

Guillaume Freneuil - Vice President Intercontinental Operations, Consumer Healthcare Division, Ipsen



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Ipsen's Guillaume Freneuil gives his take on the importance of the Algerian market to the global group.

33 percent of Sales within Ipsen are now in developing markets. Do you see Algeria as being one of those high value developing markets of the future as David Meek put it?

Currently Algeria is the tenth largest market within Ipsen. Ignoring Western Europe and the United States, it is one of the most important developing markets with a steady growth rate. If we are investing right now in Algeria it is because we envisage further growth here to be able to serve patient needs. It is clearly going to be an important country for Ipsen, even if I cannot guarantee it will be THE power market of the future.

We can see that you are investing heavily today in local production in Algeria. What is the rationale behind this, the strategy at the regional level specifically?

There are several ways of looking at it. At the regional level, Ipsen is only present directly in two countries in Africa: Algeria and Tunisia. For the rest of the continent, we commercialise our products through partners. Our commitment and willingness to invest in those countries is linked to

the high potential they represent for us and the products we can bring to patients.

If we look at Algeria specifically, we have had a historic presence in the country. We have had a direct presence for 10 years but were here before that through partners. As a result, we have a long history in this market, and when different authorities start to request from international to be part of the development of the country and to invest, we had to assess the situation. Our calculation was that our portfolio, and our development matched with the future needs of the market. That is why we decided to invest and build in Algeria the first manufacturing site for Decapeptyl outside of France.

What do you see in terms of Algeria's potential to be a leader in the region, be it the headquarters of the future Pan African Medical Agency, or as a biotech hub on the continent?

Currently, the local authorities are focusing on the pharmaceutical market in Algeria. They have the vision to become a reference in Africa, not only in the Maghreb, but in the continent. This strategy represents a growth potential for multinationals, leading to investments in the country.

Furthermore, Algeria is currently the leading country in terms of investments, growth, size and resources in this domain. A good combination to potentially take the lead in Africa.

Finally, their main issue is they are not the only one in the race, and they started the industrial process later than other countries.

Ipsen has refocused itself towards oncology. Does Algeria's national cancer plan, the first of its kind in the region, make Algeria more important at the regional level?

It contributes, but it is not the only reason. Ipsen's vision is being a leading global biotech company focused on innovation and specialty care, including, but not limited to oncology, as we are also looking at neurosciences and rare diseases, and are establishing a growing and sustainable consumer healthcare division. It is a combination of all these elements, and the greater vision of the authorities in particular, that is making Algeria an important player at the regional level in this industry. The national cancer plan itself is just a part of that, even if it is important.

Where does Ipsen run its regional operations?

Our headquarters are based in Paris. That being said we have now a subsidiary in Algeria which is locally autonomous. So far we have not created a local cluster for the region.

What would be required to achieve this cluster?

We need to finalize Ipsen's implementation strategy in Algeria before looking at forming a cluster for the Maghreb region, of which Algeria would logically be the base.

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