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ExxonMobil and Vital Voices Launch Africa Businesswomen's Network at World Economic Forum on Africa

Africa Businesswomen's Network (ABWN) launched at the World Economic Forum on Africa ABWN will build and support a network of businesswomen's organizations in Sub-Saharan Africa Network hubs underway in Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa and Uganda

CAPE TOWN, South Africa--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Exxon Mobil Corporation (NYSE:XOM) and Vital Voices Global Partnership today joined with local businesswomen's organizations throughout Africa to announce the launch of the Africa Businesswomen's Network (ABWN) at the World Economic Forum on Africa.

The ABWN aims to build and support a network of businesswomen's organizations in Africa to expand the number of women succeeding as entrepreneurs and leaders in the corporate world; to raise the profile and credibility of women in business; to foster global networking opportunities among businesswomen; and to advocate for policies that expand economic opportunity for women. Network Hubs are now underway in Sub-Saharan African countries including Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa and Uganda.

"Women entrepreneurs are vital to reducing poverty and driving economic growth in Africa," said Rex W. Tillerson, chairman and chief executive officer of ExxonMobil. "ExxonMobil is proud to support the Africa Businesswomen's Network to stimulate the invaluable knowledge-sharing, networking and collective action that will enable women business leaders to join forces to unleash the untapped economic potential of other African women and ultimately fuel greater economic growth."

"The ABWN will address some of the unique barriers women entrepreneurs face, including negative and unsupportive policy and social environments; poor access to input and output markets and technologies; and inadequate access to information," said Alyse Nelson, President and CEO, Vital Voices. "The launch of the ABWN is a testament to the incredible potential of female entrepreneurs to effect positive social and economic change in Africa, and the integral role companies like ExxonMobil can play in supporting women's economic opportunities."

"Research demonstrates that networks are a powerful mechanism to enable economic organizing among female entrepreneurs and are a proven catalyst for business growth," said Lorie Jackson, Manager of ExxonMobil's Educating Women and Girls Initiative. "Women's business networks and associations combine existing resources to make use of the size and scale that individuals and micro or small enterprises alone do not enjoy and collectively

address fundamental barriers to women's economic success."

Recognizing the integral role that women play as drivers of economic and social change, in 2005 ExxonMobil launched the Educating Women and Girls Initiative, which provides training, resources and support networks to help women in developing countries fulfill their economic potential. The ExxonMobil Foundation has committed grants totaling nearly $20 million for programs including intensive leadership and skills development programs for women from 27 African countries.

About Exxon Mobil Corporation

Exxon Mobil Corporation and ExxonMobil Foundation, the primary philanthropic arm of Exxon Mobil Corporation in the United States, engage in a range of philanthropic activities that advance education, health, women's economic leadership and public policy in the communities where ExxonMobil has significant operations. In the United States, ExxonMobil supports initiatives to improve math and science education at the K-12 and higher education levels. Globally, ExxonMobil provides funding to help women fulfill their economic potential and combat malaria and other infectious diseases in developing countries. In 2008, together with its employees and retirees, Exxon Mobil Corporation, its divisions and affiliates, and ExxonMobil Foundation provided $189 million in cash, goods and services contributions worldwide. Additional information on ExxonMobil's community partnerships and contributions programs is available online.

About Vital Voices Global Partnership

Vital Voices Global Partnership is the preeminent non-governmental organization (NGO) that identifies, trains, and empowers emerging women leaders and social entrepreneurs around the globe, enabling them to create a better world for us all. We provide these women with the capacity, connections, and credibility they need to unlock their leadership potential.

Source: Exxon Mobil Corporation