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VENEZUELA : HIDROVEN : a national professional training system

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Venezuela is currently having huge problems dealing with the need for personnel training. There is greater awareness of the need to improve personnel's abilities since more and more private operators are now working in the country.

1998 saw the launching of a co-operation programme, to a total cost of 1.000 MFF, between the International Office for Water and HIDROVEN, with the support of the French Embassy in Venezuela and the assistance of the Marseilles Water Supply Company.

This programme continued in 1999 with 3 components :

- **Training in the water professions** with the definition of a National Professional Training System,
- **Decentralisation and participation of private companies** , specifying the conditions and the different forms of participation and the procedures for co-ordination between the different levels of government (federal, state, municipal),
- **Technical assistance** to provide Venezuelan operators with the necessary bases for the development of patterns applicable in their country.

Following the training carried out in 1998 (theory and case studies), the year 1999 was devoted to the implementation of a pilot model in HIDROCARIBE, a regional "Hidro" :

- • evaluation of technical services, organisation of operational and network management,
- • formulation of an action programme aiming to improve the operational control of the facilities,
- • definition of the adapted technical information system.

Moreover, after having carried out studies to identify the existing training opportunities and demands, in partnership with local consultants, IOWater has now been entrusted by HIDROVEN, within the framework of a contract with the Inter-American Development Bank, with proposing a National Professional Training System in the Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation sector.