

Merck Foundation met the First Lady of Kenya to underscore their commitment to build healthcare capacity in the country

NAIROBI, KENYA, May 17, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Merck Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Merck KGaA Germany underscored their commitment to build healthcare capacity in Kenya during a high level meeting held at the State House between The First Lady of Kenya, H.E. MADAM MARGARET KENYATTA and Dr. Rasha Kelej, CEO of Merck Foundation.

The First Lady of Kenya, H.E. MADAM MARGARET KENYATTA emphasized, "It was an honor and to meet and hold talks with the Chief Executive Officer of Merck Foundation, Dr. Rasha Kelej. I am looking forward to partnering in the training of more oncologists and experts in diabetes and infertility management, as well as in @BeyondZeroKenya."

<https://twitter.com/firstladykenya/status/1125806759933829121?s=21>

Dr. Rasha Kelej, CEO of Merck Foundation and President, Merck More Than a Mother explained, "I am proud and elated to meet Her Excellency The First Lady of Kenya, MADAM MARGARET KENYATTA to discuss Merck Foundation's commitment to improve the health and wellbeing of people of Kenya by improving access to quality and equitable healthcare in the country by training more doctors in the fields of Fertility, Cancer and Diabetes care through nationwide programs. Also, to work closely to break the stigma of infertility in Kenya and other African countries."

About Merck Foundation in Kenya:



Dr. Rasha Kelej, CEO of Merck Foundation and President, Merck More Than a Mother with The First Lady of Kenya, H.E. MADAM MARGARET KENYATTA at the State House, Nairobi, Kenya



Dr. Rasha Kelej, CEO of Merck Foundation and President, Merck More Than a Mother during the meeting with The First Lady of Kenya, H.E. MADAM MARGARET KENYATTA at the State House, Nairobi, Kenya

Merck Foundation launched 'Empowering Bena' project under the flagship global program 'Merck More than a Mother' in Africa to help childless and infertile women starting their own business and thus achieve financial independence and become stronger and happier. The project has benefited more than 100 women across Kenya.

Merck Foundation has provided embryology training on fertility specialty to Kenyan doctors in the past two years and will continue this program to improve access to quality and equitable fertility care in the country.

Merck Foundation has developed two-year oncology fellowship program in partnership with University of Nairobi, Kenya to improve cancer care in the country. Merck foundation has enrolled six doctors and will continue to enroll more in the next five years with the aim to build cancer care capacity nationwide.

Merck Foundation has also provided eight Kenyan doctors with one year diabetes and hypertension diploma and will continue to enroll more doctors from all counties in collaboration with local governments in the next five years through their nationwide Merck Foundation Diabetes blue points project in Kenya.

Moreover, Merck Foundation also provided first ever Health Media Training to more than 150 journalists from different part of Kenya to benefit in understanding the infertility issue in African communities and to learn the best media practices to cover such issues and raise awareness by following international standards of reporting and media ethics.

Merck Foundation also partnered with local singers to produce songs to address infertility stigma and empower infertile women in their communities. The songs were produced by Octopizzo and Suzan.

About 'Merck More Than a Mother' campaign;

"Merck More Than a Mother" initiative aims to empower infertile women through access to information, education and health and by changing mind-sets. This powerful initiative supports governments in defining policies to enhance access to regulated, safe and effective fertility care. It defines interventions to break the stigma around infertile women and raises awareness about infertility prevention and management. In partnership with academia, ministries of health and international fertility societies, the initiative also provides medical education and training for healthcare providers and embryologists to build and advance fertility care capacity in Africa and developing countries.

With "Merck More than a mother", we have initiated a cultural shift to de-stigmatize infertility on all levels: By improving awareness, training the skills of local experts, building advocacy in cooperation with decision makers and by supporting childless women in starting their own small business. It's all about giving every woman the respect and the help she deserves to live a fulfilling life, with or without a child.

The Ambassadors of "Merck More Than a Mother" are: H.E. NEO JANE MASISI, The First Lady of Botswana; H.E DENISE NKURUNZIZA, The First Lady of Burundi; H.E. BRIGITTE TOUADERA, The First Lady of Central African Republic; H.E. HINDA DEBY ITNO, The First Lady of Chad; H.E.



Dr. Rasha Kelej, CEO of Merck Foundation and President, Merck More Than a Mother with The First Lady of Kenya, H.E. MADAM MARGARET KENYATTA

ANTOINETTE SASSOU-NGUESSO, The First Lady of Congo; H.E. REBECCA AKUFO-ADDO, The First Lady of Ghana; H.E. FATOUMATTA BAH-BARROW, The First Lady of The Gambia; H.E. CONDÉ DJENE, The First Lady of Guinea Conakry; H.E. CLAR WEAH, The First Lady of Republic of Liberia; H.E. PROFESSOR GERTRUDE MUTHARIKA, The First Lady of Malawi; H.E. MARIAM MINT AHMAD TEKBER, The First lady of the Mauritania; H.E. DR. ISAURA FERRÃO NYUSI, The First Lady of Mozambique; H.E AÏSSATA ISSOUFOU MAHAMADO, The First Lady of Niger; H.E FATIMA MAADA, The First Lady of Sierra Leone; H.E. AUXILLIA MNANGAGW, The First Lady of Zimbabwe; H.E. ESTHER LUNGU, The First Lady of Zambia.

Also, part of the campaign is our Merck Embryology & Fertility Training Program, a three-month hands-on practical course in partnership with IRSI, Indonesia, IRRH, India and Manipal Academy of Higher Education (Manipal University), India to establish the platform of fertility specialists across Africa and developing countries. Merck Foundation provided for more than 109 candidates, in clinical and practical training for fertility specialists and embryologists in more than 30 countries across Africa and Asia such as: Chad, Niger, Central African Republic, Cote D'Ivoire , Ghana, Ethiopia , Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania , Zambia , Nigeria, Benin, Mali, Burkina Fuso, Senegal, Guinea Conakry, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Cameroon, Rwanda, Botswana, DR Congo , Congo Brazzaville, Gambia , Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Cambodia.

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

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