

Dr. Rasha Kelej meets the First Lady of Kenya to build healthcare capacity in the country

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Merck Foundation CEO, Dr Rasha Kelej has met the First Lady of Kenya, H.E. MADAM MARGARET KENYATTA to discuss partnership opportunities with aim to build healthcare capacity in the fields of Oncology, fertility and diabetes through nationwide programs.

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."

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 improving 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."

Merck Foundation launched 'Empowering Berna' 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.

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Merck Foundation has developed a two-year oncology fellowship program in partnership with the University of Nairobi, Kenya

to improve cancer care in the country. Merck Foundation has enrolled six doctors and will continue to enrol 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 enrol 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.