

# Yaron Spigel – President of the Board & Group CEO, FarmaMondo

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We exist to serve patients for whom no other options are available. That purpose is what drives us, and what defines the way we do business.

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*FarmaMondo's evolution over the past eight years is a compelling case study in what it takes to bring life-saving innovation to the world's most overlooked patients, not through philanthropy but through a commercially sustainable, ethically grounded model. Operating from a Swiss base with deep roots in legal rigour and regulatory trust, the company has quietly built a decentralised infrastructure capable of delivering high-cost therapies to complex, underserved markets.*

**How would you describe the core mission that drives FarmaMondo, and in what ways has this mission influenced the company's transformation over the past eight years?**

FarmaMondo's mission is rooted in a fundamental global imbalance: the enduring lack of access to innovative therapies for patients in emerging markets. This is not a question of scientific limitations or insufficient demand, but of deeply embedded structural inefficiencies in how the pharmaceutical industry commercialises and distributes innovation across geographies. Our role is to bridge that gap, not through charity or compassionate access, but by building a commercially viable model for ethical access. We work closely with small and mid-sized biopharmaceutical companies, offering them a way to reach patients who are otherwise excluded from life-saving treatments available in the United States and the EU5 (France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and the United Kingdom).

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When we took over FarmaMondo, we inherited a company with a long-standing heritage as a Swiss-based pharmaceutical trader, originally founded in 1915 and run by the same family for three generations. Its legacy was always anchored in access, but the time had come to reimagine its relevance within today's global healthcare ecosystem. Our first priority was to establish a meaningful local presence across emerging markets. In our view, access cannot be delivered remotely, particularly when dealing with therapies that can cost upwards of USD 250,000. Physicians and patients alike need to place their trust in a partner that can provide not only the product, but also the medical training, regulatory expertise, funding pathways and compliance clearance that such therapies require. That trust can only be built through direct, in-country engagement.

Over the past eight years, we have systematically developed the infrastructure required to deliver on that promise. This includes building capabilities in regulatory affairs, market access, and medical affairs across the regions we serve, while maintaining a strong and visible headquarters in Switzerland. That dual structure – combining Swiss governance and operational discipline with decentralised, market-facing execution – has become one of our key differentiators. Our access model is built around four core dimensions: Market Access, where we define funding frameworks and unlock hybrid access pathways; Medical Affairs, focused on scientific validation and reactive engagement with key opinion leaders and patient groups; Regulatory Capabilities, blending centralised regulatory intelligence with local execution; and Geographic Reach, anchored in 14 in-country legal entities and last-mile distribution capacity.

Together, these pillars enable our biotech partners to engage through a trusted Swiss platform while winning on two important goals: bring greater access to therapies for patients in some of the world's most complex and fragmented healthcare environments and realize meaningful near-term revenue upside. This model has allowed us to successfully onboard numerous US and European biopharmaceutical companies and bring their assets to market in a way that is both ethically sound and commercially sustainable.

### **What is your approach to building sustainable success across highly diverse emerging markets?**

Achieving success in emerging markets requires more than a structured operational model, it demands a strong sense of purpose, the right people, and a culture of trust and accountability. At FarmaMondo, purpose is the foundation upon which everything else is built. We exist to serve patients for whom no other options exist, those living with debilitating or life-threatening conditions who may never gain access to therapies that are standard elsewhere. These are patients who do not have time to wait years for commercial timelines to align; they need solutions now. That urgency is deeply felt throughout our organisation and serves as a powerful recruitment tool. When I meet someone who understands this mission intuitively, who can already see the patient behind the product, I know they will fit at FarmaMondo. When the alignment is there, the results are transformative, not only for the patients we serve, but for the energy and resilience it generates within our teams.

Leadership, too, plays a central role. I have always believed in giving people ownership, not just over their tasks, but over their judgment. We empower our teams to make decisions, even at the risk of failure, as long as those decisions are made with the patient in mind. Our culture is not one of micromanagement or rigid control. Instead, we cultivate trust and responsibility by asking one simple question: if you were standing in front of the patient, what would they want you to do? This principle has helped us navigate the complex and often unpredictable realities of emerging markets, where regulatory frameworks, funding models, and local expectations differ significantly. There is no

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universal blueprint for access, but with the right people, guided by a common purpose and empowered to lead, we are able to adapt with speed, integrity, and consistency, delivering value where others cannot.

## **How does FarmaMondo identify new expansion opportunities, and why is India emerging as a strategic focus?**

Our expansion strategy is rooted in a pragmatic balance between addressing unmet medical needs and aligning with the access potential of each market. Emerging markets are not a monolith, they vary widely in terms of size, regulation, political stability, and healthcare infrastructure. Having worked across these regions for over a decade, we have built the intuition and operational insight needed to navigate this complexity. We organise our activities across six broad regional clusters – Latin America, Russia & CIS, MENA & Turkiye, Europe (Switzerland, Baltic and Nordic countries), Greater India, and Asia-Pacific – each composed of countries that differ in potential. In some, the conditions are ripe for immediate engagement; in others, we adopt a more measured, phased approach. Our guiding principle remains constant: we do not leave a patient untreated. This is made possible by the flexible infrastructure we have built, regional hubs that enable swift and compliant mobilisation across neighbouring countries. Being physically close to the point of need is not just operationally efficient; it is essential to delivering access responsibly.

India has recently become a central pillar of this strategy. After several years of groundwork – engaging stakeholders, testing demand, and observing the appetite for high-cost therapies – we have formalised our presence with the creation of a dedicated affiliate. India’s scale, both in geographic and demographic terms, makes it uniquely important. Even for rare and orphan indications, the sheer size of the population translates into significant patient numbers. By contrast, markets such as Singapore or Hong Kong may only yield a handful of eligible patients, despite their sophistication. In India, we see not only volume, but momentum. The regulatory and policy environments are maturing, and we observe strong interest across both government and institutional partners to improve care pathways. Our track record in other complex markets gives us confidence in our ability to replicate success. Within two to three years, I believe India will stand as one of our most solid operations, and within five, a key growth driver for FarmaMondo overall.

## **How do you define your portfolio strategy, and what criteria guide your selection of therapeutic areas and assets?**

Early in our journey, we debated whether to focus on a narrow set of therapeutic areas or to build a model capable of addressing a broader range of unmet needs. Given the diversity and fragmentation of emerging markets, we chose the latter. While our portfolio naturally includes rare and ultra-rare indications – particularly in oncology, haematology, and paediatric oncology – it also encompasses areas such as neurology, ophthalmology, dermatology, and speciality care. The common thread is not the disease category, but the scientific quality of the asset and its relevance to patients in the markets we serve. We built FarmaMondo to be a platform for meaningful innovation, not a vehicle for opportunistic product placement.

Our screening process is rigorous by design. We are regularly approached by companies looking to expand into emerging markets, but we move forward only when we are convinced of the therapeutic value and scientific merit of the product. It is not enough for a therapy to be approved in the US or Europe; it must also resonate within the clinical, regulatory, and economic realities of emerging markets.

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This stands in stark contrast to traditional reimbursement-based systems, where insurers, governments, or public funds underwrite the cost. In many of the markets we serve, access is not contingent on inclusion in a national reimbursement list but rather on the patient or family's ability to mobilise the necessary resources. As such, our work is fundamentally different from that of a CRO or early-stage partner. We do not engage in clinical development or regulatory submission processes; rather, we operate downstream — once a product has received regulatory approval from agencies like the FDA or EMA — maximizing access across multiple regulatory pathways to ensure that it reaches patients in regions where access might otherwise be delayed by years or rendered impossible due to operational or commercial complexity.

This dynamic brings with it an even greater ethical imperative: we must be certain that the products we bring into our portfolio are not only scientifically sound but also justifiable, compared to existing therapeutic options, in their total burden on the patient. It places a premium on clear communication, local medical endorsement, and cost-benefit credibility. When we bring a therapy forward, we must be confident it provides significant improvement in patient benefit. This is why innovation, on its own, is not sufficient. It must be grounded in sound science and genuinely improve outcomes. That patient-centric view has always guided our portfolio strategy, and it continues to shape the partnerships we pursue today.

### **What are the organisational and cultural elements that allow FarmaMondo to thrive across such a decentralised international model?**

FarmaMondo may not be large by global standards, but its operational model is highly international and structurally complex. Unlike conventional distribution partners that typically operate within a single country or region, our teams are spread across diverse markets, often working in small, agile units separated by geography, language, and time zones. This presents a unique organisational challenge: how to create unity and consistency in a decentralised environment. We address this by investing deliberately and continuously in our culture. What binds the organisation together is not proximity but purpose, a shared commitment to putting patients first, operating with integrity, and delivering impact in places others often overlook. These principles are not left to interpretation; they are embedded in our communication, our internal systems, and the way we lead. Everyone, regardless of location, must feel connected to something greater than their immediate remit.

The structure we have built places operational capability within the regions, but always with deliberate channels of interaction between headquarters and local teams, and across regions themselves. We actively promote this cross-market collaboration, ensuring that knowledge flows laterally, not just top-down. The success of such a model depends on a strong and steady strategic foundation. In my view, a powerful strategy is not one that constantly shifts in response to trends, but one that holds firm and continues to deliver relevance over time. That consistency signals to our teams that we are moving in the right direction. Each year, whether at a kick-off or a year-end close, our strategy remains valid. This gives people the clarity and confidence to focus on doing more and doing better, within a coherent framework.

That clarity has been crucial during our period of accelerated growth. Scaling from a team of 20 to nearly 200 within seven years is not a linear journey. It has required major investments in systems, processes, leadership, and above all, people. Growth of that magnitude demands not only operational evolution, but cultural resilience. We have focused intensely on both because, at our core, success in emerging markets depends on the strength, adaptability, and alignment of the people tasked with delivering access where it is most needed.

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## **How would you characterise the recognition that FarmaMondo receives from stakeholders as the organisation expands into new markets like India?**

While we are firmly established across the markets in which we operate, strengthening our capabilities remains an ongoing priority. Expanding into a new country is never without complexity, particularly in a market as vast and nuanced as India. Although we had previously engaged there in a more exploratory capacity, establishing a formal affiliate required us to tailor our proven model to the distinct regulatory, clinical, and commercial realities of the local landscape. In keeping with our approach elsewhere, we appointed a seasoned local leader, an essential step in building contextual understanding and long-term credibility on the ground.

Growth inevitably brings operational challenges, but it also brings meaningful validation. The most profound recognition we receive comes not from industry accolades but directly from the patients and families we serve. I have personally received messages from parents who spent months, sometimes years, pursuing access to a therapy, only to succeed with our support.

One such case involved a young girl whose family had been waiting for over two years for a particular treatment that had received FDA approval. Once FarmaMondo was appointed as the distribution partner, we were able to navigate the regulatory, compliance, and funding processes and deliver the therapy within just 35 days of signing the agreement. In another instance, our teams have facilitated access to a rare paediatric therapy – proven to increase survival rates from 25 to 75% – for more than 1,000 children across 20 markets over the past seven years. These are not isolated cases; they are emblematic of our broader mission.

On the industry side, we are seeing a perceptible shift. Increasingly, pharmaceutical companies are approaching us not only with curiosity, but with a clear strategic interest in how our model operates. This growing engagement reflects a broader recognition that responsible commercial access in emerging markets can be both compliant and impactful. In that sense, the trust we are building today is a testament to FarmaMondo's evolution, from a promising concept into a trusted downstream partner for biopharmaceutical innovators seeking to extend their reach to the world's most underserved geographies.

## **Looking ahead to 2028, what are your strategic priorities for FarmaMondo, and how does the company's Swiss base support your operations across emerging markets?**

At the current pace of growth, we foresee the need to continue investing in our infrastructure to accommodate an expanding portfolio of assets. India is set to become a fully sustainable affiliate within the next three years, potentially among our strongest in terms of performance, simply due to the scale and demand it represents. By that point, we will also likely be preparing for our next expansion phase. Competitive advantage is only meaningful if it is actively sustained and evolved; otherwise, it becomes vulnerable to replication.

Our positioning in Switzerland is a strategic asset in this context. Many of our partners value the ability to operate across complex, fast-moving emerging markets through a relationship grounded in Swiss law and business standards. These regions often come with challenges: currency fluctuations, shifting political environments, regulatory unpredictability, and varying reimbursement frameworks. Engaging directly with multiple local players across these landscapes can be burdensome and exposes companies to greater risk. By contrast, we offer a single, stable counterpart that ensures trusted, transparent frameworks govern the entire process.

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Switzerland's pragmatic yet robust business environment is a clear enabler. It combines the flexibility needed to operate internationally with the legal clarity and compliance required in the pharmaceutical industry. This is not only reassuring to our partners but essential to building and maintaining trust, something we view as fundamental to the way we conduct business.

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