

# Findings

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Best Practice  
Infobrief



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## **Best Practice in Urban Water Supply Côte d'Ivoire's SODECI - Capacity-building for Better Service**

### **Background:**

SODECI (La Société de Distribution d'eau de Côte d'Ivoire) is the Cote d'Ivoire's water supply agency. It has provided over 30 years of service in water supply starting with a lease contract which lasted for approximately 25 years. This was converted into a concession in 1987. The World Bank has been working in partnership with the agency through financing of investments in water supply. The agency's approach to management has been key to its success.

### ***Impact on the Ground***

- In 1993, the agency distributed 103 million cubic meters of water and billed 300,000 clients for 89 million cubic meters. It realized approximately US\$ 40 million worth of income.
- The company now receives no operating subsidies and all investments are self-financed. It is listed on the stock exchange since 1978 and pays dividends to its shareholders.
- Decentralization has been supported over the years with a range of activities and improvements. Among them, development of information/computing services, decentralized budget management, better monitoring methods, and fraud management.

### ***Lessons Learned***

***People*** : SODECI works on the basis that a company can only be properly managed if it invests in its human capital:

- Efforts have been made to improve the work environment and conditions.

- Three special assistance funds have been established for the staff.
- Training is required for all staff to improve their productivity and professionalism and to assist them in promoting the company.
- A family spirit and sense of ownership has been created by keeping staff informed of performance and maintaining transparency among workers in all parts of the company.

### ***Innovative Management Methods***

- Motivation is a cornerstone of people management.
- Cultural beliefs/practices can be used to improve the management of the company: emphasis is put on group spirit, leadership, sense of discipline, and open formal and informal communication, which play important constructive roles in the country's cultural life.
- Women, who have proved to be more commercially oriented than men, have been put in charge of the collection of fees.

Decentralization and delegation of power to a range of different departments for the management of various tasks constitutes effective management.

*SODECI's manager, Zadi Kessy, recently summarized some of the lessons and secrets of continuing improvement at the 8th Congress of the Union of African Water Suppliers (UADE) in Yaounde, Cameroon . For more information on this subject, please contact Letitia Obeng, Rm. J11-073, World Bank , 1818 H Street NW, Washington D.C. 20433. Tel. (202) 473-4551 or Internet at : Lobeng@worldbank.org.*

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