إتحاد المستشفيات العربية
ARAB HOSPITALS FEDERATION

25 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

ACTION PLAN **2026**

STRENGTHENING
FOUNDATIONS
IN THE FACE OF CHANGE

Strengthening Foundations in the Face of Change

In 2026, the Arab Hospitals Federation stands at a critical juncture, one that demands more than vision and ambition. Rapid technological advancement, rising patient expectations, sustainability pressures, and shifting demographic realities are reshaping healthcare systems across the Arab world.

In this environment, progress can no longer rely on isolated initiatives or short-term solutions. It requires strong, reliable foundations capable of withstanding and guiding change.

The 2026 Action Plan is built on this conviction. Drawing on years of regional collaboration, institutional trust, and strategic partnerships, the plan focuses on reinforcing the core pillars that sustain effective healthcare systems: sound governance, institutional capacity, digital and AI readiness, workforce resilience, quality, patient safety, and sustainability.

Through structured programs, dedicated platforms, and coordinated regional efforts, AHF is enabling hospitals and healthcare leaders to face change with confidence, ensuring that transformation is grounded in solid foundations and that Arab healthcare systems are prepared not only to adapt to the future, but to help shape it.

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AHF **PRESIDENT** Foreword

MP. Fadi Alame
President

As we step into 2026, the Arab Hospitals Federation enters a new era defined by deeper collaboration, accelerated transformation, and a strong commitment to shaping the future of healthcare in the Arab world.

This year marked a historic milestone with the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between AHF and the World Health Organization Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office (WHO EMRO), reinforcing our shared mission to advance health for all. Through this partnership, AHF will collaborate with WHO EMRO across key pillars: capacity building, quality and accreditation, sustainability, and digital transformation and artificial intelligence.

Aligned with this momentum, the 2026 Action Plan presents a clear roadmap to empower healthcare institutions, professionals, and systems across the region. Our priorities include strengthening capacity building through the AHF Academy, advancing quality and patient safety, driving sustainable and resilient healthcare through the Arab Healthcare Sustainability Center, and leading digital transformation with the launch of the AI & Cybersecurity Center to support AI adoption, workforce upskilling, and data security.

In 2026, AHF will also launch a new edition of the Gold Initiative Certificate, reaffirming our commitment to excellence and patient-centered care.

The year ahead will be driven by action and impact, with high-level regional events and forums fostering collaboration, sharing best practices, and accelerating healthcare transformation.

The Arab Hospitals Federation remains dedicated to uniting healthcare leaders, empowering professionals, and building resilient, equitable, and sustainable healthcare systems. We thank our members and partners for their continued trust and collaboration as we work together to shape the healthcare of today and build the foundations for tomorrow.

MESSAGE FROM THE **CEO**

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Alice Yammine Boueiz
Chief Executive Officer

Whenever I sit with ministers, CEOs, global partners, and healthcare leaders across the Arab world, one reality consistently emerges: our region is changing faster than our systems can keep pace.
Artificial intelligence is advancing at full speed. Expectations from patients and communities are rising. Sustainability is no longer a choice but a necessity. Our workforce is under growing pressure, and hospitals are expected to do more, every single day.
In this environment, good intentions alone are not enough. What we need is strength, the kind that comes from solid governance, reliable data, capable institutions, digital and AI readiness, climate resilience, quality, patient safety, and, above all, leadership that guides transformation rather than being overwhelmed by it.

This is why we chose the theme **"Strengthening Foundations in the Face of Change."**
If the foundations of our healthcare systems are weak, nothing we build will endure. And if we aspire to shape the future rather than chase it, we must reinforce the pillars that provide stability, credibility, and long-term progress.

For the Arab Hospitals Federation, 2026 is a different kind of year. It is not a year of ideas on paper, but a year of structure, discipline, and real execution. Every pillar matters, AI and cybersecurity, sustainability and climate-ready hospitals, leadership and workforce development, quality, patient safety, accreditation, digital transformation, medical tourism, and stronger partnerships with WHO, ministries, and global organizations.

Looking toward 2030, my vision is clear and unwavering. I see a healthcare ecosystem that is future-ready, ethically governed, digitally mature, sustainable, and globally competitive. A region where systems communicate, leaders support one another, data informs every decision, innovation is adopted wisely, and institutions operate with responsibility and purpose.
This is the direction we are taking. This is the commitment of the Arab Hospitals Federation. And this is our shared responsibility, as CEOs, policymakers, and changemakers, to strengthen the foundations now, so the future of Arab healthcare stands on solid, resilient, and unified ground.

We are not just facing change.
We are preparing ourselves to shape what comes next.

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IN HONOR OF THE GS
To a Visionary. To a Builder. To Our Guiding Light.

The Arab Hospitals Federation dedicates this Action Plan in honor of Professor Tawfik Khoja, its General Secretary whose vision, leadership, and unwavering commitment shaped the Federation's identity, mission, and regional standing.

Professor Khoja was more than a leader. He was a founder of purpose. He believed deeply in the Federation's role as a unifying Arab platform capable of advancing healthcare systems through collaboration, credibility, and shared responsibility. Long before transformation became a global imperative, he worked quietly and persistently to lay the foundations upon which progress could be built.

He did not merely guide the Federation through growth. He safeguarded its values. He built trust across countries, institutions, and generations, ensuring that the Federation stood not as an organization of events, but as a movement of impact. His leadership was marked by foresight, humility, and an unshakeable belief in the potential of Arab healthcare.

Through decades of service, Professor Khoja elevated the Arab Hospitals Federation into a respected regional and international voice, earned through integrity, consistency, and dedication rather than visibility or recognition. His legacy lives in the partnerships he nurtured, the platforms he strengthened, and the culture of collaboration he embedded within the Federation.

As the Federation moves forward with its Action Plan 2026, we do so grounded in the principles he championed: unity, excellence, and responsibility toward the future of healthcare in the Arab world.
This Action Plan is not only a roadmap for the years ahead. It is a continuation of his vision.

Professor Tawfik Khoja remains, and will always remain, a guiding light in the journey of the Arab Hospitals Federation.

ABOUT AHF

A Legacy of 25 Years of Arab, Regional, and Global Presence

About AHF

Since its establishment in 1999, the Arab Hospitals Federation (AHF) has built a 25-year legacy as a unique, independent, non-political, and non-profit Arab organization representing more than 1,700 hospitals, medical institutions, healthcare organizations, and executives across the region.

More than a federation, AHF serves as a catalyst for excellence, a reference platform, and a driving force for healthcare advancement, connecting a strong regional and international network of leaders, institutions, and stakeholders. Through advocacy, strategic partnerships, and capacity-building initiatives, the Federation has contributed to shaping policies, advancing healthcare standards, and empowering its members to address both current and future challenges.

Recognized for its influence and leadership, AHF maintains close collaboration with Arab, regional, and global authorities and holds Observer Status at the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Regional Committee and the Economic and Social Council of the Council of Arab Health Ministers. Over the years, the Federation has evolved into a central pillar of regional healthcare transformation, bridging the public and private sectors, aligning national priorities, and accelerating cross-border collaboration. Its forward-looking agenda supports member hospitals in navigating key priorities such as digital transformation, artificial intelligence, sustainability, climate resilience, workforce development, quality improvement, and patient experience.

AHF's role extends beyond convening stakeholders. Through specialized centers, including the AHF Academy, the Arab Healthcare Sustainability Center, and the AI & Cybersecurity Center, the Federation provides tools, frameworks, and expert networks to strengthen governance, elevate standards of care, and build resilient, efficient, and future-ready healthcare systems.

Today, as healthcare systems undergo rapid transformation, the Arab Hospitals Federation continues to stand at the forefront, empowering leaders, strengthening foundations, and driving collaborative action to shape the future of healthcare in the Arab world.

AHF STRUCTURE

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Council for Women Leaders in Healthcare

AHF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

As part of the AHF Action Plan, the Executive Council composed of distinguished health leaders and experts has defined the 2025–2026 goals to drive progress and innovation in the Arab Healthcare sector.

MP. FADI ALAME
President
Governing Council

MR. MOHAMED ALNOIMI
Vice President
Governing Council

MS. ALICE BOUEIZ
Chief Executive Officer
Executive Council

DR. ALI EL HAJ
Chairman of Governance,
Leadership & Research Division
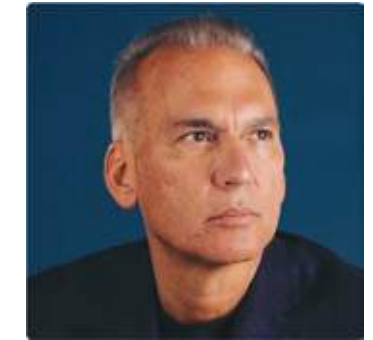
MR. BRIAN DE FRANCESCA
Special Envoy for AI &
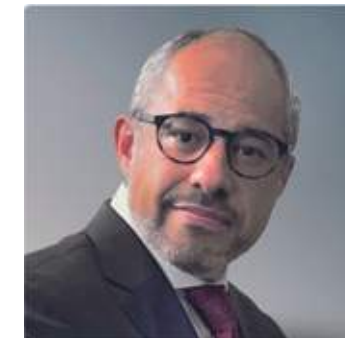Synthetic Workforce Development

DR. YOUSSEF BASSIM
Chairman of Digital Health
Transformation & AI Division
Executive Council

DR. BASSAM KADDISSI
Chairman of the Arab
Healthcare Sustainability Center

MR. TONY ELZOGHBI
Chairman of the Strategic
Partnership & Global Alliances Division

DR. OSSAMA SHAHEEN
AHF Official Envoy to the
League of Arab States

DR. SALLY AL RABBAA
Chairman of Academic
Partnership Division

ENG. RONY ABDEL-HAY
Executive Council Member

DR. AMEER ELTELWANY
Executive Council Member

DR. ALI ABU GRAIN
Executive Council Member

DR. MIREILLE KHALIL
Senior Projects Officer

LUTECIA BOUCHABKE
Head of Strategic Development Division

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AHF LEADERS ADVISORY BOARD

The AHF Leaders Advisory Board brings together visionary healthcare leaders from across the region to provide strategic insight and expert guidance.

Working under the direction of the Executive Council, the Board supports AHF's mission by offering recommendations that advance sustainable, innovative, high-quality healthcare systems.

DR. AHMED EL SOBKY
Chairman
Egypt Healthcare Authority
Egypt

DR. AHMED EZZELDIN
Chief Executive Officer
Cleopatra Hospitals Group
Egypt

MR. AYMAN MOKHTAR
Regional President Middle East, North Africa, and Eurasia - Viatris
UAE

DR. GEORGE PASCAL HABER
Chief Executive Officer
Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi
UAE

DR. FAWZI AL-HAMMOURI
Chairman & General Manager
The Specialty Hospital
Jordan

MR. JOSEPH HAZEL
Chief Executive Officer
Apex Health
Qatar

DR. MARWAN AL KAABI
Chief Executive Officer
Sheikh Shakhbout Medical City
UAE

DR. MOHAMED HABLAS
Regional Director
Saudi German Health in Egypt and North Africa

DR. MOHAYMEN ABDELGHANY
Vice President – Fakeeh Care
UAE Chief Executive Officer,
Fakeeh University Hospital, Dubai

DR. RAZA SIDDIQUI
Group CEO , Arabian Healthcare Group
Executive Director, RAK Hospital
UAE

MR. BASSAM CHAHINE
Chief Executive Officer
SMC Healthcare
Saudi Arabia

DR. MARIAM AL JALAHMA
Chief Executive Officer
Government Hospitals
Bahrain

DR. MALEK ALMOOSA
Chief Executive Officer
Almoosa Health Group
Saudi Arabia

DR. GABY MOAWAD
Associate Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology
The George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences - USA

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Strategic partnerships are central to advancing AHF's mission and driving measurable improvements across the Arab healthcare sector. Acting as a bridge between public and private stakeholders, AHF facilitates collaboration, knowledge sharing, and joint initiatives that strengthen healthcare systems and accelerate innovation. By engaging with international organizations, regional and national health authorities, key governmental entities and Academia, AHF enhances its ability to support hospitals, build capacity, and promote quality, resilience, and accessibility in healthcare delivery.

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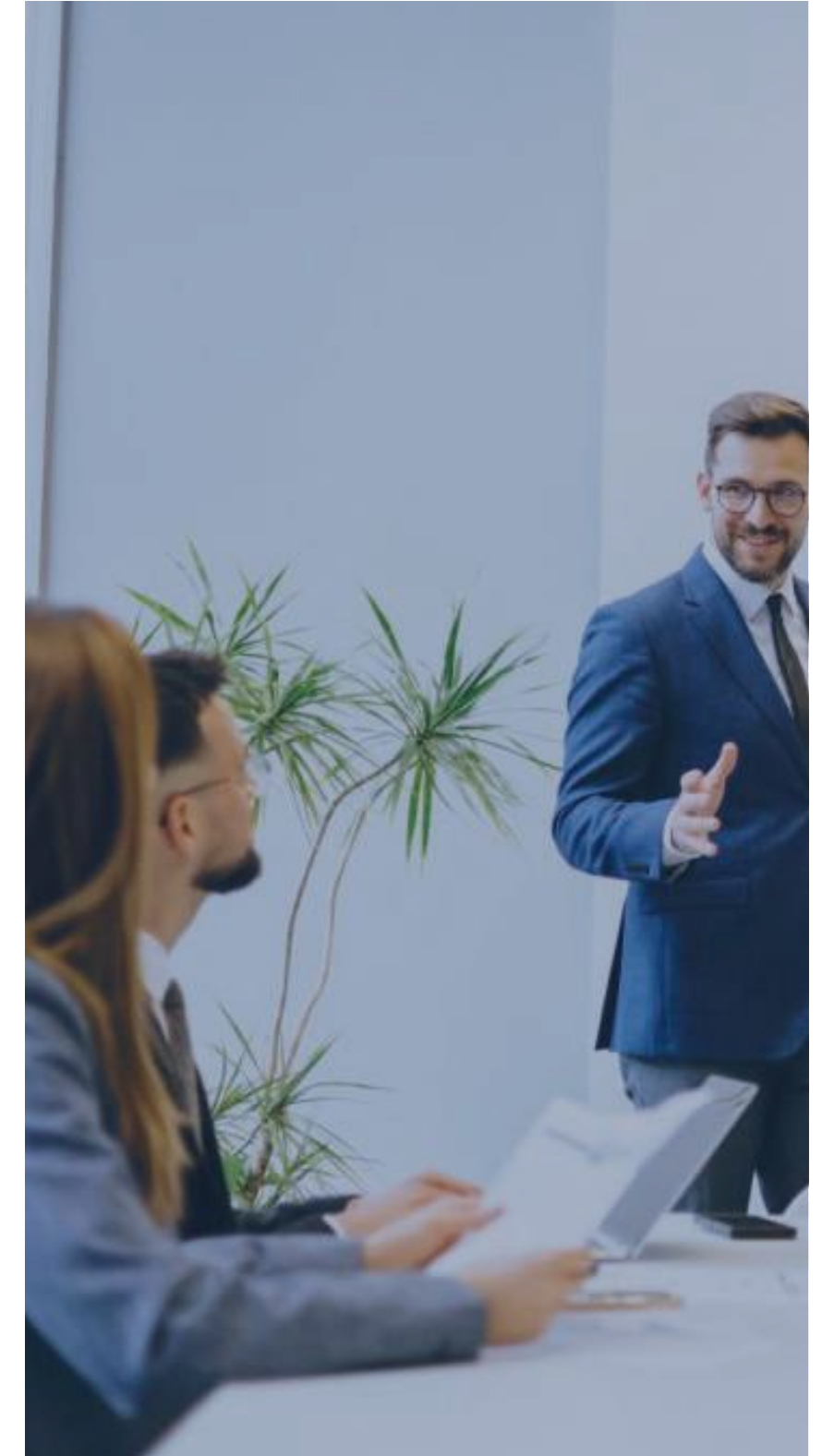Council for Women Leaders in Healthcare

EXECUTIVE CIRCLE

The Arab Hospitals Federation Executive Circle is an elite, invitation-only platform designed for top healthcare executives across the Arab region. Reserved exclusively for CEOs, senior healthcare leaders, and key decision-makers from hospitals and healthcare organizations, the Circle provides a trusted and professional environment for high-level dialogue, peer exchange, and strategic collaboration. It brings together leaders who are shaping healthcare systems to openly share experiences, discuss common challenges, and collectively advance healthcare standards across the Arab world.

The Executive Circle aspires to be the leading regional platform where Arab healthcare executives collaborate, innovate, and influence the future of healthcare leadership, excellence, and transformation. Its mission is to empower senior leaders through meaningful dialogue, peer learning, and collaborative problem-solving, enabling them to strengthen health systems, enhance organizational performance, and drive sustainable, patient-centered innovation across the region.

At its core, the AHF Executive Circle exists to unite CEOs and senior executives in a trusted, high-level forum for strategic exchange, address shared leadership challenges and emerging opportunities, and strengthen executive decision-making through evidence-based discussions and best practices. It fosters collective action that advances quality, resilience, digital transformation, and equity in healthcare delivery, while reinforcing the Arab Hospitals Federation's role as the regional connector and accelerator of healthcare leadership.

Through this platform, the Executive Circle contributes to strengthening regional healthcare leadership, advancing organizational excellence, accelerating healthcare transformation, building executive networks and strategic partnerships, enhancing crisis preparedness and system resilience, and promoting leadership development and talent retention across the Arab healthcare ecosystem.

Stay Tuned to know more details about the 2026 Executive Circle meeting.

COUNCIL FOR WOMEN LEADERS IN HEALTHCARE

The Council for Women Leaders in Healthcare brings together women leaders from hospitals, academic institutions, and healthcare organizations across the Arab region. It serves as a regional platform to support women's leadership and participation in healthcare decision-making and system reform.

The Council works to advance women's representation in senior and executive roles through leadership development initiatives, regional training, mentorship, and peer exchange. Its activities engage women leaders across priority areas including digital health and AI, sustainability, patient experience, research, health tourism, and preventive health.

The Council role is to expand the regional pipeline of women leaders, activate a cross-country mentorship network, and increase women's presence in senior decision-making roles. National ambassadors drive country-level engagement aligned with regional priorities.

The Council also produces policy insights and regional declarations, documents leadership success stories, and establishes long-term partnerships that anchor women's leadership development within healthcare systems.

ARAB HEALTHCARE SECTOR STATUS

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Arab Healthcare Sector Status Overview

From Progress Narratives to Structural Choices

The Arab region has delivered measurable progress in health over the past two decades. Vaccination coverage has reached high levels across most countries. Maternal and child mortality have fallen significantly. Digital health infrastructure is expanding, with electronic health records now standard in many hospital systems. Accreditation programs are growing, and an increasing number of institutions meet international quality standards. Medical and nursing education has strengthened, and regional collaboration through platforms like the Arab Hospitals Federation continues to deepen.

These gains are real, and they matter. But they tell only part of the story.

Beneath the progress indicators, structural weaknesses persist and in some cases, are growing. Hospitals continue to be built without system-level planning, fragmenting clinical expertise and driving up costs. Core processes inside many facilities operate with high failure rates that would not be tolerated in other high-risk industries. Digital transformation is being layered onto weak governance and unreliable data foundations. Environmental sustainability remains largely absent from healthcare strategy, even as climate impacts intensify across the region. Workforce models are misaligned with the demands of AI- enabled care and aging populations.

This section confronts six uncomfortable truths that Arab healthcare systems must address if we are serious about transformation:

Oversupply and misallocation of hospitals can kill – when clinical volumes are too low, quality and safety erode.
Our hidden deficit is process maturity, not just coverage – unreliable processes create avoidable harm and waste.
AI, data, and cybersecurity are critical infrastructure, not side projects – treating them as optional puts patients at risk.
Healthcare's environmental footprint is a clinical, economic, and moral crisis – we cannot deliver health while contributing to harm.
Our workforce is structurally misaligned with an AI-enabled future – we need different configurations of people, skills, and tasks.
Regional collaboration must move from talk to shared rules and shared assets – declarations without enforcement do not change frontline reality.

These are not criticisms of individuals or institutions. They are system-level diagnoses that require system-level responses. The pillars of AHF's 2026 Action Plan, from the Gold Initiative and the Academy to the AI & Cybersecurity Center and the Council for Women Leaders, are designed to address these structural gaps with practical tools, training, standards, and partnerships that hospitals can use immediately.

The question for 2026 is not whether the Arab region is improving. The question is whether we are improving in the right way, fast enough, and on strong enough foundations to meet the future that is already here.

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Across 22 Arab countries, we have made real progress: vaccination rates are high, maternal and child mortality have fallen, digital health is expanding, and many hospitals meet international accreditation standards.
Policy-makers know this story.

What is discussed far less openly is the structural risk underneath that progress:
- We are still building too many hospitals in the wrong places.
- Many services run at volumes too low to be safe.
- Core clinical and administrative processes often operate at failure rates no other high-risk industry would tolerate.
- We are adding AI and digital tools on top of weak foundations.

Where We Actually Stand:
Real Gains, Real Pressure

There is no question that Arab countries have delivered important results:
- **Communicable disease control:** high immunization coverage, control of polio and measles in most places, elimination of several once-endemic diseases.
- **Maternal and child health:** major reductions in mortality, better access to skilled birth attendance and emergency obstetrics.
- **Digital health:** wide adoption of electronic health records in larger systems, rapid growth of telehealth, and the first wave of AI-assisted diagnostics.
- **Workforce:** more medical and nursing schools, stronger residency programs, and emerging leadership and management training.
- **Quality and safety:** expansion of national quality programs, growth in accreditation, and visible improvements in infection control and medication safety in leading institutions.

At the same time, pressures are intensifying:
- Aging populations and rising noncommunicable disease burden.
- Conflicts, fragility, and displacement in several states.
- Growing expectations from citizens, with social media making poor experiences visible in real time.
- A global race in AI and digital health that can either help the region leap forward or lock it into permanent dependence.

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Arab Healthcare
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Uncomfortable Truth 1:
Too Many Hospitals in the Wrong Places Can Kill

In tourism, more hotels usually mean more choice and better prices.
In healthcare, more hospitals in an unplanned system can quietly erode quality and safety.

When acute care capacity is fragmented across many low-volume facilities:
- Clinical skill decays because teams see too few complex cases.
- Complication management weakens, as there is no concentrated experience.
- Costs rise because every small facility must duplicate expensive technology and specialist coverage.
- Staff become overstretched, and error rates increase.

The region has invested heavily in new hospitals, often driven by:
- Real estate opportunities.
- Local political pressure.
- Private investment incentives.

Far less often have approvals been tied to a system-level view of:
- Catchment populations and disease burden.
- Minimum safe volumes per specialty.
- Existing service coverage within realistic travel times.

Key policy message:
"Licensing and financing new hospitals without explicit system planning is now a patient safety risk, not just an efficiency issue."

Implications for policy-makers
- Link licenses to system need: New beds and services should be approved only when justified by regional capacity maps, disease burden, and minimum volume thresholds.
- Consolidate complex services: High-risk, low-volume specialties (e.g. complex surgery, advanced oncology, trauma) should be concentrated in designated centers of excellence, with clear referral pathways.
- Rebalance investment: Shift capital from building more general hospitals to strengthening primary care, out-of-hospital care, rehabilitation, and home-based services.

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Arab Healthcare
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Uncomfortable Truth 2:
Our Hidden Deficit Is Process Maturity

Most national discussions focus on coverage (how many beds, how many doctors, how many devices).
Much less attention goes to how reliably the system actually works day to day.

Inside many Arab hospitals:
- Clinical and administrative processes run with high variation and weak control.
- Terminology and coding differ between facilities, regions, and payers.
- Measurement systems are fragmented; leaders do not have one trusted version of the truth.
- Improvement is driven by short projects or accreditation cycles rather than continuous, system-level methods.

The result is that many core processes operate at low sigma levels – meaning avoidable failures are common. In a high-risk environment like healthcare, this translates directly into harm and waste.

Key policy message:
"The Arab region does not only have an access problem; it has a process maturity problem."

What "FOUNDATION" looks like at system level

POLICY-MAKERS CAN THINK IN FOUR BLOCKS:

1. Nomenclature standardization	2. Process standardization and tightening	3. Measurement system and data quality	4. Workforce restructure and reskilling
• One shared language for diagnoses, procedures, locations, professions, events. • Aligned with international standards, adapted for Arabic and local context.	• Clear, evidence-based pathways for high-volume and high-risk conditions. • Standard operating procedures for critical administrative flows (admissions, billing, referrals).	• Agreed indicator sets and definitions. • Robust data collection and validation. • A single, trusted source of performance data.	• Roles and tasks redesigned to match new processes and technologies. • Continuous, practical training tied to real work.

Without these foundations, adding more hospitals, devices, or AI systems will create complexity faster than it creates value.

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Uncomfortable Truth 3:
AI, Data, and Cybersecurity Are Critical Infrastructure

In many strategies, AI, digital health, and cybersecurity sit as separate projects or "innovation" pillars.

In reality, they are now critical infrastructure:
- Data standards and connectivity are becoming as vital as water and electricity.
- AI systems will increasingly support diagnosis, triage, scheduling, and population health management.
- Cybersecurity failures can shut down hospitals, corrupt data, and directly harm patients.

Treating them as optional "add-ons" or isolated pilots is no longer viable.

Key policy message:
"AI, data standards, and cyber resilience must be governed and financed like utilities, not gadgets."

Policy implications

- National and regional "health data grids":
  - Mandate core data standards and health identifiers.
  - Build secure, interoperable data exchange across public and private sectors.

- AI readiness and cyber readiness as licensing conditions:
  - For hospitals and vendors, specific baseline requirements for:
  - Data protection,
  - Secure architectures,
  - Incident detection and response,
  - Transparency and safety of clinical AI tools.

- Regional cooperation on AI and cyber:
  - Shared testing and evaluation centers for health AI solutions.
  - A regional health-sector cyber threat and incident sharing mechanism.
  - Joint procurement frameworks to reduce cost and raise standards.

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Uncomfortable Truth 4:
Healthcare's Environmental Footprint Is a Clinical, Economic, and Moral Crisis

Healthcare systems across the Arab region are major contributors to environmental degradation, yet sustainability is rarely treated as a core strategic priority.

The facts are stark:
- Healthcare is responsible for 4-5% of global greenhouse gas emissions more than the aviation industry.
- Arab hospitals operate in some of the world's most water-stressed and heat-vulnerable regions, yet many run with aging, energy-inefficient infrastructure.
- Medical waste management remains inadequate in many facilities, creating environmental and public health risks.
- Supply chains are carbon-intensive, with minimal attention to lifecycle emissions or circular economy principles.

More fundamentally, climate change is now directly undermining health outcomes across the region:
- Extreme heat is causing surges in emergency admissions, straining already stretched systems.
- Water scarcity affects infection control and operational continuity.
- Air quality deterioration worsens respiratory and cardiovascular disease burdens.

This is not a "nice to have" environmental agenda. It is a patient safety, financial resilience, and regional security issue.

Key policy message:
"Healthcare cannot deliver its mission if it contributes to environmental harm that makes people sick. Sustainability must be embedded into licensing, financing, and performance standards."

Policy implications

- Sustainability as a licensing and accreditation requirement:
  · Mandatory environmental performance metrics for all healthcare facilities (energy use per bed, waste reduction, water efficiency).
  · Phase out high-emissions equipment and retrofit aging infrastructure with green technology.

- Green procurement and circular supply chains:
  · Prioritize suppliers with verified low-carbon practices.
  · Shift to reusable, recyclable medical products where clinically safe.
  · Implement regional pharmaceutical take-back and safe disposal programs.

- Climate-resilient healthcare infrastructure:
  · Design new facilities to withstand extreme heat and water stress.
  · Invest in renewable energy sources (solar, wind) and backup systems for critical care.
  · Establish early warning systems and surge capacity protocols for climate-related health events.

- Regional sustainability standards and benchmarking:
  · Develop Arab-region-specific carbon accounting frameworks for healthcare.
  · Create a regional green healthcare network to share best practices and innovations.
  · Link sustainability performance to national health system rankings and public reporting.

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Uncomfortable Truth 5:
Workforce Mismatch in an AI-Enabled Future

Most conversations in the region frame workforce issues as shortages: not enough doctors, nurses, or specialists.

The deeper problem is structural mismatch:
- Specialists concentrated in capital cities; peripheral and rural areas remain underserved.
- Highly trained clinicians spend large portions of their time on low-value administrative work that technology could handle.
- Many countries rely heavily on expatriate workforce, creating strategic vulnerability and high turnover.
- Training pipelines are not yet aligned with AI-enabled models of care, population aging, and chronic disease patterns.

Key policy message:
"We do not just need more people; we need a different configuration of people, skills, and tasks."

Elements of a new workforce architecture

- Task shifting and sharing at scale:
   · Expand the clinical roles of nurses, mid-level   practitioners, and community health workers within clear safety and regulatory frameworks.

- Synthetic + human workforce planning:
   · Plan services around combined teams of humans and AI/automation, with clear rules for what technology can and cannot do.
   · Free up clinicians' time by systematically offloading documentation, scheduling, and routine decision-support to digital tools
.
- Regional skills and mobility frameworks:
   · Mutual recognition of core qualifications.
   · Regional training hubs for AI, digital health, quality improvement, and leadership.
   · Mechanisms to deploy teams rapidly where crises or gaps emerge.

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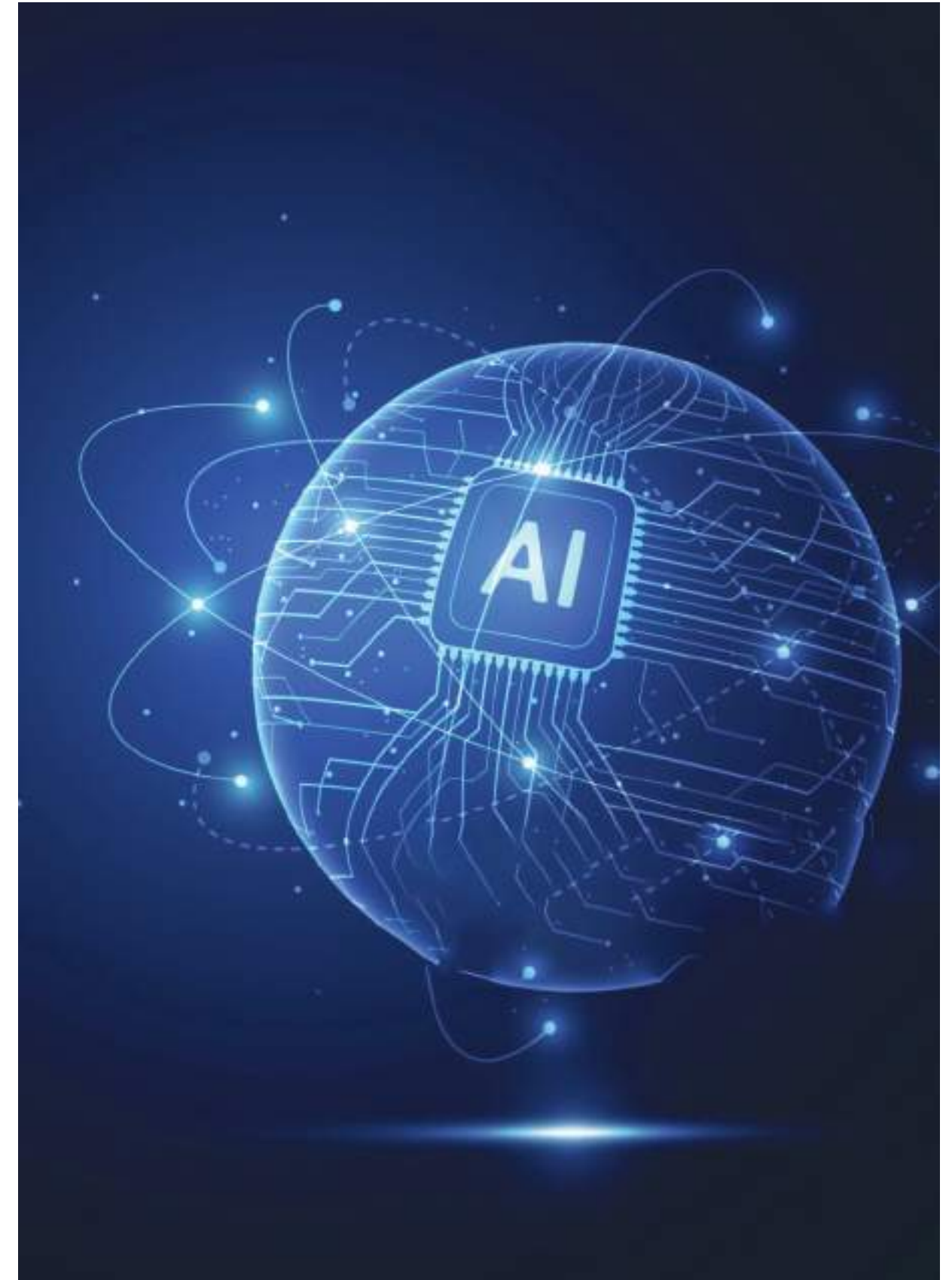
**Arab Healthcare
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Uncomfortable Truth 6:
Collaboration Needs Teeth, Not Just Conferences

The Arab region has a long history of declarations, summits, and action plans.
These matter, but on their own they do not change frontline reality.
To make regional collaboration meaningful, the focus now should be on a small set of shared rules, shared infrastructure, and shared enforcement tools.

Key policy message:
"After decades of meetings, the most valuable regional products now are common standards, shared platforms, and transparent reporting."

What this could look like

1. Regional minimum standards
   · A core set of mandatory baselines for:
   · Hospital licensing and volume thresholds,
   · Data and terminology standards,
   · Minimum AI and cyber readiness criteria,
   · Environmental performance and sustainability targets.

2. An Arab Health Systems Accord
   · A voluntary but public commitment by countries to:
   · A small number of measurable targets (e.g. process reliability, safety
     indicators, readiness metrics),
   · Annual transparent reporting,
   · Peer review and technical follow-up through a regional body.

3. Shared assets instead of duplicated efforts
   · Reference architectures and open technical frameworks for digital health and
     AI that smaller countries can adopt.
   · Shared training academies and simulation centers.
   · Regional centers of excellence that support others rather than compete with
     them.

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The Path Forward:
From More of the Same to Different by Design

The Arab region has capacity, capital, and expertise.
The question is not whether we can add more hospitals, devices, or apps, but whether we can reconfigure what we already do for a safer, more resilient, AI-ready, and sustainable future.

Four immediate shifts in mindset and policy are needed:

1. From counting beds and buildings to managing volume, risk, and outcomes.
2. From projects and pilots to building strong, standardized foundations for processes and data.
3. From environmental neglect to treating sustainability as core clinical and operational infrastructure.
4. From declarations to enforceable minimum standards and shared infrastructure.

If we make these shifts, the next decade can move us from incremental improvement to structural transformation of health systems across all 22 countries.

2026
ACTION PLAN

إتحاد المستشفيات العربية
ARAB HOSPITALS FEDERATION

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1 | MEMBERSHIP

Empowerment and Growth

In 2026, AHF will significantly expand its membership base across both public and private healthcare sectors, transforming from a network platform into a value-delivery engine that provides tangible, immediate benefits to member institutions.

AHF membership connects over 1,700 hospitals and healthcare institutions across 22 Arab countries, providing access to specialized training through the AHF Academy, technical support in digital health, AI, and cybersecurity through the AI & Cybersecurity Center, sustainability guidance through the Arab Healthcare Sustainability Center, and direct participation in forums, executive roundtables, and working groups with regional healthcare leaders.

Some benefits of what members gain in 2026:
- Capacity Building
- Technical Support
- Recognition
- Policy Influence:
- Strategic Intelligence
- Network Access

2026 Membership Growth Strategy:
AHF will execute a targeted expansion plan focused on converting reach into active membership by demonstrating clear return on investment. This includes launching a tiered membership model, expanding public sector engagement through Ministry of Health endorsements, partnering with national hospital associations for collective enrollment, and providing annual member impact reports.

Through this focused growth strategy, AHF will consolidate its role as the essential regional platform that strengthens healthcare foundations, enables sustainable transformation, and connects leaders committed to building resilient, high-quality healthcare systems across the Arab world.

Together, we are stronger. Alone, we face challenges. United through AHF, we shape the future of Arab healthcare.

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2 | THE GOLD INITIATIVE

Over the previous years, The Gold Initiative certificate launched by the Arab Hospitals Federation has become a Seal of Excellence highlighting the outstanding progress of Arab healthcare organizations in their steadfast commitment to excellence across various fields.

The widespread adoption of the Gold Initiative Certificate highlights its transformative value in advancing healthcare across the region and its role in driving meaningful change in the Arab healthcare sector. It stands as a testament to AHF's capacity to create impactful initiatives that empower healthcare providers, foster innovation, and align with global health priorities.

Beyond recognizing their achievements, it is our shared objective to facilitate the exchange of invaluable experiences and knowledge, fostering a collaborative spirit among Arab healthcare organizations.
Through this united effort, we strive to enhance and elevate the entire healthcare ecosystem in our region.

The remarkable success of the Gold Initiative Certificate in the six previous editions has led the federation to plan the launching of two new editions for 2026.

Begining 2026, we will launch the 7th edition under the theme of "THE QUALITY TRANSFORMATION BENCHMARK" which embodies a new standard that recognizes hospitals for their evolution in quality at every stage and includes nine dimensions that blend classical excellence with modern transformation.

Stay tuned for more details about this new initiative!

3 | THE ACADEMY

The AHF Academy will serve as the Federation's core platform for hospital **capacity building** across the Arab region. It will deliver structured professional development programs addressing priority operational and system needs, including leadership and governance, digital health and AI readiness, sustainability and green hospitals, patient experience and humanized care, clinical research and principal investigator certification, accreditation and safety, medical tourism and compliance, and clinical and professional practice.

Programs will be delivered through a blended model combining online modules, virtual workshops, in-person training, masterclasses, executive bootcamps, and applied on-the-ground coaching. This approach ensures that learning is practical, context-specific, and directly integrated into hospital operations. All programs will follow recognized international professional development standards and provide verified learning hours, module certificates, track certifications, and co-branded institutional certificates.

The Academy will work with specialized partners and regional institutions such as WHO and others to ensure scientific validation, curriculum relevance, and effective implementation. These partnerships will support high-quality content, regional applicability, and alignment with international standards.

Beyond training, the Academy will provide **tailored consultancy services** to support hospitals in quality and patient safety, digital transformation and AI readiness, accreditation preparedness, operational efficiency, sustainability, and leadership and workforce development. Each engagement will follow a structured process from assessment to implementation and outcome measurement, adapted to hospital size, capacity, and maturity.

The Academy will generate **applied research and regional evidence** on digital readiness, quality and safety systems, workforce needs, sustainability, and operational performance. These outputs will inform program design and support hospitals, ministries, and partners in shaping policy, investment priorities, and system-level improvements.

Through this action plan, the AHF Academy will strengthen hospital leadership and workforce capacity, improve quality and safety of care, accelerate digital and sustainability transitions, support accreditation and compliance, and translate knowledge into measurable improvements in hospital performance and patient outcomes across the Arab region.

4 | ARAB HEALTHCARE SUSTAINABILITY CENTER

The Arab Healthcare Sustainability Center is AHF's dedicated platform to advance climate resilience and environmental sustainability across healthcare systems in the Arab region. In 2026, the Center will operationalize the sustainability pillar of the AHF-WHO EMRO Memorandum of Understanding, positioning Arab hospitals to measure, reduce, and manage their environmental impact while strengthening resilience to climate-related health risks.

The Center's work addresses a critical reality: healthcare systems across the Arab region operate in some of the world's most water-stressed and heat-vulnerable environments, yet sustainability remains largely absent from strategic planning. Healthcare cannot deliver its mission if it contributes to the environmental conditions that make people sick.

The Center will strengthen hospital resilience through an all-hazards approach focused on climate adaptation, accessible and sustainable facility design, and operational continuity under environmental stress. It will launch the Arab Healthcare Decarbonization Benchmark in partnership with Arthur D. Little, providing hospitals with the region's first credible framework to measure emissions, identify improvement opportunities, and set evidence-based reduction targets.

The Center will promote green practices across energy efficiency, medical waste management, water conservation, and sustainable procurement, while building leadership capacity to embed sustainability principles into governance, operations, and capital planning. Through partnerships with leading sustainability organizations, academic institutions, and technical experts, the Center will provide hospitals with practical assessment tools, implementation guides, benchmarking data, and access to vetted green solutions and financing mechanisms.

By driving awareness, policy alignment, and climate-smart healthcare strategies, the Arab Healthcare Sustainability Center is building systems that protect communities today while safeguarding health for future generations. Sustainability is not an add-on, it is infrastructure.

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5 | AI & CYBERSECURITY CENTER

AI & Cybersecurity Center - Powered by AHF

The AI & Cybersecurity Center powered by AHF is the first regional hub dedicated to supporting safe and impactful AI adoption while protecting healthcare systems from cyber threats.

In 2026, the Center will establish itself as the regional center of excellence for AI and cybersecurity in healthcare, combining AHF's regional credibility with global expertise to empower hospitals across the Arab world to adopt AI safely, strengthen cybersecurity, and enhance operational resilience and patient trust.

The Center will provide readiness assessments, strategic planning support, governance and data strengthening frameworks, curated AI and cybersecurity solutions, and end-to-end implementation guidance. This enables safe AI integration into clinical and operational workflows while building a trusted network of vetted solutions and expert partners across the region.

Through these efforts, the Center will accelerate AI adoption, enhance cybersecurity infrastructure, and consolidate AHF's role as a leader in digital health transformation across the Arab world. AI and cybersecurity are not optional upgrades, they are critical infrastructure for healthcare systems that must function safely in an increasingly digital environment.

6 | EVENTS

In 2026, AHF will convene regional and global healthcare leaders through three flagship events and sustained participation in major international forums. These platforms drive policy dialogue, accelerate knowledge exchange, and strengthen the partnerships required to transform healthcare systems across the Arab region.

AHDAF 2026

The Arab Healthcare Development Annual Forum (AHDAF) will bring together healthcare leaders, policymakers, and institutional partners to advance collaboration on digital transformation, health tourism development, and cross-border care delivery. The forum serves as the primary platform for strengthening public-private partnerships and aligning national healthcare strategies across the Arab world.

MedHealth 2026 – Strengthening Foundations in the Face of Change

The AHF flagship MedHealth Forum will bring together Ministers of Health from across the Arab region, hospital CEOs, industry experts, and global partners to address critical healthcare transformation challenges, including digitalization, sustainability, and workforce resilience. The forum will feature ministerial roundtables, the Gold Initiative Award Ceremony, high-level panels on AI and climate-resilient healthcare, and strategic networking, culminating in a regional declaration on healthcare priorities for 2026–2030 endorsed by participating health authorities.

High Level Side event at the 79th World Health Assembly in Geneva

AHF will co-organize a high-level side event at the 79th World Health Assembly in Geneva with WHO EMRO, UHC2030, and regional partners to position the Arab and EMRO region as an active shaper of the global Universal Health Coverage agenda ahead of the 2027 UN High-Level Meeting. The event will align regional priorities, coordinate political commitments, showcase Arab country experiences in fragile and resource-constrained settings, and facilitate high-level dialogue on financing, digital transformation, resilience, and equity pathways to UHC.

Global, Regional, and Arab Contributions

Beyond its flagship events, AHF will actively engage in major global, regional, and Arab healthcare forums as a contributor and strategic partner, reinforcing its role in shaping health policy, innovation, and investment priorities.

7 | AWARDS

The Arab Hospitals Federation recognizes and honors outstanding individuals and healthcare organizations across the Arab region for their exceptional contributions to advancing healthcare systems and improving patient care. These awards celebrate measurable achievements that have strengthened quality, patient safety, leadership, innovation, and system performance, while highlighting positive impact on communities and health outcomes.

Through its awards and recognition programs, AHF promotes a culture of excellence by showcasing best practices that can be replicated across the region. The initiative encourages innovation, supports continuous improvement, and reinforces accountability by recognizing organizations and leaders who set high standards in governance, clinical quality, patient experience, sustainability, digital transformation, and workforce development.

The awards also serve as a platform to strengthen regional collaboration and professional networks, bringing together healthcare leaders, policymakers, and partners to exchange experiences and accelerate collective progress. By elevating exemplary performance and leadership, AHF enhances the credibility and visibility of Arab healthcare achievements at regional and global levels, while inspiring institutions and professionals to contribute to resilient, high-quality, and patient-centered healthcare systems.

8 | GLOBAL FUNDING SUPPORT

AHF works with hospitals across the Arab region to strengthen healthcare systems in ways that directly improve patient care for millions of people. Global Funding Support is essential to this mission. It allows AHF to build long-term partnerships with donors, development agencies, foundations, and private sector partners committed to improving health outcomes at scale.

Sustained funding enables AHF to support hospitals beyond short-term projects by building lasting capacity that benefits both institutions and patients. This includes developing healthcare leaders, strengthening quality and patient safety, supporting digital transformation and AI readiness, promoting sustainability and resilience, and advancing women's leadership in healthcare. These efforts translate into safer services, better patient experiences, and more equitable access to care.

Supporting AHF is not support for a single organization. It is an investment in hospitals that serve millions of patients every year and in health systems that must continue to function under complex and often challenging conditions.
Through committed partnerships, AHF helps hospitals improve the care they deliver today while building the capacity needed to meet tomorrow's health needs across the Arab region.
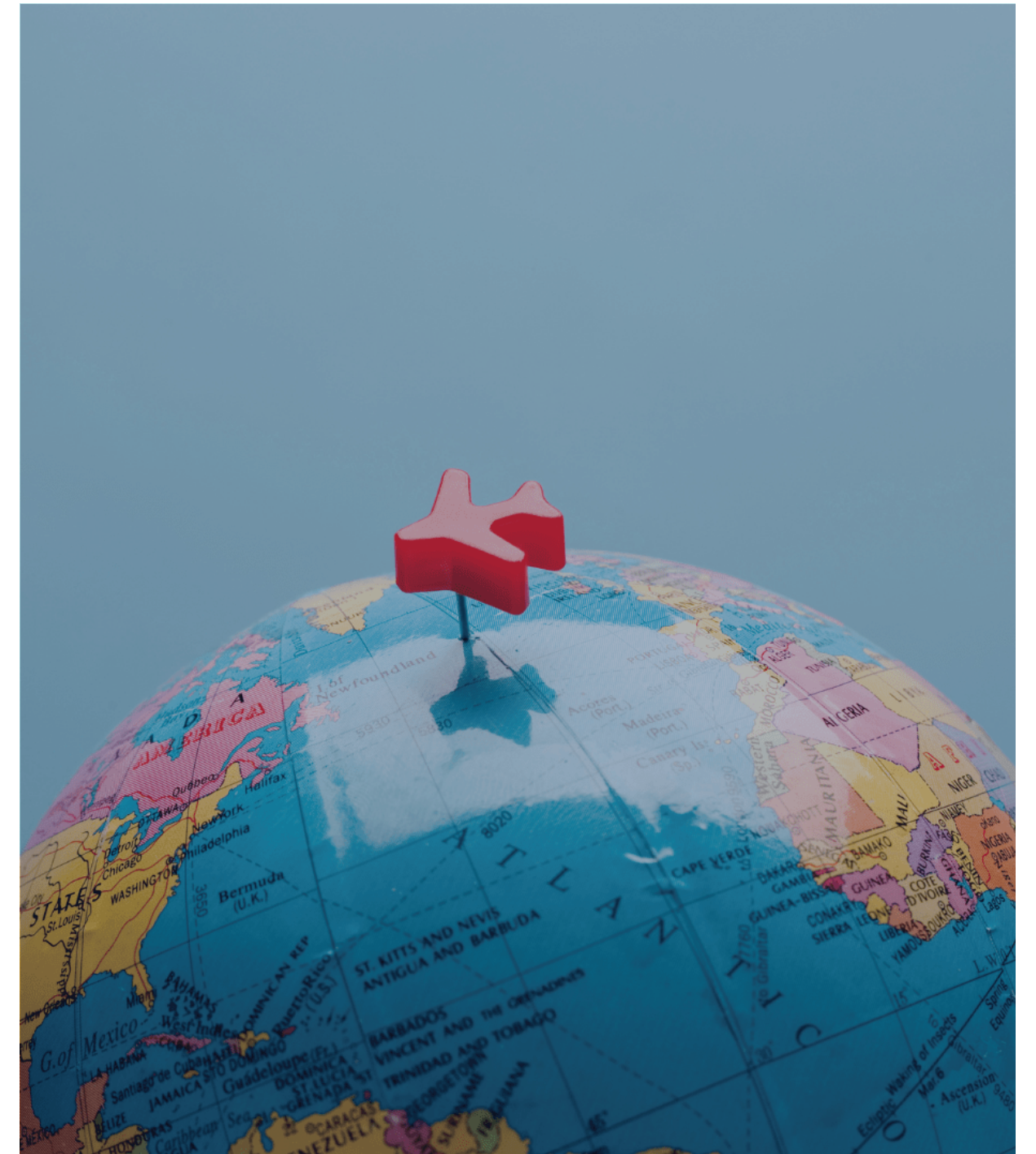
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