Accountability to Communities and Beneficiaries

October 2017

What is Beneficiary Accountability?

WWF recognises that we have a responsibility to be accountable to our supporters, donors, the communities and partners that we work with[1]. WWF also recognises that beneficiaries have the right (to resources, participation and decision-making) for things that affect their lives. Beneficiary accountability is how WWF is accountable to beneficiaries/ communities and other stakeholders.

Why it is Important to be Accountable to Beneficiaries?

WWF is responsible for the positive and negative impacts of its projects. Actions that promote accountability can contribute to more effective and sustainable results in a number of ways:

1. Demonstrate respect and promotion of human rights
2. Foster good cooperation, empower rights-holders, build trust and stronger relationships with project stakeholders.
3. Help to strengthen ownership amongst partners, improving the chance of long-term impact.
4. Provide WWF with feedback on what is working well and not so well.
5. Strengthen our understanding of the context in which the project operates.
6. Identify unintended consequences that are impacting negatively on some stakeholders; remedial action can then be taken so that these do not become a risk to the project's success.
7. Motivate staff e.g. when positive feedback is received.
8. Help to pick up on issues such as fraud and misconduct
9. Support WWF in implementing the network's social principles[2] and suite of social policies, guidelines and other relevant commitments[3]

Who are Project's Beneficiaries?

There are different types of beneficiaries:

Ultimate: Men and women, households and communities in the project area / focus countries whom ultimately WWF's work is intending to benefit

Proximate: Men and women, organisations or institutions that the project works with <u>directly</u> e.g. civil servants, government departments, community based organisations, and businesses.

Intermediate or Indirect: institutions, organisations, governments, groups, men and women with whom the project aims to bring about change but with whom the project may not be working directly.

There may also be some men and women or organisations that are **negatively affected** by the project. When a project includes risks of negatively affecting the land or resource rights of local communities, WWF is committed to engaging with these communities in order to prevent or minimise harm, and to ensure adequate compensation for negative effects that cannot be mitigated.[4]

Methods to support Beneficiary Accountability

Different methods can be used to promote accountability with communities. ~~These fall~~ Suggestions are presented below under 5 categories but several approaches can be used together as needed. For policy projects, where the project may not work directly with ultimate beneficiaries, look at how

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[1] http://wwf.panda.org/who_we_are/organization/ethics/
[2] http://wwf.panda.org/what_we_do/how_we_work/people_and_conservation/our_principles/
3 For social policies go to -
http://wwf.panda.org/what_we_do/how_we_work/people_and_conservation/wwf_social_policies/
4 WWF Guidelines: Prevention of Restriction of Rights and Involuntary Relocation and Resettlement of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities.

information can be shared (e.g. digitally), how the voices of beneficiaries can be included in policy dialogue, and how a sample of ultimate beneficiaries can be used to gain feedback and/or participate in evaluations.

Sharing of Information
- Physical - sign-boards, posters, pamphlets, pictures (including cartoons)
- Digital – social media, TV, radio, films / cartoons, information sharing platforms
- Events – community or individual meetings / workshops, drama or music events
- Individual - phone calls, individual meetings

Consultations (including surveys)
Any consultation needs to ensure the rights of communities and should follow the principle of obtaining free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) from communities as stated in WWF policy[5]. Please see the guideline on how FPIC can be implemented[6]. Methods for consultation include:
- Meetings – community meetings, stakeholder workshops, personal meetings
- Individual phone calls
- Surveys – face-to-face, hard copy, on-line or SMS. Then hold meetings to verify and share findings
- Involvement in rights mapping, land use mapping, participatory rural appraisal (PRA) type exercises, social and environmental impact assessments (SEIA), etc.

Participation
- Beneficiaries design and implement activities
- Beneficiaries jointly develop guidance or plans with the public and private sector
- Beneficiaries develop evidence (i.e. films) for advocacy
- Beneficiaries take an active role in monitoring and evaluation

Feedback
- In meetings
- In participatory monitoring and evaluation processes
- 'Post box' where communities / beneficiaries can submit written complaints
- A toll free mobile phone number which people can phone and/or texts be sent to
- Help desks in certain locations and on certain days where complaints can be either addressed verbally or written complaints submitted (see separate section below).

Learning and Adaptation
- Reflection - Hold reflection meetings with beneficiary groups
- Analysis of Change – beneficiaries develop change stories or pictures
- Meetings to share and discuss monitoring and evaluation findings
- Beneficiaries and stakeholder representatives are part of monitoring and evaluation teams
- Beneficiaries participate in the process to update, revise or redesign project plans

Formal Complaints and Response Mechanism (CRM)
WWF's formal Projects Complaints Resolution Policy and Projects Complaints Resolution Process. reflect WWF's commitment to providing a mechanism for receiving and responding to concerns raised by stakeholders. The project should plan, budget, and implement any activities necessary to ensure that beneficiaries are able to submit a CRM (i.e. via help desks, phone, SMS etc.). It is important to document each complaint (who raised it, the decision, and when fed back).

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[5] WWF Environment and Social Safeguards Integrated Policies and Procedures, June 2015
[6] http://wwf.panda.org/?203189/Free-Prior-Informed-Consent--REDD-Guidelines-and-Resources

When to Consider Community Accountability Throughout the Project Cycle

Many WWF projects are already practising elements of good beneficiary accountability, but perhaps they are not doing so consistently. Below are some suggested actions to strengthen beneficiary accountability at each stage of the cycle. In the design stage it is important to plan carefully how you will consider beneficiary accountability throughout the whole project cycle.

PPMS Stage	Actions To Take
Define	• Involve beneficiaries in the Stakeholder Analysis and Context Analysis • For policy projects, although there is often limited direct relationship with ultimate beneficiaries, it is important to think about how any partners you are working with relate to these beneficiaries, how they represent them and how the voices of the most marginalised can be heard in policy dialogue.
Design	• Involve beneficiaries in problem-solving and the design of strategies via information provision, consultation, participation etc. • Develop accountability approaches for the Implementation, Analyse/ Adapt and Share stages and include them in the workplan
Implementation	• Include beneficiaries in planning and carrying out the activities • Consult with beneficiaries throughout the project • Establish a feedback mechanism including a formal CRM
Analyse / Adapt and Share	• Involve beneficiaries in monitoring and evaluation • Hold meetings to share the monitoring and evaluation findings and agree how to adapt the work-plan and approach • Plan and carry out reflection times with beneficiaries and agree adaptations

Enabling Communities to hold Duty Bearers to Account

For improved effectiveness and sustained impact it is beneficial for WWF to help communities to: 1) understand their human rights and policies that should be applied by Governments and the private sector and 2) to facilitate them to be able to hold these duty-bearers to account. As examples, these could relate to factors that affect ecosystems and beneficiaries' well-being such as policies on pollution, logging, land-rights, and also services that should be present such as agroforestry extension services and insurance schemes. If the beneficiaries are involved in monitoring for both the project and of an ecosystem, they can use this evidence to push for change by authorities.

Community Accountability Examples

1. The SWAUM programme, Tanzania, uses Stories of Change as one approach to understanding change in the communities and what they perceive as the most significant.

2. Plan UK has been piloting approaches to involving their beneficiaries – children – in the design and implementation of evaluations of their programmes.

3. The Coastal East Africa GI has worked with proximate beneficiaries including Government departments, civil society organisations and the private sector to jointly develop guidelines, strategies and work-plans. This approach has strengthened mutual accountability and created a stronger sense of ownership amongst partners.

4. In Uganda UNICEF supported the development of a system called 'Ureport' which is a free SMS-based system that has been used to consult young Ugandans on a range of issues including: education, health, inflation, early marriage and safe water. The Ureport team analyse and share the results.

5. Holding Duty Bearers to Account – Nepal WWF have been ensuring the Government mandated annual Public Hearing Public Audit are carried out effectively, with the voice of Community Forest Users Groups (GFUG) being heard. In the public hearings the members identified that GFUG money was being embezzled, and the funds were subsequently retrieved.

Appendix 1 – Stakeholder Engagement and Accountability Framework

Stakeholder	Type of beneficiary: ultimate, proximate, intermediate or negatively affected (where applicable).	Level of participation: when and how you will engage each stakeholder. (N.B. these are illustrative examples, for each stakeholder the level of participation will vary but at the very least all stakeholders should be informed and consulted about the project)					Feedback mechanism
		Inform	Consult	Involve	Partnership	Empower	
Community Forest User Group Members	Ultimate	Notice board with info about WWF and the project Verbal updates at regular meetings.	On project plans on annual basis.	In design, monitoring and in evaluations	In co-creation and co-management of the overall project.	Throughout the project to be able to manage forest resources by themselves by end of project.	Public Hearing and Public Audits annually. Informally during field visits Local grievance mechanism
Women engaged in income generating projects.	Ultimate	Notice board in villageswith info about WWF and the project Verbal information about project provided at start and on annual basis.	Interviewed / focus groups during evaluations	In design of appropriate projects; in monitoring and in evaluations	In co-creation and co-management of the overall project	Throughout the project to be able to manage income generation approaches by themselves by end of project.	Informally during field visits. Local grievance mechanism.
Fisher people impacted by policy changes to regional fishing policies.	Ultimate Possibility of some fisher people being negatively affected.	Information about project provided at start and on annual basis	Groups representing fisher people are consulted on proposed policy changes.	In evaluations	In lobbying and advocacy	To affirm their voice in representing their communities to those in power	Grievance mechanism. Policy dialogue workshops. Formal consultations. .