

Merck Foundation and Uganda Ministry of Health continue their support for the Heroines of 'Merck More Than a Mother'

Merck Foundation evaluates the economic and social impact of 'Merck More Than a Mother' program on infertile women groups in Uganda.

KAMPALA, UGANDA, February 19, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Merck Foundation](#), a non-profit organization and a subsidiary of Merck KGaA Germany, and Uganda Ministry of Health continue their commitment towards childless women through "[Merck More than a Mother](#)" campaign in the heart of Africa. Merck Foundation evaluated the social and economic impact of 'Merck More Than a Mother' on childless women in Uganda and encouraged them to continue leading an independent and happier life.

In 2016, Merck Foundation in partnership with Uganda Ministry of Health had started 'Merck More Than a Mother' Campaign in the country with the aim to raise awareness about infertility prevention and management, build fertility care capacity and break the stigma around infertile women. They established various income generating projects to support infertile women across the country with the aim of empowering them socially and economically. The business set by Merck Foundation has benefitted over 800 women across Uganda.

"The childless women groups we created in each village are doing a great job. I remember last year they had no purpose in life, no respect from their community and no source of income. Today they have a bank account and a steady monthly income; now they are much happier and stronger." Explained Dr. Rasha Kelej, CEO Merck Foundation.



Dr. Rasha Kelej, CEO Merck Foundation with the heroines of 'Merck More Than a Mother' in Uganda.



Dr. Rasha Kelej, CEO Merck Foundation and Hon. Sarah Opendi, Minister of State of Health, Uganda addressing the community in Uganda

“For me, it’s essential to frequently visit ‘Merck More Than a Mother’ heroines across Africa to influence their transformation. The base of change in these villages is remarkable, and with our efforts and passion this change will be sustainable.” She further emphasized.

During the event, Hon. Sarah Opendi, Minister of State of Health, Uganda said, “The journey that Merck Foundation has started is a very special journey that has touched the lives of women who have been forgotten in the communities. It has touched not only women but also the lives of men who have been mistreating their women thinking that infertility is an issue of women, not know that 50% infertility is due to the malefactor. I want to thank Merck Foundation for thinking about these women.”



Dr. Rasha Kelej, CEO Merck Foundation and Hon. Sarah Opendi, Minister of State of Health, Uganda with ‘Merck More Than a Mother’ Heroines

"I feel grateful and honored to be a part of the joy and happiness of these amazing women, who suffered the infertility stigma all their lives. I am glad that the efforts of 'Merck More Than a Mother' paid off. Now, these women are independent and getting the respect and support they deserved from the community." Dr. Rasha Kelej added.

About ‘Merck More Than a Mother’ campaign; In many Cultures, childless women suffer discrimination, stigma, and ostracism. Their inability to have children results in great isolation, disinheritance, and assaults. “Merck More Than a Mother” empowers such women through the access to information, health, change of mindsets and economic empowerment.

Merck Foundation provided for more than 40 candidates, three months to six months clinical and practical training for fertility specialists and embryologists in more than 15 countries across Africa and Asia.

Merck Foundation is making history in many African countries where they never had fertility specialists or training facilities before ‘Merck More Than a Mother’ intervention, to train the first fertility specialists such as; in Sierra Leone, Liberia, The Gambia, Niger, Chad, and Guinea.

Merck Foundation plan supported the establishment of the first public IVF in Ethiopia through providing the clinical and practical training necessary for their staff. Merck Foundation also plans to support the establishment of the first public IVF in Tanzania soon.

Over 1,200 infertile women in Kenya, Uganda, Nigeria, Ghana, Tanzania, CAR, Ethiopia, Liberia, Tanzania, Niger, The Gambia and Cote D’Ivoire who can no longer be treated have been empowered socially and economically to lead independent and happier lives through “Empowering Berna.”

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