



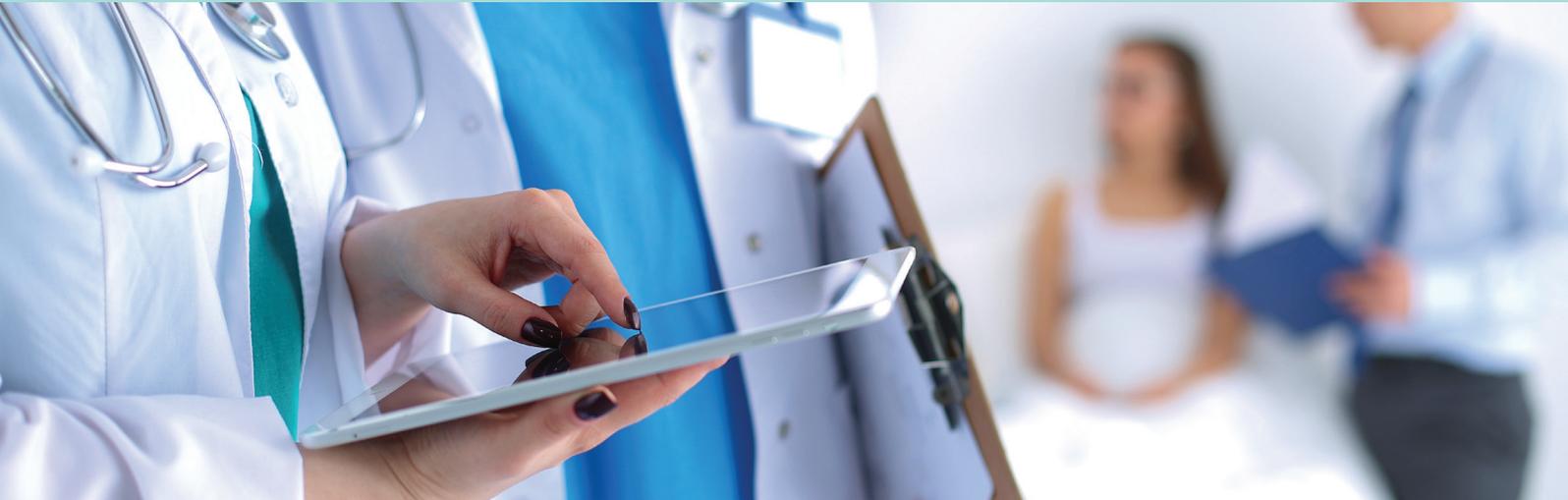
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## Case Study

# General Electric and Corporate Citizenship: Transforming Oncology Healthcare in KSA



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# General Electric and Corporate Citizenship: Transforming Oncology Healthcare in KSA

Over the past few years, Corporate Citizenship has become an important and thoroughly discussed concept in the private sector. Corporate Citizenship can be defined as the ability of businesses to contribute positively, both socially and economically, to the society in which they operate, while maintaining their profit-making ambitions. One particular company that has consistently demonstrated Corporate Citizenship is General Electric.

General Electric describes itself as a “diversified infrastructure, finance and media company”. It currently operates in over 100 countries and employs nearly 300, 000 individuals. In the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), General Electric is involved in a broad range of projects. More specifically, General Electric’s work in MENA can be classified into three broad categories:

1. Building infrastructure
2. Social development
3. Diversification of products and services

General Electric’s main objectives are profit-making, doing so ethically, and facilitating long-term sustainable social development and change (Balakrishnan and Moonesar, 2015) in its countries of operation. According to Balakrishnan and Moonesar (2015), General Electric aims to achieve sustainability by:

1. Identifying global health challenges in a resource-constrained world with more people and more needs in terms of resources
2. Developing products and services that meet global health challenges, strive to reduce external costs, improve quality and access, and promote human rights
3. Measuring the company’s impact and contribution in terms of profit-making, doing so ethically, innovation in products and services, operational excellence, and advocating public policy and philanthropy
4. Using engaged employees and participating in numerous public-private partnerships (PPPs) with the objective of growing markets, solving more health-related issues for more people, reducing risks, and creating profit

**Table 1** presents a list of projects that constitute each of the three categories (Balakrishnan & Moonesar, 2015).

Category	Projects
Building infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transportation development</li> <li>• Energy efficiency and water sufficiency</li> <li>• Local service capability</li> <li>• Knowledge transfer</li> </ul>
Social development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare</li> <li>• Security</li> <li>• Local manufacturing</li> <li>• Job creation</li> <li>• Leadership development</li> </ul>
Diversification of products and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Industrialization</li> <li>• Financial services</li> <li>• Real estate</li> <li>• Tourism and entertainment</li> </ul>

To successfully implement sustainable values and practices through its operations, General Electric used a strategy that involved innovation and localization. Through innovation, General Electric was able to respond to challenges with solutions that had a positive impact while being cost-effective at the same time. Similarly, localization ensured that General Electric adapted and responded to challenges specific to each country of operation in an appropriate manner. In 2009, General Electric launched “Healthymagination”, a six-year-long project worth \$6 billion, with the purpose of offering better healthcare to a greater number of people at a lower cost. This project was part of General Electric’s Corporate Citizenship plans in its countries of operation. Although healthymagination stretches across many countries, it was particularly efficacious in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA).

In the KSA, the Saudi Cancer Registry at the King Faisal Specialist Hospital & Research Centre confirmed that breast cancer was the most common type of cancer among Saudi women. Therefore, early screening & diagnosis is required. As a result, General Electric began working with the Saudi Ministry of Health to determine why the average age for developing breast cancer among Saudi women was approximately ten years less than in other countries. General Electric worked in two specific ways to help reduce the risk of breast cancer among Saudi women. First, it attempted to create relevant products that improved the state of cancer care. In order to do so, General Electric launched the \$100 million healthymagination global open-initiative challenge, which sought to identify and bring to the market ideas that would advance breast cancer diagnostics, and help doctors better understand and treat it (Balakrishnan and Moonesar, 2015). It also reached out to students at Saudi universities, especially female students, to collaborate in cancer Research and Development. Through these initiatives, General Electric was able to create the following products:

- SenoCase™, an ultra-portable mammography device could fit into a large suitcase
- SenoBright™, contrast-enhanced spectral mammography, which was a breast screening technique that would enable more precise identification of breast cancer incidence

The second way in which General Electric tried to reduce the risk of breast cancer among Saudi women was by running awareness campaigns stressing the importance of screening and treatment. Healthymagination formed a PPP with the Saudi Ministry of Health with the goal of providing 10, 000 Saudi women with access to screening by 2012. Using social media platforms, which are popular among Saudi women, as well as a dedicated website, healthymagination sought to spread awareness about breast cancer and simultaneously encouraged women diagnosed with the disease to share their stories. As a follow-up to the awareness campaign, healthymagination allowed women to easily book an appointment for screening through a call center or the website set up by the Ministry of Health. Furthermore, The Ministry of Health deployed three General Electric healthymagination mobile clinics, in coordination with the Saudi Cancer Society, staffed with female radiographers and other support staff to undertake the screening program (Balakrishnan and Moonesar, 2015). As part of the aftercare process, the King Fahad Medical City assisted the campaign by providing timely medical care for those diagnosed with breast cancer at the screening.

As part of General Electric’s Corporate Citizenship initiatives, healthymagination had a significant impact on breast cancer awareness and treatment in Saudi Arabia, a country that is relatively conservative in terms of openly discussing the disease. Through this initiative, General Electric was able to help the Saudi market understand why GE products were needed and how they could work together to make their products more useful to customers, rather than just selling them. Not only is this outcome in line with General Electric’s desire to encourage sustainability within its markets, but it also allows General Electric to profit.

## References

1. Balakrishnan, M. S., & Moonesar, I. A. (2015). General Electric: How GE worked to transform oncology healthcare in KSA. *Emerald Emerging Markets Case Studies*, 5(3), 1-29.

This short case extract summary was written by Madiha Sayani (madihasayani1@gmail.com) and Dr. Immanuel Azaad Moonesar R.D. (Immanuel.moonesar@mbrsg.ac.ae) based on a previously published case study. It was prepared using organisational information, and intended to provide material for class discussion through publication. The authors do not intend to illustrate either effective or ineffective handling of a managerial situation. The authors may have disguised certain names and other identity information to protect confidentiality.

## Potential Case Questions:

1. What are the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) facing this organisation in relation to the strategic excellence planning/ leadership/ management? Also, discuss the policy implications for the UAE.
2. Compare this case to your current organisation, in terms of operations, management and/or leadership. Discuss.



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