# VPA CAPACITY BUILDING ASSESSMENT AND PLAN (DRAFT)

[Document subtitle]

APRIL 1, 2025
[COMPANY NAME]
[Company address]

**Background and Rationale:**

This Capacity Assessment Strategy, built on the foundation of the JIF, seeks to structure efforts cohesively to achieve and sustain FLEGT Licensing standards by 2026 and beyond. It can also help the FLEGT Secretariat determine capacity gaps in the advancement of the VPA as the implementation phase progresses. This Strategy is intended to for various actors within the VPA implementation and includes GTLAS agencies, FLEGT Secretariat, the NIWG, GCB, and FSOs. Each stakeholder in this process will continue to play a critical role, not only is seeing FLEGT licenses realized but well beyond. Capacity building and sustaining same is therefore critical and needs to be revisited periodically to ensure all capacities are included over time. Part of this assessment also sought to examine the training which has been completed and also determine how training needs are fully met.

The following presentation identifies capacity gaps and associated actions to fill those gaps, using the structure and capacity-related content of the JIF.  Earlier diagnostic work done that identified capacity gaps and recommended actions forms the basis for much of the gaps and actions identified.  Where additional gaps and actions may be needed, these are highlighted in <mark>yellow</mark>.

Noteworthy is the fact that the capacities are based on each strategic task of the JIF. For those tasks already completed, and assessment was therefore not needed.

**Strategic Task 2: VPA management, coordination and monitoring mechanisms in place**

The NIWG and the FLEGT Secretariat are two key and interdependent entities needed for the successful implementation of the VPA. Significant efforts have already been made to identify needed capacities.  This section highlights those gaps with an eye towards longer-term sustainability since some of the roles played in implementation (e.g. institutional cooperation and dialogue) will be needed for continuous learning and strengthening of the TLAS.

| JIF Outputs | Proposed Output indicators | Capacity diagnostic[1] | Capacity building gaps[2] | Proposed actions to implement priority recommendations |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2.2 NIWG established and functional | 2.2.1 NIWG representatives functioning optimally | Retreat reports | **NIWG**:<br>● IP and private sector organisations require support to perform their functions on the NIWG effectively | ● <mark>One-on-one VPA needs-based training for NIWG reps</mark> |
| 2.5 VPA Secretariat strengthened | 2.5.1 Secretariat operational structure in place<br><br>2.5.2 Staff functioning optimally | Discussion with FLEGT Secretariat<br><br>FLEGT Secretariat Needs Assessment | **SECRETARIAT:**<br>● Capacity gaps in reporting, project management/development of organisational management tools <mark>to strengthen institutional memory (e.g. systematically recording achievements/activities completed in different areas to support reporting and programming</mark>) | ● <mark>Provide training to the FLEGT Secretariat in areas such as basic project management principles and tools (e.g. writing ToRs, understanding logframes and performance monitoring, monitoring and evaluation of systems and procedures, as applicable to VPA implementation)</mark> |

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[1] Source for capacity building gaps and actions are indicated here. Gaps and actions highlighted in <mark>yellow</mark> are original and suggested by the FLEGT Secretariat.

[2] Place completed items in separate worksheet. Include remaining gaps in this matrix. Indicate priority gaps in **bold green**. Priorities are defined as "without this intervention, FLEGT licensing will not be achieved."

**Strategic task 3: GTLAS developed and operational**

This section focuses on the main structures which are needed for the GTLAS to function effectively. Each GTLAS agency's role is critical as well as some departments within the GFC, the agency responsible for the majority of legality indicators. These agencies, units and the people within are therefore essential for the smooth functioning of the VPA and the TLAS system its built on.

| JIF Outputs | Proposed Output indicators | Capacity diagnostic | Capacity building gaps | Proposed actions to implement priority recommendations |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3.3 Control and verification mechanisms within GTLAS agencies established and functional | GTLAS agencies can deliver LD Verifiers (assumption that capital resources provided by GoG are adequate). | | **GFC/MISU/IAU/TLTU**<br>● VPA, LCDS, & Forest Act 2009 & Regulations Training<br>● MoPs Training (FMD, FRMD, FD)<br>● Relevant IT Training (Legality Application, dWTS, MISU, FSO Applications, etc)<br><br>**GFC/GTLAS agencies/MISU/TLTU**<br>● Complaints Mechanism Training | |
| 3.5 The Internal Audit Unit (IAU) enhanced and functional | IAU delivers audit report including checking verifiers submitted by GTLAS agencies | | **GFC:**<br>● New Timber Grading implementation (training)<br>● Code of Practice training<br><br>**GTLAS agencies/TLTU**<br>● GTLAS MoP training | |
| 3.7 The Timber Legality Trade Unit (TLTU) established and functional | TLTU issues FLEGT Licenses | | ● Provision of relevant Manual/documentation for all above | |

**Strategic task 4: Capacities of stakeholders developed to implement the VPA**

GTLAS Agencies (including GFC) have a key role to play in the verification of compliance of Forest Sector Operators for the successful implementation of the VPA and the issuance of FLEGT licenses. FSOs also face many challenges/barriers in complying with the legal requirements. This section highlights capacity gaps for meeting compliance requirements from the perspective of GTLAS Agencies and the FSOs.

| JIF Outputs | Proposed Output indicators | Capacity diagnostic | Capacity building gaps | Proposed actions to implement priority recommendations |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4.1 GTLAS agencies, FSOs, Indigenous groups and other relevant stakeholders have the required capacity for implementing FLEGT VPA | Capacity to verify Compliance of Forest Sector Operators | Strategic Planning: TLAS Agencies Report | **GFC**<br><br>**Manual of Procedures**<br>● Piloting of the updated Manual of Procedures.<br>● Update MoPs where necessary based on pilot lessons.<br>● Phasing in the updated Manual of Procedures by the end of 2025<br>　　o Training in updated Manual of Procedures for relevant GFC staff.<br>　　o MoPs operationalized.<br><br>**Legality Application**<br>● Training of relevant GFC staff to use the Legality Application<br>● Piloting of the Legality Application over a period of X months.<br>● Phasing in the use of the Legality Application to verify compliance.<br><br><br>**GTLAS agencies:**<br>● Review and update the legal framework on sharing of information/mandate between agencies.<br>● MOU between the Agencies and GFC on addressing short-medium and long-term solutions to address verification of compliance.<br>● Capacity built for addressing actions to meet verification of compliance in the short term (which could include sharing of resources, information and coordination of field visits for monitoring and verification, creating standards for data collection) | ● Assessment of the efficiency of the systems in place for verifying compliance information to GFC in a timely/systematic manner at the level of each Agency. What are the main challenges faced by Agencies in supplying verification of compliance, and what could be short, medium and long-term solutions for verification of compliance agreed between the Agencies.<br><br>● Updated Manual of Procedures put into operation by mid-2026<br><br>● Legality Application tested and put into operation by the end of 2025<br><br>● Review of the legal framework completed with the aim of harmonisation of the governing Acts and relevant procedures of the GTLAS agencies by December 2025.<br><br>● Acts amended to allow for sharing of data and resources across various GTLAS agencies by end of 2026. |

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| | | | ● Commitment of support from/for Agencies re. medium and long-term capacity needs, e.g. investments in technologies, staff, systems, vehicles, decentralization of activities, institutional budgeting for ensuring compliance in the forests sector, etc.<br>● MOUs in place for sharing of information with GFC (based on frequency established in the verification procedures) including<br>   o Focal Point and Alternates for Compliance assigned at each Agency<br>● Capacity of Focal Points and Alternates built for providing the relevant information on compliance | ● GTLAS Agencies agree on a strategic action plan for addressing verification of compliance challenges by end of September 2025.<br><br>● Assessing the systems in place to allow stakeholders to be compliant. Are they creating barriers to compliance, e.g. travel cost, are the requirements clear and well known, etc? |
| | FSOs comply with the legal framework | Improving Compliance in Guyana's Forestry Sector: A Stakeholder Perspective | **FSOs:**<br><br>**Addressing barriers to compliance**<br>● Financial literacy/education training for community forestry organizations, small operators, indigenous villages.<br>● Understanding the cost of compliance<br>● Timber supply chain management training, which includes maintaining/increasing value throughout the supply chain.<br>● Addressing the issue of standards along the supply chain: training in and enforcement of the Guyana Timber Grading rules.<br>● Raising awareness of compliance requirements (uncomplicated materials)<br>   o *GRA compliance*<br>   o *NIS compliance*<br>   o *Occupational Health and Safety compliance*<br>   o *Environmental Permit* | ● Map and encourage and strengthen synergies with other related initiatives (e.g. strengthening cooperatives, SME accelerator programme, IPED)<br>● Following the sustainability plan developed for the FPA, examine follow-up actions that will be required to strengthen the capacity and representation/reach of the organisation<br>● Annual outreaches to FSOs |

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| | | | o *GFC Code of Practice for Operations compliance based on various types of operations.* | |

**Strategic task 5: Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms for VPA implementation in place**

With the implementation of the VPA comes a series of impacts that need to be captured, assessed and minimized, if negative. Some of these impacts will be felt in the short term, while others, in the medium- to long-term. Institutional strengthening to maximise positive impacts while mitigating negative ones requires that stakeholders are integrally involved. A safe and productive space to share concerns and grievances will help institutionalise good practices. These and other external, independent views on the system also lends credibility to the GTLAS.

| JIF Outputs | Proposed Output indicators | Capacity diagnostic | Capacity building gaps | Proposed actions to implement priority recommendations |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6.1 Stakeholder engagement, monitoring and outreach mechanisms established and supported | 6.1.2 Monitor effectiveness of the engagement and communications strategy | | • Need to review and update the 2020-2023 National communication Strategy and Implementation Plan | • Update the implementation plan of the national communication strategy |
| 5.2 A system for monitoring and evaluating the impacts of the VPA implementation is established | 5.2.1 Monitoring system developed and approved 5.2.2 VPA impacts captured in report | | GFG?: staff trained on impacts, source, timelines etc. • Need to develop an engagement plan? • staff trained to analyze data once collected, for information gathering • basic auditing training with a few staff | |
| | 6.1.9 Web-based question and feedback (Q&A) mechanism on VPA-FLEGT for the business sector established and maintained | | • Business sector not aware of or encouraged to use mechanism already in place • Major corrective actions should be discussed at mngt. level and minor ones addressed thru reporting and action • Need for strengthened communication/engagement with the private sector. | • Integrate recommendations for enhancing and advertising the web-based mechanism to stakeholders, including the VPA Annex contains key areas of focus for the IA business sector |
| 5.3 Independent Audit mechanism established | 5.3.1 IA mechanism/TOR developed and approved by the parties | | | • Possible adjustments to the FLEGT website can inlclude linking the form to the FAQ, providing the contacts for TLAS agencies (NLS, MoL, GRA…), updated version to be shared by EFI/TAP. |
| 5.4 Complaints mechanism developed and operational | 5.4.1 TBD | | | • complaints mechanism drafted with EFI-TAP's inputs and placed version on website and enhancing the language/prompts on the contact form. |
| | | | | • Through the FS' Communications Officer, create a FSO mailing list through which regular updates/newsletters can be sent. |

**Strategic task 6: Stakeholder engagement, coordination and outreach mechanisms in place**

The effectiveness of the VPA requires that all stakeholders, notably those in the timber value chain, are informed and involved. This can be achieved by ensuring that the National Communication and Implementation Strategy is continuously updated and providing a suitable user-friendly mechanism that serves the dual purpose of strengthening communication and the relationship between TLAS agencies and FSOs.

**Strategic task 7: VPA-FLEGT connected and supported actions**

[COMPLETE NARRATIVE AND TABLE]

| JIF Outputs | Proposed Output indicators | Capacity diagnostic | Capacity building gaps | Proposed actions to implement priority recommendations |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7.3 Market improvement and industry development | | | ● Support for FSO certification | |
| 7.4 Domestic market developed | | | | |