

PRESS RELEASE

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SOCIAL INNOVATION IS CRITICAL TO MEETING THE ENERGY EFFICIENCY, ENERGY ACCESS AND CLIMATE CHALLENGES FACING THE WORLD TODAY

In the third webinar in a series hosted by the United Nations Foundation's Energy Access Practitioner Network in partnership with the Rexel Foundation and the Clean Energy Solutions Center, on the topic of energy efficiency for energy access, leading experts focused on the critical role played by social innovation in driving energy progress.

Reid Detchon, Vice President for Energy & Climate Strategy, United Nations Foundation, opened the webinar with an introduction to the work of the Energy Access Practitioner Network and highlighted the importance of promoting social innovation as an accelerator for scaling energy access for the world's most disadvantaged communities.

He said: *"Working with like-minded organisations such as the Rexel Foundation, we can raise awareness and support for social entrepreneurs to deliver effective, efficient and cleaner energy solutions while responding to the climate challenge."*

Pascale Giet, Rexel Foundation Vice-Chairman and Rexel Group Senior Vice-President for Communication, Sustainability & Social Impact, highlighted the work of the Rexel Foundation to promote socially innovative solutions and models in the energy sector via a joint-skills platform for social entrepreneurs, which provides financial support, skills sponsorship, equipment donation and logistical assistance.

She said: *"Social innovation in the 'energy' context is about providing reliable access to clean energy for the estimated 1.2bn people in the world today that are cut off from the grid or for the even greater number – some 2.7bn people – who have to rely on solid biomass and inefficient stoves to cook and heat their homes."*

"The Rexel Foundation is working hand-in-hand with social entrepreneurs to provide them with the tools and funding they need in order to put in place sustainable solutions that empower local communities and will help them to secure access to efficient and clean energy for generations to come."

Pascale used the webinar to introduce listeners to 3 social innovation projects that are being sponsored by the Rexel Foundation:

- **Life Project 4 Youth**, an organization dedicated to the integration of young adults living in extreme poverty, is working with the **Rexel Foundation** on a project which involves the creation of a center managed by young local women in the slums of Tondo (near Manila, Philippines), which rents affordable solar lanterns to people living without access to electricity, www.lp4y.org/en.
- The **Rexel Foundation** also supports **SunSawang**, a social venture from Thai foundation BGET, which targets poor communities in the Tak and Mae Hong Son provinces of Northern Thailand, providing training and recruitment of local technicians for the installation of solar products and services to provide clean and affordable energy and reduce lighting expenses by 80%.

- The **Rexel Foundation** is also supporting the development of the **StovePlus Academy** initiative from not-for-profit GERES in the Philippines. The StovePlus Academy aims to train and encourage networking between entrepreneurs and energy program implementers, in the field of energy efficient and clean cooking devices. <http://www.stoveplus.org/en>

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 32 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, 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

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 2,400 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.

REXEL CONTACTS

PRESS

Karolina Adamkiewicz +33 1 42 85 76 39 karolina.adamkiewicz@rexel.com

REXEL FOUNDATION

Amélie ANDRE +33 1 42 85 99 50 amelie.andre@rexel.com

UNITED NATIONS FOUNDATION CONTACT

Yasemin Erboy Ruff +1-202-887-9040 info@energyaccess.org

ⁱ IEA, World Energy Outlook 2015 :
<http://www.worldenergyoutlook.org/resources/energydevelopment/energyaccessdatabase/>