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## MEDIA RELEASE

### **Walmart Launches Global Women's Economic Empowerment Initiative**

*Effort Will Provide Opportunity for Hundreds of Thousands of Women around the World*

**BENTONVILLE, Ark., September 14, 2011** – Walmart President and CEO Mike Duke today launched a major initiative that will use the company's global size and scale to help empower women across its supply chain. Working over the past year with leaders from government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), philanthropic groups and academia, Walmart's Global Women's Economic Empowerment Initiative will accomplish five goals by the end of 2016:

1. ***Increase sourcing from women-owned businesses.*** Over the next five years, the company will source \$20 billion from women-owned businesses in the U.S. and double sourcing from women suppliers internationally.
2. ***Empower women on farms and in factories through training, market access and career opportunities.*** New programs will help 60,000 women working in factories that supply products to Walmart and other retailers develop the skills they need to become more active decision-makers in their jobs and for their families. The initiative will also help women farm workers participate more fully in the agriculture supply chain.
3. ***Empower women through job training and education.*** Successful retail training programs will be scaled to help 200,000 women internationally. In the U.S., Walmart will help 200,000 women from low-income households gain job skills and access higher education.
4. ***Increase gender diversity among major suppliers.*** In markets around the world, the company will require major professional service firms and merchandise suppliers with over \$1 billion in sales to increase women and minority representation on Walmart accounts.
5. ***Make significant philanthropic giving toward women's economic empowerment.*** The company will support these programs with more than \$100 million in grants that drive progress against key goals. Funding will come from the Walmart Foundation and donations directly from Walmart's international businesses.

"Helping more women live better is a defining issue for our business and our world," said Duke. "We're stepping up our efforts to help educate, source from and open markets for women around the world. We want them to view us as a retailer that is relevant to them and cares about them. We want them to be leading suppliers, managers and loyal customers."

Walmart is putting to work the same model for making a difference that it has used to take on big issues like hunger, healthy foods and sustainability. In doing so, it will partner with an array of leaders in this area, including CARE, Vital Voices, Count Me In, WBENC and We Connect International.

"Walmart's global women's initiative has the potential to be a game-changer for women and for economic growth," said Melanne Verveer, U.S. Ambassador at Large for Global Women's Issues. "By tapping its core competencies as a global retailer, Walmart will empower more women to access

markets and develop careers in the global supply chain, transforming their lives and the lives of their families.”

“This effort recognizes the untapped power of women around the world and CARE is honored to partner with Walmart on this groundbreaking initiative,” said Helene Gayle, president and CEO, CARE. “Together we can sustainably and dramatically improve the lives of hundreds of thousands of women – factory workers and farmers among them. Together we will see these women change the lives of their families and communities for the better. We congratulate Walmart for taking this bold step forward.”

The company has also established country-specific goals and commitments in markets where it operates. For example, over the next five years:

- **Walmart China** is helping women farmers make their agricultural operations more sustainable and productive through its direct farm program.
- **Walmart India** is providing retail skills training and career development to women through its Bharti Walmart Training Center.
- **Walmart Brazil** is hiring women construction workers to help build its new stores and provide job opportunities for women in Sao Paulo.
- **Walmart Global Sourcing** is launching a program to improve the lives of women factory workers in Bangladesh, India and other key sourcing markets.
- **Walmart in Central America** is helping female suppliers grow their business through programs like Una Mano para Crecer (A Hand to Grow).

Leslie Dach, Walmart’s executive vice president of Corporate Affairs, discussed the company’s approach to women’s economic empowerment.

“We do not believe that a company has to choose between being a successful business and a responsible one,” he said. “We have a model for making a difference that works. When we combine the Walmart model with women’s empowerment, we have an incredible opportunity to make a difference on the big challenges facing our world.”

For additional details on Walmart’s Women’s Economic Empowerment Initiative, visit [www.walmartstores.com/women](http://www.walmartstores.com/women).

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#### **About Walmart**

Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. (NYSE: WMT) serves customers and members more than 200 million times per week at over 9,600 retail units under 69 different banners in 28 countries. With fiscal year 2011 sales of \$419 billion, Walmart employs 2.1 million associates worldwide. Walmart continues to be a leader in sustainability, corporate philanthropy and employment opportunity. Additional information about Walmart can be found by visiting <http://walmartstores.com> and on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/walmart>. Online merchandise sales are available at <http://www.walmart.com> and <http://www.samsclub.com>.

**Issued by Brunswick on behalf of Walmart/Massmart**

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