

Women's Empowerment for Climate Action: the W+ Standard



- **Incentivizes actions for women's empowerment in climate projects**
- **Measures and quantifies** women's empowerment
- **Channels funds** directly to women for adaptation



www.wplus.org



WOCAN : Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management

- ❖ women-led international membership network of 1400+ women and men professionals and women's associations in 118 countries
- ❖ founded in 2004, based on decades of experiences of gender integration within environment organizations
- ❖ Mission: to advance Women's Empowerment and Collective Action within Enabling Environments
- ❖ Delivers training and capacity building for Gender-integrated Planning and Monitoring and women's leadership within ag and environment organizations, to increase benefits and impacts for rural women and their groups.
- ❖ Innovator of W+ Standard TM

Key Messages



- Women are critical to achieving climate change solutions yet their contributions are not often recognized and compensated.
- W+ Standard offers metrics for projects and companies to quantify, certify and monetize outcomes for women's empowerment in 6 areas.
- Can generate co-certified units with carbon standards to sell for a premium price.
- Generates returns for investors and grants for women's groups, by using climate finance to provide grant funds for adaptation

W+ Standard: What it is

- metrics and procedures to quantify, verify and monetize women's empowerment results within projects and supply chains
- framework for designing as well as monitoring results
- **W+ units:** quantified and verified unit of improvement in women's conditions and status from a baseline in six domains

Why W+ is unique:

- Provides quantified units (not just statements), that can be monetized through carbon markets, SDG markets, outcome linked funds
- Results based on progress from baseline measurement, reported as % of change
- Developed by gender and M & E experts, who provide guidance
- Channels grant funds for adaptation: at least 50% of the revenue from W+ unit sales is provided to local women's groups to support their self-determined adaptation activities
- Can be linked to carbon credits as social co-benefit or used as stand-alone without carbon

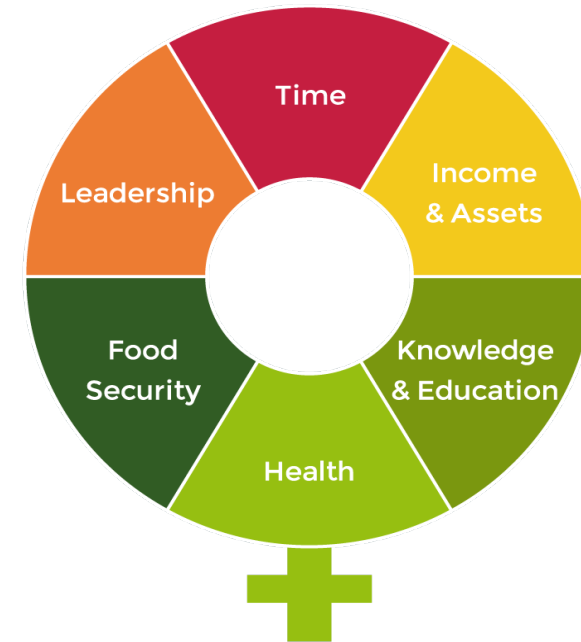


Six Domains

The W+ Standard™ measures results in six domains: Time, Health, Education & Knowledge, Food Security, Income & Assets and Leadership.

A method was developed for each domain to measure and quantify projects' outcomes on women's lives (their condition and status). Domains were determined by rural women in Nepal and Kenya.

Questionnaires related to each domain are available for proponents that have registered with the W+ Standard.



Value of the W+ | A Gender-Responsive Solution

1

Provides results-based measurement and reporting for donors and investors

- Quantified impacts for SDG target # 5
- Transparency and credibility through rigorous measuring and registry
- Stories and qualitative metrics beyond numbers of women
- Screen for portfolio of projects

2

Enables one-stop mechanism to purchase GHG units with W+ label

- Linked to VCS (Verified Carbon Standard) to enable streamlined verification of both standards
- Can also link to other GHG accounting frameworks
- Enables buyers to purchase GHG units with social co-benefit

3

Provides revenue for both investors and women's groups through benefit-sharing mechanism for self-determined adaptation initiatives



How It Works



Consultations
with women
Stakeholders

1

2



Development of
Project Design
Document



Baseline
survey

3

4



Measurement
of Results



Verification

5

6



Issuance of
units



Direct
payments
to women

7



Who benefits? A Triple win solution



WOMEN

Benefits and revenue for
women engaged in the
project
[At least 50 %] to support
additional climate activities



CLIMATE PROJECT DEVELOPERS

Reimbursement for costs of
project activities & measurement
plus funds for additional project
activities



UNIT BUYERS

Verified outcomes for SDG
#5 and
social returns

Where does the demand for W+ units come from?

Demand for W+ comes from entities engaged in international development, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), sustainability of corporate supply chains, gender-related Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), social and 'gender lens' investing and 'women-branding'.

- Countries supporting gender equality and women's empowerment
- Governments and companies using SDG targets for gender/women's empowerment
- Carbon offset buyers seeking to support communities and SDGs
- Women branding: 85% of consumer decisions in Europe and US are made by women
- Increasing number of companies seeking transparent ways of improving lives of women producers in their supply chains
- Individuals wishing to support women's empowerment
- Social impact investors who take partial or whole repayment in social returns

Example: Transformative changes in women's lives in Nepal

- Women's unpaid labor has enabled functioning and maintenance of biogas digesters, resulting in climate mitigation, forest conservation and GHG units sold by Nepal government.

- W+ Standard measured the time saved for 7,200 women in Kavre and Sindhuli districts who replaced their wood-generated stoves, relieving them of the need to collect fuel wood from the forest and saving 2.26 hours per day.

- By eliminating this time-consuming, labor-intensive task, women gained time for leisure and self-improvement, planting vegetable gardens and cash crops, and engaging in income generation and community activities.



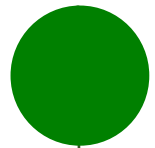
Proof of Concept: UNFCCC Recognition

- Winner of Momentum for Change Lighthouse Activity Award of UNFCCC 2016: *W+ Standard: Measuring and Monetizing Co-Benefits of Climate Mitigation to Support Women's Empowerment*
- Units from this biogas project in Nepal were generated by measuring time savings and sold to buyers
- Funds to women's groups in project area used for livelihood and climate adaptation activities.

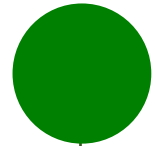
<https://unfccc.int/climate-action/momentum-for-change/women-for-results/the-w-standard>



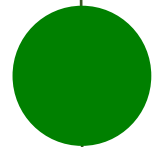
A Platform for Rapid Scale-up for Crosscutting Solution for Climate Action and Women's Empowerment



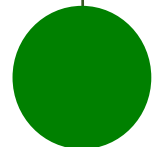
W+ applications demonstrate that women's empowerment, like climate mitigation, is a cross-cutting topic that touches projects implemented in a wide variety of sectors.



Carbon markets demonstrated that a financial value placed on a measurable impact that generates tradeable assets (carbon credits) can lead to climate-sensitive design of a large number of projects across a wide spectrum of sectors.



The W+ Standard demonstrates that we can use this same concept for the purpose of women's empowerment. **The W+ Standard gives a monetary value to women's unpaid work and contributions to climate actions.**



A key factor for success is the stimulation of demand for W+ units.



If we don't address gender and climate jointly, we undermine both agendas. By integrating the two, we can amplify the impact of both.

What's needed is a **simple solution** for companies and organizations that internally are not capable of implementing gender activities.

A **low cost yet reliable and standardized mechanism** to certify results for women's empowerment and gender equality, similar to what the voluntary carbon market provides to investors and companies seeking to meet climate goals.





Women provide services for climate solutions

However...

Summary: Climate solutions cannot be achieved without the knowledge, skills and networks of women.

Climate finance could catalyze women's empowerment in ways that advance climate results, but it must do so in ways that provide equal opportunities and benefits, and recognize, reward and compensate women for this mostly unpaid care for the environment. The W+ Standard can do so, while providing financial returns to investors AND grants to women's groups.



[For more information
coordinator@wplus.org](mailto:coordinator@wplus.org)
www.wplus.org

