

Merck launches their Merck Foundation in The Gambia in partnership with The First Lady of The Gambia

Merck Foundation appoints H.E. Fatoumatta Bah Barrow, The First Lady of The Gambia as the ambassador of 'Merck More Than a Mother' campaign in the Gambia

BANJUL, THE GAMBIA, February 27, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- • Merck Foundation(MF) in partnership with the First Lady of The Gambia through her foundation; Fatoumatta Bah Barrow(FaBB) Foundation launched 'Merck More Than a Mother' campaign in the Gambia

- Merck Foundation provides oncology fellowship program to develop the first medical oncologists in The Gambia

Merck Foundation partners with the First Lady of The Gambia Foundation; Fatoumatta Bah Barrow (FaBB) foundation. The partnership aims to achieve Merck foundation's objectives of raising awareness, building professional capacity and improving healthcare access in the field of Cancer and fertility care in The Gambia.

Merck Foundation appointed the H.E Fatoumatta Bah-Barrow, the First Lady of The Gambia as an ambassador of 'Merck More Than a Mother' campaign in The Gambia.

"It was a great honor to appoint the First Lady of The Gambia, Her Excellency Fatoumatta Bah-Barrow Foundation as an ambassador of 'Merck More Than a Mother' campaign. Together we acknowledged and encouraged infertile women groups across the country for their courage to share their stories of suffering from infertility stigma. They are 'Merck More Than a Mother' Heroines. I am thrilled and proud to be part of this great day." emphasized, Dr. Rasha Kelej, CEO of Merck Foundation and President of Merck more than a Mother.



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During the event the First Lady of the Gambia, H.E. Fatoumatta Bah-Barrow explained, “We are engaging in humanitarian ventures to improve the lives of vulnerable groups in the society. My ambition is to meaningfully contribute to the improvement of lives of women and children and address issue of infertility in our society.”

She further emphasized, “Our partnership with Merck Foundation aims at empowering infertile women in The Gambia and ensure that they access information, education and health services by collectively working with stakeholders, communities, traditional communicators, religious leader and healthcare workers. With the support of Merck Foundation, the government is adopting important policies to enhance access and regulate safe fertility treatment.”



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Merck Foundation is making history in The Gambia, together with the Ministry of Health and the First Lady’s Foundation, we will train the first oncologist and fertility specialist in the country. According to the Ministry of Health data, The Gambia never had an oncologist or a Fertility Specialist, neither they had a cancer care facility or a fertility clinic in the country.

“I am very proud that Merck Foundation is contributing to shaping the future of The Gambia by working closely with the First Lady, a wonderful lady. She is very passionate about improving healthcare in her beloved country.” Dr. Rasha Kelej CEO of Merck Foundation and president of Merck more than a Mother.

In Africa including The Gambia, childless women still suffer discrimination, stigma, and ostracism. An inability to have a child or to become pregnant can result in significant isolation, disinheritance or assaults; this often results in divorce or physical and psychological violence.

During the community program, many infertile women from the community have been acknowledged by both Merck Foundation and the FaBB for their courage to share their sad tales of their suffering from infertility stigma, and ostracism by the society and their families.

Applauding the courage of these infertile women, Dr. Rasha Kelej said, “Merck Foundation salutes these infertile women in The Gambia, who shared their stories of suffering and discrimination. H.E. Fatoumatta Bah-Barrow, the First Lady of The Gambia and myself, appreciate these strong women and encourage them to establish their own business and become independent. I’m very proud of our movement in The Gambia and the rest of Africa.”

The Merck Foundation also commit to support The Gambia through providing their oncology fellowship program to establish their first training oncologists in the country, First Lady of The Gambia emphasized, “Merck foundation helps us to make history in The Gambia; we will have in the next two years our first oncologists and fertility specialists in the country. This will help improve access to Fertility and cancer care significantly as currently, we do not have both specialties, we do not even have cancer care facility in The Gambia.”

The Merck Foundation also maintains its commitment to building capacity and improving access to quality and equitable healthcare solutions with particular 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 training programs in fertility or oncology fellowships. Merck Foundation aims to expand to more African and Asian countries in the near future.

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