

Saudi Arabia positions regulatory reform at the heart of its life sciences investment strategy

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RIYADH, SAUDI ARABIA, August 18, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Oxford Business Group \(OBG\)](https://www.oxfordbusinessgroup.com), in partnership with the Saudi Food and Drug Authority (SFDA), has released Volume 1 of its eight-article Strategic Spotlight Series: "Pillars for Strategic Investment in Food and Drugs". The series examines the structural reform of Saudi Arabia's regulatory framework for food, drugs and related health care products, and its implications for investment, localisation and long-term sector development in the Kingdom.

Titled "Connecting Global Innovation to Local Markets: Pillars for Strategic Investment in Food and Drugs," the publication explores how Saudi Arabia is shifting from a largely compliance-based regulatory model towards a more risk-informed framework that both safeguards public health and supports sectoral growth.



The analysis examines how the SFDA has aligned elements of its framework with international standards and regulatory practices, while introducing faster pathways for lower-risk products and more tailored oversight for higher-risk or novel categories. It also reviews the expansion of mechanisms such as expedited registration for selected medicines and the Regulatory Affairs



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SFDA

Innovation and Development (RAID) pathway, which enables early regulatory engagement for advanced therapies, medical technologies and digital health solutions.

The article further considers the role of international integration in strengthening Saudi Arabia's regulatory position. It notes the SFDA's participation in organisations such as the International Council for Harmonisation (ICH), MedDRA, ICMRA, IMDRF and Codex, underscoring how these engagements can support regulatory convergence,

knowledge exchange and greater alignment with evolving global standards.

The publication also highlights digital transformation as a key enabler of reform, pointing to the use of electronic submission platforms, licensing systems and compliance tools such as the Drug Track and Trace System (RSD) and the Unified Electronic System (GHAD). These systems are presented as supporting traceability, transparency and more proactive oversight across the product life cycle, while helping create a more predictable operating environment for businesses.

The SFDA stated that the developments outlined in the article reflect the Authority's commitment to maintaining robust standards while adapting to a changing innovation landscape.

"The SFDA's evolving framework is designed to strengthen regulatory effectiveness, improve transparency and support the responsible introduction of innovative products into the Saudi market," the SFDA said. "This is an important part of creating the conditions for sustainable investment in both food and drug sectors."

Commenting on the publication, Oliver Cornock, OBG's Editor-in-Chief, said the article reflects a broader shift in how regulation is being positioned within national development strategies.

"Saudi Arabia's regulatory transformation is becoming an increasingly important part of the Kingdom's long-term investment proposition," the spokesperson said. "The article shows how a more risk-informed, digitally enabled and internationally connected framework can support both public health objectives and private-sector growth."

The article concludes that continued progress in digitalisation, innovation-enabling pathways, clinical research infrastructure and international regulatory alignment will be important to Saudi Arabia's ambition to position itself as a regional and global hub for life sciences and health care investment.

Connecting Global Innovation to Local Markets: Pillars for Strategic Investment in Food and Drugs is now available to view and download at: https://oxfordbusinessgroup.com/partner-download/SFDA26_Article_1_Health_Care_Regulation.pdf

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