

UN-REDD
PROGRAMME



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UN-REDD 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

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FOREWORD

As we reach the midpoint of this critical decade to halt and reverse deforestation and forest degradation by 2030, the urgency to accelerate action has never been greater. The next few years will determine whether the global community can meet this ambition, requiring sustained political leadership, scaled finance, and more effective implementation of policies that address the drivers of forest loss while upholding rights and strengthening livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

The UN-REDD Programme continued to demonstrate its value as a trusted partner to countries in advancing REDD+ implementation and enabling high-integrity forest solutions, despite a volatile, uncertain and complex geopolitical and economic context. UN-REDD's results in 2025 reflect strong country demand and the Programme's continued focus on REDD+ implementation and access to results-based finance. During the reporting period, UN-REDD supported 22 partner countries with tailored technical assistance to strengthen REDD+ monitoring systems, advance safeguards compliance, unlock results-based finance, and embed forests more effectively into national development planning and climate commitments. This support has helped countries advance jurisdictional REDD+ implementation aligned with high-integrity market and results-based finance frameworks, including emerging standards such as Architecture for REDD+ Transactions (ART) TREES, enabling countries to prepare for verification, credit issuance and participation in high-integrity jurisdictional REDD+ markets. These achievements reflect the strong collaboration of contributing donors and collaborating partners, to whom we express our sincere appreciation.

Following COP30 in Belém, forests have gained renewed political attention, including through new initiatives such as the Tropical Forest Forever Facility and strengthened commitments on forest and land tenure and the Roadmap for Halting and Reversing Deforestation and Forest Degradation by 2030. These developments represent important momentum, yet they also underline the scale of the challenge and the need to translate commitments into accelerated implementation and measurable results. Achieving the 2030 goal will require scaled and predictable finance, strengthened governance, and credible implementation pathways grounded in high-integrity standards and respect for rights.

[The UN-REDD Programme's 2026–2030 Strategy](#), which was finalised in 2025 and developed through a process of reflection and consultation, sets out a collective vision for how the Programme will contribute to halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation by 2030. Building on more than 15 years of experience and partnership at country, regional and global levels, the Strategy responds to a shift in global priorities, from ambition-setting to delivery at scale. The Strategy positions UN-REDD to continue supporting countries in strengthening implementation capacity, mobilizing finance, and ensuring that forest action remains rights-based, credible and effective.

UN-REDD's distinctive contribution to realising forest-based solutions lies in how it works as a trusted partner supporting highly participatory, demand-driven and context-specific processes. In line with the direction of UN reform and UN80, the Programme has continued to strengthen efficiency, value for money and accountability across its operations. UN-REDD's financial management and transparency remain anchored in the Multi-Partner Trust Fund mechanism, providing robust fiduciary oversight and clear reporting to contributing donors and partner countries. UN-REDD stands ready to continue supporting countries in advancing and accelerating large scale REDD+ implementation, access to investments and results-based finance and, ultimately, contributing to halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation by 2030.

Tropical forests breathe life into our planet.
Without tropical forests, there is no path to
limiting global warming to 1.5°C
by the end of the century.

([António Guterres, UN Secretary-General](#))

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The conclusion of the 2021-2025 phase marks an inflection point for jurisdictional REDD+. Over the past five years, UN-REDD partner countries have moved beyond assembling the essential components of the REDD+ architecture toward institutionalizing systems capable of withstanding technical scrutiny and market due diligence. National forest monitoring systems are more standardized and embedded within government institutions. Safeguards information systems are clearer and increasingly operational. Legal debates on carbon rights, registries, and nesting approaches have translated into formal policy instruments in several countries. Across forest countries, securing land-tenure rights is increasingly recognised as critical to advancing and sustaining efforts to halt and reverse deforestation, biodiversity protection and resilient livelihoods.

At the same time, the external environment has become more demanding. Voluntary carbon markets have faced intensified integrity scrutiny, standards have been raised, and expectations around transparency, tenure, and benefit-sharing have sharpened. Access to results-based finance now depends not only on technical readiness, but on demonstrable governance quality and social legitimacy. Credibility has become the decisive factor.

By the end of 2025, monitoring and reporting systems in 16 partner countries have moved closer to institutional maturity. Technical gaps in activity data, emission factors, and Quality Assurance / Quality Control (QA/QC) procedures were addressed through targeted assistance, while several countries advanced or updated forest reference levels and strengthened interoperability between monitoring platforms and national registries. Importantly, monitoring functions are increasingly embedded within permanent government structures rather than project-based arrangements. The overall trajectory reflects a shift from readiness to operational reliability, though continued domestic investment remains critical to sustain performance.

Similarly, safeguards information systems (SIS), across UN-REDD partner countries moved closer to full implementation, with several countries using them to prepare and submit submitting summaries of information to the UNFCCC. Targeted technical assistance has helped close gaps in safeguards reporting, clarify legal and regulatory frameworks, and improve benefit-sharing arrangements, while strengthening national and subnational safeguards systems to align with market (e.g. ART-TREES) and fund (e.g. GCF) results-based finance requirements and processes. Sustained operational capacities to run SIS have been embedded within government institutions and are increasingly less reliant on individual ODA-funded personnel.

Seventeen jurisdictions advanced legal, safeguards, registry, and benefit-sharing frameworks required for high-integrity results-based finance. Progress along ART-TREES cycles - preparation of registration documents, monitoring reports, and third-party validation and verification - signals a more coherent jurisdictional REDD+ pipeline than at the start of the phase. In several countries, UN-REDD support formed part of a broader ecosystem of assistance linked to engagement with GCF Results-Based Payments or jurisdictional market initiatives. While transaction decisions remain independent of Programme support, institutional capacities and readiness for participation in results-based finance mechanisms is measurably stronger.

Ahead of COP-30 in Brazil, the Programme played a catalytic role by supporting national consultations and providing technical assistance to advance land tenure rights in five participating countries (Costa Rica, Ecuador, Indonesia, Peru, and Republic of the Congo) including supporting engagement and specific contributions to the Intergovernmental Land Tenure Commitment (ILTC).

Forests are more firmly embedded within national climate planning than at the beginning of 2021-2025 Phase. Sixteen countries incorporated forest mitigation more explicitly within updated NDC processes or related climate strategies, supported by analytical inputs and policy dialogues facilitated through the Programme. Rather than operating as stand-alone REDD+ strategies, forest

mitigation is increasingly positioned within more holistic climate and development planning frameworks, linking mitigation targets, regulatory reforms, and financing considerations.

The Programme's role as a neutral convener gained importance amid tightening integrity expectations in global carbon markets. Investment roundtables, regional safeguard clinics, and targeted policy dialogues provided structured platforms for governments to engage with standards bodies, finance actors, and peer jurisdictions. These engagements did not determine market outcomes, but they strengthened shared interpretation of evolving requirements and reduced fragmentation in approaches to safeguards, jurisdictional crediting, and benefit-sharing. In a period of heightened scrutiny, this facilitative role has reinforced coherence and credibility across participating countries.

2021-2025 Phase support operated at this intersection of technical consolidation and governance strengthening. UN-REDD has not functioned as a transaction broker or standard setter; its role has been to reinforce the institutional conditions that allow countries to engage credibly with evolving Article 5 and Article 6 frameworks, ART-TREES requirements, and results-based payment modalities. Durable forest climate finance rests less on isolated transactions than on the strength of national systems that underpin them.

The 2026-2030 phase therefore begins from a more mature technical baseline, but within a more complex and scrutinized landscape. Political transitions, fiscal constraints, and shifting market dynamics introduce uncertainty into implementation pathways. The immediate priority is recalibration: consolidating gains, aligning with market integrity requirements, and ensuring that strengthened systems translate into scalable, high-integrity emission reductions. The year 2026 will serve as a transition year in this alignment process.

PROGRESS TOWARDS REDD+ IMPLEMENTATION

Forest solutions realised

Across REDD+ implementation, including forest management and deforestation-free commodity supply chains (Outputs 1.1 to 1.3), countries have advanced through strengthened planning frameworks, sectoral integration, and the development of investment pathways. Approximately 8–10 countries, with support from UN-REDD show progress in implementing REDD+ investment plans or programs (Output 1.1), including the development of national or subnational action plans, improved coordination across institutions, and the operationalization of benefit-sharing and incentive mechanisms (e.g. Bolivia, Costa Rica). A number of countries also reported advances in integrating REDD+ into productive landscapes and territorial approaches, contributing to more coherent implementation (e.g. Ecuador, Indonesia). Progress under Output 1.3 (deforestation-free commodity supply chains) was reported in 5–7 countries, particularly through pilot initiatives and analytical work in key sectors such as coffee, cacao, and livestock, supporting alignment between forest conservation objectives and sustainable production systems (e.g. Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico). Under Output 1.2 (forest landscape restoration and carbon stock enhancement), two countries made progress through the development of methodologies, analytical work, and initiatives to support restoration and sustainable forest management, including restoration-linked enterprise development and carbon stock assessment (e.g. Democratic Republic of the Congo, Costa Rica). Overall, progress across these outputs reflects a growing emphasis on translating REDD+ strategies into coherent operational frameworks and investment-ready approaches, while continued efforts will be important to further scale implementation and results on the ground.

Progress under Output 1.4 has been strong and widespread, with over 20 countries reporting advances in forest monitoring and emissions accounting systems. Countries have strengthened National Forest Monitoring Systems (NFMS), developed or updated forest reference emission levels (FRELs), and improved activity data and emission factors through enhanced land-cover mapping,

field-based data collection, and methodological improvements (e.g. Cambodia, Costa Rica, Chile). Several countries also advanced the integration of geospatial tools, uncertainty analysis, and data platforms, contributing to greater transparency and robustness of monitoring systems (e.g. Mexico, Nepal, Papua New Guinea). These efforts support countries in meeting international reporting requirements, including Biennial Transparency Reports and REDD+ Technical Annexes, while also enhancing readiness for participation in high integrity results-based finance mechanisms. In many cases, progress reflects the increasing institutionalization of monitoring systems within national frameworks, contributing to their long-term sustainability and policy relevance.

Similarly, Output 1.5 on safeguards has shown substantial progress across the portfolio, over the past five years with 19 countries reporting advances in the development and operationalization of safeguards systems. Key achievements include the establishment or strengthening of Safeguards Information Systems (SIS), the preparation and submission of Summaries of Information to the UNFCCC, and the development of grievance redress mechanisms and benefit-sharing frameworks. Countries also undertook safeguards gap assessments, institutional capacity-building efforts, and the development of reporting tools aligned with international standards, including ART-TREES requirements.

The Programme strengthened land tenure security, indigenous rights, and safeguards across all participating countries. Costa Rica advanced coordination among national and international partners in support of the ILTC, while Ecuador issued collective Shuar land titles and integrated *Planes de Vida* into REDD+ frameworks through strengthened governance and participatory processes and endorsing the ILTC. Indonesia also endorsed the ILTC and made significant progress on customary forest recognition through new training, taskforce planning, and database consolidation. In Peru and the Republic of the Congo, improvements in benefit sharing, land tenure analysis, safeguards, and institutional capacities further reinforced the enabling conditions needed to advance land tenure rights. These efforts contribute to strengthening the environmental integrity and social inclusiveness of REDD+ implementation and provide an important foundation for sustaining long-term forest outcomes.

Forest solutions rewarded

As of the close of 2025, UN-REDD assisted 24 jurisdictions in meeting eligibility requirements for results-based finance. 5 jurisdictions received support to strengthen capacities and engagement with carbon markets across the voluntary carbon markets (VCM), CORSIA, and Article 6. 17 received technical assistance toward ART/TREES alignment, and one jurisdiction received knowledge management support. This support helped strengthen engagement with the LEAF Coalition, potentially generating up to 170 million tons of annual supply by 2027¹. UN-REDD also connected jurisdictions in the ART/TREES pipeline with public and private finance across the VCM, CORSIA, and emerging Article 6 cooperation frameworks through 3 Investors Roundtables. Additionally, UN-REDD supported two jurisdictions (Papua New Guinea and Uganda) in accessing results-based payments (RBPs) from the Green Climate Fund (GCF), corresponding to approximately 25 million tCO₂e in verified emission reductions representing around USD 95 million in payments. This support focused on strengthening national MRV systems, implementing safeguards, and preparing the documentation required for submitting results-based finance requests.

The Programme supported 17 jurisdictions, including Bolivia, Chile, Costa Rica, the Democratic Republic of Congo (Province of Tshuapa), Ecuador, Ghana, Kenya, Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR), two subnational jurisdictions in Mexico, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Republic of Congo, Uganda, Viet Nam, and Zambia, on strengthening technical readiness for jurisdictional crediting, by ensuring compliance with ART/TREES. This support included MRV improvements, safeguards and benefit-sharing systems, validation and verification processes, and the preparation

¹ Estimated volume of credits under the assumption that 50% of the current pipeline materializes.

of documentation required by buyers and investors in the VCM. The Programme also advised jurisdictions on navigating evolving market integrity considerations, including integrity initiatives such as ICVCM Core Carbon Principles (CCPs) and the SBTi draft Corporate Net Zero Standard V.2.

As of 2025, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Ghana, Nepal received technical assistance from UN-REDD to conform with ART/TREES, guiding them through the full cycle, from concept notes to registration documents, and supporting validation and verification processes, culminating in the signing of ERPAs with the LEAF Coalition². Other jurisdictions supported by UN-REDD have progressed through the signing of LOIs, including Vietnam and Kenya, while others such as Bolivia, the Democratic Republic of Congo (Province of Tshuapa), and the states of Jalisco and Quintana Roo have advanced through MOUs. All are part of the potential pipeline of jurisdictions that can deliver more than enough emission reductions to fully commit available funding under the LEAF Coalition.

During 2025, the UN-REDD Programme convened three REDD+ Investment Roundtables: in London alongside the London Climate Action Week 2025, Seoul alongside the Global Green Growth Week 2025, and Johannesburg on the margins of the Africa Carbon Markets Summit. These events were aimed at addressing the gap between the forthcoming supply of high-integrity jurisdictional forest emission reductions and the relatively limited understanding of public and private-sector actors about the carbon and non-carbon benefits of REDD+ credits. The roundtables brought together more than 100 participants representing governments, investors, intermediaries, development partners and other stakeholders to foster dialogue, exchange market trends, and identify opportunities for long-term offtake agreements, blended finance and risk mitigation mechanisms, covering voluntary carbon market (VCM), CORSIA, and Article 6 cooperative approaches.

Despite a complex geopolitical context, in 2026, scaling finance for forests remains a priority, and the outlook for jurisdictional REDD+ is encouraging. Key trends for driving JREDD+ consolidation by 2030 include:

- High-integrity carbon markets: Integrity is becoming the norm, enabling carbon credits, including JREDD+, to command premium prices and higher retirements.
- Expanding demand for carbon credits, with strong potential for JREDD+ participation: Demand is expected to accelerate across voluntary markets (1.5–2.0 GtCO₂e by 2030), CORSIA’s mandatory phase (502–1,299 MtCO₂e, 2027–2035), and Article 6 cooperation (7.2 GtCO₂e by 2050), driven by corporate, airline, and government buyers.
- Accelerating JREDD+ supply: Host jurisdictions are advancing carbon pricing, regulatory frameworks, and ART/TREES compliance, supported by phased issuance, financial de-risking instruments, and long-term offtakes.
- Growing role of rating agencies in strengthening carbon markets confidence: Ratings set benchmarks for quality and impact, guiding buyers and correcting market misconceptions, and their work continues to influence the broader carbon market, including JREDD+.
- Financial de-risking for JREDD+: Blended finance, carbon insurance, and credit guarantees help mitigate delivery, political, and reversal risks, reinforcing market confidence in JREDD+.
- Continuation of REDD+ RBP programs: Article 5 programs under the Paris Agreement, supported by the GCF and FCPF, will remain relevant for financing jurisdictional REDD+, even amid multilateral budget pressures.

Given this setting, and under its 2026–2030 strategy, UN-REDD will scale up support for jurisdictional REDD+ by strengthening safeguards, benefit-sharing, and land tenure arrangements; promoting de-risking solutions to enhance market confidence and predictability; and facilitating engagement with public and private finance providers to support JREDD+ markets.

² Brazil’s state of Pará, which also signed an ERPA, was supported through knowledge management activities.

Forest solutions enhanced

UN-REDD continued to support countries to enhance the role of the FOLU sector and REDD+ in their NDCs as well as the associated national climate planning and reporting. Forests and REDD+ have become significantly more embedded in national climate planning over the programme cycle. From 2021 to 2025, sixteen partner countries have strengthened the integration of REDD+ and forest mitigation into their updated NDCs and related climate strategies, reflecting a clear shift from treating REDD+ as a stand-alone initiative to positioning it as a core pillar of national climate ambition. Through targeted analytical support and policy dialogues facilitated by the Programme, countries increasingly anchored REDD+ within whole-of-government planning frameworks, linking forest mitigation targets with regulatory reforms, investment strategies, and cross-sector coordination.

UN-REDD played a central role in helping countries to integrate and enhance the inclusion of forest sector actions and REDD+ priorities into NDCs as well as general national climate action planning and reporting. In Asia Pacific, Cambodia advanced the integration of forestry and land use targets into its NDC 3.0, defining REDD+ indicators for incorporation into the Cambodia Management Information System (CEMIS) and strengthening linkages between forest mitigation and national climate planning and environmental information systems. Viet Nam incorporated new mangrove carbon stock assessments into national databases to inform NDC ambition and advance readiness for potential carbon market access. In Africa, Uganda supported FOLU integration into NDC implementation through regulatory updates and policy coherence analysis tied to public forestry expenditure. Cote D'Ivoire held a series of stakeholder engagements to identify key measures and targets to be incorporated into its NDC 3.0, with a focus on the areas of REDD+ and deforestation-free commodities. In Latin America, Colombia aligned the NDC 3.0 update with the ENREDD+ 2.0 process through a jointly developed roadmap and strengthened institutional capacity for NDC mitigation analysis in the agrifood sector. Costa Rica incorporated the updated Payment for Ecosystem Services system (PES 2.0) directly into NDC implementation instruments, reinforcing forest sector contributions to mitigation and restoration. Bolivia aligned its REDD+ Action Plan with national territorial policies to support NDC 3.0 implementation, including new targets to reduce deforestation by 80% by 2035 and eliminate deforestation in protected areas. The Action Plan translates these commitments into coordinated territorial actions and embeds safeguards to ensure effective, high-integrity delivery.

UN-REDD also continued to strengthen the capacity of countries to mobilize finance for advancing the implementation of NDC forest-sector focused interventions. For example, in Ecuador, Indonesia, and Kenya, support focused on strengthening readiness for high-integrity forest finance, improving systems and policies to deliver REDD+ results, and integrating forest action into national climate and development planning. These efforts collectively assisted in converting NDC targets into actionable, finance-ready measures.

As 2025 marks the final year of the current UN-REDD Programme phase, consolidating achievements and maintaining momentum into 2026–2030 will be essential. While progress has been made in terms of the role of forests and REDD+ in the latest NDCs, the world is still off-track in meeting the long-term temperature goal of the Paris Agreement. With many countries having now submitted their updated NDC 3.0s with more ambitious and comprehensive FOLU-based and REDD+ aligned targets, UN-REDD's support on accelerated NDC implementation in the forest sector will remain critical to ensure that countries are able to meet their enhanced national FOLU-based climate targets, as well as further ratchet ambition as part of the next NDC cycle.

CONTRIBUTION TO THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The UN-REDD Programme continues to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by supporting countries in integrating forest and land-use solutions into their climate strategies.

Through technical assistance, policy guidance, and facilitation to access finance, UN-REDD helps advance at least seven SDGs, ensuring that forests remain an integral part of global sustainability efforts.

UN-REDD supports SDG 13 (climate action) and SDG 15 (life on land) by assisting countries in embedding forest and land-use measures into their national policies (SDG 13.2), strengthening institutional capacities for climate action (SDG 13.3), and helping mobilize international climate finance (SDG 13.a). The Programme also promotes sustainable forest management and restoration (SDGs 15.1 and 15.2) and supports countries in developing financing mechanisms for sustainable forestry (SDG 15.b). As part of its technical work, UN-REDD has continued to support countries in accessing results-based payments and carbon finance, ensuring that mitigation actions in the forestry sector contribute to long-term climate goals.

Gender equality (SDG 5) remains an integral part of UN-REDD's approach, ensuring women's participation in decision-making processes (SDG 5.5) and supporting their equal access to land and natural resources (SDG 5.a). In 2025, the Programme continued integrating gender considerations into national REDD+ strategies, ensuring that women's roles in forest governance and climate action are acknowledged and incorporated.

UN-REDD also contributes to SDG 16 (peace, justice, and strong institutions) by promoting governance frameworks that facilitate the participation of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and civil society in forest-related decision-making processes (SDG 16.7 and 16.10). The Programme supports transparency in carbon finance transactions and strengthens national institutions to improve the governance of forest and land-use sectors.

Efforts to promote sustainable trade (SDG 12) have continued through UN-REDD's work on deforestation-free commodity supply chains (SDG 12.6), with countries increasingly aligning their forest policies with international trade and sustainability standards. The Programme has also contributed to poverty reduction (SDG 1) by enabling forest-dependent communities to access climate finance (SDG 1.a) and advocating for equitable land tenure systems (SDG 1.4).

Collaboration remains an important aspect of UN-REDD's work under SDG 17 (partnerships for the goals). The Programme continues to facilitate multi-stakeholder platforms, support public-private partnerships for sustainable forest management (SDG 17.17) and build technical capacity for countries to implement their climate commitments (SDG 17.9). By supporting South-South cooperation (SDG 17.6 and 17.16), UN-REDD has facilitated knowledge exchanges on sustainable forestry practices and financing mechanisms, ensuring that developing countries can access the tools and expertise needed to implement their SDG-aligned climate strategies.

COUNTRY RESULTS

Argentina



REDD+ Implementation

Forest solutions rewarded

UN-REDD support strengthened Argentina's technical capacity to understand and navigate carbon market opportunities under Article 6, directly informing future REDD+ implementation. In coordination with Argentina's Undersecretariat for the Environment, UN-REDD designed and facilitated a two-session workshop that convened national and provincial authorities, private sector actors (including forest carbon developers), and international partners. The sessions provided an updated overview of jurisdictional and project-level carbon market approaches, nesting frameworks with integrity requirements, and key safeguards considerations, marking the first dedicated multi-institutional dialogues on nesting in the country. This process established a shared technical baseline, fostered inter-institutional coordination, and supported the identification of jurisdictional options to inform future REDD+ decision-making. In parallel, under the UN-REDD Safeguards Working Group for Latin America and the Caribbean, tailored technical assistance was provided to subnational authorities from the Government of Misiones. This included capacity-building on REDD+ safeguards, jurisdictional REDD+ approaches, and specifically on jurisdictional market-based mechanisms, further consolidating Argentina's readiness for implementing jurisdictional REDD+ with environmental and social integrity.

Gender and social inclusion

Given the strategic and upstream focus of the technical assistance provided in 2025, the activities operated at a stage where applying gender-responsive or socially inclusive measures in a substantive way was not yet feasible. UN-REDD AT in 2025 was mostly centred on high-level policy dialogue and institutional processes that precede the definition of actions with identifiable gender-differentiated impacts. Despite the early stages of activities implementation, UN-REDD mainstreamed gender in monitoring efforts of participation in workshops and technical dialogues by disaggregating data by sex and by identifying with women who actively engaged as government counterparts, technical experts and participants. These exchanges helped reinforce the importance of inclusive decision-making from the outset. UN-REDD remains committed to integrating gender equality and social inclusion as the country moves into more detailed design, implementation and monitoring stages, where targeted and evidence-based gender-responsive actions can be meaningfully applied.

Partnerships

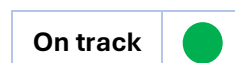
Complementing areas of work directly linked to REDD+ strategy and NDC implementation the country is implementing through the REDD+ RBP payment with FAO as Accredited Entity, the dialogue and specific TA on carbon markets was boosted by the close coordination with the GIZ ProClima project and UNEP's Carbon Markets Unit LAC team. These partnerships facilitated direct outreach to, and engagement with, the National Directorate of Climate Change on the subject.

Challenges and solutions

For an extended period, due to subsequent restructuring and changes in government authorities in the forestry sector, it was difficult to establish a consistent channel of communication with the Government of Argentina. To strengthen engagement on carbon markets, UN-REDD worked closely with the GIZ ProClima project and other UNEP initiatives already collaborating with the Office of the Undersecretary for the Environment on REDD+-related topics. This coordinated approach helped identify government counterparts with the mandate and interest to advance the forest and climate

change agenda. It also enabled better alignment of priorities, a more coherent technical message and the opening of space for substantive exchanges. As a result, UN-REDD was able to deliver focused technical assistance while navigating sensitive policy discussions in a coordinated manner.

Bolivia



REDD+ Implementation

UN-REDD provided Technical Assistance (TA) to Bolivia, in synergy with the AIM4Forests initiative and with other cooperation partners, to consolidate National REDD+ efforts. This support focused on structuring REDD+, strategy/action plan that defines a strategic pathway to access climate finance, to report on forest solutions realised under results-based cooperation and with social and environmental safeguards systematically integrated contributing to the forestry sector objectives for Bolivia's NDC 3.0. and ensuring that interventions align with international standards and national commitments.

Forest solutions realised

UN-REDD TA strengthened inter-institutional coordination by articulating key national and territorial stakeholders through the construction of the REDD+ Action Plan. This process contributed to defining priority regions for intervention and strengthening governmental and local capacities in REDD+ implementation. Evidence-based technical inputs were developed, including deforestation risk and multi-benefit forest models. These tools identified the main drivers and processes of deforestation, forest fires and forest degradation in priority regions including Chaco, Chiquitania, northern and southern Amazonia, supporting the formulation of concrete, region-specific actions. Participatory processes were used to define enabling measures, building on existing initiatives and opportunities for scaling up and innovation, also providing a platform to identify potential social and environmental risks, in line with REDD+ safeguards. This approach supports cost-effective territorial responses to deforestation and forest degradation across the key regions. In parallel, UN-REDD supported the compilation and analysis of the institutional and regulatory framework underlying the REDD+ Action Plan, strengthening its technical and policy foundations.

Forest solutions rewarded

UN-REDD's TA also supported on-going efforts to update and review Bolivia's legal and governance framework in the forestry sector to facilitating access to results-based climate finance (Article 6 the Paris Agreement, standard TREES). This preliminary diagnosis includes the gaps, challenges and recommendations of legal solutions and institutional arrangements to enable access to finance. Also, an assessment of existing safeguards provisions and identified opportunities to strengthen institutional arrangements for safeguards implementation and reporting were carried out. UN-REDD supported the review of the National Registry of Projects and Programs (RENAPP, acronym in Spanish) regulations and identified the legal inputs for the development of a roadmap for its implementation. In addition, UN-REDD facilitated a knowledge exchange among the Ministries of Environment of Bolivia, Peru, and Costa Rica to share experiences and best practices on national mitigation registries. In coordination with AIM4Forest, institutional capacities were strengthened on emerging methodological approaches and tools to prepare the activity data for Charagua and assess methodological improvements to Bolivia's submitted FREL.

Forest solutions enhanced

The Programme also supported alignment of REDD+ Action Plan with the national and territorial public politics and Bolivia's broader territorial management approach, supporting the achievement of forest-related objectives and goals under the NDC 3.0. Bolivia's Nationally Determined Contribution for 2025-2035, presented in September 2025, establishes a target of reducing deforestation to 80% by 2035 compared to its baseline (approximately 633.591 hectares), and to achieve a 100% reduction in deforestation within protected areas. The REDD+ Action Plan contributes directly to operationalising these targets by translating national commitments into coordinated territorial actions and ensures that safeguards are embedded as a cross-cutting element, supporting the achievement of forest-related objectives and the broader NDC 3.0 targets

Gender and social inclusion

UN-REDD and FAO Bolivia integrated a gender perspective within the analysis on the control of deforestation, degradation, and conservation of forests and biodiversity. It assessed the social dynamics, roles and power relations shaping men and women participating in forest governance. Based on this, an intersectional analysis was carried out, recognizing that women in rural areas face double or multiple levels of discrimination linked to their gender, ethnicity, and territorial context. The REDD+ action plan was developed through a participatory process involving workshops and dialogue forums attended by local stakeholders, indigenous peoples and local communities, young people, women, producers, and municipal authorities, among others. This inclusive process allowed for an in-depth analysis of the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, as well as the identification of concrete territory-specific actions from a gender perspective. In doing so, the process consolidates the scientific and geospatial evidence base applied in the design of the country's REDD+ Action Plan.

Partnerships

UN-REDD maintained strategic coordination with the General Direction of Forest Management and Development (DGGDF) of the Ministry of Environment and Water (MMAyA) and with the Plurinational Authority of Mother Earth (APMT). The work was also articulated through the Forest Roundtable, an inter-institutional coordination platform that brings together key actors linked to:

- Land tenure (INRA - National Institute of Agrarian Reform).
- Agricultural production (Ministry of Rural Development and Lands).
- Biodiversity (SERNAP - National Service of Protected Areas).
- In addition to FONABOSQUE (National Forest Fund) and
- Planning (Ministry of Development Planning M&D).

At the territorial level, the TA was linked to FAO Bolivia's regional programs, ensuring coherence between national policy development and subnational implementation. Likewise, actions were coordinated with institutions that implement the UK-PACT projects and programs, promoting complementarity and alignment of efforts related to REDD+ and climate finance.

Challenges and solutions

During the reporting period the implementation was influenced by institutional turnover and evolving coordination arrangements within relevant government counterparts. Changes in focal points and technical teams affected continuity and required renewed alignment on technical priorities and timelines. These shifts resulted in temporary delays in certain analytical and coordination activities. In response, UN-REDD adjusted its engagement approach by prioritizing targeted technical sessions, reinforcing documentation and knowledge transfer, and clarifying roles and responsibilities across implementing partners. This adaptive approach aimed to maintain momentum while respecting national processes and decision-making structures. Additional constraints related to data availability and inter-institutional coordination limited the pace of progress in some technical components. UN-REDD supported dialogue among technical agencies to clarify data-sharing arrangements and align methodologies, contributing to gradual resolution of

bottlenecks. While structural challenges remain, the reporting period demonstrated that adaptive engagement and sustained technical dialogue can mitigate disruption and preserve implementation continuity under changing institutional conditions.

Cambodia



REDD+ Implementation

Forest solutions realised

UN-REDD support advanced the National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS) MRV component through the development of the 2024 national 22-class land cover map and land cover change products (2018–2024), strengthening activity data (AD) for deforestation and forest degradation, while improving the transparency and accuracy of AD emissions reporting through the application of sample-based area estimation and fieldwork data validation. UN-REDD resources also supported multi-scale forest monitoring by piloting near-real-time monthly deforestation alert systems in five provinces and delivering inter-ministerial training on near-real-time deforestation detection. Policy-level support was further provided through the development and publication of the 2025–2028 Priority Action Plan of the Ministry of Environment’s (MoE) General Directorate of Environmental Knowledge, containing key REDD+ related forest monitoring implementation actions.

Forest solutions rewarded

The Safeguard Information System (SIS) and the national REDD+ Registry, along with its User Manual, were completed, and the second Summary of Information was submitted to the UNFCCC, closing key technical gaps ahead of the preparation of a GCF REDD+ RBP funding proposal currently underway. Support to the REDD+ policy and finance framework included developing options for operationalizing the Environmental and Social Fund and benefit-sharing guidelines to enhance transparency in climate finance. This work was aligned with the completion of the Nesting REDD+ pilot, which updated the Nesting Regulation and Roadmap. These measures strengthen Cambodia’s governance, safeguards, and regulatory architecture for engagement with results-based finance and jurisdictional carbon mechanisms. The Carbon Market Readiness Workplan continues to inform the GHG Emission Reduction Mechanism and Article 6 Operational Manual implementation in the FOLU sector, underpinning private-sector engagement, the REDD+ and Carbon Crediting Secretariat and the Working Group on Carbon Credits for public–private partnerships and management of climate finance and REDD+ revenues.

Forest solutions enhanced

UN-REDD supported the Royal Government of Cambodia to support the development of NDC 3.0, with a strong focus on Forestry and Other Land Use (FOLU) targets and positioning REDD+ as a central mechanism for achieving national climate commitments. The process also defined REDD+ indicators for integration into the Cambodia Environment Management Information System (CEMIS) and tracking of NDC implementation, highlighting forest-based management with local communities and Indigenous Peoples. By linking REDD+ systems with national climate planning and environmental information platforms, forest mitigation is increasingly embedded within Cambodia’s broader climate and development framework.

Gender and social inclusion

UN-REDD activities continued to demonstrate a strong commitment to gender equality, promoting balanced participation of women and men and systematically integrating gender-responsive approaches across activities, including the use of gender-disaggregated data. The piloting of the Nested Framework and related work on the SIS, Registry, the collection and validation of information for the 2nd Summary of Information, and early discussions on the GCF REDD+ RBP proposal applied a combined gender and social inclusion approach in discussions, monitoring and reporting, as well as in stakeholder dialogues and community consultations, with gender considerations embedded in workshop organization, capacity building technical training and field work data collection.

Partnerships

Under the Nested System pilot, UN-REDD collaborates with international and local Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and project developers (e.g. Conservation International, Wildlife Conservation Society) in Cambodia to align project-level efforts with the national REDD+ framework. Preparation of the 2nd Summary of Information on Safeguards required extensive coordination with multiple line ministries and agencies to compile and validate data on REDD+ implementation, strengthening institutional linkages with the UN-REDD team. A similar approach was applied to FOLU-related dialogues under NDC 3.0 and discussions on the GCF REDD+ RBP proposal, particularly with subnational stakeholders, ensuring that partnership-based processes underpin design choices and that local and subnational government bodies remain closely engaged in implementation. Technical work on the National Forest Inventory (NFI) continues to be conducted in collaboration with the Royal University of Agriculture, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and other partners. Technical work on activity data is carried out in close collaboration with the MoE's Department of Geospatial Information Services (DGIS) and through the Technical Working Group for Land Use and Land Cover. Forest monitoring capacity building technical trainings have targeted interministerial collaboration between MoE and Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), with particular focus on community forest and community protected areas.

Challenges and solutions

Delays from 2024 did not cause major implementation issues, and all activities in the annual workplan were delivered on schedule. This performance reflects effective collaboration between the Government and the UN-REDD country team and was facilitated by the extension granted to the nesting piloting, which enabled completion of the full nesting package by the end of 2025. While the revised timeline created some challenges for workshop planning and MoE review, these were successfully managed by the country team. In a context of constrained national capacity, joint efforts by MoE and MAFF management and the UN-REDD team led to targeted investments in capacity development and strengthened technical decision-making, including through on-the-job training, workshops, consultations, and extended missions. Additionally, the implementation of MRV activities faced challenges related to limited technical capacity, staff permanence, and shifting government priorities. These constraints were addressed through regular coordination meetings to align priorities, deliverables, and timelines, enabling progress toward finalizing AD data in early 2026. Limited country data availability for forest degradation remains a challenge, therefore, global data sources have been used for method development. Work on forest degradation will continue and will be further aligned with restoration-related activities to strengthen methodological development.

Chile



REDD+ Implementation

Forest solutions realised

UN-REDD support strengthened Chile's capacity to monitor and demonstrate the multiple co-benefits associated with the implementation of the ENCCRV at the landscape level through the existing co-benefit monitoring system overseeing REDD+ territorial action under the Benefit Sharing System (BSS). A comparative analysis of international methodologies and technical review of Chile's six co-benefit indicators enhanced the methodological robustness of its Soil, Water, Biodiversity and Socio-Cultural metrics under the ENCCRV. This resulted in improved clarity, operational feasibility and alignment with global best practices, including approaches used in Costa Rica, Paraguay, Argentina and Panama.

The country now has clearer pathways to apply temporal analyses, integrate biophysical and socio-economic variables, and strengthen field validation to better demonstrate REDD+ outcomes beyond carbon. Since 2020, Chile's [National Strategy on Climate Change and Vegetation Resources \(ENCCRV\)](#), led by CONAF and supported by GCF-funded +Bosques project and the FCPF Emissions Reduction Program (PRE, in Spanish), has been fully operational. Through its BSS, 970 territorial projects have been implemented in fire prone and highly vulnerable regions in southern regions (Maule, Ñuble, Biobío, Araucanía, Los Ríos and Los Lagos), reaching 98% territorial coverage in rural municipalities. In 2025 Chile launched the fourth public tender cycle of the SDB, integrating for the first time integrated results-based carbon financing from both RBP projects.

Since 2024, UN-REDD has supported CONAF's MRV team in revamping the Forest Monitoring System (SMM in Spanish), and preparing a new national FREL, compliant with various carbon finance opportunities, such as GCF REDD+ RBP policy and carbon market opportunities via the ART-TREES. TA and inputs contributed to a diagnostic and roadmap document identifying gaps vis-à-vis TREES and the GCF's scorecard outlining steps through 2026. UN-REDD supported development of a new methodological approach to estimate emission reductions from deforestation and forest degradation, with piloting underway ahead of a nation-wide interpretation effort in 2026. Standard operating procedures are being completed to strengthen institutional capacities within CONAF for preparation funding proposals, carbon market registration and monitoring documents.

Forest solutions rewarded

UN-REDD technical backstopping directly supported Chile's third monitoring report to the Carbon Fund under the ERPA, strengthening Chile and CONAF's ability to issued and transfer ERs. Moreover, UN-REDD provided CONAF with initial technical inputs regarding Chile's regulatory preparedness and/or feasibility to monetize on FCPF ERs under voluntary carbon markets. UN-REDD also facilitated a regional high-level technical dialogue, with the participation of Chile, Brazil, Costa Rica and other jurisdictions progressing under TREES, in relation to safeguards requirements under ART-TREES. This will enable Chile to better understand the conditions for accessing results-based finance under the standard. The session clarified expectations related to participation, benefit-sharing, rights over emissions reductions and future monitoring reports, drawing on lessons from. As a result, Chile is now better positioned to assess the feasibility and potential value of submitting a jurisdictional proposal to ART. The discussion helped the country identify institutional strengths, such as an operational MRV system, a safeguards information system and a supporting environmental and management framework, and an operational benefit-sharing mechanism, and areas requiring preparatory work, including scale definition and documentation of participatory legitimacy. This enhanced readiness is essential for unlocking potential future results-based payments. UN-REDD also provided technical review and feedback on the second draft of the

ENCCRV's Environmental and Social Management Framework. UN-REDD provided concrete recommendations to strengthen its coherence, clarity and alignment with REDD+ safeguards requirements. The working document submitted to CONAF supported the refinement of the updated framework and helped ensure consistency with international best practices.

Gender and social inclusion

CONAF's safeguards' team with the support of the +Bosques project and UN-REDD developed [The Power of Gender and REDD+](#). The report highlights best practices in Latin America and Caribbean regions where innovative REDD+ actions have successfully placed gender equality and women's empowerment at the heart of their design and implementation. The report includes comprehensive case studies of results-based REDD+ projects funded by the GCF in Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, and Paraguay.

Partnerships

The REDD+ RBP Chile (+Bosques) project has become the operational and administrative arm of CONAF's ENCCRV. Accordingly the +Bosques, with FAO as Accredited Entity and implementing partner, is a strategic partner for UN-REDD's TA in supporting Chile's efforts to successfully continue to implement its forest climate objectives and continue to mobilize forest carbon finance for the sustainability of the ENCCRV and its measures of actions. In the last quarter of 2025, and in the context of the financial and institutional architecture for the ENCCRV 2026-2030 supported by UN-REDD's, the World Bank FCPF's team reached out to explore collaboration opportunities, including in relation to the financial sustainability of the ENCCRV and opportunities to access carbon finance under voluntary carbon markets.

Challenges and solutions

Beginning in late 2024 and throughout 2025, CONAF experienced leadership and technical team changes, including within the Climate Change and Environmental Services Directorate and the BSS and Safeguards teams. In May 2025, the institutional restructuring that established the National Forest Service (SERNAFOR) formally replaced CONAF as Chile's REDD+ focal institution. While protected areas and biodiversity functions moved to the Ministry of Environment, the ENCCRV remains under the new institution within the Ministry of Agriculture. These transitions resulted in delays and adjustments to some 2025 activities, though technical assistance was ultimately delivered as planned and coordination with new authorities was maintained. A presidential election in December 2025 signals potential further institutional adjustments in 2026. Key safeguards-related challenges include the need for more consistent long-term data for co-benefits monitoring, limited field-validated information, and alignment with evolving ART-TREES requirements. UN-REDD provided methodological guidance on temporal analyses, enhancements to biodiversity and cultural indicators, and clarification of participation, rights and benefit-sharing expectations, supporting refinement of monitoring systems and preparation for potential jurisdictional crediting. Although CONAF maintains strong technical capacity, teams remain stretched due to parallel RBP implementation and reporting commitments, and UN-REDD technical assistance continues to provide complementary support.

Colombia



REDD+ Implementation

Forest solutions realised

Colombia consolidated core elements of its REDD+ governance architecture. UN-REDD strengthened the MRV and accounting framework through technical inputs to the [2023–2027 FREL](#), the [REDD+ Technical Annex](#), and the [BTR1](#), helping ensure coherence and environmental integrity across programmes and initiatives. The updated accounting rules and the assessment of overlaps and overestimations among REDD+ initiatives created the evidence base needed for future nesting approaches and high-integrity finance. In parallel, pilots on forest-positive coffee and cocoa chains demonstrated the minimum conditions for deforestation-free production, informing tailored support packages for cooperatives and unlocking catalytic assistance to scale forest-friendly models in high-deforestation areas. Support for compliance with [Judgment T-248](#) advanced the regulatory package on safeguards, strengthened the SIS and its alignment with the benefit-sharing system, and facilitated multi-actor spaces, five under T-248 and three for the ENREDD+ update, that generated concrete proposals on FPIC, monitoring, and territorial governance. Together, these advances reinforce Colombia’s readiness for transparent, accountable, and rights-based REDD+ implementation and improve conditions for accessing results-based payments.

Forest solutions rewarded

Through the Technical Assistance and in coordination with the GCF–Visión Amazonía Project implemented by FAO, support was provided to the National Government for the implementation of the ENREDD+ and the Comprehensive Deforestation Control Plan (PICD) in the Amazon biome, in close collaboration with the Visión Amazonía Program and other partners. The TA also supported The Institute of Hydrology, Meteorology and Environmental Studies (IDEAM- Instituto de Hidrología, Meteorología y Estudios Ambientales) in REDD+ accounting analyses as inputs for future Results-Based Payments, potential engagement with High-Integrity standards, or the updated DCI’s modality 1. As part of the TA, a South-South Exchange on “Strengthening Legal Preparedness for Carbon Transactions in REDD+ Countries” (Rome, 5–6 June 2025) was promoted, with participation from the Ministry of Environment. The TA produced a Policy Brief presenting Colombia as a case study on Environmental Integrity, including recommendations. It also supported IDEAM and the Ministry in the assessment of the 2023–2027 NREF, the BTR, and the REDD+ Technical Annex conducted by UNFCCC experts, providing technical inputs at the government’s request.

Forest solutions enhanced

Through the Technical Assistance, support was provided for several workshops carried out as part of the country’s NDC 3.0 update, seeking to ensure alignment with the ENREDD+ 2.0 update process. In this regard, the TA, together with the Ministry of Environment’s (DBBSE - Dirección de Bosques, Biodiversidad y Servicios Ecosistémicos del MinAmbiente) led the development of the roadmap for updating and implementing ENREDD+ 2.0 through dedicated internal and national workshops. The TA also strengthened national government capacities in applying IPCC methodologies for estimating and monitoring emissions and removals in the agrifood sector, contributing to the analysis and refinement of mitigation targets. This was achieved through the participation of Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Agriculture officials in FAO’s technical training workshop on the use of the NEXT Tool for tracking NDC targets.

Gender and social inclusion

Social and gender inclusion was further strengthened in 2025 through the implementation of Ruling T-248 and the update of ENREDD+. The participatory spaces under Order 10 and the ENREDD+ workshops were designed and adapted jointly with Indigenous, Afro-descendant, and campesino organizations, recognizing differentiated rights, governance structures, and political priorities. The proposed ethnic-sensitive protocol for REDD+ in Indigenous territories and the due diligence guidelines explicitly aim to protect collective rights and enhance the role of women and youth in territorial decision-making. As the SIS and the Benefit-Sharing System advance, these instruments provide entry points to integrate gender- and ethnicity-sensitive criteria into eligibility, monitoring, and grievance mechanisms, directly linking inclusion to who benefits from forest solutions and how those benefits are tracked. Finally, within deforestation-free supply chains, work has been carried out with women-led organizations in the territories, further strengthening the integration of the gender component.

Partnerships

Implementation in Colombia was supported by multilevel partnerships that brought together institutions, territories, and social actors. The UN-REDD Technical Assistance was carried out in close collaboration with various directorates at the Ministry of Environment (DBBSE) and IDEAM complemented by specialized support on safeguards, carbon markets, emissions accounting, environmental integrity, stakeholder participation, and forest–agriculture linkages. Indigenous organizations, Afro-descendant community councils, campesino platforms, and emerging Indigenous Territorial Entities (ETIs) played a central role in designing and validating participatory methodologies, territorial proposals, and inputs for the update of ENREDD+ 2.0. Likewise, synergies with NGOs, academia, and initiatives such as [AIM4Commodities](#), together with [BMZ](#) support to local cooperatives, [AIM4Forests](#), and coordination with ongoing projects from the three agencies' country offices, helped connect REDD+ governance across the various results and thematic areas, enhancing the impact of the limited AT resources.

Challenges and solutions

Implementation in 2025 took place in the context of structural and political constraints. Constitutional Court Ruling T-248 exposed significant shortcomings in voluntary carbon market (VCM) REDD+ projects, including gaps in access to information, FPIC, safeguards, monitoring, law enforcement, and institutional coordination, while high turnover among political and technical counterparts, together with restricted access to RENARE data, further limited decision-making and undermined trust. Although IDEAM holds part of the information, it cannot issue public technical opinions since it no longer administers RENARE. Within this context, the TA advanced confidential carbon accounting analyses, identifying overlaps and the non-compliance of VCM projects with Resolution 1447 of 2018 regarding alignment with the NREF, and provided related recommendations to the Ministry of Environment. UN-REDD supported integrated solutions across safeguards, the SIS, the benefit-sharing system, MRV, national accounting, and the update and dissemination of ENREDD+ 2.0, promoting intercultural participatory methodologies and human rights approaches. Finally, the TA team recommended that the Ministry provide clear political guidance on: (i) the role of UN-REDD in JDI monitoring, (ii) ensuring compliance with Resolution 1447/2018 based on national accounting analyses, (iii) concrete actions for RENARE's operation, (iv) next steps on participation and Ruling T-248, and (v) clarity on the jurisdictional and nesting approach.

Costa Rica



REDD+ Implementation

Forest solutions realised

Costa Rica has advanced the systematisation of its national carbon registry for the Land Use, Land-Use Change, and Forestry (LULUCF) sector. To ensure robust governance and efficient management of this registry, the country convened coordination meetings with key national institutions, including the National Meteorological Institute, the Climate Change Directorate, and the Fondo Nacional de Financiamiento Forestal (FONAFIFO). Through these collaborative efforts, consensus was achieved on the governance structure and operational responsibilities for the registry, specifically tailored to the unique requirements of the LULUCF sector. Additionally, Costa Rica submitted its updated Forest Reference Emission Level (FREL) for the period 2020–2029 on 6 January 2025. This submission has since undergone review and received approval from the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The REDD+ Technical Annex, which complements the FREL and provides further technical detail on emission reductions, is currently in the final stages of approval. These milestones underscore Costa Rica’s ongoing commitment to transparency, international standards, and the integrity of its national carbon accounting systems.

The soil carbon study has made steady progress during 2025 in developing and applying the methodology to estimate carbon change in forest soils. The first phase focused on methodological design and standardizing field and lab procedures, while the second phase advanced coordinated fieldwork with the REDD+ Secretariat. By December 2025, 70 of 135 plots had been sampled (52%), 14 audited, and 111 approved, with 20 additional plots planned. The study is expected to conclude by the end of January.

UN-REDD has undertaken a comprehensive diagnostic to update and build upon the system assessment that began three years ago, aimed at modernising the Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) management tools used by FONAFIFO. This updated analysis revisits the outcomes of the 2023 diagnostic, carefully evaluating the progress achieved to date while pinpointing the persistent technical and workflow challenges that continue to impede data efficiency and integration within the PES framework. The study leverages a robust evidence base, collected through interviews with key personnel including FONAFIFO engineers, monitoring specialists, IT staff, and external regents. These interviews were supplemented by targeted follow-up sessions that addressed complex geospatial challenges encountered in the management and use of ecosystem service data. In addition, close coordination with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) was maintained to ensure that the diagnostic aligns with ongoing redevelopment efforts of the Control and Monitoring Module (MoCYM, Módulo de Control y Monitoreo) and supports broader goals for interoperability across systems. As a result of this analysis, the updated diagnostic now serves as a critical foundation for guiding future improvements to the PES management system and enhancing institutional coordination.

UN-REDD Costa Rica delivered targeted technical assistance to advance the development of updated sectoral context studies focused on supply and demand dynamics within key agroforestry value chains, namely coffee, cacao, and livestock, as well as the broader forest sector. The primary aim was to enhance Costa Rica’s preparedness for accessing climate concessional finance. These studies were carried out with technical facilitation from UN-REDD to ensure full alignment with REDD+ objectives, the NDC, and national climate and forest priorities. The resulting analyses provided clarity on sectoral priorities, identified critical financing needs, and highlighted both structural barriers and emerging opportunities. This facilitated the creation of a strategic pathway for mobilising climate concessional credit to support sustainable, low-emission, and deforestation-

free production systems across Costa Rica. By the close of 2025, final sectoral documents for coffee, cacao, livestock, and the forest sector were nearing completion and were slated for presentation in early January 2026. These technical outputs will form the foundation for international concessional finance proposals, targeting multilateral and bilateral climate finance institutions, with the overarching goal of scaling up investment in sustainable land-use transformation throughout the country.

Work began on developing Costa Rica's framework to monitor the social benefits associated with the Territorial Forest Environmental Plans (PAFTs) in Indigenous territories. UN-REDD carried out preliminary analysis and designed a proposed work plan that lays the foundation for defining the methodology needed to report how financial rewards from REDD+ mechanisms, particularly payments under the Forest Emission Reduction Contract (CREF), are benefiting Indigenous communities. As several PAFTs have already received their first and second payments, this work marks the critical next step toward identifying measurable indicators of social benefits, supporting accountability in the equitable distribution of resources and in demonstrating improvements in community well-being, livelihoods and gender dynamics. At the request of the Government of Costa Rica, the full development of the framework has been rescheduled for early 2026, with the final output intended to inform the required annex to the Carbon Fund report. UN-REDD strengthened Costa Rica's capacities on REDD+ Grievance Redress Mechanisms through a targeted Safeguards Clinic of the LAC Safeguards and Integrity Working Group. The session provided international experiences, clarified scope and key elements for a national GRM, and produced a brief summary with findings and recommendations to guide future safeguards implementation

Forest solutions rewarded

A comprehensive compliance analysis of the newly adopted GCF RBP policy was developed and shared with the Costa Rican government in 2025. This analysis directly supported the creation of a concept note, which were prepared and submitted to the GCF. The concept note builds on Costa Rica's successful engagement in the GCF REDD+ RBPs pilot program, a project the country is set to conclude in early 2026. Developed through a rigorous, participatory approach, the concept note strictly adheres to the requirements of the GCF policy for REDD+ RBPs. The process was led jointly by the Government of Costa Rica and UNDP, as the GCF Accredited Entity, and involved a broad spectrum of national stakeholders, including government agencies, Indigenous Peoples, rural women, and local communities. The concept note introduces a series of policy and financial innovations derived from Costa Rica's NDC and the National REDD+ Strategy. Key proposals include a policy shift toward integrated agro-landscapes and the modernization and diversification of national PES schemes, notably expanding coverage to mangrove ecosystems. Governance structures are strengthened through greater inclusion of Indigenous Territories, while the country's readiness for financial mechanisms under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement is enhanced. Digital innovations are also proposed, aimed at improving the monitoring of forests, landscapes, and commodities. Furthermore, the concept note seeks to broaden access to forest and climate finance via new global initiatives, such as the Tropical Forest Forever Facility (TFFF), and the establishment of green credit lines to promote deforestation-free production.

The TREES credit verification and validation process has advanced to its final stage, with the fourth and last set of findings actively being addressed. This marks a significant milestone towards the completion of the process, ensuring robust compliance with established environmental and carbon credit standards. In parallel, a comprehensive guidance document was collaboratively developed to provide best practices, actionable recommendations, and detailed procedural guidelines for governments engaged in the ART/TREES standard, supporting the effective execution of validation and verification activities for REDD+ results. Drawing on the experiences of countries such as Costa Rica and Ghana, as well as expertise from UN-REDD agencies, the document offers practical advice grounded in international standards. It is specifically designed for stakeholders involved in environmental and carbon credit initiatives, and will be instrumental for governments like Pará, which are preparing to launch these processes in 2026.

Forest solutions enhanced

UN-REDD has supported FONAFIFO in strengthening Costa Rica's NDC implementation instruments through the launch of the updated PES 2.0 system, under which new contracts are already being signed. The NDC incorporates the PES by expanding its criteria to include soil organic carbon as a new fundable ecosystem service and by strengthening Indigenous and forest-related PES within the implementation of REDD+. It also adjusts the PES to promote productive inclusion in vulnerable areas, integrating it as a central instrument for restoration, conservation, and social and climate co-benefits.

Gender and social inclusion

UN-REDD provided support to pilot the [W+ Standard](#) in the GCF-financed and UNDP implemented "Costa Rica REDD+ Results-Based Payments (RBP) for 2014 and 2015" project. Given the project's strong focus on gender equality and women's empowerment, use of the W+ Standard is allowing the project to measure its impact on women's empowerment, particularly around projects activities focused on leadership, education and knowledge. Field work relating to W+ measurement took place in November 2025, and these results will be independently verified in February 2026. Once verified, the project will generate W+ credits, which are tradable units that corporates, governments, and institutions can purchase to meet sustainability goals. In addition, a country case study on gender and REDD+ for UN-REDD's "[The Power of Gender and REDD+](#)" publication was developed and finalized in 2025. In support of the International Land Tenure Commitment announced at COP-30, coordination efforts between FCLP, RRI, and FONAFIFO have been strengthened.

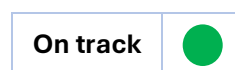
Partnerships

Costa Rica strengthened coordination among the National Meteorological Institute (IMN, Instituto Meteorológico Nacional), the Climate Change Directorate, and FONAFIFO to agree on roles and responsibilities for the national carbon registry, ensuring institutional coherence and avoiding double counting across standards. Likewise, at the international level, Costa Rica continued to expand partnerships with initiatives such as LEAF, the FCPF and the World Bank, and the GCF Results-Based Payments window, complementing its national strategy for financial diversification for REDD+. In addition, UNDP strengthened ties with the private sector, leveraging regional experiences in deforestation-free value chains through ICAFE's work with Illy and Lavazza.

Challenges and solutions

A major challenge in the reporting period was navigating the extensive ART/TREES validation and verification process, which required multiple consecutive rounds of findings. In the fifth and final round, the country received eight findings, one of which determined the need for a sixth methodological variance related to removals - specifically, the requirement to map the areas used to calculate removals, which must demonstrate more than five consecutive years under forest cover. This methodological variance was developed, submitted, and is currently pending approval. One final finding remains open, requesting justification that Costa Rica's restoration actions are national in scope. FONAFIFO's legal lawyer has prepared a detailed response demonstrating that these actions are implemented across the entire national territory.

Côte d'Ivoire



REDD+ Implementation

Forest solutions realised

UN-REDD delivered a targeted capacity-building webinar for Côte d'Ivoire REDD+ focused on the fundamentals, functions, uses of the Safeguards Information System (SIS), strengthening technical understanding among participants of its role within the Warsaw Framework and results-based finance processes. The event also included a dedicated presentation on REDD+ registry systems clarifying their requirements, objectives, and purpose served in tracking emissions reductions credits and transactions. These trainings were important especially to prepare the country for the [sale of excess credits](#) generated under FCPF on the market, signed with Emergent in November. Côte d'Ivoire is actively committed to the implementation of REDD+, demonstrated through various initiatives at different levels. The country has ongoing actions that focus on strengthening and operationalizing the elements of the UNFCCC framework for REDD+. During the reporting period, UN-REDD TA's support was focused on consolidating the elements of the REDD+ framework to facilitate the future capture of potential payments from emissions reductions results, through updating the national REDD+ investment framework, operationalizing the National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS/SNSF), operationalizing the SIS, and developing a methodology for the nested approach. Additional support included estimating annual forest losses and gains for the period 2021-2024, updating the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation in Côte d'Ivoire, and establishing a national zero-deforestation platform to enhance stakeholder coordination, strengthen synergies, and facilitate the sharing of results and lessons learned from the implementation of REDD+ projects and initiatives.

Forest solutions rewarded

Through technical assistance and in coordination with the GCF PROMIRE project implemented by FAO, support was provided at the national level to develop a methodology for nesting. This methodology will enable local emission reductions to be accounted for in a manner consistent with national targets, while facilitating benefit-sharing and preventing double counting. Additional support included the integration of trees into cocoa systems (agroforestry) and the restoration of degraded lands. Furthermore, Côte d'Ivoire has achieved significant results in implementing its emissions reduction program around Taï National Park, conducted in partnership with the FCPF of the World Bank. T UN-REDD provided continued support for the effective operationalization of the Carbon Markets Office, including training and capacity building of government officers on different elements of carbon markets and the development of comprehensive annual workplan and budget.

Forest solutions enhanced

UN-REDD provided TA for the development and successful submission of NDC 3.0, including the enhancement of the AFOLU component of the NDC, building on policy alignments and field innovations between the forest, cocoa and trade sectors.

Gender and social inclusion

Gender and social inclusion considerations are embedded within Côte d'Ivoire's REDD+ safeguards and carbon market governance architecture. UN-REDD support to operationalize the Safeguards Information System (SIS), strengthen registry systems, and develop the national nesting methodology contributed to reinforcing transparency, equitable benefit-sharing and accountability within results-based finance and carbon market engagement. The nesting framework and zero-deforestation platform provide institutional mechanisms to coordinate stakeholders and ensure that emission reductions generated at local levels are accounted for consistently and fairly within

national systems. Through these measures, social inclusion dimensions are integrated into REDD+ implementation and access-to-finance processes, particularly in relation to benefit-sharing and stakeholder participation under high-integrity market standards.

Partnerships

Partnership with national institutions including Ministries and their agencies, EUREDD-Facility, the World Bank, the German Development agencies, and projects such as the FAO-GCF PROMIRE project, the Thai ER Programme, the Cocoa and Forest Initiative among others has been strengthened. Internationally, UN-REDD facilitated also a connection and the technical exchanges between the Government and Emergent.

Challenges and solutions

Support from the UN-REDD program remains necessary to support the operationalization of the REDD+ tools under finalization following extensive support from both the UN-REDD program and the PROMIRE project (mitigation GCF-funded project). Additionally, this support will help unlock potential financing opportunities by leveraging the country's emission reductions. The UN-REDD programme will continue its collaboration with the Carbon Market Office and identify the support needed to ensure its proper functioning.

Democratic Republic of the Congo



REDD+ Implementation

Forest solutions realised

Strengthening Safeguards Information System, as well as supporting the establishment of a National REDD+ Registry have progressed well, both workstreams will be completed in early 2026. The Restoration Factory incubation programme for forest-positive enterprises was completed, with 59 entrepreneurs selected via competitive process, matched with 27 mentors. All 8 modules were delivered to enable entrepreneurs develop investable, forest-positive business models focused on restoration and sustainable land use. The modules are aimed at guiding entrepreneurs through core business design and validation such as value proposition development, business model design, revenue and pricing strategy, financial planning and viability. Thirty-four (34) entrepreneurs completed the program despite the civil unrest in Bukavu.

Forest solutions rewarded

In Tshuapa Province, assistance focused on ART-TREES readiness through gap analyses, data assessments, and carbon accounting inputs to inform the future registration document, aimed for end of 2026. In Haut Uele Province, UN-REDD's support leveraged funding from Korean International Development Agency (KOICA) to advance stakeholders consultations and formulation of TREES concept note for submission in early 2026. Likewise, support was mobilized to allow DRC's effective access to REDD+ Results-Based Payments. Stakeholder consultations organized in Zongo helped define a strategic approach for resource mobilization, address GCF scorecard gaps, explore complementarities with initiatives such as Tropical Forests Forever, and consider potential use of proceeds (e.g. the Kivu-Kinshasa green corridors).

UN-REDD also engaged the private sector operating in the DRC and in carbon markets, building constructive partnerships that will continue through further events and meetings in 2026. Discussions focused on structuring effective, risk-mitigated deals to attract investors, and on

integrating carbon markets into existing commodity value chains to create joint offerings, helping scale the carbon market while unlocking forest finance. The Programme has capitalized and strengthened the collaborative work with the World Bank, focusing on the experience of the FCPF DRC ER Program in Mai Ndombe. There is a common understanding that capacities of the Ministry of Environment's (MEDD) on NFMS, carbon markets and Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, need to be strengthened, including creating strategies for marketing excess carbon credits and engaging potential buyers. UN-REDD leveraged FCPF experience to complete the analysis on carbon ownership rights, develop the guidelines on benefit sharing and complete the MRV assessment for the purposes of ART TREES (Tshuapa province) and beyond, to be completed in 2026. This has also led to improve coordination between Republic of Congo and DRC, and identify quick, practical steps to advance UN REDD technical support in both countries.

Forest solutions enhanced

UN-REDD technical assistance was mobilized to support the effective implementation of the Carbon markets and NDC implementation' project. This includes the mobilization of national and international expertise, procurement of various infrastructures, and inter-institutional coordination within the government and across international partners, notably through the Groupe Inter-bailleurs pour l'Environnement et le Changement Climatique (GIBEC).

Gender and social inclusion

UN-REDD helped strengthen DRC's SIS by enhancing the quality standard of safeguards reporting, placing greater emphasis on gender equality and social inclusion considerations – ensuring women's rights, participation and differentiated impacts can be more clearly reflected in the national process. Additional upgrades to the SIS platform and further refinement of the national system-improvement roadmap are planned, with most of this next phase of work expected to move forward in early 2026.

Partnerships

UN-REDD's partnership with the African Forest Forum facilitated a policy dialogue that brought together key stakeholders from forest-related sectors in the outskirts of Kinshasa. The 33 participants discussed key constraints, challenges and opportunities for mainstreaming REDD+ across sectoral policies and came out with key solutions and road map towards better integration of REDD+ in sustainable development strategies for better coordination, policy reforms and enhanced REDD+ implementation. The main outcome of the dialogue was a roadmap providing strategic guidance and an operational framework for effective integration of REDD+ into sectoral policies, strengthening national coordination and mobilizing climate finance. The physical presence of dedicated UN-REDD personnel in Kinshasa has strengthened relationships with the principal government bodies involved in the REDD+ process. Following the 2025 government reshuffle, UN-REDD is now well positioned and has established a trusted working relationship with the current Minister of Environment, Sustainable Development and New Climate Economy. In December 2025, a UNEP delegation conducted a mission to Kinshasa to reinforce the support requested by the new Minister in assessing progress of the REDD+ initiative in the DRC. UNEP and other donor partners have strengthened their collaboration through the establishment of a platform that enables regular exchanges and updates on their respective agendas. This platform includes FAO, UNDP, UNEP and the World Bank. Meetings held in the last quarter of 2025 helped identify areas of synergy and collaboration, with a focus on enhancing complementarity.

Challenges and solutions

Four major challenges affected implementation of UN-REDD support to the Democratic Republic of the Congo:

- Insecurity in the Eastern DRC: Civil unrest disrupted primarily the Restoration Factory supporting forest-positive enterprises in Bukavu through incubation programme provided to small and medium enterprises. To protect staff and participants, all in-person activities shifted to fully online delivery, allowing work to continue while minimizing security risks.
- Ministerial reshuffle (8 Aug 2025): changes at the top of the Ministry of Environment occurred without a proper handover. UN-REDD Programme briefed the new Minister during the Africa Climate Summit in Addis Ababa, building a constructive relationship and agreement to strengthen REDD+ system effectiveness. A deeper efficiency review is scheduled for 2026 to inform a Ministerial reform.
- Slow government responsiveness and poor collaboration caused delays. UN-REDD staff in Kinshasa mitigated this by convening joint technical sessions across ministry units, enabling more direct exchanges and faster decision-making.

A recurring challenge has been variability in the quality and consistency of technical experts, which can undermine confidence and require additional verification or re-analysis by government counterparts and UN-REDD. This creates inefficiencies, diverts limited institutional capacity and funding, and slows progress toward implementation and compliance objectives.

Ecuador



REDD+ Implementation

Forest solutions realised

Throughout 2025, Ecuador consolidated the implementation of REDD+ by translating long-standing readiness investments into operational forest solutions embedded within national policy and planning frameworks. REDD+ actions were implemented in alignment with the updated NDC, the National Forest Strategy, and sectoral policies, reinforcing the role of forests in climate mitigation, sustainable land use, and territorial development. UN-REDD provided targeted technical assistance to priority workstreams, supporting continuity in REDD+ implementation, planning, and coordination across institutions. Forest solutions were realised through strengthened integration of REDD+ with productive landscapes, including deforestation-free coffee and cacao systems, PES, and emerging climate finance instruments. This integrated approach embedded forest conservation outcomes within broader economic and productive strategies, ensuring that REDD+ contributes not only to emission reductions but also to sustainable livelihoods, policy coherence, and long-term climate resilience.

Forest solutions rewarded

Ecuador continued advancing toward large-scale results-based forest climate finance. Building on prior access to REDD+ Results-Based Payments through the GCF pilot and the REM programme, the country strengthened its engagement with ART-TREES and the LEAF Coalition. A key milestone was the selection of the Validation and Verification Body (VVB), reinforcing Ecuador's readiness to complete the ART-TREES validation and verification cycle and access high-integrity jurisdictional REDD+ credits. Forest solutions were also rewarded through market-based mechanisms linked to deforestation-free supply chains. Ecuador demonstrated how REDD+ outcomes can generate tangible economic value by advancing deforestation-free coffee and cacao exports to international markets. Capacity building was provided to the Interinstitutional Committee on Sustainable Production and Trade and its sub-committees to strengthen the application of international due diligence and legality standards in agricultural supply chains. Training focused on the use of practical tools and frameworks, including the OECD-FAO Handbook, GROUND, and WHISP,

supporting national stakeholders in applying due diligence and legality criteria. These efforts contributed to enabling verified exports to European markets while ensuring alignment with national REDD+ objectives and emerging traceability frameworks.

Forest solutions enhanced

REDD+ implementation was further enhanced through strengthened technical, institutional, and digital capacities. UN-REDD support contributed to improvements in national forest monitoring systems, including quality control of National Forest Inventory datasets, updated forest cover mapping, and enhanced analytical tools. In collaboration with "Building global capacity to increase transparency in the forest sector (CBIT-Forest)", Ecuador applied the national forest monitoring system assessment tool, strengthening its capacity to generate credible baselines, monitor deforestation, and meet international reporting and verification requirements. In parallel, Ecuador enhanced integrated approaches linking REDD+, concessional finance, PES, and deforestation-free value chains supported by digital monitoring and traceability tools such as FUNDP's Digital Tool (MONBO, Monitoreo de Bosques). UNDP's digital forest monitoring platform MONBO (Monitoreo de Bosques), together with FAO's Open Foris tools (Ground and WHISP) provide an integrated framework to support forest monitoring, traceability, and deforestation risk analysis. Open Foris Ground is a mobile application used to collect field data and delineate production plots, enabling accurate geospatial records while ensuring data governance and ownership by producers. Complementing this, Open Foris WHISP is a digital risk screening tool that assesses deforestation risk at the level of production plots. WHISP operates using both national and global geospatial datasets and, through the convergence of multiple lines of evidence, generates robust and reliable results for deforestation risk assessments. These tools combine field-based data collection with geospatial risk screening, strengthening national systems for sustainable production and compliance with emerging market requirements. In parallel, structured South-South exchanges with Honduras, Ethiopia, and Vietnam have reinforced Ecuador's role as a knowledge provider, sharing practical experience on REDD+ governance, safeguards, digital traceability systems, and compliance with emerging market requirements, including the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR).

Gender and social inclusion

UN-REDD support in Ecuador strengthened gender-responsive and socially inclusive REDD+ implementation by reinforcing safeguards, rights-based approaches, and institutional capacities. Targeted technical assistance supported the integration of REDD+ safeguards, Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), and grievance and redress mechanisms, helping ensure meaningful participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in REDD+ processes and benefit-sharing frameworks. Country-led progress on land tenure and Indigenous territorial rights advanced during the year, including the formal delivery of collective land titles to Shuar Indigenous communities within the Kutukú Shaimi Protective Forest. These outcomes, led by national authorities, were supported by REDD+ safeguard frameworks and technical assistance that strengthened governance, accountability, and monitoring of social and gender considerations. Through collaboration with DEFRA-supported initiatives, participatory processes (including workshops and direct grants to Indigenous Peoples organisations) were facilitated, leading to the integration of the Indigenous Peoples' Planes de Vida into jurisdictional REDD+ implementation frameworks. In addition, a country case study on gender and REDD+ for UN-REDD's "The Power of Gender and REDD+" publication was developed and finalized in 2025. Building upon the progress made in consolidating land tenure rights in Shuar territories under the GCF-funded programme, coordination was strengthened among key stakeholders to identify potential areas for advancing land tenure rights at the national level. In this context, targeted coordination meetings were held with partners such as FCLP and RRI to support Ecuador's announcement at COP30 under the Inter-governmental Land Tenure Commitment.

Partnerships

UN-REDD worked closely with the Ministry of Environment and Energy (MAE) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG) to align REDD+ with national climate, forest, and agricultural priorities. Collaboration with international partners supported ART-TREES processes, safeguards, and results-based finance. Private-sector partnerships, particularly in deforestation-free coffee and cacao, linked REDD+ outcomes with global markets, including collaboration with the Lavazza Group under the Coffee Print initiative. South–South cooperation across Latin America, Africa, and Asia further positioned Ecuador as a regional and global reference for REDD+, traceability, and deforestation-free commodity systems.

Challenges and solutions

Key challenges in 2025 included institutional adjustments linked to the national electoral cycle, the procedural complexity of ART-TREES verification processes, and volatility in international coffee and cacao markets. These risks were mitigated through sustained technical engagement, continuity of REDD+ technical teams, and strengthened interinstitutional coordination. Market-related risks were addressed by reinforcing digital traceability systems, maintaining strategic commercial partnerships, and advancing concessional finance mechanisms to de-risk deforestation-free production. Close coordination with MAE ensured steady progress on ART-TREES milestones while safeguarding technical integrity, credibility, and Ecuador’s long-term access to results-based forest climate finance.

Two factors have contributed to the “Delayed” progress rating, firstly, is the advancement under the ART-TREES process was slower than anticipated, primarily due to the need to finalize key technical documents, the TREES Registration Document (TRD) and the TREES Monitoring Report (TMR), as prerequisites for initiating the validation and verification (VVB) process, as well as completing the formal registration process with the ART Secretariat. Registration is expected to be finalized in March 2026, which would allow the VVB process to start in April. Secondly, while land tenure and Indigenous territorial rights remain a central pillar for REDD+ implementation, initial delays were linked to the timing of Norway’s funding. Nevertheless, progress has continued through active articulation with results-based payment frameworks and other complementary programmes, allowing this agenda to move forward in alignment with broader REDD+ implementation efforts. Key processes for both the abovementioned initiatives are now positioned to advance in 2026.

Ethiopia



REDD+ Implementation

Forest solutions realised

At Ethiopian Forestry Development (EFD) request, and following a mission to Addis Ababa in early 2025, an adjusted 2025 workplan was agreed with UN-REDD on safeguards and access to finance. The primary focus was agreed for UN-REDD to support delivery of safeguards training-of-trainers targeting subnational level for the TREES-ready jurisdiction. In parallel, UNEP’s role was further defined, upon request, as providing targeted technical backstopping and advisory support on the completion of TREES TRD and TMR, the SIS IT infrastructure and the second SOI, support revision of a national benefit-sharing mechanism. Despite repeated follow-ups, progress across these areas was more limited than anticipated in 2025 and the agreed activities did not progress during 2025 reporting period.

Forest solutions rewarded

With the support of UN-REDD, Ethiopia (via the Ministry of Planning and Development, and EFD) participated in the two REDD+ investment roundtables organized by UN-REDD (in June in [London](#) and in [Johannesburg](#) in October). The roundtables aimed to connect supply and demand in high-integrity jurisdictional forest carbon markets by bridging credible REDD+ supply with committed capital. The roundtable brought together REDD+ jurisdictions, investors, market actors, Indigenous peoples and civil society to identify practical pathways for scaling high-integrity forest carbon investments, build trust through transparency and equitable engagement, and lay the groundwork for future collaboration to unlock private finance for jurisdictional REDD+ deals. UN-REDD not only gave the stage to Ethiopia on both occasions but also facilitated discussions between the Ethiopian Government and potential buyers like [SEFE](#) and Emsurge during the London roundtable, with whom the two parties are currently discussing potential agreement on the sale of Ethiopia's credits.

Gender and social inclusion

Gender and social inclusion considerations remain embedded within Ethiopia's REDD+ safeguards and access-to-finance agenda, particularly in relation to TREES requirements and the revision of the national benefit-sharing mechanism. Although planned safeguards activities did not advance during the 2025 reporting period, UN-REDD engagement continued to emphasize the importance of equitable participation and integrity standards in jurisdictional carbon market discussions. Ethiopia's participation in the REDD+ investment roundtables provided exposure to international expectations regarding inclusive engagement, transparency and benefit-sharing within high-integrity forest carbon markets. These elements remain central to future safeguards strengthening and access-to-finance efforts, pending confirmation of Government priorities for 2026.

Partnerships

Both the [London](#) and [Johannesburg](#) roundtables organized respectively in June and in October were in partnership with the Integrity Council for the Voluntary Carbon Market (ICVCM) solidifying the emphasis on high-integrity JREDD emissions reductions.

Challenges and solutions

The lack of responsiveness and inconsistent communication from the Government counterpart made it impossible to move forward on the implementation of the 2025 workplan for Ethiopia. The absence of clear direction on priorities, expectations and cooperation made it difficult to determine scope and modality of engagement. As a next step, it is proposed that UN-REDD continue to seek formal clarification from the Government on its strategy and technical assistance needs for 2026. Continued engagement and involvement of UN-REDD to support, on the safeguards aspects as well as on the access to finance and benefit-sharing, will be contingent on confirmed demand, defined activities and mutually agreed coordination arrangements to ensure relevancy, accountability and effective use of resources.

Ghana



REDD+ Implementation

Forest solutions realised

UN-REDD support helped Ghana consolidate and expand the results of its REDD+ initiatives to translate REDD+ plans into measurable, sustainable forest solutions and results-based finance. A cost-benefit analysis of jurisdictional REDD+ pilot interventions was initiated in collaboration with

the Forestry Commission (FC) to help assess the efficiency and alignment of REDD+ investments and strengthen policy and financial planning decision making. UN-REDD facilitated the acquisition of updated public expenditure data, and the analysis is currently being revised to reflect the most recent figures. This lays the groundwork for a draft report on public expenditure to inform subsequent policy coherence analysis.

With support from UN-REDD, a National Forest Inventory (NFI) design and budget have been completed and presented to the Climate Change Directorate and to the Resource Management Support Centre of the FC for the collection of in-situ data to improve emission factors. However, the validation on the NFI design and the collection of pilot plot measurements in savannah areas have been postponed at the request of FC. Legal support activities in the context of EUDR readiness were postponed to 2026 to allow prioritization of LEAF HIA Framework Agreements implementation, reflecting a pragmatic sequencing of national REDD+ priorities.

In September, UN-REDD's support to Ghana on safeguards was agreed to focus on strengthening national capacity to implement and report REDD+ safeguards. Key elements of the support include targeted technical training for Forestry Commission staff and stakeholders on ART TREES safeguards, the Safeguards Information System, reporting, benefit-sharing, and grievance redress. The support also covers updating the national safeguards training manual and producing outreach materials to improve awareness, consistency, and effective safeguards application at national and local levels. Implementation has experienced delays and substantive activities set to commence in 2026.

Forest solutions rewarded

Ghana strengthened the enabling conditions to access results-based finance for REDD+ by advancing the technical, institutional, and governance frameworks underpinning forest carbon implementation. Collectively, this enhanced national capacity to generate and manage high-integrity emission reductions and expand REDD+ implementation across diverse landscapes. This included ART-TREES compliance with the finalization of the legal basis for Framework Agreements in Hotspot Intervention Areas (HIAs), which serve as the primary community partners for REDD+ implementation. UN-REDD supported clarification of inclusive carbon rights in an inclusive manner, eligible beneficiaries and benefit types, in tandem with the existing benefit sharing plan for the LEAF area. Progress was also achieved, with UN-REDD facilitation, in operationalizing the regulatory framework for NFMS and carbon trading through a South-South exchange on carbon transactions. The exchange enabled Ghana to learn from international best practices and peer experiences across jurisdictional REDD+, voluntary carbon markets (including LEAF and ART-TREES), and emerging Article 6 mechanisms. Topics included ERPAs, with national legal frameworks, benefit-sharing mechanisms, and institutional arrangements, enforcement and risk management.

Building on UN-REDD assistance, Ghana continues to implement the REDD+ Strategy and its NDC, through a jurisdictional approach; the Ghana Shea Emission Reductions Landscape REDD+ Programme, funded by the Green Climate Fund is in its fourth year of implementation. UN-REDD support also helped to provide by contributing to confirmation of the actual baseline data and emission reductions since the beginning of the project (at the start of the project, estimates were provided). A Project Document for the LEAF programme which contains detailed information about what ER payments will be used for and how they will be disbursed is in an advanced stage. This carbon market opportunity has afforded Ghana to continue a virtuous cycle of investments in the forest, community and land sector, a lynchpin for REDD+. Completion and signature of the document by FC and UNDP is expected by early 2026. Key elements include social and environmental screening and a Performance Based Payment Agreement (PBPA). The Benefit Sharing Plan for the LEAF Programme, as well as a benefit sharing framework for carbon markets in general have been completed. It provides for how the ER payments are distributed across the various stakeholders and is implemented through the PBPA. In addition, a social and environmental

screening process has been carried out. It accompanies a solid safeguard framework integrated into the PBPA.

Ghana participated in the UN-REDD led London Climate Week roundtable between countries that have readily available credits, and investors/buyers. The initiative was organized to enable the supply and demand side (private and multilateral donors) to engage in open discussions on issues/key elements (including integrity, pricing, etc.) that need to be in place for achieving win-win deals.

Gender and social inclusion

With support from UN-REDD, robust gender monitoring and evaluation efforts began in March 2025, through the application of the [W+ Standard](#) in the GCF-financed Ghana Shea Landscape Emission Reductions Project (GSLERP). Independent verification confirmed and validated the W+ units (58,144 W+ credits under Education and Knowledge and 64,674 W+ credits under Income and Assets). Based on the information and evidence reviewed, the verification confirms that the GSLERP achieved significant positive outcomes for women in the project area. The project delivered measurable improvements in women's income and assets, as well as enhanced knowledge and skills. For example, 91% of surveyed women reported income increases due to project activities, where top uses of additional income included household consumption goods (80%), education (71%), and health expenses (57%). Additionally, 56% of women reported reinvesting in their businesses, indicating a thoughtful balance between welfare and productive use of funds. The verification also confirmed that the unintended negative effects related to health, workload, and exclusion, as identified in the W+ monitoring report, have been effectively addressed through corrective project actions.

UN-REDD also supported integration of gender equality and the inclusion of vulnerable groups into community-level REDD+ governance, including within Hotspot Intervention Areas (HIAs); and Community Resource Management Areas. In the Juabeso/Bia HIA, for example, women hold nearly half of the seats on the Management Board, and governance processes ensure free, fair, and participatory representation across all structures. Gender mainstreaming was also embedded in the development of the Benefit Sharing Framework (BSF) for the TREES programme area. Through inclusive regional workshops, participatory tools, and iterative consultations, stakeholders - including women and other vulnerable groups - contributed to shaping the allocation of carbon benefits. A key aspect of the engagement process was ensuring gender inclusivity. Facilitators were also trained to create a welcoming environment where women's voices were prioritized, ensuring their perspectives were fully integrated into the discussions.

Partnerships

The country submitted its fourth FCPF Monitoring Report, advancing engagement with the FCPF Carbon Fund. Since the Programme's commencement in 2019, the Government of Ghana has received a total of USD 20,458,085 for 4,351,617 tCO₂ of verified ERs, demonstrating the country's capacity to generate high-integrity REDD+ results. Collaboration with Emergent, the financial intermediary of the LEAF Coalition, continued to advance during the ART-TREES Validation and Verification process, reinforcing Ghana's leadership in international climate finance and sustainable forest management. Upon successful validation, ART is expected to issue serialized TREES Credits for the 2017–2021 crediting period.

Challenges and solutions

The implementation of some activities faced delays due to institutional changes within the Government, notably the replacement of Directors at both the Climate Change Directorate and the Resource Management Support Centre of the FC. These transitions temporarily affected coordination and decision-making for key REDD+ initiatives, including the collection of pilot plot measurements for the National Forest Inventory. To address these challenges, UN-REDD engaged

closely with the new leadership, providing technical guidance and updates and facilitating discussions with relevant partners to optimize resources and prioritize activities. This collaborative approach ensured continuity of critical processes, such as the completion of Framework Agreements, and allowed adjustments to align implementation more effectively with national REDD+ and climate priorities. By strengthening institutional coordination and maintaining active stakeholder engagement, these measures mitigated disruption and positioned Ghana to accelerate pending activities in 2026.

Indonesia



REDD+ Implementation

Forest solutions realised

The Indonesian Environment Fund (IEF) launched a “Sharia-compliant Revolving Fund Facility” to expand access to finance for social forestry groups. The launch built on intensive preparation of internal regulations, engagement of Sharia advisors and the training of 59 field facilitators (7 women) to support implementation on the ground. Following the launch, further regulatory refinements were completed to operationalize fund disbursement, service fee arrangements, and delivery through non-bank financial institutions, supporting readiness for scale-up. Under safeguards, recommendations for integrating SIS information into the National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS) and the National Registry were provided, and a subnational and national SIS roadmap was developed. A safeguards gap assessment against ART-TREES was completed to inform pilots at subnational level and guide further development at national scale. Under GREEN for Riau, a draft provincial REDD+ action plan strategy developed to contribute to low carbon development initiatives and REDD+ investment at sub-national level. Ongoing verification of a satellite-based peatland monitoring model, supported by field data; with continued coordination with the national government.

Forest solutions rewarded

UN-REDD contributed to the concept of the Climate Resilience Fund (CRF) for NDC-climate finance acceleration and was handed over to IEF for further uptake by government. A draft concept note for ART-TREES submission for sub-national REDD+ RBF piloting prepared and ready to be submitted to national government for endorsement. Continued and expanded support for peatland restoration resource mobilization led by Government of Indonesia (GoI) to GCF, including the addition of new pilot areas in North Sumatra, alongside ongoing efforts in Central Kalimantan and Riau. With UN-REDD as a convening forestry carbon market policy vehicle, multiple capacity-building, knowledge-sharing events and ongoing technical advice have been provided to Ministry of Forestry (MoF) and Ministry of Environment (MoE) to strengthen government and stakeholder capacities and inform decision-making on jurisdictional REDD+ implementation, including alignment with national and international standards. Indonesia national and sub-national governments joined the [London](#) (global) and [Korea](#) (regional) REDD+ investment roundtables where direct engagement with buyers of high integrity REDD+ credits was facilitated. The establishment of a national nesting framework was supported, providing significant technical inputs on MRV, safeguards, and governance. In addition, carbon pricing advice provided, and national and sub-national learning gathered from Viet Nam [bilateral exchange](#) on ART-TREES and PFES.

Forest solutions enhanced

Indonesia endorsed the Intergovernmental Land Tenure Commitment at UNFCCC COP 30 in Belem, Brazil and committed to recognize 1.4 million hectares of new customary forests by 2029. In support of Ministerial Decree No. 144 of 2025, by the Ministry of Forestry in March 2025, to establish a Special Task Force to Accelerate the Recognition of Customary Forests, the Programme also enabled the development of a training module to strengthen the capacity of Adat Forests field verification teams, followed by a series of on-going regional trainings. Another key progress is the development of a roadmap for the Special Task Force as well as consolidation of a database for customary forests which draws from groundwork by CSOs in Adat Communities to avail an updated map for the status of customary forests throughout the country.

Gender and social inclusion

Sharia financing-related activities reached 259 direct beneficiaries, with women accounting for approximately 33% overall. Women also comprised 78 of the 207 participants (38%) involved in technical consultations, focus group discussions, and meetings related to regulatory development, Sharia agreement design, intermediary preparation, dispute resolution mechanisms, and IT system development. Field engagement with [KSPPS BMT UGT Nusantara](#) in May 2025 highlighted women's practical role in household-level financing processes, with women frequently attending socialization activities on behalf of their husbands who were unable to participate due to work commitments, even though loan applications were submitted under the husbands' names. These observations have informed the work on Sharia-financing is integrating a gender approach and promoting women's active and equitable participation in consultation processes. Gender mainstreaming work will continue in the preparation for piloting in 2026. The GREEN for Riau Initiative showed clear progress in women's participation, increasing from 10-16% at the inception workshop to 31% in safeguards coordination forums. Despite the initially low numbers, women engaged actively in discussions on Indigenous Peoples' rights, inclusive governance and benefit-sharing. These lessons now shape the 2026 workplan, which will further strengthen women's participation through Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) trainings and a dedicated gender expert, building provincial and district capacities to institutionalize gender-responsive safeguards, FPIC and monitoring.

Partnerships

National forest carbon market events supported by UN-REDD included engagements with a broad range of stakeholders, including national and sub-national authorities, relevant ministries, embassies, development partners, academia, research institutions, the private sector and carbon project developers. The GREEN for Riau Initiative brings together government, academia, the private sector, communities, civil society and the media to jointly reduce deforestation and forest degradation. During the launch, all key stakeholders signed a joint declaration to collaborate, share responsibilities and support coordinated actions for sustainability. This partnership creates a structured platform for piloting sub-national jREDD+ approaches that inform Indonesia's national framework, strengthening the basis for effective implementation and long-term impact at both provincial and national levels. The support to the Ministry of Forestry's Special Task Force on Customary Forests involves close collaboration with key national CSOs such as Indigenous Peoples Alliance of the Archipelago (AMAN, Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara), Indigenous Territory Registration Agency (BRWA, Badan Registrasi Wilayah Adat), Participatory Mapping Network (JKPP, Jaringan Kerja Pemetaan Partisipatif), Association for Community and Ecological-Based Law Reform (HUMA, Perkumpulan untuk Pembaharuan Hukum Berbasis Masyarakat dan Ekologis) as well as international CSOs like World Resources Institute (WRI) and Climate and Land Use Alliance (CLUA). Country progress on forest monitoring was achieved thanks to the dual and joint efforts with AIM4Forests, including in sharing cost of key personnel.

Challenges and solutions

Key challenges in Indonesia include weak provincial-level coordination on REDD+ implementation, limited institutional capacity for carbon market governance, and insufficient enforcement to protect forests. The Ministry of Forestry plans to establish Provincial Coordinator Offices in all 35 provinces, create a dedicated Directorate for Carbon Pricing (NEK) under the Directorate General of Sustainable Forest Management, and increase forest ranger numbers. UN-REDD provides sub-national and national technical support and advice to this process, helping to ensure that social safeguards are respected.

Kenya



REDD+ Implementation

Forest solutions realised

In collaboration with the AIM4Forests programme, UN-REDD delivered two technical training courses and convened two in-person REDD+ Technical Working Group meetings in Kenya. The trainings strengthened national capacity in (i) forest cover change monitoring and (ii) FREL calculation and Carbon Calculation Database development for REDD+ reporting, enabling Kenya to sustain annual forest monitoring with reduced external technical support. Two other stakeholder workshops supported consultation on the updated national forest monitoring system (NFMS) and forest reference level (FRL), culminating in the December FRL consultative workshop where proposed updates were formally reviewed. This process strengthened national ownership and responsibility of Kenya's NFMS and reference level while improving technical transparency and stakeholder alignment. UN-REDD provided strategic guidance to support Kenya's future REDD+ climate finance, emphasizing the need to sustain efforts to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation while strengthening restoration activities to increase forest cover and removals from enhanced forest carbon stocks. This approach is aligned with the Green Climate Fund's REDD+ policy, ART-TREES eligibility, and emerging Article 6 opportunities, and highlights the importance of continued strengthening of the NFMS to monitor and report both emissions and removals.

Forest solutions rewarded

UN-REDD supported two quality assurance and quality control (QA/QC) data review events focused on improving Kenya's forest activity data. The review engaged over 20 interpreters from different institutions all reviewing samples collected in 2024. Results from this exercise helped to identify systemic interpretation errors in the data set and further improved the efficacy of the monitoring data collected in 2024 and 2025 for the historical reference period 2016 - 2023, strengthening national understanding of QA/QC requirements and their role in credible MRV reporting. The process resulted in improved activity data for challenging land-use classes, particularly dryland forests, and refinement of key supporting tools, including the national Interpretation Key. These improvements increased overall data accuracy and reduced uncertainty in activity data estimates, directly strengthening the robustness of Kenya's NFMS outputs. The refined results were formally presented and discussed with stakeholders at the December REDD+ Technical Working Group meeting, reinforcing transparency, technical confidence, and readiness for future reporting and climate finance engagement. Kenya has not made any significant progress towards either a FRL submission to the UNFCCC and/or a submission to ART-TREES

However, progress toward Kenya's participation in ART/TREES progressed with a clear decision from the Kenya Government to proceed once data points are confirmed. The work towards assessing safeguard compliance will begin in 2026, building on the safeguards readiness elements Kenya developed and will be completed in 2026. This includes support for the operationalization of the Safeguards Information System, and preparation of the Summary of Information to the UNFCCC. This work will provide the basis for Kenya to submit a concept note to the ART Secretariat. Support on legal aspects and title transfer in the context of ART/TREES will also be assessed through concomitant work on the Registration Document.

At Kenya's National Carbon Markets Expo 2025, UN-REDD was invited to share insight on "Regional Climate Finance, unpacking the legitimacy of carbon markets and the pricing and demand challenges that continue to shape Africa's evolving carbon landscape". The event was arranged by Climate ARK, UK PACT (Partnering for Accelerated Climate Transitions), and Conservation International. The session shed light on how transparent, high-integrity finance systems can unlock equitable value chains, ensuring that carbon markets deliver tangible benefits for communities, conservation, and climate resilience to the participants.

Forest solutions enhanced

Support in 2025 focused on finalizing a high-integrity Carbon Calculation Database and discussing the implications of the improved data on Kenya's future carbon finance opportunities. As such the activity associated with reviewing the NDC and the role forests play in the NDC was not undertaken. UN-REDD will revisit this activity in 2026, with a focus on NDC implementation. In February 2025, UN-REDD and AFF convened a policy dialogue in Kenya bringing together government sectors, civil society, county representatives, and partners to strengthen integration of REDD+ into broader development planning. The dialogue produced a shared roadmap to mainstream REDD+ across sectors, with agreed solutions, clear roles, responsibilities, and timelines. It improved cross-sector understanding and alignment among institutions central to land use, finance, and climate action. The policy dialogue highlighted that effective REDD+ implementation in Kenya depends on stronger coordination beyond the forest sector, embedding REDD+ in national development strategies, and clarifying institutional responsibilities to move from policy ambition to practical, cross-sector action.

Gender and social inclusion

Across the reporting period, women's participation in UN-REDD-supported technical and policy processes ranged from 31% to 54%, with an overall average of approximately 41%, and two major engagements achieved near gender parity. Given the technical nature of the topics, these figures suggest that women are actively engaged in core climate governance functions, including MRV systems, carbon accounting, and national reference level development, rather than being limited to peripheral or consultative roles. This reflects positive progress toward integrating women into technical and decision-making spaces within REDD+ governance structures. Beyond participation metrics, UN-REDD remains committed to embedding gender-responsive approaches within safeguards implementation, forest monitoring processes, and national REDD+ planning to ensure that climate mitigation actions contribute to equitable outcomes

Partnerships

AIM4Forests program being implemented in Kenya shares many of its activities with UN-REDD and the two programs enjoy well aligned activities and outputs. Work to explore innovating financing instruments (Bonds) to drive investments in forest management has progressed with partners engaged in supporting financial instruments for Kenya. Funding through UNDP's Climate Promise has resulted in direct financing for implementation in the AFOLU sector, to ten women and indigenous peoples-led community organisations in ten locations in the Country contributing to climate mitigation. Further funds from Germany are supporting County led climate action in the AFOLU sector through existing programmes supported by the World Bank. In partnership with the

African Forest Forum, a National REDD+ Policy Dialogue on REDD+ took place in February, convened 21 stakeholders from government sectors, civil society, counties, and partners including Emergent. The main outcomes improved awareness of REDD+-relevant sector policies; clearer identification of institutional and policy barriers; agreement on the need for stronger cross-sector coordination, especially across agriculture, land use, and forestry; and a stakeholder roadmap with defined roles, responsibilities, and timelines to advance and mainstream REDD+ integration in Kenya.

Challenges and solutions

Kenya's updated Forest Reference Level (FRL) demonstrates the high standards of integrity and transparency required for engagement with international climate finance mechanisms. However, the revised FRL, particularly the emissions component, is substantially lower than Kenya's initial submission to the UNFCCC in 2019. As a result, Kenya has been cautious in proceeding with formal updates to the UNFCCC, opting to delay submission while exploring options for further technical improvements. This has led to a modest delay in progress toward accessing forest-related climate finance. UN-REDD will continue to support and encourage Kenya to advance its reporting process and pursue opportunities aligned with its climate finance ambitions. Progress in Kenya experienced delays in overall implementation in 2025. While advances were made in strengthening national forest monitoring capacities, Kenya could not submit an updated FRL to the UNFCCC due to Government's decision to re-assess data and carry out further technical refinements. This in turn has not enabled ART-TREES registration to proceed. Key preparatory elements, including the safeguards assessment, operationalization of the Safeguards Information System, and updates to the legal review on emissions reduction rights, are postponed to 2026. These combined factors have nevertheless contributed to further understanding of the viability and the strategic elements to participate in ART/TREES by considering the role of removals.

Lao PDR



REDD+ Implementation

Forest solutions realised

Lao PDR kicked-off a feasibility study on Payment for Forest Ecosystem Services (PfES), focused on the component of PfES fee collection (benefit distribution component to follow in 2026). The study unpacks the current legal framework and identifies legal and operational limitations that hinder the collection of PfES and collected an overwhelmingly supportive response on willingness to pay among industry beneficiaries of forest ecosystem services for water and eco-tourism sectors. The support to PfES is caveated by requirements for transparency on the channeling and use of funds after collection. Who and how much to be paid will also require further careful consultations and piloting. Overall, PfES is considered as a timely and well-positioned domestic financing option that has the potential to trigger Lao PDR's access to further international climate finance. UN-REDD support also facilitated the drafting and consultations on national standards for forest certification and supported trainings in the analysis of National Forest Inventory results using specific software. On safeguards, UN-REDD supported the operationalization of the Lao National Safeguards Information System (LNSIS), and supported Lao government in capacity building workshops for the safeguards technical working group and the social and environmental safeguards unit of the Department of Forestry. Responding to government request, an ART-TREES assessment was done on safeguards to inform decision making. A brief was prepared for the second Summary of Information on safeguards (SOI2).

Forest solutions rewarded

The government of Lao PDR issued a decree on carbon credits, which is expected to facilitate Paris Agreement Article 6 processes, and leverage further climate finance. For this process, technical insights were shared from the forestry sector based on REDD+ and broader forest carbon experience, including advisory and awareness on the importance of high-integrity carbon from UN-REDD. UN-REDD also supported Lao PDR to join [REDD+ Investment roundtable London](#) to connect and discuss potential forest carbon transactions with buyers interested in high-integrity forest carbon.

Gender and social inclusion

All UN-REDD activities were carried out with a perspective towards gender and social inclusion. UN-REDD supported Lao PDR in 2025 to strengthen gender-responsive safeguards and forest governance, including integrating gender aspects into ART-TREES safeguards assessments and ongoing REDD+ readiness processes.

Partnerships

Close partnerships are maintained with development partners including synergistic co-financing of the PfES feasibility study with GIZ, Luxembourg and EU, JICA and the Silva Carbon under the US Forestry Service continue to be a key partner for the support offered on forest monitoring. Close communication is maintained with JICA, also as the accredited entity for Lao's GCF RBP programme, where discussions on potential piloting of PfES through the GCF Programme is being considered. As stated above, UN-REDD, with its core expertise on REDD+ and the AFOLU sector, works to ensure coordination and information exchange with key partners in the wider carbon and climate finance arena, including GGGI, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. This collaboration helps to strengthen the integration of the AFOLU sector into broader carbon market initiatives.

Challenges and solutions

Lao PDR's forestry sector is already under significant pressure from regional and global land-based investments driving forest loss, namely agriculture commodities and mining. Forest carbon projects can be part of the climate and finance solution, but without due diligence, there is a likely scenario for such projects to end up as additional pressures mounting against sustainable forest management and conservation. While the ambition and enthusiasm towards carbon finance both from within the government and private entities is encouraging, a carefully vetted process that can screen high-integrity initiatives from risky business needs to be institutionalized. This will require time and significant capacity-building efforts beyond the forestry sector and momentum built around continued strong indication of long-term returns. PfES as a domestic financing mechanism offers an opportunity to engage with stronger leverage than in international financing mechanisms, allowing a stepwise building of institutions and capacity that will also cater to accessing international climate finance.

Mexico



REDD+ Implementation

Forest solutions realised

The technical capacity to improve the efficiency of wall-to-wall cartographic information generation was strengthened, with UN-REDD supporting methodological improvements and piloting new approaches in the Yucatán Peninsula. These advances underpin Mexico's ability to monitor land use change and inform national policy, ensuring robust data for climate action and REDD+ implementation. To advance deforestation-free commodity supply chains, innovative forest-positive livestock management initiatives from across Latin America (including Paraguay, Ecuador, Colombia, Argentina, and Peru) were identified, laying the groundwork for tailored strategies in Mexico. UN-REDD strengthened Mexico's National Safeguards System by developing the Subnational Safeguards Reporting Guidelines document, improving the Homologated Reporting Tool with monitoring indicators, and producing a visual Guide on the Voluntary Carbon Market for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities. These outputs enhance consistency, accessibility, and understanding of safeguards within forest carbon-market and result-based payments approaches.

Forest solutions rewarded

A comprehensive gap analysis confirmed Mexico's readiness and eligibility for the GCF Results-Based Payment window. This led to the development and completion of a concept note, coordinated with SADER and CONAFOR, which is now ready for submission, positioning Mexico to access significant results-based finance for verified REDD+ achievements. Mexico also benefited from targeted support on innovative climate finance mechanisms, including knowledge resources on debt-for-nature swaps, biodiversity credits, Article 6, and voluntary carbon markets. Technical assessments further strengthened the operation and capacity of the National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS) and MRV system, enhancing Mexico's ability to meet international reporting requirements and participate credibly in emerging carbon markets. In parallel, UN-REDD supported the projection of the forest sector's mitigation contribution to NDC 3.0, with tools like UNDP's PLANT and ongoing technical assistance from FAO in close collaboration with CONAFOR, this work will equip national stakeholders with robust data and actionable insights, ensuring the forest sector's role is fully recognized and maximized within Mexico's enhanced climate commitments.

Forest solutions enhanced

Institutional capacities within CONAFOR were significantly strengthened, enabling more effective mapping and data analysis for forest monitoring. UN-REDD's technical support helped identify priorities for the future implementation of the National Forest Inventory, including the migration of data to advanced platforms like Open Foris Arena and the optimization of sampling strategies. The prioritization of a real-time deforestation alert viewer is making critical information more accessible and actionable for stakeholders. These advances ensure Mexico remains a regional leader in forest monitoring, supporting adaptive management and evidence-based decision-making to safeguard forest resources.

Gender and social inclusion

UN-REDD technical assistance advanced gender-responsive implementation by systematically integrating gender considerations into safeguards processes and tools. A visual guide for the voluntary carbon market was developed using inclusive, culturally appropriate language to enhance accessibility for Indigenous Peoples and local communities. Additionally, proposed safeguards

monitoring indicators for the Homologated Reporting Tool incorporated a gender lens, prioritizing variables on benefit sharing and consultation. These efforts ensure future reporting captures differentiated impacts and fosters more inclusive, participatory decision-making.

Partnerships

Strategic partnerships were deepened through collaboration with national institutions such as CONAFOR, SADER, SEMARNAT, and the Ministry of Finance, as well as through regional and South-South exchanges that facilitated knowledge transfer and joint technical missions. These alliances enhanced Mexico's ability to access climate finance, implement robust forest solutions, and share best practices globally. Notably, partnership with the Government of Jalisco advanced subnational TREES processes and improved coordination for safeguards reporting, reinforcing multi-level alignment and impact within the REDD+ framework.

Challenges and solutions

Mexico faced challenges stemming from limited public resources and the need to optimize forest inventory methodologies. Budget constraints drove the adoption of more efficient platforms and sampling strategies, while UN-REDD technical assistance helped identify strategic improvements for the NFMS, ensuring robust reporting and data generation despite resource limitations. Additionally, engaging subnational governments in safeguard-related activities required clarifying roles and responsibilities with national authorities. Once resolved, collaboration with Jalisco advanced planned activities and strengthened national-subnational dialogue on REDD+ safeguards.

Nepal



REDD+ Implementation

Forest solutions realised

Nepal launched its national geo-portal on forest data in 2025, enhancing transparency in forest monitoring data. Country specific allometric equations for dominant tree species were also developed, with support from UN-REDD and the World Bank. Accounting for carbon removals for the Nepal LEAF ER Programme has been a significant endeavour, noting the stringent requirements for removals under ART-TREES which include spatial boundaries and demonstration of intent. On safeguards, Nepal submitted its Summary of Information on safeguards to the UNFCCC in 2025. Support was also extended to strengthen the Nepal Safeguards Information System (SIS) platform, including data collection towards reporting on implementation, trainings for the three provinces under the Nepal LEAF ER Programme. A review of the Grievance Redress Mechanism was completed generating a GRM capacity building plan, along with inputs to the GRM guidelines, and a plan for training of trainers to be implemented in 2026.

Forest solutions rewarded

UN-REDD in close collaboration with other TA providers supported Nepal in drafting its first TREES Monitoring Report, reporting on implementation and results of the Nepal LEAF ER Programme for crediting years 2022 and 2023. The TREES Registration Document went through its fourth iteration receiving comments from the ART Secretariat, particularly around requirements for accounting removals credits. At the same time, UN-REDD supported and facilitated the government's LEAF advisory committee towards technically endorsing the Emissions Reduction Payment Agreement (ERPA), which is scheduled for signing in early 2026, including providing technical advisory support

on the LEAF pathways. UN-REDD continued to play its role as the coordinator, based on a government request, of all TA for the Nepal LEAF initiative.

Forest solutions enhanced

UN-REDD supported stakeholder consultations and FPIC for the Nepal LEAF ER Programme. As a result, over 1,500 people including over 40% from Indigenous Peoples have been consulted to date. A review workshop of the FPIC and consultation process was also organized in December 2025, confirming the usefulness of the approach taken so far, and proposing improvements going forward, particularly in benefit sharing. More broadly, in February 2025, UN-REDD hosted a national dialogue on forest carbon finance towards broad awareness raising on the Paris Agreement and potential opportunities, while reflecting on the draft Carbon Trade Regulation of the government. Further, UN-REDD supported Nepal's participation in the REDD+ Investments roundtable in Seoul, to connect with potential buyers in high-integrity markets forest carbon.

Gender and social inclusion

Gender and social inclusion considerations were embedded in the consultation and safeguards processes supporting the Nepal LEAF ER Programme. Participation targets were established and met, with women representing 51% of participants across consultation processes, including specific outreach to ensure participation of women from Dalit communities and proportional representation of Indigenous Peoples, achieving 47% participation. These measures complemented broader FPIC and stakeholder engagement efforts, which have consulted over 1,500 individuals to date, and informed ongoing refinements to benefit-sharing arrangements. Strengthening of the Safeguards Information System and review of the Grievance Redress Mechanism further contributed to enhancing accountability, inclusiveness and responsiveness within the REDD+ framework.

Partnerships

UN-REDD remains as a trusted partner of the government for REDD+ and continued to play its role as coordinator and facilitator to government, for the TA providers (namely, UK Technical Assistance Programme, and US Forestry Service/ SilvaCarbon) under the Nepal LEAF initiative. Coordination meetings were held also with broader carbon and climate finance sector players including UNDP, World Bank and GGGI, to maintain fluid information exchanges on support and developments, particularly as they relate to processes under the Paris Agreement and climate finance opportunities.

Challenges and solutions

Nepal experienced a turbulent state of political stability in 2025. While much stability has been regained on the streets, the country remains challenged towards rebuilding its national institutions, with elections expected in first quarter of 2026. While the technical tasks under the UN-REDD workplan were not significantly impacted, political alignment and prioritization of the climate agenda need to be monitored into 2026. Government personnel are also impacted by these broader challenges and calls for patient dialogue and partnership.

Papua New Guinea



REDD+ Implementation

Forest solutions realised

Papua New Guinea continues to make significant strides in reducing deforestation and enhancing forest conservation through its implementation of REDD+. In 2025 UN-REDD supported an update Land Use and Land Use Change assessment up to 2022; the updated data is included in PNG's first [Biennial Transparency Report](#) (BTR) which also includes a Technical Annex on REDD+. UN-REDD Supported undertaking a Monte Carlo analysis to quantify uncertainties in emission reductions for ART TREES submission, and continued capacity building on Safeguards Information System (SIS) and data collection from sector agencies to inform SIS platform and its operationalization. This included support to the CCDA-led process to finalize and submit the second SIS on safeguards, and supporting the EU FCCB furthering this area of work.

Forest solutions rewarded

In June of 2025, Papua New Guinea at GCF Board 42, became the first small island developing state (SIDS) in the world, and the second country in Asia and the Pacific after Indonesia, to receive REDD+ result-based payments from the Green Climate Fund (GCF). Key to this achievement is the Climate Change Development Authority (CCDA) who provided institutional coordination and support across sector. Further progress was made towards results-based finance with UN-REDD continued to support to the preparation of the ART-TREES Registration Document and TREES Monitoring Report (TMR), both planned for submission in Q1 of 2026. UN-REDD has supported several national knowledge-exchange and high-level political events to strengthen understanding of jurisdictional REDD+ finance opportunities in PNG, including requirements for nesting, opportunities for the forestry sector under Article 6 (jointly with aim4forest), and options for private-sector engagement in jurisdictional REDD+.

Forest solutions enhanced

UN-REDD has provided support to the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) development process, with a revised NDC expected in 2026. The National REDD+ development and implementation guidelines have been used, especially in the defining use of proceeds, in the development of the funding proposal for Results based payments from the Green Climate Fund (GCF).

Gender and social inclusion

Under UN-REDD TA in Papua New Guinea, continued effort was placed on promoting a gender approach in SIS related work and in the preparation of the ART-TREES Registration Document and Monitoring Report. Gender is also considered in the revised safeguards indicators of Papua New Guinea. To illustrate, Safeguard A mentions the need to consider gender in the implementation of REDD+ activities and Safeguard B mentions gender considerations in any resettlement or displacement due to REDD+ activities.

Partnerships

UN-REDD support is in direct collaboration with ongoing work under AIM4Forests and the European Union's Forestry, Climate Change and Biodiversity Programme (EU-FCCB). Examples of collaboration includes sectoral data collection and national consultations in coordination with EU FCCB, and workshop on Article 6 in coordination with aim4Forest.

Challenges and solutions

Challenges in Papua New Guinea include ongoing discussion about the viability of vintage credits, and challenges in obtaining SIS and ART-TREES data from some agencies; one-on-one meetings have been organized to go through difficult reporting questions.

Peru



REDD+ Implementation

Forest solutions realised

UN-REDD delivered substantive progress in strengthening Peru's national REDD+ systems that underpin environmental integrity and access to results-based finance. Significant advances were achieved in the Safeguards Information Module, including an updated structure, TREES-aligned indicators, and clear procedures for monitoring, reporting and interoperability with the National Mitigation Registry. These improvements strengthened Peru's ability to produce consistent, transparent safeguards information across the Amazon, coast and highlands. A safeguards cost-assessment exercise, delivered through a dedicated Safeguards and Integrity Clinic, generated practical inputs to inform future SIS planning and resourcing. Progress on benefit sharing and land tenure reinforced the social foundations of REDD+. National capacities were strengthened to align benefit-sharing approaches with TREES requirements, while targeted support to the Indigenous Peoples' Land Tenure Commitment generated actionable inputs through national and subnational consultations and consolidated geospatial analysis of land tenure types and overlaps. Together, these results strengthened safeguards implementation, Indigenous rights, and the enabling conditions needed to reduce deforestation at scale

Forest solutions rewarded

UN-REDD supported Peru in translating forest mitigation results into credible and inclusive climate finance pathways. Concrete progress was made on regulatory and financial instruments, including a proposed Guarantee Fund under the Framework Law on Climate Change that prioritizes Indigenous Peoples, and a draft Climate Fund for Indigenous Women. These instruments address structural barriers to finance while embedding equity, leadership and resilience within climate investment frameworks. At the technical level, UN-REDD supported advances in Peru's readiness for results-based payments by strengthening national carbon accounting and safeguards documentation for the TREES Registration Document and Monitoring Report, covering the Amazon, coast and highlands. Support improved the consistency of national-level accounting across biomes and strengthened transparency through the creation of an internal evidence database underpinning reported information. Documented methodologies and datasets for Amazon estimates contributed to standard operating procedures for national MRV. A targeted learning-by-doing training on Monte Carlo analysis further improved forest degradation estimates and reduced the risk of double counting. In parallel, UN-REDD supported analysis of emissions reductions ownership and associated benefit-sharing scenarios, strengthening MINAM's technical understanding of policy options. UN-REDD also supported the development of a voluntary carbon market access strategy aligned with Peru's NDC financing framework and the National Mitigation Registry. A gap analysis on Article 6 readiness identified institutional and technical priorities, resulting in a roadmap to attract investment while ensuring high-integrity forest carbon credits. This work strengthened Peru's positioning for future market engagement and transparent climate finance.

Gender and social inclusion

UN-REDD contributed to integrating gender equality and social inclusion into Peru's forest and climate action. Key results include the conceptualisation of a Climate Fund for Indigenous Women, explicitly linking climate finance with women's leadership, economic empowerment and resilience. Indigenous women were also formally recognised as forest guardians in national REDD+ grievance and communication materials, strengthening rights-based implementation. On social inclusion, UN-REDD supported financial instruments that reflect multicultural contexts and differentiated access to finance for Indigenous Peoples, notably through the design of inclusive eligibility criteria under the proposed Guarantee Fund. In parallel, UN-REDD supported Indigenous-led dialogue through the Indigenous Peoples' Platform for Climate Change, contributing to inclusive inputs for NDC implementation in the forest sector

Partnerships

UN-REDD strengthened strategic partnerships to increase coherence and impact. Collaboration with FAO's AIM4Forests project enabled joint engagement with Amazonian Indigenous representatives and reinforced aligned messaging on safeguards, MRV and REDD+ integrity. Sustained coordination with ANECAP and Grupo Perú supported the development of Indigenous Jurisdictional REDD+ proposals and improved readiness for planned technical assistance in 2026.

Challenges and solutions

The year was characterized by political instability and institutional transitions within the Ministry of Environment, including changes in senior leadership. These dynamics affected continuity for processes requiring policy-level validation and formal endorsement and directly delayed the delivery and submission of Peru's ART-TREES Registration Document in 2025. In parallel, additional time was required to complete and validate technical analyses for non-Amazon biomes, further affecting the planned timeline. In response, UN-REDD prioritized sustained engagement with technical focal points, safeguarded institutional memory, and advanced workstreams not dependent on senior endorsement. This approach enabled continued technical progress despite the delay, including strengthening internal consistency, documentation and cross-biome alignment, while advancing an approach to ensure coherence between the national ART-TREES process and the Indigenous Jurisdictional REDD+ ART-TREES proposal. Regular communication with incoming authorities and adaptive planning helped maintain momentum and protect delivery of key technical results.

Republic of Congo



REDD+ Implementation

UN-REDD support to Republic of Congo focused on preparation for the first Summary of Information on Safeguards (SOI). Work started in 2025 with an exercise of mapping the countries Principles, Criteria and Indicators to the Cancun safeguards laying the groundwork for smooth and systematic monitoring and reporting. Drafting the SOI is ongoing and progressing, led by a national consultant in collaboration with the REDD+ Secretariat (CN REDD). Its completion is targeted for early Q2 2026 and will be submitted to the UNFCCC by end of 2026. The 2025 workplan builds on the findings from the evaluation of the REDD+ National Strategy initiated in 2024. It also reflects the country's submission of interest in the LEAF initiative, which aims to mobilize funds through potential emission reductions under the HFLD modality. Following confirmation of this interest and validation of the submission by LEAF, the Republic of Congo has prepared a concept note that is receiving

support from the UN-REDD Programme, in collaboration with AIM4Forest, for its development. The Programme also provided complementary support, focusing on continued technical assistance for the development of the ART-TREES registration document, particularly in the context of the imminent closure of the additional support provided by the SYNA-MNV project (initially planned to end on 30 October 2025, but benefiting from a final extension until June 2026). This includes strengthening enabling actions related to this process, NFI capacity building, ongoing technical support on land tenure issues using Open Tenure, definition and allocation of carbon rights, and substantial assistance for safeguards, including the design of the Safeguards Information System.

Forest solutions realised

In efforts to secure smallholder tenure rights in collaboration with the PREFOREST project, FAO's Open Tenure tool was successfully piloted in Ngo District where it was used to, document 47 land parcels involving 75 smallholders (49 men and 26 women), with 53% of parcels claimed by Indigenous community members. Partners expressed support to continue using Open Tenure for a more extensive roll-out of land tenure rights mapping. A preliminary analysis work evaluating Congo's Principles, Criteria, and Indicators in relation to the Environmental & Social requirements under TREES (Cancun measures) was produced, in addition with a compliance plan to advance with section 7 of the concept note. As part of the effort to consolidate the country's data management capabilities on data collection and reporting in line with the UNFCCC, four days in- person NFI training (second phase) was held in December 2025 aiming to implement a set of new tools in collaboration with sectoral ministries. Overall, several training courses have been offered at the National Centre for Forest and Wildlife Resource Inventory and Management (CNIAF) to maintain existing data analysis capabilities, while an update training course on forest inventory techniques, covering sampling optimisation and new measurement and data storage technologies has been catalytic in preparing for a second IFN cycle, improve knowledge of forest resources and greenhouse gas emission factors for REDD+. In addition, a training on UNFCCC expectations and reporting requirements, e.g. REDD+ technical annex and/or BTR in line with ART-TREES requirements, has been scheduled in 2025 in close collaboration with the national counterpart, to take place in February 2026.

Forest solutions rewarded

To access climate finance, in addition to MRV and safeguards requirements, carbon rights need to be defined and properly allocated in line with the benefit sharing plan. For this purpose, an extensive review of the legal framework and arrangements to be set in place in light of TREES requirements has been developed and shared with the national counterpart. A national consultation workshop will follow in early 2026 to validate the results of the analysis. A series of virtual capacity building sessions focusing on Article 6, carbon rights have taken place with a good level of attendance, and other sessions planned, with a focus on safeguards, carbon markets, NDC, ex- Act/registry, and TFFF. Finally, technical exchanges have taken place to agree on the jurisdiction to adopt and the credit period, as well as to introduce the TFFF, without discouraging engagement on TREES.

Forest solutions enhanced

TA was provided for resource mobilization and the formulation of the third generation of NDC with a specific focus on LULUCF mainstreaming, as well as the coordination of UN inter-agency engagement for NDC implementation in the Rep. of Congo.

Gender and social inclusion

Consistent efforts have been made to ensure gender balance in activities supported under UN-REDD support. For instance, national counterparts have been encouraged to identify and invite female participants for capacity building, workshops, and other activities. Open Tenure activities have emphasized the importance of securing user rights for women along with those of men,

prioritizing the participation of women in the pilot activity and tailoring the interface to ensure tracking of gender. UN-REDD reinforced Republic of Congo’s safeguards monitoring and reporting by building capacity for improving gender-responsive and socially inclusive indicators, thereby ensuring that rights, meaningful participation, and differentiated impacts are more effectively captured across different stakeholder groups within national safeguard monitoring systems.

Partnerships

UN-REDD support in the Republic of Congo has been delivered in close coordination with the REDD+ National Coordination (CN REDD), the National Centre for Forest and Wildlife Resource Inventory and Management (CNIAF), and relevant sectoral ministries. Collaboration has been strengthened with FAO through the application of the Open Tenure tool and National Forest Inventory (NFI) capacity building, as well as with the PREFOREST project on tenure security. Technical synergies were maintained with AIM4Forest and the SYNA-MNV project in advancing ART-TREES readiness and safeguards development. Engagement under the LEAF initiative and ongoing exchanges on carbon rights and market mechanisms further contributed to aligning national efforts with emerging high-integrity carbon market standards. These partnerships have supported institutional capacity building, safeguards development and access-to-finance preparation within the national REDD+ framework.

Challenges and solutions

The capacity of the REDD+ national coordination is still technically and financially insufficient, despite a good level of collaboration with the UN_REDD counterpart. It is recommended to increase empowerment of this entity which resulted from the evaluation of the REDD+ national strategy and its investment framework implementation status. The institution still relies on technical partners, such as CAFI, for its financing and operation. Some delays in the operationalization of the work plan were also due to HR reasons, as the person in charge of most of the deliverables unfortunately passed away in mid-2025 following several months of illness.

Uganda



REDD+ Implementation

Forest solutions realised

Progress have been made in the UN-REDD support to the Ugandan Government despite some delay in implementation due to a number of iterations needed in the process of developing the key documents (e.g. TRD and TMR). The Uganda ART-TREES registration package with the ART Secretariat is close to being complete, the few remaining gaps (including section 6 on carbon rights) will be prioritized as part of UN-REDD support for 2026. Beyond advancing the ART TREES registration package, UN-REDD support focused on strengthening the country’s core pillars of the Warsaw framework, including progressing on the SIS, the preparation of the second SOI, as well as strengthening of the NFMS. Together, these efforts are reinforcing the country’s technical readiness and credibility for result-based climate finance, with finalization of those critical pillars of REDD+ expected early 2026, pending resolution of the EACC issue (see challenges and solutions section below). UN-REDD also convened exchanges between Uganda Government and the ART Secretariat during the implementation support mission that took place in December 2025. The exchanges aimed at giving the Government an opportunity to ask the ART Secretariat any questions as part of the country’s preparation for the upcoming Validation and Verification process.

Forest solutions rewarded

During the 43rd GCF Board meeting Uganda received approval for its GCF RBP for results period from 2016 to 2017. The approval authorizes up to USD 31 million to Uganda for verified emissions reductions of 8 million tCO₂e. This milestone marked Uganda as the first African country to secure a GCF RBP. Initial steps were taken to enhance Uganda's enabling environment for private-sector forest carbon investments, with a focus on improving national readiness for Results-Based Finance (RBF). Key recommendations were formulated to guide the use of proceeds from GCF RBP, including considerations related to the European Union Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) and its implications for Uganda's coffee sector. Capacity building on Access to REDD+ Finance, tailored to the expressed needs, was also provided to the Uganda REDD+ Secretariat team via a series of webinars. UN-REDD advanced subnational Emissions Reductions (ER) programme development through stakeholder consultations in the Albertine and Kyoga water management zones in February 2025, where regional actors identified forest priorities and next steps. Moving forward requires government guidance on the most suitable financing route (donor or ER programme model), as well as decisions on verification approaches and region-specific FREL/baselines. A strategic decision is still needed on where and how to present these ER programmes.

UN-REDD and the REDD+ Secretariat convened a national roundtable on the 2025 Climate Change Mechanisms (CCM) regulations. Government agencies, project developers and finance stakeholders discussed implementation requirements, shared practical challenges, and identified coordination gaps and opportunities to strengthen Uganda's carbon market framework. UN-REDD also supported development of a draft national REDD+ registry, identified as a carbon market readiness priority. Stakeholder consultations informed updates, and alignment with the Climate Change Department's national registry plans and CCM regulations will continue in 2026. Uganda, with UN-REDD support, took part in the REDD+ Investment Roundtable in Johannesburg in October; a strategically important opportunity for the country at a critical moment in its jurisdictional REDD+ journey. The event directly connected credible REDD+ supply with serious sources of capital, giving Uganda visibility with investors actively seeking high-integrity forest carbon opportunities. The roundtable convened jurisdictions, investors, market actors, Indigenous Peoples, and civil society to move beyond dialogue toward practical deal-making pathways. For Uganda, this helped build investor confidence, clarify market expectations, and strengthen trust through transparent and equitable engagement, essential foundations for unlocking private finance and advancing future jurisdictional REDD+ transactions. UN-REDD also facilitated bi-lateral conversations between organisations such as Emsurge and Sylvera with Uganda Government. UN-REDD also provided support on how Uganda can utilise its new regulations to build investment and attract buyers to the country.

Forest solutions enhanced

With contribution of UN-REDD's support, Uganda's Climate Change Regulation was finalized and gazetted in Q1 of 2025 and includes provisions on high-integrity emissions for REDD+ via ART TREES although its operationalization will still require support, in terms of guidelines to be developed. UN-REDD is finalizing the policy coherence analysis based on the public expenditure analysis on forestry in Uganda, which is based on the previous public expenditure analysis.

Gender and social inclusion

Through UN-REDD TA, efforts focused on strengthening and enhancing quality of safeguards reporting. More specifically, this support focused on systematically integrating indicators for gender equality and social inclusion ensuring rights, participation and impacts are more clearly reflected in national processes.

Partnerships

UN-REDD partnered with Environmental Management for Livelihood Improvement – Bwaise Facility (EMLI) to provide targeted technical support to strengthen Uganda’s safeguards architecture focused on improving safeguards monitoring and reporting, operationalization and update of the SIS infrastructure, and finalizing the 2nd Summary of Information on safeguards, capacity-building on ART-TREES. Additionally, UN-REDD partnered with a consortium led by the Forestry Research Institute of Ghana (CSIR-FORIG), with the Thünen Institute and Makerere University to develop the policy coherence analysis.

Challenges and solutions

Despite good progress on the programme in Uganda, UN-REDD’s continued engagement in Uganda will have to be reconfirmed at beginning of 2026 through new discussions with the government, including to complement and avoid overlapping with the Government’s agreement with East African Carbon Credits Company (EACC), which grants the company extensive, long-term control over carbon project functions (incl. MRV, safeguards, stakeholder processes and ART-TREES coordination that might overlap with UN-REDD’s technical assistance role). The recommended way forward is for the Government to formally confirm that ongoing UN-REDD-supported programmes are not overlapping and/or excluded from the EACC agreement and to clarify UN-REDD’s role in future REDD+ work. To advance on subnational Emissions Reductions programme ideas, UN-REDD supported national stakeholder consultation in the Albertine and Kyoga water management zones in February 2025. Regional stakeholders provided feedback on the priorities for the region for forests and next steps. To move this work forward, further guidance is needed on the type of donor to support these ER programmes and, if they are to be presented as an ER program rather than a grant-style proposal, issues such as, the verification methodology and a FREL/baseline for each region, need to be discussed. Further decisions and strategic directions by the government are needed on where to present these ER programmes.

Viet Nam



REDD+ Implementation

Forest solutions realised

Viet Nam has continued to advance its REDD+ readiness, and, through transformational changes in the forestry sector and support from UN-REDD, has made significant progress toward meeting the requirements for accessing REDD+ results-based finance. To ensure integrity, the UN-REDD has supported a Safeguards package of initiatives which includes the review of Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) operations, with a focus on LEAF provinces, which led to the preparation of a final report with action plan for GRM strengthening. In addition, UN-REDD supported the preparation of a final draft LEAF Program subnational safeguards guidance and chapters related to safeguards and GRM in the Program Operations Manual (POM). The update of Safeguards Information Systems (SIS) has advanced, with background webpages updated, and new safeguards information being added. Finally, Vietnam’s second Summary of Information (SOI) was submitted to VNFOREST for review, with a possible extension of the SOI period under consideration.

The final draft of the national Decree on Carbon Services has been submitted. Consultation rounds have started, including linkages with the LEAF program's Benefit Sharing Plan and it is now pending Ministerial endorsement. The National REDD+ Action Plan (NRAP) review report has been completed. Next steps include comments/consultations and a national workshop to disseminate

findings and outline adoption and next steps. UN-REDD has continued to foster regional and south-south cooperation on carbon integrity through knowledge exchanges with Indonesia, in specific with Riau Province on the ART-TREES process and lessons learned and on opportunities and challenges of Payment for Ecosystem Services (PFES). Overall, the UN-REDD Team continues to provide support to VNFOREST for the coordination of the LEAF program and broader forest carbon-related activities. In the context of a fragmented TA and REDD+ finance landscape, the support provided by UN-REDD enabled VNFOREST to achieve better coordination.

Forest solutions rewarded

Viet Nam's participation in the LEAF Coalition significantly advanced in 2025 and following the successful conclusion of the ERPA negotiation, carbon credit issuance is expected in late 2026. Following the submission of TREES Monitoring Report (TMR) 1, the UN-REDD supported the Verification & Validation (VVB) process both on logistics (mission by Aenor in May 2025) and by supporting VNFOREST to address questions and clarifications in two separate rounds of review, including preparing detailed response and references. The TREES Registration Document is being updated based on inputs and requests from the VVB. [Lessons and recommendations for the ART-TREES validation and verification process](#) have been captured in a dedicated brief. In the meantime, support for the preparation of the Second Monitoring Report (2023-2024) requirements has started. UN-REDD supported Viet Nam to join REDD+ Investment roundtables in [London](#) and [Seoul](#) to connect and discuss potential TREES-transactions with buyers interested in high-integrity forest carbon Viet Nam Forest Fund (VNFF) institutional capacity built on safeguards implementation and monitoring, and an Action Plan for VNFF as the Financial Intermediary (FI) for LEAF has been drafted gathering inputs from key stakeholders and partners.

Forest solutions enhanced

Viet Nam has progressed significantly in its MRV framework however, carbon accounting in line with existing and emerging RBPs mechanisms still require support which has been provided by UN-REDD, particularly in the context of the TREES Monitoring Reports. Further opportunities for improvements with UN-REDD and partner's support also include a better and more efficient integration of various data collection processes in Vietnam i.e. NFIMAP and FPD forest monitoring. In addition, PFES has successfully created a virtuous cycle to finance forest management activities, however since its true impact on emission reduction should be more explicitly quantified, a dedicated assessment has been supported by the UN-REDD.

There was continued support to the development of the domestic carbon market, this year focusing on the development of the National Carbon Registry, and complete connection among systems in ETS and carbon credits, ensure the integration of domestic market and international platforms. Furthermore, to explore further carbon market opportunities, a CORSIA study was conducted on assessing the compliance to CORSIA in the aviation sector to assess the potential of domestic carbon credits and mitigation outcomes from agriculture, forestry and energy for CORSIA offsets. UN-REDD also contributed to the development of policies, guidance and relevant legal documents to implement Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, including the draft national standard on the requirements for forest carbon credits. There was further support on the assessment of carbon stocks of mangrove forests with the objective of quantifying mangrove forests' contribution to raising ambitions in the NDC. A database is now completed, and results are integrated into the national coastal forest database and endorsed by the government.

Gender and social inclusion

Gender equality and social inclusion are prioritized through several key strategies. Gender was mainstreamed into all activities, with efforts made to achieve at least 30% representation of women in workshops. To ensure meaningful participation, gender-specific group discussions were conducted where necessary, allowing women to share their perspectives in a safe and supportive

environment. Consultations and information sharing were conducted at national, provincial, and local levels, with targeted outreach to women’s organizations and ethnic minority communities.

Partnerships

The UN-REDD continued its role as a trusted partner to VNFOREST in coordinating the support on the forest carbon markets and in particular for the LEAF initiative. As requested by VNFOREST, the UN-REDD facilitated coordination and collaboration among technical advisory providers, such as JICA, IFAD, USAID, UK TAP, etc. UN-REDD also continues to actively engage with partners such as the UK and Norwegian Embassy, the UN RC and UNCT system, the World Bank among others. UN-REDD have also fostered South-South cooperation on REDD+, organising a knowledge exchange between Vietnam and Indonesia.

Challenges and solutions

In the context of a positive and fast progressing environment, several challenges impact program implementation. Finalizing ERPA documents and completing VVB processes still require UN-REDD close support to VNFOREST. Time constraints between the development of the separate decree for the LEAF initiative and the general carbon market decree also pose a challenge. Furthermore, decision-making processes within VNFOREST have at times slowed advancements.

Zambia



REDD+ Implementation

Forest solutions realised

UN-REDD support to establish Zambia’s Safeguards Information System (SIS) is ongoing and progressing in collaboration with ZEMA, the Forestry Department, and the National Safeguards Technical Working Group. Its completion is targeted for end of Q1 2026. Zambia’s Second Summary of Information has been completed and validated in 2025 and will be submitted to the UNFCCC in 2026, following quality assurance. Following recent government transitions, UN-REDD has initiated targeted support and capacity-building for newly appointed Safeguards Focal Point, including technical briefings, structured mentoring to ensure continuity, institutional memory and sustained progress on the safeguards agenda. In June and July, a workshop and training on ART-TREES was delivered by UN-REDD, providing comprehensive information on ART-TREES to the country’s key stakeholders. It equipped senior government officials, technical working groups, development partners and local community representatives with the information needed to make informed decisions prior to pursuing the TREES pathway. Importantly, for the first time it brought together the country’s MRV and safeguards teams working on REDD+, strengthening internal understanding, coherence and collaboration across REDD+ pillars.

UN-REDD convened a regional workshop on benefit-sharing for REDD+ in Lusaka, bringing together the World Bank, ART Secretariat, African Forest Forum, and representatives from 12 African countries. The event enabled strategic engagement with Zambia’s new leadership (Acting Director of Forestry and the new Safeguards Focal Point), advanced discussions on national perspectives on TREES and upcoming JREDD initiatives. At the same time, the event was an opportunity to enable Governments to interact directly with the ART Secretariat to get clarifications on concerns they have on technical and procedural aspects of the standard.

Forest solutions rewarded

A UN-REDD mission in June included meetings with the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Green Economy and Environment, identifying priority support areas, including advice on options to market existing carbon credits. It was agreed that UN-REDD would assist with not only policies and frameworks to enable better access to market but also help creating strategies in which to do so such as VCM, Article 6, CORSIA and so on. Zambia was invited to participate in both roundtables (in London and Johannesburg) but were unable to attend. However, the country was involved in helping shape the conversations during the events and will be invited to the events occurring in 2026.

Gender and social inclusion

UN-REDD supported the strengthening of Zambia's approach, enhancing quality of safeguards reporting and systematically integrating indicators for gender and social inclusion – ensuring rights, participation and impacts are more clearly reflected in national processes.

Partnerships

UN-REDD support in Zambia has been delivered in close collaboration with the Zambia Environmental Management Agency (ZEMA), the Forestry Department, the National Safeguards Technical Working Group, and the Ministry of Green Economy and Environment. Strategic engagement was strengthened through the regional benefit-sharing workshop hosted in Lusaka, which convened the World Bank, ART Secretariat, African Forest Forum, and representatives from 12 African countries, facilitating technical exchanges and alignment on TREES and jurisdictional REDD+ approaches. Continued dialogue with the ART Secretariat and other partners supported Zambia's consideration of carbon market pathways, including voluntary markets, Article 6 and CORSIA. These partnerships have reinforced institutional coordination across MRV and safeguards pillars and supported Zambia's positioning within emerging high-integrity forest carbon market discussions.

Challenges and solutions

The high turnover in the Government key positions for advancing the REDD+ agenda represented a challenge in 2025, causing delays in the delivery of the UN-REDD workplan implementation. For reference, since between June and November, the focal point of the National Safeguards Technical Working Group changed twice, and in the same timeframe, the Director of Forestry Department and the Director the Zambia Environmental Management Agency (ZEMA) also changed. The November workshop enabled UN-REDD to bring those key officials up to speed to some extent although more sessions are needed.

GLOBAL AND REGIONAL INITIATIVES

ASEAN Social Forestry Initiative



The UN-REDD Initiative “Climate change mitigation through social forestry actions in Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries”, also known as ASEAN Social Forestry (SF) is working to strengthen the evidence base for climate mitigation contributions of social forestry to facilitate its integration in NDCs and enhance access to climate finance. The Initiative, which is funded by Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and with the first phase running from 2022 to 2025, works at the regional ASEAN level, with piloting on strengthening of SF monitoring systems, capacity development, including for mitigation assessment for SF, and SF enterprise development in three countries: Cambodia, Indonesia and Lao PDR.

2025 highlights for the Initiative

- Assessing the contribution of SF interventions towards climate change mitigation in Cambodia, Indonesia and Lao PDR (Output 1 of the Initiative). These were developed with government agencies, and the findings shared to support development of the new NDCs, facilitate reporting, as well as support other related initiatives. A key pillar of this is the ongoing development of the SF monitoring systems, including database, in Cambodia and Lao PDR.
- Capacities developed in the three focus countries to assess and monitor SF interventions (Output 2), including through integration in national forest monitoring systems (NFMS) and development of new NDCs (Output 3), this included through trainings, workshops and development and testing of guidelines and manuals to support better understanding of climate mitigation impacts of social forestry, with support for access to finance and policy development.
 - The new NDC (3.0) for Cambodia incorporates SF in many areas, including in quantitative terms. The new NDC also reflects other areas of ASEAN SF work including on strengthening use of forest management plans with the NDC targeting that all SFs have functioning management plan.
 - Indonesia’s new NDC sees consolidation and embedding of SF in other related national initiatives including the SRN (National Registry System) and village-level programmes (ProKlim) helping to embed SF within MRV/registry and finance/policy frameworks. The latest NDC also renews the country’s commitment to 12.7 million ha of SF by 2030. The NDC submission coincides with the government:
 - committing to sell carbon credits from sustainable forest management, including SF.
 - developing a Regulation for SF tenure holders to benefit from the sale of carbon through their stewardship of forest resources. FAO is supporting the government on this including reviewing the draft Regulation and developing and piloting a guideline to support its implementation.
- The Initiative also supported the ASEAN Member States in the development of a Common Position on Forestry for Climate Action for UNFCCC COP30. The Common Position which was developed through collaboration between the ASEAN Secretariat, UN-REDD Programme (FAO and UNEP), ASEAN Working Group on Forest and Climate Change (AWG-FCC), and ASEAN Working Group on Social Forestry (AWG-SF), is significant in many ways beyond COP30.
- The Initiative supported 13 Social Forestry Enterprises (SFEs) in developing operational Business and Investment plans, which included facilitating introductions and negotiations between the SFEs and market and financial actors, with additional support to address business and financial management gaps.
- The Initiative supported the ASEAN Secretariat and the AWG-SF in developing the “Blueprint for the Business Development of Social Forestry Enterprises in ASEAN Countries” (work in progress)

- The team, working with the ASEAN Secretariat, relevant AWGs and Nanyang Technological University, finalised the ASEAN Guideline and Toolkit for integrating NbS in forestry, including SF (Output 5). These were endorsed by the ASEAN Senior Officials in Forestry and the ASEAN Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry in Q3 of 2025. The Initiative is in discussion with relevant agencies and partners to pilot the Toolkit in SF landscapes in the region.

REDD+ Implementation

Development of SF mitigation assessments in the three focus countries, as part of developing capacities to determine impact of forest management, including SF, on carbon. This has been complemented by development of Manual for conducting mitigation assessment for social forestry in Indonesia, and guideline for developing and implementing carbon projects in SF landscapes. The guideline is being developed to support development of Regulation by the government of Indonesia on carbon projects in SF. The Initiative also provided feedback on the first draft of the Regulation. The Guideline was also tested in a SF landscape in Kalimantan in Q4 2025.

A total of 3 SFEs in Cambodia, 2 in Lao PDR, and 8 in Indonesia were supported to identify suitable investment sources and facilitated in accessing finance to implement their business plans. Field-based learning is being captured a Blueprint for the Business Development of Social Forestry Enterprises in ASEAN in consultation with the ASEAN Working Group on Social Forestry.

Gender and social inclusion

The ASEAN SF Initiative supported gender mainstreaming in SF in the three focus countries, as well as at the regional level, this included:

- Research at landscape and national levels on impact of SF on vulnerable groups, including women, as part of larger assessment of SF. The results of which are being shared with government agencies.
 - Use and effectiveness of SF management plans (SFMPs) in the three countries, this included role of women, youth, ethnic groups in development of the SFMPs, benefit sharing etc.
 - Impact of social forestry on vulnerable groups in Cambodia.
 - Development of national and regional guidelines and toolkit that include emphasis on gender rights and equity in forest management, including under NbS and carbon projects.
 - ASEAN Guideline and Toolkit for integrating NbS in forestry, including SF, which through application of its Guiding Principles, provides support to NbS project
 - proponents on how to develop and implement NbS projects in forest landscapes in an inclusive manner – including through use of FPIC and other related processes.
 - Guideline on SF and carbon rights in Indonesia, linked to development of government regulation on the issue. The guideline was piloted in SF landscape in Kalimantan.
- Support for SF enterprises in the pilot countries, including development and implementation of Business and Investment Plans. In Cambodia this involved support for 3 SFEs, covering 1,917 ha. Total of 1,243 members incl. 609 women. While in Indonesia, 8 SFEs were supported. Women active in 6 of the SFEs. 2 SFEs are led by Indigenous Peoples.

Partnerships

The Initiative works in partnership with the ASEAN Secretariat, ASEAN Working Groups on Social Forestry (AWG-SF) and Forest & Climate Change (AWG-FCC). It also works with the governments of Cambodia, Indonesia and Lao PDR, including through Letters of Agreement. The Initiative also re-established support to the Secretariat of the AWG-SF and AWG-FCC. This is proving increasingly

important as the Initiative moves forward, such as for the implementation of the Plans of Actions (2021-2025) for both WGs, and development of Plan of Actions (PoAs) for 2025-2030, as well as development of ASEAN Common Position on forestry for COP30. The AWG-SF and FCC, as well as the ASEAN Secretariat also facilitate the engagement with other projects and partners in their coordination efforts with ASEAN mechanisms. Additionally, the Initiative is working closely with Nanyang Technological University, Non-Timber Forest Products - Exchange Programme (NTFP-EP) and RECOFTC and various other partners and stakeholders in ASEAN and in the target countries. Additional effort is being made in Cambodia to synergize with the SDC supported Community Action for Sustainable Forest (CASFor) project, and coordinate with other agencies on the support to NDC 3.0.

Challenges and solutions

UN-REDD has faced several challenges in advancing its work on social forestry (SF), each requiring strategic solutions. One key hurdle has been the sensitivity surrounding SF data. However, UN-REDD's strong relationship with the government has allowed access to this critical information. By ensuring a clear understanding of how the data will be used and how findings will be communicated, the initiative has been able to navigate this challenge effectively. Nonetheless, last-minute changes to the work plan have required the team to remain highly flexible and adaptive. Additionally, data inconsistencies and system limitations across all three focus countries made integrating SF into Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) particularly challenging. To address this, the Initiative is continuing to make substantial investments in system improvements and capacity development, tailoring its approach to the specific needs of each country. These efforts aim to create a stronger foundation for SF's inclusion in national climate strategies, as well as work on nature action, and livelihood development. Furthermore, the Initiative's investment in the partnership approach also continues to pay dividends going beyond data access, but also development of synergies in the activities.

UN-REDD and Africa Forest Forum Partnership



REDD+ Implementation

As 2025 was the last year of implementation of the project implemented in partnership with AFF. Six main activities were scheduled and completed. The partnership delivered a comprehensive package of knowledge, policy, and capacity-building support across Africa, including six national REDD+ country analysis, four thematic policy briefs, two national policy dialogues (Kenya and DRC), two regional Communities of Practice (on carbon markets and deforestation-free agriculture), and one regional Knowledge Exchange focused on equitable, effective and efficient benefit sharing for REDD+, with planned last regional knowledge change on deforestation-free commodities in February 2026. These were complemented by high-level side events and a targeted media engagement effort to amplify forest and REDD+ issues.

The main key takeaways from 2025 include the following: Countries gained clearer, comparative understanding of REDD+ policy, finance, safeguards, and carbon markets through targeted knowledge products. High-level policy dialogues in Kenya and DRC improved cross-sector coordination and reform momentum. Large Communities of Practice built technical capacity for carbon market access and deforestation-free agriculture, highlighting blended finance, traceability, and producer empowerment. Regional learning strengthened equitable benefit-sharing systems and safeguards credibility. Side events and policy briefs amplified REDD+ as a nature-based solution, while media engagement expanded public and political visibility of forests, inclusion, and results-based finance. An online e-learning module titled "Enhancing policy coherence through public

expenditure analysis for forests” was published to help stakeholders optimize public finance, strengthen policy coherence, and promote synergies between the agriculture and forestry sectors.

In summary, the activities undertaken during 2025 under the partnership strengthened technical, policy, and market readiness while creating a shared knowledge base and practical solutions. They improved countries’ ability to meet international standards, fostered partnerships, and increased visibility and investor confidence, supporting the scale-up of high-integrity, socially inclusive REDD+ implementation across the continent.

Gender and social inclusion

UN-REDD/AFF partnership support placed strong emphasis on strengthening how gender and social inclusion are embedded within REDD+ processes across African countries. Through policy dialogues, regional exchanges, and targeted learning platforms, the project helped countries better integrate gender-responsive approaches, inclusive participation, and equitable benefit-sharing into REDD+ planning and implementation. This contributed to ensuring that the rights, voices, and benefits of women, Indigenous Peoples, and local communities are more systematically reflected in safeguards systems, policy frameworks, and emerging carbon market engagement.

Partnerships

During 2025, UN-REDD not only remained a trusted partner of the African Forest Forum (AFF) for advancing REDD+ in Africa but also broadened its collaboration network well beyond this initial partnership. Engagement deepened with African countries and expanded to key institutions including the World Bank, Emergent, ART-TREES, AFWC, and GLF. Together, these partners jointly delivered major activities such as the Regional Exchange, Learning Lab Workshop, Policy Dialogues, the Community of Practice, side events, and coordinated actions to elevate the Forest and REDD+ agenda across the continent.

Challenges and solutions

During the reporting period, keeping the Communities of Practices active outside the week’s webinar sessions constituted a challenge to keep participants engaged. To sustain engagement, the Communities of Practice should shift from one-off webinar series to a year-round community model with a clear calendar, light but regular interactions, and quarterly thematic focus. Assigning member champions to drive peer exchange, offering practical problem-solving sessions and tools, sharing short micro-content, recognizing active contributors, and linking discussions to funding, market opportunities, and events will make the CoP more valuable and visible, turning it into an active network rather than a periodic event.

AIM4FOREST



The programme is designed to advance gender equality and social inclusion. Such considerations are at the heart of the programme’s definition of the change it aims to promote, and they are mainstreamed throughout the logframe with several targets directly set to enhance access to women, and disadvantaged groups. There is also a whole output specifically targeting Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, a key group that has so far not had sufficient access to work on forest monitoring and climate change. In 2025, the Young Forest Champions programme (a youth-focused initiative for Kenya) was rolled out to further five countries.

AIM4Forests crucially relies on partnership to deliver progress. Experts, firms, universities external to FAO are crucial delivery partners. In particular, partnership with the Global Forest Observations

Initiative (GFOI) stands out. The GFOI plays a role to technically advise AIM4Forests, as the technical teams to the GFOI Leads as a sounding board. Certain activities are also implemented together, for example, a south-south exchange at FAO's headquarters in November 2024. The GFOI also directly leads output 4 of the AIM4Forests Programme to deliver a country-led planning process for forest monitoring capacity development. In 2025, the GFOI worked with Fiji, Kenya, Guatemala, Viet Nam, Peru and the DRC to help run a structured planning process designed to strengthen technical capacities and better integrate forest monitoring into national institutions. The programme continues developing and flexibly responding to the contextual challenges:

- In early 2025, the UK government and FAO together launched AIM4Nature, a new output under the AIM4Forests programme. It sets out to develop a global dataset on nature restoration progress monitoring.
- Also in early 2025, the results of the AIM4Forests Mid-Term Review were presented to its Steering Committee. The Mid-Term Review attested strong performance in project implementation. It also resulted in a set of recommendations to further enhance impact.
- In late 2025, the donors and FAO decided to add a new component to the AIM4Forests programme, as its output 8, targeting transparency in commodity supply chains. The new component began operating from January 2026.

The AIM4Forests programme works since 2023 to transform forest monitoring systems. The logframe includes activities to develop tools and platforms, includes a strong focus on participation and transparency, especially of Indigenous Peoples, and country level support. There is much collaboration with the Global Forest Observations Initiative through a Country-Led Planning programme. In 2025, work fell, broadly, into four thematic categories:

- Forest monitoring to advance better resource management,
- Measuring, reporting and verification of mitigation results,
- Progress monitoring for nature restoration,
- Forest monitoring to support transparent commodity value chains.

Overall progress for AIM4Forests activities was “on track” in 2025. There is a total of 48 activities organized in 6 outputs. Naturally some of these activities advanced faster than others. Highlights in 2025 included the following:

- Under activity 3.5, AIM4Forests made an important contribution towards anchoring Indigenous Peoples' forest stewardship in the CBD process. The project helped provide the groundwork for the new Target 22 headline indicator of the Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF), which was agreed in early 2025 at CBD COP16-bis under FAO custodianship.
- Under activity 1.8, AIM4Forests launched Open Foris Arena Mobile 2.0 in April 2025. Open Foris Arena Mobile is part of a data management solution for national forest inventories and includes, among other things, improved functionality for offline data collection, new language options.
- Under activity 1.5, AIM4Forests brought together representatives from seven countries in March 2025 in Bangkok for an exchange workshop on technical aspects of project nesting using DeforRisk, a newly developed computational tool for deforestation risk modelling.
- Under output 2, AIM4Forests provided much assistance to the nascent Tropical Forests Forever Facility. Notably, the Government of Brazil and the TFFF Secretariat requested FAO to undertake a scoping study to identify methodological issues and collect quantitative data on principal forest countries to build the TFFF financial model. In the follow-up the AIM4forests team engaged into co-development of the TFFF Operations Manual.

Progress for work at the country level is also overall “on track”. AIM4Forests included 16 country workplans in 2025. The following countries benefitted from AIM4Forests support: Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Peru, Fiji, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Viet Nam,

the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda, Zambia. Highlights included the following:

- In June 2025, a team of FAO technical specialists provided targeted advice to Brazil’s INPE on accuracy assessment of PRODES, the key dataset to underlie climate change reporting, including for states’ ART-TREES programmes.
- In April and October 2025 (respectively), AIM4Forests undertook detailed assessments of implications if PNG and Guatemala considered participating in Article 6.2 with their REDD+ programmes, leveraging a newly developed country preparedness framework for REDD+ under Article 6.2.
- In October 2025, a regional workshop held in Lima brought together 40 representatives of Indigenous Peoples and community forest organizations from nine Latin American and Caribbean countries. Participants exchanged experiences, identified common challenges, and explored peer-learning opportunities, with outcomes feeding into AIM4Forests’ global Community of Practice on Forest Monitoring.

In countries receiving both UN-REDD TA and AIM4Forests direct assistance, support is jointly planned and deployed in a consistent and coordinated manner, benefiting one from each other so to multiply the effects and the impact.

REDD+ Academy



REDD+ Implementation

The REDD+ Academy further expanded its reach and solidified its role as a global hub for REDD+ learning. Throughout the year, the platform recorded 16,196 visits and engaged 3,308 active users, reflecting strong demand for structured, practitioner-focused learning across multiple regions. A major milestone for the year was the launch of four new learning journals and their associated tools, covering Forest Carbon Markets, National Strategies or Action Plans, Forest and Climate, and REDD+ Safeguards. These resources provided practitioners with practical guidance on critical REDD+ topics and strengthened the Academy’s capacity to support knowledge transfer and applied learning.

The Academy placed continued emphasis on in-person and regionally focused knowledge exchange. A global knowledge exchange on benefit-sharing mechanisms was convened in Nairobi, bringing together 82 country representatives and experts. A follow-up Learning Lab in Lusaka, Zambia, gathered over 80 country representatives and technical experts from Africa to share experiences and explore practical approaches. Insights from these events informed updates to Academy materials, ensuring that resources remain relevant to real-world implementation and regional priorities.

Knowledge production and dissemination accelerated in 2025. The Academy published 171 written resources, 80 videos, and 89 facilitated discussion threads, substantially expanding its library of high-quality learning materials. Video developed through the Safeguards Community of Practice achieved a 56 percent engagement rate, demonstrating strong interest among practitioners. Communities of Practice, including the African Forest Forum, continued to serve as key peer-learning platforms, supporting experience sharing and collaborative problem-solving among REDD+ stakeholders.

Gender and social inclusion

Gender distribution among registered participants continued to improve, with 47.9 per cent men and 28.0 per cent women, representing an increase in the proportion of registered women compared to the previous year.

Partnerships

The Academy strengthened its partnerships, collaborating with ITC-ILO as a service provider and with the African Forest Forum, while exploring new linkages with the World Bank Academy.

Challenges and solutions

Despite overall growth, engagement levels varied by region. Participation remained strong in Africa, while engagement from Latin America and Asia was comparatively lower. To address this, the Academy is implementing targeted regional outreach strategies, including tailored content and strengthened collaboration with regional partners. Experience in 2025 also underscored the need to improve coherence across learning modalities. While Learning Labs, Communities of Practice and Learning Journals each deliver value independently, efforts are underway to integrate them more closely and create clearer, more seamless learning pathways. Ensuring accessibility for users with diverse technical backgrounds remains a priority.

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT RESULTS

UN-REDD combined technical knowledge generation, strategic convening, and targeted advocacy to help strengthen the policy visibility and investment case for forest-based climate solutions. Knowledge management remained closely linked to implementation needs, ensuring that global policy discussions were informed by operational experience and country realities.

Key knowledge outputs included the [State of Finance for Forests](#), [High-risk forests, high-value returns](#) and [the Solutions Tree knowledge platform](#) highlighting integrated REDD+ action pathways. Additional products including [a gender-focused analysis](#), [lessons-learned syntheses](#), and [high-integrity carbon market toolkits](#) provided practical guidance for policymakers, investors and key stakeholders in priority UN-REDD technical assistance countries. Complementary work on land tenure, forest monitoring, safeguards, and implementation lessons, such as, the guide on “[Advancing NDC implementation in the AFOLU sector](#)”, and the “[Initial lessons and recommendations for ART-TREES validation and verification](#)”, helped ground policy discussions in practical experience.

UN-REDD’s convening role was central to translating knowledge into collaboration and practical action. REDD+ investment roundtables in [London](#), [Seoul](#), and [Johannesburg](#) brought together over 130 governments, donors, investors, and Indigenous Peoples’ representatives to examine financing barriers and opportunities. Two global benefit-sharing conferences in [Lusaka](#) and [Nairobi](#) convened 150 stakeholders from 20 countries, strengthening shared learning on safeguards implementation and equitable benefit sharing through an active community of practice. Convening around land tenure and rights helped maintain attention on tenure security as a prerequisite for sustainable forest management, equitable benefit sharing, and investment readiness. Held in close partnership with the World Bank and other partners, these platforms reinforced UN-REDD’s role as a neutral broker for technical exchange, policy dialogue, and consensus building.

To further facilitate uptake of knowledge products, strategic outreach was expanded, with newsletter subscriptions increasing by roughly 15% and reaching over 12,000 stakeholders globally, while overall knowledge products, web stories and think pieces and digital engagement reached an estimated 1 million people. Media visibility also expanded, including a feature in the [New York Times](#), op-eds in [Climate Home News](#) and [SwissInfo](#), and a growing number of expert interviews and features. Country-focused stories, including community forest stewardship in [Costa Rica](#), safeguards implementation experiences in [Zambia](#), and jurisdictional forest monitoring efforts in [Nepal](#) and [Indonesia](#), helped translate technical knowledge into practical examples for policymakers and investors.

Strategic partnerships further strengthened this role. As a key partner in the newly launched JREDD Coalition, UN-REDD is leading two working groups and contributed across others, helping ensure technical rigor and country experience informed coalition priorities. The programme also supported Brazil’s COP presidency’s Action Agenda, including leadership on the Plan to Accelerate Solutions on REDD+ and Combatting Deforestation alongside the Forest and Climate Leaders Partnership (FCLP).

UN-REDD continued to provide support to Indigenous Peoples including through advice to members of the IIPFCC (International Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate Change); the IIPYFCC (International Indigenous Peoples Youth Forum on Climate Change); and IP organizations such as the Global Alliance of Territorial Communities; co-organizing or speaking in climate-related events; and supporting their participation in global convenings. UN-REDD also leveraged global events to promote the work on the NDC and climate finance including on direct grants, including during the UNPFII and NY Climate Week both in New York, and at the Forest, People, Climate Global Convening in Rio de Janeiro and COP 30 in Belem – both in Brazil.

UN-REDD also supported design of the Forest Guardians Investment Accelerator, a rights-based platform designed to channel global private finance toward Indigenous led forest conservation and bioeconomy initiatives, addressing the critical need to protect tropical forests. A 2024–2025 pilot demonstrated strong proof of concept through successful collaborations with companies such as Lavazza, Rituals, Rurban and the Amazon Investor Coalition, and Sacred Forests. An interim gender balanced, multi stakeholder Advisory Council representing Indigenous leaders, entrepreneurs, and environmental champions has been established to provide oversight for the Platform.

This combined knowledge and convening work contributed to maintaining forests and REDD+ within global climate policy and investment discussions. The State of Finance for Forests report was referenced at a high-level ministerial during COP30 in Brazil and featured prominently at both London and New York Climate Weeks, reinforcing the policy and investment rationale for forests. These discussions informed the Brazil-led Tropical Forest Finance Facility and supported the Forest Finance Roadmap backed by 34 countries. At [COP30](#), UN-REDD's [Forest Finance event](#) at the Forest Pavilion provided a platform to consolidate emerging consensus around jurisdictional REDD+ as a practical pathway for scaling forest-based mitigation, while highlighting continued investment needs, policy alignment challenges, and the importance of engagement with Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities.

Through evidence-based advocacy, partnerships, and practical knowledge products, UN-REDD continued to support countries and partners in advancing forest-based climate action, strengthening its role as a technical convener connecting policy, finance, and implementation communities.

GENDER

UN-REDD Programme continued to support 22 partner countries in advancing their efforts to integrate gender equality and women's empowerment principles into their REDD+ action, particularly on forest monitoring carbon market readiness and REDD+ results-based payment efforts. Support to UN-REDD partner countries ranged from strengthening gender responsiveness of safeguards frameworks and reporting to increasing women's involvement in decision-making spaces and promoting gender-responsive and socially inclusive benefit sharing schemes.

For example, in Cambodia, UN-REDD supported work on REDD+ safeguards, particularly on the country's [2nd Summary of Information \(Sol\) on REDD+ Safeguards](#) (published in November 2025), in which a gender and social inclusion approach was fully integrated, documenting and reporting the country work within REDD+ action from 2018-2022. In Mexico, UN-REDD supported work on REDD+ safeguards resulted in incorporation of gender into safeguards monitoring indicators, prioritizing gender-specific variables on benefit sharing and consultation. These efforts ensure future reporting captures differentiated impacts and fosters more inclusive, and gender-responsive participatory decision-making.

In Ghana, under the LEAF project, UN-REDD efforts included promoting the integration of a gender and social inclusion approach in its Benefit Sharing Framework and community partner management arrangements for REDD+ implementation. To illustrate, [69% of payments go directly to local farmers and communities](#) and women must represent at least 30% of 1) leadership roles within community management arrangements and 2) farmers within participating farmer groups. Similarly, in Indonesia, the new "Sharia-compliant Revolving Fund Facility" for social forestry groups reached 259 direct beneficiaries (33% women) and women comprised a total of 78 of the 207 participants (38%) engaged in technical consultations, meetings and focus group discussions, including on Sharia agreement design and dispute resolution mechanisms, amongst other topics.

Furthermore, in Bolivia a gender perspective was integrated into the analysis on the control of deforestation, degradation, and conservation of forests and biodiversity to help identify concrete gender and territory-specific actions to incorporate into the country's REDD+ Action Plan. In Colombia work was also carried out with women-led organizations within deforestation-free supply chains. In Peru, a Climate Fund for Indigenous Women was also conceptualized which looked at specifically linking climate finance with women's leadership, economic empowerment and resilience.

Also, with support from the UN-REDD Programme, the [W+ Standard](#) was piloted in the following 2 Green Climate Fund-financed projects: 1) "Ghana Shea Landscape Emission Reductions Project" (GSLERP) and 2) "Costa Rica's REDD+ RBP for 2014 and 2015 project". For the GLSERP, the W+ Standard was applied to project activities focused on [restoring degraded shea parklands and empowering women across the shea value chain](#). The W+ verified results from these activities demonstrated that 91% of surveyed women from these project activities reported income increases due to project activities, where top uses of additional income included household consumption goods (80%), education (71%), and health expenses (57%). Additionally, 56% of women reported reinvesting in their businesses, indicating a thoughtful balance between welfare and productive use of funds. For Costa Rica's REDD+ RBP project, [the W+ Standard was applied to project activities](#) on 1) gender-responsive knowledge, and training activities on forest fire management and 2) women's active and equitable decision-making around forest management and use, through a National Forum of Rural Women and Environmental and Forest and Territorial Plans in Indigenous Territories. The W+ verified results from these activities demonstrated that prior to the project, 56% of women surveyed identified exclusion as "most challenging," with rural women reporting particularly high levels (68%). Post-project, only 7% of women surveyed rated it as "most challenging," and many responses moved into intermediate or lower challenge categories. These W+ results suggest that while exclusionary dynamics persist, women increasingly perceive themselves as having tools, legitimacy, or collective backing to contest or navigate these practices.

Additionally, with support from the UN-REDD Programme, "[The Power of Gender: New Generation of REDD+ Action in the LAC Region](#)" was published in November 2025 and spotlights the good practices from innovative REDD+ actions in the LAC region that have successfully placed gender equality and women's empowerment at the heart of the design and implementation of their REDD+ action. The report includes in-depth case studies from GCF-financed REDD+ RBP projects within five Latin American countries, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador and Paraguay. These case studies were developed and validated in close collaboration with the participating countries as well as the broader UN-REDD LAC Gender and REDD+ Platform. Possible options for a launch event in 2026 for the publication are currently being explored.

Innovative social media campaigns for [International Women's Day](#) and the [Day of Rural Women](#) were also developed to help amplify the voices of women leaders and their invaluable role in forest protection and REDD+. UN-REDD continued to also raise awareness and support efforts to integrate gender into carbon markets through the "[Gender and Voluntary Carbon Market](#)" Community of Practice, which now has over 1,250 online members.

FINANCIAL REPORTING

[Financial report will be provided by the MPTF separately in May 2026]

LOOKING AHEAD

The year 2026 marks the transition into the UN-REDD Programme's 2026–2030 phase, at the midpoint of this critical decade to halt and reverse deforestation and forest degradation by 2030. With only a few years remaining to meet this global goal, and with tropical forests now widely recognized as indispensable to keeping the 1.5°C limit within reach, the urgency to accelerate delivery has never been greater. The coming period will be decisive in determining whether commitments translate into scaled implementation and measurable results on the ground. [Without sustained protection of tropical forests, there is no credible pathway to achieving this goal.](#)

Building on progress achieved in 2025 and guided by the UN-REDD 2026–2030 Strategy, the Programme will focus on supporting countries to accelerate implementation unlock and mobilize finance, and ensure forest action remains rights-based, credible and effective. This includes continued support for strengthening national forest monitoring systems, safeguards implementation, and governance frameworks that are essential for accessing results-based finance and high-integrity market mechanisms.

The outcomes of COP30 in Belém, including momentum around the global deforestation roadmap, reinforced both the political momentum around forests and the growing demand for practical pathways to scale investment. In this context, UN-REDD will remain well positioned to support partner countries in advancing high-integrity jurisdictional approaches, strengthening readiness for results-based payments, and operationalizing safeguards, benefit-sharing and tenure-related measures that underpin long-term credibility and sustainability, including through UN-REDD's engagement in advancing high-integrity jurisdictional approaches under [the newly established J-REDD Coalition](#).

Recognizing that transformative change requires cross-sectoral action, UN-REDD will also deepen efforts to support countries in fully realizing forest solutions in the context of national development priorities, NDC implementation, and wider green economic transitions. The Programme will continue to strengthen partnerships across governments, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, civil society, financial institutions and the private sector, helping to align incentives and accelerate progress toward deforestation-free development pathways.

In line with UN reform and UN80, UN-REDD will continue to strengthen efficiency, integration and accountability in the way it delivers. Anchored in transparent and robust financial management through the Multi-Partner Trust Fund mechanism, the Programme will remain focused on delivering high-impact technical assistance and knowledge support, while leveraging its convening role to help mobilize scaled and predictable finance for forests.

With 2026 as a year of triple COPs (the UNFCCC COP, CBD COP, and UNCCD COP), UN-REDD will continue to work on synergies across the climate, biodiversity and land degradation agendas, supporting countries to pursue more integrated and coherent forest solutions. Building on its convening role and technical expertise, the Programme will help strengthen alignment across national policies, finance mechanisms and implementation frameworks, ensuring that forest action delivers multiple benefits and contributes meaningfully to global goals.

ANNEX 1: IMPACT STORIES

1. GENDER-RESPONSIVE FOREST CONSERVATION ACTION DELIVERS STRONGER RESULTS

When women lead and benefit equitably from forest conservation, the results are transformational, for forests, communities and climate action.

This is the key message of a new case study report developed by the UN-REDD Programme. Titled [“The Power of Gender: New Generation of REDD+ Action in the LAC Region”](#), this publication spotlights the good practices from innovative REDD+ actions across Latin America and the Caribbean that have successfully placed gender equality and women’s empowerment at the heart of the design and implementation of their REDD+ action. With this publication, the UN-REDD Programme is helping to address the global continued need to document and systematize gender good practices and support efforts to design and implement high impact REDD+ actions that jointly deliver for forests and gender equality. With in-depth case studies from Green Climate Fund (GCF)-financed REDD+ results-based payments (RBP) projects from Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador and Paraguay, the report demonstrates that gender-responsive approaches not only advance gender equality but also deliver more effective and durable forest conservation outcomes. See below for a snapshot of some of the good practices and results featured in the publication.

Brazil: Women as agents of change

The pilot Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) programme of Brazil’s Floresta+ Amazon Project pioneered clear, measurable and ambitious gender requirements to promote women’s equitable participation as beneficiaries and to ensure they receive an equitable share of benefits. In this process, it collected gender-disaggregated data to establish gender baselines for land ownership, information that previously did not exist. A key innovation is in the benefit sharing arrangements for the PES programme: where rural properties have multiple owners, payments are transferred directly to women’s bank accounts, strengthening economic autonomy. Demonstrating the pivotal role women play in driving innovation and forest sustainability, the project has also actively and equitably promoted women’s leadership in decision-making and governance structures. By the end of 2024, 43 percent of beneficiaries under the Conservation modality were women, of which 10 percent were heads of single-parent families; half of supported innovative businesses were women-led; and 52 percent of the Project Advisory Committee were women, embedding gender balance in decision-making.

Chile: Systematic gender integration

Chile mainstreamed gender across all REDD+ implementation levels, developing tools, checklists and guidelines for site-level projects, to ensure gender equitable benefit sharing and expanded livelihood opportunities for women. Results followed: as of the end of 2024, women accounted for 50 percent of 3,142 permanent direct project beneficiaries and 70 percent of 821 site-level projects integrated a gender-sensitive approach and 46 percent had women as project owners. Chile also introduced the country’s first gender equality indicator within the National Forestry Corporation’s Management System, making gender responsiveness a mandatory element of conservation management.

Costa Rica: Amplifying rural and Indigenous women’s voices

Costa Rica established the National Forum of Rural Women in 2022, bringing together representatives from the country’s 29 rural territories. By 2024, the Forum had developed a national strategy and led drafting of a Law on Women’s Access to, Use and Control of Land, which has received parliamentary support. The country also pioneered gender-responsive fire management,

training 80 firefighters (45 women and 35 men) through the region's first Gender, Forest and Fire course. In Indigenous territories, 20 Environmental, Forest and Territorial Plans, covering 79 percent of Indigenous lands, were developed through inclusive processes. In this process, Indigenous women represented 51 percent (4,932 women) of the Indigenous People participating in the 209 community dialogues on design and 52 percent of the members of the corresponding monitoring committees.

Ecuador: Addressing inequalities and empowering women to drive economic change in forest conservation

In Ecuador, with the development of the Botas Violeta (Purple Boots in English) initiative, the project helped prevent gender-based violence (GBV) through awareness raising activities shedding light on the economic violence faced by many women in the Amazon. This initiative also helped to make visible the indispensable roles women play in REDD+ and associated sustainable agriculture and livelihoods practices. Due to its success in helping to tackle GBV, reaching nearly 1,750 people, mostly women, the Botas Violeta initiative was scaled up in 2023 to the national level to reach more women and men. Women's barriers to finance were also removed through a deforestation-free credit line, easing loan requirements for women and allowing them to also help in the conservation of forests in the Ecuadorian Amazon. Of USD 3.9 million disbursed, 35 percent went to female producers, who made up 43 percent of recipients. In addition, of a total of 6,585 ha in transition to sustainable production systems, 2,327 (35 percent) is under women's leadership.

Paraguay: Removing barriers to leadership

In Paraguay, culturally adapted intercultural dialogues increased Indigenous women's participation in forest governance. Women now comprise 40 percent of the Project Board, with equal representation on regional councils. Indigenous women also played an active and equitable role in decision-making processes to ensure their priorities were included in financial incentives associated with the country's Environmental Services Regime. To illustrate, Indigenous women represented 42 percent of the 1,905 Indigenous People consulted on Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC). Childcare spaces (including play and learning areas) were provided during these FPIC processes so that mothers could effectively participate in the workshops.

A model for transformational change

Across these countries, gender-responsive REDD+ action has delivered stronger forest outcomes, improved livelihoods, and shifts in social and gender norms. Through these efforts to systemize and generate new knowledge on gender good practices, UN-REDD continues to support countries in scaling approaches that show a simple truth: when women are equitably and actively involved and have a seat at the table, forests, and climate action, are more effective and successful.

2. UNLOCKING FOREST FINANCE: HOW REDD+ INVESTMENT ROUNDTABLES ARE TURNING INTEREST INTO ACTION

Momentum for REDD+ investment is being built. As demand for nature-based solutions grows and pressure to reduce emissions intensifies, forest finance is moving from theory toward implementation. Yet while many countries have made strong technical progress, transactions at scale remain limited.

In 2025, the UN-REDD Programme convened a series of REDD+ Investment Opportunities Roundtables in London, Johannesburg, and Seoul to help close this gap. Bringing together

governments, investors, technical experts, and carbon market leaders, the roundtables aimed to move beyond expressions of interest and accelerate high-integrity, jurisdictional REDD+ deals.

The first dialogue took place in London during Climate Action Week, co-hosted with the Integrity Council for the Voluntary Carbon Market. Around 60 private sector participants joined governments, development banks, Indigenous Peoples representatives, civil society, and international organizations to examine why transactions remain slow despite rising demand.

Discussions highlighted three persistent constraints. First, governance clarity: investors need clear mandates, coordinated institutions, and stable legal frameworks. Second, predictable long-term purchase structures, including greater certainty on pricing, timelines, and performance conditions. Third, robust benefit-sharing systems that are transparent, equitable, and trusted by communities.

Despite these barriers, confidence remained high. Buyers reaffirmed interest in jurisdictional REDD+ credits, while governments presented increasingly detailed investment pipelines. The takeaway was pragmatic: the challenges are well understood and increasingly solvable, provided risk-sharing mechanisms and global frameworks continue to improve.

The second roundtable in Johannesburg shifted focus to Africa's rapidly advancing REDD+ landscape. Governments presented new and emerging jurisdictional programmes designed to deliver emissions reductions at scale, with several countries already accessing, or preparing to access, results-based finance, carbon markets, and blended finance.

Investors and development banks responded positively, highlighting strong potential for blended finance, the importance of long-term offtake agreements, and growing confidence in high-integrity African programmes. A clear signal emerged: as readiness improves, investor's appetite is expanding alongside it.

The third dialogue, held in Seoul, showcased how years of technical preparation in Asia are translating into investment readiness. Countries demonstrated progress in forest monitoring systems, safeguards implementation, accounting frameworks, reference levels, and data transparency.

Across sessions, investors emphasized three priorities: transparency through open data and verifiable results; alignment between project-level, jurisdictional, and national systems; and legal certainty defining roles, rights, and transaction conditions. Governments reaffirmed plans to advance jurisdictional programmes, signalling a transition from readiness to implementation.

Across all three regions, a shared message emerged. National systems are strengthening, governments are presenting clearer investment pipelines, and investors are increasingly aligned on expectations. Buyers consistently emphasized integrity, transparency, legal clarity, and long-term deal structures.

Together, the 2025 roundtables helped translate dialogue into direction, clarifying the reforms and standards needed to unlock jurisdictional REDD+ investment. They brought national ambition and market reality closer, reinforcing confidence that high-integrity forest finance can scale to meet global climate goals.

3. FROM READINESS TO RESULTS: HOW UGANDA TURNED FOREST ACTION INTO RESULTS-BASED CLIMATE FINANCE

For more than a decade, Uganda has invested in forests as part of a long-term effort to translate forest action into predictable climate finance. Through sustained engagement under the UN-REDD

Programme, starting around 2009-2010, the country focused on readiness, institutional strengthening, and building the systems needed to turn forest conservation into measurable climate outcomes.

In 2025, that effort reached a milestone. Uganda became the first African country, and the first least developed country, to receive results-based payments for REDD+ from the Green Climate Fund. The approval of USD 31 million, in recognition of verified emissions reductions achieved between 2016 and 2017, marked a turning point for how forest-based climate action can be financed at scale in Africa.

This achievement was grounded in sustained investment in national systems. With support from FAO and the UN-REDD Programme, Uganda developed its National REDD+ Strategy and established a robust national Monitoring, Reporting and Verification system. This system enabled the country to track forest cover change, estimate emissions and removals, and apply safeguards in line with international standards.

The credibility of Uganda's data proved decisive. Transparent and consistent reporting made it possible to verify more than 8 million tonnes of CO₂ equivalent in emissions reductions for the 2016-2017 period – the results that unlocked results-based climate finance through the Green Climate Fund.

In the words of Mr. Bob Kazungu, Assistant Commissioner for Forestry (Assessment and Monitoring) and National REDD+ Focal Point for Uganda: *“It is such a great opportunity for Uganda to see tangible results after a sixteen-year journey of REDD+. Thanks to the leadership of the Ministry of Water and Environment, in-country experts, the World Bank, the Austrian Development Agency, and the UN-REDD Programme, we finally have something concrete to show for our efforts.”*

As Uganda moves into the implementation phase of its results-based payment project, attention has turned to how these resources can be reinvested to sustain results over time. In parallel with REDD+ implementation, Uganda has strengthened its understanding of how forests are financed through public budgets.

With support from FAO, under the UN-REDD Programme and the BIG-CHANCE project funded by Japan, the country undertook a public expenditure and policy coherence analysis of the forestry and land-use sectors. This work is now helping guide decisions on the use of proceeds, ensuring that results-based finance is reinvested in ways that are coherent with national land-use policies and capable of delivering lasting impact.

4. HOW GHANA WILL SHARE THE BENEFITS OF FOREST EMISSIONS REDUCTIONS: A STORY OF INNOVATION, INCLUSION, AND COLLECTIVE ACTION

Ghana continues to chart an ambitious path in forest conservation and management by building on experience with benefit sharing in the Cocoa Forest REDD+ Programme in the high forest zone. This path places communities, fairness, and innovation at its core. Through the TREES Program, Ghana is earning payments for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. But the real story lies in how these benefits will be shared: transparently, equitably, and with the people who protect the country's forests every day.

Ghana's Benefit Sharing Plan (BSP) for the TREES Program is the product of extensive and inclusive consultation processes undertaken in the forest sector. Over 337 stakeholders from across ten regions-traditional authorities, women and men farmers, youth groups, civil society, private companies, local governments, and forest-dependent communities, contributed directly to shaping how benefits should flow.

Workshops, focus groups, pairwise ranking, impact assessments, and role-playing exercises ensured that even groups often left out of natural resource governance, especially women, youth, and marginalized forest users—had their voices heard. Their insights shaped a benefit-sharing arrangement rooted in fairness, practicality, and trust.

Innovation in Benefit Sharing

The TREES BSP breaks new ground in several ways to distribute the proceeds from results-based payments:

Performance-based rewards ensure that those who actively reduce emissions such as farmers adopting climate-smart agriculture and fire volunteers protecting forest reserves receive a meaningful share.

Non-monetary benefits, including farm inputs, training, community projects, boreholes, and reforestation support, expand the definition of “benefits” to include improvements in long-term wellbeing.

A gender-responsive approach mandates women’s representation in governance structures and ensures that benefit packages explicitly address gender-related barriers.

A blended governance model combines existing structures such as Community Resource Management Areas (CREMAs) and Hotspot Intervention Areas that have established committees to manage and execute benefit sharing.

Where the Money Will Go

Payments received through the Emission Reductions Purchase Agreement signed with Emergent through the LEAF Coalition will be distributed according to clear, transparent proportions:

Communities, the frontline stewards of Ghana’s forests receive the largest share at 56%, including allocations to farmer groups, community development projects, and traditional authorities.

Government agencies, such as the Forestry Commission, COCOBOD, and District Assemblies, receive 30% to sustain forest governance and monitoring.

Civil society and private sector actors, critical for technical support, awareness, and further investment, each receive 2%.

The Program Management Unit receives 10% to ensure strong oversight and reporting.

A Model for Inclusive Climate Finance

Beyond numbers and structures, Ghana’s TREES Benefit Sharing Plan reflects a deeper transformation: a commitment to ensuring that climate finance reaches the people who safeguard the country’s forests and a virtuous cycle of forest management and governance is the result. Effective climate action is possible, and is most successful when co-created with communities, grounded in local realities, and designed to uplift both people and landscapes.

As Ghana begins to implement this Benefit Sharing Plan, it sends a powerful message: climate finance can be fair, inclusive, and transformative, when people are at the centre.

5. EVIDENCE ON FOREST FINANCE AND CO-BENEFITS HELPS SHAPE POST-COP30 CLIMATE ACTION

By the close of UNFCCC COP30 in Belém, forest finance had moved from a largely technical issue to a central element of climate and development negotiations. The debate was no longer about whether forests matter but about how to finance their protection at the scale required. Two UN-REDD analytical reports released ahead of the conference, *State of Finance for Forests 2025* and *High-Risk Forests, High-Value Returns*, helped inform that shift by grounding discussions in evidence rather than general commitments.

The finance report clarified the scale of the challenge. It estimated that global forest-related finance would need to increase from roughly US\$84 billion annually to around US\$300 billion per year by 2030 if climate, biodiversity and land restoration goals are to remain within reach. It also highlighted a roughly US\$67 billion annual financing gap in tropical forest countries, a figure that featured regularly in preparatory discussions ahead of COP30.

Having a quantified gap helped move discussions toward questions of financial architecture — how capital flows, over what time horizon, and with what incentives — rather than isolated pledges.

The analysis fed directly into policy design. Brazil drew on this evidence as it advanced the Tropical Forest Forever Facility (TFFF), which secured US\$5.5 billion in pledges during COP30 to support long-term tropical forest protection. André Aquino, lead economist at Brazil’s Ministry of Environment, has noted that clearer financing analysis helped shift discussions beyond short-term project funding toward mechanisms better suited to sustaining forest conservation over decades. The findings also informed a Forest Finance Roadmap endorsed by more than 30 countries and were referenced in technical dialogues, ministerial discussions and several Plans to Accelerate Solutions under the COP30 Action Agenda.

The companion co-benefits report broadened the economic case for forest investment. It identified around 391 million hectares of tropical forests at high risk of deforestation, roughly a quarter of global tropical forest area, and showed that protecting these landscapes can deliver substantial environmental, economic and social returns. Conserving these forests could keep an estimated 2.3 million tonnes of nitrogen pollutants and 527 million tonnes of sediment out of rivers annually, support the nutritional needs of roughly 10 million people through pollination services, and sustain forest-based livelihoods for about 25 million low-income people.

Researchers involved in the assessment, including work led by the National University of Singapore, have emphasized that recognizing these wider benefits helps correct persistent undervaluation of forests in financial decision-making. The analysis also estimated that protecting high risk forests could help avoid around US\$81 billion annually in climate- and disaster-related losses, reinforcing the case for treating forests as economic infrastructure rather than solely carbon assets. This framing proved particularly relevant in COP30 discussions where governments were weighing climate ambition alongside development and resilience priorities.

Overall, the reports strengthened the evidence base available to policymakers to design financing mechanisms, inform investment decisions and articulate the economic case for forest protection. Media coverage further broadened awareness beyond specialist policy circles, helping bring forest finance constraints into wider public and investor discussions.

6. CONNECTING CARBON AND CAPITAL: THE GREEN FOR RIAU–DINFRA APPROACH

In mid-2025, Indonesia launched two closely linked initiatives, GREEN for Riau and the DINFRA Climate Resilience Fund (DINFRA-CRF)—to tackle a persistent bottleneck in forest and peatland

protection: how to convert emissions reductions and restoration efforts into steady, large-scale finance.

GREEN for Riau is a jurisdictional REDD+ programme led by the Riau Provincial Government with national direction and technical support from the UN-REDD Programme (UNEP and FAO). It focuses on an indicative 2.6 million hectares of forested landscape, dominated by peatlands but also including mangroves and mineral soils. The programme spans 12 districts, 769 villages, about 2.1 million people, and 14 customary law forests, reflecting the scale at which land-use change must be addressed.

The objective is to make Riau eligible for high-integrity, jurisdictional-level results-based payments under the ART-TREES standard. To reach this, the province is establishing forest reference emission levels, strengthening MRV systems, operationalizing safeguards and grievance mechanisms, and designing a benefit-sharing system. These components allow emissions reductions from deforestation, forest degradation, assisted natural regeneration, and peat decomposition to be quantified, verified, and registered for international transactions.

Implementation is structured in three stages: readiness (2025–2027), pre-investment, and payment. During readiness, Riau is completing technical documentation, aligning provincial systems with national regulations, and building institutional capacity through working groups on MRV, safeguards, carbon pricing and finance, registration, and benefit sharing. The aim is to shift from fragmented projects toward a province-wide accounting and management system that can host multiple public, community, and private interventions under one framework.

While GREEN for Riau builds the supply of verified emissions reductions, DINFRA-CRF addresses the financing side.

DINFRA-CRF is a pooled investment vehicle regulated under Indonesia's KIK-DINFRA framework and issued by the state-owned asset manager PT BRI Manajemen Investasi. It mobilizes capital for verifiable nature-based solutions such as peatland and mangrove restoration, social forestry, eco-tourism infrastructure, and sustainable commodity value chains. Investors receive periodic interest and principal at maturity, similar to other capital-market instruments.

A portion of DINFRA-CRF proceeds can be allocated to initiatives like GREEN for Riau. Returns are expected from a mix of carbon credits, eco-tourism revenues, and natural product sales. Public institutions provide policy alignment and oversight, while partners such as UNEP and UNCDF support safeguards, MRV systems, and risk-sharing mechanisms.

Together, the two initiatives create a clear division of roles:

GREEN for Riau builds credible, jurisdictional-scale emissions reductions.

DINFRA-CRF converts those reductions into investable pipelines.

This linkage matters because many forest and peatland programmes stall after producing plans and pilots, without generating predictable cash flows. By connecting a jurisdictional REDD+ platform to a regulated investment vehicle, Indonesia is testing a way to move beyond small, stand-alone projects toward province-level climate finance.

For Riau, this could mean sustained funding for peat rewetting, fire prevention, forest protection, and community livelihoods. For Indonesia, it offers a practical model for combining public policy, carbon markets, and capital markets in a single financing chain.

The approach is not a cure-all. But it clarifies a central point: large-scale forest protection will not be delivered by carbon markets alone, nor by public budgets alone. It requires both, linked through systems that are credible, transparent, and workable for governments, communities, and investors.

7. UN-REDD SUPPORTS PROGRESS ON LAND RIGHTS ACROSS ECUADOR, CONGO AND INDONESIA

Across forest countries, securing land and tenure rights is increasingly recognized as central to climate action, biodiversity protection and resilient livelihoods. In Ecuador, the Republic of Congo and Indonesia, governments working with UN-REDD and partners are translating REDD+ investments into concrete gains for Indigenous Peoples and local communities, demonstrating how rights-based approaches strengthen forest outcomes.

Ecuador: Securing Indigenous land rights in the Amazon

In 2025, Ecuador secured legal title for 18,408 hectares of ancestral lands for three Shuar communities in the Kutukú Shaimi Protected Forest - a critical Amazon region under the leadership of the Government of Ecuador and with support from UNDP through the REDD+ Results-Based Payments project and the UN-REDD Programme. This breakthrough strengthens community governance in a forest landscape vital for carbon storage and biodiversity.

Thanks to capacity building, the Shuar groups are now better equipped to access future REDD+ finance under a clear benefit-sharing framework that aligns climate ambition with equity. In addition, with land tenure officially recognized, communities are actively implementing forest restoration actions through REDD+ Results-Based Payments project contributing to long-term ecosystem resilience.

This milestone demonstrates how REDD+ can advance climate goals while delivering social justice. By securing formal rights in a remote Amazon area, Ecuador is setting a powerful example for forest nations worldwide.

Republic of Congo: Documenting agroforestry land rights

Since 2021, the Republic of Congo has implemented a Green Climate Fund-financed programme, with complementary support from UN-REDD, to improve land tenure security and livelihoods for Bantou and Indigenous Peoples through climate-smart agroforestry. A recent milestone was achieved in Onianva village, Ngo District, where tenure rights for smallholder farmers were formally recorded for the first time.

Under the leadership of the National Programme on Afforestation and Reforestation (PRONAR), the State allocated user rights for one-hectare agroforestry plots on savanna lands designated for tree planting. To date, land documentation has begun at scale, with plans to extend registration across up to 14,500 hectares.

Farmers are intercropping acacia trees with cassava, maize and okra, reducing pressure on natural forests while improving soil fertility, crop yields and food security. Tenure documentation is generated using FAO's Open Tenure digital tool and is formally recognised by local authorities. Women and Indigenous Peoples are prioritised in land allocation, helping address long-standing inequalities in access to land.

Indonesia: Accelerating recognition of customary forests

In 2025, Indonesia reaffirmed its commitment to Indigenous Peoples and local communities as forest stewards, announcing plans to recognise an additional 1.4 million hectares of customary forests (Hutan Adat) by 2029. The government also endorsed the Intergovernmental Land Tenure Commitment at UNFCCC COP30 in Belém.

This momentum is anchored in Ministerial Decree No. 144/2025, which established a Special Task Force to accelerate recognition of customary forests. The decree builds constitutional guarantees, the Forestry Law, and a landmark Constitutional Court ruling affirming that customary forests belong to Adat Law Communities, not the state.

Customary forests form part of Indonesia's Social Forestry programme and provide a pathway toward full land title recognition. As of October 2025, 164 Adat communities had secured recognition for more than 345,000 hectares, benefiting approximately 88,000 households.

With funding from Norway, UNDP through UN-REDD is supporting implementation by developing a multi-stakeholder roadmap, strengthening field verification and consolidating a national customary forest database.

Rights at the heart of climate action

Together, these experiences show how REDD+ can advance climate goals while delivering social justice. By securing land rights and tenure, countries are strengthening forest governance, empowering communities and laying the groundwork for durable, high-integrity climate action.

8. BREWING CHANGE: HOW COLOMBIA'S COFFEE SECTOR IS HELPING REDUCE DEFORESTATION

In Antioquia, Cauca, and Huila, two coffee companies are changing how deforestation risks are managed in their supply chains. Between November 2023 and 2025, Green Coffee Company, [Comepcafé](#), and Cónдор Specialty Coffee tested concrete measures to strengthen traceability, improve governance, and work more closely with producers to prevent forest loss linked to coffee production.

The pilots focused on practical actions. Companies mapped direct and indirect suppliers, reviewed sourcing areas, clarified internal responsibilities and integrated deforestation risk analysis into routine operations. Monitoring and verification systems, including digital traceability tools, were expanded to cover more farming families, helping companies better understand where risks may occur and how to address them. These actions catalyzed deforestation-free coffee production with tangible results.

For producers, this translated into clearer expectations, improved communication and closer engagement on sustainable production practices.

"We can have a better understanding of the regulations, not just in terms of deforestation, but also in relation to human rights, indigenous communities, and legal compliance", Carlos Alberto Gómez Ramírez, Chain of Custody Assurance Specialist, Cónдор Specialty Coffee

The coffee sector operates at national scale. It supports close to [500 000 coffee-producing families](#) in Colombia, represents around [15 per cent of agricultural GDP](#), and generates an estimated [2.5 million direct and indirect jobs](#). Because coffee is grown in forest-rich landscapes, how it is produced and sourced has direct implications for forests, rural livelihoods and climate commitments.

The pilot was implemented with technical support from the UN-REDD/FAO and WWF Colombia in Antioquia and Huila, and UN-REDD/UNDP in Cauca in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and the National Federation of Coffee Growers of Colombia.

The work applied the OECD-FAO Business Handbook on Deforestation and Due Diligence in Agricultural Supply Chains, published in 2023 with support from the Government of Germany. The handbook provides a five-step framework that helps companies establish deforestation policies, identify risks, design mitigation measures, verify actions, and report on progress. Through this approach, due diligence moved from a compliance requirement to a management tool, supporting better decision-making across sustainability, logistics, legal and management teams.

Building on the results, FAO – under UN-REDD technical assistance – has initiated cooperation with the National Federation of Coffee Growers of Colombia to develop a due diligence process that can benefit more than [500 000 coffee-producing families nationwide](#). In Cauca, UNDP-UN-REDD's support resulted in [Compecafé exporting](#) 26,630 tonnes of deforestation-free coffee to the United Kingdom, complying with stringent environmental traceability standards. In addition, UNDP has piloted a [digital platform](#) 'MonBO' with Colombia, Costa Rica and Ecuador, that helped local cooperatives analyze deforestation-free at the farmland level. The platform operationalizes OECD-FAO's approach through the use of technology for enhanced territorial governance.

Using the five-step approach of the OECD-FAO handbook, the Federation is documenting deforestation risks and mitigation measures across its operations, while aligning coffee production with Colombia's commitments under the Paris Agreement.

Since early 2024, this work has contributed to the development of the Federation's corporate environmental sustainability policy, including a clear commitment to zero deforestation, sustainable land use, and forest protection.

“It's useful to know the traceability of the farm or the coffee we collect, so we can really know its origin, where it comes from and the processes it has undergone up to the point of collection in our warehouses”, Milena Figueroa Hernandez, Administrative and Financial Coordinator, Association of Agricultural Producers of Timaná

9. STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY-BASED FORESTRY THROUGH SOUTH-SOUTH EXCHANGE

Community-based forestry is central to addressing climate change, biodiversity loss and rural poverty. Across West Africa, Asia and Latin America, communities are restoring forests, managing landscapes and building livelihoods rooted in local knowledge and long-term stewardship. Yet many challenges are shared: insecure tenure, limited access to finance, weak links to policy processes, and barriers to women's participation and leadership.

For these challenges, solutions rarely emerge in isolation. Countries and communities often advance faster when they learn from peers facing similar realities. South-South cooperation has therefore become a core pillar of support for community-based forestry – not as a one-off event, but as a structured way to turn experience into policy, learning and long-term capacity.

For the UN-REDD Programme, South-South exchange is a practical tool. It connects local practice with national and regional systems, ensuring that lessons from the field inform broader efforts on forest governance, climate action and sustainable development. UN-REDD's support goes beyond technical frameworks, focusing on how forests are governed on the ground: how communities organize, how rights are recognized, and how benefits are shared.

This approach also shaped UN-REDD's contribution to the South–South Knowledge Exchange on Community-Based Forestry held in Praia, Cabo Verde, in May 2025. Organized by FAO in collaboration with Sida, ECOWAS and UN-REDD, the exchange brought together practitioners and policymakers from Africa, Asia and Latin America. Conceived as a working space rather than a showcase, it enabled participants to share concrete experiences from restoration, agroforestry, forest governance, women-led enterprises and community monitoring, while exploring how similar challenges are addressed across regions.

Insights from Praia fed into a wider package of support for community-based forestry in West Africa and beyond. [Praia Declaration on Community-Based Forestry](#) was adopted by all the participants. They contributed to a [regional policy report](#) translating community experience into policy-relevant analysis and recommendations. The exchange also served as a platform to present and disseminate a new [set of multimedia stories documenting community-based forestry initiatives](#), designed as learning tools to support peer exchange beyond the region.

Lessons from Praia are also informing the development of a new e-learning course on community forestry, grounded in real cases and practical experience. Building on these lessons, UN-REDD will continue to strengthen its work on community-based forestry and social forestry by applying South-South exchange approaches at regional and global levels, including in Asia, Latin American and other regions in Africa, ensuring that local practice continues to shape global approaches to sustainable forest governance and climate action.

ANNEX 2: LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AFOLU	Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use
ART	Architecture for REDD+ Transactions
BTR	Biennial Transparency Report
COP	Conference of the Parties
CORSIA	Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation
ERPA	Emission Reductions Purchase Agreement
ETS	Emissions Trading System
EU	European Union
EUDR	EU Deforestation Regulation
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FCPF	Forest Carbon Partnership Facility
FOLU	Forestry and Other Land Use
FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
FRL	Forest Reference Level
FREL	Forest Reference Emission Level
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
ICVCM	Integrity Council for the Voluntary Carbon Market
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
JREDD+	Jurisdictional REDD+
LEAF	Lowering Emissions by Accelerating Forest Finance
MRV	Measurement, Reporting and Verification
MPTF	Multi-Partner Trust Fund
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NFMS	National Forest Monitoring System
PES	Payment for Ecosystem Services
QA/QC	Quality Assurance / Quality Control
RBP	Results-Based Payment
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation plus
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SIS	Safeguards Information System
SOI	Summary of Information
TA	Technical Assistance
TFFF	Tropical Forests Forever Facility
TREES	The REDD+ Environmental Excellence Standard
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
VCM	Voluntary Carbon Market
VVB	Validation and Verification Body