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CHICAGO, Oct. 24, 2024 /PRNewswire/ --Schneider Electric, the leader in the digital transformation of energy management and automation, today announced that it is partnering with United Solar Initiative to install two microgrids at maternal healthcare clinics in Guatemala, expanding the company's efforts to provide microgrid infrastructure for healthcare clinics in remote international communities.

Schneider Electric made the announcement at "WE 24" - the Society of Women Engineers annual conference - during a panel discussion with clean energy leaders highlighting "Empowering Change through Energy Equity." The company is donating \$50,000 to United Solar Initiative to support the installation of the microgrids.

Worldwide, more than five million mothers and children die unnecessarily each year due to lack of healthcare access, according to the World Health Organization. In Guatemala, indigenous women have one of the highest levels of risk for death during labor in the Western Hemisphere, with an average 156 deaths per 100,000 live births - seven times higher than that of women in the United States.

Through the microgrid deployments at clinics in San Sebastián Coatán and Santa Eulalia, Schneider Electric is helping ensure those living in these remote regions of Guatemala have reliable, round-the-clock power, which is crucial for maintaining consistent healthcare access and improving maternal health outcomes. Additionally, the microgrids support essential day-to-day operations, including preventative primary health care, rigorous monitoring and evaluation processes, and continuous capacity building for midwives, mothers, and Ministry of Health staff.

Access to consistent energy is a significant challenge in many parts of the world. A 2022 report by the International Energy Agency (IEA) revealed a staggering statistic: approximately 760 million people globally lack access to electricity. Lack of access to electricity has far-reaching consequences, impacting not only healthcare but also overall socioeconomic well-being.

The initiative in Guatemala expands upon Schneider Electric's work to provide reliable energy for maternal healthcare clinics in Kenya, where the company has partnered with United Solar Initiative and Impact Global Health Alliance to deploy microgrid systems at three birthing clinics in Matongo, Nyagoto, and Irinda. The microgrids provide a consistent and dependable energy source at night without interference, vital for delivering quality medical care 24/7.

"Our partnership with United Solar Initiative and Impact Global Health Alliance has already underscored the life-saving impact of microgrids via our deployments in Kenya, where maternal mortality rates have dropped by 83% since the microgrids were deployed in 2019," said Samantha Childress, Microgrid Partner & Strategy Director for Schneider Electric. "We are excited to expand this program to Guatemala, where we can continue



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to help make a positive impact in the lives of mothers and their children."

Among the countries in the Western Hemisphere, Guatemala has some of the greatest socio-economic disparities, health-related inequalities, and ethnic group inequalities in coverage of reproductive, maternal, and child health interventions. Access to adequate healthcare facilities that are equipped with reliable energy is crucial for improving these conditions.

Childress, who leads Schneider Electric's work with United Solar Initiative and serves on their board, added: "We are aiming to replicate the impactful model that we deployed in Kenya, bringing the life-saving benefits of reliable energy to mothers in Guatemala. This will help to ensure that mothers don't wonder whether they'll give birth in the dark, or whether there will be electricity to power critical life-saving medical devices - microgrid technologies help to make that possible."

Schneider's purpose is to create Impact by empowering all to make the most of our energy and resources, bridging progress and sustainability. At Schneider, we call this Life Is On.

We are a global industrial technology leader bringing world-leading expertise in electrification, automation and digitization to smart industries, resilient infrastructure, future-proof data centers, intelligent buildings, and intuitive homes. Anchored by our deep domain expertise, we provide integrated end-to-end lifecycle AI enabled Industrial IoT solutions with connected products, automation, software and services, delivering digital twins to enable profitable growth for our customers.

We are a people company with an ecosystem of 150,000 colleagues and more than a million partners operating in over 100 countries to ensure proximity to our customers and stakeholders. We embrace diversity and inclusion in everything we do, guided by our meaningful purpose of a sustainable future for all.

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