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Women's Empowerment for Climate Action: Making Climate Finance Work for Women



www.wocan.org
www.wplus.org

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5 GENDER
EQUALITY



13 CLIMATE
ACTION





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 114 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

Gaps : *Climate finance, both public and private, could catalyze women's empowerment and accelerate climate action, BUT:*

1. Negligible funds are targeted for activities that effectively engage and benefit women

- *A mere 0.01 percent of all worldwide funding supports projects that address both climate change and women's rights. (UNDP, 2016)*
- *Just 0.2 percent of all philanthropic foundation funding focused explicitly on women and the environment, with the median grant amount a mere \$7,000. (Global Green Grants, 2014)*
- *Less than 1% of the approximately \$1.6 billion in foundation climate funding in 2019 went toward grassroots organizing and other efforts to achieve climate solutions that center racial, gender, and economic equity (ClimateWorks, 2020)*

2. Climate finance architecture is not oriented towards scaling and replicating locally-driven, women-led solutions

- *Existing climate funds have inadequate mechanisms to strengthen capacities of women's groups or to incentivize women's inclusion*

3. Few projects are measuring the social as well as environmental impacts of climate projects due to lack of means of measuring outcomes

- *Investors need reliable metrics for ESG to guide their selection and they need mechanism to generate profits/returns.*

Opportunities:

1. Frameworks and policies exist now in public climate finance mechanisms, though are at low levels of implementation
2. Corporations have Net Zero (or Carbon Neutral) and SDG pledges, driven by investors and consumers, measured by carbon standards and SDG standards has resulted in 'explosion' of carbon markets
3. Gender lens investors and impact investors are actively searching for climate projects that benefit women or are managed by women-led SMEs

Yet there are still few projects or companies reporting on actions that address both climate and gender targets.

How do we take advantage of the new opportunities within both public and private climate finance to drive more resources to women and women's groups to engage them in climate actions at a scaled up level?

Solution/mechanism: W+ Standard



- 1. Measures and quantifies women's empowerment**
- 2. Incentivizes actions for women's empowerment in climate projects using a market-based approach**
- 3. Channels funds directly to women's groups**

The W+ Standard™ (www.wplus.org)

Measures results in six domains for women's empowerment: [Time](#), [Health](#), [Education & Knowledge](#), [Food Security](#), [Income & Assets](#) and [Leadership](#)

Channels money to women at the community level: at least 20% of the revenue from W+ unit sales is provided to women's groups engaged in the project to support their own community activities

Provides revenue for both investors and women's groups



Who benefits? A Triple win solution



WOMEN

Benefits and revenue for women's groups engaged in the project
[At least 20 %] to support additional climate activities



CLIMATE PROJECT DEVELOPERS

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



UNIT BUYERS and INVESTORS

Verified outcomes for SDG #5 and 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 carbon units sold by Nepal government.

- W+ Standard measured the time saved for 7,200 women 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

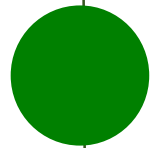
- Winner of Momentum for Change Lighthouse Activity Award of UNFCCC 2016: *W+ Standard: Measuring and Monetizing Co-Benefits of Climate Mitigation to Support Women's Empowerment*
- Units from this biogas project in Nepal were generated by measuring time savings and sold to buyers
- Funds to women's groups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



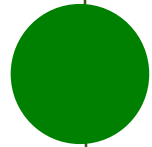
<https://unfccc.int/climate-action/momentum-for-change/women-for-results/the-w-standard>



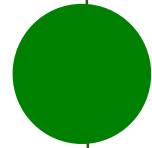
A Platform for Rapid Scale-up for Crosscutting Solution for Climate Action and Women's Empowerment



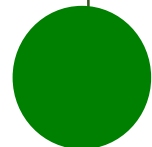
W+ applications demonstrate that women's empowerment, like climate mitigation, is a cross-cutting topic that touches projects implemented in a wide variety of sectors.



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.

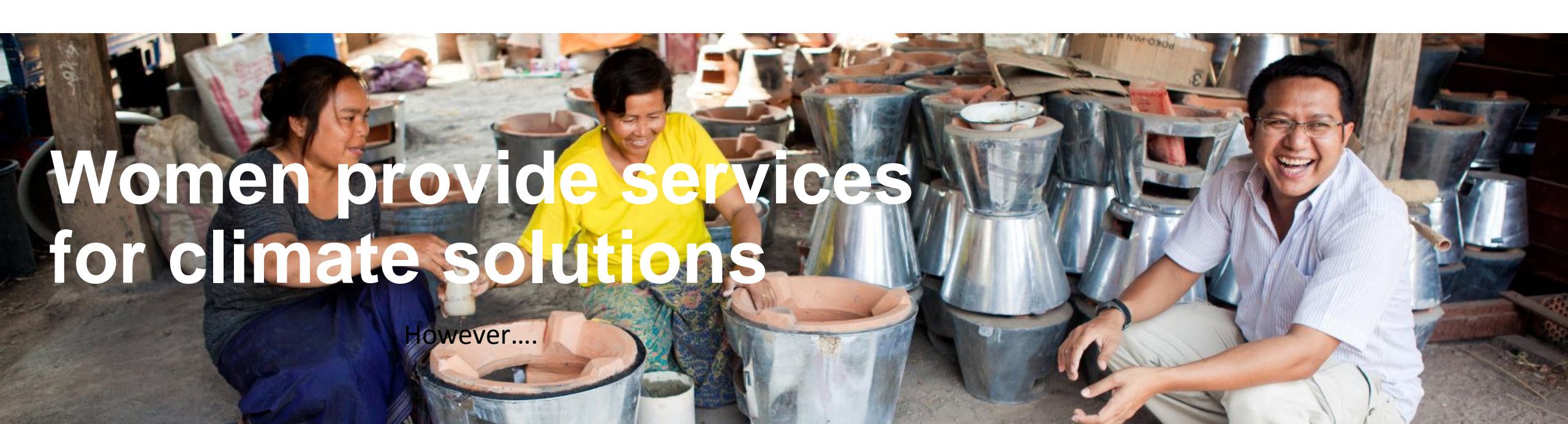


If we don't address gender and climate jointly, we undermine both agendas. By integrating the two, we can amplify the impact of both.

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.