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Nawel Baba Hamed, general director of Pierre Fabre Algeria, outlines the French company's product portfolio in Algeria, its dermatological expertise, and the growing significance of its oncology segment.

Could you introduce our readers to Pierre Fabre and its footprint in Algeria?

Pierre Fabre is the second-largest dermo-cosmetic laboratory in the world, and the second largest private pharmaceutical group in France. 60 percent of our revenue is now generated internationally. Pierre Fabre is composed of two divisions: pharmaceuticals and dermo-cosmetics, with dermatology bridging the two. In pharmaceuticals, we are active in several therapeutic areas including oncology, urology, cardiology and family health. Remarkably, Pierre Fabre is owned by a government-recognized public foundation, the Foundation Pierre Fabre whose purpose is to enable people in the Global South to have sustainable access to medicines and quality care.

In Algeria, Pierre Fabre generates 70 percent of its revenues in pharmaceuticals (PFMS). For PFD we are the leading laboratory in the total dermatology market with a 13.5 percent market share and enjoy a 22 percent market share in the segment where we operate, namely acne, mycoses, and ichthyosis. Beyond dermatology, in the therapeutic areas where we are present – acne, mycoses and atopic dermatitis – our products are either leaders or main challengers, compared

with 30 percent for dermo-cosmetics. The dermo-cosmetic activity started later, in 2000, and accounts for 30 percent of our Algerian business through brands like Avène Thermal Water, Klorane, Aderma and Ducray.

In a very competitive local market and despite the challenges created by import rationalization, we have been growing steadily in recent years.

What specific projects would you highlight as successes for Pierre Fabre over the previous four years?

Thanks to our expertise in dermatology, Pierre Fabre has created a number of innovative projects, providing proven solutions for Algerian patients suffering from various dermatological diseases.

Firstly, we have launched the Teen'act project. This is a holistic approach in managing severe adolescent acne. This project enables dermatologists responsible for these patients to address not only the drug treatment, but also the patient care, including psychological and nutritional aspects. This project boosts collaboration with psychologists, psychiatrists, and nutritionists, facilitating better management of this pathology for the patients.

Secondly, we have inaugurated the first two schools of atopy in Algeria, in which there is an objective to improve the care of patients. These two schools will educate patients about conditions such as atopic eczema and atopic dermatitis.

Thirdly, we have been running the first Phase IV study concerning dermo-cosmetic treatment in Algeria, in collaboration with 60 dermatologists. Similarly, in 2016 we conducted an epidemiological study on acne in Algeria. The results were published in the Algeria Medical Journal and broadcast to the worldwide medical community.

In other therapeutic areas, several Continuing Medical Training Programs were deployed such as **Webcast Urology** that proposes training via teleconference to urologists and general practitioners, creating a direct link between international and local experts, **Assisted Proctoring** on advanced technique surgical and **the foetal ultrasound program** for gynaecologists, which shared the fundamentals of early detection of foetal malformation with health professionals.

Which aspects of your portfolio are performing best locally?

We are the local market leaders in dermo-cosmetics with an above 40 percent market share through five brands. Our leading brand is Eau Thermale Avène, complemented by Klorane, Ducray and A-Derma. The growth prospects of these brands are significant, and we expect to consolidate our market leadership in the years to come.

For PFD, as mentioned above, we are the leaders of the dermatological market in Algeria, with 22.1 percent market share and 60 percent growth.

Oncology has been cited as a strategic area for Pierre Fabre. What is the presence of Pierre Fabre's oncology division in Algeria?

It is true that oncology is a priority for Pierre Fabre in terms of investment. Year in, year out, our pharmaceutical division spends around 50 percent of its R&D budget on oncology.

We actually provide a full range of cancer products. The areas where we have seen significant success include: breast, lung, and bladder cancers, onco-haematology, and stem cell transplants.

Our next step in oncology is to launch a new targeted therapy in melanoma. Pierre Fabre has just announced that the European Commission has granted marketing authorization for the combination of Braftovi (Encorafenib) and Mektovi (Binimetinib) for the treatment of adult patients with unresectable or metastatic melanoma with BRAF mutation. The approval of BRAFTOVI & MEKTOVI will be applicable to all 28 European Union member states, and we expect to launch in Algeria in 2020.

In addition to our products, we have been involved in several initiatives to assist in both fighting cancer and improving patient welfare. We helped create a website which provides advice and information on breast and lung cancer to patients and their families. Moreover, we have supported and aided several initiatives to raise public awareness about cancer and help to curb the factors that increase the risk of cancer. We have also been involved in oncological research, having launched an epidemiological study on melanoma in Algeria.

We understand that Pierre Fabre is moving towards local production. Could you expand on these plans?

Pierre Fabre has launched a joint venture with Algerian partners for the commercialization and production of medicines. The JV was created in May 2018. It will operate under the 51/49 rule. The

decision was taken both as a response to the National Health Policy and pharmaceuticals guidelines, and to solidify our footprint in Algeria which is a priority for our pharma division. The project will benefit from a EUR 15 million investment.

We will produce several pharmaceutical forms locally (tablets, liquids…) with the aim to produce mid-term the majority of our products locally, in line with the government objectives. The technology transfer is still ongoing, but we are targeting a production kick-off in the very close next future.

How important is the Algerian affiliate? How easily can you convince your global management of Pierre Fabre's potential in Algeria?

The data on the potential for the Algerian market speaks for itself. It has strong fundamentals and the most advanced health policy. Seven percent of Algeria's GDP is dedicated towards health spending. This is unique in Africa.

The Algerian market is the most important in Africa region and Pierre Fabre has historic partnerships with healthcare professionals and public healthcare organizations. For important Pierre Fabre products like our major product in Urology, Algeria is the fifth largest market globally, with ten percent of global sales. We are also the third largest market globally with products for the prevention and treatment of anaemia, with nine percent of all sales.

For Pierre Fabre dermatology we are the third largest affiliate worldwide, we used to be second after France, but unfortunately, we slipped down the ranking following the limitations of the quantities of the import programs.

What are the main objectives for Pierre Fabre in Algeria over the next four to five years?

We expect to reinforce our partnership with healthcare professionals, scientific societies and patient associations, with respectively innovative medical education, therapeutic education and awareness programs.

Our objective is also to further contribute to the national health effort by improving the access of the Algerian patient to innovative therapies and to be a key health player, by extending our portfolio, developing industrial transfers of pharmaceutical specialities, growing our market share

and establishing ourselves as the leader in our target therapeutic segments. Our strategy is focused on patient and consumer needs. Our priority is to provide them with safe efficacy and quality products.

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