

Merck Foundation marks 'International Women's Day' with the First Lady of Niger

Merck Foundation, in partnership with the First Lady of Niger builds healthcare capacity in the country with special focus on Cancer, Diabetes and Infertility.

NIAMEY, NIGER, March 8, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- •[Merck Foundation](#) appoints the First Lady of Niger, as an Ambassador of Merck More than a Mother.

Merck launches their Merck Foundation in Niger in partnership with the First Lady of Niger and their Ministry of Health. During the launch event Merck Foundation, a non-profit organization and a subsidiary of Merck KGaA Germany, marks 'International women's Day' in Niger to empower infertile women through "Merck More Than a Mother" campaign.

During the event, Prof. Frank Stangenberg-Haverkamp, Chairman of the Executive Board of E.Merck KG and the Chairman of Merck Foundation Board of Trustees emphasized, " We are very proud to launch our Merck Foundation in partnership with the First Lady of Niger and Ministry of Health to build healthcare capacity, improve access to Cancer and Diabetes care and to empower infertile women in the country."

Dr. Rasha Kelej CEO of Merck Foundation explained, "We are very proud to appoint H.E. Mrs. Aissata Issoufou Mahamadou, the First Lady of The Republic of Niger, as an ambassador of 'Merck More Than a Mother' campaign, to work closely with Merck Foundation in defining interventions to break the stigma around childless women across the country. Through our



Prof. Frank Stangenberg-Haverkamp, Chairman of the Executive Board of E.Merck KG and the Chairman of Merck Foundation Board of Trustees and Dr. Rasha Kelej, CEO of Merck Foundation with Her Excellency, the First Lady of Niger, H.E. Mrs. Aissata Issoufou



Prof. Frank Stangenberg-Haverkamp, Chairman of the Executive Board of E.Merck KG and the Chairman of Merck Foundation Board of Trustees and Dr. Rasha Kelej, CEO of Merck Foundation with the President of the Republic of Niger H.E. Mahamadou Issoufou

partnership, we will transform the lives of those unprivileged women, women who suffered all their lives from the Infertility stigma.”

Her Excellency, the First Lady of Niger, H.E. Mrs. Aissata Issoufou Mahamadou emphasized, “I truly value our partnership with Merck Foundation. I firmly believe that building professional capacity is a good strategy to help our government to improve access to healthcare in our country. I will also work closely with Merck foundation to break the stigma around infertility at all levels by raising awareness, training the skills of local experts and by supporting childless women in starting their small businesses.”



Merck Foundation underscoring their long-term commitment to building healthcare capacity in Niger with the President of the Republic of Niger H.E. Mahamadou Issoufou

She added "Currently, we don't have any oncologist or fertility specialists in Niger, we even do not have cancer care facility and fertility clinic in the country. Merck Foundation makes history in the Niger, through its 'Merck Oncology Fellowship Program' and 'Merck More Than a Mother'. They will provide training to the first oncologists and fertility specialists for Niger.

“As per the information received from the Ministry of Health, for 22 Million population Niger has only six oncologists, one hematologist, and 12 radiotherapists. This gap is of course not enough to give proper access to quality and equitable cancer care across the country. We hope we can significantly increase the number of oncologists in the next three years.” Rasha Kelej added

Merck Foundation is committed to providing one-year to two-years Oncology Fellowship Programs and Clinical Fertility Management Training to four candidates from Niger in 2018 and is determined to provide training to more candidates in the future.

Moreover, Merck Foundation is committed to contributing toward advancing Diabetes Care in Niger, by providing online Diabetes Management Diploma in the French language, for medical postgraduates in Niger and other Francophone African countries, so that they can learn more about diagnosis and treatment of diabetes. The course is accredited by 'Royal college for general practitioners' in the UK.

About Merck Foundation in Niger:

Merck Foundation is going to provide the oncology and clinical fertility training to the following healthcare professional from Niger:

Oncology

1. Dr. Mamadou Oumarou Ramatou- Adult medical oncology
2. Dr. Mahamadou Aichatou- Paediatric Oncology
3. Dr. Alhousseini Alhassane Laila- Radiation oncology
4. Dr. Moussa Soffo Issa- Radiation technician

Clinical Fertility Management Training

1. Dr. Abdoulaye Maiga
2. Dr. Barkire Fatoumatou
3. Dr. Lawali Chekarao Mamadou.

So far, candidates 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's training programs in fertility or oncology fellowships. Merck Foundation aims to expand to more African and Asian countries soon.

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