Alain Barry – Managing Director, MSD Morocco

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Alain Barry, managing director of MSD in Morocco, shares how the organization is partnering with the Moroccan healthcare community to ensure that patients have access to innovative therapies and vaccines.

Could you start by introducing the importance of the Moroccan affiliate within the Middle East and Africa (EMA) region?

MSD has been present in Morocco for over 50 years and today the Moroccan affiliate encompasses most parts of biopharmaceutical activities (manufacturing, distribution and promotion). In addition, the team based in our Casablanca office has been supporting our activities in North and sub-Saharan Africa through shared services and regional functions.

What strategic priorities did you put in place when you became MD of Morocco in August 2018?

MSD was launching many therapeutic innovations in Morocco at that time, in particular our flagship immuno-oncology therapy. The priority then was to ensure that this breakthrough therapy would reach as many patients as fast as possible. This meant building the right team and ensuring all elements were in place from a logistical, pricing, scientific and regulatory standpoint to accelerate

product availability in the Kingdom. In addition, several functions within our organization have been consolidated and their capabilities reinforced to support the development of our portfolio in the field of Oncology, Vaccines, Antibiotics, Diabetes, Anesthesia.

Over the last two decades, Morocco has made a lot of advances in combatting viral diseases through vaccination programs. How is MSD partnering with authorities in the field of vaccination?

Morocco has been a pioneer in the region in the field of immunization by introducing innovative vaccines in the national immunization program and by achieving very high coverage rates.

For the past decade, MSD has been active in the area of cervical cancer prevention. Our teams have been collaborating with the healthcare community to help tackle this problem. It is important to note that there is a high unmet medical need, with cervical cancer being the second most frequent cancer among Moroccan women.

The arsenal against cervical cancer includes primary, secondary prevention and treatment. In Morocco a tremendous effort has been made by the Lalla Salma Foundation to ensure proper screening of women, and many centres have been established to provide patients with diagnostics and treatment. The next step was to ensure the inclusion of the HPV vaccine in the national immunization program. Health Authorities have recently announced a plan to introduce HPV vaccination in the coming months which will complete the existing arsenal.

Since 2014, MSD has also been partnering with the Moroccan Ministry of Health in the field of rotavirus vaccination.

MSD has been recognized as one of the best places to work in Morocco. What makes MSD Morocco such a great place to work?

Foremost is the opportunity that our company provides to do fulfilling work that is inspired by our shared mission to save and improve lives. And then it is about the environment we create. Our company is renowned globally for creating a culture of wellbeing in the workplace. We run many initiatives locally to drive employee engagement and create a dynamic organization, by promoting work-life balance, healthy behaviours around diet and exercise. In addition, at MSD, we understand that diversity and inclusion are fundamental to our success and key to innovation. We foster this

culture locally.

What would you like to achieve before the end of your tenure in Morocco?

Our mission is to ensure that Moroccan patients have access to our medicines and vaccines.

This challenge can only be tackled if we collaborate across the system with all relevant stakeholders to provide affordable solutions and ensure that there are processes in place to reimburse the innovation we bring. So we will be continuing to collaborate with partners across the health ecosystem (health authorities, the scientific community, payers, industry) to achieve this objective.

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