**Summary of Social Impact Working Group Meeting**

October 6& 7, 2014

Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves &

International Center for Research on Women (ICRW)

**Background**

On October 6 and 7, the Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves (the Alliance) and the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) convened the Alliance’s Social Impact Working Group, which was created to provide expert guidance to the Alliance as it develops an implementable framework for the clean cooking sector to measure and report social impacts. The meeting brought together experts from the private and nonprofit sectors, including investors, energy and gender experts, clean energy enterprises, clean cooking researchers, and implementers, with the goal of developing a process for measuring the social impact of clean cooking solutions. Participants provided feedback on draft social impact conceptual frameworks developed by ICRW, discussed solutions to some of the major challenge of defining and measuring social impact in the clean cooking sector, and discussed competing priorities and needs of a variety of stakeholders. While this was the first convening of the Social Impact Working Group, we envision this group collaborating, convening, and providing feedback into the process of creating a social impact measurement system over the next year and a half.

The Working Group meeting had several key objectives:

* Gain consensus on the key and realistically measurable components and pathways through which the clean cooking sector creates social impact
* Expand knowledge of what resources and information related to social impact exist in the clean cooking sector, as well as other development sectors
* Initiate thinking around specific social impact indicators and measurement methodologies
* Establish a community of experts committed to creating a global M&E framework for social impact in the clean cooking sector

**Special Emphasis on Gender and Empowerment**

The Alliance is interested in and wants measure social impacts for both men and women. However, due to the particular benefits experienced by women, as well as the nuanced connections between the energy sector and gender relationships, the Alliance will specifically focus on measuring gendered impacts such as women’s economic empowerment and gendered dimensions of well-being.

There is a strong case to be made that the clean cooking sector use gender-informed practices and that the sector can provide strong opportunities for women’s empowerment.

* As the primary users of cookstoves, women ultimately determine whether and to what extent clean cooking solutions are adopted. Additionally, as the primary users of cookstoves, women stand to gain the most from using a tool that can make their daily tasks more efficient, enhance their social and economic well-being, and reduce their exposure to HAP.
* Women are an untapped resource to scale the adoption of cookstoves, as peer-to-peer communication among women has been shown to enhance cookstove adoption.
* Women stand to gain from the expansion of the clean cooking sector, both through their involvement in the value chain and through the usage of clean cooking technologies.

To frame the discussion of how and to what extent the clean cooking sector might empower women, ICRW presented a framework developed by ICRW researchers for understanding the complicated subject of women’s economic empowerment, which ICRW divides into two different yet equally important parts:

* To be economically empowered, women must have access to **resources and skills**, which might include:
	+ Livelihoods
	+ Education, training, and/or skills
	+ Time
	+ Good health
	+ Networks
	+ Energy sources
	+ Technology
	+ Financial capital
* To be economically empowered, women must also have **power and agency**, meaning:
	+ They can make their own decisions
	+ They have control over their own resources
	+ They have a voice, both in the home and in public
	+ They have self-confidence

**Activities & Outcomes**

During the first day of the workshop, the Working Group discussed a variety of domains in which the clean cooking sector might have social impact in some form, including: generating livelihoods, potentially freeing up time (women might save time on collecting fuel and cooking), contributing to economic impacts (related to shifts in money spent on fuel and use of the cookstove for income generation), and improving psychological and physical wellbeing (for instance, reducing injury and exposure to safety risks from using the cookstoves).

On the second day of the workshop, experts presented on various relevant measurement methodologies. Specific presentations explained the W+ Standard time-use measurement developed by South Pole Carbon and WOCAN, various fuel impact measurements developed and used by the Alliance, the Progress out of Poverty Index (PPI) developed by the Grameen Foundation, and an overview by Winrock of the lab and field testing methodologies currently used in the sector. After reviewing some of the main indicators and measurement methodologies that could be considered for the social impact M&E framework for the clean cooking sector, the Working Group participated in an activity to prioritize the main domains of impact and key areas for measurement within those domains. Participants formed groups based on their role within the sector- investors, advocates, program implementers, and gender researchers. Each group then went through the domains of impact and prioritized the pieces of information that would be most relevant for them in terms of understanding their own social impact or the impact of the enterprises with whom they work. The results of this group activity can be found on pages 8-13 of the attached slides. When presenting their list of priority indicators to the larger Working Group, stakeholder groups identified pieces of information that they thought to be crucial/”must-haves” for their own organizations and their audiences, pieces of information that would fall into the “would like to know” category, and pieces of information that were deemed unimportant to their sector. As the Working Group discussed the feasibility of collecting data related to some of the concepts, participants agreed that some areas would be more appropriate for in-depth research studies than for the collection of monitoring data.

After listening to each group’s rationale as well as integrating insights from background research, ICRW has created Tables 1 & 2 that lay out the main domains of impact and key areas for measurement.

**Key Questions & Challenges**

Throughout the two-day meeting several key questions and concerns over how to handle potential challenges arose. Some of the outstanding questions include:

* How nuanced of an understanding/measurement of time use is necessary to feel that we are accurately, yet feasibly tracking impacts on time use?
	+ Do we need to understand what women do with their saved time?
* Should decreases in injuries encountered during fuel collection be captured under “social impact” or “health impacts”?
* Who will actually be motivated to collect or pay for collection of this data?
* How will we validate the data?
* How deep within their value chain will we expect enterprises to collect data?
* How would cookstove users be reached? Would they be responsive to SMS surveys?
* How will we know whether and to what extent the cookstoves are actually being used?
* What are the main components of a “quality” livelihood that we will want to measure?
* What are some of the key gaps in the theory of change of how clean cooking solutions generate social impact?
	+ *How could these be filled in with specific research studies?*
	+ *Who would fund such studies?*

The challenges—logistical and practical—that would be involved in measuring social impact were also addressed by the Working Group. Among the key challenges identified were the following:

* While private sector actors are generally receptive to the message that including women is “good for business,” they are less willing to devote time and resources to gather the evidence that would be needed to make this case; enterprises will not see the value of measuring impact—and certainly won’t want to pay for doing the measuring—if they do not see the benefit (particularly the financial benefit) of doing so.
* Not only is it difficult for all stakeholders to agree on the main areas of the clean cooking sector’s social impact, but it is potentially even more difficult to come up with indicators that can measure these impacts across the wide variety of actors involved in the sector (manufacturers, distributors, enterprises, non-profit implementers), the great variation in stove designs and fuels distributed, and the diversity of settings (urban, rural, mountainous, rainy, etc.) in which these stoves are used.

**Next Steps**

Based on what was discussed this working session, as well as through other efforts such as interviews, background research, and the ISO/TC285, the Alliance is working with ICRW to develop a concrete list of key domains of impact, key areas for measurement, and draft indicators and measurement methodologies. Once the Alliance has an internally vetted the draft, the Alliance will share these draft indicators and measurement methodologies with the Working Group to receive feedback.

Moving forward, the Alliance will continue to consult with the Social Impact Working Group on indicators, measurement methodologies, data collection methodologies, data capture systems, and more. In order to develop a social impact measurement system that is usable and valuable for a variety of stakeholders, we need your input in this process!

**Table 1: Social impacts created through involvement throughout clean cooking value chains**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Livelihoods** | Jobs created |
| Income |
| Quality of jobs created |
|   | Part-time/full-time |
|   | Management level |
|   | Area within the value chain |
|   | Geographic location |
|   | Women-owned |
| Interaction with external organizations and entrepreneurs |
| Empowerment/leadership skills |
| Access to networks |
| Access to credit |
| Control over resources/assets |

**Table 2: Social impacts created through adoption and use of clean cooking solutions**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Household Finances** | Money spent on fuel |
| Economic stability |
| **Time Use** | Time spent on fuel collection |
| Time spent on cooking |
| **Household Social & Economic Well-being** | Well-being |
| Status within the family/community |
| Workload |
|  | Safety/protection |
|  | Drudgery |