

Impact case study (REF3b)

Institution: University of Greenwich
Unit of Assessment: (UoA 19) - Business and Management Studies
Title of case study: Public-public partnerships (PUPs)
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>Public-public partnerships (PUPs) are emerging as a viable approach to develop capacity and enhance efficiency and effectiveness in the global water sector. Since 2000, the Public Services International Research Unit (PSIRU) has played a globally leading role in researching the developmental potential of water PUPs in developing countries. The impact includes influencing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the EU to create a new €40million programme supporting PUPs in ACP countries; • the UN Secretary General Advisory Board to launch a global scheme supporting PUPs; • a majority of Indian states to agree to develop water services through PUPs.
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>The underpinning research has been produced by David Hall, Director of PSIRU and Emanuele Lobina, Principal Lecturer, PSIRU, between 2000 and 2012. The outputs consist of three commissioned reports and a peer refereed journal article. The notion of public-public partnerships as an instrument for providing capacity and institutional development in the water sector was first formulated by Hall (2000 [3.4]) and the concept was then refined by Hall et al. [3.1] and Lobina and Hall [3.2, 3.3]. It has since become prominent in the policy and academic debate on capacity and institutional development. The research outputs representing the underpinning research are regularly cited as key references in the literature on the subject – for example in a book written by the world leading scholar Karen Bakker (2010) and in a report produced for the European Parliament (Tucker et al., 2010). The 2011-2012 European Report on Development (European Commission, 2012) acknowledges the merits of PUPs and calls for PUPs to be considered as a policy option for developing capacity in water – an indirect citation of PSIRU’s work on PUPs.</p> <p>Our findings can be summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the last 20 years, Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) have failed to meet theoretical expectations of greater efficiency and effectiveness in developing water supply and sanitation systems. PPPs have also failed to meet expectations in terms of capacity development. The private sector’s imperative to achieve profit maximisation is incompatible with the need to build capacity in developing countries. Knowledge transfer from private operators to local managers, local authorities and civil society would in fact preclude long term business prospects and undermine the very raison d’être of PPPs [3.3, 3.2 pp98-99]. In light of the following findings, PUPs are emerging as a viable alternative to PPPs for developing capacity in the water sector. • PUPs are the collaboration between two or more public authorities or organisations, based on solidarity, to improve the capacity and effectiveness of one partner in providing public water supply and/or sanitation services. PUPs are peer relationships forged around common values and objectives, which exclude profit-seeking [3.1]. • The absence of commercial considerations allows partners in PUPs to reinvest all available resources into the development of local capacity, to build mutual trust which translates in long term capacity gains, and to incur low transaction costs [3.1, 3.3]. • The comparative advantage of PUPs over PPPs extends to more ample opportunities for replication and scaling up. PUPs are far more diffused globally and induce less social resistance than PPPs. In addition, public operators that have benefitted from PUPs tend to support other public utilities in need of capacity development, thus producing a multiplier effect [3.1, 3.3].
<p>3. References to the research (REF1 submitted staff in bold, **REF2 Output)</p> <p><u>Research outputs</u></p> <p>3.1 Hall, D., Lobina, E., Corral, V., Hoedeman, O., Terhorst, P., Pigeon, M., & Kishimoto, S. (2009) Public-public partnerships (PUPs) in water. Report commissioned by the Transnational Institute and Public Services International, March 2009. http://www.psiru.org/reports/2009-03-</p>

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- **3.2 Lobina, E. & Hall, D. (2008)** The comparative advantage of the public sector in the development of urban water supply, in *Progress in Development Studies*, 8(1), pp. 85-101.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/146499340700800108>
- 3.3 Lobina, E. & Hall, D. (2006)** Public-Public Partnerships as a catalyst for capacity building and institutional development: lessons from Stockholm Vatten's experience in the Baltic region. A *PSIRU Report* commissioned by Public Services International, August 2006:
<http://www.psiru.org/reports/2006-09-W-PUPs.doc>.
- 3.4 Hall, D. (2000)** Water partnerships - public-public partnerships and 'twinning' in water and sanitation. A *PSIRU Report* commissioned by Public Services International, July 2000:
<http://www.psiru.org/sites/default/files/2000-07-W-PUPs.doc>.

Quality of the research

Lobina and Hall (2008) is a peer refereed journal article listed in REF2. Acting in his capacity as external assessor for the University of Greenwich, Professor Peter Fairbrother, School of Management, RMIT has rated Lobina and Hall (2008) as 4 star - i.e. quality that is world-leading in terms of originality, significance and rigour. An email from Professor Fairbrother is available if required to confirm this. Hall et al. (2009), Lobina and Hall (2006) and Hall (2000) are all commissioned reports and are regularly cited as key references in the policy and scholarly literature on the subject – for example in Tucker et al. (2010) and in Bakker (2010). Finally, in a letter sent to David Hall on 11 March 2010, the European Commission stated that it had decided to award Service contract 2010/236-444 to PSIRU (duration 2010-2012, contract value €52,000), in consideration of PSIRU's "unique expertise" on PUPs. More precisely, the European Commission had established that PSIRU was internationally recognised for having a unique expertise on the experience with PUPs in the global water and sanitation sector. This was established through conducting a literature survey and through enquiries amongst experts in water and sanitation. The letter is a confidential document and can be made available to the panel upon request.

Bakker, K. (2010) *Privatizing Water – Governance failure and the world's urban water crisis*. Cornell University Press: Ithaca and London.

Tucker, J., Calow, R., Nickel, D., Thaler, T. (2010) A comparative evaluation of Public-Private and Public-Public Partnerships for urban water services in ACP countries. Study requested by the European Parliament's Committee on Development, EXPO/B/DEVE/FWC/2009-01/Lot5/01, May 2010. Brussels: Directorate-General for External Policies of the Union, Policy Department:
<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/studiesdownload.html?languageDocument=EN&file=31831>.

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

The underpinning research has produced tangible impact by influencing the policy decisions of international organisations and the practices and understanding of national governments, associations of public water operators, international NGOs and trade unions. This impact was the result of a two-pronged outreach strategy including the dissemination of the research outputs through the internet and presentations; and the provision of policy advice to organisations listed in Impact 4. These organisations have in turn facilitated policy diffusion resulting in Impacts 1, 2 and 3. This strategy has led to the production of the following impact.

Impact 1. Launch of the European Commission's ACP-EU Water Partnerships initiative

In 2010, the EU earmarked €40million to support not-for-profit partnership projects and PUPs in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries, aiming to develop capacity, and enhance

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governance and sustainability in the ACP water and sanitation sector. PSIRU's research has influenced the launch and informed the design of this international programme, particularly in relation to the not-for-profit nature of partnerships as a determinant of the success of PUPs, and the possibility to achieve replication and scaling up thanks to the multiplier effect of PUPs (European Commission, 2010: 10, 21). In a meeting with public water utilities and international NGOs, a European Commission official acknowledged that Lobina and Hall (2006) was a key reference informing the design of the programme. The European Commission official can be contacted to corroborate this.

Impact 2. Launch of the United Nations' Water Operators Partnerships initiative

In 2006, the United Nations Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation (UNSGAB) called for the adoption of Water Operators Partnerships as the key policy for the development of capacity in the global water and sanitation sector. In 2009, the United Nations agency UN-HABITAT responded to UNSGAB's 2006 action plan by establishing the Global Water Operators' Partnerships Alliance (GWOPA) with the remit to promote and enable impactful Water Operators Partnerships (UN-HABITAT, 2009). UNSGAB's initiative was influenced by our findings on the benefits produced by the not-for-profit nature, cost-effectiveness and multiplier effect of PUPs, and was promoted by a member of UNSGAB to whom PSIRU had provided policy advice on PUPs since 2000. In a letter sent to Emanuele Lobina to corroborate this impact statement, said UNSGAB member stated "PSIRU's research on PUPs was key in influencing the launch of GWOPA".

Impact 3. Adoption of PUPs as coordinating principle by conference of state water authorities in India

In January 2011, the Indian-based think tank Centre of Excellence for Change – <http://www.waterandclimatefuture.com> - organised a high level conference on "Water partnerships towards meeting the climate challenge" in Chennai, India. The conference was attended by representatives of Indian state water authorities and launched the Water Organisations Partnerships platform of India, based on the concept of PUPs. The conference was addressed by David Hall whose presentation influenced the final decision adopted by the conference. "David Hall, director of PSIRU, contributed tremendously to the understanding of why PuP is the way forward to tackle water crisis in India and elsewhere" (RPW, 2011).

Impact 4. Adoption of policy supporting PUPs by international NGOs, associations of public water operators and trade unions

The underpinning research has influenced international NGOs, associations of public water operators and trade unions to support PUPs in the water and sanitation sector. Three examples are given below:

(a) Established in 2005, the Reclaiming Public Water Network (RPW) is a multi-sectoral network that connects NGOs, researchers, community activists, public water operators, trade unionists, and community water systems from around the world. A primary objective of RPW is to promote PUPs in the global water and sanitation sector (RPW, 2010). This policy decision has been influenced by exposure to the underpinning research, as evidenced by the fact that key RPW members co-authored Hall et al. (2009).

(b) Established in 2009, Aqua Publica Europea is an association of European public water operators - <http://www.aquapublica.eu>. It decided to support the European Commission's ACP-EU

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Water Partnerships initiative as a result of PSIRU presentations made at events organised by Aqua Publica Europea and informed by the underpinning research. A member of Aqua Publica Europea has corroborated this statement in a letter to Emanuele Lobina.

(c)Public Services International (PSI) is the global federation of public service trade unions bringing together more than 20 million workers, represented by 650 unions in 148 countries and territories - <http://www.world-psi.org>. PSI's continued support for PUPs has been influenced by the underpinning research and by policy advice received from PSIRU since 2000. A PSI official has corroborated this statement in a letter to Emanuele Lobina.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

References:

European Commission (2012) Confronting scarcity: managing water, energy and land for inclusive and sustainable growth. European Report on Development 2011-2012: http://erd-report.eu/erd/report_2011/documents/erd_report%202011_en_lowdef.pdf.

European Commission (2010) Partnerships for Capacity Development in the ACP Water & Sanitation Sector - Restricted Call for Proposals - Guidelines for grant applicants. 10th European Development Fund, ACP-EU Water Facility (Reference: EuropeAid/129510/C/ACT/Multi).

RPW (Reclaiming Public Water Network) (2011) New Public Water Partnerships towards Meeting Climate Challenge. Our Water Commons feature story: <http://ourwatercommons.org/feature/new-public-water-partnerships-towards-meeting-climate-challenge>.

RPW (Reclaiming Public Water Network) (2010) What is the "Reclaiming Public Water Network"?, RPW leaflet: www.waterjustice.org/uploads/attachments/RPW%20network%20leaflet%20es%20and%20eng%20final.pdf.

UN-HABITAT (2009) GWOPA - Global Water Operators' Partnerships Alliance: Helping water operators help one another: http://gwopa.org/images/generic_gwopa_brochure_final.pdf.

Individuals who can corroborate our impact statements

- European Commission official (in relation to Impact 1)
- Member of UNSGAB and PSI official (in relation to Impacts 2 and 4)
- Member of RPW (in relation to Impacts 1 and 4)
- Member of Centre of Excellence for Change (in relation to Impact 3)
- Member of Aqua Publica Europea (in relation to Impact 4)