



Municipal Services Project – Phase III

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**Understanding Successful Alternative Delivery Models in Health,
Water and Electricity: Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and Latin America**

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Project Duration: 72 months (1-year, no-cost extension was granted)

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Appendices

- Appendix 1 provides a list of project publications
- Appendix 2 provides a list of events
- Appendix 3 reports on communications results (website, email marketing, social media)
- Appendix 4 summarizes media coverage
- Appendix 5 presents the project's normative framework
- Appendix 6 provides the Cape Town conference programme and participants list
- Appendix 7 presents a few sample questionnaires from focus groups

i) Basic Project Information

Abstract

The Municipal Services Project has systematically explored non-commercialized alternatives to service provision in three interrelated sectors: health, water/sanitation and electricity. Drawing on experiences and debates from Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and Asia, this research has contributed to filling the gap in the empirical literature on service delivery alternatives and has gone beyond localized and sector-specific scholarship by developing a set of universal norms to evaluate successful services. As such, the project has fostered an evidence-based dialogue on policy options for better access to quality public services for equity-oriented development in the global South.

The project has built the capacity of partner organizations and allowed them to establish themselves as important sites of research on public services in the global South, capable of attracting established researchers and practitioners in the field as well as training graduate students and engaging young leaders.

A diversity of actors, from water utility managers to health professionals, to international NGOs and regional campaigners have used MSP research to develop policy recommendations and to call for improved service delivery as well as working and living conditions. They have engaged from the local to the global level, from municipal councils to National Health Departments, to the World Health Assembly. While it is still early to assess outcomes, current developments point to significant research uptake and wider policy horizons for the thousands of people reached by the Municipal Services Project.

Keywords: public services, health systems, water, electricity, privatization

ii) The Research Problem

Background: Improving service delivery in Southern Africa (2000-2007)

The first and second phases of the Municipal Services Project (MSP) ran from January 2000 to March 2007. Funded in large part by the IDRC (with approximately \$1.2 million in grants), the project also attracted funding from a variety of donor agencies, municipalities, labour organizations and national governments, adding more than \$500,000 to projects activities, as well as creating spin-off funding for project partners in related research activities.

The thematic focus was on the governance of basic municipal services, primarily water, sanitation, electricity and waste management – including research looking directly at the primary healthcare sector – with particular attention paid to the impact of their commercialization on equity and health. The project initially researched South Africa, with case studies in other parts of Southern Africa (Namibia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Botswana) and Ghana.

Over these years the MSP produced a large body of work that has received widespread recognition and acclaim (half a dozen books, numerous academic articles and papers, radio productions in more than six languages, among others). In terms of outcomes, MSP research had far-reaching impacts in South Africa and beyond, affecting government policy on service delivery, influencing debates and actions within labour organizations, NGOs, health and social movements, and helping to shape a dynamic public discourse on appropriate models of service delivery in countries in the South.

Rationale for current third phase: Influencing the global policy debate (2008-2014)

Funding from IDRC advanced the current phase of the project in three ways. First, it allowed a geographic expansion to include more countries in sub-Saharan Africa as well as selected countries in Asia and Latin America. Second, the project was reoriented to focus entirely on “alternative” service delivery models (broadly defined to include systems which do not require formal for-profit private sector participation) to understand the conditions required for their sustainability and reproducibility. Third, it supported a greater emphasis on public health services, more systematic investigation on health systems and the links between the health sector, water, sanitation and electricity.

New project partners were identified for this expansion, with the aim of creating a network of international researchers that have the capacity to develop additional research projects in tandem with the MSP to further enhance the regional and sectoral scope of the project’s work and to build on core IDRC funding.

The project’s starting point was the common acknowledgement of the widespread failure of state authorities to sustainably provide adequate and affordable services to the poor in countries in the South. In the 1990s, the policy response to this state failure was

largely focused on various forms of structural adjustments including privatization. The belief then was that the private sector would be more responsive to consumer demands, more efficient, more accountable, more innovative and would bring skills and resources unavailable to the public sector.

There is now a general recognition that **privatization, commercialization and downsizing have failed to deliver on the promise to provide adequate and effective basic services** to low-income households in countries in the South (Hall and Fine, 2012). This has entailed a “rethink” of privatization efforts (a term used even by the World Bank), with renewed exploration of the role that different actors might play in service provision – from various tiers of government through to the diverse mix that makes up civil society.

There remains concern, however, that the work by the World Bank continues to seek solutions that provide stronger support to the private sector and/or deepen the commercialization of the public sector. As a result, this current phase of MSP was developed with the objective of rigorously documenting and evaluating ‘successful’ alternatives to commercialization as a counter-balance to this market-based narrative, and as a way to build an evidence-based, progressive dialogue on public services in the South.

This phase of the project was also premised on the fact that there has been a **growing literature on what appear to be promising ‘alternatives to privatization’ worldwide**, but that this research generally **lacks clear conceptual and methodological frameworks**. Though useful in its articulation and exploration of non-marketized forms of service delivery, the writing on alternatives has tended to be inconsistent in its focus and quality, and often contradictory in its conclusions. Another problem worth noting is that much of the work on alternatives does not go beyond a critique of privatization and neoliberalism. While we recognize the need for such analysis, it is imperative to offer more rigorous analyses of ‘alternative’ policy options.

Equally problematic is that there has been **little in the way of inter-regional dialogue** and research. There have been some very useful edited collections on alternative forms of water, electricity and healthcare delivery in the ‘Global South’ (e.g. Global Health Watch 2005, 2009, 2012), and there are regular global conferences and workshops that bring together practitioners and academics on these issues (e.g. World Water Forums), but a lack of consistent research methodologies and assumptions have made inter-regional comparisons difficult.

There has been **even less research that speaks across sectors** (despite the proven links between health, water and electricity for example). This is due in part to the significant technical, political and jurisdictional differences between these services, as well as a lack of effective communication between researchers, practitioners and academics in those sectors.

As a result, it appeared extremely difficult to compare the successes and failures of alternative service delivery models across regions/sectors, let alone make recommendations on how transferable these models may be from one place/sector to another.

Health, water, sanitation and electricity are not the only services involved in these debates, but they offered some of the most advanced research (and research capacity) from which to build – including work previously undertaken by the MSP and its research partners.

There are significant differences between these three sectors but they are also strongly **interrelated**. Most obviously, water, sanitation and electricity are key health determinants, particularly in low-income areas in countries of the South where there are no (or inadequate) services offered, and especially for the most vulnerable in these communities such as women and children. From cholera to TB, to occupational health hazards for frontline workers, these day-to-day necessities can mean the difference between a healthy and productive life and one that is filled with ill health and deprivation.

Each service has its own regionally specific history as well, but all have been affected by marketized policies such as cost recovery and commercialization, and governance failures at the local level. In this respect **there is a universal challenge to understanding the potential for successful public alternatives in these sectors**, as well as possible lessons to be learned for entirely different sectors facing similar situations, such as waste management, housing and education.

We have continued to consider **developing alternatives in health systems** rather than focus on specific diseases or issues to foster broad cross-sectoral dialogue. The health systems approach entails a focus on upstream strategies aimed at promoting and protecting health in areas such as food and water security, or by promoting literacy. It encourages integration, multi-sectoral action, equity, appropriate technologies and human rights (see Global Health Watch 2005, 57-58; Macintosh 2001).

In defining a health system, we took as a starting point the World Health Organization's definition of "all actions whose primary purpose is to promote, restore, or maintain health" (WHO 2000). The project refined this to include "upstream" social determinants of health and health equity (in this case, water, sanitation and electricity), as well as the potential for health systems themselves to act as social determinants by shaping "downstream" access to healthcare services by the disadvantaged, as well as reaching back upwards to shape the socio-political environment (Gilson et al, 2007, viii). Taken in this way, health systems are a totality of interactions, with different sectors having reciprocating effects on one another and reshaping the health system as a whole.

iii) Objectives

General Objective: Analyze service delivery models in the health, water and electricity sectors in Africa, Asia and Latin America to identify and document successful alternatives to commercialization and the conditions required for their sustainability and/or reproducibility, with particular reference to Southern Africa.

Specific Objectives:

1.1 Develop new and rigorous research methodologies and conceptual frameworks of assessment and evaluation that are regionally and sectorally relevant but allow for inter-regional and inter-sectoral comparison and linkages and which advance overall understandings of health systems.

The development of new research methodologies focusing on alternatives was challenging because of a virtual methodological vacuum. The process also necessitated consensus building and effective networking among our research teams, which slowed down the first two years of activities. However, the resulting conceptual framework and regional research evidence published in our first book – *Alternatives to Privatization* – served as a useful normative and methodological guide for all subsequent research, which in turn complemented the original framework and enriched it through discussions with all stakeholders. The more rapid allocation and production of research activities from 2012 illustrates the importance of this groundwork.

1.2 Develop a network of researchers and organizations in different sectors and regions to implement research activities and to build long-term research capacity in the field covered by this project.

The expansion of the project from a Southern Africa core to include partners from around the world was an excellent decision in terms of networking, outreach and cross-regional dialogue. However, it too required building new communications channels and a project governance system, which took longer than anticipated. But overall it has allowed the project to have an unprecedented reach.

Our network remains much the same since the start of the project, with the important addition of the People's Health Movement (PHM) in 2010 and of an internationally recognized gender scholar from Syracuse University, Chandra Mohanty:

- Regional Network on Equity in Health in Southern Africa (Equinet): Yoswa Dambisya, Rene Loewenson, Di McIntyre
- Africa Water Network: Alhassan Adam replaced by Leonard Shang-Quartey
- Focus on the Global South: Joy Chavez replaced by Mary Ann Manahan
- Transnational Institute (TNI), Amsterdam: Daniel Chavez, Satoko Kishimoto
- Red Vida: Marcela Olivera, Adriana Marquisio

- Public Services International Research Unit: David Hall replaced by Emanuele Lobina
- University of Ottawa School of Global Development Studies: Susan Spronk
- University Mayor San Simón: Carlos Crespo
- School of Oriental and African Studies: Ben Fine

Additional research dissemination collaborators have included:

- Latin American Social Medicine Association (ALAMES) (health systems)
- Third World Health Aid (G3W) (health systems)
- Oxfam-GB (global health policy)
- Oxfam-India (health systems)
- ActionAid India (health systems)
- Platform for Public-Community Partnerships in the Americas (water)
- Corporate Europe Observatory (water remunicipalisation)
- Council of Canadians (water)
- International Center of Research and Information on the Public, Social and Cooperative Economy (CIRIEC)

1.3 Employ and refine research tools to identify and document successful models of alternative service delivery linked to health systems as well as potential future research priorities.

The conceptual framework developed for the first book (*Alternatives to Privatization*) and refined in subsequent publications has provided a useful methodology to systematically document alternatives in the health sector. For example, the project was able to develop timely research on “universal health coverage” as the main mechanism being promoted to finance health systems at the global level. Our research related to this theme included 3 book chapters on public alternatives and 3 Occasional Papers, as well as a popular animation video. Notably, the MSP’s work informed the development of strategic positions within the People’s Health Movement (PHM) for engagement at the World Health Assembly.

1.4 Effectively disseminate research findings through multiple publication formats and communication strategies;

MSP research was released in varied formats to reach a wide audience: 3 academic books and 2 more forthcoming (6 publishers, in both English and Spanish); 17 policy-oriented Occasional Papers and Briefing Notes; 3 popular videos (in seven languages, viewed by over 22,000 people) with one forthcoming in 2015. Appendix 1 offers a detailed list of publications.

Our research affiliates also participated in over 60 events (see full list in Appendix 2) and our research findings were featured in 57 articles in popular blogs and media

outlets (see Appendix 4). Statistics on our impressive web presence and overall communications results can be found in Appendix 3.

1.5 Engage with policy makers, NGOs, labour unions, social movements, academics, donor agencies, development banks and other relevant organizations to promote alternative models of service delivery that advance improved health systems and delivery in the relevant service sectors;

In addition to disseminating our research outputs at multi-stakeholder events, on our website, in social media and via our e-newsletter, we developed specialized lists of experts and practitioners who we thought might be interested in the research and contacted them directly. We set up some meetings with key contacts in influential think tanks and international organizations (e.g. ILO, UNRISD, UN-Habitat, UNDP, WHO, World Water Forum, World Economic Forum, Oxfam), several of which resulted in direct collaboration on research and/or dissemination.

At the national level, our research focusing on health systems was particularly useful in informing policy dialogues. In India for example, research on universal health coverage informed the national debate on the Twelfth Five-Year Plan and research on community-based monitoring was discussed within the Health Ministry's Advisory Group on Community Action. In Uganda, research on faith-based health services was conducted in direct collaboration with the Health Ministry, with a view to better integrating these services into the national health policy and ensure their sustainability.

Our final conference in April 2014 in Cape Town was a good illustration of how the project was able to bring together researchers, NGOs, community organizations, representatives from trade unions, development practitioners and policy makers from around the world working to promote progressive public services, with an emphasis on inter-linkages between health, water and electricity.

1.6 Identify and work with research partners and funders that fall outside immediate project activities in an effort to develop parallel research and dissemination activities that complement the core objectives of the MSP.

In an effort to leverage IDRC monies for this research project, we have **secured a total of more than \$350,000 for activities** related to the MSP from our network partners, NGOs and funding agencies. More details are provided in the outputs and outcomes sections further below, but highlights are:

- Focus on the Global South contributed \$75,000 toward the MSP by attracting additional funds from Development and Peace, CCFD, and Rosa Luxembourg Foundation.
- In collaboration with PHM, we secured \$21,250 from ActionAid India to organize an inter-sectoral meeting on public services alternatives in Bangalore. We are

also collaborating with Brussels-based Third World Health Aid (G3W) on a training module focused on alternatives in public health services, for which they have earmarked €3,000.

- TNI was able to raise €26,000 for work on water remunicipalisation, including from Oxfam Novib. More than €20,000 was also contributed to the translation to Spanish of some of our books and to cover travel costs of participants to our Cape Town conference.
- Red Vida contributed more than \$30,000 in-kind for research and translation work.
- One of our affiliate researchers from GSIDS leveraged \$87,844 for a SSHRC standard-research grant (2010-2014) closely related to the MSP's ongoing work on water alternatives.
- Finally, the MSP co-director at Queen's University has secured a UN-Habitat grant (\$42,300) for a one-year research project to develop an alternative 'social' efficiency framework for the Global Water Operators' Partnership Alliance (GWOPA).

iv) Methodology

Given the lacunae in the research described in the Research Problem section above, the project was designed in an iterative, step-wise fashion by Steering Committee members during a first meeting in May 2008. Activities unfolded in three stages as explained below.

Stage One: Mapping alternatives

In the first stage of the research, a 'mapping exercise' determined the scope and scale of alternatives that exist and **established a broad normative framework** – based on existing literatures and debates – to construct baseline criteria for what constitutes a 'public alternative' as well as what constitutes 'success' and the conditions necessary for these service delivery alternatives to emerge and be sustained.

Researchers undertook an initial mapping of alternatives in their respective regions and sector (health, water or electricity) in 2008 and presented draft papers at a workshop held in June 2009. The objectives of the workshop were to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the initial typologies and the selected criteria for successful public alternatives, bearing in mind differences across sectors and regions. The research team assessed the outcomes, refined the conceptual models and methodologies employed, and set an agenda for more in-depth research. The resulting normative framework is provided in Appendix 5.

The refined criteria were then tested against a comprehensive review of existing (and past) alternatives in the three sectors identified, in countries from Africa, Asia and Latin America. Horizontal studies of particular social actors involved in the development and implementation of alternative service delivery were also undertaken (e.g. public sector unions, social movements).

This initial mapping of service delivery alternatives involved desktop research and literature reviews, but also primary research and extensive engagement with government officials, social movements, trade unions, academics and NGOs involved in alternatives. Face-to-face interviews, focus group calls and participation in workshops were some of the ways in which data was collected. In doing so, we sought to understand the common challenges facing health practitioners and municipal workers, progressive governments, communities, town planners and social movements.

Even when focusing on local alternatives, researchers assessed their robustness with a multi-scalar perspective asking how local systems might have broader systemic linkages that enable these alternatives to be sustained and/or reproduced. For example, watersheds often cross jurisdictional boundaries, the economies of scale in electricity production tend to make it a national/regional service, and the complexities of health systems involve numerous levels of government. The roles of international financial institutions, multinational corporations, international trade regimes and an increasingly global network of labour and social movements were also taken into consideration.

Research findings from this stage were published by Routledge (Europe and North America), HSRC Press (Africa) and LeftWord (Asia) (see McDonald and Ruiters 2012).

Stage Two: Deepening our understanding of alternatives

Although grounded in the best current knowledge about the state of alternative service delivery models and performance, the first stage of the research was necessarily elementary in its configuration, drawing rough conceptual and methodological guidelines for the mapping exercise, with the intent of identifying the most fruitful case studies to research in detail in stage two and **refining the research tools** to be used – including revisiting our typology of alternatives and our definitions of success.

Following the Steering Committee meeting in Delhi in 2010, it was decided that the best way forward in the second stage would be to **focus on key thematic research areas** instead of doing regional/sectoral case studies. The focus areas were selected to be as broadly representative of all sectors/regions as possible:

- innovative public financing of alternatives, in particular for health systems
- gendered understandings of public alternatives
- the use of legislation in support of ‘public’ services
- corporatization of public utilities: pros and cons
- remunicipalisation of services for greater efficiency and equity
- participatory alternatives in service delivery and accountability
- non-state actors in services (unions, NGOs, community or faith-based groups)

Project partners were then directly involved in the research on these specific areas and/or assisted with the identification of researchers who could provide the expertise and rigour required. These **partners also interacted with local and national networks and policy communities to ensure a strong participatory process and involvement.**

Commissioned authors followed the normative framework designed in stage one to investigate alternative models. Where possible and appropriate, they adopted a health systems approach, with a focus on upstream strategies aimed at promoting and protecting health in areas such as energy and water security, and attempting to understand how alternative service models encourage integration, multi-sectoral action, equity, appropriate technologies and human rights. As such, marginalized groups such as women, ethnic minorities and rural populations were of particular interest in all of the case studies – regardless of their region or sector – asking questions about the ability of a particular service model to address these vulnerability concerns.

This second stage involved the use of a wider range of research tools and participants, employing both quantitative (e.g. statistical analyses using the STATA software in Ortiz Hernández and Pérez Salgado 2014) and qualitative research methodologies. In most cases the research was participatory, involving service users, workers and producers in

an effort to capture a broad a set of opinions as well as building longer term research and service delivery capacity. Face-to-face interviews with policy-makers and utility managers as well as focus groups with service users were important data collection techniques. We present some sample questionnaires in Appendix 7.

Local government was an important entry point for the project, providing explicit and focused research on the capacity of municipal-level authorities to develop and sustain successful service delivery alternatives. Where the state is weak, NGOs and social movements were key in getting access to promising community-based alternatives.

Overall, the normative framework – how and what gets defined as an alternative – presented in Appendix 5 was enriched by discussions among all the stakeholders. Research findings on focus areas were published in 2 books and 17 accessible, policy-oriented Occasional Papers and Briefing Notes, as well as popularized through 3 animation videos available in 7 languages.

Stage Three: Drawing general conclusions from findings

The final stage of the project was meant to provide a forum for an overall evaluation of the research to date, with an emphasis on their implications for service delivery options in South and Southern Africa (grounding the project once again in its initial regional focus). We had originally planned to commission a report to summarize the significance of the findings for Southern Africa but given the amount of written material we already had we decided to use the final Cape Town conference (April 2014) as an opportunity to include a broad range of practitioners, policy-makers and academics and to gauge their uptake and interest in the research. The conference attracted more than 150 people and was an opportunity to showcase the project's findings, expand our research and policy network, receive feedback on our outputs and strengthen partnerships in preparation for a possible next phase of the project. Results from the follow up evaluation of the conference are presented in the section on outcomes further below.

Research conclusions and future research areas will be discussed in a special journal issue on South Africa and in 2 forthcoming edited volumes, one with case studies from around the world and one focusing on Latin America.

Methodological challenges

It was planned that the stage two case studies would take place over a three-year period (years 2-4 of the project), allowing for a continued (re)evaluation of research findings and methods. However, delays in commissioning research due to the transfer of the South African portion of the project from Rhodes University to the University of the Western Cape meant that many case studies were published later than anticipated, which had some impact on our ability to benefit from the sharing of parallel research results and learning from shared methodological challenges.

It should also be noted that we understood from the start that the project's institutional and research capacity was stronger in some countries/sectors than others, and that our

network's research capacities in sub-Saharan Africa were weaker in the realm of alternatives. Despite our continued efforts to document alternatives from this region, the scarcity of innovative public service alternatives reflects in the choice of case studies.

We also realized that too many focus areas had been identified in stage two and we could not explore all of them sufficiently in-depth (e.g. review of health alternatives related to the MDGs, or climate implications for alternatives). In some cases we could not identify the researchers to produce the reports we were looking for (e.g. technology in shaping choices about public versus private service delivery, or nationalization as an alternative in the electricity sector).

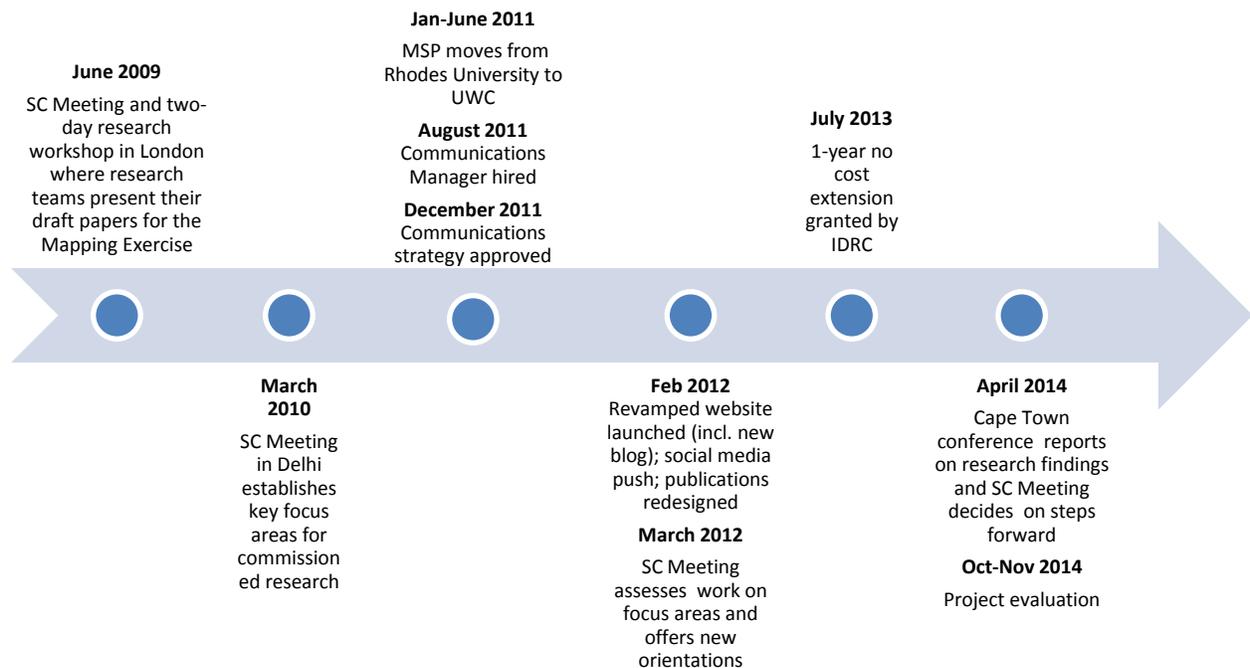
v) Project Activities

Project management

The project had a necessarily slow start due to the complex nature of the work conceptually, and the new global network it was building. The expansion of the project to include partners from around the world was an excellent decision in terms of networking, outreach and cross-regional dialogue but it required creating strong communications channels and a governance structure in 2009-2010, which took longer than anticipated and slowed some of the collaborative research and publication activities in the first two years.

The methodology described in the above section was developed through a series of Steering Committee meetings that defined and refined research orientations (see milestones in Figure 1). As stated in the agreement, we used IDRC funds to organize these meetings and bring together researchers from the three regions. We had initially planned to meet annually but in 2011 we decided to convene only when it could be coupled with other project activities to save costs (e.g. parallel to the 2012 Alternative World Water Forum in Marseille or the MSP's Cape Town conference in 2014). In the interim, more extensive use was made of web-based communication, such as email updates and Skype meetings.

Figure 1: Project management milestones



As mentioned in Figure 1, given the strong focus on publications and knowledge translation for various audiences, a more targeted communications strategy was approved in 2011 and resources were earmarked for strengthening dissemination platforms that would serve for all research outputs (website, blog, social media, redesigned templates for publications). This represented a considerable amount of work but made it possible to achieve impressive dissemination results (see Appendix 3).

The movement of the project's South African office from Rhodes University to the University of the Western Cape (UWC) in 2011 resulted in a 6-month period where virtually no financial transactions could be conducted from that office (or research commissioned), and a further learning period for the new institution in terms of logistical and financial support. Further administrative complications arose due to tighter financial regulations at the national Reserve Bank in South Africa, which delayed payments to researchers outside of South Africa.

Research and policy engagement

Despite these delays the project has produced an extensive list of outputs, including 3 books (with 2 more in progress), 13 Occasional Papers and 4 Briefing Notes (see Appendix 1), all involving activities such as intensive research design, fieldwork, write-up and editing, as well as strategic dissemination including among policy-makers. Table 1 contains a summary of research activities with an overview of outputs (presented more in detail in the following section) and related policy engagement, which is also discussed more at length further below.

MSP research findings from all the focus areas listed here were presented at our Cape Town international conference in April 2014. The event was an opportunity to mobilize our local network (including the strong presence of the Housing Assembly, the South African Municipal Workers' Union and the Alternative Information and Development Centre), to reflect on lessons learned for Southern Africa and on emerging themes globally. More details on the conference are presented below as part of the section on outputs and Appendix 6 presents the programme and participants list.

Table 1: Main research activities, timelines and related outputs

Focus Areas	Research Activity	Lead Researcher(s)	Timeline	Outputs
Methodology	Alternatives to privatization: mapping exercise	Al-Hassan Adam, Cheryl Batistel, Kate Bayliss, Daniel Chavez, Carlos Crespo, Yoswa M. Dambisya, Buenaventura Dargantes, Ben Fine, David Hall, Terri Hathaway, Luis Ortiz Hernández, Nepomuceno Malaluan, Mary Ann Manahan, Marcela Olivera, Amit Sengupta, Susan Spronk, Philipp Terhorst, Hilary Wainwright	November 2008 – Feb 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - book published by Routledge (Europe and North America), LeftWord (Asia), HSRC Press (Africa) - translation to Spanish published by Icaria editorial - translation to Turkish by NotaBene - 6 launch events in presence of policy-makers (Cape Town, Delhi, Ottawa, Amsterdam, London, Montevideo) - workshop at Alternative World Water Forum 2012 - normative framework and 'criteria for success' used as basis for 3 animation videos produced
Public finance	Universal Health Coverage	Amit Sengupta, PHM, India	January – May 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2 Occasional Papers: one focusing on UHC in India (in-kind contribution) and one global overview - Blog on Oxfam's <i>Global Health Check</i> - animation video summarizing analysis (subtitles in 4 languages, being dubbed in Hindi) - 20+ op-eds - 15+ lectures on findings (incl. Delhi panel on global health and equity organized by WHO and attended by key policy-makers) - informed PHM recommendations at WHA66 and 67 - informed chapter in <i>Global Health Watch 4</i>
	Universal health coverage in Latin America	Luis Hernandez, ALAMES, Mexico	July 2013- May 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Occasional Paper in English and Spanish - 2 op-eds on <i>The Lancet Blog</i> and Oxfam's <i>Global Health Check</i> - distributed by ALAMES - presentation at Cape Town conference
	State-owned banks and public services financing	Thomas Marois, SOAS, UK	April-Dec 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Occasional Paper - 2 op-eds - presentation at MSP

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> conference in Cape Town - forthcoming book chapter - Bank of England contacted the author for additional insights
	Public banking for development in Turkey	Thomas Marois, SOAS and Ali Rıza Güngen, Samsun, Turkey	April-Dec 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Occasional Paper (incl. translation to Turkish) - 1 op-ed in <i>Development Viewpoint</i> - 1 published journal article (Turkish) - 2 forthcoming journal articles
	Public finance for public services	Ronnie Lipschutz, University of California, US	April – Dec 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Occasional Paper - Briefing Note - Blog post on <i>SocialFinance.ca</i> - research presented to UNDP officials in New York - 1 media hit
Gender	Gender and public services	Chandra Mohanty, Syracuse University, US	September 2009 – December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Briefing Note incl. extended bibliography - MSP conference presentation
	Gender and public water in Dhaka, Bangladesh	Farhana Sultana, Syracuse University, US	Dec 2011 – Sept 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Occasional Paper - Montreal conference presentation, May 2014
Remunicipalisation	Remunicipalisation of water (jointly funded with TNI and CEO) - Dar es Salaam - Argentina - Paris - Hamilton - Malaysia	Martin Pigeon, Corporate Europe Observatory, Belgium (co-edited with David McDonald, MSP, Satoko Kishimoto, TNI, and Olivier Hoedeman, CEO; Argentina chap. by Daniel Azpiazu and Esteban Castro)	Sept 2010 – Dec 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Book published in English and Spanish by TNI - translated to Bulgarian - Launch at Alternative World Water Forum 2012 - 2 media hits - animation video summarizing analysis (subtitles in 6 languages) - extensive policy outreach by TNI and Corporate Europe Observatory
Legislation	Legislation and water	Jackie Dugard, Socio-economic Rights Institute of South Africa, Johannesburg	April 2011 – June 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Occasional Paper - 2 op-eds - broadly circulated within various water networks - used for policy advocacy by groups such as KRuHa in Jakarta, Indonesia
	Nationalization of energy electricity in Bolivia	CEDLA, Bolivia	Nov 2012 – March 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Draft paper submitted, considering publication options

Corporatization	Corporatization of water and electricity utilities - Philippines - Malaysia - Burkina Faso - Tunisia - Costa Rica - Uruguay - Europe	Buenaventura Dargantes, Nepo Malaluan, Catherine Baron, Ali Bennasr and Eric Verdeil, Daniel Chavez, Emanuela Lobina	Aug 2011 – April 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - book published April 2014 by Zed Books - launches in Cape Town and London - sent to key contacts at OECD, IEA, World Bank, ILO, UNRISD, etc - discussion at Montreal conference, May 2014 - forthcoming Spanish version published by Clave Intelectual (Jan. 2015) - chapters on Tunisia and Burkina Faso translated to French - forthcoming 3-minute animation video
	Corporatization of health services in Malaysia	Chan Chee Khoon	April – Aug 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - presentation at MSP conference - Occasional Paper - forthcoming chapter in edited volume on re-thinking federalism in Malaysia
	Corporatization of water utilities in Indonesia	Mohammad Al'Afghani, Center for Water Governance, Indonesia	March 2013- Jan 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - first draft in, being edited - presentation at Cape Town conference
Participation & Accountability	Integrated Municipal Development Planning in South Africa	Michael Blake, ILRIG, Cape Town (with Adrian Murray)	June 2012 – Jan 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Final paper being edited. Exploring publication options. - presentation at MSP conference where 10 community representatives from the Housing Assembly participated in discussions; strong presence of South African Municipal Workers' Union (Samwu) as well - presentations by A. Murray in Ottawa and Hamilton
	Hospital management in South Africa	Jane Doherty, South Africa	July 2012 – June 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Briefing Note - Background Report and Literature Review - presentation at MSP conference - presentation at Third Global Symposium on Health Systems Research - distributed in SA by the Community of Rural Doctors - distributed within the SA National Department of Health and obtained positive feedback
	Community-based monitoring and	Abhay Shukla, SATHI, India	October 2013-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Occasional Paper - presentation at MSP

	planning in health		September 2014	conference and at closing plenary of Jawaharlal Nehru University International Symposium, New Delhi - presentation at meeting of the Health Ministry's Advisory Group on Community Action, India
Non-state actors	Labour-community alliances for public services in SA	Dale McKinley, South Africa	October 2013-May 2014	- Occasional Paper - presentation at MSP conference - op-ed in SA Civil Society Information Service - forthcoming journal article
	Labour-community alliances for public water in Colombia	Madeleine Bélanger, Susan Spronk, Adrian Murray	June 2013-Oct 2014	- Occasional Paper in English and Spanish - presentation at MSP conference - MSP blog post distributed in Red Vida network - presentation in Medellín in Oct. 2014 as part of an exchange of the Platform for Public-Community Partnerships in the Americas where union leaders from 3 water and electricity utilities were in attendance (video available)
	Faith-based health services in Uganda	Yoswa Dambisya, University of Limpopo, South Africa	Nov 2012 – Aug 2013	- Occasional paper - co-written with the Assistant Commissioner, Human Resource Development, Ministry of Health, Uganda - presentation at MSP conference - circulated among key officials from the Health Ministry through public servants consulted during in research activities
Technology	Technology and public services (focus on electricity)	Prabir Purkayastha, Centre of Technology and Development, India	April 2011-Dec 2011	Draft paper submitted. Final product still to be determined.

Policy engagement strategies related to each research activity varied greatly, ranging from the local to the global level, and from participatory approaches to others favouring knowledge translation for instance. Some research was conducted with extensive participation from policy-makers, as shown by our study of the role of faith-based hospitals in health service delivery that was co-authored with the Assistant

Commissioner in Human Resource Development at the Uganda Ministry of Health, while other outputs involved policy-makers at the dissemination stage such as with advocacy efforts on universal health coverage at the 66th and 67th World Health Assemblies.

Seven out of the 15 lead researchers who replied to our final evaluation survey reported having involved policy-makers as an integral part of their data collection, while 11 said they had interviewed practitioners as well. The other 8 researchers said they had engaged with policy-makers or practitioners after the publication of research findings in the context of dialogue events or seminars.

In terms of dissemination activities we reached out to local state and civil society actors, as well as multilateral organizations and international NGOs. Generally speaking, the commitment of the researcher to dissemination activities and his/her connection with larger civil society networks were key in multiplying the impact of the research findings. We also found that those researchers who had involved policy-makers and practitioners in research activities from the start thereby secured effective channels to disseminate their research findings beyond academia.

Capacity-building

Regional networks

We encouraged and supported 15 regional meetings to advance the MSP research agenda (see Table 2). These meetings were often held parallel to other key events and were coordinated by our partners. They served to deepen their research and administrative capacities as well as to broaden their research networks regionally.

Table 2: Regional MSP research meetings

Latin America	Asia	Africa
Red Vida Assembly, Colombia, May 2010	MSP regional workshop, Thailand, October 2009	Third EQUINET Regional Conference on Equity in Health in east and southern Africa, Kampala, Uganda September 2009
Seminar on Public Services, Montevideo, November 2011	MSP research workshop, New Delhi, March 2010	PERSA team meeting, Durban, South Africa
Red Vida Assembly, Mexico, October 2012	ASEAN People's Forum, Jakarta, Indonesia, May 2011	PERSA team meeting, Sheffield, South Africa
Seminar on Public Enterprise, Montevideo, October 2012	ASEAN-Europe People's Forum, Vientiane, Laos, October 2012	PERSA team meeting, Grahamstown, South Africa
Second Seminar on Public Enterprise, Montevideo, September 2014	Water privatization conference, New Delhi, March 2013	Third People's Health Assembly, Cape Town, July 2012

This approach assisted with cross-sectoral dialogue among researchers. Most of these events were also an opportunity to assist with awareness-raising on MSP issues among a wider public of policy-makers and practitioners, and the general public through media coverage (e.g. Montevideo conferences, ASEAN forums).

Participation in additional global events – such as the Alternative World Water Forum and the GWOPA Congress in the water sector, or the World Health Assembly and the People's Health Assembly in the health sector – allowed expanding our informal network to generate a multiplier effects in the three regions.

Involving students

We involved many students in project management and event logistics throughout the project. In 2009-2010, two postgraduate students based at the Rhodes' Institute of Social and Economic Research in Grahamstown contributed background research for the MSP. Amanda Wilson from Queen's University coordinated communications activities during the same period. Most of the book launches organized in the three regions throughout 2012-2013 also involved students.

In 2014, Natalie Seymour, a postgraduate student from UWC was hired to work on the logistics for the MSP conference in Cape Town. Three more UWC students (Goodwill Tuffuor, Nelly Bama, Kwesi Agwani) assisted with registration and reporting on panel sessions during the conference and prepared multimedia materials for the MSP website. We also provided financial assistance to six post-graduate students to attend the event.

In terms of building research capacity, our commissioned authors generally benefited from the assistance of graduate students during fieldwork and write-up. The 15 lead researchers who replied to our final evaluation survey reported having involved 26 students directly in their MSP research. The project co-directors also mentored 3 PhD students and 3 Master students doing thesis work directly related to the project's research mandates.

vi) Project Outputs

Research

The project produced **15 academic publications**. We established a solid normative and conceptual framework for all subsequent MSP research with the publication of the book *Alternatives to Privatization* in English, Spanish and Turkish. Two other books and 7 journal articles further strengthened our methodology. There are two more books forthcoming (with Zed Books and Icaria Editorial) and half a dozen more submitted journal articles.

With our **13 Occasional Papers** we made a concerted effort to reach out to non-academic audiences, although this research was also grounded in our unique research methodology. We made special efforts to make these accessible to policy makers, multilateral agencies, NGO leaders, unions and social movements. In addition to promoting them at events, on our website, in social media and via our e-newsletter, we developed specialized lists of experts and practitioners who could be interested in each paper and contacted them directly.

Together, our publications have been **downloaded 4,490 times** on our website alone. We also promoted successful alternatives through **28 blog posts** on our own website as well as on external ones (e.g. The Lancet Global Health Blog, Oxfam's Global Health Check), which greatly helped popularize our work. Whenever possible we also reached out to mainstream news outlet, yielding the project over **29 explicit references to our work in the media**.

Three of our most timely publications on key focus areas (universal health coverage, water remunicipalisation and corporatization) served as the basis for **3 animated videos**. One has yet to be released but together the other two have been **viewed by over 22,000 people** on YouTube alone, and have been subtitled in 7 languages.

The MSP participated in more than **65 events** over six years to disseminate research findings among academics, civil society groups, unions, utility operators and policy makers (see Appendix 2). Those events **reached over 2,500 people in over 40 cities** around the world, raising awareness of the key role of the public sector in providing essential services and of emerging alternatives worldwide. Some of these events were co-organized with government officials, including the international seminars that took place in Montevideo, Uruguay with the support of Ministry of Social Development and the Ministry of Industry, Resources and Mining.

Our three-day **MSP conference in Cape Town** in 2014 featured 59 speakers from 22 countries, three plenary events and 15 panels; an additional 75 people, mostly from Africa, participated as observers. This generated an additional **28 conference papers** from researchers outside the formal MSP network, most of which will be published as part of edited volumes to be released in 2015 (Zed Books in English and Icaria Editorial in Spanish) as well as a special journal issue focusing on South Africa.

We include a summary of actual outputs against set outputs in Table 3, but more details are found in Appendices:

- Publications: Appendix 1
- Events: Appendix 2
- Website statistics, email marketing results and social media presence: Appendix 3
- Media Coverage and Blogs: Appendix 4
- Cape Town conference programme and participants list: Appendix 6

Table 3: Project Outputs as compared to those set in the agreement with IDRC

Set Outputs (2008)	Actual Project Outputs (2008-2014)
Occasional Papers (6)	13 Occasional Papers, including 4 in multiple languages (English, Spanish, French, Turkish).
Peer-reviewed articles	7 academic articles in as many journals, including Antipode, Third World Quarterly, the Review of Radical Political Economy, Water Alternatives.
Edited volumes (3)	3 edited books, all in Spanish and English. Two more edited books based on research produced for the 2014 MSP Conference are forthcoming (with Zed Books and Icaria Editorial).
Popular publications (10) (e.g. broadsheets, education manuals, newspapers op-eds or articles)	57 op-eds, news articles and blogs. 22 e-newsletters to our general listserv, which grew from 404 to 641 subscribers. Developing a web-based training module on health alternatives with G3W.
Video documentaries: explore possibility of producing such videos and seek external funding	2 videos released (1 forthcoming on Corporatization in Jan 2015): “Remunicipalisation: Putting Water Back into Public Hands” released in March 2012 with TNI got 19,410 views on YouTube (volunteers subtitled it in Portuguese, Dutch, Italian, German, Greek and Turkish). “Universal health: From private coverage to public care” was released in November 2013 with PHM and got 2,737 views (volunteers subtitled it in Dutch, French, Spanish, Turkish). It is currently being dubbed in Hindi by Oxfam-India for awareness-raising work.
Website: offer more user-friendly and interactive, up-to-date info on important policy developments, newly emerging alternatives, links to other relevant websites, media reports, photos, events, etc.	We revamped our website and strengthened our web presence. Annual website visits grew from 5688 to 15885 – an increase of 279% – when comparing the first year of the project (Nov 2009-Nov 2010) to the last (Nov 2013-Nov 2014). Annual pageviews also increased from 18,161 to 34,263 for the same period, of which our publications represent more than a quarter (9,318 pageviews in the last year). Publications downloads have also increased threefold since the launch

	of the new website in 2012 (total 6,266 including past MSP publications; 4,490 for grant outputs).
Events: present research results at international conferences, as well as at MSP events.	<p>The MSP participated in more than 65 events, reaching over 2,500 people in over 40 cities.</p> <p>Our three-day MSP conference in Cape Town in 2014 featured 59 speakers from 22 countries, three plenary events and 15 panels; an additional 75 people, mostly from Africa, participated as observers. All video of presentations are available online.</p>

As Table 3 demonstrates, we have delivered more research outputs than initially planned in all of the categories listed above. However, we have focused these additional efforts on outputs that would allow us to reach beyond academia for more direct impact on policy and practice. We seized opportunities where debates on alternatives were picking up steam, even if this implied privileging some regions or deepening specific focus areas. For example, our work on health financing through “universal health coverage” in India and in multilateral agencies such as WHO took precedence over conducting some originally planned activities.

Capacity building

From the development of a core team of researchers, to the building of administrative infrastructure, to the creation of inter-sectoral understandings and insights into municipal service delivery, the project has allowed partner organizations to establish themselves as important sites of research on public services, capable of attracting established researchers in the field as well as training graduate students and new researchers.

Table 4: Summary of capacity-building outputs

Numbers of students mentored	<p>38 students mentored</p> <p>Financial support for 6 students to travel to the MSP Cape Town conference to present their research</p>
Research capacity-development activities	<p>4 SC meetings involving capacity development activities for a dozen affiliate researchers</p> <p>15 regional meetings to guide research activities</p> <p>1 meeting on gender-oriented research into public services involving 6 MSP researchers and 3 students</p>
Workshops for policy-makers, practitioners and civil society groups	<p>7 multi-stakeholder workshops:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - International People’s Health University, Thessaloniki - People’s Health Assembly, Cape Town - Alternative World Water Forum, Marseille - ASEAN-Europe People's Forum, Vientiane

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ASEAN People's Forum, Jakarta - People's Social Forum, Ottawa - Workshop on social efficiency in the water sector, Montreal
Networking and inter-sectoral dialogue	<p>International MSP conference, April 2014, Cape Town:</p> <p>150+ researchers, community groups, representatives from leading trade unions, development practitioners and policy makers from around the world working to promote progressive public services in the three sectors (health, water and electricity).</p> <p>Participants were encouraged to participate in panel discussions from all sectors and regions to come to explore alternatives from this broader perspective. Appendix 6 presents the programme and participants list.</p> <p>There was a strong presence from local actors engaged with the MSP such as Cape Town Housing Assembly, the South African Municipal Workers' Union and the Alternative Information and Development Centre (AIDC).</p>

It is noteworthy that women constitute half of the project Steering Committee and the **gender composition** of research teams was also similarly balanced, assisting with gender-sensitive research design, fieldwork, dissemination and advocacy activities. The majority of our research on public services alternatives in the global South was conducted by local researchers. Of the 55 researchers who published their research as part of the MSP, 26 were women and 29 were men, and 34 were **based in the South**. Also, 24 of the 28 capacity-building meetings, workshops and conferences listed in Table 4 were organized in the South and received institutional support from partner organizations on the ground.

We also made a concerted effort to mentor students and involved 38 of them directly in research or as part of our events. This contribution to supporting a new generation of researchers is evidenced in the following quote by a Canada-based PhD student conducting his research in South Africa:

“My MSP related activities have been critical in my development as a developing student and academic researcher. They have allowed me to develop research skills in an academic environment as well as in the field, in liaising with other research partner organizations as well as in the collection of empirical data. This has been invaluable in my ability to continue in my studies at the doctoral level and to secure external funding for this continued work.” – Adrian Murray, University of Ottawa

Indeed, students and other emerging researchers have benefited greatly from our ability to create effective networking among them as well as to connect them with experienced researcher and campaigners in the field. Through their involvement with the MSP, trainees have also gained cross-sectoral and inter-regional insights to inform their

research. Many of these trainees have already demonstrated their ability to raise additional funds for their own work.

From an institutional perspective, increased capacities of partners appear sustainable and most are able to integrate MSP activities into their regular programming. They have demonstrated their capacity to obtain successful funding from other donors to increase the impact of MSP research as illustrated in Table 5.

Table 5: External funding capacity for MSP-related research

Partner	Output	External Funding
Focus on the Global South	<p>Alternatives book research and launch event; 3 related regional publications and 10 talks</p> <p>Participation in 4 MSP Steering Committee meetings</p>	<p>\$75,000 in-kind for project management, roundtable series, regional events, popularized version of MSP research</p> <p>Funds drawn mostly from Development and Peace, CCFD, and Rosa Luxembourg Foundation</p>
PHM	<p>Alternatives book research and launch with LeftWord in Delhi</p> <p>Co-organized sessions on MSP research: - New Delhi (2010) - People's Health Assembly, Cape Town (2012) - Bangalore (2013)</p> <p>2 occasional papers on UHC and related video, incl. extensive dissemination in India (20+ news articles; 15+ talks)</p> <p>Participation in 3 MSP Steering Committee meetings</p>	<p>\$3750 in-kind for project management and research on UHC in India</p> <p>\$21,250 from ActionAid's South-South Solidarity fund for Bangalore event</p> <p>€3,000 from G3W for health alternatives training module based on MSP case studies</p>
TNI	<p>Remunicipalisation book production, launch in Marseille and Spanish translation</p> <p>Remunicipalisation video</p> <p>Distribution and dissemination of Spanish version of Alternatives book</p> <p>Participation in MSP Cape Town Conference: Satoko Kishimoto; Fiona Dove; Brid Brennan; Hilary Wainwright</p> <p>Participation in 4 MSP Steering Committee meetings</p>	<p>\$3200 in-kind for project management</p> <p>€26,000 for the remunicipalisation work, including in-kind and external funding from Oxfam Novib</p> <p>€5,250 on the Spanish version of the Alternatives book</p> <p>€15,000 in travel costs and time for the Cape Town conference</p>
Red Vida	<p>Research and dissemination of Alternatives and Corporatization book chapters</p>	<p>\$850 in-kind for project management</p> <p>\$30,000 in-kind contribution of one</p>

	<p>Translation and dissemination of paper on community water alternative in Colombia</p> <p>Participation in 3 MSP Steering Committee meetings</p>	<p>researcher for 2 publications</p> <p>Secured \$30,000 for the Red Vida from Tides Foundation as a result of increased capacity</p>
SIGDS	<p>Research and presentations on Alternatives and Corporatization book chapters</p> <p>1 Briefing Note and 1 Occasional Paper</p> <p>Participation in 4 MSP Steering Committee meetings</p>	<p>\$4000 in-kind for project management and write-up</p> <p>Participation in MSP helped leverage \$87,844 for SSHRC standard-research grant (2010-14) that looked more in-depth at alternatives from MSP's 'mapping exercise'</p>
SOAS	<p>Research on role of state-owned banks in financing public services</p> <p>Participation in 2 MSP Steering Committee meetings, plus June 2009 workshop</p>	<p>\$2400 in-kind for project management</p> <p>MSP research served as basis for \$1-million proposal to the UK's ESRC Funding Council on public banking in emerging economies</p>
PSIRU	<p>Participation in 3 MSP Steering Committee meetings, plus June 2009 workshop</p>	<p>\$3200 in-kind for project management</p>
Equinet	<p>book on Universal Health Care in Southern Africa</p>	<p>funded by the South African Development Trust and drew on MSP-Equinet networks.</p>
Queen's University	<p>Research on remunicipalization.</p> <p>Various launch events</p> <p>Coordination of and participation in 4 MSP Steering Committee meetings, plus June 2009 workshop</p>	<p>\$110,000 in-kind for co-director salary and office space</p> <p>\$42,300 UN-Habitat grant for 1-year research project to develop an alternative 'social' efficiency framework for GWOPA</p> <p>Applied for a SSHRC grant in 2014</p>
UWC	<p>Research on labour-community alliances and social protest in South Africa.</p> <p>Series of UWC talks</p> <p>MSP conference in Cape Town.</p>	<p>\$12,000 in-kind support for the co-director (salary, office space, internet and printing, venues for talks, facilitating travel arrangements, etc).</p> <p>\$5,000 in-kind contributions by co-ordinating student assistants for the final conference in Cape Town and providing AV equipment.</p> <p>Leveraged more than \$10,000 in-kind from local partners and national unions for the participation of nearly 45 leaders from community groups (Progressive Youth Movement, Manenberg People's Centre, Housing Assembly, AIDC, ILRIG) and reps from Samwu, Numsa, Cosatu.</p>

As illustrated in Table 5, we have **secured a total of more than \$325,000 for activities** related to the MSP from our network partners, NGOs and funding agencies, all in an effort to leverage IDRC monies invested in this research project.

vii) Project Outcomes

Research and capacity building

It is still early to definitively evaluate research uptake at the academic level given most of the outputs were released between 2012 and 2014, and a majority of Occasional Papers went out in the last year as did one of the books. The new and innovative nature of the work also probably means it will take more time before our alternative framework can be integrated. We anticipate significant influence over the longer term as a result of our continued dissemination efforts.

The mix of academic, NGO, labour and community organizations from the health, water and electricity sectors in our network has resulted in a sharing of insights and strengths. This close collaboration has increased the 'scientific literacy' of the non-researchers and, perhaps more importantly, improved the 'grassroots literacy' of academics, making both stronger in terms of influencing policy.

Partners also broadened their research networks regionally and internationally, and solidified inter-partner communications and management systems essential to the long-term viability of effective multi-institutional and multi-disciplinary research.

Many have seen the MSP's work as providing useful conceptual anchor points to formulate their policy recommendations, as illustrated in the following responses to our end-of-project survey:

"Research work on public services and on UHC has been very useful in informing PHM's positions in these areas" – Amit Sengupta, PHM-India

"Collaboration with MSP has enhanced our insights related to public services by acquainting us with concepts like 'publicness' of services and dimensions of publicness" – Abhay Shukla, SATHI, India

A social movement like the Red Vida had extensive cumulative knowledge of the water sector already, yet its members had less direct research experience, and the project changed their perspective on the transformative potential of research:

"It gave us access to quality information that has strengthened our approach to organizing and significantly contributed to the effectiveness of our activist endeavours seeking more just water policies." – Marcela Olivera, Red Vida, Bolivia

"Over the last few years in the Red Vida, there has been a shift in focus from struggling against privatization to a greater focus and debate on creating alternatives, including a debate on the "social-public" and public-public partnerships. The MSP's work is referenced in these debates." – Susan Spronk, University of Ottawa and member of Red Vida, Canada

“creemos que mas que aportar al trabajo del MSP, el MSP ha aportado a nuestro trabajo y se ha convertido en uno de los aliados mas importantes y constantes de la red.” – Adriana Marquisio, Red Vida, Uruguay

For ALAMES in Latin America, research capacity was also already good, but collaboration with the MSP opened up new opportunities to consider health alternatives from other regions and to learn about new dissemination strategies:

“Involucrarme en el MSP permitió ampliar mi trabajo para estudiar problemas en una perspectiva internacional y comparativa. Una herramienta importante que aprendí son las estrategias de diseminación del conocimiento (...) Finalmente, el intercambio de experiencias y conocimientos con colegas de otros países hizo claras las similitudes y especificidad de la provisión de servicios públicos en diferentes sociedades del Sur Global.” – Luis Ortiz Hernández, ALAMES, Mexico

Others have clearly seen the influence of MSP research in debates at a national level:

“[I]t has stirred new debates on the direction of research in academic circles here in the Philippines, in particular on alternatives and new methodologies for cross-continental comparative research.” – May Ann Manahan, Focus on the Global South, Philippines

For some commissioned authors, participation in the project refocused their own research and encouraged them to seek additional funding:

“The work with MSP has been an important catalyst for a shift in my research within the field of banking and development. My understandings of and contributions to the sphere of public services has increased significantly as a result of my interaction with MSP. Importantly, the experience and insight gained from MSP activities has provided a basis for me to submit a large research proposal to the UK ESRC funding council (about \$1 million) to further study public banking in emerging economies. This is directly connected to my MSP activities.” – Thomas Marois, School of Oriental and African Studies, UK

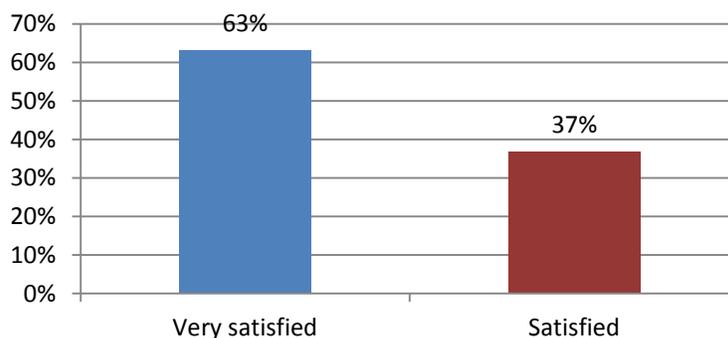
“[i]t opened a new issue at a timely moment, it helped me developing further a research on electricity in Tunisia funded by the French National Agency for Research Funding” – Eric Verdeil, Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS), France

Cape Town Conference

The MSP’s international conference hosted in Cape Town in April 2014 was designed to consolidate findings from all research undertaken since 2008, as well as to widen the debate on alternatives with the contribution of researchers new to the MSP. It allowed us to generate new research on Southern Africa, to contribute to local capacity and to strengthen partnerships in the region in preparation for a possible next phase of the project.

We conducted a follow-up survey after six months among 32 conference panelists who were not related to the MSP in order to assess the event’s short-term impact. Figure 2 presents the results from the 19 responses we collected to the question “Overall, were you satisfied with this conference?” A selection of answers to open-ended question follows.

Figure 2: Satisfaction with the final MSP conference, Cape Town, April 2014



“Yes, I do have a better insight of public services because I was exposed to research and experiences in different sectors and different levels of government.”
– Walter Flores, Center for the Study of Equity and Governance in Health Systems, Guatemala

“Personally for me, this is the first time I met with other water activists (my field of work) from different countries...” – Irfan Zamzami, Amrta Institute for Water Literacy, Indonesia

“Through the conference, I met new people working on similar issues and we are working toward future collaborative projects... Presenting my work at the MSP conference gave it the necessary profile for practitioners to consider its findings.”
– Mary Galvin, University of Johannesburg, South Africa

“Participation definitely contributed to building an extended network, both professional and academic.” – Elena Kim, American University of Central Asia in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

“After the conference I prepared an article for the local newspaper *Agua Bien Común*. The article discusses the meanings of public in the city of Medellín based of the outcomes of the conference.” – Marcela López, PhD Candidate in the Department of Geography at the Freie Universität Berlin, Germany

“Yes, it has expanded my sense of what has been done already, and some of the key issues at stake, particularly in the South African context, but more broadly. I really appreciated the connection and participation of a range of activists at the meeting... I have a renewed commitment to working with activists, and with other researchers, on my work on these themes.” – Leila Harris, Institute on Resources Environment and Sustainability at the University of British Columbia, Canada

“It was an opportunity for me in particular to connect with researchers working on water and sanitation issues in Africa as well as an opportunity to better understand how to bring stronger gender analysis into the sector... Many of the papers and presentations from the conference continue to serve as references for me in my work at the Blue Planet Project.” – Meera Karunanathan, Council of Canadians, Canada

“The MSP has been increasingly central to the Unions’ strategic thinking on the state of Local Government, and its interface with the Public Sector as a whole. Not only have we drawn on the extensive research work that has been undertaken in South Africa by the Project, but also the many international studies and examples that have helped to articulate a much broader view, and for those of us in the labour movement, this includes an increased range of positive options on how most effectively to defend and extend the public sector. The MSP has also developed its capacity of being able to bridge the 'coherence divide' that often exists between institutions based in the Academy, and worker representatives at shop floor level. The recent Conference is a case in point, and we were very pleased that SAMWU shop stewards were able to have very fruitful and informative exchanges with an impressive array of scholars and researchers grappling with the survival and transformation of the public sector. For the sake of a rational local government system we hope MSP will continue to be supported and allowed to flourish.” – Stephen Faulkner, International Officer, South African Municipal Workers’ Union (Samwu)

Policy influence

Social movements, labour groups and NGOs have also used MSP research to develop policy recommendations and to advocate for improved service delivery as well as working and living conditions. We provide a few illustrative examples of concrete outcomes here.

Universal health coverage

The entry point for our research focused on public health financing was via the global debate on universal health coverage (UHC) models versus universal health systems. The MSP paper on UHC debates in India came at the height of efforts to reformulate national health policy in 2013. The author Amit Sengupta weighed in on debates by attracting significant media coverage (see Appendix 4). The other paper we published on UHC from a global perspective was released soon after and served to inform the People's Health Movement (PHM) [recommendations](#) at the 66th session of the World Health Assembly.

Based on this research, we produced a 3-minute animation video on UHC. We used it in the lead up to 67th session of the World Health Assembly to raise awareness of the risk of neglecting public provision of health services among key actors in the debate. At the national level, the video raised particular interest in India where the debate on health financing is ongoing and Oxfam-India is now putting resources toward dubbing it in Hindi to use it in its awareness-raising work across the country.

In 2014, we released another paper evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the UHC model versus universal health systems in Latin America by comparing Chile and Costa Rica. We disseminated it in numerous networks such as ALAMES, Oxfam, the Third World Network and the Equity, Health & Human Development program at PAHO. A commentary piece summing up key findings was featured on *The Lancet Global Health Blog*.

Overall our continued engagement on the topic has brought to the fore the poor results of insurance-based health coverage in terms of equity and has promote alternative public health system solutions. According to Amit Sengupta from PHM-India: "While difficult to quantify, the work through MSP on UHC, has started being picked up by the mainstream discourse on UHC. Most web based resources on UHC, for example, list MSP's and PHM's position."

We are currently collaborating with Brussels-based Third World Health Aid (G3W) on a training module focused on alternatives in public health services, for which they have earmarked €3,000.

Social efficiency in the water sector

The work on public-public partnerships and social understandings of efficiency that the MSP conducted in the water sector during the initial mapping exercise exerted significant policy influence. Following our participation in the 2nd Global Water Operators' Partnership Alliance (GWOPA) Conference, we voiced concerns through an op-ed (*The Guardian Poverty Matters Blog*, "[Global public water alliance must not be allowed to evaporate](#)") about the UN body's tendency to use the same narrow financial performance indicators as private companies, encouraging public operators to adopt market-based operating principles.

This constructive criticism eventually led to the approval of a grant via UN-Habitat (US\$42,300) for a one-year research project to develop an alternative 'social' efficiency framework in collaboration with water operators, with the aim of producing flexible guidelines for knowledge transfer in WOPs. The research outputs will be aimed primarily at a water operator and policy audience, with secondary outputs for an academic audience and citizen water networks.

MSP research on water remunicipalisation has also been very timely and influential. Our book published in 2012 in English and Spanish has generated interest from policy-makers and citizen groups alike by demonstrating the cost-effectiveness of public management. The 5-minute animation video we produced to popularize the research findings was released in 2013 in English, French and Spanish and has since reached over 20,000 viewers on web platforms. Citizen-led water networks who wanted to use it in local campaigns volunteered to subtitle it in Portuguese, Italian, German, Greek and Turkish.

The video was also of interest to policy-makers, notably in France where it was presented to over 150 local authorities as part of World Water Day activities at *Mairie de Paris* the same year. It has been presented in numerous other key meetings from Cape Town to San Salvador to Barcelona to Quezon City. We are currently working with TNI on another open-access edited book on the subject to be published in early 2015. This publication will target policy-makers and water operators even more directly. TNI is covering research costs to the amount of €8,000 and German and French public water operator associations will also contribute an estimated €8,000 for translations.

Legislation to protect public goods

The MSP conducted original cross-regional research on the effects of legislation and constitutional reforms that are designed explicitly to prevent, resist or reverse privatization and promote public services. The goal was to analyze the extent to which such legal tools can assist in developing, sustaining and improving effective public service provision. This focus area has been closely associated with such policy developments in a growing number of countries and as such it has been of interest to legislators.

For example, MSP associate researcher Susan Spronk was invited as a thematic expert to take part in a consultation forum organized by the Salvadoran *Comisión de Medio Ambiente y Cambio Climático* of the Legislative Assembly to inform the study of the bill for a General Water Law (*Ley General del Agua*). About 50 people attended the event, including the Chair of the Environmental Committee and the other parliamentarians who serve on the committee, as well as representatives from civil society organizations concerned with environmental issues and consumer rights. The MSP's water remunicipalisation video was presented on this occasion and Susan Spronk gave at least six television and radio interviews, including a half-hour interview on the popular program, "Tu mañana." <http://www.asamblea.gob.sv/noticias/archivo-de-noticias/desarrollan-foro-de-consulta-en-torno-al-proyecto-de-ley-general-del-agua>

Another example is the research focusing on water in Asia published in the *Alternatives to Privatization* book that has figured into the agenda of development circles in the Philippines, in particular by putting forward innovative water service management alternatives. Some 10-15 government officials were consistently involved in the roundtable series hosted by Focus on the Global South in the country, including Walden Bello of Akbayan Party List, Bernadette Herrera-Dy of the Bagong Henerasyon Partylist, the former Mayor of Iligan City, the current undersecretary of the National Anti-Poverty Commission, Jude Esguerra, and officials of the National Water Resources Board. This sustained policy engagement has contributed to the introduction of a legislative bill on watershed protection in the House of Representatives in the Philippines. Finally, in India the research is now being used by an active water campaigning network for advocacy efforts with key allies in Parliament and the government bureaucracy.

viii) Overall Assessment and Recommendations

The project worked well because academics and campaigners involved shared common goals, were committed to participatory research and shared strong ethical commitments to empowerment through research. Our capacity-building efforts have and must continue to link with social movements and unions because service delivery alternatives are embedded in political commitments and public values; policy is not only made by elected politicians and bureaucrats but also on the ground by frontline workers and the communities themselves.

There continues to be a strong appetite from students and non-academic researchers alike for strengthening research capacity in the field of alternatives to privatization in the South, and very few places to turn to for this. As such, the MSP serves a distinct and important role. We are helping them to publish and present materials in various formats, helping expose their work across regions and make it more visible to others in this field of inquiry. Where there is still much to be done, however, is on finding ways to interest researchers and practitioners in cross-sectoral issues to create solidarity in this search for progressive policy options in health, water and electricity service delivery.

But this type of capacity-building is challenging and difficult work, requiring concerted efforts to sustain support, assist with networking and dissemination, and maintain an ongoing dialogue, all of which requires central administrative capacity within the project.

The governance structure of the MSP in the current phase was also partly a legacy of the project's prior activities and a reflection of locations of key personnel (South Africa and Canada). The need to build a new research framework and an extended partner network benefited from this relatively centralized governance structure.

An expanded network of partners is now solidly in place. As we move forward, there would need to be an increased sense of decentralized ownership and capacity, which combined with effective central coordination would significantly increase the reach of future activities. Our rigorous and well-coordinated approach to research would need to be maintained and enhanced by this ability to distribute the work load and extend responsibilities more broadly.

In terms of dissemination, we would need to continue to develop sectoral and regional mechanisms to engage on specific themes and with target audiences. Better feedback loops to bring back info from constituencies would also help with evaluation and strategic planning.

That being said, to our knowledge the project remains the first coordinated effort to systematically articulate a set of research methods and frameworks on 'successful public services', to build an international network of researchers, practitioners and campaigners, and to construct cross-sector narratives with a focus on health systems. It has been a demanding and challenging task, but one that has contributed knowledge and capacity and with much more promise for the future.

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