

Bringing European Innovation Into Africa



“ Innovation is not just technology, but governance. ”

*Francisco Nunes Correia
Portuguese Water Partnership*

Francisco Nunes Correia, President of the [Portuguese Water Partnership \(PWP\)](#), offered an example of how public-private collaboration is bringing innovative solutions to a market outside Europe.

The PWP is made up of 100 private companies, research centers, professional associations and government agencies in Portugal who are dedicated to water at the global scale.

Nunes said the EIP Water framework – focusing on water reuse and recycling, flood and drought risk management, the water-food-energy nexus, water and wastewater treatment, and ecosystem services – is applicable in Africa, with solutions adapted for local conditions.

Many African countries need solutions to deal with extreme hydrological variability, aggravated by climate change, and lack of installed infrastructure. Although the much of the continent is poor, financing is not the main barrier to providing solutions, Nunes said – poor governance and lack of capacity to implement changes are bigger obstacles.

In studying challenges of bringing water innovation to the market in African countries, the PWP looks at four key questions:

- What are local/regional needs?
- What technology can we provide?
- Is it economically and financially feasible?
- Is governance appropriate to sustain change?

The partnership's Project Agua Global – a joint venture of PWP and [AEP](#), Portugal's largest business association – selected target markets in four countries: Morocco, Algeria, Angola, and Mozambique.

For all four countries, the biggest areas of business opportunity were in water and sanitation services and multipurpose water infrastructure.

Among the lessons learned: *“We should adapt to realities”* in the target markets; local awareness is important, as is understanding the relationship between people and institutions; and innovation *“is not just technology, but governance.”*