

ENERGY ACCESS PRACTITIONER NETWORK MEMBER WE CARE SOLAR WINS \$1 MILLION “POWERING THE FUTURE WE WANT” AWARD

Washington — September 14, 2015

The UN Foundation’s Energy Access Practitioner Network salutes We Care Solar for winning the inaugural USD 1 million Energy Grant “Powering the Future We Want – Recognizing Innovative Practices in Energy for Sustainable Development” launched by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) this year.

We Care Solar was announced as the recipient of the award by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at a high-level ceremony at the UN today. The grant aims to fund capacity development activities on energy for sustainable development.

We Care Solar is a non-profit organization that promotes safe motherhood and reduces maternal mortality in developing regions by providing health workers with reliable lighting, mobile communication, and blood bank refrigeration using solar electricity.

Dr. Laura Stachel, Co-Founder and Executive Director of We Care Solar, said, “The United Nations is shining a light on an area that has all too often been overlooked — the lack of reliable electricity in health facilities. This award is the beginning of a brighter future for women everywhere. We will use these funds to help further improve the health of women and their newborns by bringing much needed solar power to health clinics still lacking reliable electricity across the developing world.”

We Care Solar is a long-time member of the UN Foundation’s Energy Access Practitioner Network, a global platform that brings together more than 2,000 energy service providers and stakeholders to support the delivery of sustainable decentralized energy solutions as a contribution to the UN Sustainable Energy for All initiative’s goal of universal energy access by 2030. Two other Practitioner Network members, SolarAid and Solar Electric Light Fund (SELF), were also among the 12 finalists for the UNDESA grant.

Richenda Van Leeuwen, Executive Director for Energy Access at the UN Foundation, said, “We Care Solar’s work shows how renewable energy solutions can be used in health care settings to support better health care delivery, especially during humanitarian emergencies.” She added, “Congratulations to all the finalists, whose work shows so well how sustainable energy and development are intertwined.”

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The Energy Access Practitioner Network is open to all organizations and individuals actively involved in the implementation, development, financing, and management aspects of delivering electricity sustainably, affordably, and effectively. It supports primarily market-led decentralized energy applications and catalyzes energy service delivery by promoting new technologies, adoption of quality standards in technology and delivery, and innovative financial and business models. For more information, please visit www.energyaccess.org.

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About We Care Solar: As an obstetrician conducting public health research in Nigeria, Dr. Stachel was one of the first experts to recognize the link between maternal mortality and lack of access to reliable power. She co-founded We Care Solar in partnership with her husband, Hal Aronson, in 2010. Together, they developed compact portable Solar Suitcases to provide essential lighting and electricity to maternal health centers. To date, 1300 We Care Solar Suitcases® have been distributed to health centers, primarily in Africa and Asia, and that number is expected to double in the next 12 months.

We Care Solar is headquartered at the Blum Center for Developing Economies, UC Berkeley. www.wecaresolar.org.

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About the United Nations Foundation:

The United Nations Foundation builds public-private partnerships to address the world’s most pressing problems, and broadens support for the United Nations through advocacy and public outreach. Through innovative campaigns and initiatives, the Foundation connects people, ideas, and resources to help the UN solve global problems. The Foundation was created in 1998 as a U.S. public charity by entrepreneur and philanthropist Ted Turner and now is supported by global corporations, foundations, governments, and individuals. Learn more at www.unfoundation.org.