

# Merck Foundation & First Lady Of Burundi release “Plus Qu’une Mere” an empowering song to all infertile women in Africa

BUJUMBURA, BURUNDI, June 15, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Merck Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Merck KGaA Germany together with The First lady of Burundi and her foundation, Buntu Foundation, released an empowering song, a theme song for Merck more than a Mother campaign as a courtesy to all infertile women in Burundi and Africa. “The objective of the song is to break the stigma around infertility in Africa and rest of the world as part of Merck more than a Mother community awareness campaign”, said Dr. Rasha Kelej CEO of Merck Foundation and President of Merck more than a Mother.

The song has been composed by Merck More Than a Mother Song Award winners, a very talented band from Burundi Dr. Rasha Kelej emphasizes, “I thank my sister H.E. MADAM DENISE NKURUNZIZA, The First Lady of Burundi and Ambassador of Merck More Than a Mother for her creativity. This beautiful French Song “Plus Qu’une Mere” which mean “More than a Mother” communicates an important message to the society that women are more than just mothers, they are valuable and productive members in society weather they have children or not. It also speaks about the stigma around infertility, gives an important message that fertility is a shared responsibility and men should support women during their treatment journey. It makes me very happy to discover young African talents and work closely with them to create an important culture shift in our societies”.

H.E. MADAM DENISE NKURUNZIZA, The First Lady of Burundi, President of Buntu Foundation and Ambassador of Merck More Than a Mother emphasized “The objective of this song is to empower infertile women in Burundi and send out the message to the entire African community that infertility is not a stigma. It is our contribution towards Merck More Than a Mother, an important campaign by Merck Foundation”. “The song addresses infertility stigma with the aim of raising awareness about male infertility and sensitizing the community that #MenToo can suffer infertility not only women, and call upon every husband to share the journey of infertility treatment with his wife” Dr. Rasha Kelej added.

The band was selected at a special competition held between ten local choir groups from Burundi during the launch of Merck Foundation in Burundi in March 2019. Merck Foundation has been working at all levels to bring in a cultural shift in the African society and has been advocating for the women who aren’t able to bear children against the discrimination, isolation and violence.

Other than this song, Merck Foundation has launched 14 local songs with famous singers from, Ghana, Rwanda, Kenya, Sierra Leone and Gambia to raise awareness about male infertility and to break the Stigma around Infertile women in Africa such as Tom Close from Rwanda for “Life is bigger” song and Sunita from Gambia for “More than a Mother” song. Moreover, H.E. First Lady of Burundi has composed three songs in French, English and Kurundi.

Merck Foundation has worked closely with local singers in Zambia to create songs that address the same issue to sensitize the community with the aim to break the stigma of infertility and empower infertile women. Another project in the pipeline is Pan African song with six singers from six countries of west and east Africa.

Merck Foundation plans to release these songs to all African TV and Radios soon.

“Art has the capacity and influence to make the problem felt, which further stimulates emotions and leads to engagement and action. Hence we used this medium to address the issue of infertility and stigma attached to it. I personally believe that this song will add significant value to influence the culture change we are advocating in Burundi and rest of Africa” concluded Dr. Rasha Kelej.

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. 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, IIRRH, India and Manipal Academy of Higher Education (Manipal University), India to establish the platform of fertility specialists across Africa and developing countries.

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