

# Amro Kandil Managing Director, GE Healthcare Northeast Africa

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*Amro Kandil, managing director of Northeast Africa at GE Healthcare, emphasizes the company's crucial role in improving healthcare in Egypt as part of a long-standing partnership with the Ministry of Health. He also explains why he has established education and after-sales services as two of his priorities leading the regional affiliate.*

### **Having been appointed as managing director for GE Healthcare Northeast Africa in January 2018, can you give an overview of the region?**

The region includes Libya, Sudan and Egypt, so it comes with different challenges in each country. Nevertheless, we are growing our operations in each market, using different strategies. In Libya, we are working with the public and private sectors to successfully install our equipment in hospitals helping patients in need, despite the volatile political situation in the country. We were also awarded the largest private sector project in Sudan in 2018, which is an achievement we are very proud of. Our company is working with partners in both countries, sourcing local talent and providing expertise and training. GE Healthcare is committed to the region, so we see the challenges that Libya, Sudan and Egypt are facing as temporary and an opportunity to improve the healthcare ecosystem in all three countries.

### **As GE Healthcare has been in Egypt for other 40 years, can you outline its footprint in the country?**

GE Healthcare has a huge focus on Africa and Egypt is one of the continent's largest platforms for healthcare, due to its population size and economic growth. Our commitment to the country is evident in our ongoing investment and the affiliate has grown continuously over the last few years. Up to today, GE Healthcare has installed more than 14,000 equipment units across Egypt, in areas such as imaging, cardiology, and oncology, in partnership with both the public and private sectors.

One of our priorities is products of lifecare support, which includes emergency care devices in areas such as anaesthesia or ventilation. Our headquarters have understood that emerging markets like Egypt require a different business approach than developed countries. We have invested in an affordable care product line specialized for markets like Egypt, providing the required service at a reasonable cost. Today, we have 220 employees and a newly established training centre in Cairo. Our ambition is to be closer to the customer and while Cairo is a huge market, nearly 50 percent of the population lives outside the metropolitan area of the capital. Hence, we are also creating jobs in the Delta region, the Nile Valley, the Canal Zone and Upper Egypt, to have a strong local network of expertise and support.

### **What are your priorities?**

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My approach has been to listen to the market first to understand the current needs of patients and clients. When taking over the position, Egypt had just overcome a small recession, so in the first three months, we analyzed how the economic recovery would affect our business and the public and private sectors. We identified a clear need for education and after-sales support in the medtech industry, as it helps customers gain trust in our company.

Hence, GE Healthcare's focus is on providing excellent services in these two areas and we are one of the strongest companies in North East Africa providing after-sales support, with nearly 50 percent service professionals among our local workforce. My priority is to offer clinical education for our customers to maximize their return on investment. It is crucial to know how to use all the options of our machines to serve the patient with one of the best image qualities, which leads to better diagnostics. Overall my goal is to provide continuous education, further improve after-sales services and give our best effort to reach our goals.

**Egypt has many needs with one of the region's highest road injury and fatality rates on the one hand and a rising number of cardiovascular and oncology diseases on the other. How does GE Healthcare approach these challenges?**

The three areas mentioned are of huge importance for us and we are providing solutions for all them through different approaches. In oncology, we have products that provide a good balance between affordability, image quality and stability, as part of a wide range of products that fit different needs. GE Healthcare has invested in the oncology team in Egypt in the last few years, which has resulted in one of the largest market shares in the sector, thanks to the trust customers have in our products and solutions. We have an excellent package offering affordable financing solutions, high-quality products and excellent after-sales support. Education is also a focus for us in oncology, as we bring in top-notch industry speakers and organize workshops for knowledge sharing.

Traumatic care is also a priority for us, simply because road injuries remain a big challenge in Egypt. I am confident that the government will make it a priority to reduce road fatalities in the future, just as they have prioritized healthcare recently. GE Healthcare is offering many mobile solutions in the traumatic area and we have capabilities to train ambulance workers to achieve the most exceptional care possible.

**To ensure excellent treatment, it is essential that physicians and medical staff know the functions of the products very well. How do you ensure that Egyptian healthcare professionals receive the training necessary to use GE's medical devices?**

Ten years ago, GE Healthcare was the first multinational company in Egypt to set up a training centre for government workers to use ultrasound machines in collaboration with the Ministry of Health. This has been a huge success. In February, we inaugurated our first radiology training centre in Egypt, aiming to provide advanced training to medical professionals throughout the country. As a core part of the GE Healthcare Education program, the centre will initially train some 200 radiologists and radiographers on GE Healthcare equipment and will also allow medical students to have hands-on training experience.

**There is strong competition in the field of medical technology, so apart from providing devices, how is GE Healthcare distinguishing itself from its competition**

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Growing the team internally and increasing expertise is fundamental for our performance here in Egypt. Thanks to our people, GE Healthcare is able to provide exceptional after-sales service, as we put ourselves in the customers' shoes. We take customer feedback seriously, so we have improved our technical support on the phone, have many colleagues out on the field to repair products with the shortest response and repair time, all in order to create a great overall customer experience.

**A consumer-driven trend one can see in the medical technology industry seems to be to provide integrated healthcare solutions based on digital technologies rather than just a product. How does GE healthcare position itself towards this trend?**

Digital technology is at the core of the company providing healthcare solutions. These digital solutions include business software to improve cost-effectiveness, clinical and imaging solutions to drive productivity, workflows to foster patient safety, interoperability with other systems, and complete clinical data at the point of care.

By investing in digital solutions and software, GE Healthcare aims to offer customers greater insight and data analysis, so they can make better clinical, operational and financial decisions, and a good example of that is our Enterprise Imaging Solutions -including Centricity PACS with Universal Viewer and Centricity Clinical Archive solution- that help lower IT costs, improve clinician productivity, expand networks of care, and improve workflows.

In addition, Digital Healthcare solutions are intended to be of particular benefit to after-sales services and maintenance, have a team dedicated to managing remote fix maintenance, as 30 percent of maintenance operations are done remotely.

Today, we are not just providing software, it's about doing the right thing, at the right time, for every patient. We call this precision health. Precision health is an approach to health care that is integrated, highly personalized to each patient and reduces waste and inefficiency using machine learning and artificial intelligence.

In March, GE Healthcare Egypt participated in an AI congress in Cairo, which was also co-sponsored by GE Healthcare, in order to increase awareness of this trend and its benefits and how to leverage AI for the Egyptian industry.

**Where do you want to see GE Healthcare Egypt in five years?**

Egypt is a huge land of opportunity, but flexibility is needed to be successful as it is an ever-changing environment.

GE Healthcare is committed to the country to paving the way for improved patient care and creating measurable impact in Egypt. Being the partner of choice of the country is our goal, and we are all working hard to design the next steps, to deliver better outcomes to our partners and provide an exceptional patient experience. From advanced technologies, to service and training, we should look towards a future where precision and individualized healthcare will be provided for all.

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