

## PRESS RELEASE

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### ENERGY EFFICIENCY CALLED CRITICAL TO REDUCING ENERGY POVERTY IN THE DEVELOPED WORLD

In a training webinar on the nexus of energy efficiency and energy access, hosted today by the United Nations Foundation's Energy Access Practitioner Network in partnership with the Rexel Foundation and the Clean Energy Solutions Center, leading experts said that scaling energy efficiency is the critical first step toward closing residual energy access gaps, lowering energy bills, reducing energy consumption, and influencing a change in 'energy' behaviors.

Fuel poverty – or energy poverty-- is becoming an increasingly serious issue in developed economies, with currently 1 household in 7 in Europe in or on the margins of fuel poverty, creating significant financial, social, societal and health problems. Solving this issue will require the collective involvement of various stakeholders, including energy service providers and companies, NGOs, and local or national governments, bringing specific expertise to the table.

Reid Detchon, Vice-President for Energy & Climate Strategy, United Nations Foundation, said: *“Energy efficiency reduces the cost of energy services to the consumer anywhere in the world. Whether in a rural village far from the electric grid served by entrepreneurs selling prepaid access to solar power, or in a low-income neighborhood of a wealthy city served by a giant electric utility, the first step toward affordable energy is making it go further through greater efficiency.”*

Pascale Giet, Vice-Chairman of the Rexel Foundation for a better energy future said: *“Rexel and its Foundation for a Better Energy Future are working day-in and day-out to bring concrete responses to the fuel poverty challenge. We have observed that user behavior is paramount to curb energy consumption. Education, advice and support as well as the adoption of the right equipment can make the difference. Working with social entrepreneurs in the field allows us to combine our strengths and accelerate our mission and significantly drive a positive social impact.”*

Jules Kortenhorst, Chief Executive Officer of the Rocky Mountain Institute, added: *“The costs of energy, low performance homes, and climate change have and will continue to affect very low-, low-, and moderate-income families the hardest. These families also have less time to figure out how to take action to mitigate and adapt to climate change impacts. With this in mind, the Rocky Mountain Institute is working on several fronts, from partnering with utilities to organizing change Labs for new ideas to emerge or through its RMI's Residential Energy+ initiative. With this initiative, the RMI is working with industry leaders to increase access to higher quality, resilient, and energy-efficient affordable housing by making home energy upgrades understandable and conversational; simplifying the investment process to empower families to adopt energy upgrades; and unlocking opportunities.”*

Patty Fong, Programme Director for Energy Efficiency at the European Climate Foundation, said *“Home energy efficiency upgrades is the most economically sustainable solution for addressing fuel poverty in Europe. Large-scale energy renovation requires a multi-stakeholder alliance to foster awareness of the tangible benefits and build broad political support for action. It also requires concerted coordination of the building sector value chain and innovative, industrialised approaches to increase affordability and accessibility.”*

Participants who attended the webinar had a chance to interact with the experts detailing their respective organizations' experience and collective best practices in the nexus of energy efficiency, fuel poverty and energy access. The presentations from the webinar as well as a full recording are available at: <https://cleanenergysolutions.org/training/fighting-fuel-poverty-in-developed-economies>.

### About the Rexel Foundation

The Rexel Foundation for a better energy future was founded in May 2013 by the Rexel Group, a global leader in the professional distribution of products and services for the energy world, under the aegis of the Fondation de France. The Rexel Foundation's mission is to promote access to energy efficiency for all based on three key pillars: community projects across the world in partnership with NGOs or other foundations, social innovation projects through its social entrepreneurship platform, and knowledge and academic research in the field of energy efficiency innovation. Over three years, the Rexel Foundation has launched 48 initiatives in 15 countries with nearly 50 partners. For more information, please visit: [www.rexelfoundation.com](http://www.rexelfoundation.com).

### About Rexel Group

Rexel, a global leader in the professional distribution of products and services for the energy world, addresses three main markets - residential, commercial and industrial. The Group supports its customers to be at their best in running their business, by providing a broad range of sustainable and innovative products, services and solutions in the field of technical supply, automation and energy management. Rexel operates through a network of some 2,100 branches in 35 countries, with c. 28,000 employees. The Group's sales were €13.5 billion in 2015.

Rexel is listed on the Eurolist market of Euronext Paris (compartment A, ticker RXL, ISIN code FR0010451203). It is included in the following indices: SBF 120, CAC Mid 100, CAC AllTrade, CAC AllShares, FTSE EuroMid, STOXX600. Rexel is also part of the following SRI indices: DJSI Europe, FTSE4Good Europe & Global, EURO STOXX Sustainability, Euronext Vigeo Europe 120 and ESI Excellence Europe. Finally, Rexel is included on the Ethibel EXCELLENCE Investment Register in recognition of its performance in corporate social responsibility (CSR). For more information, visit Rexel's web site at [www.rexel.com](http://www.rexel.com)

### 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.

### About the Energy Access Practitioner Network

As a part of the Sustainable Energy for All initiative, the UN Foundation-led Energy Access Practitioner Network promotes universal access to modern energy services. With more than 2,300 members working across 170 countries, the Network focuses on decentralized low-carbon household and community-level electrification. It supports innovative financial and business models in predominantly market-based applications that also help address development issues related to income generation, health, agriculture, education, small business, and telecommunications. For more information, visit [www.energyaccess.org](http://www.energyaccess.org).

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