

News Release

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Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany and the Royal Health Awareness Society Partner to Advance Women's Health in Jordan

- **New partnership under Healthy Women, Healthy Economies initiative facilitates women to overcome health barriers to economic participation**

Darmstadt, Germany, September 22, 2016 – Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, a leading science and technology company, today announced its partnership with the Royal Health Awareness Society (RHAS) of Jordan to advance health awareness and education particularly on thyroid disease amongst Jordanian women. Women are five to eight times more likely to suffer from thyroid disorders than men¹. This memorandum of understanding and its resulting policies, which has been signed today, will support women's health and well-being in Jordan, helping women to be more active participants in their local economies.

"We are excited about our new partnership with Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, which opens new horizons for RHAS to scale up and expand its outreach with a particular focus on women," Hanin Odeh, Director General of RHAS, commented on the signing. "Through this initiative, we are not only helping women look after the health of their children and families better, but more importantly, ensuring that women are looking after their *own* health. No doubt, if women are not healthy, we are jeopardizing our country's potential on various levels. We are glad that we could benefit from Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, experience in this area, and adapt scientific and tested approaches, towards a healthier Jordan."

The memorandum is part of the global [Healthy Women, Healthy Economies](#) initiative, an innovative public-private partnership that explicitly links the issue of women's health and well-being with economic growth. The partnership will focus on

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developing a thyroid awareness campaign through expanding the Healthy Community Clinic program under RHAS' umbrella. This campaign aims to reach patients, most of whom are women, and health practitioners to promote healthy lifestyles, raise awareness on the importance of diagnosis and treatment of thyroid disease, and it will lay the ground work for further programs addressing other non-communicable diseases that disproportionately affect women.

"Advocating for better health, and especially women's health, creates a ripple effect uplifting entire families, communities and future generations. We are proud to partner with RHAS to expand the Healthy Women, Healthy Economies initiative into Jordan. When women do better, communities become stronger and this reflects favourably on economies," said Belén Garijo, Member of the Executive Board and CEO Healthcare at Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany.

This memorandum is now the second of its kind signed by Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany under the program, following a 2015 partnership with the Philippine Department of Health and Philippine Thyroid Association. Healthy Women, Healthy Economies is an innovative public-private partnership under the auspices of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation, Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, and the U.S. and Philippine governments that explicitly links the issue of women's health and well-being with economic growth. Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany pursues three strategic spheres of corporate responsibility, namely health, environment and culture. Healthy Women, Healthy Economies brings to life Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany's heritage of corporate responsibility and long-term vision to tackle big issues in health, like gender equality in the workforce and access to high-quality health solutions.

Healthy Women, Healthy Economies brings together the evidence about women's health and well-being and its impact on economic growth with the best practices that governments, employers and non-governmental organizations can follow. It aims to identify and implement policies that advance women's health and well-being to increase their economic participation in the societies they live in.

References

1. According to the American Thyroid Association <http://bit.ly/1X9oSBf>

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About RHAS

The Royal Health Awareness Society was established in 2005 under the direction of Her Majesty Queen Rania Al-Abdullah to promote health awareness and to empower Jordanians to adopt healthy lifestyles and behaviors. To achieve its mission, RHAS adopts a comprehensive approach, through implementing preventative public health and safety programs based on the right to health for all, targeting school children, youth and the community at large.

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