Analysing REDD+
Challenges and choices

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Local hopes and worries about REDD+ projects

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- Local forest users in sampled REDD+ project areas understood REDD+ to be fundamentally about forest protection; simultaneously, they hoped that local REDD+ projects would improve their incomes and worried that they could negatively affect their livelihoods.
- Villagers depend extensively on proponents for information about REDD+ and the local REDD+ project, and there may be a need for independent knowledge brokers or legal advisers.
- The key challenges for REDD+ projects are: i) to communicate to villagers how REDD+ projects work, the opportunities and risks, and the rights and responsibilities; ii) to involve villagers meaningfully in the design and implementation of the project; and iii) to balance forest protection with the welfare concerns of villagers.

11.1 Introduction

Halting deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries involves potential trade-offs between conservation and livelihood development. Due to their often heavy dependence on land and forest resources, local forest users may suffer from interventions to protect forests, unless they receive adequate

compensation for changing their livelihood strategies. One of the reasons that REDD+ has become such a popular idea so quickly is its potential to generate a sufficiently large funding stream to fully compensate the opportunity costs incurred by local forest users over the long term. REDD+ can thus be viewed as a potential win–win solution for maintaining standing forests and supporting local livelihoods (Brown *et al.* 2008; Phelps *et al.* In press; see also Chapter 3).

As a climate change mitigation initiative, REDD+ can be implemented in different ways, including through a subnational project-based approach. REDD+ subnational projects in various stages of development and forms are being initiated in many countries (Kshatriya *et al.* 2011; see also Chapter 10). These projects involve stakeholders that range from local communities to large-scale private or state entities. Local forest users who currently are, or could be, engaged in activities that contribute to greenhouse gas emissions are the principal targets of REDD+ projects, since they will help determine how projects are implemented while also being directly affected by them.

Policy makers and researchers alike have stressed the importance of genuinely engaging local people in decision making and supporting local livelihoods to promote positive forest management outcomes (e.g. Ostrom and Nagendra 2006). Forest conservation efforts are believed to have a greater chance of success when local economic concerns are taken into account (Ferrarro and Hanauer 2011). In practice, however, aligning conservation goals with improved local livelihoods has often faced substantial challenges (Sunderland *et al.* 2007; McShane *et al.* 2011).

Villagers' meaningful involvement in and support of REDD+ projects can help ensure that projects achieve their goal of long-term emission reductions (Harvey *et al.* 2010b; Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation *et al.* 2011). Such involvement requires project proponents (i.e. the organisations that coordinate the REDD+ projects) to engage local stakeholders in all project phases, from ensuring the basic right of free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) at the project's outset to establishing mechanisms for transparency and equity throughout (May *et al.* 2004). Through the FPIC process, proponents engage in outreach activities in project area communities, during which they can explain the fundamental concept of REDD+ along with specific project strategies. REDD+ projects must be designed and implemented in such a way that local livelihood concerns are addressed in order to move towards a win–win outcome.

An important precondition for meaningful community participation in REDD+ is local knowledge about climate change and the REDD+ project (Sunderlin *et al.* 2011). To obtain informed consent, it is especially important that local people understand why forests are important in the context of climate change, how REDD+ projects will be organised and administered

as a means to achieve climate change mitigation, and how the interventions will affect their lives. This information includes benefit distribution, rights and responsibilities, as well as risks and costs associated with local people's involvement in the REDD+ project. Without this kind of outreach, REDD+ risks repeating past errors of conservation initiatives that have often bypassed and marginalised local people and consequently lost their support. Moreover, on moral grounds, local people should have a voice – and that voice should be heard – in project design and implementation (Newell and Wheeler 2006). It is thus critically important to understand local people's knowledge, expectations and concerns about REDD+ projects, along with their recommendations for how to improve them.

Given the *potential* win–win character of REDD+, in this chapter we ask the following question: Do local people's understanding of and expectations for REDD+ projects reflect broader win–win objectives of REDD+ to simultaneously promote conservation and improve local livelihoods? To answer this question, we draw on research in communities at nine REDD+ project sites located in four countries: Brazil, Cameroon, Indonesia and Tanzania.[1] For this study, we focus on local communities or groups of smallholders and not on other potentially important stakeholders in local REDD+ projects.

The chapter is composed of three parts: in Section 11.2 we explain the methods and field data of the study; in Section 11.3 we present the findings and discuss their relevance; and in Section 11.4 we offer conclusions and propose steps forward.

11.2 Field data

The nine REDD+ projects analysed are located in Brazil (2), Cameroon (2), Indonesia (3) and Tanzania (2). They vary in terms of drivers of deforestation and degradation, project objectives, intervention mechanisms, and project development stage (Table 11.1). While all projects (by definition) aim to avoid deforestation and forest degradation, most projects have additional specific objectives for conservation, sustainable resource use, improving local livelihoods or alleviating poverty. Project proponents at these sites include government agencies, private entities and/or NGOs. Intervention mechanisms include combinations of increased enforcement, support for livelihood alternatives and payments for environmental services (PES).

The analysis is primarily based on data from quantitative surveys with 1243 households in the nine project areas. We carried out field data collection

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1 These nine projects were selected out of the 22 (intensive and extensive) sites across six countries (see Appendix). The analysis relies heavily on household data and therefore focuses on intensive sites only. In addition, data from other sites were not available at the time of writing because the field work had not yet been done or because we were not able to pose the relevant questions at those sites.

Table 11.1 REDD+ projects analysed

REDD+ Projects	Main drivers of deforestation or degradation in project area	Specific project objectives (in addition to REDD+)	Leading proponent(s)
Brazil – Acre	Swidden agriculture Timber harvesting Cattle ranching Road building	Implementation of State Plan for Control and Prevention of Deforestation	State government
Brazil – Transamazon	Swidden agriculture Timber harvesting Cattle ranching	Reconciliation of smallholder production systems and natural resource conservation	Research NGO
Cameroon – CED	Swidden agriculture Timber harvesting	Environmental protection and livelihood improvement	Environment and development NGO
Cameroon – Mount Cameroon	Swidden agriculture Permanent agriculture (cocoa and palm oil)	Responsible use of forest resources	Provincial government
Indonesia – Ulu Masen	Timber harvest Swidden agriculture Permanent agriculture (cocoa)	Water conservation	Provincial government
Indonesia – KCCP	Permanent agriculture (incoming oil palm plantation) Forest concession Illegal mining	Secure village forest management rights	Conservation NGO Village communities
Indonesia – KFCP	Peat drainage and peat fires*	Peat rehabilitation and revegetation	Donor country – national government
Tanzania – TaTEDO	Clearing land for settlement Subsistence fuel wood; commercial charcoal	Access to sustainable modern energy technologies in marginalised communities; poverty reduction; conservation; self-reliance	NGO working on energy issues
Tanzania – TFCG Kilosa	Drought and wildfires Swidden agriculture Timber harvest Subsistence fuel wood; commercial charcoal Cattle ranching	Conservation of high biodiversity forests	Conservation NGO

Note: *Most emissions from KFCP are not from deforestation and forest degradation, as the area emitting the most GHG is peatland already deforested/degraded

from mid-June through October 2010, at a time when most projects were in their early stages of development. The household surveys were complemented by interviews with REDD+ project proponents about specific intervention mechanisms. Importantly, we recognise that nine project sites is far too small a sample to fully represent the many incipient REDD+ project sites across the tropics, and this is not necessarily representative of the countries in which the projects are located.

In applying the survey, we first inquired about villagers' *knowledge* about REDD+ in general, and about the local REDD+ project, in particular, by posing the questions: i) "Have you heard of REDD+ prior to this interview?" and ii) "Have you heard of (*the local REDD+ project)* prior to this interview?" For those who answered affirmatively to at least one of the questions above, we then asked for a short explanation of REDD+ and/or of the REDD+ project to get a sense of their *understanding* of these concepts. These were open-ended questions, and multiple responses were allowed. If the respondent correctly stated at least one characteristic of REDD+ or the local REDD+ project, that person was judged to have a basic understanding of REDD+ or the local REDD+ project. These questions were simply used as a screening mechanism to assess the appropriateness of asking further questions related to local hopes and worries for REDD+ and were not designed to get a full view of respondents' understanding of REDD+.

To those who had heard of the local REDD+ project and showed a basic understanding of REDD+ or the local REDD+ project, we posed the following questions: i) "What are your hopes about how (*the local REDD+ project*) will benefit your household?" ii) "What are your worries about how (*the local REDD+ project*) will affect your household?" and iii) "What are your recommendations on how the implementation of (*the local REDD+ project*) in your village should be improved? Respondents who were unable to demonstrate a basic understanding of REDD+ or of the local REDD+ project were not asked these questions.

11.3 Findings and discussion

11.3.1 Local knowledge of REDD+

Villagers' knowledge, or familiarity, with REDD+ and/or with the local REDD+ project was generally low. Of the total 1243 households interviewed, only 327 (26%) had heard about the concept of REDD+ and 502 (41%) had heard about the local REDD+ project (Table 11.2). Only at two sites were more than half of all respondents familiar with REDD+, and only at three sites were more than half familiar with the REDD+ project in their area. These low numbers partly reflect the time at which we posed the questions;

Table 11.2 Project status and knowledge of REDD+ and local REDD+ project (2010)

Project	Project status at time of fieldwork (2010)	Knowledge of REDD+ in general (% respondents)	Knowledge of local REDD+ project (% respondents)
Brazil – Acre	Implementation of monetary incentive for sustainable agriculture	15	92*
Brazil – Transamazon	Village meetings to introduce proposed REDD+ project	30	39
Cameroon – CED	Participatory livelihood analysis in two villages; organisational training in one village; participatory mapping and carbon baseline in one village	74	72
Cameroon – Mount Cameroon	Improved farming techniques; capacity building for village forest management committees; law enforcement	25	63
Indonesia – Ulu Masen	Consultation at level of village clusters	2	6
Indonesia – KCCP	Preparatory activities for development of Village Forests, including consultations with key stakeholders, strengthening village capacity, village mapping of High Conservation Value Forests	5	23
Indonesia – KFCP	Village meetings to introduce proposed REDD+ project; instalment of facilitators in villages, detailed design of dams for canals in peatlands, hydrology monitoring	13	27
Tanzania – TaTEDO	Collection of socioeconomic baseline information; land tenure regularisation	52	28
Tanzania – TFCG Kilosa	Village meetings to introduce proposed REDD+ project	18	11
Average		**26**	**41**

Note: *Villagers at this site were not asked about the statewide REDD+ programme as a whole, but rather about a specific project within the larger programme, which focused on incentives for sustainable agriculture and was the first action to be implemented in the project area.

some proponents had not yet begun or concluded their outreach work to explain the REDD+ project. In other cases, the outreach work may have been performed but the respondents (for whatever reason) were not reached or did not internalise the knowledge conveyed.

As expected, we found the project proponent to be the single most important source from which villagers heard about REDD+ or the local REDD+ project. At seven of the nine sites, more villagers heard about REDD+ from the proponent than from any other source. Similarly, at six of the nine sites, villagers heard of the local REDD+ project from the proponents. At the remaining three sites, information about the REDD+ project was mostly obtained from: an NGO that, at the time, supported the proponent (Indonesia Ulu Masen); the village leader (Tanzania TFCG Kilosa); or several other sources (Indonesia KCCP). The government or extension agents (where they were not proponents) were a minor source of information about both REDD+ and the REDD+ project. Strikingly, in one of the two cases where the proponents were themselves the government (Indonesia Ulu Masen), villagers had heard about REDD+ and the REDD+ project from an NGO operating in the area instead of from government officials.

It makes sense that proponents are the main source of information about the REDD+ projects, because they can speak most confidently on behalf of their respective projects. The overall lack of local familiarity with REDD+ and local REDD+ projects that was observed in this study suggests that information communicated to villagers may have focused on specific project activities and was not necessarily tied to the broader REDD+ project or the concept of REDD+ in general. Interestingly, at the Tanzanian sites, understanding of the concept of REDD+ was greater than of the specific project itself.

There are various reasons for what appears to be inadequate communication of REDD+ in general and the local REDD+ project at project sites. Importantly, the pace of international negotiations has slowed down the establishment of national policies and institutions related to REDD+, which has affected the progress of subnational REDD+ projects (see Chapter 10). In this climate of uncertainty, some proponents fear unnecessarily raising the expectations of local stakeholders and have thus decided to postpone communicating the concept of REDD+ and to delay disseminating information about the local REDD+ project to local villagers in the project area (Sunderlin *et al.* 2011). Importantly, since we conducted our field research, several proponents have conducted basic REDD+ outreach at their sites, which has likely increased local knowledge in these places. For instance, at Indonesia KCCP and KFCP, as activities advance and as the project attracts more attention, more villagers seem to be familiar with REDD+.

11.3.2 Local understanding of REDD+ projects

Households' understanding of the objectives of the REDD+ projects in sites in Brazil, Cameroon and Indonesia are summarised in Figure 11.1. The results from the two project sites in Tanzania were dropped due to a low number of responses.
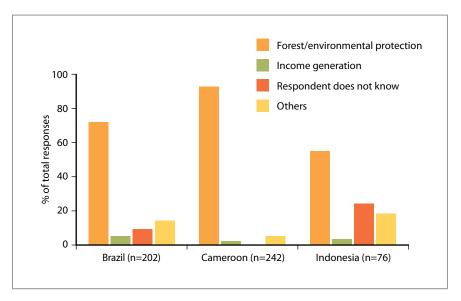

Figure 11.1 Local understanding of the local REDD+ project objectives

In all three countries, households overwhelmingly perceived REDD+ and/or the local REDD+ project to be focused on forest/environmental protection. The emphasis on forest protection may be explained by observing villagers' source of information about REDD+/the local REDD+ project. As described above, the most frequent source of people's information about REDD+/the local REDD+ project was the proponents or their partners, and several of the proponent organisations have a conservation focus. Furthermore, proponents might have been reluctant to talk about or emphasise potential income streams or livelihood issues, for fear of unnecessarily raising hopes and expectations before project planning was more advanced. Responses in the 'others' category included perceptions that the objective of the local REDD+ project was to change agricultural practices or empower communities.

Households expressed a range of hopes and worries related to the local REDD+ project (Figure 11.2). Most responses can be grouped into five themes: income improvement, forest protection, reduction of threats from climate change, tenure security and project realisation. Local hopes reflect the realisation of these themes (i.e. income improvement, forest protection, etc.), whereas worries reflect the fear that the project will fail in meeting those goals (i.e. inability to improve income, inability to protect forests, etc.).
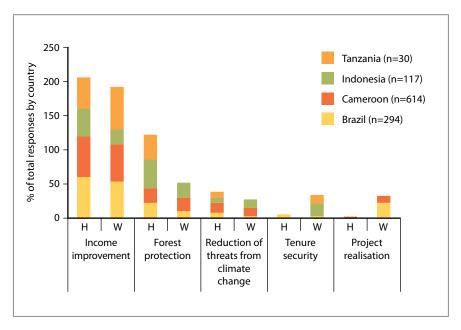
Figure 11.2 Local hopes and worries concerning the REDD+ project

Income improvement: in general, income-related outcomes were the most frequently expressed hopes and worries related to local REDD+ projects. The type of income improvements varied among sites. In Brazil and Indonesia, providing alternative or supplementary income was considered a more important hope than compensation from lost forest income, emphasising that villagers wanted new land use opportunities, as opposed to simply being prevented from using forests. In contrast, compensation for lost forest income was the hope of a large proportion of respondents at both of the Cameroon sites, suggesting that respondents already imagined that their forest use would be limited. In Cameroon CED, it is possible that the project's shift to establish community forestry is seen as potentially limiting current timber exploitation and clearing of land for agriculture. In Cameroon Mount Cameroon, villagers are clearing forests in a national park for agriculture, which would likely be restricted by the REDD+ project. In general, compared to the other three countries, villagers in Cameroon appeared to be generally more wary of their local projects.

Forest protection: while most villagers understood REDD+ projects focus on forest protection, this was secondary to income improvements as a hoped for outcome. This finding implies that villagers were differentiating between project aims and the potential personal benefits that they could derive from the project. It also suggests that the idea of improved income in exchange for forest protection (i.e. the REDD+ concept of compensation for reduced emissions) may have been understood by some people at the local level. Our

finding suggests that out of 295 respondents who said the REDD+ project was about forest protection, 197 of them had hopes for – among other things – income improvement.

In one project in Indonesia (KCCP), the hope for increased forest protection was probably related to the expressed desires that the project would halt big companies from deforesting community lands and allow continued local access to forest goods and services. Consistent with the hopes expressed by villagers in Brazil Acre, Cameroon (CED and Mount Cameroon) and in Indonesia (Ulu Masen and KCCP), inability to prevent big companies from converting local forests was an important worry in these places. In Indonesia, villagers primarily refer to large-scale agricultural activities as responsible for conversion of neighbouring forests, along with logging activities. This finding is consistent with the trend of pressures for oil palm development and forest conversion in nearby villages in the area. Similarly, some villagers at the Brazilian and Cameroon sites relate their desires for forest protection to the presence of large companies that are degrading community forests, such as logging companies, considered a main driver of degradation in these project areas (Table 11.1).

Reduction of threats from climate change: this theme was mentioned as a hope in all but two projects sites, but was considered less important than improved income and forest protection. This finding is probably due to the lack of a perceived connection at the local level between REDD+ project actions and the concept of REDD+ as a climate change mitigation tool.

Tenure security: the idea that the REDD+ project might limit rights to land or forests was an important worry in Indonesia, as was the idea that it could create uncertainty over tenure in Tanzania. In Indonesia, respondents may have erroneously related the REDD+ project to past failures in a large government agricultural project, which led to forest conversion, or to a more recent conservation project that prevented villagers from continued access to their forests. In most project sites, hopes for rights-related outcomes, i.e. improved land tenure, respect for local rights, and access to forest goods and services did not emerge strongly. This finding can be interpreted in different ways, including that local people were not confident in the ability of REDD+ to resolve these issues, or that more immediate income-related concerns dominated. An exception to the general finding was at Brazil Acre where land regularisation efforts, as part of REDD-readiness activities, fostered hope for acquiring land titles.

Project realisation: the worry that the project would not go ahead was notable at a couple of sites in Brazil and Cameroon. This was a major concern at Brazil Transamazon, where a previous PES-like project ended prematurely.

Similarly, in Cameroon CED, villagers were worried that project promises would not be realised or that they would be cheated by proponents. Unlike the villagers who own land outside of the community forest that the project is working to establish, villagers with property inside the forest can no longer freely exploit their land. As a result, the latter group has felt penalised and frustrated as their access has been limited without having seen any concrete results of the REDD+ project. Although the proponent had started to carry out certain activities, villagers were anxious to see REDD+ investments that would distinguish REDD+ from other conventional conservation activities.

11.3.3 Other responses

In addition to the five main categories of responses discussed earlier, there were also a number of diverse and site-specific responses. For instance, in both of the Brazilian sites, provision of technical assistance and training were important for promoting sustainable agricultural practices (see Box 11.1). Other hopes included the provision of governmental services and enhanced wellbeing in general. In Indonesia support for children's education (KCCP) and respect for local rights (KCCP and KFCP) were noted as hopes, while in Cameroon CED support for better housing was expressed.

In Brazil, there was a particular concern related to having to abandon swidden agriculture. This concern was directly related to the proponent interventions at Brazil Acre, where farmers were asked to give up using fire and engage in more sustainable agricultural practices through the use of a nitrogen-fixing legume in order to qualify for a direct cash payment.

No hopes or worries to express: A substantial proportion of respondents who had a basic understanding about the REDD+ project did not have any hopes or worries to express. There are at least two plausible explanations for this finding. First, our criterion for measuring people's understanding of REDD+ or the local REDD+ project was kept at a minimum, because we wanted to capture as many perspectives as possible, including those with very basic understanding. Therefore, our set of respondents may have included villagers who had little basic understanding of REDD+ or the project and who thus did not yet have a critical view on whether the REDD+ project was beneficial or a liability to their interests.

Second, we posed the question at an early stage of REDD+ project development, long before most of the project interventions were introduced and perhaps even talked about, for reasons discussed earlier. At the project sites where there was little project-related information or action, it makes sense that there would be few hopes and worries expressed by local people.

Box 11.1 Are REDD incentives in line with local people's perceptions? Lessons from the Transamazon region of Brazil

Marina Cromberg

Over the last decade, there has been much enthusiasm over the concept of payment for environmental services (PES), which is viewed as a complement to integrated conservation and development programme (ICDP) and command and control approaches. In the context of REDD+, PES schemes have been adopted by proponents of multiple subnational pilot REDD+ projects across the tropics. In many cases, however, the choice of this incentive type may be more in line with technical objectives than with the needs of local participants.

The pilot REDD+ project 'Sustainable Settlements in the Amazon: The challenge of transition from family production on the frontier to a low carbon economy', proposed by the Amazon Environmental Research Institute (IPAM) has three levels of action, one of which targets 350 families in the Brazilian Transamazon region that participated in *Proambiente* (a governmental programme that aimed to conciliate smallholder production with natural resource conservation). For these families, IPAM seeks to provide a package of incentives to conserve forests and increase agricultural production in deforested areas, including direct cash payments and investments in sustainable production techniques.

To understand if the REDD+ project incentives are in line with people's interests and needs, we interviewed 137 families in the project site in July and August 2010. We first asked if the families had heard about the REDD+ project, and if so, if they could describe it. For the families that were able to accurately describe the project (43 families; 31%), we asked about their hopes and recommendations for it.

The results indicate that the majority of the families (26) hoped the project would improve their incomes. The second most commonly listed hope was that the project would contribute to sustainable production (14), and the third was that it would help protect forests (10). The main recommendation of local farmers was that the project should help make production systems more sustainable, through access to technical assistance, machinery and training (17). Other recommendations included providing benefits in accordance with farmers' needs (8), receiving adequate/higher payments (6), avoiding false promises (4), and investing in infrastructure (3).

While almost all respondents hoped that the REDD+ project would increase household incomes, their recommendations revealed that non-monetary forms of compensation, used to enhance production systems, may be more important than direct cash payments. Indeed, farmers stated that current slash-and-burn agricultural practices have low economic returns and negative environmental impacts, but that they lacked the resources and skills to change these practices. Therefore, increasing household incomes indirectly through improved production techniques, as IPAM has contemplated in their REDD+ project, may be more effective than PES alone in terms of reducing emissions from deforestation. That said, such new agricultural practices and production alternatives must be introduced in accordance with local realities and knowledge to avoid interventions that are overly difficult for local producers to implement. REDD+ projects with incentive structures that are closely aligned with local needs may likely result in greater project effectiveness, efficiency and equitability.

11.3.4   Local recommendations for REDD+ projects

Villagers' recommendations across the nine project sites encompass a wide range of issues and can be grouped into six major categories (Table 11.3).

Local recommendations for project improvement varied, but in general the themes were consistent with people's hopes and worries. Again, improvement and/or maintenance of income stood out as the most frequent response at the majority of sites, referring to increased income, better livelihood means to obtain income, and increased wellbeing. That said, there were varying opinions about *how* to improve income. Some respondents opted for direct cash payments, others for in-kind compensation, and yet others preferred indirect support such as technical assistance in improving agricultural production systems. Forest protection and reforestation of degraded lands were included as recommendations and were suggested to be largely linked to the function of forests in sustaining people's welfare.

Other important issues that did not surface in the hopes and worries were captured clearly in villagers' recommendations. Notably, villagers wanted proponents to communicate better about their projects and demonstrate more transparency. People also wanted to engage and participate meaningfully in the implementation of the project. Importantly, villagers' recommendations strongly reflect the expectation that REDD+ projects respect and uphold communities' rights.

11.3.5   Putting the findings together

The findings clearly reveal that, from the perspective of villagers, positive income-related outcomes are a top priority. The process of establishing and implementing REDD+ projects is also of importance to villagers. For instance, local people want to be informed of the project, participate in the project, and want it to be implemented in a transparent manner. This relates to the 'Information' in the 4 Is discussed in Chapter 2. Inadequate information flow about REDD+ and the REDD+ project – at least at the time of the field research – was reflected in villagers' limited knowledge and understanding of REDD+. This in turn explains a rather high number of respondents having no hopes and worries to express about the local REDD+ project. While many proponents plan to conduct REDD+ outreach and the FPIC process, local people must be able to give their consent to, or conversely, reject a project, based on sufficient and accurate information.

One may argue that there is no need to burden villagers with outreach on the broad, complex and rather abstract concept of REDD+, insofar as it may not directly affect the attainment of emission reductions and improvement of local livelihoods. We argue, however, that local forest users should know about the basic concept of REDD+ in order to understand how REDD+

Table 11.3 Local people's recommendations for REDD+ projects

Villagers' recommendations		
Improved income and welfare	Improve, or at least not limit, local livelihoods	Support for local production systems such as provision of agricultural inputs, irrigation, soil improvement, reduction of transport costs, pest prevention, improved efficiency of agricultural production in fallows and expansion of agricultural land to increase income. Project should not be too restrictive on local land uses or livelihoods.
	Increase income	Government assistance to supplement income; direct cash payments; regular and larger payments from project
	Improve services and infrastructure	Support to improve local utilities (water, electricity) and infrastructure (roads, schools, health centres, dams)
	Provide incentives or compensation to not deforest	Provision of diversified income if people are no longer allowed to cut trees; compensation for protecting forests
Community engagement in the REDD+ process and implementation	Provide better information/community awareness about the project	Better presentation of the project by proponents to enhance community awareness; clarification of project goals with local people; openness and transparency about project; information on project updates; capacity building
	Encourage community participation	Involvement of local people in project and project management; promotion of equitable participation; sufficient consultation with villagers before decisions are made; inclusion of villagers in decision making
	Encourage community–government collaboration in managing forests	Increased enforcement and adherence to rules
Sustainable land use practices and forest protection	Strengthen sustainable agriculture	More sustainable and conservation friendly agricultural practices; ban on use of fire
	Conserve or maintain existing forests	Maintenance of forest reserves for people's livelihoods; protection of rubber gardens from large-scale agribusiness and timber plantations; education for conservation; imposition of sanctions on people who cleared too much land by requiring them to replant, reforest and protect and preserve forests
Benefits accrued at local level; equitable and transparent benefit distribution	Money must reach the community and increase value of direct cash payments; compensation should be in kind and not in cash; benefits to communities should be ongoing/continuous, particularly when people have to stop their activities; benefits should be shared accordingly among villagers; there should be a participatory management of funds and transparency	
Strengthened community rights	Establishment of clear village management rights; joint efforts to claim communities' rights; maintenance of villagers' customary rights; land titles; establishment of clear village boundaries; promotion of tenure rights for the interests of the community	
Realisation of project promises	Realisation of concrete results of the project; greater efficiency in projects so that they are not simply experimental, but definitive as well	

projects work, the opportunities and risks, as well as rights and responsibilities associated with their participation, before they can give their consent to accept or reject a REDD+ project within the framework of FPIC. Nonetheless, it may be difficult to implement FPIC properly, especially since it has been suggested that FPIC is not a one-off process, and should be cyclical as the project advances and changes (Chapter 17), requiring multiple knowledge sharing moments during the course of the project lifetime.

To what extent can projects' interventions be in tune with local desires? All of the projects analysed are planning to provide livelihood alternatives for villagers, which potentially address some of the expectations and concerns of the local communities. Although responding to local concerns is important to gain the support of these stakeholders, expecting a REDD+ project to completely fulfil people's desires and needs is likely beyond the project's capacity and may not be realistic, especially given that the basic objective of REDD+ is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

There are also major risks and costs associated with the implementation of REDD+ projects that must be internalised by the project proponents. Furthermore, the architecture of REDD+ projects is complex, the technological dimensions are intricate, and monitoring involves conscious efforts. For example, eventual benefits that can be distributed to local people will depend on the carbon proceeds that the project is able to secure. Ensuring full and equitable participation can be costly for the project in terms of time and resources. The question is to what extent projects will remain sufficiently attractive for local communities to choose REDD+ *vis-à-vis* other initiatives that are detrimental to forests, but more promising in terms of income generation or livelihood. The key challenge is to fulfil the needs and desires of local forest users within the project's constraints and limitations.

11.4 Conclusions and ways forward

Part of what makes REDD+ different from conventional conservation approaches is the possibility of large income streams that could promote a win–win outcome of forest protection and improved livelihoods. This chapter examines whether local forest users' views of REDD+ projects reflect this win–win assertion. The findings highlight the fact that where villagers were aware of REDD+ and/or the local REDD+ project, they understood the main objective to be forest protection. However, they did not link forest protection to improved incomes in terms of REDD+ project objectives, despite the fact that all projects plan to support alternative livelihoods, and in some cases, apply PES. Further participation in REDD+ projects hinges on income improvements, and proponents need to address the livelihood and wellbeing concerns of local stakeholders.

Another challenge for the overall REDD+ effort is that villagers depend on proponents for information about REDD+ and the local REDD+ project; proponents therefore have a critical role in fostering local knowledge about REDD+ interventions. It is expected that proponents would strive to ensure that local people's concerns are observed and respected in REDD+ projects, but conflicts of interest and power imbalances can make proponents' efforts to provide unbiased information difficult. There may be a need for independent knowledge brokers or legal advisers for the community, for example when legal agreements are signed, to allow them to make informed decisions.

In summary, this study highlights the importance of incorporating local hopes and concerns into the design and implementation of REDD+. It also underscores the need to improve the communication between project proponents and local stakeholders. The hopes, worries and recommendations expressed by local people in the sampled sites seemed to reflect experiences and disappointments with previous conservation and development initiatives. Since REDD+ holds promise for bolstering forest conservation as well as local livelihoods, local people potentially have much to gain, but also much to lose if this new forest management regime fails. Given the high stakes of REDD+, it is critical that local voices are heard, not only by project proponents, but also by national and international decision makers.