

Colombian Conference on «Water and Light»

The Universidad de los Andes had the pleasure of organizing the second conference of the research network «Water and Light,» which took place from February 14 to 16, 2013.

From February 14 to 15, 2013, the Universidad de los Andes held a research symposium on Social Enterprise in water and energy. This experience brought together entrepreneurs, professors and students from different areas and perspectives. During two days working together on awareness and mutual learning dynamics, attendees were able to increase their understanding of what it takes to approach the water and energy needs of the less privileged populations in our societies.

Throughout the event it was clear that social and environmental initiatives come from different stakeholders. Different types of entrepreneurs, all kinds of organizations within governments and civil societies (i.e. for-profit, non-profit or community organizations), and international cooperation participate in a wide arrange of initiatives. With diverse approaches they contribute to improve access and quality of water and energy, reduce water waste, facilitate investments and improve the quality of life for entire populations.

The participants also discussed different strategies for the development of water and energy initiatives. These ranged from enabling strategies, such as impact investment and stakeholder dialogues, to analysis and communication of process and results, such as symbolic and cultural analyses and visualization techniques. From the field, participants got a taste of testimonies, case studies, projects and programs; even experimental economics were wielded to understand the actions of individuals in water shortage.

We hope to capture the richness of these two days in an edited book. The compilation will contribute to a better understanding of accomplishments and challenges related to water and energy projects.