



“Carbon for Water” Project Saves Lives in Kenya

Challenges

- Over a billion people lack access to clean drinking water, causing 3.5 million deaths annually, 84% of whom are children under the age of 14, from waterborne illnesses.
- Residents in rural regions of Kenya burn wood to boil and purify their drinking water releasing carbon emissions and contributing to deforestation.
- In order to provide safe drinking water, Vestergaard Frandsen (VF) wanted to distribute their new portable water filters free of charge in rural Kenya.

Response

- DNV’s validation of the project helped VF secure Gold Standard certification, demonstrating that the project achieved the stated carbon reductions and promotes sustainable development.

Benefits

- The project meets four of the eight United Nations Millennium Goals for sustainability.
- The nearly 900,000 water filters being installed in the Western Province of Kenya could save thousands of lives.
- Due to reduced deforestation, greenhouse gas emissions will decrease and VF will receive over two million tons of carbon reductions annually.
- The company has received numerous accolades for the project, including an ABC News broadcast story in June 2011.



“Carbon for Water” Project Saves Lives in Kenya

The Story

Over a billion people lack access to safe drinking water, and more than 3.5 million people die each year from water-borne diseases, 84% of whom are children under the age of 14. As a company with a humanitarian entrepreneurship business model specializing in disease control products, Vestergaard Frandsen (VF) had developed the LifeStraw® Family water filter to help address this issue. Each LifeStraw® filter delivers enough EPA-quality drinking water to supply a family of five for at least three years.

The company wanted to distribute the filters free of charge in rural Kenya, one of the areas with a pressing need for safe drinking water. Since local residents were burning wood to boil water, VF realized that the filters would not only provide safe drinking water but also reduce deforestation and carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions.

Working with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), VF launched its “Carbon for Water” project, in which they would claim the carbon credits from the reduced CO₂ emissions. The project would allow them to be reimbursed for the costs of manufacturing and transporting the filters as well as for the training provided to over 4,000 community health workers to distribute the filters and educate residents on how to use them.

VF asked DNV to validate the project’s carbon credits, requesting a Gold Standard certification. The Gold Standard Foundation registers projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions in ways that contribute to sustainable development and certifies the carbon credits for sale in both compliance and voluntary offset markets. VF chose DNV because of its impressive track record in project validation and because DNV is one of only a few companies that is accredited to validate Gold Standard projects.

Based on DNV’s validation, the project was approved as a voluntary project and received a Gold Standard certification. In April 2011, VF began its distribution of nearly 900,000 LifeStraw® filters to 90% of the households in the Western Province of Kenya.

Residents will no longer need to gather firewood to boil water which will reduce deforestation. Furthermore, the widespread distribution of LifeStraw® filters in rural Kenya has the potential of saving thousands of lives and reducing the spread of disease.

VF will receive over two million tons of carbon reduction credits annually if the LifeStraw® Filters continue to be used by residents. The project also meets four of the eight United Nations Millennium goals including reducing child mortality, improving maternal health, combating disease and ensuring environmental sustainability. The project has been widely publicized and was featured in an ABC News television broadcast in June 2011 as well as broadcasted on television stations in Africa.

Founded in 1864, DNV adopted its mission to safeguard life, property and the environment ninety years later in 1974. To meet that mission, DNV offers risk-based environmental and safety services, including verification, validation and certification as well as advisory services that ensure credibility and technical rigor. DNV’s offerings in the sustainability area provide trusted advice to businesses in their pursuit of maximizing shareholder value and stakeholder trust. With 9,000 staff in 300 offices across 100 countries, DNV is the premier global provider of integrated strategic, operational and technical services.



MANAGING RISK