

# LESSONS LEARNED FROM VPA PROCESS DURING COVID-19

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# Talking points:

- What forest management/governance issues did COVID 19 uncover?
- How is VPA processes designed to respond?
- What is the outlook for post-COVID 19 in a VPA country like Ghana?

## What forest management/governance issues were uncovered?:

1. Forest management must be a shared responsibility
  - Restrictive approach to forest management alienate communities from forest protection
2. The need to develop a stronger domestic market for forest products
  - COVID 19 has led to decline in timber exports
  - Companies struggling to pay salaries of staff
3. Forest management needs to incorporate technology
4. **\*\*\*Politicians cannot be trusted**

## How is VPA process designed to respond to these issues?:

1. VPA embraces multi-stakeholder approach to forest governance and management
2. It empowers communities to want to protect forest because of benefits they gain from protecting the forest
3. Domestic market restructuring is a key element in Ghana's VPA
4. Promote consumption of legal timber on domestic market
5. The TLAS ensures that there is proper chain of custody of timber
6. VPA minimizes physical contacts by introducing digitized wood tracking system(WTS)

## What is the outlook for post-COVID 19 in a VPA country like Ghana?:

1. Potential surge in illegal timber logging???
  - How do we ensure harvesting within prescribed limits
  - How do we protect culturally sensitive areas
2. How do we safeguard the interest of forest dependent communities?
  - Community benefits (SRAs)
3. How do we ensure that illegal forest exploitation doesn't become the means to recover from COVID-19 crisis
4. There is the need for continuous engagement with all stakeholders using existing multi-stakeholder platforms

# Thank you

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