



NEWS RELEASE

Merck and the Mectizan Donation Program Donate \$1 Million to the END Fund for Efforts to Help Eliminate River Blindness in Africa

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Since 1987 Merck Has Donated More than Two Billion Treatments of Mectizan to Help Eliminate River Blindness and Lymphatic Filariasis

Merck (NYSE:MRK), known as MSD outside the United States and Canada, announced today that the company, together with the Mectizan Donation Program, is donating \$1 million to the END Fund in support of efforts in Africa to eliminate river blindness, which is also known as onchocerciasis. Today's donation will enable participating countries to prepare for a period of post-treatment surveillance that is needed before an application can be submitted to the World Health Organization (WHO) for official elimination verification status. Efforts to eliminate river blindness are aligned with WHO's Roadmap on Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs), which calls for elimination of river blindness in selected countries in Africa by 2020. While three countries in Latin America have already received WHO verification of elimination of river blindness, no countries in Africa have yet achieved this goal.

"Merck has worked with our partners for nearly three decades to make Mectizan (ivermectin) available, free of charge, to all those afflicted by river blindness," said Kenneth C. Frazier, chairman and chief executive officer, Merck. "It is an honor to present this donation to the END Fund today alongside Dr. William Campbell, the retired Merck parasitologist who shared the 2015 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for his discoveries that led to the development of Mectizan."

"The END Fund is proud to partner with Merck on this critical next step toward the end of river blindness," said Ellen Agler, CEO of the END Fund. "Merck's long-standing commitment to elimination efforts is further bolstered by their

thoughtful investment. Through innovative public-private partnerships coupled with country-led programs, millions of the most vulnerable people will no longer have to worry about the devastating effects of this disease. The END Fund is grateful for Merck's collaborative leadership and we look forward to others joining us, with the hope for continued momentum building towards elimination."

River blindness is a parasitic infection that can cause intense itching, skin discoloration, rashes, and eye disease that often leads to permanent blindness. Common in many parts of Africa, Latin America and in Yemen, it is spread by the bites of infected black flies that breed in rapidly flowing rivers in the affected countries. Through decades of effort by a range of partners led by WHO's African Program for Onchocerciasis Control (APOC), the transmission of new cases of river blindness in Africa has been greatly reduced. In many countries it is suspected that transmission has been completely eliminated.

About the Mectizan Donation Program

The Mectizan Donation Program is the longest-running, disease-specific, drug-donation program and public-private partnership of its kind. In 1998, Merck expanded the program to include the elimination of another disease, lymphatic filariasis. The program reaches more than 250 million people in the affected areas annually, with more than 2 billion treatments donated since 1987.

About the END Fund

The END Fund is the world's first private philanthropic initiative to combat the five most common neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) that, together, cause up to 90% of the NTD burden in sub-Saharan Africa. Supported by a group of global philanthropists, the END Fund provides financing for nationwide disease control initiatives, creating new programs, supplementing existing ones, and using leveraged funds to extend and deepen the impact. The END Fund provides exceptional return on investment by harnessing the highly scalable impact of low-cost mass drug administrations. www.end.org.

About Merck

Today's Merck is a global health care leader working to help the world be well. Merck is known as MSD outside the United States and Canada. Through our prescription medicines, vaccines, biologic therapies and animal health products, we work with customers and operate in more than 140 countries to deliver innovative health solutions. We also demonstrate our commitment to increasing access to health care through far-reaching policies, programs and partnerships. For more information, visit www.merck.com and connect with us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

Forward-Looking Statement of Merck & Co., Inc., Kenilworth, N.J., USA

This news release of Merck & Co., Inc., Kenilworth, N.J., USA (the “company”) includes “forward-looking statements” within the meaning of the safe harbor provisions of the U.S. Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These statements are based upon the current beliefs and expectations of the company’s management and are subject to significant risks and uncertainties. If underlying assumptions prove inaccurate or risks or uncertainties materialize, actual results may differ materially from those set forth in the forward-looking statements.

Risks and uncertainties include but are not limited to, general industry conditions and competition; general economic factors, including interest rate and currency exchange rate fluctuations; the impact of pharmaceutical industry regulation and health care legislation in the United States and internationally; global trends toward health care cost containment; technological advances, new products and patents attained by competitors; challenges inherent in new product development, including obtaining regulatory approval; the company’s ability to accurately predict future market conditions; manufacturing difficulties or delays; financial instability of international economies and sovereign risk; dependence on the effectiveness of the company’s patents and other protections for innovative products; and the exposure to litigation, including patent litigation, and/or regulatory actions.

The company undertakes no obligation to publicly update any forward-looking statement, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise. Additional factors that could cause results to differ materially from those described in the forward-looking statements can be found in the company’s 2015 Annual Report on Form 10-K and the company’s other filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) available at the SEC’s Internet site (www.sec.gov).

For Media:

Jennifer Allen Woodruff, 267-305-3550

or

Lainie Keller, 908-236-5036

or

For Investors:

Teri Loxam, 908-740-1986

or

Justin Holko, 908-740-1879