



REDD+ & POST-CONFLICT

A briefing for the Oslo REDD-Exchange
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Since the first commitments for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD+) were announced in Bali in 2007, more than half of all participating countries have experienced violent conflict involving organized, armed groups (see Figure on reverse). Through programs like the United Nations–REDD Programme, the World Bank-hosted Forest Carbon Partnership Facility and Forest Investment Program, as well as the Amazon Fund, and various bilateral and private programs, REDD+ can help avoid a resumption of violence and reinforce peace processes around the globe. REDD+ offers a plausible alternative to sectors that have contributed to conflict, such as industrial forestry and plantation agriculture, and governance reform associated with REDD-readiness can contribute to “environmental peacebuilding.” If properly designed, REDD+ programs can strengthen peace and security as much as they can mitigate climate change, improve environmental management, and support local communities.

But to be effective, REDD+ must address challenges unique to countries attempting to recover from conflict.

The opportunities presented by post-conflict environments can include:

- A “constituency for change” that can **build the “political will”** among elites that would otherwise resist change.
- **Popular support** for the reform of forest management consistent with REDD-readiness, especially if the exploitation of forests (such as through industrial logging or plantation agriculture) contributed to the conflict and/or exploited local people.
- **International attention, money, resources, and expertise** which can help raise the capacity of government, the private sector, and civil society to implement governance reform.
- “Good will” that can provide the **leverage for reform**, especially if the reform is tied to the lifting of international sanctions and/or consumer campaigns.

But (post-)conflict countries also pose challenges for initiatives like REDD+ that are offered as alternatives to “business as usual”:

- Impatience: immediately after conflicts, “quick wins” are needed, especially job creation and revenue generation; **industrial logging and plantation agriculture are seen as a fast way to rebuild a war-torn economy**; REDD+ payments are often seen as being unable to deliver in time
- **Risk is high, so “responsible” investment is low**; “passive speculators” (those holding licenses but not operating, and instead waiting to sell the licenses once risk is lowered) may be common, as are operators that obtain high return by “cutting corners” and/or operating corruptly.
- **Insecurity is high**, especially in rural, forested areas, making it difficult to access and, therefore, engage stakeholders in consultation processes.
- Former commanders **co-opt/block reforms as a way to maintain militia networks** and obtain money; these “spoilers” are willing to resume violence in order to maintain power and revenue-streams.
- **Individuals within transitional governments see logging and plantations as a way to personally benefit** (rent-seeking).
- Discussions over regional forest management are often entwined in national discussions over **decentralization and regional autonomy**.
- **Land rights are uncertain**; “adverse possession” is problematic when displaced people return to find squatters on their land.
- **Populations are traumatized**; trust is difficult to build.

Given the history of conflict in more than half of all countries participating in REDD+, including 12 countries with UN/European Union missions related to peacekeeping and 9 with UN peacebuilding funds, REDD+ must be “conflict-sensitive.” At the very least REDD+ must ‘do no harm’, and avoid generating grievance that could fuel a resumption of violence. But, by seizing the opportunities and managing the challenges of operating in a (post-)conflict country mentioned above, REDD+ programs will not only increase their own chance of success, but contribute meaningfully to peacebuilding.

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The presence of conflict since 2008 in countries participating in the three largest REDD+ programs (UN-REDD (✓); FCPF (✓); FIP (✓)). Conflict is defined by the Uppsala Conflict Data Program as i) organized, armed conflict with at least 1 death in a given year (👤); and ii) organized, armed conflict involving government forces with at least 25 deaths in a given year (👤👤). The presence of a mission related to peacekeeping is indicated by the U.N. (🇺🇳) and European Union flags (🇪🇺); the 🇺🇳 symbol indicates a U.N. peacebuilding fund.

The Fund for Peace's Fragile States Index (on a scale from 0 – 115, best to worst) incorporates measures like "factionalization of elites", "group grievance", "state legitimacy", "rule of law", "security apparatus", and "external interventions". No REDD+-country scored better than the average value for all OECD countries (median = 33.6).

Countries are listed by decreasing forest cover, as reported by FAO for 2015.

COUNTRIES WITH FOREST COVER >100 MILLION HECTARES

COUNTRY	REDD+ PROGRAMS	PRESENCE OF CONFLICT	PEACE-KEEPING MISSIONS	FRAGILE STATES INDEX
BRAZIL	✓	👤		—
DR CONGO	✓✓✓	👤👤	🇺🇳 🇪🇺	—

COUNTRIES WITH FOREST COVER >10 MILLION HECTARES

COUNTRY	REDD+ PROGRAMS	PRESENCE OF CONFLICT	PEACE-KEEPING MISSIONS	FRAGILE STATES INDEX
INDONESIA	✓✓✓	👤	🇪🇺	—
PERU	✓✓✓	👤👤		—
INDIA	✓	👤👤	🇺🇳	—
MEXICO	✓✓✓	👤		—
COLOMBIA	✓✓	👤👤		—
BOLIVIA	✓✓			—
ZAMBIA	✓✓			—
TANZANIA	✓✓			—
MOZAMBIQUE	✓✓	👤👤		—
PNG	✓✓	👤	🇺🇳	—
MYANMAR	✓	👤👤	🇺🇳	—
ARGENTINA	✓✓			—
GABON	✓✓			—
REP OF CONGO	✓✓✓	👤		—
MALAYSIA	✓	👤👤		—
CAR	✓✓	👤👤	🇺🇳 🇪🇺	—
SUDAN	✓✓	👤👤	🇺🇳	—
CAMEROON	✓✓✓	👤		—
LAOS	✓✓✓			—
CHILE	✓✓			—
GUYANA	✓✓✓	👤		—
THAILAND	✓	👤👤		—
SURINAME	✓			—
PARAGUAY	✓✓			—
VIETNAM	✓✓			—
ZIMBABWE	✓	👤		—
MONGOLIA	✓			—
ECUADOR	✓✓	👤		—
ETHIOPIA	✓	👤👤	🇺🇳	—
MADAGASCAR	✓✓	👤	🇺🇳	—
CÔTE D'IVOIRE	✓✓✓	👤👤	🇺🇳	—

OECD
MEDIAN
LEVEL
(33.6)

COUNTRIES WITH FOREST COVER >1 MILLION HECTARES

COUNTRY	REDD+ PROGRAMS	PRESENCE OF CONFLICT	PEACE-KEEPING MISSIONS	FRAGILE STATES INDEX
CAMBODIA	✓✓✓	👤👤		—
GHANA	✓✓	👤		—
PHILIPPINES	✓	👤👤	🇺🇳	—
S. SUDAN	✓	👤👤	🇺🇳 🇪🇺	—
NIGERIA	✓✓	👤👤		—
GUINEA	✓	👤	🇺🇳	—
MOROCCO	✓			—
BURKINA FASO	✓✓✓			—
CHAD	✓	👤👤	🇺🇳 🇪🇺	—
PANAMA	✓✓	👤		—
HONDURAS	✓✓✓	👤		—
KENYA	✓✓	👤	🇺🇳	—
BENIN	✓			—
LIBERIA	✓✓		🇺🇳	—
NEPAL	✓✓✓	👤👤	🇺🇳	—
GUATEMALA	✓✓✓	👤		—
MALAWI	✓			—
NICARAGUA	✓			—
COSTA RICA	✓✓			—
BHUTAN	✓✓			—
SOLOMON ISLANDS	✓			—
UGANDA	✓✓✓	👤👤	🇺🇳	—
SRI LANKA	✓	👤👤	🇺🇳	—
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	✓✓			—
GUINEA-BISSAU	✓		🇪🇺	—
URUGUAY	✓			—
EQUATORIAL GUINEA	✓			—
PAKISTAN	✓✓	👤👤	🇺🇳	—
BANGLADESH	✓✓	👤👤		—
BELIZE	✓			—
TUNISIA	✓✓			—
FIJI	✓✓			—

COUNTRIES WITH FOREST COVER <1 MILLION HECTARES

COUNTRY	REDD+ PROGRAMS	PRESENCE OF CONFLICT	PEACE-KEEPING MISSIONS	FRAGILE STATES INDEX
RWANDA	✓	👤👤		—
VANUATU	✓✓			—
JAMAICA	✓			—
EL SALVADOR	✓✓			—
TOGO	✓✓			—
SAMOA	✓			—