



## Executive summary of the Context research and Assessment report

The report is comprised of three sections:

1. Introduction to the study, which provides background information and sets out the methodology and limitations of the study,
2. Context research, describing the stakeholders and the context of grievances in the land-use sector relating to land ownership and forest resource use, and
3. Assessment, outlining a typology of these grievances and the policies which (will) influence grievance patterns. This section also contains an identification and assessment of the institutions related to land-use grievances.

Recent data produced by the REDD+ Coordination Unit shows that the highest rate of deforestation is taking place in the Cayo, Orange Walk and Toledo Districts. The main drivers are agriculture and national policies and measures. As such, grievance patterns are related to these drivers, as well as institutional factors.

This study has identified three types of grievances:

1. **Institutional grievances**- This type of conflict refers to stakeholder concerns about the functioning of government institutions and civil servants related to institutions related to land-use. This stems mainly from distrust of the government by the stakeholders.
2. **Resource grievances**- related to the access to resources. There are significant levels of dissatisfaction at the local level related to decreased availability of resources due to the inaccessibility of areas and environmental damage.
3. **Land-related grievances** – These type of conflicts have to do with institutional grievances, resource grievances, and issuance of licenses and tenure/ownership. Lack of and contested land rights are currently a critical cause of conflicts.

This research identified 14 FGRMs that are available to stakeholders for land-use feedback and grievance redress. These are located at the local community level (3 mechanisms), in specific sectors (4 mechanisms), within the judiciary (4 mechanisms) and 3 special purpose forums. The 14 FGRMs were evaluated on the basis of the 8 principles as outlined in the FCPF Guidelines for evaluating GRMs: legitimacy, accessibility, predictability, fairness, transparency, rights compatibility, continuous learning and engagement.

- Some local level mechanisms scored particularly well because of their accessibility and legitimacy in the eyes of complainants, notwithstanding that they are dependent on other institutions for redress.
- Sector mechanisms have a high potential for grievance research and redress but need strengthening of their structures with regard to predictability, transparent procedures and continuous learning. Stakeholders particularly request institutional strengthening of the Lands and Surveys Department.
- The judicial system scores well on all accounts but is a more time and resource intensive option.
- The ombudsman has a high potential for conflict resolution, but its mandate and resources are limited. The general public is not fully aware of the role of this office for grievance redress.



## Executive summary of the Joint Plan and Implementation Framework

This report provides the recommended plan and detailed framework for implementation of a FGRM related to REDD+ Implementation in Belize.

The planned FGRM design considers the 8 principles (legitimacy, accessibility, predictability, fairness, transparency, rights compatibility, continuous learning, engagement) that characterize sound FGRMs according to the FCPF and UN-REDD, as well as capability. The FGRM also builds on the contextual situation as identified during our consultations, key informant interviews and literature research.

The FGRM framework consists of the following main components:

- A Core FGRM Department, supported by Intake Centers and a Mobile Unit.
- Incorporation of FGRM Steering functions in the envisioned REDD+ Steering Committee.
- Collaboration with existing FGRM structures, in particular at the sector and local level.
- Financed through Climate Financing and other options.

The following is the recommended schematic diagram for the FGRM.

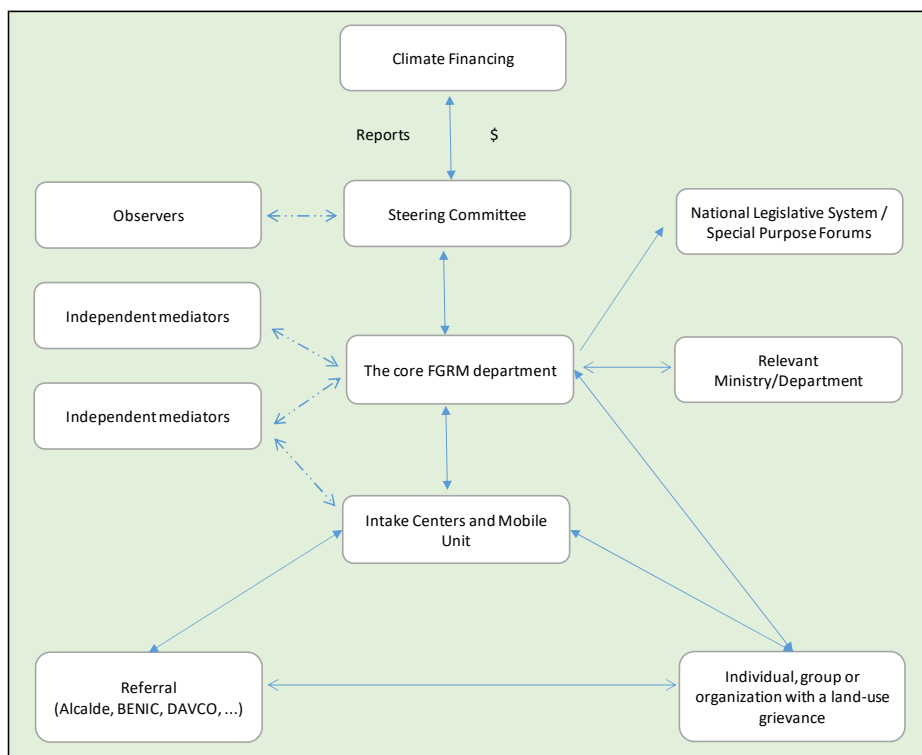


Figure 0-1 Flowchart of the FGRM Management Structure



The FGRM framework sets out a process consisting of seven steps:

1. Receive and register the query, feedback, complaint and/or grievance
2. Acknowledge, assess, assign the case
3. Develop a proposed response to the case
4. Seek agreement on aforementioned proposed response
5. Implement the agreed response
6. Review the case
7. Grievance referred or closed out

The report also recommends several strategies and actions to decrease the type and number of complaints related to the forestry and land-use sectors. These strategies and actions are relevant, because they will contribute to sustainable solutions and promote systemic improvements in the public administration related to REDD+ Implementation. The strategies are summarized hereafter:

- 1) Improve the performance of State agencies:
  - a) Invest in institutional capacities, amongst others in the Land and Surveys department, Forest Department, Department of Agriculture, and the Rural Development Agency, to have an even more professional, competent public sector.
  - b) Strengthened collaboration and communication among land-use institutions to develop appropriate grievance responses, and implement policy changes to reduce the type and amount of future grievances.
- 2) Review, develop and revise legislation and policies concerning land-uses to make them more harmonized with REDD+.
  - a) Resolve land tenure situation to recognize the value of communities in forest sustainable management, private land and lease land.
  - b) The REDD+ MRV and protected areas management systems should identify and engage community members, who have an affinity with technology, forests and nature conservation, as rangers.
  - c) Land rights and land allocations should be digitally processed via an inter-agency monitoring system; the geoportal Belize National Spatial Data Infrastructure (BNSDI). Geospatial depictions of land allocations will strengthen the State system to allocate lands and improve protected areas planning and management.
- 3) Develop and implement a stakeholder multi-institutional awareness and communications plan and improve stakeholder awareness of:
  - a) institutional procedures,
  - b) their rights and responsibilities, and
  - c) the importance and necessity of the 5 REDD+ activities: reduce deforestation and degradation, and implement sustainable forest management, conservation and reforestation.