

## "COOPER PHARMA" – BRAND YOUR MOROCCO

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**Introduction.** The "Cooper" (Casablanca, Kingdom of Morocco). This is how pharmacists used to call CPM, "the Moroccan pharmaceutical cooperative" or Cooper Maroc, which became Cooper Pharma, a one hundred percent Moroccan company. The Cooper cars with their green and blue logo, which criss-cross the country, are the emblem of a brand that has been part of the history of health care in Morocco for over 80 years. A brand linked to a committed figure, that of Jaouad Cheikh Lahlou, its Chairman and CEO.

**The aim of the study.** Provide a history of the development and formation of the leading and largest pharmaceutical company in Morocco "Cooper Pharma" whose products are represented in the global pharmaceutical market.

**Methods of research.** To write the paper were used electronic resources of the pharmaceutical company "Cooper Pharma", news and articles from pharmaceutical activities in Morocco [1-9].

**Main results.** Originally, in the 1930s-1950s, Cooper Maroc was a subsidiary of the French company Cooper Melun. It distributed medicines imported from international laboratories to some five hundred Moroccan pharmacies. The company really took off when it started a production activity under the responsibility of Jaouad Cheikh Lahlou, who was then the pharmacist in charge. Indeed, 1980 marks the creation of a manufacturing plant in Tit Mellil, which allows the laboratory to conquer the Moroccan pharmaceutical market with its own products. Tablets, capsules, ointments, syrups and injectables are now manufactured in this factory. A visionary, Jaouad Cheikh Lahlou is involved in the company well beyond his technical responsibilities. While optimizing production, he also gave the laboratory a real commercial dynamic. From 20 people in 1980, Cooper pharma now has 250 sales people! The production of medicines gradually took precedence over distribution. When Cooper Melun became a subsidiary of Rhône-Poulenc in 1995, Jaouad Cheikh Lahlou proposed to buy Cooper Morocco by joining forces with pharmacists from the Kingdom. Cooper Maroc became a company with 100% Moroccan capital. Since then, two new industrial units have been created: the Bouskoura plant (MC Pharma), created in 2007, specialized in effervescent tablets, and IDC Pharma, in Tit Mellil, Cooper Pharma's research and development subsidiary, created in 2012.

"Your health comes first. With this slogan, Cooper Pharma is committed to making medicine available to everyone. This publicity campaign, based on the faces of children, women and men in good health, laughing at life, made a lasting impression. Through these images, which are very different from the somewhat austere world of a pharmaceutical laboratory, Cooper Pharma has made itself known to a large number of people. Its message is clear: treating patients means reducing the cost of medicines and making them available in all pharmacies in the kingdom. And to be more visible, the company has chosen to call itself "Cooper Pharma" and to make its logo more visible on its own ranges.

Behind this brand is one of Cooper Pharma's great assets: its men and women. Aware that excellence cannot be achieved without the commitment of his collaborators, Jaouad Cheikh Lahlou knew very early on how to gather around him talented and involved people.

To his teams, he has never ceased to transmit these two values: seriousness and balance. To progress in wisdom and keep one's feet on the ground.

With products under license from about twenty international laboratories and its own range of generic drugs, Cooper Pharma is positioned today as a pioneer and a leader of the pharmaceutical industry in Morocco. As a guarantee of seriousness and quality, the numerous certifications acquired over the years respect the most rigorous international standards. In 2000, the laboratories were awarded the Quality Prize by the Ministry of Industry and Trade. Cooper Pharma is also a wholesale distributor, delivering through its nine distribution centers more than three thousand pharmacists throughout the country. Finally, Cooper Pharma products are exported to twenty-four countries. Two-thirds of them are in West Africa, but also in the Middle East, Denmark and Libya.

Cooper Pharma is today the leading laboratory of the national pharmaceutical industry, with its own range of products, covering with more than one hundred specialties, the major therapeutic areas.

Alongside this range of branded generics, Cooper Pharma is the partner of about twenty multinationals for which it represents about a hundred medicines, under license.

With more than 1200 employees, Cooper Pharma embodies a unique model in Morocco with its triple activity:

- Manufacturer: A state-of-the-art industrial unit certified by the health authorities (ANSM, Saudi FDA, GMP Morocco, etc...);
- Distributor: 8 distribution centers, in addition to the wholesaler in Casablanca;
- Exporter of pharmaceutical specialties: A successful export activity since 1999.

The group is currently present in 24 export countries.

Today, this model has evolved with the creation of Cooper International, a subsidiary based in Dubai which manages all the export activity of Cooper Pharma in ANF, Middle East and Europe.

Cooper Pharma is a strongly committed company. Naturally, it has invested in health, its core business, but also in the environment and in education. The laboratory accompanies, sponsors and co-organizes medical caravans on a national scale and regularly donates medicines.

As a partner of the *Mohammed VI* Foundation for the Environment, it also participates in civic actions such as clean beaches, flowery cities and eco-schools. In the field of education, renovating a school, fighting illiteracy, promoting tutoring, buying books... are all part of the actions aimed at promoting good living in Morocco.

**Conclusions.** As Cooper Pharma's core business is health, the company's promise is "Your health first". In this sense, Cooper Pharma organizes, sponsors or participates in the management of several medical caravans on a national scale (223 caravans sponsored over the last 3 years). Cooper Pharma is also involved in awareness campaigns, screening... This is why Cooper Pharma's commitment to

citizenship could not but focus on all actions aiming at promoting health and well-being among the Moroccan population.

Cooper Pharma is involved in the upgrading of several schools (from junior high to university). These upgrades include buildings and facilities, green spaces, or any other action that could have a beneficial influence on the students' curriculum. Cooper Pharma is also committed to promoting access to preschool. To this end, it sponsors more than 300 students in several regions of Morocco. In addition, Cooper Pharma is a partner of the Zakoura Foundation for the fight against illiteracy, school and preschool support. Cooper Pharma also supports, among others, the Al Jisr association and the Injaz Al Maghrib Initiative.

The environment completes the triptych, which, along with health and education, is able to bring well-being to our fellow citizens. Cooper Pharma is an active player in the Ecoschool program as well as in the national project "Villes Fleuries". This program, sponsored by the Mohamed VI Foundation for the Environment, consists of the rehabilitation of green spaces in several Moroccan cities.

Cooper Pharma is also a partner of the *Mohamed VI* Foundation for the Environment on the following projects: "Eco schools" which aims at anchoring environmental education in the school curriculum and allows schoolchildren as well as the different actors of the school to build a concrete environmental project for the place of life they share; "Cities in bloom" which contributes to the restoration, the protection and the maintenance of historical gardens; "Voluntary compensation of CO<sub>2</sub> emission" which participates in the fight against atmospheric pollution and global warming. Other actions are carried out by Cooper Pharma in favor of the environment.

The commitment to environmental protection is first promoted internally, for example by reducing electricity and water consumption or by making Cooper Pharma a tobacco-free company.

### References

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