



# Investing in Employees' Professional Development

## A Social Case Study

### Company Profile

Cleopatra Hospital is a member of North Africa Hospital Holding Group and is a leading private hospital in East Cairo serving a catchment area of more than 5 million residents. Cleopatra operates 165 beds, 16 outpatient clinics, six operating theatres, an ICU, a cardiac care unit, a day-care center, a dental clinic as well as a state-of-the-art lab and a radiology center. The hospital employs over 1,400 people including more than 260 resident physicians and over 335 nurses. It has one of the best staffed emergency rooms in the country with 24 specialized medical doctors in addition to general practitioners. Cleopatra has more than 250 practicing physicians, most of whom are university professors and renowned practitioners in their fields of expertise.

### The Challenge

Nursing is an important part of the healthcare sector. Despite its importance, the quality of nursing education does not meet the needs of the healthcare sector in Egypt. Nursing schools have so far been producing generalists and their training is more academic than practical. Moreover, as medical care continues to focus on specialization, there is a gap between nurses' training and market needs. Furthermore, the provision of patient care is not monitored against standards or accepted international credentials. Nurses who graduate are seldom trained to improve their performance and augment their skills. Cleopatra Hospital has suffered from lack of appropriate training that will allow the nurses to apply international standards (e.g. Joint Commission International or JCI) and particularly, lack of specialized nurses who have both academic and practical experience handling patients in CCU, emergency, orthopedics, etc. While hospitals suffer from a lack of qualified nurses, on the other end, universities with nursing schools, especially private universities, suffer from low demand and inability to convince students of the value of a nursing degree.

Cleopatra Hospital management and Badr University Cairo (BUC) held discussions for BUC to engage with their professional diploma program that could benefit nurses from Cleopatra Hospital.



### The Sustainability Innovation Grant (SIG)

In June 2016, Cleopatra Hospital was awarded a \$60,000 CAD Sustainability Innovation Grant (SIG) from Global Affairs Canada through a project managed by Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA). The company planned to invest \$140,6400 CAD of its own funds to implement the SIG activities. The SIG had one main purpose: 'To build the technical competencies and confidence of nurses working at Cleopatra hospital.'

Based on the criteria that Cleopatra developed, qualified nurses, primarily women, will receive a professional diploma after attending 3-4 sessions per month over the period of one year. BUC will develop a customized curriculum of 12 modules. Some of the modules will focus on general themes such as communication skills, administering medicine, bedside manners etc. however, a few sessions would focus on ICU-specific subjects.

The company believed that the successful implementation of the SIG would enhance technical competencies of the participating nurses, improve their performance and accelerate nurses' career progression. It was expected that qualifying nurses would receive 10-20% higher compensation than their peers.

### SIG Impact

As part of the SIG, Cleopatra hospital has trained female and male nurses. The SIG project produced the following results.

*Since we launched through SIG, the nurses' diploma [SIG project] is one of the most important initiatives that we always share in our corporate meetings, including with investors, as a success story. (Cleopatra SIG Contact)*

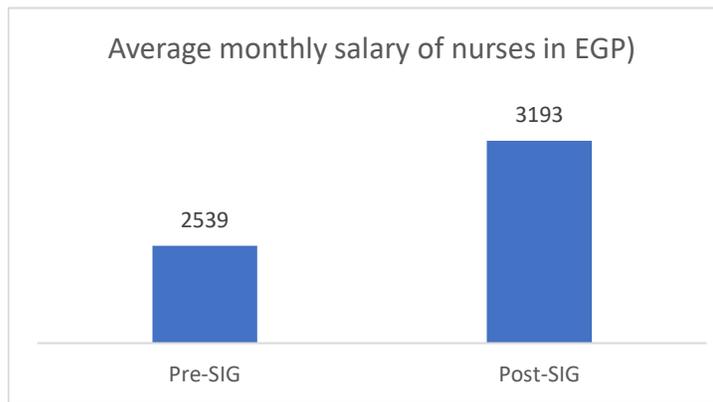


### Increased Nurses' Knowledge and Skills

A total of 186 nurses (74% or 138 are female) received training conducted by BUC. All of the participating nurses received professional diploma by scoring more than 80% in their exams. Participating nurses expressed an increase in their knowledge and skills relating to patient care. For many, this was the first professional training they had ever attended. Female nurses also reported increased self-confidence after attending the training.

### Increased Nurses' Income

With increased knowledge and skills, participating nurses earn higher income after receiving the professional diploma. According to company's reports, average monthly salary of nurses increased by 25% after successful completion of training. Interestingly, SIG initiative also contributed to wage parity. For instance, before SIG monthly salary of male nurses was EGP (i.e. Egyptian Pound) 2,646 while female nurses were getting EGP 2,434 a month. However, after receiving professional diploma, female and male nurses were both earning EGP 3,193 a month.

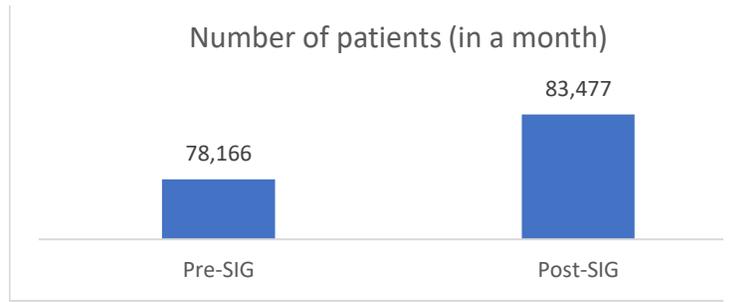


### Increased Patients' Satisfaction

Cleopatra hospital reported increased patients' satisfaction as a result of SIG initiative. Per cent of patients who were satisfied with Cleopatra nurse care increased from 77% (i.e. before SIG please add the date of this survey also) to 99% in September 2017 (post SIG). According to the company the enhanced nurses' competencies has led to higher quality service thus improving the overall experience of patients in the hospital. Patients now feel more confident in the knowledge and skill of care providers, especially nurses.

### Improved Business Performance

The company witnessed an increase in its clients over the period of the SIG initiative. Total number of patients increased from 78,166 to 83,477 a month—an increase of about 6%. In company's view, nursing quality has contributed to this increase in client numbers.



### Increased Awareness about Sustainability Issues

Cleopatra reported increased ESG (environment, social, governance) awareness among staff as a result of implementing the SIG initiative. For the most part, this increased awareness was attributed to SIG quarterly reports and ESG related conversations with MEDA during monitoring visits. The company reporting using SIG data for their quarterly and annual reports to assess the progress of the nurses' professional development plan.

### Sustainability

Cleopatra hospital plans to continue training activities launch under the SIG initiative. The company will select qualified nurses, who received professional diploma, as 'trainers' to impart knowledge and skills to other nurses who did not benefit from the SIG project. Cleopatra hospital will also invest more resources for professional development of other staff that will not only enhance technical but also the soft skills, such as communications, which are very important in the health industry. Cleopatra's sustainability initiative contributed to the Sustainable Development Goal # 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth.



### Lessons Learned

The company learned that better quality of service and enhanced patient dealings can only be achieved through the development of its core staff—nurses—who are directly interfacing with patients. The hospital learned that better coordination among all departments is extremely important for any professional development activity. Finally, the company believed that staff professional development is a continuous process with great returns for employees as well as for the business.