



ASSESSING ACCESSIBILITY & AVAILABILITY OF LOGGING INFORMATION TO COMMUNITIES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere appreciation goes to my Gaia Consult team members who supported with the production of this report. Many thanks also to Samuel, Elvis and Obed, all of Civic Response who provided useful guides to deliver this work. My biggest appreciation also goes to all the respondents who made time respond to our questionnaire.



Civic Response is natural resources and people's rights organization working to entrench rights of people and seeks particularly, to advance the rights of communities that depend on forest resources for their livelihood. It has been a major stakeholder in the negotiation and implementation of the Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) which is part of the EU's Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade Action Plan (FLEGT-AP). It has also been part of the REDD+ discussions in Ghana.

This Publication is product of Forest Governance Monitoring, implemented as part of the 'Tackling Deforestation through Linking REDD+ and FLEGT Project

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Asumadu, K.K.W (2016) Assessing the availability and accessibility of logging Information to local communities. Civic Response Accra.



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ABBREVIATIONS

DA	District Assembly
DCE	District Chief Executive
DFO	District Forest Officer
EU	European Union
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FCP	Forest Carbon Partnership
FIP	Forest Investment Program
FLEGT-AP	Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade Action Plan
FLEGT	Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade
FSD	Forest Services Division
FC	Forestry Commission
FWP	Forest and Wildlife Policy
GSM	Global System for Mobile Communications
HFZ	High forest zone
JCM	John Bitar Company Limited
KII	Key Informant Interview
LLL	Logs and Lumber Limited
NREG	Natural Resources and Environment Governance
NREG-TA	Natural Resources and Environment Governance Technical Assistance
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
SRAs	Social Responsibility Agreements
TO	Technical Officer
TOS	Timber Operation Specification
TUC	Timber Utilization Contracts
VPA	Voluntary Partnership Agreement
WB	World Bank

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ghana has committed to various forest sector initiatives to improve governance, ensure sustainability, and improve the lives of people who depend on forest resources. These initiatives include a Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA), the Natural Resources and Environment Governance Programme, and the Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation Programme. These processes have triggered governance reforms in the forest sector particularly in improving information availability, participation and benefits sharing among others. Fern and its partners in Liberia, Cameroon, Republic of Congo and Ghana are currently implementing the Tackling Deforestation Programme which links REDD+ and FLEGT projects across the implementing countries.

This study is part of the actions implementing the Tackling Deforestation Programme through linking the REDD+ and FLEGT Projects, which is being implemented Civic Response in Ghana. Among the outcomes of the Tackling Deforestation Programme is the establishment of governance monitoring systems to track developments in the forest and land sectors, particularly initiatives related to the FLEGT process, land acquisition and REDD+.

This assessment is the first of a series of assessments and this particularly seeks to examine the availability and accessibility of logging information to thirty (30) local communities in five (5) forest districts in the High Forest Zone of Ghana. The study sought to (i) assess the level of information communities have about logging companies in the selected areas; (ii) assess information gaps to communities regarding timber allocations and harvesting; (iii) identify existing information outlets targeting and intended to serve communities; and (iv) make specific administrative or policy recommendations to redress the information gaps identified.

The assessment used desk study to identify what information communities were required to have access to as part of forest management procedures as established in the forest laws and in the Manuals of Procedures. Based on information obtained thereunder, a questionnaire was developed to assess the information communities have access to. The targets for the study were mainly the local communities and the Forest Services Division, FSD. Community Focus Groups and Key Informant Interviews were also used to solicit information. Community focus group discussions were made up of community opinion leaders, women leaders, traditional authorities and members who were available at the time of the meeting. Key informant interviews employing the services of an interview guide were used to elicit views from the FSD. The study was limited to five forest districts which were currently experiencing active logging: namely Goaso, Nkawie, Kumawu, Sefwi Wiawso and Sefwi Juabeso. The study was also limited to logging within a period of five years i.e. between 2009 and 2014 to properly assess the impact of new and existing governance processes since 2009.

The assessment identified that the FSD provides some form of information to communities but the exact information on logging and timber companies proved to be inconsistent across the districts. Additionally, the level of information communities have on logging companies is generally low. Also, different approaches/media including training workshops, manuals and handouts, communal durbars, oral presentations, community outreach programmes, letters are used by different districts to furnish communities with information. Most FSDs also relay information to established community systems such as the Traditional Authority and Unit committee.

Major logging information gaps were identified in almost all communities assessed. The gaps included ignorance of information on the type of timber rights the logger has and the duration of their contract, signing of SRAs, the role of the FSD in signing SRAs, the 5% stumpage equivalent value of SRAs, community presence during log measurement and stumpage calculation, and information about contractors working over weekends and compartment closure.

It is recommended that among others, the FC/FSD a) clarifies what information DFOs put on notices intended to alert other stakeholders of the award of logging rights, b) provides specific information regarding the name of the contractor, the type of permit, the duration of logging, the need to have SRA signed, etc. during introductory meetings, c) develops a knowledge hub/platform where all required logging information will be uploaded and readily downloadable in English and different local languages d) partners with Non-Governmental Organisations and communications service providers to pilot GSM-based information access system for each district whereby any community member can access logging information by sending a short code to a designated number, e) develops communication strategy per forest district or for all forest districts that clarifies the type of information, packaging, the media, possible responses and feedback mechanisms to be used, f) puts in an extra effort to explain the logging information and also facilitate SRA negotiations between timber companies/contractors and communities instead of interceding only when communities demand more than the 5% stumpage equivalent from contractors; g) where applicable, provide communities with documents that cover the operations of timber companies and contractors, and h) partner Civil Society Organizations in the sector that can provide avenues for the FC/FSD to disseminate information to the ordinary community member readily.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Ghana has committed to various forest sector initiatives to improve the governance of forest resources, ensure sustainability of forests and improve the lives of people who depend on them. These initiatives include a Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) signed with the European Union (EU) as part of the EU's Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade Action Plan, the Natural Resources and Environment Governance Programme with World Bank, and the Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation Programme. These initiatives analysed the drivers of forest losses and in most processes involved government, the logging industry and civil society who also represent communities. These three processes have triggered governance reforms in the forest sector. These reforms are mutually reinforcing and complimentary and seek to improve governance and efficiency in the management of forest resources.

The forest governance reform is encapsulated in the 2012 Forest and Wildlife policy which was developed through a participatory and extensive deliberative process with sufficient time for stakeholders particularly civil society to engage with their constituents. The policy promotes the development of mechanisms for transparent governance, equity sharing and people's participation in forest and wildlife resource management. A critical element to ensure good forest governance is transparency and access to relevant information. It is fundamental because it is the basis for stakeholders, particularly local communities and civil society, to make informed, intelligible and meaningful contributions to forest decision making. Ghana however didn't negotiate for a Transparency annex in the FLEGT-VPA, unlike the subsequent VPAs that were negotiated by other countries. Despite this fact, the Forestry Commission's Charter commits to deliver its services in an effective and professional manner which includes making information available to its clients.

In 2014, Civil Society raised the need for firm commitments to transparency and subsequently developed a transparency matrix and a priority list of six different information types to be made available to the public at the district and national levels. To confirm that these commitments are honoured in reality, Civic Response commissioned a study to track the accessibility and availability of logging information to local communities. This report is the first of two reports which focuses on availability of logging information in the forest sector.

This study is part of the actions implementing the Tackling Deforestation through linking REDD+ and FLEGT Project, a multi-country project by Fern and partners in Liberia, Republic of Congo, and Cameroon and implemented in Ghana by Civic Response. An outcome of this project is to develop governance monitoring systems to track developments in the forest and land sectors, particularly initiatives related to the FLEGT process, land acquisition and REDD+.

1.1 Objectives

This first assessment was to examine the availability and accessibility of logging information to thirty (30) local communities in five (5) forest districts in the High Forest Zone of Ghana. The study sought to:

- (I) Assess the level of information communities have about logging companies in the selected areas,
- (ii) Identify information gaps to communities regarding timber allocations and harvesting,
- (iii) Identify existing information outlets targeting and intended to serve communities, and
- (iv) Make specific administrative or policy recommendations to redress the information gaps identified.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Desk Study

The study used desk study to identify what information communities were required to have access to and/or processes they have to be involved in as enshrined in the forest laws and in the Manuals of Procedures (MOPs). The documents assessed include the Constitution of Ghana, Forestry Commission Charter, 2012 Forest and Wildlife Policy, and other legal and administrative documents such as the MOPs (A-F). Results from the desk study forms the basis of the study from which questions for field work were developed. The targets for the study were mainly the local communities (traditional authorities, assemblymen, unit committee chairmen and a cross section of the community members who were available during focus group meetings), and the Forest Services Division (FSD). The FSD by their mandate is considered the party responsible for disseminating logging information while communities are considered beneficiaries who need this information to be able to argue out their rights, and relate with timber companies/contractors.

2.2 Data Collection

The study used both qualitative and quantitative methodologies to elicit information from focus group discussions (FGDs) and key informants. The focus groups were formed based on the availability of respondents in each community visited. The groups were however selectively chosen to represent a cross section of the society i.e. elite and common folk. Groups were in all cases made up of representatives of women, traditional authorities, opinion leaders, unit committee members and some community members who were available at the time of the meeting. Key informant interviews (KIIs) employing the services of an interview guide were used to elicit information from Forest Services Division (FSD) representatives.

2.2.1 Selection of Respondents

Participants from communities were selected based on:

- Whether they were privy to the information required
- Whether they are community members
- Their availability to attend focus group meetings

It is assumed that the elite group are expected to share information they receive from the FSD with the community. Community elite group (Traditional Authorities, Unit committee, Assemblymen) were selected together with some members of the general community to ensure information provided is not skewed to either group and represents what the greater population knows. This is because this elite group claim to be serving the interest of the community other than their own.

2.3 Study Area

The study was limited to three regions and five forest districts which had active logging currently on-going namely: Goaso, Nkawie, Kumawu, Sefwi Wiawso and Sefwi Juaboso. The study was also limited to areas with logging activities within a period of five years i.e. between 2009 and 2014 and in some places still on-going to be able to assess the impact of interventions intended to improve forest governance e.g. VPA. Five (5) communities with logging currently on-going were selected for the study per forest district; with the exception of Sefwi Wiawso which has ten (10) communities (five in both Akontombra and Sefwi Wiawso since they are under one forest district). Communities in Bodi District (which falls under Sefwi Juaboso Forest District) were selected for this study because that was where logging was on-going. The regions, forest districts and communities selected for the study are found in the table below:

Table 2: Study Area

Region	Forest district	Selected communities
Ashanti	Nkawie forest district	Ampenkro, Nkrumah, Kobeng, Serebuoso, and Nkonteng
	Kumawu forest district	Wioso, Woraponso, Bahankra, Ntarentare, and Amantina
Brong Ahafo	Goaso forest district	Dominase, Akrodie, Kensere, Ayumso, and Bediako
Western	Sefwi Wiawso forest district	Old Adiembra, Baakonka, Anglo, Nsunyameye, Nsusua, Asantekrom, Kofikrom, Bopa Nkwanta, Aprutu, and Yawkrom
	Sefwi Juaboso forest district	Kama, Attaboka, Odumtankwa, Oparekrom, and Duakrom (All communities in Bodi)

2.4 Key to Interpreting the Tables

In the district level information section/tables, one shaded box represents one community response (i.e. from community focus group discussion). If their answer to the question was “yes” or “positive” the box is shaded green . If their answer was “no” or “negative”, the box is shaded red . If they did not know the answer to the question or did not answer, the box is shaded yellow .

During community-level focus group discussions, respondents were asked to grade the rate of information flow between the FSD and themselves in the categories of Absent, Moderate, Good and Excellent. FSD respondents were also asked to rank themselves (FSD) in such manner. For the purposes of reporting, the average rate of information flow between communities and FSD and vice versa is provided as either Absent, Moderate, Good, or Excellent. Responses from the FSD (per district) is provided to either buttress or show disparities in comparison with community responses.



Picture 1: Focus Group Discussion at Amantina, Kumawu Forest District

3.0 FINDINGS

This section presents summarized findings from the study on a district-by-district basis. The tables below show information from desk study that communities are supposed to know as well as community responses. In all districts (with the exception of the Nkawie Forest District), the narrative also shed light on responses from the district FSD. It provides inputs to answering to the study objectives mainly on (i) the level of information communities have, (ii) information gaps regarding allocation and harvesting, and (iii) existing information outlets targeting and intended to serve communities. The tables have been grouped into (i) general information on logging, (ii) information outlets, and (iii) information gaps.

3.1 Policy and Legal Basis for Community Access to Information

3.1.1 Constitution of Ghana

Chapter 5 of Ghana's 1992 Constitution highlights that everybody has the right to access information subject to such qualifications and laws as are necessary in a democratic society.¹ A committee of experts reviewing the Constitution in 2011 further buttressed this notion that "A political system in which the public surrenders these rights to a political party or government cannot hope to be democratic. The public must therefore be guaranteed the right to know, the right to access information, as a basic human and constitutional right."² Alongside the disclosure of information, governments are required to adopt transparent processes for establishing and implementing resource policies, for awarding contracts, for collecting and managing revenues, and for taking spending decisions.³ With regards to natural resources management, particularly forests in this case, the award of contracts, site selection, revenues collected and disbursed, etc. must be made public knowledge.

3.1.2 Forestry Commission (FC) Charter

Much in line with the Constitution, the FC charter aims to improve information transparency by seeking to:

- Establish and utilize a variety of means to build public awareness as well as keep customers up-to date at all times on FC policies, procedures and programmes as well as service delivery performance reports for ease of access of services.
- Conduct annual surveys of the public to measure FC's overall progress in meeting the needs and aspirations of clients and citizens.
- Put in place a customer feedback mechanism that enables customers to complain on their services and provide suggestions for improvement. Continually improve the quantity and quality of information on FC website to inform customers as well as enable them self-serve with relevant information, both in and out of office.⁴

3.1.3 2012 Forest and Wildlife Policy

The Forest and Wildlife Policy (FWP) of 2012 was developed with the support of and inputs from different sector stakeholders including civil society groups that represented community interests. Objective four of the policy is to promote the development of mechanisms for transparent governance, equity sharing and people's participation in forest and wildlife resource management. The 2012 FWP introduces a number of strategic initiatives to improve and integrate amongst others good governance, transparency and equity in the forest and wildlife sector. "The policy seeks to consolidate good governance through accountability and transparency, enhance active participation of communities and land owners in resource management and addressing issues of tree tenure and benefit sharing."⁵ This policy declares government's intent and guides the work of the implementing body, the Forestry Commission (FC). Transparency and participation cannot be achieved if communities do not have access to information in the sector thereby limiting such a

¹ *The Constitution, 1992, Article 21 (1) (d)*

² *Report of the Constitution Review Commission, 2011, Chapter 13*

³ *Report of the Constitution Review Commission, 2011, Chapter 12*

⁴ *FC Charter* <http://www.fcghana.org/page.php?page=199§ion=22&typ=1&subs=260>

⁵ *2012 Forest and Wildlife Policy*

good policy to merely good intents. Some of the policy strategies outlined in the 2012 FWP include the FC:

- Disseminating information on forestry events, issues and trends to allow informed participation by the wider public as well as the forest fringe communities.⁶
- Modifying its management focuses due to strong interests and rights of local communities in forest resource management, to ensure greater consultation with stakeholders, especially local communities that are dependent on the forests.⁷

3.1.4 Other Legal and Administrative Provisions

While the Logging Manual prescribes the code of practice to be adhered to by all contractors, the Manual of Proceedings are the administrative interpretations of the law by FC. It outlines what the FC through its regional and district representatives does in its operations to implement the policy. The MOPs (A-F) indicate specific sections which allow forest fringe communities and land owners to be part of the forest allocation, harvesting and benefit sharing processes. It highlights the transparency and information sharing concepts which were adopted in the 1994 FWP and entrenched in the more recent 2012 FWP. The administrative provisions on participation, information sharing and transparency within the MOPs are found in the table below.

Provision	Source
The directives to conduct a field inspection from the Chief Conservator of Forests shall require the District Forest Officer to constitute in consultation with the District Chief Executive a team of inspectors made up of (i).... (ii) a representative of the Traditional Council of the Area Nominated by the Traditional Council	Timber Resource Management Regulations L.I. 1649 Regulation 2
For forest reserves identified for logging purposes, the DFO must notify the people of the area proposed	Timber Resource Management Regulations L.I. 1649 Regulation 2(6)
Where allocated area is an off-reserve, the DFO shall with the assistance of the DCE seek the written consent and agreement of the owners of the land	Timber Resource Management Regulations L.I. 1649 Regulation 3
For the purpose of bringing the proposal to grant timber rights in respect of the land to the notice of persons who own the land, the DFO shall post notices at the offices of the DA, Traditional Council and Unit area.	Timber Resource Management Regulations L.I. 1649 Regulation 3a
The SRA is a TUC schedule intended to normalise relations between the TUC holder and the local communities, witnessed and negotiated by the FSD in advance of the contract being advertised; the SRA is applicable to both on and off-reserves.	MoP C, Instruction Sheet 3.2
Code of conduct for forest reserve TUC areas will specify how the two parties have agreed to ensure these rights are respected. For off-reserve areas, the code of conduct recognises the following rights of land owning communities be respected; cultural norms, agricultural activities, rights to non-timber forest products, consultations during planning of operations; share of revenue from harvesting; local infrastructure, etc.	MoP C, Instruction Sheet 3.2; Logging Manual Section 3.3 (9a, 9b)

⁶ *Ibid Strategic Directions 5.2.1 (b)*

⁷ *Ibid section 2.1.2*

<p>The level of consultation is particularly extensive for the off-reserve areas, but even on-reserve it has to be remembered that the Forest Service is acting as the agent for the land owners and needs to seek their endorsement for operations by a particular contractor</p>	<p>MoP C, Instruction Sheet 3.3</p>
<p>Primarily the communities that own the land; all the communities that make up the land-owning stool will be identified in the management plan. In addition, it is expected that settler communities accepted onto the land by the landowners and living close to the reserve will also be considered beneficiary communities.</p>	<p>MoP A, Instruction sheet 2.4</p>
<p>Local Communities are to be consulted in finalising forest reserve management plans to ensure the plan reflects their requirements.</p>	<p>MoP A</p>
<p>Objectives of the consultation process is to ensure that the wishes of land owner, involved communities and local administrators are taken into account when formulating terms and conditions for the operation of the TUCs both on and off-reserve.</p>	<p>MoP C, Instruction Sheet 3.3</p>
<p>The DFO will identify and arrange meetings with the owners of the land including a meeting with the Traditional Council of the land-owning stool.</p>	<p>MoP C, Instruction Sheet 3.3</p>
<p>Contact will need to be made with the traditional authorities and each of the land-owning stools in order to brief the elders on the TUC process. As far as possible the chief and the elders of each stool should be present, as well as the assemblymen, unit committee members and representatives of each of the affected communities.</p>	<p>MoP C, Instruction Sheet 3.3</p>
<p>The communities and the District Assemblies have the right to inspect all logging activities at any time whether it be on reserve or not. If they are unhappy about the conditions and standards being followed they are entitled to make their concerns known to the district staff and request action to their grievances.</p>	<p>MoP C, Instruction Sheet 4.4</p>
<p>The Social Obligations will be itemised by the DFO during TUC area identification procedures. It is the responsibility of the FSD to act as a responsible arbiter and not dictate the terms and conditions.</p>	<p>Timber Resource Management Regulation, 1998, Regulation 2 (b) (d)</p>
<p>No timber shall be lifted from its stump unless its measurements are taken and the actual stumpage fee payable in respect of it has been calculated by the District Forest Officer according to the formula set out in Schedule 3 in the presence of the landowner and the contractor or their representatives</p>	<p>Timber Resource Management Regulation, 1998, Regulation 22 (3)</p>

The Minister shall issue a Notice of the Grant of timber rights which shall specify activities to be completed by the winner... including; the conclusion of a Social Responsibility Agreement with local communities, which shall include an undertaking by the winner of the bid to assist communities and inhabitants of the timber utilization areas with amenities, services or benefits, provided that the cost of the agreed amenities, services or benefits shall be 5% of the value of stumpage fee from the timber that is harvested.

L.I 1721 Bidding Procedures



Picture: Focus Group Discussion at Serebuoso, Nkawie Forest District

3.2 Goaso Forest District

Communities: Akrodie, Ayumso, Bediako, Dominase and Kensere

General Information		
Question	Response	Comments
Has there been timber extraction close to this community in the last 5 years?	■ ■ ■ ■ ■	
Do you know the name of the timber contractors who have worked in this area?	■ ■ ■ ■ ■	FDN, RK Peprah and Ayum Timbers

The communities were selected with help from the FSD as being communities with on-going logging activities. All the communities knew or had an idea of the timber company working within their area. Timber companies working in the communities are R.K. Peprah, Ayum Timbers, and FDN. The former operates in Kensere community. Ayum Timbers operates in Ayumso and Dominase while FDN operates in Akrodie and Bediako. Only Ayum timbers had been formerly introduced in the communities they work in.

The FSD through the KIIs indicated that communities are informed of logging companies working in their area. The FSD passes on information to communities through opinion leaders as and when permits are issued.

Information Outlets

Question	Responses/ Comments
Does an agency or person provide you information about logging in the area?	
Who normally provides logging information to the community?	FSD, Chief, Unit Committee Chairman, Assemblyman,

All communities with the exception of Bediako acknowledged that logging information is provided. Respondents from Ayumso and Kensere indicated that the FSD provides them such information whereas in Akrodie and Dominase, the logging information was provided by chiefs, assemblymen, and unit committee representatives. According to the FSD, logging information is provided orally during community outreach programmes. It also does so through other media such as community opinion leaders as indicated above.

In general, all communities agreed that not all needed information is provided by the FSD, chiefs, and other opinion leaders. Information if available from the FSD is kept with the elite groups of the community with bits and pieces flowing to the general community members. The preferred information channels as indicated by community members and the FSD from validation workshops include durbars, community fora, and targeting the community on taboo days.

Information Gaps

Question	Responses
Do you know the duration of the harvesting for the contractors?	
What type of permits are being used by contractors for logging in this area?	
Was the community informed about the timber company who has been awarded the contract to harvest the timber?	
Was the community informed about signing an SRA with the timber contractor?	
Was the community informed about the value of the 5% of stumpage fees due to them?	
Was the community or the representative of the TA made aware to be part of the measuring of harvested trees?	
Are community members informed by the FC when timber contractors are to work on weekends?	
Are communities informed about the closure of compartments after logging?	

Even though the FSD mentioned that it provides logging information directly and via opinion leaders to communities as and when permits are issued, the communities indicated they did not know the type of permits the contractors had, and duration of such contracts. The communities provided the general view that the FSD does not provide them with detailed logging information. Information such as the species, the number of trees to be felled and closure of compartments among others are not provided. Only one community (Ayumso) out of the five communities indicated the community was informed by the FSD when the timber company/contractor was awarded timber harvesting rights. KIIs with the FSD however showed that all landowners are given information prior to logging. Four out of the five communities are not informed to negotiate SRA with the logging company in the area. Ayumso remains the only community out of the five that was informed by the FSD to negotiate for SRA contrary to information from the FSD that it informs all communities to negotiate SRA with the contractor. The FSD representative at the validation meeting explained that some communities have not been informed to start negotiating SRAs because the contractors are not in their coups yet and will be asked to start negotiations when harvesting is about to commence. None of the five (5) communities, however, knew that the SRA should be equivalent to 5% of the stumpage. The FSD however indicated during the KII that it informs communities about the 5% value of stumpage.

No representative (in all five communities) of the landowners or the unit area where logging takes place is notified or asked to be present when harvested trees are being measured. None of the communities is also informed when the contractors are to work on weekends but the FSD indicated that community members who work with the timber companies are aware of such arrangements. The FSD rates the flow of information between communities and itself as moderate while communities consider such information flow to be absent pre, during and post-harvesting.

The communities requested that there be improved interactions between the FSD and themselves. They also suggested that their opinion leaders regularly visit the FSD offices on their behalf and provide feedback on what they learn.

3.3 Sefwi Wiawso District

Communities: Nsusua, Nsonyameye, Baakonka, Anglo, Asantekrom, Kofikrom, Bopa Nkwanta, Aprutu, Yawkrom and Old Adiembra.

General Information		
Question	Response	Comments
Has there been timber extraction close to this community in the last 5 years?		
Do you know the name of the timber contractors who have worked in this area?		Boison, BLLC, T. Andrews and LLL

Five (5) out of the ten (10) communities (i.e. about 50% of surveyed communities) – Nsusua, Nsonyameye, Baakonka, Anglo and Old Adiembra – knew or had an idea of the timber company working in their area.

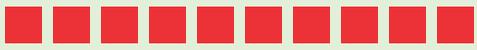
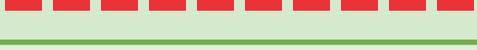
Information Outlets

Does an agency or person provide you information about logging in the area?		
Who normally provides logging information to the community?	Chief, Unit Committee, FSD, and Assemblyman	

According to the Sefwi Wiawso District of the FSD, communities are encouraged to protect the forest resources and provided with basic logging information such as SRAs. This information is provided through workshops, manuals, hand-outs, community durbars etc. Representatives of four (4) out of ten (10) communities (i.e. about 40% of surveyed communities) – Nsusua, Nsonyameye, Baakonka, and Old Adiembra – however indicated that their communities obtained logging information mainly from their chiefs, unit committees, FSD, and assemblymen.

The communities in general are of the view that the FSD, T.A., and timber companies are unwilling to share logging information since they benefit from the community being in the dark. To improve upon information sharing on logging, communities indicated that the FSD should collaborate with community opinion leaders to provide logging information to the general community. They suggested that the FSD uses the information service system and take advantage of community durbars on taboo days to reach the bigger section of the community.

Information Gaps

Do you know the duration of the harvesting for the contractors?	
What type of permits are being used by contractors for logging in this area?	
Was information made available to the community before the enumeration of trees? **	
Was the community informed about the timber company who has been awarded the contract to harvest the timber?	
Was the community informed about signing an SRA with the timber contractor?	
Was the community informed about the value of the 5% of stumpage fees due to them?	
Was the community or the representative of the TA made aware to be part of the measuring of harvested trees?	
Are community members informed by the FC when timber contractors are to work on weekends?	
Are communities informed about the closure of compartments after logging?	

Only 30% of surveyed communities (Nsusua, Old Adiembra and Nsonyameye) were informed about the award of contract to companies to operate in their area. None of the communities including the 30% informed were aware of the type of permit being used by timber contractors operating in their area as well as the logging duration. None of the communities had their representatives present during the measurement of harvested trees and calculation of the stumpage. Ninety percent (90%) of the communities indicated that their communities are not informed by the FSD when compartments are closed.

None of the ten communities (with the exception of Old Adiembra that had an SRA committee) knew about signing SRAs with timber companies, as well as the monetary value of the 5% of stumpage fees due them. The FSD however indicated that it provides communities with information on SRAs and intercedes to settle differences between timber companies and communities when communities' proposed demands exceed the 5% stumpage value. Eighty percent (80%) of the communities (with the exception of Nsusua and Nsonyameye) however indicated that the FSD does not provide their communities with information.

Information flow between the FSD and the communities was on the average rated low by the latter. The communities indicated that they cannot always go to the district office because of the distance and high transportation costs involved. They also mentioned that it will take several visits to get a request sorted out by the FSD therefore they are not motivated to interact with the FSD. The FSD on the other hand indicated that information flow to communities is good but it (FSD) lacked enough T.Os to assist in information delivery.

3.4 Nkawie Forest District

Communities: Ampenkro, Nkrumah, Serebuoso, Kobeng and Nkonteng

General Information		
Question	Response	Comments
Has there been timber extraction close to this community in the last 5 years?		
Do you know the name of the timber contractors who have worked in this area?		Pulla, Cargo; Mary Brobbey and Paul (Individual contractors)

All the community representatives present at the FGD knew or had an idea of the timber company working in their area because some of the respondents/community members had been employed by the timber company(ies). They reiterated that usually, until the company starts working, the community does not know who has been awarded the logging rights. The companies and individuals working in the area had been in operation for more than five years.

Information Outlets	
Does an agency or person provide you information about logging in the area?	
Who normally provides logging information to the community?	FSD (technical officer or forest guard), timber contractor, Traditional Authority (sometimes), Unit committee chairman

All the communities acknowledged that some logging information is provided by the FSD. In most of the communities, either the Forest Guard or the Technical Officer (T.O) provides such information. In Nkrumah community, they interact with the T.O usually when there are wildfires in the area. In Ampenkro and Serebuoso, the communities suggested that logging information is sometimes passed on to the Traditional Authorities and/or unit committee members. The unit committee chairmen relay logging information to residents of Nkonteng and Kobeng.

The communities during validation meeting indicated that the most appropriate means of providing logging information to them is community durbars, radio and the FC website. They further added that public notices of timber rights allocation should provide information on the name of the company, type of permit, duration of logging, species to be harvested, and number of trees allocated.

Information Gaps	
Do you know the duration of the harvesting for the contractors?	
What type of permits are being used by contractors for logging in this area?	
Was the community informed about the timber company who has been awarded the contract to harvest the timber?	
Was the community informed about signing an SRA with the timber contractor?	
Was the community informed about the value of the 5% of stumpage fees due to them?	
Was the community or the representative of the TA made aware to be part of the measuring of harvested trees?	
Are community members informed by the FC when timber contractors are to work on weekends?	
Are communities informed about the closure of compartments after logging?	

None of the five surveyed communities in the Nkawie Forest District with the exception of Nkrumah community were aware of the duration of logging in the area. In Nkrumah the community claims the T.O informed them that the company will be working for a period of three years but the company operated beyond the said duration. Again, none of the communities knew the type of rights (permits) the timber companies had. They all made it clear that they will not be able to tell even if they (the permits) are shown to them. Only Ampenkro community members confirmed that they are informed about the timber company working in the area but got the information just before logging commenced.

None of the communities were informed about signing an SRA with the timber companies as well as its equivalence of 5% of the stumpage. The Ampenkro community mentioned the community members did not know what SRA was, the 5% stumpage equivalent, and that they had to sign an agreement with the contractor. They added that some years ago, the contractor gave the T.A an amount of two hundred Ghana cedis (GHS 200) for working in the area. In Nkrumah, the participants who had attended forest fora knew about SRAs but reported that upon confronting the contractor, they were told the trees belong to government and that the contractor had paid for it and was not obliged to make any arrangements with the

community. In Serebuoso, the community indicated that the community was given an amount of money by the contractor but was not informed of the amount. The community was surprised to hear of the 5% stumpage equivalent and blamed the T.O for not informing them of such an entitlement. In Nkonteng, the community indicated the community is sometimes informed it has a share of the harvested trees but community members are not aware how much that is worth.

None of the communities or representatives of the TA were reported to have been made aware by the FSD or the contractor about the measurement of harvested trees and calculation of stumpage. The communities interacted with are also not informed when the contractor is to work on weekends or when the compartment is closed.

The communities during validation outlined the challenges to obtaining information from the FSD to include distance and transportation costs of visiting the FSD offices. Communities expressed their lack of knowledge and capacity to ask for specific logging information at any point in time. They also blamed opinion leaders for not disseminating information properly to the general community.

All the communities rated the information flow between themselves and the FSD before, during and after logging as average/medium. They argued that information they get does not give them an indication that they have to know and be part of the forest governance processes. They advocated for the use of information centres to disseminate information and also for CSOs and FSD to build their capacities. During the study period the team was unable to get information from the FSD to corroborate or disprove allegations of the communities. The FSD Manager indicated he will be ready to assist the team if only an approval was given from the FC head office.

3.5 Kumawu Forest District

Communities: Amantina, Wioso, Woraponso, Bahankra and Ntarentare

General Information		
Question	Response	Comments
Has there been timber extraction close to this community in the last 5 years?		
Do you know the name of the timber contractors who have worked in this area?		

Although there has been logging activities on-going in the selected communities, only one of the communities (Amantina) knew the name of the timber company working in the area. According to the FSD, it only verbally informs the communities that a contractor has been given permit for logging in their area.

Information Outlets	
Does an agency or person provide you information about logging in the area?	
Who normally provides logging information to the community?	FSD (technical officer or forest guard), timber contractor, Traditional Authority (sometimes)

All the communities acknowledged that they receive logging information although they (4 out of 5 communities) could not name a single contractor working in the area. The communities indicated that they get logging information mostly from the FSD i.e. through the T.O. Communities such as Ntaretare, Bahankra, and Wioso get such information from both the FSD and timber companies although the latter is upon confrontation. The traditional authority (mainly chief, queen mother, and elders) and assemblyman are the main communication channels between the FSD and the community. This was corroborated by the FSD that communities approach the division for information especially when there are altercations with contractors. Contrary to responses of majority of the community, the FSD indicated that it informs the communities about the companies working in the area. The FSD remarked this takes place when companies are required to seek consent from the communities before being given the permission to commence work.

Representatives of the communities during validation meeting indicated their preferred communication channels to be either the community radio or the information centre. They also suggested that the FSD takes advantage of taboo days to reach majority of the community members. It was also suggested that the FSD serves both T.A. and D.As with letters as a form of information sharing on logging.

Information Gaps	
Do you know the duration of the harvesting for the contractors?	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
What type of permits are being used by contractors for logging in this area?	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Was information made available to the community before the enumeration of trees? **	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Was the community informed about the timber company who has been awarded the contract to harvest the timber?	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Was the community informed about signing an SRA with the timber contractor?	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Was the community informed about the value of the 5% of stumpage fees due to them?	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Was the community or the representative of the TA made aware to be part of the measuring of harvested trees?	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Are community members informed by the FC when timber contractors are to work on weekends?	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Are communities informed about the closure of compartments after logging?	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

**** Off-Reserves Only**

None of the five surveyed communities in the Kumawu Forest District knew the type of permits and duration of logging for the timber companies present. In fact, the communities had no idea there were different types of permits for logging. Although none of the communities could provide the name of the timber companies in the area, representatives from Amantina emphasized that they had good working relationship with the FSD and can obtain such information upon request. Representatives from Wioso indicated that they had been informed of the timber company working in the area yet they could not provide the name of the company.

None of the communities apart from Amantina, had been informed about signing an SRA with the timber companies as well as its equivalence of 5% of the stumpage. Even in Amantina, the representatives claimed they had signed an agreement after which some money was given to them for development but they did not know that this sum was called an SRA and is supposed to be equivalent to 5% of the stumpage. Wioso community did not know about signing an SRA with the contractor but had been given some money at the onset of timber harvesting in the area. The community members indicated that they did not know how the amount given them was derived and believed it to be a token from the timber company. Representatives in Woraponso also did not know about signing an SRA but indicated they had been given a token as well. Ntaretare community had neither been informed of signing an SRA nor received any token from the timber company in the area. This is contrary to information provided by the FSD that it alerts the communities of the need to negotiate SRAs with the logging companies and that communities approach the division when there is a breach regarding SRAs and compensations. The FSD Officials further made it clear that they apply the 5% value of stumpage when there is misunderstanding between the parties.

None of the communities or representatives of the TA were reported to have been made aware by the FSD or the contractor of the measurement of harvested trees. The FSD corroborated this that measurement of harvested trees is a technical task and therefore does not involve communities. In Amantina however, the T.A was mentioned to have sent representatives to count the tree stumps after the contractor had finished harvesting. The communities interacted with are not informed when contractors are to work on weekends or when the compartment is closed. The FSD confirmed that information on compartment closure and contractors working over the weekend is not given to communities.

Communities believe that the FSD is not transparent and is also reluctant to share information with them. They however rated information flow between the FSD and themselves as moderate. The FSD rather rated the information flow between communities and themselves as good although they could improve with increased manpower (extra T.Os and supervisors).

3.6 Sefwi Juabeso District (Bodi)

Communities: Kama, Attaboka, Odumtankwa, Oparekrom, and Duakrom.

General Information		
Question	Response	Comments
Has there been timber extraction close to this community in the last 5 years?		
Do you know the name of the timber contractors who have worked in this area?		LLL

Four (4) out of the five (5) communities (i.e. about 80% of surveyed communities) – Kama, Attaboka, Odumtankwa, and Oparekrom – knew or had an idea of the timber company working in their area.

Information Outlets		
Does an agency or person provide you information about logging in the area?		
Who normally provides logging information to the community?	FSD	

According to the Forest Services Division (FSD), basic logging information on timber rights allocation (permits), pre-felling inspection, and Social Responsibility Agreement is provided to communities. Such information is usually provided to community representatives such as traditional authorities and unit committees via letters, workshops and meetings. Even so, only two (2) out of the five (5) surveyed communities – Kama and Oparekrom – indicated that they obtained such logging information from the FSD.

Information Gaps	
Do you know the duration of the harvesting for the contractors?	
What type of permits are being used by contractors for logging in this area?	
Was the community informed about the timber company who has been awarded the contract to harvest the timber?	
Was the community informed about signing an SRA with the timber contractor?	
Was the community informed about the value of the 5% of stumpage fees due to them?	
Was the community or the representative of the TA made aware to be part of the measuring of harvested trees?	
Are community members informed by the FC when timber contractors are to work on weekends?	
Are communities informed about the closure of compartments after logging?	
How do you rate information flow between the FSD and the community before harvesting	

Three out of the five communities (i.e. about 60% of surveyed communities) – Kama, Odumtankwa, and Oparekrom – were informed about the award of contract (timber rights or permits) to companies to operate in their area. None of the five surveyed communities were aware of the type of permit being used and duration of operation by timber contractors in their area. The representatives of four (4) communities indicated that their communities are not informed by the FSD when compartments are closed and when contractors have to work on the weekends.

According to the FSD, communities are provided with information on SRAs and their share (5% equivalent) of the stumpage. Only one of the surveyed communities, Oparekrom, indicated it had been informed about the monetary value of the 5% of stumpage fees due them. Two (2) out of the five (5) communities (Odumtankwa and Oparekrom), had been informed to sign an SRA with the timber contractors operating in their area.

On the average, communities rated the information flow between themselves and the FSD as moderate whereas the FSD rated information flow as good.

4.0 DISCUSSION

4.1 Information Gaps

According to the 1992 Constitution of Ghana, the public must be guaranteed the right to know, the right to access information, as a basic human and constitutional right”.⁸ In light of this, the public (communities) have the right to be informed and be part of various aspects of forest resource management such as the award of contracts, site selection, benefit sharing, etc. The FC has taken the right steps to achieve improved transparency, participation and inclusion through the FC Charter, FWP, legal and administrative instruments, and the MOPs. The 2012 FWP seeks to consolidate good governance through accountability and transparency, enhance active participation of communities and land owners in resource management and addressing issues of tree tenure and benefit sharing.”⁹ The 2012 FWP emphasises the need to ensure greater consultation with stakeholders, especially local communities that are dependent on the forests.¹⁰ To achieve this on the ground, the various MOPs (A-F) have made provisions to engage local communities either by information or in participatory processes to ensure good governance, benefit sharing, and harmony in forest operations.

The results from the study show that although for more than five years there had been logging activities in the areas selected, the level of information on logging is generally low. Majority of the communities are only informed when their areas have been given to a timber company to log but do not receive any additional information on:

- The type of timber rights the logger has and the duration of their contract
- Signing of SRAs
- The value of the SRA
- Presence during log measurement and stumpage calculation
- Contractors working over the weekend and
- Compartment closure

L.I. 1721 states that, “The Minister shall issue a Notice of the Grant of timber rights which shall specify activities to be completed by the winner...including; the conclusion of a Social Responsibility Agreement with local communities, which shall include an undertaking by the winner of the bid to assist communities and inhabitants of the timber utilization areas with amenities, services or benefits, provided that the cost of the agreed amenities, services or benefits shall be 5% of the value of stumpage fee from the timber that is harvested.” From the study, about 70% of the communities were not informed to sign SRA with the timber company/contractor. They were also not aware that social benefits from SRA should be equivalent to 5% of the stumpage. This indicates that the FSD as the manager of community forest resources and the arbiter of the SRA process has not fulfilled its role. It also shows that TUC right holders do not fulfil their roles as indicated by the Minister. Respondents indicated that they had been given tokens by some timber companies but that they were given as “gifts” rather than as legal requirement. It is important to note that while communities claimed they were not aware of signing SRAs and the 5% stumpage fee equivalent, the FSD in Kumawu, Sefwi Wiawso and Juabeso reported they provide such information.

Regulation 22 (3) of L.I. 1649 states that, “No timber shall be lifted from its stump unless its measurements are taken and the actual stumpage fee payable in respect of it has been calculated by the District Forest Officer according to the formula set out in Schedule 3 in the presence of the landowner and the contractor or their representatives.”

As already indicated, about 90% of communities do not know about stumpage fees and the 5% equivalent share of it. The results further indicate that ≈96% of the communities in this study do not have their representatives present when log measurements and stumpage fees are being calculated. From the study it is clear that most communities are not aware of this legal provision. A possible implication is that communities will not know how much their 5% is worth especially since the FSD has failed to arbitrate in about 70% of the communities.

⁸ *Report of the Constitution Review Commission, 2011, Chapter 13*

⁹ *2012 Forest and Wildlife Policy*

¹⁰ *Ibid section 2.1.2*

4.2 Information Outlets

L.I. 1649 Regulation 2(6) mentions that for logging purposes, the DFO must notify the people of the area proposed (in this case the area already given out). Not only does this serve to keep communities abreast with information but it also shows the FC/FSD acknowledges that it is serving the interests of the communities that own the resource. The Regulation makes sure that not only the Traditional Council is informed of this but the Unit Area where the actual logging takes place as well. Regulation 3 (b) (d) of L.I. 1649 emphasises that, “For the purpose of bringing the proposal to grant timber rights in respect of the land to the notice of persons who own the land, the District Forest Officer shall post notices at- the office of the District Assembly, Traditional Council, and Unit area in whose area of authority the land identified is situated.” Although the law puts the onus of information sharing on the FSD, it does not specify what information should be on the notices. The exact information to be provided remains unclear and at the discretion of the FSD.

From the study, ≈65% of the communities confirmed they receive logging information from the FSD through the Forest Guards and Technical Officers. Approximately three communities out of the five in each district had received some logging information from the FSD. Information outlets are however different from district to district. While some districts inform communities through workshops, community durbars, community outreach programmes, manuals and hand-outs, others relay information to the elite group (traditional leaders, assemblymen, and unit committee members). The latter is practiced in about 90% of the communities but in all it was evident from the study that information either does not trickle down to the ordinary community person or information provided is not about logging, rather the need for communities to protect the forest as mentioned in Sefwi Wiawso. Elite capture has been identified as a possible bottleneck to information reaching the general community. The FSD mentioned it provides most of (if not all) the required logging information to the community elites since they represent the entire community yet the information does not trickle down. This could be because of what the elites could stand to gain or lose if information is made common knowledge.

4.3 Level of Information about Logging Companies

In reference to L.I 1649 Regulations 3a, communities should by way of notice and prior SRA with TUC holder know the name(s) of the latter, the type of permit and logging duration within their areas. About 75% of communities knew the names of logging companies in their area but not all of them were informed by the FSD. For example, in Kumawu, only one community could provide the name of timber company in the area even though there were logging activities as at the time of the study. Some communities in Nkawie were able to mention the names of the logging companies only because some of the participants had been employed by the company. It is therefore clear that the FSD provides some form of information to communities but the exact information provided regarding logging and about the companies is not consistent across the districts. None of the communities knew the type of permit the companies had as well as the duration of operations. The communities are also not informed when compartments are closed and when contractors work during weekends. Although it is not within the law for the FSD to inform communities on compartment closure, in the interest of improving governance, collaborative resource management and forest resource protection, it must be considered important that communities have this information.

As explained earlier, the level of information communities had on SRAs and the 5% stumpage equivalent is very low. Communities are not aware that they should have representatives present before measurements are done and stumpage calculated.

All communities in this study on the average rate information flow between themselves and the FSD as very low while on the average the FSD rates same as good.

5.0 CONCLUSION

Although the legal requirements for sharing and accessing logging information is clear on paper, it is different in practice. The FSD was identified as the main source of logging information to communities even though the study also shows communities have major information gaps. The assessment has identified that different FSD offices use different approaches/media in reaching out to communities such as:

1. Training workshops, manuals and handouts
2. Communal durbars
3. Oral presentations
4. Community outreach programmes
5. Letters
6. Established community systems such as the Traditional Authority and Unit committee (elites)

In reality, the FSD relays information to some elites within communities but information does not trickle down to the entire community. Elite capture has therefore been identified to facilitate this process. Information may also be distorted in transfer or may not be transferred at all. In cases where revenues are involved, there is the tendency for some opinion leaders to withhold information from the community. The study has shown that while the FSD is convinced of providing information to communities, most communities do not have information specific to logging including benefit sharing. This limits the improved governance agenda as communities do not have adequate information to enable them participate in the forest governance process.

Communities have major logging information gaps such as the ignorance on:

1. The name of timber company, permit type used, and duration of operation in the area
2. Being present during measurement and calculation of stumpage fees for felled trees
3. What an SRA is and the need to sign one with timber companies
4. The role the FSD has to play in the SRA process
5. The SRA being equivalent to 5% the stumpage fee
6. Compartment closure and
7. Timber companies working on weekends

The FC's policy plan to "modify its management focus due to strong interests and rights of local communities in forest resource management, to ensure greater consultation with stakeholders, especially local communities that are dependent on the forests"¹¹ still remains unachieved as communities lack fundamental information regarding logging. To achieve improved governance through accountability and transparency, both the FC/FSD and Civil Society could work towards enhancing active participation of communities and land owners in resource management and addressing issues of tree tenure and benefit sharing.

This study has outlined a series of reviews on participation and transparency (methodology) that Civil Society can use on a case-by-case basis to assess how and what specific information is being provided to communities in on and off-reserve areas. Although this study makes a quick scan of the situation, an in-depth study per district can be carried out using the information provided to develop district-specific solutions to improving governance in the sector; particularly as information sharing varies from district to district.

¹¹ 2012 FWP

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Legally, communities are entitled to basic logging information that enables them to relate with timber contractors/companies, FSD and also ensure their benefits are secured. In short, availability of logging information allows communities to participate in decision-making, and feel included in forest governance processes. Communities with this information are able to build good relations with both the FSD and contractors because they know each party's role in the process from timber identification to compartment closing. Knowing this, communities are able to protect their interests and also protect the forest resources from illegal entry and destruction.

The general trend identified by this assessment is that within the same district, most communities have little to no access to real logging information and as such information flow from the FSD to communities is rated low by respondents. The FSD may be putting in the effort to improve its service delivery and a combination of advanced and yet simple approaches should be used to provide communities access to logging information. The following recommendations are being proposed to bridge this gap:

1. L.I. 1649 asks DFOs to post notice of logging at the offices of the DA, Traditional Council and Unit area. The law does not however state what information should be on the poster. The FC/FSD in its attempts to improve transparency in the sector should work with Civil Society to expound exactly what information should be on these posters.
2. In line with the MOP C, the DFO should provide information to the traditional authorities and each of the land-owning stools in order to brief the elders on the TUC process. As far as possible, the chief and the elders of each stool should be present, as well as the assemblymen, unit committee members and representatives of each of the affected communities. It is important to capture records of such meetings and outcomes for dissemination. Specific information on the name of the contractor, type of permit, duration of logging, the need to have SRA signed, etc. must be made clear at such meetings.
3. Each FSD could develop a knowledge hub/platform where all required logging information will be uploaded and readily downloadable in English and different local languages. A section of the FC website can be dedicated to districts to direct viewers to events and information specific to the districts.
4. The FC has all logging information on its website but not all communities either know this or have access to the internet. In an age when mobile phones abound, the FC/FSD could partner with Non-Governmental Organisations and communications service providers to pilot GSM-based information access system for each district whereby any community member can access logging information by sending a short code to a designated number. This approach can also be used to develop an effective forest monitoring system.
5. The FC could develop a communication strategy per forest district or for all forest districts (for uniformity). Per this strategy, the type of information, the media, feedback mechanisms should be set and possible responses sought for it to be successful. This will put an end to the elite capture challenge that keeps information from trickling down to the general public.
6. Under circumstances where community representatives are invited for meetings, trainings, conferences, etc., the FSD could develop a feedback mechanism and/or an action plan (to be monitored) of how the participants can or should disseminate the newly acquired knowledge or information to their respective communities.
7. Each FSD could establish an effective and reliable complaint and conflict resolution mechanism to foster trust and good working relationship with communities.

Appendices

ASSESSING ACCESSIBILITY AND AVAILABILITY OF LOGGING INFORMATION TO COMMUNITIES

Community:

District:

Region:

Stakeholders: Type of stakeholder and names

Background

Civic Response has awarded a short term consultancy to Gaia Consult to assess the accessibility and availability of logging information to local communities. This is in an activity as part of the forest governance monitoring framework for Ghana that has been designed by Civic Response to monitor participation of local communities regarding logging information and forest management; and accountability in benefit sharing. This action contributes to the Linking FLEGT and REDD+ project funded by the EU.

We (Gaia Consult) will like to have a brief discussion on the kind of logging information you receive as a community, the information sources, how often you receive them, and the medium of delivery. We will like to have a 30-min discussion to further gain insight on the community perspective on the subject matter. We will like to seek your permission to before we start the discussion. Thankyou.

Your responses will be kept confidential and we would not identify you with a comment unless you have expressly given permission to the research to do such.

Questionnaire for Local Communities

INDICATOR / QUESTION	YES	NO	COMMENT					REFERENCE
General Questions								
Has there been timber extraction close to this community in the last 5 years?								
Do you know the name of the timber contractors who have worked in this area?								
Does an agency or person provide you information about logging in the area?								
Do you know the duration of the harvesting of the contractors?								
What type of permits are being used by contractors for logging in this area?								
Who normally provides information to the community?								
Information is made available, who is the information passed to?								
PRE-HARVESTING								
Was information made available to the community before the enumeration of trees? **								
Was the community involved in the stock survey? **								
Was the community given a copy of the yield which was allocated to the timber contractor?								
Was the community informed about the timber company who has been awarded the contract to harvest the timber?								
Was the community informed about signing an SRA with the timber contractor?								
Was the community informed about the value of the 5% of stumpage fees due to them?								
How do you rate information flow between the FSD and the community before harvesting	1	2	3	4	5	1=Excellent 2= Good 3=Moderate 4=Absent		
DURING HARVESTING								
Was the community informed about the logging schedules of the various contractors in the forest reserves								
Are community members informed when by the FC when timber contractors are to work on weekends?								

Was the community or the representative of the TA made aware to be part of the measuring of harvested trees?						
How do you rate information flow between the FSD and the community during harvesting?	1	2	3	4	5	1=Excellent 2= Good 3=Moderate 4=Absent
POST-HARVEST						
Are communities informed about the closure of compartments after logging?						
How do you rate information flow between the FSD and the community after harvesting?	1	2	3	4	5	1=Excellent 2= Good 3=Moderate 4=Absent
What effective approaches and media should be used to ensure that local communities have greater access to logging information						

**for off reserves

Question grid for forest services division

INDICATOR	YES	NO	COMMENTS					REFERENCE
GENERAL QUESTIONS								
What basic logging information does the District Forest Office provide for local communities?								
How do you provide this information?								
In what form/medium is the information given to them?								
Do community reps approach the FSD for information?			How often?					
Are the communities aware of the companies working in the reserves/off reserves in proximity to them?								
How were they made aware of this? Did they approach the FSD or vice versa?								
Does the FSD face any legitimate public or private risk by disclosing logging information to communities?								
PRE HARVESTING								
Do local communities participate in enumeration of trees for salvage felling?								
Are land owners made aware prior to logging in their farms?								
Do you give copies of yields to the community?								
Is the community informed to negotiate SRAs								
Is the community informed about the 5% value of stumpage								
How do you rate information flow between the FSD and the community before harvesting	1	2	3	4	5	1=Excellent 2= Good 3=Moderate 4=Absent		

DURING HARVESTING

Was the community informed about the logging schedules of the various contractors in the forest reserves						
Are community members informed when by the FC when timber contractors are to work on weekends?						
Was the community or the representative of the TA made aware to be part of the measuring of harvested trees?						
How do you rate information flow between the FSD and the community during harvesting operations?	1	2	3	4	5	1=Excellent 2= Good 3=Moderate 4=Absent

AFTER HARVESTING

Are communities informed about the closure of compartments after logging?						
How do you rate information flow between the FSD and the community during harvesting operations?	1	2	3	4	5	1=Excellent 2= Good 3=Moderate 4=Absent
What effective approaches and media should be used to ensure that local communities have greater access to logging information						



A Publication by Civic Response
February 2017



Design & Print:
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