

Supporting Capacity-building and Dialogues with Local Stakeholders



As the first company globally to implement the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Remedy Framework since its launch in July 2023, we recognise the need to help enable local communities, rightsholders and other local stakeholders to engage meaningfully and effectively in the remedy process. Part of this work is undertaking awareness and communication activities at the impact areas, particularly at the local level.

A key guidance on engaging with local stakeholders is that there is no one-size-fits all solution. Local stakeholders and communities need to be understood and engaged with in their specific context. We also recognize that working with experienced national and local NGOs that have close relationship with, and are trusted by, local communities is an effective approach. This also reinforces the view that remedy is a locally driven process where remedy actions are discussed and agreed with the impacted rightsholders on the ground.



To engage with stakeholders in Riau province, APRIL has been working with two independent organisations: Forum Komunikasi Kehutanan Masyarakat (FKKM) Riau and Patala Unggul Gesang (PUG). Each organisation brings extensive experience and expertise in community engagement within the region.

Community Preparedness and Issue Identification

Forum Komunikasi Kehutanan Masyarakat (FKKM) Riau, established since 2004, is a multi-stakeholder forum that promotes, encourages and oversees community-based forest management. FKMM leads a comprehensive community preparedness program for APRIL’s remedy process in five villages across the Siak, Pelalawan, Kepulauan Meranti, and Bengkalis regencies. The initiative, launched in October 2024, was supported by a network of Riau-based NGOs.



A core component of the program is building awareness within communities about the FSC Remedy Framework, the Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) principles, participatory mapping, and APRIL remedy process.

In addition, FKMM’s member NGOs have conducted dialogues – a minimum of two sessions per village each month – since November 2024. These dialogues were held with village heads and community and indigenous leaders in the five villages in Riau.

Any issues raised by the communities during these sessions that do not fall under ‘past harms’ are also diligently documented, as these will be addressed through APRIL’s existing operational grievance mechanism.

Building Awareness and Dialogue

Patala Unggul Gesang (PUG) is a civil society organization that focuses on sustainable forest management, including supporting the implementation process of the FSC Remedy. PUG launched its community preparedness initiative with a provincial-level dialogue held in Pekanbaru in January 2025, which was followed by landscape-level dialogues in March.

The provincial-level dialogue convened about 100 participants, local communities, indigenous peoples, provincial and local government officials, local NGOs, private sectors, and academics.

Between March and July 2025, landscape level-dialogues were held to build an understanding of the FSC Remedy Framework and its implementation across four districts in Riau: Pelalawan (99 participants), Kuantan Singingi (114 participants), Indragiri Hulu (118 participants), and Siak (138 participants).

PUG has also extended its outreach to Riau media and engaged in dialogues with several Riau-based NGOs. These provincial and district-level events have significantly contributed to public discussions, resulting in the publication of more than 80 commentaries in local Riau media.

Insights from Initial Community Engagements

These community engagements have generated strong interest and participation from the rightsholders, affected stakeholders and the broader community. Key observations and insights from the dialogues include:

- While some rightsholders maintain a degree of scepticism, many are optimistic and enthusiastic about the remedy process and its potential benefits. Early feedback from dialogues in Pelalawan indicated a strong desire among participants to already see action and tangible on-the-ground implementation.
- The role of the village facilitators is crucial in building trust and encouraging active participation among community members. For example, fostering community readiness in Bengkalis District required multiple, deliberate efforts to establish sufficient rapport with communities before they provided their consent and willingness to participate. This highlights the importance of adopting a patient and consistent approach to engagement.
- Most communities view the FSC remedy process as a promising pathway to resolving outstanding issues and express strong support for the process. However, there remains an ongoing need to build a deeper understanding of the remedy processes, and the role of rightsholders and other stakeholders.
- Fostering cross-learning among different stakeholders can cultivate a collective understanding. To this end, APRIL, through FKMM Riau and PUG, has initiated peer-to-peer learning sessions among village facilitators.

While APRIL, FKMM Riau and PUG are encouraged by the community participation, all parties acknowledge that there is still significant work ahead and are firmly committed to ensuring stakeholders receive the necessary guidance and support to participate meaningfully in the remedy process.

In line with the learning-by-doing approach, the insights gained from these early outreach efforts will help inform and improve engagement with the local communities. This process is ultimately about relationship and trust-building with the local communities over the long term, and also about mutual capacity building as APRIL, PUG and FKMM also learn from the communities on their concerns and aspirations related to FSC remedy and beyond.

For a detailed update on PUG’s outreach in Riau, please refer to the below report.

