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ExxonMobil Expands Support for Technologies That Help Women in Developing Countries

- Builds on commitment to invest in innovations that create economic opportunities for women
- \$1 million focused on scaling up alternative energy technologies
- ExxonMobil Women's Economic Opportunity Initiative has invested more than \$35 million since 2005, reaching women in 77 developing countries

NEW YORK--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- [Exxon Mobil Corporation](#) (NYSE:XOM) today announced a \$1 million commitment at the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI) to invest in the expansion of high impact, sustainable technologies that advance women economically in the developing world.

The program is expected to directly benefit more than 13,500 people, with indirect benefits reaching more than 475,000 people in the next two years.

The new commitment will help innovators in scaling up technologies that benefit women economically and were identified through ExxonMobil's partnership with Ashoka's Changemakers in the [Women | Tools | Technology: Building Opportunities & Economic Power Challenge](#), launched at last year's CGI. The new financial support from ExxonMobil will help provide consulting support, facilitate the innovators' connections with other social entrepreneurs, business and technical experts and identify best practices.

"The programs identified through the 2009 commitment use technology to improve the lives of women in developing countries," said Suzanne M. McCarron, general manager, ExxonMobil public and government affairs. "By further supporting these programs, we will be advancing technologies that are proven to create more economic opportunities for women and, as a result, strengthen their communities."

A significant barrier to economic advancement is a lack of access to energy. An estimated 1.6 billion people in the world have no access to electricity and approximately 2.4 billion rely on biomass fuels like wood, charcoal or dung for cooking and heating. This undermines the productivity, education, health and safety of these people - 70 percent of whom are women and girls.

ExxonMobil grants will be provided to select innovators who advance technologies to increase access to energy through innovative sources. These technologies help women increase their productivity and effective participation in the economy. The grant recipients include [Kopernik](#), [Solar Electric Light Fund](#), [Solar Sister](#), [Productive Agricultural Linkages and Marketing Systems \(P.A.L.M.S\)](#) and [smallsolutions](#).

"My country will be a better place when more women have access to technologies," said Leticia Brenyah, an ExxonMobil-supported innovator from Ghana who spoke at CGI as part of the meeting's Empowering Girls and Women focus area. "When women thrive economically they improve their lives, families and country."

As part of its support for the programs identified through the Women | Tools | Technology program, ExxonMobil will work with partners Ashoka's Changemakers, the International Council for Research on Women and the Thunderbird Emerging Markets Laboratory (TEM Lab) to support the further development of a number of concepts involving the use of innovative technologies to enable women's access to energy in a sustainable and scalable manner.

TEM Lab will deploy on the ground consulting teams to help diagnose business problems and opportunities with the goal of strengthening program effectiveness.

"We are excited to enter into this meaningful partnership which leverages business and technology expertise to enable innovators to improve their capacity," said Angel Cabrera, president of Thunderbird School of Global Management.

Innovators will have the opportunity to engage with experts at CGI and utilize the Ashoka's Changemakers Discovery Framework to better understand the challenges and opportunities in bringing their concepts to scale.

"The passion and new ideas represented by the solutions sourced through last year's commitment and the subsequent [Women | Tools | Technology: Building Opportunities & Economic Power Challenge](#) represent a powerful new force for advancing women's economic opportunities globally," said Bill Drayton, chairman and CEO of Ashoka. "I look forward to not only the deep and lasting impact these leaders will create, but also the future generations of changemakers they will inspire along the way."

As part of the 2009 CGI Commitment, the research report, "Bridging the Technology Divide," by the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW), provided insights into how technology can help advance women economically. ICRW will continue to provide monitoring and evaluation support for the commitment activities.

"A year later, it is great to see how innovators have turned good intentions into actions that effectively integrate women in various stages of the technology lifecycle to give them the tools they need to thrive," said Sarah Degnan Kambou, president of ICRW.

About Exxon Mobil Corporation

ExxonMobil, the largest publicly traded international oil and gas company, uses technology and innovation to help meet the world's growing energy needs. ExxonMobil holds an industry-leading inventory of resources, is the largest refiner and marketer of petroleum products and its chemical company is one of the largest in the world. Globally, ExxonMobil provides funding to improve basic education, promote women as catalysts for development, and combat malaria and other infectious diseases in developing countries. In 2009, together with its employees and retirees, ExxonMobil Corporation, its divisions and affiliates, and ExxonMobil Foundation provided \$235 million in contributions worldwide. Additional information on ExxonMobil's community partnerships and contributions programs is available

at www.exxonmobil.com/community.

About Thunderbird School of Global Management

Thunderbird is the world's No. 1-ranked school of international business with more than 60 years of experience in developing leaders with the global mindset, business skills and social responsibility necessary to create real, sustainable value for their organizations, communities and the world. The Thunderbird Emerging Markets Laboratory (TEM Lab) is a capstone course in which second year, honors students apply the full range of skills acquired in their course work and experience. TEM Lab MBA consulting teams work on-site with client systems in emerging markets all over the world. www.thunderbird.edu

About Ashoka and Ashoka's Changemakers

Ashoka is the global association of the world's leading social entrepreneurs - men and women with system-changing solutions for the world's most urgent social problems. Ashoka's Changemakers creates opportunities for organizations and individuals to drive meaningful and measurable social change. Through collaborative competitions, Changemakers connects Ashoka's elite fellowship, an online community of social innovators, and pioneering investors to inspire and drive innovative solutions to the world's most pressing challenges. By focusing on how leading social entrepreneurs, government agencies, corporations, and citizens solve vital problems and build their communities, Changemakers and its partners spark promising ideas for further development and investment. Learn more at www.changemakers.org.

About the International Center for Research on Women

The International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) is a leading international research organization that works to empower women, advance gender equality and fight poverty in the developing world. To accomplish this, ICRW works with partners in the public and private sectors and civil society to conduct empirical research build capacity and advocate for evidence-based practical ways to change policies and programs. Learn more about ICRW and its work at www.icrw.org.

About the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI)

Established in 2005 by President Bill Clinton, the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI) convenes global leaders to devise and implement innovative solutions to some of the world's most pressing challenges. Since 2005, CGI Annual Meetings have brought together more than 125 current and former heads of state, 15 Nobel Peace Prize laureates, hundreds of leading CEOs, heads of foundations, major philanthropists, directors of the most effective nongovernmental organizations, and prominent members of the media. These CGI members have made more than 1,700 commitments valued at \$57 billion, which have already improved the lives of 220 million people in more than 170 countries. The 2010 CGI Annual Meeting will take place from September 20-23, 2010, in New York City. The CGI community also includes CGI University (CGI U), a forum to engage college students in global citizenship, MyCommitment.org, an online portal where anybody can make a Commitment to Action, and CGI Lead, which engages a select group of young leaders from business, government, and civil society. For more information, visit www.clintonglobalinitiative.org.

Source: Exxon Mobil Corporation