

Final Evaluation Report

Your Details	
Full Name	Marshall Adams
Project Title	Assessing good forest governance practices in the high forest regions of Ghana
Application ID	28170-1
Grant Amount	£5000
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Date of this Report	June 30, 2020

1. Indicate the level of achievement of the project's original objectives and include any relevant comments on factors affecting this.

Objective	Not achieved	Partially achieved	Fully achieved	Comments
<p>Original title: Assessing good forest governance practices in the high forest regions of Ghana</p> <p>Revised titled: Good Governance Practices in the Ghana Voluntary Partnership Agreement Process: An Application of Q methodology</p> <p>The objectives of the present research were to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore the areas of consensus and disagreement among forest sector stakeholders in Ghana on good forest governance practices as applied to the VPA process. 2. Consider the practical implications of our findings for addressing governance challenges in the forest sector. 				

2. Please explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled.

Concerning my fieldwork in Ghana, it was interesting as well as full of surprising developments. It was interesting because the Forestry Commission of Ghana with assistance from the United Nations FAO was developing similar good governance indicators to assess the VPA governance impacts in the country. Related, the European Forest Institute also developed a similar good governance instruments and currently in the process of piloting the instrument in six VPA countries including Ghana. This research opened the door for further reflection and ideas on my Q-sort statements before testing them in the field. This growing amount of research around governance implies that my research is urgent and desirable. Therefore, it will be interesting to see areas of agreements and disagreements in our findings.

My fieldwork was also full of surprising developments because, I found out that local communities do not have direct participation in the VPA process in Ghana. So, I realised that their participation in the Q-sort exercise was a challenge. While the participatory nature of Q methods supported meaningful multi-actor participation for evaluating environmental policy process, my discussions could not benefit directly from the views of communities and other unorganised stakeholder groups in the forest sector of Ghana. Thus, future research could triangulate with other methods by incorporating their views to better inform policy and improve practice on the ground.

In practice, the Q-sort was not easy as captured in theory. Particular challenges I encountered in the field related to time constraints as participants were less committed to our appointments for the Q-sort and post-Q sort interviews. More importantly, some participants were reluctant to some statements as least applied good governance practices in Ghana's process, and this delayed in decision prolonged the initial time allocated to complete individual Q-sorts. These unforeseen challenges brought additional financial burdens.

3. Briefly describe the three most important outcomes of your project.

The present research applied a Q method to examine stakeholder perspectives on good governance as applied to the VPA process in Ghana. I identified and distinguished three prominent stakeholder perspectives on good governance in relation to Ghana's VPA process. The three perspectives are founded on the belief that good forest governance in Ghana is underpinned by the principles of accountability and civil society participation in decision making, strengthened by multi-stakeholder forest governance reforms and enhanced by an accountable and transparent timber legality verification system for monitoring supply chain commitments. These findings can inform national stakeholders engaged in the VPA process in Ghana.

The Q analysis revealed areas of consensus and disagreement that decision makers and policy actors could focus on to provide strategic planning to strengthen legal and sustainable forest management. Concerning areas of disagreement, there could be benefits to strengthening the active engagement of the different stakeholder groups in genuine deliberation via the Multi-stakeholder Implementation Committee to better understand these areas of disagreement. Outlining such areas could assist authorities to engage the stakeholders in addressing their concerns. This may enrich the quality of deliberation and stakeholder engagement by providing concrete evidence of validity that key stakeholders can brainstorm. The authorities could also use this opportunity to clarify misinformation and continue to advocate for strengthening good governance in the forest sector. Likewise, the consensus between differing perspectives may be of interest to the authorities. One of the common views that emerged from my analysis is that the actual capacity of the legality verification system for tracking timber along supply chains is robust. Since timber legality verification has been so contentious (see also Nathan et al., 2014), it was reassuring to find a consensus in stakeholder perspectives on legality verification as an example of good practice in Ghana's VPA process.

On a more practical level, the study provides concrete empirical evidence for strengthening forest governance and sheds light on the challenges and opportunities for strategic implementation (e.g., conversion of extant leases to Timber Utilisation Contracts and enactment of tree tenure rights and benefit-sharing framework). This should lead to a better understanding among the agencies and actors responsible for tackling illegal logging, forest degradation and deforestation, and climate change. Methodologically, this study provides additional recommendations to scholars of forest policy and governance to apply Q methodology. Finally, the study suggests further research into emerging contestations such tree tenure rights, in light of the revealed limitations of the Q methodology. See attached manuscript.

4. Briefly describe the involvement of local communities and how they have benefitted from the project.

As mentioned above, while the participatory nature of Q methods supported meaningful multi-actor participation for evaluating environmental policy process, my discussions could not benefit directly from the views of communities and other unorganised stakeholder groups in the forest sector of Ghana. Thus, future research could triangulate with other methods by incorporating their views to better inform policy and improve practice on the ground. However, I sought feedback from relevant community leaders and organisations in an interactive and continuous process and shared my reflections and findings with them after my study. I opened up dialogue and infused it with reason and insight about the social relevance of my research.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes, I am currently looking for grants to replicate the “Good Governance Practices in the Ghana Voluntary Partnership Agreement Process: An Application of Q methodology” in other VPA partner countries in the emerging context of FLEGT VPA’s Theory of Change

6. How do you plan to share the results of your work with others?

The work has since been published in the Journal of Environmental Policy & Planning, and on the European Forest Institute website. The earlier version of this manuscript was part of my dissertation and the dissertation has been published in Antioch Repository and Archive (AUARA), OhioLINK Electronic Theses and Dissertations Center, and ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Database. See the links below and the attached file for your official use only.

1. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1523908X.2020.1784116>
2. <https://www.efi.int/publications/good-governance-practices-ghanas-flegt-voluntary-partnership-agreement-process>
3. https://etd.ohiolink.edu/pg_10?::NO:10:P10_ETD_SUBID:185554 (Dissertation)
4. <https://aura.antioch.edu/etds/571/> (Dissertation)

7. Timescale: Over what period was the grant used? How does this compare to the anticipated or actual length of the project?

The grant was used for my fieldwork in Ghana and related data analysis. The field work actually extended beyond the anticipated end date. For example, the initial length of the fieldwork in Ghana was from June 2019 to September 2019. However, the field work went up to October 2019. The post-field telephone conversation continued even after the fieldwork, because I still needed more information. My first draft journal article was supposed be ready by December 2019, but I actually finalised it in January 2020. I published the paper with my collaborators at the end of June; one of the fastest peer-review processes because of the quality of the research.

8. Budget: Provide a breakdown of budgeted versus actual expenditure and the reasons for any differences. All figures should be in £ sterling, indicating the local exchange rate used. It is important that you retain the management accounts and all paid invoices relating to the project for at least 2 years as these may be required for inspection at our discretion.

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
Daily Subsistence Allowance for two (2) research assistants (lodging and meals)	£2500	£3000	+£500	Difference paid from external support
Surface (ground) Transport Airfare	£2100	£2600	+£500	Difference paid from external support.
Logistics/supplies	£400	£400		No additional costs
TOTAL	5000	6000	+£1000	

9. Looking ahead, what do you feel are the important next steps?

I have already started engaging stakeholders in the Ghanaian forest sector through policy and political dialogue as well as promoting the application of my research findings to foster effective FLEGT VPA implementation in Ghana. As mentioned above, I am also looking forward to applying for more grants to replicate this good governance research in other VPA partner countries as part of their VPA impacts monitoring and related theory of change.

I also looking for opportunities in research with the United Nations system, international and national environmental organisations, corporate civil society organisations, and any interesting and challenging ways of applying my knowledge and skills.

10. Did you use The Rufford Foundation logo in any materials produced in relation to this project? Did the Foundation receive any publicity during the course of your work?

Yes, The Rufford Foundation logo was used in my dissertation proposal defense and the final dissertation defense, including conferences. I acknowledged The Rufford Foundation as my sponsors in my dissertation and publication.

11. Please provide a full list of all the members of your team and briefly what was their role in the project.

Marshall Alhassan Adams is a practice-based scholar with over nine years' experience in sustainable forest management practices in Ghana and United States of America. He is a graduate of the Antioch University New England en passant MSc and PhD in Interdisciplinary Environmental Studies. His ongoing research focuses on multi-scalar forest governance and related theory of change, in particular, the interaction of forest policy and sustainable development.

Role: Lead researcher (erstwhile PhD candidate) and corresponding author. I conceived the original idea and wrote the research proposal, coordinated field work and wrote the original manuscript as my dissertation chapter.

Jean Kayira is a core faculty member in the environmental studies department and associate director for the environmental studies PhD program at Antioch University New England. Her research interests focus on Indigenous knowledge and sustainability education, youth participatory action research, decolonizing methodologies, and community-based environmental education.

Role: Dissertation Committee chairperson, supervision of the entire research process. Read, provided review comments, suggestions and approved the final manuscript as part of my dissertation chapter.

James S. Gruber is the Director of the PhD Program in Environmental Studies at Antioch University New England. He is also a member of the IUCN Council for Environmental Economic and Social Policy, and a recent delegate to the UN Environmental Assembly in Nairobi, Kenya. He has consulted for governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in North America, Eastern Europe, South America, and Africa on environmental issues and local governance focusing on citizen engagement in developing and implementing policy and programs. His work over the past three decades as a consultant, town manager, and professor has had a strong focus on facilitating positive adaptive change. He is a Civil Engineer and holds graduate degrees from MIT, Harvard Kennedy School of Government, and University of Zagreb.

Role: Dissertation Committee member, supervision of the research process. Read, provided review comments, suggestions and approved the final manuscript as part of my dissertation chapter.

Prof. dr. Bas Arts holds a personal chair in forest governance at the Forest and Nature Conservation Policy (FNP) group at Wageningen University, the Netherlands. He is also Chief Scientist at PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency. Arts holds a master's in biology (majors in forest ecology and in environmental sciences, 1987) and a PhD in public administration and environmental sciences (1998). Currently, Arts' research and teaching focus on international forest, biodiversity and climate change governance, local natural resource management and their interconnections (local-global nexus, multi-level governance). His experience includes research in the Netherlands, Europe and the Tropics, interdisciplinary work with natural and social scientists, policy design and scenario development with

stakeholders, and policy advice at various levels (United Nations, EU and Netherlands). Arts was Visiting Professor at the Europe College in Bruges, Belgium (2006-2010), at BOKU University of Life Sciences in Vienna, Austria (March-April 2010), at the Geography Department of Cambridge University, UK (October 2013) and at the School of Natural Resources and the Environment of the University of Michigan, USA (March-April 2014). Also, he was Visiting Fellow at the Max Planck Institute on Common Goods in Bonn, Germany (2002). He (co)produced over 150 academic publications, including journal articles, books and book chapters, which are overall well-cited (H-indices: 36, 22 and 16 from Google Scholar, Scopus and Web of Science, respectively). Over the years, Arts acquired – both as main applicant and co-applicant – over 25 important research grants, including NWO, EU Framework and EU Horizon 2020 programs. Since 2006, 36 PhDs graduated under his (co)supervision, whereas 16 are currently supervised. During his career, he taught over 20 different courses on various topics related to his expertise, with various didactic approaches and forms, and at all levels (undergraduate, graduate, post-graduate, post-doctoral). Overall, his teaching is well evaluated (average score of 4.4 on a scale of 0-5 in courses recently taught). FNP's research program, led by Arts between 2006 and 2018, was evaluated by an international peer review committee in June 2015 and its quality and relevance were both assessed as 'excellent'.

Role: Dissertation Committee member, supervision of the research process. Read, provided review comments, suggestions and approved the final manuscript as part of my dissertation chapter. Prof. Bas Arts provided comments on previous versions of the paper that well-advanced our thinking.

Uwafiokun Idemudia PhD is an Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Social Science, in the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies at York University, Toronto, Canada. He teaches in the International Development Studies and African Studies program. His research interests are in the area of Business and development, natural resource governance and Conflict and development. His recent book is titled *Africapitalism: Sustainable Business and Development in Africa* (Routledge), and other works have appeared in journals such as *Business Strategy and Environment*, *Environmental Science and Policy*, *Organization and Environment*, and *Natural Resources Forum*.

Role: Co-author and Q methodology expert. The research work benefited from Prof. UWafiokun's expertise and experience. He read, provided review comments, suggestions and approved the final manuscript.

Yitagesu Tekle Tegegne holds PhD degree in Global forest governance from the University of Helsinki. He is currently working as governance expert at European Forest Institute, Barcelona office. He has more than 10 years of working experiences on global forest governance, policy impact monitoring, and analyzing drivers of land use changes in Africa, Latin America and Asia. He has been involved in various projects as lead researcher, project co-coordinator and project manager.

Role: Co-author and FLEGT expert. The research work benefited from Dr. Tegegne's expertise and experience. He read, provided review comments, suggestions and approved the final manuscript.

Dr. Alhassan Nantogmah Attah is a forestry industry and trade specialist with over 30 years technical experience. He has a strong international reputation in facilitating negotiations processes and high-level discourse through his roles as Chairman of the Council and other committees of the International Tropical Timber Organisation, and his work with the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF). In his role as Chair of Ghana's VPA steering committee, he gained recognition with both national and international stakeholders as a skilled facilitator and trusted convener of complex multi-stakeholder processes. Through his skill at managing the deliberative process that informed Ghana's negotiating position, he was instrumental in setting a standard for the management of VPA negotiation processes that became the benchmark against which other countries that followed would be measured. His experience as a senior member of the Government of Ghana's negotiating team also means that he has a detailed technical understanding of the complexity of VPAs. Between 2014-2017 Dr Attah worked as the FLEGT Facilitator in Guyana. He now works as an independent consultant in the forestry and environment sectors.

Role: Co-author and FLEGT expert. Dr. Attah supervised this research process in Ghana and worked with me as my external learning domain mentor on this project. The research work benefited from Dr. Attah's expertise and experience. He read, provided review comments, suggestions and approved the final manuscript.

Dr. Francis Xavier Dery Tuokuu is a critical environmental social scientist. He is a Postdoctoral Fellow at York University in Toronto, Canada. Francis has authored and co-authored some scientific papers which have appeared in prominent journals including Energy Research and Social Science, Environmental Science & Policy, Journal of Cleaner Production, Natural Resources Forum, Journal on migration and Human Security, The Extractive Industries and Society, Resources Policy, Journal of Sustainable Mining, Journal of Global Responsibility and Int. Journal of Business and Social Science. He has published one book chapter.

Role: Co-author and policy expert. The research work benefited from Dr. Tuokuu's expertise and experience. He read, provided review comments, suggestions and approved the final manuscript.

Michael Ansong is currently a lecturer in Department of Silviculture and Forest Management- Faculty of Renewable Natural Resources, at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) in Ghana. Michael holds PhD in Environmental Science (Ecology), MSc and BSc in Natural Resources Management; and has a rich combination of both practical and theoretical experience in natural resources and environmental management.

Role: Co-author and Q methodology expert. The research work benefited from Dr. Ansong's expertise and experience of quantitative data analysis. He read, provided review comments, suggestions and approved the final manuscript.

Adam Osman Wumbei and **Adam Danaa Fusheini** were my research assistants and one graduate student volunteer **Osaman Sualley**. They assisted in the data collection.

12. Any other comments?

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to The Rufford Foundation and its entire team for their generous financial support.