future SIA of REDD+ projects. This analysis, together with three peer reviews of Version 1.0 of the SIA Manual, and feedback from other practitioners and observers, provides the main basis for developing Version 2.0 of the Manual during mid-2011. The results of the three case studies are presented in Annex 1 (Suruí Carbon Project, Brazil), Annex 2 (GuateCarbon REDD project, Guatemala) and Annex 3 (Alto Huayambamba Conservation Concession REDD project, Peru).

It is recognized at the outset that the selection of the case studies may appear limited in range as regards geographic type and project type – all were in Latin America and all were REDD projects, as opposed to afforestation, reforestation or agroforestry (A/R) projects. This was because the case studies were very dependent on which projects were at the right stage and had sufficient interest in testing out the SIA methodology. The latter seemed also to depend on institutional linkages. Thus two of the three projects have been supported by the Katoomba Incubator; one of them had strong links to the CCBA; and the other was managed by Rainforest Alliance, one of the collaborating NGOs on this initiative. Efforts were made to engage a project in East Africa, but for various reasons it was not possible to firm up a case study (although, following their participation in the Tanzania SIA Training Workshop in October 2010, the Tanzania Forest Conservation Group (TFCG) has been undertaking a ‘theory of change’ based SIA process on a REDD Project in Lindi District with the support of Tuyeni Mwampamba, one of the SIA workshop facilitators).

As well as World Bank PROFOR, Forest Trends acknowledges the support of NORAD for the Suruí Carbon Project SIA; of Rainforest Alliance for the GuateCarbon SIA; and CCBA/Rockefeller Foundation for the Alto Huayambamba REDD project. Other donors contributing to Version 2.0 of the Manual are USAID-Translinks, Morgan Stanley, The Blue Moon Fund and Rockefeller Foundation (the latter two via CCBA).

This report was written by Michael Richards of Forest Trends. He thanks all who participated in the SIA Case Studies, especially Steve Panfil (CCBA), Oscar Maldonado (Consultant), Almir Quilo (Rainforest Alliance), Wesley Pacheco (ACT-Brazil), Pedro Soares (IDESAM), Maria Barcelos (Metareila Association), Beto Borges (Forest Trends), César Flores (AMPA), Karina Pinasco (AMPA), Sarah Richards (Pedagogy Consultant who wrote Annex 4) and Miguel Tang (AMPA). He also thanks Jacob Olander (Forest Trends) for his overall support and guidance.

## **2. Overview of the SIA Manual and the proposed methodology**

### **2.1 Objectives and structure of SIA Manual**

The SIA Manual is a joint endeavour of Forest Trends, the Climate, Community and Biodiversity Alliance (CCBA), Rainforest Alliance and Fauna & Flora International (FFI). It aims to provide guidance to land-based carbon projects in the task of identifying, assessing and measuring their positive and negative social impacts in response to multiple benefit standards such as the Climate, Community and Biodiversity (CCB) Standards.

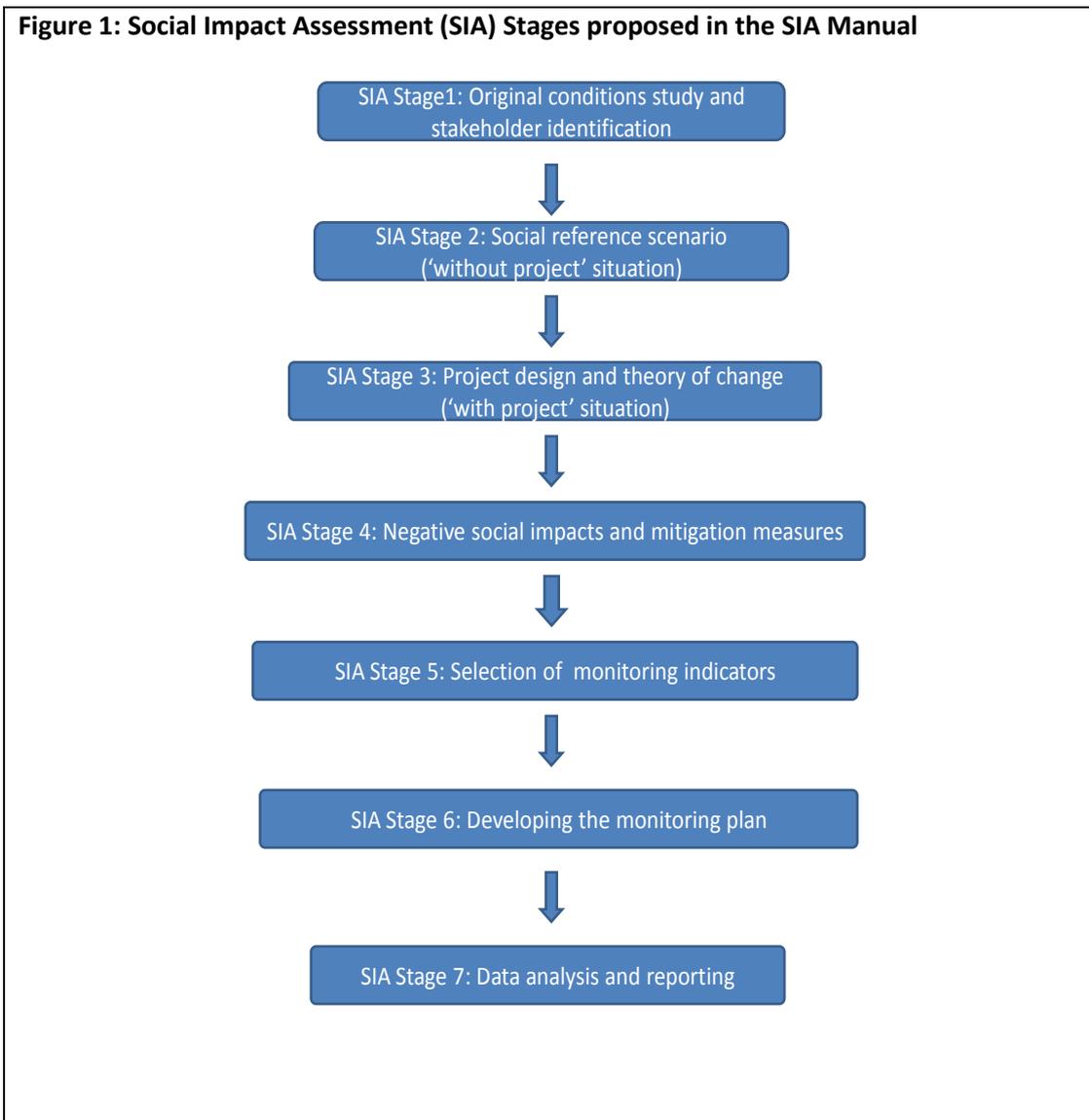
Version 1.0 of the SIA Manual (Richards & Panfil, 2010) is organized in two parts. Part 1 (Core Guidance) discusses the challenges to cost-effective SIA, and sets out a seven stage process for developing credible SIA (Figure 1). Part II (Toolbox of Methods and Support Materials) explains in more detail the range of potential SIA methods or tools, and provides other supportive analysis, such as a review of the documented and likely social impacts of forest carbon projects.

In order to make it as user friendly and useful as possible, the Manual is designed to complement the Climate, Community and Biodiversity (CCB) Standards as the market leader for multiple benefit carbon projects, but also aims to be relevant for other multiple benefit carbon standards. Table 1 describes the seven SIA stages, mentions some key methods, and lists the corresponding 'concepts' and 'criteria' of the CCB Standards.

### **2.2 The 'theory of change' methodology**

As explained in the SIA Manual, following an earlier literature review (Richards, 2008), the 'theory of change' approach to impact assessment was identified as the most cost-effective and appropriate methodology for meeting the CCB requirements. 'Attribution' is the main challenge for any kind of impact assessment. It is particularly important in the context of the CCB Standards which require that social benefits, like carbon, are 'additional' or caused by the project as opposed to other possible factors. The traditional way of tackling attribution has been to use "matching methods" or the experimental/quasi-experimental approach, involving comparisons over time between control and treatment groups. But this approach is costly for REDD+ projects, and faces significant problems around the selection and retention of valid controls, as well as some difficult ethical issues.

**Figure 1: Social Impact Assessment (SIA) Stages proposed in the SIA Manual**



The theory of change or causal model approach promoted in the SIA Manual is based on the ‘Open Standards for Forest Conservation’ methodology developed by the Conservation Measures Partnership (CMP, 2007). The theory of change approach is increasingly seen<sup>1</sup> as a credible and cost-effective approach to impact assessment since it tackles attribution and provides a sound basis for indicator selection, as well as, more broadly, project design. The essence of the approach is that the project team and stakeholder representatives develop a hypothesis of how the project will achieve its proposed social goals or objectives over time. In other words it is the project’s theory of how and why a positive social change will happen due to the project.

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<sup>1</sup> Versions of the causal model approach have been adopted by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Evaluation Office, the World Bank's Independent Evaluation Group (IEG), the Conservation Measures Partnership (CMP), the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC), the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), UK DFID in its ‘Integrated Impact Assessment Approach’, GTZ with its ‘Results Based Impact Chain’, and the International *Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labeling* (ISEAL) Alliance.

**Table 1: Summary of proposed SIA Stages and relevance to the CCB Standards**

<b>SIA Stage</b>	<b>Brief description</b>	<b>Main methods</b>	<b>Relevant CCB Concepts and Criteria</b>
SIA Stage 1	Description of socio-economic conditions before project start-up, and identification of all stakeholder groups that might be affected	PRA, household surveys, community maps, secondary data, wealth or well-being ranking, and stakeholder analysis	Concept G1 (esp. Criteria G1 1, G1.2, G1.3, G1.5 & G1.6), Criterion G3.8
SIA Stage 2	Projection of social conditions and impacts assuming there is no project, and focusing on the variables and outcomes most likely to be affected	Stakeholder focus group discussions, expert opinion, problem trees, scenario analysis, etc.	Concept G2 (especially Criteria G1.1, G1.2 & G1. 4)
SIA Stage 3	Formulated description of how project proponents and stakeholders think the social objectives will be achieved, and identifying key assumptions between outputs, outcomes and impacts	Causal model or theory of change ideally developed at project design stage; multiple stakeholder group meetings to verify/modify project theory of change	Concept G3 (especially Criteria G3. 1, G3.2, G3.3,G3. 5, G3. 7 & G3. 8)
SIA Stage 4	Analysis of possible negative social impacts and cost-effective mitigation measures	Stakeholder focus groups, PRA methods, regular meetings with stakeholders, stakeholder fora	Criteria G3.5, G5.4, G5.5, G5.6, and Concept CM2
SIA Stage 5	Identification of monitoring indicators to measure progress in achieving the desired social outcome & objectives	Indicators could be based on causal model or sustainable livelihoods framework	Concept CM3
SIA Stage 6	Design of the social or community monitoring plan, including data collection methods for measuring indicators	PRA, surveys, key informants, Basic Needs Survey (BNS), Participatory Impact Assessment (PIA) & others	Concept CM3
SIA Stage 7	Analysis, reporting and verification of the SIA results with stakeholders	Stakeholder meetings and feedback workshops	Concepts CM3 and GL

The ‘theory of change’ approach is very relevant to the challenge presented by the CCB Standards – the wording of the CCB Standards (Second Edition, 2008) almost implies a theory of change approach, for example, CCB Criterion CM1.1 states that *“a credible estimate of the changes must include changes in community well-being due to the project ... based on clearly defined and defensible assumptions about how project activities will alter social and economic well-being.”*

Having decided that the ‘theory of change’ approach was most appropriate, it was necessary to decide which theory of change methodology was most appropriate for REDD+ projects aiming to meet the CCB or other multiple benefit standards. When writing the SIA Manual Version 1.0, three potential theory of change methodologies were investigated: the ‘Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation’ approach developed by the Conservation Measures Partnership (CMP, 2007); the Review of Outcomes to Impacts (ROtI) method developed for the GEF Evaluation Office; and the Participatory Impact Pathways Analysis (PIPA) tool developed by some CGIAR institutions.

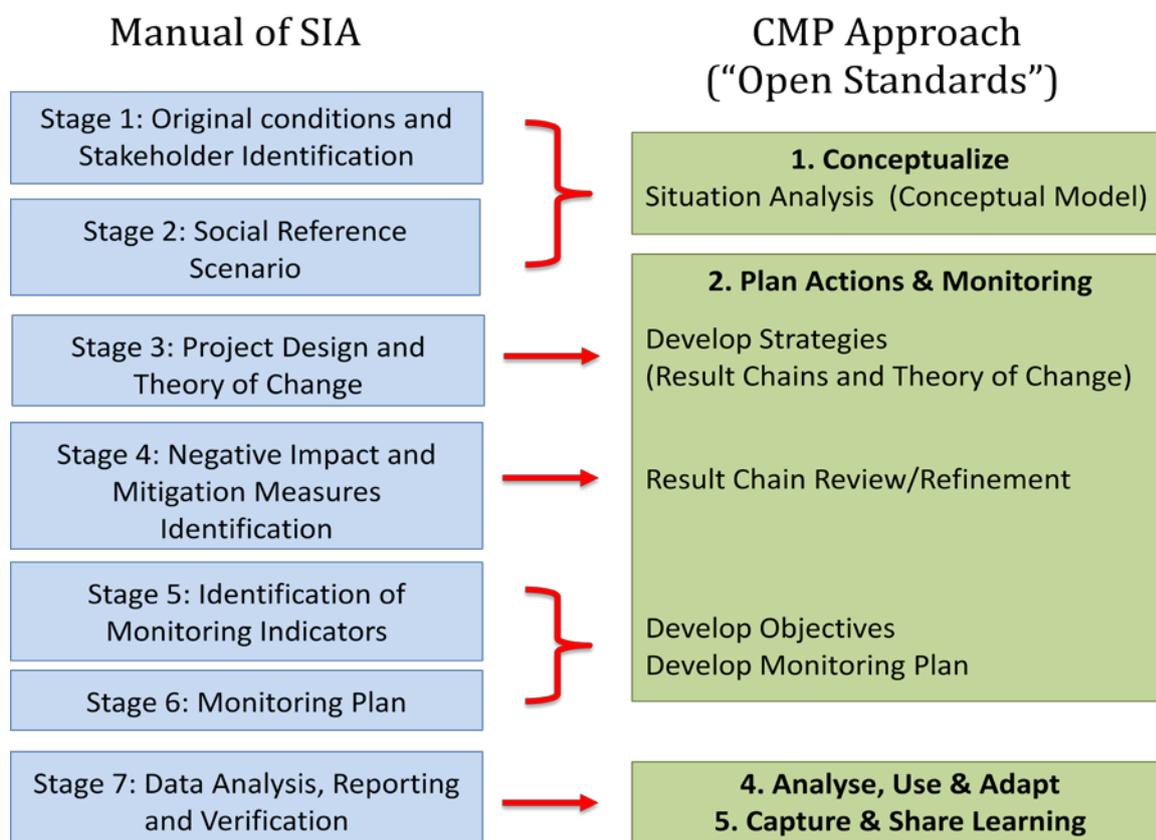
The first two approaches were felt to be most relevant to REDD+ projects. They were therefore first tested out in an SIA training workshop in Moyobamba, Peru in June 2010<sup>1</sup>. It was found that the Open Standards approach represented a better fit with the CCB Standards than the ROTI methodology, partly because it was designed for ex ante analysis, while the latter is an ex post approach and is therefore less appropriate for the validation or project design certification stage. It was also realised that the ‘Open Standards’ approach had major ‘spin-off’ benefits in terms of its contribution to a strategic and participatory project design, stakeholder ownership, and adaptive project management. Subsequently the Open Standards approach was further tested and refined at the Tanzania SIA training workshop (October 2010). The ‘Open Standards’ or CMP approach is grouped into five main stages as shown in Figure 2, while Figure 3 shows how the Open Standards approach can be adapted to the seven SIA Stages.

**Figure 2: Stages and Steps of the CMP Approach (CMP, 2007)**



<sup>1</sup> The workshop participants were divided into two case study groups – one to develop an ‘Open Standards’ analysis of the AMPA REDD project in Brazil, and the second to apply the ROTI approach to the GuateCarbon REDD project with community forest concessions in the Guatemalan Peten.

**Figure 3: Equivalence between the SIA Stages and Open Standards approach**



Source: Oscar Maldonado, Consultant

### 3. Summary of the case study project contexts

#### 3.1 Surui Carbon Project, Brazil

The Suruí Carbon Project aims to use REDD+ finance to support the Suruí indigenous peoples in their efforts to develop alternative livelihoods and protect 248,000 hectares of forest in the western Amazon (the Suruí's indigenous territory spans Rondonia and Mato Grosso States). The Suruí, after seeing their population and territories decimated by road-building and a massive influx of settlers in the 1970s and 1980s, have had considerable success in reducing the rate of deforestation due to illegal logging, ranching and agriculture, but without carbon finance it will be difficult to sustain current efforts.

A unique aspect of the Suruí Carbon Project is that the project developer is a grass roots organization - the Metareila Association of the Suruí People. Metareila Association is being supported by various NGOs including Forest Trends, ACT-Brasil, Kanindé (a local NGO) and the Institute for Conservation and Development of Amazonas (IDESAM). It is hoped that the Suruí Carbon Project, which may be the first indigenous REDD project in Amazonia, will serve as a model for how REDD+ can benefit Amazon indigenous communities – groups who control over a fifth of Amazon forests.

### **3.2 GuateCarbon REDD Project, Guatemala**

The GuateCarbon REDD project aims to reduce deforestation rates in the ‘Multiple Use Zone’ of the Maya Biosphere Reserve in the Petén Department of northern Guatemala. The potential project area of over 600,000 hectares is of high archaeological and biodiversity importance, and includes two major biological corridors. Much of this area is managed under community forest concessions, as well as two industrial forest concessions, based on 25 year leases from the government, which is represented by the Protected Areas Commission (CONAP). Most of the concessions are certified under the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). The total area of forest concessions, including the industrial forest concessions, is 553,000 hectares.

The project proponents are the Association of Forest Communities of the Peten (ACOFOP), which represents the community forestry organizations, CONAP and Rainforest Alliance, the project’s technical advisor and facilitator. The plan is to layer a REDD project onto a community-based sustainable forest management project, based largely on the extraction of timber and Xate, a fern which is used in flower arrangements. However several of the concessions are finding it difficult to compete with less sustainable land uses; some of them have lost their FSC status: and there is also a threat of road construction.

### **3.3 Alto Huayambamba Conservation Concession (CAAH), Peru**

The Alto Huayabamba Conservation Concession (CAAH) REDD project involves the attempt to conserve a 146,000 forest concession in the Department of San Martin on the Amazon slopes of the Peruvian Andes. The project is being implemented by Amazónicos por la Amazonía (AMPA), a non-governmental organization which has been granted a 40- year conservation concession. AMPA is receiving technical support from Forest Trends and Conservation International.

The concession area includes montane areas of high biodiversity and archaeological value, as well as important sources of water supply for downstream towns. By working with regional government and local families within and adjacent to the concession, AMPA aims to avert the deforestation impacts typically associated with new road access in frontier forests - the deforestation threats from planned road construction are clear and documented.

At the same time, AMPA is collaborating with other NGOs and regional/national government to develop a regional baseline model across the Department of San Martín (50,000 square kilometres) in order to ensure a clear and consistent sub-national REDD+ accounting framework.

## **4. Methodology used in the case studies**

### **4.1 Introductory sessions**

The three SIA case studies adopted a broadly similar approach and methodology based on the Open Standards ‘theory of change’ approach. The first day started with facilitator and participant introductions, an ice breaker, and development of ground rules (e.g., cells on mute, not interrupting, punctuality, etc.). This was followed by overview presentations of the SIA methodology – as set out in the SIA Manual - in greater or less detail according to the composition of the participants. This was

very different in the three case studies. Thus for the Suruí Carbon Project, Brazil, where all local participants were indigenous Suruí of variable educational levels, a quite short overview presentation was made, while at the Guatemala case study, where over two thirds of participants were from NGOs or state bodies, longer presentations were made.

## 4.2 ‘Conceptualization stage’ (including elements of SIA Stage 1)

The initial step in the ‘Conceptualization stage’ was to develop a short and clear ‘vision statement’ as regards the social objectives of the project (see Annexes 1-3 for vision statements of two of the case studies). According to the ‘Open Standards’ approach, defining a vision statement helps develop a common vision among the participants.

The second task was to select priority ‘focal issues’, at least as regards social aspects of the project. Focal issues in an SIA context can be defined as the social factors or issues which are most important in relation to a potential REDD+ project – social factors which are most associated with the problem of forest degradation, and which a REDD+ project is most likely to influence. Since a project cannot address all potential social issues, it is necessary to identify the (3-5) most important ones. The main guiding questions used to help the participants prioritize focal issues were:

1. *What social issues must be addressed for the project to succeed?*
2. *On what social issues is the project most likely to have an effect on?*
3. *What social issues are most related to deforestation (may give similar answers to 1)*

After deciding the focal issues, the participants divided into working groups (WGs) of about 5 to 8 people per focal issue depending on the number of participants. In one case study (Suruí Carbon Project), each WG brainstormed positive and negative aspects surrounding the focal issues. This provided a basis for SIA Stage 2 - the social reference scenario.

## 4.3 Social reference scenario analysis and problem trees (SIA Stage 2)

Each WG then worked on a projection of current conditions and problems (in terms of their focal issue) in the ‘without project scenario’, focusing on the processes, consequences and impacts of change at two or three future time periods (5, 10 and 20 years time). Key guiding questions<sup>1</sup> for this analysis were:

- What will be the main changes associated with this focal issue?
- What are the direct and indirect consequences of these changes, negative and positive?
- How will vulnerable local stakeholders (e.g., women, poorest) be affected?

Each WG then developed a short ‘focal issue statement’. This presented the focal issue as an objective or ideal situation which the project would like to achieve. The focal issues were presented to the other groups for verification.

Another brainstorm exercise for the WGs was to list all the stakeholders currently effected by the focal issue, and whether they were being effected positively (+++, ++ or +), neutrally or negatively (--

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<sup>1</sup> In the case of the GuateCarbon REDD project a participatory approach was used to decide on the guiding questions; this is commented on in Annex 4.

-, --, -). It was useful to include (and differentiate) stakeholders external to the project zone, as well as government or national level stakeholders. Some of the WGs added a column to describe how each stakeholder group was being affected.

In the Open Standards methodology, each focal issue requires a 'conceptual model'. This is a flow diagram showing how the 'without project' situation affects or drives the main focal issue problem(s). It is similar in concept to a problem tree - a more understandable term for REDD+ stakeholders. Developing a problem tree or conceptual model combines analysis from SIA Stage 1 (the original conditions study) and SIA Stage 2 ('social reference scenario').

The first step in developing the 'focal issue problem tree' was to identify the main problem associated with the focal issue – or the focal issue expressed negatively (e.g., gender inequality, lack of livelihood options, lack of household food security, etc.). As can be seen from the examples in Annexes 1-3, the 'focal issue problem' was placed at the far right; the participants then discussed and arranged cards to the left of the focal issue as follows:

1. The most direct or immediate drivers or causes of the focal issue problem.
2. To the left of these, the factors or drivers seen as more indirect causes or indirectly related to the focal issue problem.
3. To the left of these, cards with the underlying drivers or causes of the more direct and indirect factors already identified.

Once the cards had been thoroughly discussed, particularly in terms of the cause and effect process, participants drew arrows between the cards showing the direction of causality. In some of the workshops they also identified some potential strategic or key entry points for the project.

Finally each problem tree needed to be verified by getting other participants to review it. In two of the case studies this was achieved through a 'tour' of the problem trees by all workshop participants and encouraging questions and critiquing. In the case of the Suruí project this was achieved by getting 1-2 representatives of each WG to join the one or two remaining representatives of the host WG. These reviews normally led to some modification of the flow diagrams.

#### **4.4 Focal issue 'results chain' and theory of change (SIA Stage 3)**

The focal issue problem tree provides a basis for developing the 'results chain' for each focal issue. This is to some extent the opposite of the problem tree in that it aims to reverse the negative causation cycle of the problem tree, and therefore specifies what is needed for the focal issue objective to be achieved. It is basically a causal model with all the elements of the theory of change expressed as positive results. The results chain should also reveal the assumptions in the project theory of change – these are found in the causal linkages between successful (short-term) project outputs, (mid-term) outcomes and (longer term) impacts. A results chain also provides the basis for:

- developing 'theory of change' statements
- identifying negative impacts (or at least some of them)
- proposing mitigation measures for negative impacts
- identifying measurable project objectives and corresponding progress indicators
- developing a detailed impact monitoring plan

Similar to the problem tree, the starting point is to place the focal issue objective at the far right, with the positive results needed to achieve the focal issue objective arranged to the left in a causative chain. It is also possible to list the main project activities at the far left of the results chain. As with the problem tree, the results chain needs to be critiqued and verified by the other workshop participants.

After developing the results chain, each WG developed a theory of change statement for their focal issue. This stated how the focal issue objective would be achieved in the form of an IF ... THEN ... statement. The theory of change statements were presented and discussed in plenary.

#### **4.5 Risks, negative impacts and mitigation measures (SIA Stage 4)**

The WGs then swapped focal issues in order to identify ‘what could go wrong’ with a results chain or theory of change, based on the logic that it is easier for new eyes to identify the problems. Each WG sought to identify the risks and negative impacts involved in the project strategy. This involved identifying the pivotal or most important results, and asking the following questions:

- (a) What could prevent the desired result, assuming that the project is financially successful and therefore has sufficient resources for implementation? Here the aim was to identify the main risks or threats to successful implementation.
- (b) What negative impacts are possible assuming a result is successfully achieved? The challenge here was to identify unpredicted or unintentional side-effects of project implementation: e.g., a more active and effective village forest management committee could increase the workload of committee members, making it difficult for women with families to participate.

The WGs noted down the risks and negative impacts on a separate sheet of paper, and then discussed how these risks or negative impacts could be prevented, mitigated or (in the last resort) compensated. A further column was needed to express the mitigation actions in the form of an achieved result. Using different colored cards, the risks, negative impacts and mitigation results were then pasted on to the results chain.

#### **4.6 Objectives, indicators and the monitoring plan (SIA Stages 5 and 6)**

In the case of the CCAH Peru and the GuateCarbon case studies, the results chain were used as a basis for generating the information necessary to draw up a social or community monitoring plan. In the case of the Suruí project, there was insufficient time for this. The first task was to derive, as far as possible SMART (Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Reliable and Time bound) objectives for the main desired outcomes and impacts of the results chain. Thence for each objective, participants identified at least one indicator for measuring progress towards achieving the objective. For each indicator, in turn, the WGs were asked to identify:

- Indicator type:
  - Short-term performance or output indicators (e.g., # workshops conducted, # people trained, # schools built)
  - Short to mid-term achievement or outcome indicators (e.g., # village management committees created, # land use plans developed)
  - Medium to long-term impact indicators (e.g., female participation in decision-making increased)

- Data collection method to be used to measure the indicator (HOW?)
- Already existing data for informing the indicator (also part of HOW?)
- Person/entity/organization responsible for measuring the indicator (WHO?)
- Location/place where the indicator will be measured (WHERE?)
- Timing or frequency of measurement (WHEN?)
- Cost of measurement (HOW MUCH?)

This provided almost all the information needed for the project to be able to complete the community or social monitoring plan (it was not realistic to do the latter in the SIA workshop, again mainly due to the time constraint).

## 5. Observations from the case studies

### 5.1 Suruí Carbon Project, Brazil

#### **Logistics and participants**

Two SIA workshops were held with the Suruí in November 2010 and February 2011. The first SIA workshop (15-16 November 2010) lasted two days and was effectively a training workshop which included an initial attempt at SIA Stage 2 (social reference scenario). It was attended by 13-15 indigenous Suruí participants (2-3 women) and four external stakeholders including the facilitators. The second workshop (22-25 February 2011) of 3.5 days was attended by 20 Suruí including six women, and five outsiders comprising the overall workshop facilitator (Michael Richards, Forest Trends) and four WG facilitators. Four of the facilitation team worked for NGOs supporting the Suruí Carbon Project, and other was a local consultant with the Metareila Association.

#### **Stakeholder participation**

Stakeholder participation in the first workshop was constrained by educational and linguistic issues: several participants were illiterate and some did not speak Portuguese. This meant that everything took about twice as long. The participants in the second (and main) workshop were, in general, younger and more educated - not much translation was required.

The original plan was that the second (and main) workshop would be facilitated by an experienced Open Standards practitioner, but a last minute illness prevented his participation. Consequently, the emergency facilitator of the workshop had limited Portuguese; this was not ideal, but the four WG facilitators, two without previous exposure to the methodology, were very competent. The WGs were on the small side – five to six people including the facilitator. This number worked well as regards more inclusive participation.

The theory of change methodology, involving rather linear ‘western’ thought processes, was predictably challenging for the indigenous participants, and was probably slower than if there had been a mixed group of stakeholders. However the Suruí seemed pleased with the workshop, proud of what they had achieved, and said that, although it was hard work with the help of the WG facilitators they were able to work through the various SIA stages.



Photo: Michael Richards

### **Methodological and other observations**

One of the consequences of the cultural and linguistic challenges was that it was not possible to complete the last stage of the methodology – identification of indicators and development of the community monitoring plan. It was also observed that 3.5 days was at or beyond the limit for indigenous participants unused to long mainly sedentary meetings, and concerned about daily subsistence tasks. Even with better facilitation, it would have been very difficult to complete the SIA methodology in one workshop.

It proved difficult for one overall facilitator to standardise the work of the four WGs; this underlined the need for the WG facilitators to have written guidance for each stage of the process. Also the WGs went at different speeds – one WG was slow partly since it was dealing with the most complex focus issue (socio-political organisation and related governance issues), and this resulted in some delay, but also because it was quite disrupted by a dominant participant dropping in and out.

Analysis of risks, negative impacts and mitigation actions (SIA Stage 4) was very slow taking almost a day. This was partly due to the lead facilitators' inexperience, but also because participants found it difficult to prioritise in the results chain and due to difficulties in understanding the concepts<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> In the Open Standards approach, a negative impact is defined as a negative consequence of a successful 'result' in the results chain, and a risk is defined as a threat to achieving a successful result.

## 5.2 GuateCarbon Project, Guatemala

### Logistics and participants

The SIA workshop of the GuateCarbon REDD Project was held over 22-25 March 2011 in Flores, Guatemala, and was attended by an average of about 36 participants, including 10 community participants. Other key project stakeholders were the Association of Forest Communities of the Petén (ACOFOP) (4-5 participants), the National Protected Areas Commission (CONAP) (7 participants) and Rainforest Alliance (4 participants). About 8 participants were non-stakeholders, especially NGOs (e.g., IUCN, Defensores de la Naturaleza) that worked in the Petén region. There were 7 women, 3 from the communities. Lead facilitator of the workshop was Oscar Maldonado (Consultant) with support from Michael Richards (Forest Trends) and Sarah Richards (*pro bono* rural education consultant).

### Stakeholder participation

Local stakeholder participation was weak both in terms of numbers and in some cases motivation. The large number of educated participants clearly affected local stakeholder participation. The involvement of non-project stakeholders, together with low proportion of community participants and the gender imbalance, may have resulted in some bias in the workshop results. In some WGs facilitators found it difficult to include less well educated community stakeholders who needed more time to respond and participate than other participants.<sup>1</sup> Annex 4 (Pedagogy Consultant's report) provides more observations and some recommendations on how to improve stakeholder participation.

The facilitators of the five WGs were opportunistically selected on the second morning of the workshop, and only one had prior exposure to the methodology. These factors and the high number of participants made it difficult for the main facilitator to maintain continuity of the methodology between the WGs, and to effectively support the WG facilitators.

### Methodological and other observations

The nature of the GuateCarbon project resulted in an attribution and 'additionality' challenge to the participants when comparing the 'with' and 'without project' situations. This was because the 'without project situation' was a sustainable forest management (SFM) program (but without carbon credits) that included some social interventions (education, health, training, community organisation, etc.). Therefore participants were asked to focus on communities where the SFM project was failing, and where forest degradation was more of a threat. There may however have been some exaggeration of the difference between the 'with' and 'without project' scenarios.

Another difficulty was that some 'focal issues' were either poorly defined or understood by the WGs. For example, two WGs struggled with the concept of 'social capital'. Two WGs abandoned their first attempt at a problem tree and started again with a different facilitator and/or WG members.

With such a large number of participants, 'validating' the WG outputs (problem trees, results chains and theory of change statements) by a 'tour' of all the participants seemed to have mixed success – there was a varied level of interest, several participants seemed bored, and there was limited

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<sup>1</sup> This was less of a problem in the Suruí workshop due to (a) the absence of other stakeholders or non-stakeholders, (b) the more manageable numbers, and (c) the quality of the WG facilitators.

constructive feedback or modification of the flow diagrams. Some WG presentations were too slow or detailed (in terms of the time available) and others were presented too quickly for people to follow. Finally the group work was often quite disrupted by the ‘dropping in and out’ of participants to receive cell calls or attend meetings. Annex 4 provides further analysis of some of these issues.

### 5.3 Alto Huayabamba Conservation Concession (CAH) project, Peru

#### Logistics and participants

The SIA case study of the CC-AH project took place at Leymebamba, Peru over March 17-19 2011. There were 29 participants, including workshop facilitators Steve Panfil (CCBA) and Karina Pinasco (AMPA), and 12 members of communities in the CAH concession area. Six women participated, mainly AMPA staff. The workshop lasted 2.5 days.

#### Stakeholder participation

The SIA workshop was quite dominated numerically by AMPA staff, several of whom had attended an SIA training workshop held in Moyobamba (Peru) in June, 2010; most of the local participants were also employed by the project, with the exception of three teachers from local schools. AMPA staff responsible for organizing the workshop explained that they had invited more local stakeholders, including women, but that the time required for travel made it difficult to participate. It was observed that, with only 2.5 days allocated, the SIA workshop adopted a fast pace, making it difficult for some local stakeholders to keep up. In contrast to the other projects, the local stakeholders are neighbours to the project area and do not have legal rights over the land affected by the project. Some of the stakeholders illegally graze cattle or cut trees in the project area, and may feel that it is in their interest to maintain current land use practices.

#### Methodological and other observations

It was noted that the social reference scenario analysis was rather general and could have been improved with the help of maps created as part of the baseline deforestation analysis; this would have helped participants think about what would happen to them without the project. In contrast to the other two case studies, only 45 minutes were spent on SIA Stage 4 (negative impacts, risks and mitigation actions).

### 5.4 Some common observations across the case studies

The case studies revealed the following similarities:

- There was considerable similarity in the focal issues. Table 2 summarizes the focal issues identified in the three case studies, and adds the SIA focal issues identified for two Tanzanian REDD projects in an SIA Training Workshop in October 2010.
- Considerable convergence of analysis between focus groups, including considerable ‘replication’ of issues – however this should not be considered a problem since there is merit in examining a social issue in different focal issue contexts, and it appears in several focal issue WG discussions it is an indication of its overall importance.
- The evaluation feedback from the participants was generally very positive in all three case studies, although the evaluations were not individual and confidential (mainly since time ran out at the end).
- Switching WGs, for example when assessing negative impacts and risks, worked well.

- The presence of non-project stakeholders in two of the workshop complicated the SIA process, limited the participation of local stakeholders, and possibly biased the results.
- Participation of local stakeholders in the WGs depended on the skill of WG facilitators, which was in turn highly variable.
- In most cases the WG facilitators were selected opportunistically and had no prior understanding of the methodology. Some did well, but others found it challenging.
- Low female participation in the workshops and a tendency of domination by educated men.
- In two case studies, the analysis of risks, negative impacts and mitigation actions was difficult and slow; the report of the Peru case study, in which SIA Stage 4 was conducted very quickly according to one of the facilitators, indicates that the concept of ‘negative impacts’ as used in the Open Standards methodology was not well understood.
- Participants in the Suruí and GuateCarbon workshops were exhausted after three days – either there was insufficient time to complete the indicators and monitoring plan or these tasks were carried out hastily on the last day.
- Some participants had difficulty understanding specific terms and concepts, notably ‘conceptual model’ and the ‘negative impacts’ in SIA Stage 4. In some cases a lack of a common understanding of a focal issue by WG members caused confusion and wasted time.
- Challenges to the workshop dynamics due to the differential speed of WGs.
- Weak adherence to some of the ground rules, especially as regards using cell phones. On the other hand punctuality was generally quite good.

**Table 2: Focal issues identified in SIA REDD case studies**

<i>Focal issues identified in SIA case studies (Tanzania case studies were from training workshop)</i>	<i>Suruí, Brazil</i>	<i>GuateCarbon, Guatemala</i>	<i>CCAH, Peru</i>	<i>CARE HIMA, Tanzania</i>	<i>TFCG, Tanzania</i>
1.Sustainable livelihoods/ economic alternatives / food security / agriculture	✓	✓	✓	Included in 7 & 9	✓**
2.Governance / organization strengthening / community empowerment	✓*	✓	✓	Included in 7	✓
3.Culture	✓				
4.Territorial integrity / migration	✓		✓		
5.Human capital / education	Included in 2	✓	✓	Included in 7 & 8	Included in 2
6. Social capital	Included in 3	✓	Included in 2 & 5	Included in 7	Included in 2
7. Equity or poverty		✓		✓	Included in 2
8. Gender		Included in 7		✓	Included in 2
9. “Wood demand”				✓	

Notes:

\*expressed as “socio-political organization” which included institutional development and improving human capital by accessing improved services.

\*\* expressed as “sustainable use of natural resources”

## 5.5 Estimation of cost of SIA case studies

Table 3 presents a very rough approximation of the costs of each of the SIA workshops, including the time involved in preparation, analysis and reporting. Several observations can be made on these estimates:

- They are very approximate in some cases particularly as regards the time element
- The costs contain a significant research element
- These costs do not include the recommended training workshop or of a further meeting or sub-workshop to refine the indicators and community monitoring plan
- These costs include project staff - the Peru cost was higher since many AMPA staff participated in the workshop; project staff costs were lower for the Suruí project since the 'project developer' is an indigenous grass roots organization
- The Suruí workshop was more expensive due to the high external technical assistance costs, including two Forest Trends staff and staff from two other supporting NGOs – also reflected in the high air fare cost
- The high overall cost of the Suruí project also reflects the challenges of working with an indigenous group in a relatively remote part of the Amazon
- The total estimated 'time cost' – project staff, consultants and 'researcher' time – is roughly comparable: US \$18,500, \$13,300 and \$14,200 for the three projects.

**Table 3. Estimated cost of SIA case studies**

	Suruí, Brazil	Guate- Carbon	CCAH, Peru
	US \$	US \$	US \$
Workshop logistics costs inc. food/lodging	4,600	4,800	4,500
Project staff time	500	3,300	7,300
Consultants: facilitation or other support	7,000	5,000	2,900
Forest Trends/CCBA support time	11,000	5,000	4,000
International travel costs/subsistence	5,000	1,500	2,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>28,100</b>	<b>19,600</b>	<b>20,700</b>

It is difficult to generalize from these estimated costs in terms of what the whole SIA process will cost since the cost will vary greatly according to the project type, locality, social complexity, etc. However these data lead us to estimate that a reasonable budget for an SIA workshop, including an external consultant facilitator, is in the range \$20,000-25,000. For completing the whole SIA process, including a short training workshop (involving a separate trip for an international consultant), and a further monitoring plan meeting or sub-workshop straight after the main workshop to develop the detailed monitoring plan, the total cost for most projects should be in the range \$25,000-30,000, although it could be higher for more remote or socially complex projects such as the Surui Carbon Project.

## 6. Recommendations and conclusions

### 6.1 Principal recommendations

#### ***Stronger guidance to projects on selection of workshop participants***

A balance of project stakeholders, and minimal presence of non-stakeholders, is key to ensuring good participation of local stakeholders and the credibility of the results; selecting appropriate local stakeholders, especially female, needs particular attention.

#### ***A prior training workshop is necessary prior to the 'full' SIA workshop***

A training workshop is essential for creating a common understanding of the purpose and the methodology of the workshop among the main stakeholders (it is difficult to come into 'cold').

#### ***Shift some methodological presentations away from first day***

The Manual overview and methodological guidance sessions will be more effective in terms of guiding the process if they can be mainly presented before each activity rather than on first day.

#### ***The WG facilitators should be selected and trained beforehand***

WG facilitators need to be selected in advance rather than on the day of the workshop. Training, which could take place the day before the workshop, should include how to maximise the participation of community stakeholders.

#### ***WG facilitators need written guidance for each workshop stage***

Clear written guidance notes would expedite the workshop and reduce confusion. The guidance notes should include some practical examples or exercises for the WG participants.

#### ***Local stakeholders should receive some prior training or 'practice'***

A training module with practical examples for community participants to practise 'cause and effect' logic prior to the workshop would expedite the process and improve the quality of the results. A module could be prepared for pre-identified local facilitators to take the communities.

#### ***The indicators and monitoring plan should be developed in a follow-on sub-workshop***

Developing the indicators and monitoring plan is difficult to include in the main SIA workshop, and would probably be more effectively carried out by a sub-group immediately after the workshop.

#### ***Ensure clarity of key SIA concepts through examples***

There is a need for more examples, metaphors and practical activities for stakeholders to better understand key concepts in the SIA process, for example, when explaining the meaning of 'negative impacts' and 'risks' in SIA Stage 4 (see Annex 4).

#### ***Simplification of some 'Open Standards' terminology***

The term 'conceptual model' was difficult for local stakeholders – it is suggested that it be replaced by 'focal issue problem tree' in the SIA methodology.

#### ***Clarification of stakeholder expectations of project capacity to respond to problems***

More robust clarification to stakeholders is needed that a REDD+ project will not be able to respond to all the problems identified in the problem tree or be able to implement all the activities implied by the results chain, partly to reduce the risk of 'strategic bias' in the analysis.

### ***Stricter adherence to ground rules***

Thought needs to be given to strategies to promote stricter adherence to ground rules, especially the one about using cell phones and dropping in and out of meetings (as regards the latter, the workshop location can be a significant factor).

## **6.2 Specific methodological recommendations**

More specific methodological or pedagogic recommendations (see also Annex 4) include:

### ***Practice activity for WG designed to promote full participation***

Before starting the SIA activities, WGs should undertake a short practical activity designed to maximise participation (everyone would be given a task), show that universal participation is the responsibility of all in the group, and help build the confidence of less educated participants.

### ***Ensure clarity of focal issues before starting WG analysis***

The WGs should spend time clarifying the focal issue, discussing the meaning of terms such as “social capital”, and understating the purpose of the activity, before writing out their focal issue statement, including stating it in the negative. This should be shared and validated, partly in order to avoid overlaps as happened initially in the GuateCarbon SIA.

### ***Initial brainstorm of positive and negative aspects of focal issue***

An initial brainstorm of positive and negative aspects of the focal issue by the WG, once it has been clearly understood, would facilitate the social reference scenario. Ideally this could draw on data already collected in SIA Stage 1. This will also help establish universal participation in the WGs.

### ***Greater use of maps in the social reference scenario analysis***

Maps such as those created during the baseline deforestation analysis would help the WGs think about their ‘without project’ or social reference scenario.

### ***Listing and consideration of stakeholders – gender bias***

A reminder to WGs to consider whether women have distinct stakeholder interests from men should be part of the detailed guidance to WG facilitators.

### ***Use of small portable whiteboards***

Each WG should have a small portable whiteboard which would make it more time effective to undertake some of the tasks, such as writing out the focal issue and theory of change statement.

### ***Recording all suggestions in brainstorms***

Included in the training to WG facilitators should be that at the brainstorm phase all ideas should be written down (in some WGs the person with the pen tended to write down mainly their own ideas and ignore those of other group members!).

### ***Make the cards more explicit and don't be afraid to use a lot***

In order to be understood by third parties, the cards need to be reasonably explicit, which means to some extent “stating the obvious.” Also the WGs should be encouraged to use a lot of cards and throw them away – a full dustbin is probably the sign of an effective WG consultation.

### ***Prioritise the most important results in the results chain***

Prior to analysing the negative impacts and risks, an activity should be added to prioritise the most important results in the results chain. These should be then be clearly labelled with a colored sticker.

### ***Separate the analysis of risks and negative impacts***

To avoid confusion, the analysis of risks should be carried out separately to the analysis of negative impacts, and following a fuller discussion of these concepts using examples.

## **6.3 Conclusions**

In general the case studies confirmed the applicability of the Open Standards methodology to the SIA of REDD+ projects; if done properly it should result in a robust theory of change which provides a solid base for validation and verification against the CCB or other multiple benefit standards. The methodology harmonised well with the SIA Manual and CCB Standards, for example, the problem tree analysis helped make the 'without project' analysis more rigorous, and the problem tree analysis in turn provided a strong cause and effect basis for the project theory of change as represented in the results chains. It also contributed strongly to the wider objectives or benefits of SIA as regards strategic and participatory project design as opposed to top-down approaches (the CCB Standards ask for a participatory design approach), stakeholder engagement and adaptive management. Also the workshop participants seemed to find it convincing, particularly appreciating the problem trees and result chains which they could easily modify by adding new cards and changing the position of the cards.

At the same time the case studies show that the SIA methodology is still evolving and there is much room for improvement, especially in improving the participation of local stakeholders. Some key lessons from the SIA case studies include:

- The number of participants should not exceed 25 people – more than this becomes unmanageable and it is difficult for the workshop coordinator to ensure good practice.
- Three days is probably the limit for community stakeholders. It is therefore unrealistic to complete the whole SIA/SBIA process in one workshop.
- 2-3 workshops are needed: a training workshop (since this is difficult to do 'cold'), the main SIA or SBIA workshop, and a follow-on workshop for a reduced group of participants to work on the indicators and monitoring plan. The need for and cost of separate workshops will clearly vary according to project type, complexity (including stakeholders) and location.
- WG facilitators need to be selected in advance and receive training in facilitation.
- Community stakeholders would benefit from practice in cause and effect analysis, possibly via a small training module which WG facilitators could take to the communities.
- A mix of project stakeholders (but not non-project participants) is necessary, but strategies are needed to counter the domination of WGs by non-local stakeholders.
- Improved selection procedures for local stakeholders are needed.
- Written guidance notes to WG facilitators, and the use of more examples, metaphors and practical exercises would expedite the process and reduce confusion around the understanding of key concepts. Participants must be confident with the fundamental concepts and vocabulary before they start an activity.
- Greater efforts are needed to make the exercise more gender aware.

- The definition of indicators and detailed community monitoring plan would be better carried out by a sub-group straight after the main SIA workshop.

The case studies also provide some more clues to the cost of undertaking SIA using the theory of change approach. The approximate cost of the case studies was in the range \$20,000-25,000 including preparation and reporting. For the whole SIA process, including a short training workshop and an additional 1-2 days for a sub-group to work on the indicators and social monitoring plan, a reasonable budget is \$30,000 for most projects. These costs may fall over time as our experience and understanding improves.

While recognizing that there are some limitations in terms of the geographic and thematic range of REDD+ situations trialed, we believe that the case study experiences provide a good basis, together with the peer review feedback on version 1.0 of the SIA Manual, for drafting version 2.0 of the Manual, including much stronger guidance on how SIA workshops can be effectively implemented.

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## **Annex 1: Suruí Carbon Project, Brazil**

(see Attached File: Annex 1: Suruí Carbon Project, Brazil, SIA Case Study)

## **Annex 2: GuateCarbon project, Guatemala**

(see Attached File: Annex 2: GuateCarbon Project, Guatemala, SIA Case Study)

## **Annex 3: Alto Huayambamba Conservation Concession (CAAH) REDD project, Peru**

(see Attached File: Annex 3: CCAH, Peru, SIA Case Study)

# **Annex 4: Pedagogy Consultant's report of GuateCarbon SIA Workshop**

## **Report on pedagogic and methodological aspects of the GuateCarbon Social Impact Assessment (SIA) Workshop (Guatemala, March 2011)**

*Sarah Richards (MA Education), Rural Education Consultant (pro bono)*

### **Introduction and summary of main recommendations**

The main purpose of the Social Impact Assessment (SIA) workshop, held in Flores, Guatemala over 22-25 March 2011, was to undertake an ex-ante social impact assessment (SIA) of the GuateCarbon REDD project as input into the design of a community monitoring plan needed to meet the Climate, Community and Biodiversity (CCB) Standards. A second objective, introduced by Rainforest Alliance, was to train other NGO stakeholders working in the region on REDD associated initiatives in the use of this methodology. The workshop was attended by an average of 36-37 participants (the numbers fluctuated between about 32 and 40) of whom about 30 were project stakeholders, including 10 community representatives. There were seven female participants, three from the communities.

This attempt to combine two objectives combined with the high number of participants, as well as the diverse nature of the participants, complicated the workshop, making it very difficult for one overall facilitator to adhere to a methodology designed for 20-25 (maximum) participants. The strong participation of non-stakeholder participants, combined with the low proportion of community stakeholders (about 25%) and women (about 20%) arguably biased the results away from a genuine stakeholder analysis. Only just over a quarter of the participants were community stakeholders. The dynamics of the workshop would have been very different had it been restricted to project stakeholders, the majority from the communities. Therefore, although parts of this report may appear critical, this in no way reflects on the skills and performance of the overall facilitator who performed valiantly with such a large and diverse group.

Also it would appear that the participants were satisfied with the workshop - both the 'daily' and 'end of workshop' feedback indicated a high level of satisfaction with the: methodology; quality of the facilitation; levels of participant collaboration; effectiveness of help with the tasks given to individual groups by the Working Group (WG) facilitators; etc. At the same time, there appears to be some key learning from the Workshop which can improve the effectiveness and, especially the participation of community stakeholders, in future SIA workshops. These learning points and recommendations for adaptation of the workshop methodology are based both on feedback from participants and facilitators, and my observations as a participant in two WGs and support to WG facilitators, occasionally taking over WG facilitation when the latter were absent.

Key findings or recommendations included:

- The SIA workshop should have one objective, and be limited to 25 participants all of whom should be project stakeholders apart from the workshop facilitators; stronger community

representation in a situation where communities are key stakeholders and a better gender balance are imperative.

- Making sure that all participants are familiar with the underlying concepts and that the group has a common understanding greatly facilitates participation and group communication. More time should be spent on explaining basic concepts and vocabulary since a varied understanding of these caused major problems in some WGs, and resulted in much lost time. Participants must be confident with the fundamental concepts and vocabulary before they start an activity so that they can concentrate on the activity itself rather than have the burden of struggling simultaneously with the concepts/vocabulary. Given the presence of community participants, the latter should be simplified if possible (e.g., 'focal issue problem tree' would be easier to understand than 'conceptual model')
- WG facilitators should be selected and trained prior to the workshop given their critical role in the process. This could be done in a prior workshop.
- WG facilitators need handouts explaining what to do for each step; these should include clear definitions and examples (or metaphors) of key concepts.
- Community participants would also benefit from pre-workshop training, e.g., via some simple cause and effect analysis exercises (e.g., on the causes and effects of deforestation).
- Much of the methodological explanation should be shifted from the first day to sessions immediately prior to the SIA steps or exercises, or even to the WG sessions.

## **Observations and recommendations on key requirements and stages of the SIA exercise**

### ***Key requirements for an effective SIA Workshop***

#### **1. Fulfilling the task requirements**

Participants sometimes appeared to be uncertain of the precise requirements of the task. This meant that weaker groups had to wait for advice from a facilitator before getting started and some groups needed fairly constant guidance throughout; sometimes participants' shaky understanding of the underlying concepts contributed to the confusion and on other occasions aspects of the procedures were forgotten.

A large part of the first morning was taken up with PowerPoint introductions to the methodology. Participants did not seem to refer to these initial presentations in subsequent tasks. However many participants took notes and referred to the introductions given immediately prior to each activity (although the notes taken were often rather incomplete).

#### **Recommendations**

- Move much of the methodological explanation from the first day to sessions immediately before each working group (WG) based SIA stage, or as the first WG activity for the corresponding stage of the SIA process. This recommendation particularly applies to: developing a common understanding of key concepts; practice activities using simple examples so that participants have the opportunity to explore and understand the concept; use of clear and vivid metaphors; and practising using the vocabulary.

- Use simple examples which everyone can contribute to, e.g., ‘problem tree’ cause and effect analysis of deforestation or forest fires – to the extent that people contributes they will better understand the concept and feel confident/included.
- Use metaphors to describe key concepts/processes, e.g., the overall facilitator’s vivid and clear metaphor for the results chain: someone throwing a stone, the splash, the ripple, and the ripple reaching shore.
- Avoid ambiguous/misleading instructions - the focal issue cards given to the ‘human capital’ WG contained ‘issues’ outside their remit and caused confusion from the beginning.
- Provide handouts to WG facilitators with task requirements. For some tasks checklists and key words would be useful.
- Allow more time to explain, clarify and practise immediately before the WG activities.

## **2. Facilitation and participation**

Although participants gave positive feedback regarding facilitation and participation, the WG facilitators felt there was room for improvement. They were concerned that two or three people generally dominated in each group and that people with less experience of workshops and formal education contributed significantly less. It is possible that they found working with NGO professionals whom they did not know intimidating, particularly as some of the NGO professionals lacked the necessary skills to enable full inclusion. It was noted that the few women present participated very little, even some of the NGO women.

The cards used in all the WG exercises had two main purposes: facilitating WG participation and analysis of an issue, and documenting the SIA results for outside agencies. Participants often wrote very general statements on the cards and were resistant to putting more specific information on a card because they said it was obvious. For both purposes it would be better if the participants make the cards more specific - when it was explained to one WG that the cards had to be understood by others not at the workshop, more detail was recorded. Another problem with writing general statements was that it was possible for different participants to have a different understanding of the same card.

There was also a tendency to lose contributions because the person with the pen acted as a censor rather than a recorder; this resulted in many suggestions of WG participants being excluded. This may also have been part of an apparent reluctance to ‘waste’ cards.

Recommendations:

- Train the group facilitators beforehand so that they better understand the purpose of each activity and can use techniques that increase participation and breadth of contributions
- Clarify the audience for the cards and practice making the cards as clear as possible as regards the implicit understanding or assumptions.
- Instruct WGs that in brainstorm sessions all participants’ ideas should be written down on cards and these can be rationalised later. There is no problem in using a lot of cards - a full rather than empty waste paper basket is a healthy sign!
- For some activities (e.g., focal issue statement, theory of change statement) use small portable whiteboards rather than cards or paper.

### **3. Using participants' time most effectively**

Some WGs finished SIA tasks earlier than others. Some early finishers used their time efficiently to help other groups, but others checked emails, made phone calls and chatted. This meant that they disengaged from the SIA and sometimes took time to re-engage again.

Ground rules were made at the beginning of the workshop regarding answering cell phones, but these were not adhered to, causing major disruption to the WGs. There was also considering 'dropping out' of the workshop by NGO and government stakeholders for other business.

The large number of total participants meant that, during the feedback 'tours' of the WG results, e.g., problem trees and results chains, it was difficult for everyone to engage with the WG presentations, partly as not everyone could see or hear properly.

#### **Recommendations**

- Early finishers should be given tasks, such as assisting or at least observing other groups.
- Stricter adherence to ground rules that discourage activities which distract participants.
- Make sure that shorter and sight-impaired people are at the front for presentations and that everyone can hear (find out ahead of time if any participants have hearing impairments).
- Experiment with different ways of facilitating interchanges between groups.

### **4. Community representation**

Factors limiting the attendance and effective contribution of community representatives included that the SIA took place when income-generating activities prevented some people attending; attendance entailed a financial contribution from some participants; and, in the problem tree activity of two WGs it was mentioned that patronage often prevents the most appropriate people attending trainings or events such as this (this may particularly affect participation of women and youth).

#### **Recommendations:**

- Improved selection procedures for community participants
- Strongly encourage communities to send representatives from different stakeholder groups
- Hold workshop at a time when the maximum number of community members are available

### ***Observations and recommendations on specific SIA activities***

#### **a) Writing the overall "Project Vision"**

The facilitator defined what a 'project vision' was and each person was given two cards on which to write a contribution. These were collected up but not referred to again during the workshop. But having a project vision for all to see did not appear to make a big difference to the workshop processes and outcomes.

## **b) Selection of “Focal Issues”**

After an introduction to the concept of a focal issue, the overall workshop facilitator asked for suggestions of questions that would help the participants define the focal issues. This was quite time consuming and participants struggled to come up with the questions. This seemed to be an attempt to induce participation where the answers were already known – in general it is better not to do this if one already knows the answer to something, partly since it can be demotivating and possibly confusing for participants.

Then each person was given 3 cards on which to write the focal issues they considered most important. Some participants found this challenging. Through a process of working in pairs, fours and eights, five priority ‘focal issues’ were selected by the final group of eight or 12 people. It appeared that some ‘issues’ of less dominant group members were discarded in this process of prioritization. If less confident participants feel that their contributions are judged unimportant in a very early activity, they may be reluctant to contribute to later activities.

The facilitator organised the priority ideas from each of the groups of eight into five ‘focal issue’ categories in a whole group activity. The resulting five focal issues were: alternative sustainable livelihoods; social capital; human capital and well being; equity and gender; governance. All subsequent activities and analysis derived from this activity. Therefore a solid foundation was essential not only in terms of defining each focal issue, but also in enabling the participants to understand and take ownership of the process of analysis.

It was noted that there was varied understanding of some of the concepts/jargon which affected WG consultations; for example, the human capital and gender groups both had to restart tasks, losing time and motivation in the process. The social capital group’s analysis was also impoverished by an incomplete understanding of the term ‘social capital’.

## **Recommendations**

- For getting participants to brainstorm on focal issues, it is advisable that the facilitator presents the pre-established questions and asks participants if they want to add another one.
- Design a practice ‘focal issues’ activity that emphasises maximising participation, e.g., remembering that it is the responsibility of all to facilitate universal participation, and that participation is not only talking but also listening and reflecting.
- Take more time in defining and exploring what is meant by each ‘focal issue’, especially trying to draw in the less educated participants.

## **c) Understanding and writing out the “focal issue statement”**

A WG was assigned to each focal issue (decided by facilitators in consultation with key informants) and given the corresponding focal issue ‘statement cards’ for their first activity. Using the cards, the WG decided on a short name of the focal issue, wrote it briefly in a negative form and then in a positive form. While some of the terms are widely used in development, several participants were unfamiliar with them. This partly explained why three WGs had difficulties understanding their remit as defined by their focal issue. Two groups had to restart their problem tree analysis because of

misunderstandings (in one case after several hours work). The third group did not restart, but adopted and maintained an over-narrow focus (that the way to improve social capital was by developing “entrepreneurial” capacity and values).

Writing and rewriting definitions of the focal issue on flip chart paper was time consuming.

**Recommendations:**

- Spend more time clarifying the focal issue concept and make the purpose of the activity clear by using questions such as, “What would you like to see in your community in ten years time as regards ‘human capital’ development (education, health, type of leader, etc.)?”
- Use a small portable white board (one per WG) so that words can be easily rubbed out and changed. If felt necessary to record changes, another WG member can note them down.

**d) “Social reference scenario” analysis (predicting changes without the project)**

The groups made projections of the situation as regards their focal issue in 5, 10 and 20 years if present trends continue. The instruction to think of changes **without the project** almost certainly biased the responses to being excessively negative about the future (recalling that in the GuateCarbon project context, the without project situation was a sustainable forest management programme with a wide range of activities). It was also difficult and time consuming to differentiate between 10 and 20 years.

The WGs also listed the focal issue stakeholders and assessed how they would be affected by the changes (very positive, positive, neutral, negative, very negative).

**Recommendations:**

- Conduct an initial brainstorm of all the good and bad things/issues relating to the focal issue at the moment. Everyone will have an opinion, helping establish universal participation. The brainstorm will also inform the social reference scenario analysis.
- Trace through the effects of the predicted changes on the stakeholders, for example, using the following sequence/table. This will greatly help the problem tree analysis.

What will be the main changes (in terms of X focal issue)?	Why will these changes happen? (What is causing them?)	What will be the consequences of these changes?	Who will be most affected by these changes? (stakeholder group)	How will they be affected?	How much will they be affected? (Positive: +, ++ or +++ Negative: -, -- or ---)

- Make short-term (five year’s time) and long-term (10-20 years ahead) predictions - two time periods seems sufficient given the level of precision.

### **e) Developing the “Focal Issue Problem Tree” and “Results Chain” flow diagrams**

The two WGs with the best understanding of the underlying concepts and purpose of these activities made quickest progress, although it could be noted that some responses had a tendency to resemble ‘text book’ standard ones. It is essential to have a WG facilitator who can probe or encourages others to probe standard responses in a reflective (not confrontational) way; other general comments on facilitation, participation and recording are very relevant here. The groups were often reluctant to throw cards away when they became redundant.

The Results Chain should be used as an opportunity for further reflection and modification of the Problem Tree. The WG facilitator should ensure that this opportunity is used so that this activity does not become a mechanical reversal of the problem tree.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Prior practise by community participants in particular of cause and effect analysis is strongly recommended. This could be achieved through some pre-workshop practise using a specially designed module (e.g., getting people to think through and write down a cause and effect analysis of the causes and effects of processes which are quite well understood, familiar and relevant to the workshop, such as the causes of deforestation)
- Emphasise that the aim of an initial brainstorm is to generate a lot of ideas, and that everything should be recorded. The second stage is discussing the ideas. There is no problem of using a lot of cards and then throwing many away.
- Use the small whiteboard to refine and change statements on the cards.
- Try out techniques to increase participation e.g. giving each person a task: writing the cards; writing on the board; sticking and arranging cards etc. Give participants roles they feel comfortable with and rotate the tasks if possible.
- Remind WGs that their problem tree must be understandable by third parties - the “obvious” should be written down!

### **f) Writing the focal issue “theory of change statement”**

The words ‘IF’ (*si*) and ‘THEN’ (*entonces*) were very helpful to the WGs in structuring their statements. Some WGs included all of their results chain rather than the most critical factors, making it rather long and cumbersome. This reflected a lack of prioritisation of the most important parts of the results chain (this prioritization is very important for the analysis of risks and negative results, as well as for identifying indicators).

#### **Recommendation**

- The WGs should identify and put coloured stickers on the three or four most important factors in the results chain before writing the theory of change statement.

### **g) Identification and mitigation of “risks” and “negative impacts”**

There was some confusion over the difference between risks and negative factors. The interchange between the WGs, with half of each group going to work with another group, was effective.

### **Recommendations**

- Do the analysis risks and negative impacts separately after discussing the concepts.
- Present clear examples of 'risks' and 'negative impacts' in the written handouts.
- In the risk analysis, distinguish between external and internal risks – the main focus should be on external risks
- Use the list of stakeholders as a memory aide when considering negative impacts.

### **h) Identifying the monitoring plan indicators**

This was the last main exercise of the SIA workshop. Some of the WGs had the time and energy to do this, but others were very tired and some participants had already left, leaving this complex task to a small and tired subgroup.

### **Recommendation**

- Given their importance and complexity, it would be better to define the indicators and the social impact monitoring plan in a separate workshop; this could be composed of a carefully chosen sub-group from the main workshop. Ideally it would be held soon after the main workshop, for example after a weekend break, while the information is still fresh and the wall charts are available.