



Supporting sustainable  
chainsaw milling through  
multi-stakeholder dialogue in  
Guyana



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This publication is produced within the framework of the EU chainsaw milling project “Developing alternatives for illegal chainsaw milling in Ghana and Guyana through multi-stakeholder dialogue.” This project is being carried out in Guyana by Tropenbos International (TBI) in collaboration with the Forestry Training Centre Incorporated (FTCI) and Iwokrama International Centre for Rainforest Conservation and Development (IWOKRAMA).

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## Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>5</b>
Writing down our experiences	5
The multi-stakeholder process of the EU chainsaw milling project	6
Linkages between the MSD and other key forest management initiatives in Guyana	7
<b>Narratives from the forest</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>The economic dimension</b>	<b>11</b>
If me nah bin come, me nah bin know <i>Charles Thom</i>	12
Making a difference <i>Diana Gowkarran</i>	13
Much more in the tree than wood! <i>Linden Duncan</i>	14
Using “waste” to generate income <i>Irene Bacchus-Holder</i>	15
Many eyes seeing better <i>Ingrid Devair</i>	16
<b>The social dimension</b>	<b>19</b>
“What the leaves hear/ is not what the roots ask ...” <i>Bonita Harris</i>	20
Resolving issues by talking, listening and working together <i>Shiron Darlene Reece</i>	21
Creating spaces for putting our hearts and minds together <i>Trovana Azeez</i>	22
Child’s play clears the “ear” <i>Raymond Herman</i>	23
A new era for an old generation <i>Frank Jacobs</i>	24
Martin get married last week, honeymoon done!! <i>Ovid Williams</i>	25
Basing the multi-stakeholder dialogue on sound principles leads to more buy-in <i>Andrew Mendes</i>	26
<b>The ecological dimension</b>	<b>29</b>
The multi-stakeholder dialogue as a means to sustain forests in Guyana <i>Leroy Welcome</i>	30
MSD convinces chainsaw millers to improve practices <i>Marieke Wit</i>	31
Wide support for multi-stakeholder dialogue on chainsaw milling in Guyana <i>Rohini Kerrett</i>	32

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## Introduction

### Writing down our experiences

The Forestry Training Centre Incorporated, Tropenbos International and Iwokrama International Centre for Rainforest Conservation and Development are implementing an EU financed Chainsaw Milling Project (2007 – 2015). The overall objectives of this project are to reduce poverty and promote viable livelihoods in forest-dependent communities; reduce the occurrence of illegal logging; and promote forest conservation and sustainable management. The Chainsaw Milling Project is using multi-stakeholder dialogue (MSD) as its key strategy for achieving these objectives.

In Guyana the dialogue process aims to achieve a shared understanding of chainsaw milling practices and associated opportunities for economic development at local level. It aims to build consensus among stakeholders to reduce the level of conflict and illegality related to chainsaw milling by local communities; and review regulatory frameworks in order to strengthen governance in the forestry sector.

So far the MSD in Guyana has focused largely on addressing chainsaw milling opportunities and challenges at local and regional level. To maximize its effectiveness the dialogue is in the process of being upscaled to a national level. Narratives, personal experiences and lessons from the MSD at the local level were felt to be useful in support of this endeavour. To that effect project staff and other stakeholders participated in a “write-shop” in March 2012 in Georgetown. It didn’t take people much time to write “stories” that show the different dimensions of their work but with a common message: this multi-stakeholder dialogue is of key importance for those who make a living out of the forest, for now and in the future. This booklet contains their stories.

A Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue (MSD) aims to bring relevant stakeholders or those who have a ‘stake’ in a given issue or decision, into contact with one another.

The key objective of an MSD is to enhance levels of trust between the different actors, to share information and institutional knowledge, and to generate solutions and relevant good practices.

The process takes the view that all stakeholders have relevant experience, knowledge and information that ultimately will inform and improve the quality of the decision-making process as well as any actions that (may) result.

With sufficient time, resources and preparation, an MSD can be a very effective tool for bringing diverse constituencies together to build consensus around complex, multifaceted and in some cases, divisive issues.

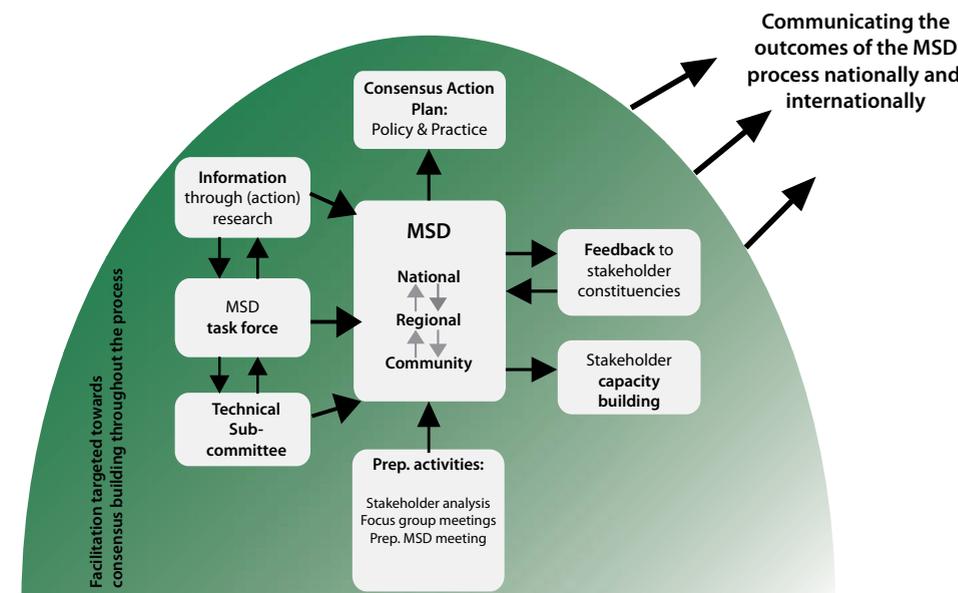
Source: Dodds and Benson. Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue, Participatory Governance Exchange Toolkit.

## The multi-stakeholder process of the EU chainsaw milling project

The MSD process in Guyana has been interactive, participatory and inclusive of key stakeholder representatives from the inception:

1. Beginning in 2008, **research** was conducted and documented on the background, impact, legal and policy framework, drivers and diagnosis of chainsaw milling in Guyana. A *Synopsis Paper on Chainsaw Milling in Guyana* was prepared and disseminated at national, community and international levels.
2. A **stakeholder analysis** was conducted which led to the identification of thirteen broad stakeholder groups involved in the chainsaw milling sub-sector.
3. Seven **focus group meetings** with stakeholder groups were conducted.
4. There was a general **preparatory meeting** to plan the content and format of the MSD process.
5. A **Task Force** comprised of nine stakeholder representatives to monitor, guide, and ensure stakeholder ownership of the MSD process was established. The Task Force engaged in strategic planning, decided on a rotating chairperson, met regularly, reflected on and provided feedback on the content and process of the MSD.
6. Four **MSD meetings** have been organised in Region 9, 10, 6 and 2 in 2010. Plans are underway for holding national level multi-stakeholder dialogues in 2012 which is expected to lead to the development of a consensus action plan.
7. **Communication & feedback:** formal reports on the Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue facilitated in Regions 9, 10, 6 and 2 were disseminated to principal agencies and uploaded on the project website ([www.chainsawmilling.org](http://www.chainsawmilling.org)). MSD Community Bulletins were disseminated to stakeholder representatives in the three pilot communities in Regions 9, 10 and 6, to Amerindian village councils, and other Community Forest Organizations. MSD Information Sheets and MSD Question & Answer Handbooks have been prepared and disseminated to facilitate the holding of community level MSDs in the pilot communities.
8. **Capacity building** of stakeholders: continuing capacity building for the MSD process is taking place to plan the way forward and institutionalize the MSD at community, regional and national levels. Twenty-two preparatory meetings were conducted with stakeholders in Regions 10, 6 and 2 to brief stakeholder representatives on the findings to date, allow for the raising of additional issues, and prepare for the two-day MSDs in Regions 10, 6 and 2. Two five-day Community Leaders' Retreats "to strengthen good governance in the forestry sector" were facilitated with three pilot communities: Annai, Orealla/Siparuta, Ituni (a fourth pilot community, Kwakwani, was added in 2011).
9. The Task Force created a **Technical Sub-Committee** to assess the issues and recommend solutions to be taken to the national level MSD for decision, for determining areas of consensus, and for action planning. Based on the results of research, numerous focus groups and other participatory meetings and the exhaustive consultative processes of the multi-stakeholder dialogue, the Technical Sub-Committee of the MSD Task Force has prepared a report in which the issues and recommendations for strategic improvement of the subsector have been assessed. This report will form the basis for further dialogue at the national level in 2012.

The diagram below gives an overview of the MSD process on chainsaw milling in Guyana:



## Linkages between the MSD and other key forest management initiatives in Guyana

In 2009 Guyana embarked on a Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS), a national development plan that outlines how the country could use its vast forests to forge an economy based on low deforestation, low carbon emissions and climate resilience. Funding for this plan should come from payments for reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation (REDD+). In the context of its LCDS and REDD+ activities the government of Guyana has started formal negotiations with the EU in March 2012, with the aim of signing a Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA). A VPA is a mutual commitment between the EU and a producing country to combat the problem of illegal logging by facilitating trade in legal timber and improving forest governance. VPAs are being developed to implement FLEGT, the EU's Action Plan for Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT).

Many people in the country's hinterland make a living from the forest, with few alternatives available. Although typical land uses in the interior - such as shifting agriculture, mining and small-scale logging - provide employment and support the livelihoods of many people, they also have the potential to increase forest carbon emissions. Implementation of the LCDS could provide an enormous opportunity if it is successful in matching improved living conditions for forest-dependent people with a smaller carbon footprint. On the other hand, forest-based livelihoods may be at risk if high standards are stringently applied. This is no small challenge: small-scale logging and chainsaw milling in more than 400 small concessions and numerous Amerindian lands are responsible for one-third of the total forest sector workforce of around 22,000 and provide livelihoods for many communities.

Stakeholders have yet to understand how the LCDS and a VPA would affect the livelihoods of forest-dependent communities in Guyana. The LCDS considers sustainable forestry and

wood processing to have great potential as low-carbon economic activities. An ongoing multi-stakeholder dialogue needs to be part of the LCDS process to support discussions on the consequences of new policies, ensure ownership of decisions, reduce conflicts between stakeholders and support a broader acceptance of policies. The MSD would provide a suitable platform for stakeholders to discuss the impact of national strategies on diverse actors in the small-scale forest sector and facilitate agreement on feasible options for the sector.

## Narratives from the forest

In March 2012 project staff, partners and stakeholders of the Chainsaw Milling Project in Guyana came together in Georgetown to share personal experiences with the MSD process. These experiences were phrased in short narratives showing the different dimensions of their work: contributing to viable livelihoods of forest communities, contributing to equitable development, and to the ecological sustainability of the forest. These dimensions coincide with the overall objective of the Project and can be visualized by using the “sustainable development” model (figure 1). The personal narratives in this document are categorized accordingly.

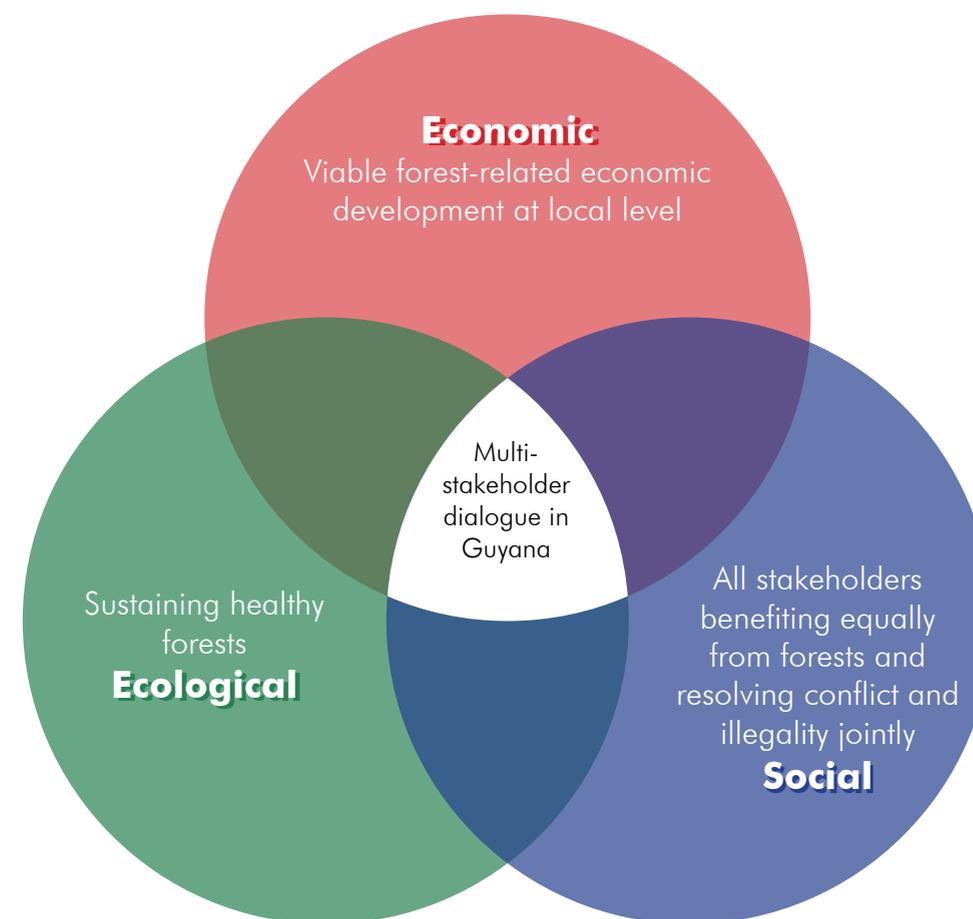


Figure 1: The multi-stakeholder dialogue in Guyana contributing to sustainable development



## The economic dimension

The multi-stakeholder dialogue helps in boosting forest-related economic development at local level. When local forest users and their leaders see and benefit from the value of forests in all its aspects they are more likely to manage it wisely.

Viabile forest-related  
economic development at  
local level



## If me nah bin come, me nah bin know

**Charles Thom**

*Chairperson of the Upper Berbice Forest and Agriculture Producers Association*

Women in Kwakwani have limited income earning opportunities. With the advent of the Upper Berbice Forest and Agriculture Producers Association, women joined the Association as chainsaw owners. However, lands available for logging are limited and alternative forms of livelihood had to be found. In 2009 the Association was invited for the first time to participate in a multi-stakeholder dialogue (MSD) on chainsaw milling in Guyana in which leaders and members were exposed to new ideas.

Subsequently, members were trained in project management, bookkeeping and other skills such as chicken rearing. A chicken farm project was launched giving 10 women an income as an alternative to logging. Interesting to note is that the Forest Association invests in this project in line with its objectives of socio-economic development of the village. An expansion of the chicken farm is expected due to high demand highlighting the viability of this economic venture.

Through the multi-stakeholder dialogue we have learnt and been able to start viable alternative livelihoods in our village giving women income earning opportunities. If me nah bin come, me nah bin know! (If I wouldn't have come, I wouldn't have known!)

## Making a difference

**Diana Gowkarran**

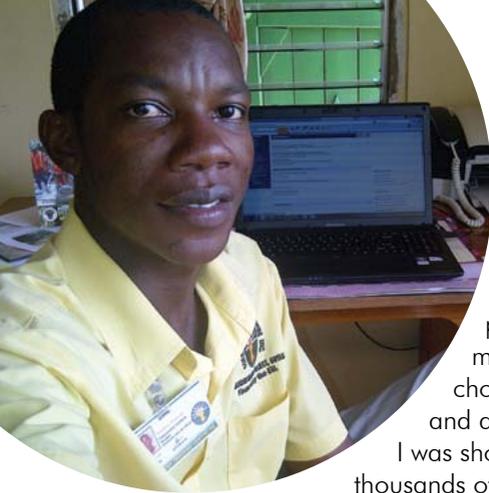
*Project assistant to the Chainsaw Milling Project.*

Like many other people in Guyana I was considering migration when I was offered the position as project assistant to the Chainsaw Milling Project. Although I knew what the abbreviation MSD meant, I was uncertain about its impact on the economy of Guyana. I gained a better understanding when I was making the project's resources available to training in cookery in the Annai District, sewing and woodworking in Ituni and the exchange visit of the Orealla villagers to Annai (North Rupununi District) in order to enhance their skills in engaging in the tourism sector.

I have learnt that the multi-stakeholder dialogue is not just about talking but also about building stakeholder capacity. I have seen it in the opening of a restaurant in the Annai District as a result of the cookery course. In Ituni, women who have never used a sewing machine are now able to sew clothing, and a training centre with woodworking equipment that had been lying idle for months was made productive through residents learning how to repair and make home furniture.

The MSD and related project activities are making an impact on people's lives. It provides an alternative livelihood to being solely dependent on the forest. I feel very good about being an accountant and also being part of something this big that is making a good change in the lives of my fellow Guyanese.





## Much more in the tree than wood!

*Linden Duncan*

*Community Forestry Worker, Ituni, Chainsaw Milling Project*

“These chainsaw operators wasting good good wood” were the words which caused laughter among the participants of an MSD meeting during which chainsaw milling techniques were demonstrated. Irene explained her choice of words. “I am a woman who has a passion for wood and art and the way I saw these guys throw away the off-cuts, I was shocked. To me that wood means so much, I can make thousands of dollars from what they consider as waste.”

Displaying a few pieces of fine art, authentic pieces produced from waste pieces thrown out by the chainsaw millers, Irene helped to inspire a new appreciation for wood.

As a result, attitudes of residents in communities dependent on chainsaw milling are changing. Greater respect is now given to the different uses of forest resources by community residents. Options are explored to add value to tree products. Skills training for better utilization of the resources are pursued. One can see the formation or resuscitation of youth and women’s groups, the accumulation of tools and equipment and the rehabilitation of training centers.

Thanks to the MSD and a woman who is passionate about wood and art, we increasingly understand that trees have great value.

## Using “waste” to generate income

*Irene Bacchus-Holder*

*Member of the Task Force for guiding the multi-stakeholder dialogue on chainsaw milling, representing the Guyana Arts & Craft Producers Association*

One of the goals of the Chainsaw Milling Project is to promote alternative livelihoods to chainsaw millers in Guyana.

I am the owner of a business that produces handcrafted products made of wood and seeds utilising the beautiful non-commercial species from Guyana’s forests. I have been able to encourage chainsaw millers to buy into the idea that the waste of timber felling, usually discarded such as burls and seeds, can be used to create income and therefore should not be discarded.

Chainsaw millers are encouraged to harvest waste often left by logging companies, or after road construction, and sell to me. I prefer to buy “waste” over buying lumber, hence saving trees.

The Chainsaw Milling Project has created awareness of these opportunities through the multi-stakeholder dialogue. Through skills training in the use of forest “waste” we jointly create income-earning opportunities in forested communities, and I earn an income too!





## Many eyes seeing better

*Ingrid Devair*  
Resident, Orealla Village

The blind man and the cross-eyed man accidentally bumped into each other. The cross-eyed man asked the blind man, "Why don't you look where you are going?" The blind man turned and responded, "And you, why don't you go where you are looking?"

Long ago, life in Orealla was real rough and almost hopeless. The blind leading the blind, every time we fell down and get up to go again, we became weaker and weaker and our vision became dimmer and dimmer.

Orealla is an Amerindian village up the Corentyne River that is rich in natural resources yet struggling to prosper economically. Why? Why? Why? Don't we want money? Yes we do, of course we do. Much more than money actually: employment, houses, educated and trained personnel.

How then do we move past our failures and the silent cry of many? One thing I can say with certainty is that success does not come overnight and magic and fairytales are for make-believe. Real life stories call for real life people sharing their real life experiences.

Through the Chainsaw Milling Project, an EU-funded project, we were able to facilitate dialogue that encouraged residents to talk about their problems, find the root causes, recommend solutions and identify actors who can be approached to lend a helping hand to make life a little better every day.

Training was the first step we decided to take towards a positive change. Today we have persons trained in various areas that can see Orealla and Siparuta diversifying from logging and chainsaw milling into alternative livelihood activities. Man, I tell you, as a resident of Orealla I am brimming with excitement since my vision is now brightened to all the potential that lies in my village, blessed with both natural and human resources to engage in the production of craft items made from non-timber products, adding value to timber products and tourism.

When it comes to governance, we no longer have to place individuals as leaders of groups who know little or nothing just because they are popular or already serving in a public office. When we elect our leaders we can now choose trained and committed persons ready for specific roles and responsibilities.

We know what to expect and we know what is expected of us.  
We no longer have to be like the blind man and the crossed-eyed man.





## The social dimension

The multi-stakeholder dialogue (MSD) helps in building consensus amongst those who have a stake in the forests in Guyana to reduce the level of conflict and illegality related to chainsaw milling by local communities and strengthen governance in the forestry sector.

All stakeholders  
benefiting equally from  
forests and resolving  
conflict and illegality  
jointly



“What the leaves hear/ is not what the roots ask ...”

**Bonita Harris**  
MSD Facilitator, Chainsaw Milling Project

... Baffled and like a root  
stopped by a stone you turn back questioning  
the tree you feed. But what the leaves hear  
is not what the roots ask ...  
[Martin Carter, “Proem”]

According to a 2006 World Bank study, “Where is the wealth of nations?”, Guyana has the lowest level of human and social capital in Latin America and the Caribbean. According to another estimate, 89 percent of our university graduates migrate abroad. We call this the ‘brain drain,’ but people from our University of Life in Guyana are also leaving in droves for greener pastures. Yet, Guyana is still wealthy. We are rich in natural resources and rich in the potential that our natural resources offer. But our real “wealth” still lies with each citizen, individually and in their organizations – in all our heads, hearts and hands.

The Chainsaw Milling Project recognizes that those close to and far from forest grounds have different perspectives on the sub-sector. We have therefore been investing heavily in the multi-stakeholder dialogue process to learn the issues and questions, get answers and provide information, and hear what people at different locations think, know, and feel.

Through the multi-stakeholder dialogue process, we have been increasing people’s capacities to communicate more effectively, and to represent themselves and others more productively. We have been facilitating the transmission of new knowledge, techniques and technologies for learning and earning to a wide cross-section of people with a stake in our forests.

Through the multi-stakeholder dialogue, we are contributing to the sustainable development of grassroots Guyanese without formal education as well as university trained personnel employed in agencies with a stake in the natural resources sector.

Through the multi-stakeholder dialogue we bring together forest-based stakeholders from different locations to air their views, listen to the views of others, contribute to Guyana’s human and social development.

Through the multi-stakeholder dialogue we are helping the leaves to hear what the roots are asking.

## Resolving issues by talking, listening and working together

**Shiron Darlene Reece**

Community Forestry Worker, Kwakwani, Chainsaw Milling Project

It was a hot day in Kwakwani, a logging community. People were quarrelling, the place was dirty, smelly from garbage piled up over time. To crown it off, Charles’s son was rushed to the hospital after he fell from a tree and hit his head. He had to be taken to Linden but there was no ambulance available. Tempers rose. Who to turn to? That was the question. The community lacked leadership, no one knew who to turn to.

Dennis, Sherman, Roy and Cow, four courageous young men decided that something had to be done. It was time for action and they planned a protest. Surprisingly they had the full support of community members. All residents came out, adults and children; they wanted to see action.

Cow, a member of the Upper Berbice Forest and Agriculture Producers Association, came to his chairman Mr. Thom for support in this action. Without delay, Mr. Thom called Ms. Reece the community forestry worker; he was worried that this could go all wrong. The two had a meeting with Cow who listened to reason. In the meantime trouble was stirring; imagine people with pieces of wood and anything they could get their hands on. Using skills from the multi-stakeholder dialogue training, through the Chainsaw Milling Project, Ms. Reece and Mr. Thom were able to calm the crowd, assemble key stakeholder representatives and have a fruitful meeting. There was no protest that day.

Results were almost immediate. The government sent a new ambulance to the community two days after and a new tractor was given to pick up garbage. The road was fixed by the bauxite company operating in the area. Added to that, further assistance was promised if needed. That was a day to remember!

The multi-stakeholder dialogue brought stakeholders together. They had common understanding; they found collective solutions to their problems; the people gained confidence in the ability of dialogue to solve their problems. Indeed, talking, listening and working together can solve conflicts.





## Creating spaces for putting our hearts and minds together

**Trovana Azeez**

*Communications Officer, Chainsaw Milling Project*

According to the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) multi-stakeholder report, “Business as usual, government as usual and perhaps even protest as usual are not giving us the progress needed to achieve sustainable development. Let’s see if we can’t work together to find better paths forward.”

Effective forest governance is essential for sustainable forest management. This is why the multi-stakeholder dialogue is focused on bringing together government, civil society, communities and businesses to discuss needs, build capacity and implement jointly agreed solutions for sustainable forest management and associated social and economic issues related to chainsaw lumbering in Guyana.

Although the dialogue cannot prevent conflict, it does provide a framework for valuable discussions at all levels. It lowers the chances of a breakdown in the communication flow; helps communicate forest policies and regulations from the national level down to the local level. Dialogue is a tool for participatory and effective communication since it involves stakeholders at all levels in a relevant and transparent manner. This communication mechanism takes the view that all stakeholders have relevant knowledge and information that will improve the quality of decision making.

I believe that single-handedly we cannot solve the incredible challenges in the forestry sector. We are more likely to move towards understanding contexts, develop solutions, build courage and commitment and gather the power for change when we join together. Hence, the multi-stakeholder dialogue creates spaces for putting our hearts and minds together.

## Child’s play clears the “ear”

**Raymond Herman**

*Community Forestry Worker, Orealla/Siparuta, Chainsaw Milling Project*

Orealla and Siparuta are two Guyanese villages on the Guyana-Suriname border. They can and cannot live without each other. Their history is one of perpetual nagging, mistrust and quarrels. They quarrel over any and everything, real or imagined: forest issues, administrative issues, uneven distribution of wealth, attempts to secede by Siparuta, rape of forests, and ‘harbouring of outsiders’ by Siparuta. Orealla was accused of neglect by the Siparutians. Regional authorities had little say in these issues.

The multi-stakeholder dialogue has acknowledged the tensions between Orealla and Siparuta. The community forestry worker in the community thought it wise to organise a sporting event in the form of a volleyball competition. The villagers competed among and against. They vented their pent-up steam on the playground. When the dust settled, they were in a better mood to look at life’s pressing issues and challenges.

So, when the project held a board mill demonstration shortly afterwards, attendance and participation was very encouraging. The sporting event was used as a means to make the people more aware of the multi-stakeholder dialogue and its related activities. The spin-off was that people now have something to believe in, together. Child’s play does not appeal to kids only; it remains a powerful tool in adult business as well.

The evolving multi-stakeholder dialogue is now in a better position to reap positive results. Child’s play can indeed clear the “ear.”





## A new era for an old generation

**Frank Jacobs**

*Community Forestry Worker, Annai District, Chainsaw Milling Project*

*The multi-stakeholder dialogue plays an important role in guiding decision making at various levels.*

Communities can now benefit from a new way that helps them to have a better understanding of information provided at different levels. It allows them to have genuine and equal interaction with policy makers different from the old days when communities were given instructions and were not part of the decision making.

During those times conflicts would arise on a daily basis due to the misunderstanding of the rules and regulations and as to who has more rights than others.

The multi-stakeholder dialogue has been introduced to the communities as a new style of meeting, information sharing and decision-making. The interactive discussion allows key players to share their personal opinions, concerns and problems. This leads to better understanding and therefore better implementation of the Code of Practice for timber harvesting and plays an important role in sustainable management of forests. As the dialogue progresses, it will develop communication skills and the knowledge of sustainable forest utilization of the key players. More and more disputes amongst stakeholders will be more easily resolved and we will all have a better quality of life.

## Martin get married last week, honeymoon done!!

**Ovid Williams**

*Member of the Technical Sub-Committee of the Task Force (advisor on Amerindian issues)*

Well!!! Honeymoon done and life got to go on. He and he wife got to eat, but Martin ain't got a job. No wuk! Ah! But wait, neighbour Jacob got an ole power saw he ain't using. Martin gun repair it and use it fuh cut wood and ketch he hand. But again, the saw may not be registered? And where he gun wuk ? In who concession? Hmm! De man Martin is a hustler and he gun find a way! I now remember, Cousin Charles (the Cool and Deadly) got a piece land (SFP) and he don't really watch de land... He nah wan pay people to watchman the land. He cheap bad! But is a good man. Martin gun gat to raid Cool and Deadly land. Like that he ain't gat to pay revenue and dem kinda tupidness! But suppose he get ketch? Dats de problem!! But hear nah, dats not no problem. All he gat to do is grease dem Officer hand and is DUH!

Well is dat kinda ting the Chainsaw Milling project trying fuh stop. Deh gat too much jiggery pokery going on. And it gat to stop. I wonder if is because is de Chain saw business it gat a chain reaction? Martin and Jacob tiefing from Cool and deadly. Cool and Deadly tiefing from GFC. GFC tiefing from.... HMMM. Leh me stop yeah. Bush gat ears!

Maria wan extend she house so Martin gat a ready market and Irene gun tek over all de lef-lef wood. She ain't even gat to pay for it!! You dis chain saw ting gat too much worries. What if Martin go to jail? What gun happen to he wife Yvette? In any case, is he de tek she away from Uriah, so she gun go back deh!

Hear! I hear some people coming fuh keep meeting to talk bout all dem ting dis. And de meeting gat a laaang name Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue. Eh wah it mean? Nuff people like me and you gun get for gaff and talk. We gat to go and talk and listen. Aright! Because we GAT problems: one, no money to buy Saw. Is nuff money at Farfan yuh know and Courts wan nuff nuff paper; two, den wood tiefing; three, dem officer corrupt; and four, people like me and Martin ain't even know to read and write, How we gun understand the laws and regulations?

Well listen! We gat to go and talk and listen. That will help Martin!





## Basing the multi-stakeholder dialogue on sound principles leads to more buy-in

### Andrew Mendes

*Member of the Task Force for guiding the multi-stakeholder dialogue on chainsaw milling in Guyana representing Guyana Manufacturing & Services Association and Managing Director of Farfan & Mendes Limited.*

The multi-stakeholder dialogue process is about generating, managing and implementing change. It is also about developing people's willingness and commitment to change.

First there must be an understanding about and faith in the process. By actively consulting all stakeholders a more representative solution can be arrived at that participants will be more likely to be willing and able to implement. To achieve the desired result, the MSD process must be underpinned by a clearly defined process, and principles that ensure:

1. All stakeholder views will be listened to and taken on board;
2. The process provides a "safe" environment for all stakeholders to freely express their views; and
3. Management by an institution regarded as being open to all views expressed and having no vested interest other than the establishment of an active, productive, dialogue process.

By creating such an environment where people can freely express a wide range of views, stakeholders broaden their horizons and become more open-minded to other perspectives, so that they will become more receptive to solutions other than their own or not totally in line with their own perspective.

This will go a long way to ensuring that all participants buy-in to the solutions generated as part of the dialogue. This in turn will facilitate much easier implementation. A well developed and reputable process creates a committed, open-minded and knowledgeable stakeholder base that is more willing and able to change.

"The energy for change comes from both the head and the heart." (C. Elliot, 1999)

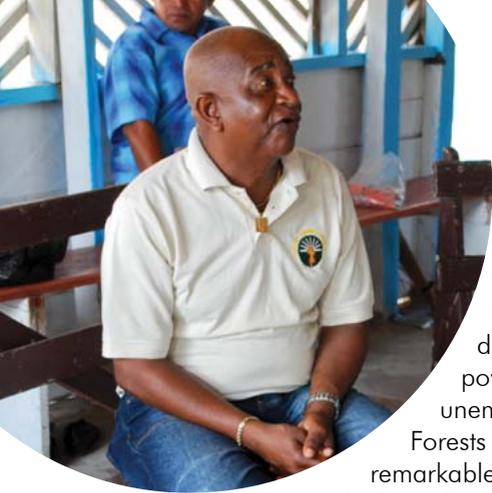




## The ecological dimension

The multi-stakeholder dialogue helps in assessing the impact of chainsaw milling practices on forest health and in brokering countervailing measures. The dialogue is premised on the notion that long-term forest benefits and good forest management are two sides of the same coin.

Sustaining healthy  
forests



## The multi-stakeholder dialogue as a means to sustain forests in Guyana

**Leroy Welcome**

*Community Forest Advisor, Chainsaw Milling Project*

Forest-based communities are usually associated with disorganization, illegal logging, widespread conflict, poverty, male dominance, bad environmental practices, unemployment and very little opportunity for alternative income.

Forests around communities are degrading as a result. This is remarkable as the use of forests is always seen as a significant source of livelihood. It seems this potential can only be achieved when relevant capacities are built at community level. The multi-stakeholder dialogue has provided a forum for communities to identify issues that are relevant for the improvement of their livelihood, community development and forest management.

It became clear that once communities recognize the value of the forests and see it as a permanent source of income and livelihood, they will develop higher levels of interest in its protection. The dialogue has allowed communities to examine their strengths and weaknesses thereby enabling them to identify their capacity needs which include governance training, leadership, community mobilization, project writing and implementation and many other relevant areas.

The multi-stakeholder dialogue is now addressing institutionalization as communities begin to recognize the usefulness and effectiveness of dialogue to resolve conflicts. This is an important step in empowering communities to manage Guyana's forest resources in a sustainable way.

## MSD convinces chainsaw millers to improve practices

**Marieke Wit**

*Tropenbos International, Overall Coordinator Chainsaw Milling Project*

Consultations in Guyana are usually in the form of "talkshops" where information is being shared. The multi-stakeholder dialogue has realised that to achieve a real change in the forestry sector in Guyana, people need to be able to "see-feel-touch" what is being discussed. That's why we have introduced practical demonstrations of improved chainsaw milling technologies coinciding with dialogue sessions.

Chainsaw millers are usually reluctant to use improved technologies such as board frames, because it is believed that these are negatively affecting their production capacity. On top of that, processing a log with freehand chainsaw milling has a "macho" status. By demonstrating however that the application of improved technologies results in safer practices and better quality products, chainsaw millers are being stimulated to change their practice.

The project engaged with Farfan & Mendes to provide the demonstrations. This private company is supporting the project because it understands that "unless industry changes effectively, it won't sustain." The trainer has been able to develop the demonstrations in such a way that sceptical chainsaw millers are starting to question their usual way of processing and doing business. In Orealla/Siparuta, for example, this "see-feel-touch" approach has resulted in chainsaw millers wanting to acquire and apply the presented technologies. This kind of training is needed for the whole timber chain which will result in more added value to the product, recovery increase and better market access.

Because of this approach that brings tangible results to people and demonstrates in practice that improved techniques and technologies do bring a better result, the multi-stakeholder dialogue will bring about real change in the sector, and contribute to more efficiently managed forests.





## Wide support for multi-stakeholder dialogue on chainsaw milling in Guyana

*Rohini Kerrett*

*National Coordinator, Chainsaw Milling Project, Guyana*

The Chainsaw Milling Project has established a “multiple” stakeholder dialogue platform to discuss chainsaw milling issues in Guyana. The objective of this platform is to create space for all stakeholders, from grassroots to policy makers, to put their issues or dilemmas on the table and discuss together how they can find solutions that will resolve the problems, in the interest of all parties. The dialogue is supported by action research. This helps to identify and clarify the issues surrounding chainsaw milling in Guyana.

Government, NGO institutions, academics, community leaders, large timber companies, Community Forest Organizations, chainsaw operators, community members and consumers have been actively participating in the dialogue at local and regional level during 2008-2010. This has resulted in a lot of information that has been analyzed by representatives of these stakeholder groups in 2011. The results of this analysis are presented in a technical report providing sound information on chainsaw milling issues and proposing strategic solutions on how to manage forests in Guyana in a sustainable manner. The report will form the basis for national dialogues in 2012.

Processes and achievements now need up-scaling to a national level to consolidate progress made. Participation of all stakeholder groups at the national level in the dialogue will strengthen shared understanding of the issues and lead to recommendations on best approaches (at policy and practical level) for addressing chainsaw milling and sustainable livelihoods of forest dependent communities in Guyana.

This publication was produced within the framework of the EU chainsaw milling project. This chainsaw milling project is being carried out by Tropenbos International in collaboration with the Forestry Training Centre Incorporated (FTCI) and Iwokrama International Centre for Rainforest Conservation and Development (IWOKRAMA). It aims to find sustainable solutions to the problems associated with the production of lumber for local timber markets by involving all stakeholders in dialogue, information gathering and the development of alternatives to unsustainable chainsaw milling practices.

*By making knowledge work for forests and people, Tropenbos International contributes to well-informed decision making for improved management and governance of tropical forests. Our longstanding local presence and ability to bring together local, national and international partners make us a trusted partner in sustainable development.*

