

# Merck Partners with African First Ladies Organization to Implement Merck Foundation's Programs in their Countries

*Merck commits to Long-term Partnership with African First Ladies Organization through Merck Foundation*

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA, February 12, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- • Marking the "World Cancer Day" at African Union Assembly, [Merck Foundation](#) pledges to continue their commitment to provide oncology fellowship program across Africa in partnership with African First Ladies.

Merck Foundation, a non-profit organization and a subsidiary of Merck KGaA Germany, signs Memorandum of understanding -MoU with the African First Ladies Organization with the aim to achieve the objectives of raising awareness, building professional capacity and improving healthcare access in the field of Cancer and fertility care in Africa.

Merck Foundation has conducted many educational and fellowship programs in Africa since 2012 in the field of non-communicable diseases through Merck Cancer Access Program, Merck capacity Advancement Program, Merck STEM Program, and Merck more than a Mother campaign.

Dr. Rasha Kelej, CEO Merck Foundation emphasized during the signing event, "We are delighted to partner with the African First Ladies Organization, to build health capacity and improve healthcare access in the field of cancer and fertility care, Merck Foundation dedicate majority of their efforts to build healthcare capacity in Africa and developing countries and with this



Dr. Rasha Kelej, CEO Merck Foundation with H.E. Madam Roman Tesfaye, the First Lady of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Chairperson of African First Ladies Organization during the MoU signing event at The African Union Assembly, Ethiopia



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partnership, we will be able to achieve our vision of a world where everyone can lead a healthy and fulfilling life.”

The MOU aims to raise awareness optimally about the prevention, management, and de-stigmatization of infertility and cancer in women. It will also aim to build professional capacity and improve access to fertility and cancer care in cooperation with the African First Ladies in their countries.

In 2017 alone, MF initiated the following activities in partnership with academia, ministries of health and the offices of First Ladies in more than 35 countries:

**Merck Cancer Access Program:** Over 30 African physicians received Oncology Fellowship programs spanning one to two years, with the aim to help increase the limited number of oncologists in Africa.

**Merck more than a Mother:** More than 40 candidates received three-month clinical training to be embryologists and fertility specialists in Africa and Asia to improve quality, regulated and safe fertility care in developing countries.

**Merck Diabetes and Hypertension Awards:** Over 50 medical postgraduates will receive a one-year online diploma in diabetes or preventive cardiovascular medicines, as part of the effort to establish a platform of diabetes and hypertension experts in Africa and Asia.

The Merck Foundation upholds its commitment to building capacity and improving access to quality and equitable healthcare solutions with special focus on cancer and fertility care in Africa. So far, doctors from Uganda, Zambia, Ethiopia, Namibia, Tanzania, Ghana, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Botswana, Liberia, Rwanda, Kenya, Chad, Niger, Guinea, Gambia, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Nepal have benefitted from Merck Foundation programs. Merck Foundation aims to expand to more African and Asian countries in the near future.

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(L-R) H.E. Madam Sia Koroma, First Lady, Sierra Leone, H.E. First Lady of the Republic of The Gambia, Madame Fatoumattah Bah-Barrow and H.E. First Lady of Lesotho Madame Maesaiah Thabane and Dr. Rasha Kelej, CEO Merck Foundation

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