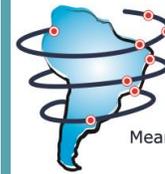




ARTISTIC COVER, FIRST MUNICIPAL CONFERENCE OF SANITATION, RECIFE, BRAZIL

# DESAFIO Newsletter

Issue 4



## DESAFIO

Democratisation of Water  
and Sanitation Governance by  
Means of Socio-Technical Innovation

### May 2014

#### IN THIS ISSUE

Our newsletter circulates quarterly and provides updates about the progress of our project activities, findings and other relevant information. You will find our contact details on the back of this newsletter.

#### Field Work Highlights

Read updated information about the work done in recent months by our research teams in Argentina, Brazil, and Colombia.

Pages 2-5

#### Article: New old problems in water management

In this article, we feature Maria da Conceição Cunha, Professor of the Department of Civil Engineering at the University of Coimbra, Portugal. She argues that fostering greater social inclusion and societies that are more democratic requires going beyond merely technological innovations.

Page 6

#### The Interview

We interviewed Eng. José Carlos Melo, designer of the Condominial Sanitation System, which we address in one of our [historical case studies](#). We present here a synthesis of the interview.

Page 7

#### Engagement and Dissemination

Our team is very active in engaging communities, governments and other relevant actors in connection with our research.



Figure 2. Meeting of our team SISAR-CAGECE, the public water utility of Ceará, Brazil, in a meeting with a local community.

We also organize and participate in academic and policy-related events at the local, regional, national, and international levels. Read more about DESAFIO's engagement, dissemination, and publications activities ...

Pages 8-11



Figure 1. Training of local community members in basic water quality tests, Lagedo, Minas Gerais, Brazil (Case Study D4.1)

## Field Work Highlights

### The [Integrated Rural Sanitation System \(SISAR\)](#), Ceará, Brazil

Our research teams at the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG) and at Ceará's Water and Sanitation Company (CAGECE) have been working closely in the development of the three cases studies involving SISAR (one historical, one current and one intervention case). For the [intervention case](#), the teams' recent research activities have centred on establishing a direct dialogue with the community of Cristais, Cascavél where a new water and sanitation system is being built. They have included several meetings with Cristais' community association to discuss the technical and administrative details of the facilities being built and the functioning of the SISAR model of WSS, which the community will adopt for the management of the system. In addition, meetings have been held with representatives of the [State of Ceará's Secretariat for Agrarian Development](#) and a [World Bank's](#) commission in charge of overseeing water and sanitation works throughout the state. The research activities in Cristais have included a pilot test of the questionnaire designed to assess the impact of the intervention on the living conditions of the community, meetings with local health workers and choosing a community with similar socioeconomic characteristics and a functioning SISAR-operated WSS to be used as a baseline to assess/compare the impact of the introduction of the SISAR socio-technical innovation in the community of Cristais.



Figure 4. DESAFIO's team meeting with members of the community of Cristais, April 2014.

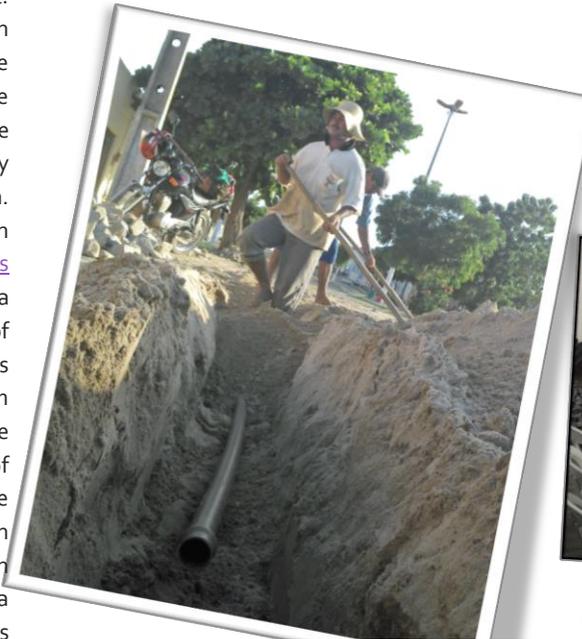


Figure 3. Construction of water and sanitation facilities in the community of Cristais, April 2014.

[Sectors \(SINDIÁGUA\)](#). These activities are being complemented with a comprehensive review of official and unofficial documents on SISAR's creation and historical development and the local, regional and global socio-political context in which it emerged.



Figure 6. Members of Cristais' community association discussing the WSS being built with representatives from CAGECE/SISAR. April 2014.



Figure 5. DESAFIO's team meeting with members of the community of Cristais, April 2014.

The ethnographic fieldwork ([current case](#)) has entailed understanding the community's water landscape, mapping the community's discourses around water and their relation to the different water sources and their uses. The field research activities for the Political-Institutional Assessment of SISAR ([historical case](#)) have mainly focused on conducting interviews with a variety of actors such as [CAGECE's Rural Sanitation Department \(GESAR\)](#), the State of Ceará's [Regulatory Agency of Public Services \(ARCE\)](#), representatives of the State's Association of Municipalities and the [Workers Union of the Water, Sanitation and Environmental](#)



Figure 7. Families collecting water from a public cistern, Cristais, Ceará, April 2014.

## The implementation of the Condominial Sanitation system in Mustardinha Community, Recife, Pernambuco, Brazil

Our local team from the Federal University of Pernambuco (UFPE) is carrying out this [historical case study](#) in Recife. It focuses on the experience of the Mustardinha Special Zone of Social Interest (SZSI), covering the period 1993-2000. SZSIs are areas in poor neighbourhoods of Recife that were designated by municipal law as priority targets for public policies focused on eliminating extreme poverty and destitution, back in the 1980s. This happened near the time when the Condominial Sanitation (CS) system was first introduced in the city. That was the time when Brazil was emerging from a long dictatorship that lasted from 1964 to 1985 and the return to democratic rule was strongly marked by a number of processes, notably widespread popular participation to deepen the democratic process and efforts to strengthen local authorities. A new Constitution passed in 1988 became a landmark, among other things by vesting responsibility for basic services on municipalities. However, this was also a time of financial crisis and funding for basic sanitation services was scant and difficult to access. These processes provided the framework for the introduction of the CS.



**Figure 8. Mustardinha community circa 1985, prior to the implementation of the Condominial System.**

At the time, the coverage for sewerage services in Recife was around 30%, and communities like Mustardinha were unserved. The CS promised a low-cost solution to expand sewerage to poor unserved communities as, according to official estimates, it would allow savings of up to 70% of the costs of conventional sanitation systems. Eventually, Mustardinha, and the neighbouring community of Mangueira, were given top priority for the implementation of the CS, which started in 1993-94.

During this research period, our local team has concentrated on complementing the bibliographic research, working with secondary data, and organizing workshops with leading members of the community who were involved in the discussions and implementation of the CS system back in the 1990s. These activities have been very fruitful, as the community members have been very keen to discuss their experience to learn lessons that may be useful to tackle the persistent situation of inequality affecting their community.



**Figure 11. Workshop on the experience of the CS system with Mustardinha community members, 1 December 2013.**

During this period, our team also carried out several interviews with key actors, including the designer of the CS system, Eng. Jose Carlos Melo, and Roberto Tavares, Presidente of the provincial water utility COMPESA.



**Figure 9. Interview with Eng. Jose Carlos Melo, designer of the CS system and Former Vice-Mayor of Recife in the 1990s. 8 April 2014**



**Figure 12. Interview with Roberto Tavares, President of COMPESA, 9 April 2014.**



**Figure 10. Community leaders actively participating in our workshop on the implementation of the CS and the IS systems in Mustardinha, 1 December 2013.**

## The implementation of the Integrated Sanitation system in Mustardinha Community, Recife, Pernambuco, Brazil

The second case study that our team at UFPE is carrying out looks at the more recent experience of the ["Integrated Sanitation" \(IS\) system](#) and covers the period 2001-2012. The study is looking at the socio-political context that characterized the introduction of IS system in Mustardinha. Despite the efforts made by previous governments, for instance through the introduction of the CS system in the 1990s, at the beginning of the twentieth-first century the situation of the community had not changed significantly. Many aspects remained the same or had even worsened owing to the neoliberal policies implemented during the 1990s, which significantly increased poverty and inequality in the city. In the municipal elections of the year 2000 an alliance led by the Workers Party (PT) won with a campaign centred on providing a solution to the lack of basic sanitation in poor neighbourhoods, and Mustardinha turned into a focal point of the campaign. It became a pilot case of a new model of intervention, the "integrated sanitation system". In this study, our local team is also completing bibliographical research, analysing secondary data, and organizing a series of workshops with the local community and with the experts and local government officers that implemented the system.



**Figure 13. Workshop with experts and public sector officers who designed and implemented the IS system in Recife, 5 April 2014.**

An important feature of the two case studies carried out in Recife is that the research team integrates non-academic actors in all stages of the project. This includes public-sector officials who had a long-term involvement with the local community, and members of the community. This is an experience that we call “transdisciplinarity in practice”, which has proved to be an excellent strategy.



Figure 15. Interview with Luciano Siqueira, Vice-Mayor of Recife, 3 April 2014.



Figure 14. Figure 17. DESAFIO's team meeting with representatives of the Lagedo community and the Quilombo of Bom Jardim da Prata, March 2014

As part of this case study our team has also carried out interviews with key actors, including Dr. Luciano Siqueira, Vice-Mayor of the Recife, and Eng. Antonio Miranda Neto, former municipal Secretary of Sanitation who led the design and implementation of the IS intervention. Eng. Miranda Neto is also a member of DESAFIO's [Strategic Advisory Committee](#).



Figure 16. Interview with Antonio Miranda Neto, former Secretary of Sanitation of Recife (2001-2005). 3 April 2014.

### Tackling extreme vulnerability in a rural community in Brazil's semi-arid region

Our local partners at the Federal University of Minas Gerais are in charge of this [intervention case study](#). Recent research activities have included a series of field visits and meetings with the community of Lagedo and representatives of the Quilombo of Bom Jardim da Prata, state of Minas Gerais, where Lagedo is located. These meetings focused on the planning of practical actions for the research and intervention activities to be developed in the community and sharing the results of the participatory diagnosis previously conducted with its members.

[Federation of Quilombola Communities of Minas Gerais \(N'Golo\)](#), the Municipal Council for the Conservation and Defence of the Environment (CODEMA), the Education Secretariat, and leaders of other Quilombola communities in the state of Minas Gerais.

These fieldwork activities are completed with the collection of water samples from the multiple sources surrounding the community and laboratory tests to examine different methods of water filtration in order to design a water treatment system that is adequate to the local conditions. We are also in the process of producing the first edition of the “Journal of the Lagedo Community”, which will contain information about the activities related to this study.



Figure 18. Collecting water samples around Lagedo, April 2014.

The meetings counted with the participation of local relevant institutions such as the

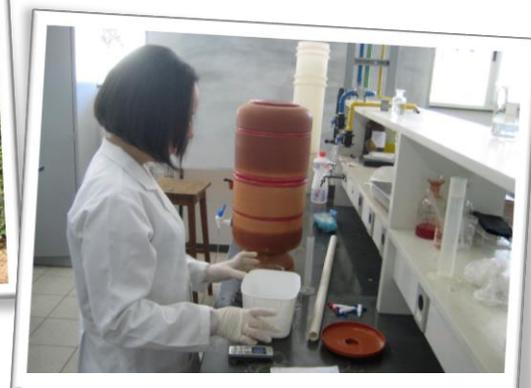


Figure 20. Testing water filtration methods at UFMG's laboratory (bottom), April 2014.



Figure 17. Invitation to the workshop on sanitation systems in Recife, 1 December 2013.

## Experiences of community empowerment, resilience and sustainability in the Cauca Valley, Colombia

Our partners at the University of the Valley (UNIVALLE), in Cali, Colombia have centred their recent activities on organizing a series of visits and workshops. These aim to aid the communities of La Vorágine ([historical case study](#)) and Mondomo ([current case study](#)) to boost their community organisations in charge of managing their water and sanitation systems and more broadly, on promoting the improvement of the provision of WSS in rural and peri-ruban communities in the country.



Figure 22. Visit to Mondomo's water treatment plant, April 2014.

As part of these efforts, DESAFIO's researchers are helping these communities design strategies to raise their visibility among partner and professional organisations and national and international institutions in the water and sanitation sector.



Figure 23. Members of the Water and Sanitation Users Association ASOVORÁGINE sharing their experiences with DESAFIO's team, April 2014



Figure 21. UNR's team collecting samples in the Carcarañá River, Province of Santa Fe, March 2014.

The team has also conducted a comprehensive review of official documents, academic works and historical audio visual and photographic material for the construction of a baseline of the ecological-environmental, socio-political and cultural, and political-institutional conditions of the communities of La Vorágine and Mondomo and their local organisations.

## Capacity building to monitor water quality in Argentina

The activities of our research team at the National University of Rosario (UNR), in Santa Fe, Argentina have included meetings with school administrators and teachers in the municipality of Carcarañá and the application of a preliminary questionnaire to define the baseline indicators for assessing the impact of capacity-building activities. In their work for this [intervention case study](#), DESAFIO's team has collected a considerable amount of quantitative and qualitative data on the characteristics of the local fauna and flora and their relationship to the region's particular environmental conditions. These activities are being complemented with an

extensive analysis of water-related news reports published in the local press such as *Diario Página/12*, *Suplemento Rosario/12*, *Diario El Litoral* and *Diario La Capital*.

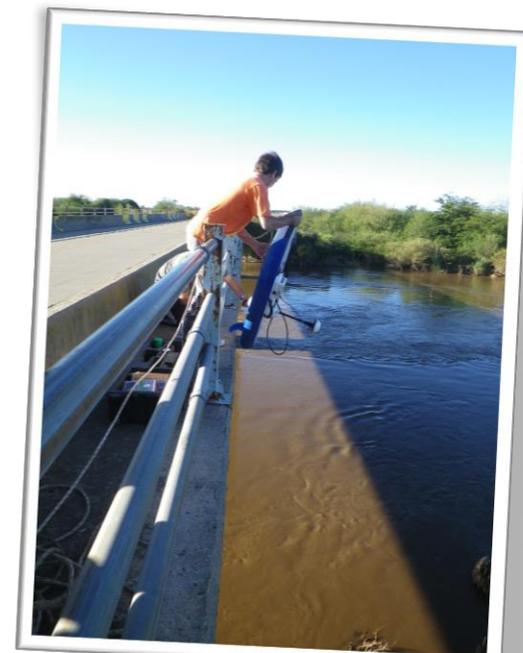


Figure 24. UNR's team collecting samples in the Carcarañá River, Province of Santa Fe, March 2014.

## Article

### New Old Problems in Water Management

By Maria da Conceição Cunha\*

Decades have passed since the concept of sustainable development first emerged. A long road has been travelled since then with many moments of success, but this does not mean that we are not faced with systemic, persistent and complex issues that need to be solved. The acceleration in the rate of growth of the population and the economy after World War II, created threats to the sustainability of life on our planet that could lead us to situations difficult to reverse. These threats also concern water, which was considered "the centre of sustainable development" at the recent Rio+20 Conference.

The transformation of the natural and built environment must be achieved in a harmonious manner, avoiding disruptions and evolving towards improving global well-being. The financial crisis that began in 2008 brought the need to think about new paradigms of development requiring changes in behaviour, to which the management of water cannot be oblivious. At the turn of the millennium, the American Society of Civil Engineers considered water supply as one of the four major achievements of twentieth century engineering. But if on one hand we are building smart cities, on the other, there are communities that still do not even have access to a tap for drinking water. The challenges faced by contemporary society cannot be overcome only with the concurrence of the natural sciences and engineering. We have to ask ourselves whether the technological innovations of the twenty first century, can by themselves, foster greater social inclusion and more democratic societies. Water management requires interdisciplinary approaches (that promote dialogue between the hard sciences and engineering, life sciences, natural sciences and social sciences) and demands inter-institutional coordination at different levels and a dynamic cooperation between researchers, technicians, decision-makers, users and all other stakeholders.

**"THE CHALLENGES FACED BY CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY CANNOT BE OVERCOME ONLY WITH THE CONCURRENCE OF THE NATURAL SCIENCES AND ENGINEERING. WE HAVE TO ASK OURSELVES WHETHER THE TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS OF THE TWENTY FIRST CENTURY, CAN BY THEMSELVES, FOSTER GREATER SOCIAL INCLUSION AND MORE DEMOCRATIC SOCIETIES."**



In order to enhance our capacity to produce responses to emerging problems and create conditions for the continuous monitoring of certain critical trends in the water sector, we should be attentive to the international agenda post-2015. In fact, at that time, we will arrive at the end of several initiatives and programmes whose results have to be examined. The shape of the new agenda is being designed, and this is something that should be closely followed.

At this moment that we are witnessing substantial changes / restructuring in public policy guidelines in the water sector in various parts of the world, we cannot lose sight that the success of these policies requires responsible, competent, transparent, auditable and democratic institutions at all levels. Effective integration of public policies and actions that ensure a water management oriented towards the goal of "water for all and of all", is desirable. This has acquired a level of increased complexity in the current context of uncertainty and heightened financial constraints. "Fragmented" decisions that may result from particular agendas that have nothing to do with the needs that have been recognised worldwide as necessary for the advancement of the water sector could produce permanent setbacks. This is not what we want!

\* Maria da Conceição Cunha is a Professor in the [Civil Engineering Department](#), University of Coimbra, Portugal. She is DESAFIO's principal investigator at the [Marine and Environmental Research Centre, University of Coimbra \(IMAR-UC\)](#). She is an expert member of the [National Water Council](#) of Portugal, a member of the Consultative Council of the Portuguese Partnership for Water, and the representative of the University of Coimbra in its General Assembly. Prof. Cunha is currently the President of the [Portuguese Water Resources Association \(APRH\)](#).

## The Interview

### Sanitation is political. An Interview with Jose Carlos Melo\*

By Hermelinda Ferreira and José Esteban Castro



#### How did the idea of condominial sanitation come about?

The first condominial Project was implemented in the communities of Rocas and Santos Reis, city of Natal, State of Rio Grande do Norte starting in 1979. These were poor neighbourhoods with the particular characteristic that about half of the houses were below street level and were located almost in the beach. The World Bank had granted funding to build a sewerage system for these communities, and the work had already started. The Bank's consultant working in the case was Prof. Duncan Mara. It was clear to all, and particularly to the Bank's consultant, that the conventional system originally proposed was not going to work, as the houses were stuck together and half of them were one metre below the level of the street. Then, we were allowed to introduce an alternative system, which would be the first condominial system ever implemented. This system, in some ways, was already in my mind and the idea came from a critique of the conventional system. The critique was that the conventional system does not work in areas with these characteristics, and in Brazil, about half of the urban population lives in such areas. Honestly, it is impossible to have a system more expensive than the conventional. Therefore, we asked, would it be possible to find a system that was good enough, which would not lose quality, but that would be simpler and cheaper? It was then that we proposed the Condominial Sanitation system for the first time.

You are an engineer with experience in politics. There is a strong tendency among experts in water and sanitation to argue that these are technical issues completely unrelated to politics. However, our project is looking at the role of socio-technical innovations in the sector as drivers of democratization. To what extent was the idea of condominial sanitation related to this issue?

I think that there is a direct relationship. The vision of the condominial system is political. There are things that are not reasonable. For instance, it is unconceivable to leave people without water. In addition, it is unconceivable to have a water system that is not everlasting. There is no sense in building a water system that may cease to exist. However, these two presuppositions are not present in Brazil. The two are factors of a political nature; the techniques required are already available. If you can, provide water for everyone 24 hours a day, and if you cannot, at least do provide water for one hour to everyone. Therefore, the technique to do it already exists, but it is a political question to provide the service to everyone and that once the service is available it be so for ever.

**“THE VISION OF THE CONDOMINIAL SYSTEM IS POLITICAL. THE TECHNIQUE ALREADY EXISTS, BUT IT IS A POLITICAL QUESTION TO PROVIDE THE SERVICE TO EVERYONE.”**

Another issue is to take away the paternalism from water systems. I argue, for instance, that the same pipe should have two different kinds of water. One is the water for health, social water, the fundamental water, for rich and poor. This water has a price. After that, the rest of the water is market water, and therefore should have a different tariff. The fact that today in Pernambuco we have the same tariff in the whole State is absurd. You have to provide water with a price that is proportional to the cost. However, as things are going, we are heading for the exhaustion of water sources. You can see that happening in Sao Paulo. Why? Because there is a long-lasting mistake, which is to assume that water is infinite. Now what? We are facing now the finiteness of water. I think that I will not be able to see it, but there is a transformation in the making. In fact, it is happening already. I remember when we started this in 197-1980, we were the first to enter a house to talk to people about water. I mean, we were the first to enter a house with a political approach to tell people “you have rights, let's organize ourselves to exercise these rights”. This is what the condominial system did back then.

\* José Carlos Melo, a native from Recife, Brazil, designed the Condominial System of sanitation in the late 1970s.

This is a synthesis of the interview, which will be published in full as part of one of DESAFIO's [Working Papers](#).

## Engagement, Dissemination, Publications

DESAFIO has a Strategic Plan for engagement and dissemination activities that includes the organization of and participation in events at the local, regional, national, and international levels. DESAFIO emerged from the work of the research network [WATERLAT-GOBACIT](#), which is a key instrument for the dissemination of DESAFIO's findings. We have recently launched the DESAFIO Series within WATERLAT's Working Papers. In addition, among other dissemination tools, we have a [Flickr photostream](#) to illustrate our activities and a [Youtube playlist](#) with interviews and clips from meetings and other events.

We provide below information about our activities between January and April 2014.

### EVENTS

**Launch of the Community Centre for Learning about Eco-Sustainable Technologies for Water and Sanitation (CCA), Maule, Chile, 17 January 2014**

The members of DESAFIO, Mariela García and Andrés Toro (UNIVALLE), represented the [CINARA Institute](#) in this event. This CCA is a joint effort of the CINARA Institute (UNIVALLE), the [Inter-American Development Bank \(IADB\)](#), the National Federation of Cooperatives of Sanitation Services (FESAN) and the [International Centre for Social and Cooperative Economy at the University of Santiago \(CIESCOOP\)](#). CCAs are part of the IADB's programme for the development of innovate models for water and sanitation management.



Figure 25. Launch of the CCA at the Inter-American Development Bank's offices in Chile, January 2014.

This centre in Maule, Chile, is a milestone in the management of drinking water and sanitation in rural America because it is the first centre dedicated to capacity building in Integrated Water Management (IWM). Its main objectives are to disseminate best practices in the management of rural water systems, the incorporation of eco-sustainable water and sanitation technologies and the optimisation of the use of this precious resource. More details can be found here: [http://www.estrategia.cl/detalle\\_noticia.php?cod=91455](http://www.estrategia.cl/detalle_noticia.php?cod=91455).

**Launch of the new course in "Arts and Crafts: Knowledge of Traditional Communities", Faculty of Philosophy and Humanities (FAFICH), UFMG, Belo Horizonte, 11 February 2014**

Delmo Vilela (UFMG) was invited to participate in this event by one of DESAFIO's local partners, the Federation of Quilombola Communities of Minas Gerais (N'Golo). This [new course](#) will be offered by [FAFICH](#) in partnership with the Brazilian Ministry of Culture and the [Institute for the Inclusion of Traditional Knowledge in Higher Education and Research of the University of Brasilia](#)

Figure 26. Launch of course in "Arts and Crafts: Knowledge of Traditional Communities", UFMG, Belo Horizonte, February 2014.



**Workshop on Water Reuse, Ceará, 6 February 2014**

Emmanuel Bastos and Colin Brown (UFMG) participated in this event organised by the World Bank. The workshop focused on water reuse in the context of the São José III Project. This project is one of the vehicles through which the World Bank provides rural development funds, primarily for the development of water and sanitation infrastructure in the state of Ceará. The event was well attended by a number of institutions acting in the state's water and sanitation sector such as NGOs, our partner CAGECE, the [Water Resource Management Company \(COGERH\)](#), the [Superintendence of Hydraulic Works \(SOHIDRA\)](#), and the [Secretariat for Agrarian Development \(SDA\)](#).

The aim of this new course is to introduce students to other non-Eurocentric cognitive logics by means of theoretical and practical experiences of indigenous and Afro-descendant frameworks generated through other modes of production, transmission and processing.

**SISAR's General Assembly, Fortaleza, Ceará, 14 March 2014**

Emmanuel Bastos (UFMG), Claudia Melo and Herlder Cortez (CAGECE) were invited to participate in this event organised by the Metropolitan Basin Association of the [Integrated Rural Sanitation System \(SISAR\)](#). This is the most important annual event of the

organisation, where all-important decisions such as defining the association’s strategic plan, electing the management committee and defining the water system’s tariffs, are taken. The event also had the co-participation of the local community associations and the [German Development Bank, KfW](#).

**“Learning among equals”: management committee of Mondomo’s Aqueduct visits La Vorágine and La Sirena, 3 April 2014**

As part of our activities to support the communities participating in DESAFIO’s case studies in Colombia, representatives of the



Figure 30. Visit to La Vorágine’s wastewater treatment plant. April 2014.

They also discussed the difficulties faced by the communities in relation to environmental sanitation and resource management. The visit also included learning about the community management model of La Sirena’s water utility, which is one of the four Community Learning Centres of AQUACOL, the Colombian Association of Community-Based Water Services Providers. La Sirena’s water system has been nationally recognised as a successful example in terms of its all-encompassing community management model and its ability to establish key alliances with institutional actors such as UNIVALLE’s CINARA Institute. CINARA has been key in providing technical support to the community throughout this process. The visit concluded with a presentation by Andrés Toro (UNIVALLE) about the current situation of the sanitation sector at the global and national levels, which prompted a discussion about the need to develop strategies for guaranteeing a continuous supply of quality water to the local communities.

management committee of Mondomo’s water utility, addressed in a [current case study](#), visited the rural communities of La Vorágine, the site of a [historical case study](#), and La Sirena. The aim of the visit was to experience first-hand these communities’ expertise in terms of water services provision, wastewater treatment and community management of WSS. The visit included meetings with ASOVORÁGINE’s president, who shared the association’s history, and details about the management processes that they have developed for improving the living conditions of the local population.

**World Water Day Celebration at the Quilombo Bom Jardim da Prata, Minas Gerais, 22 March 2014**

Delmo Vilela (UFMG) was invited to participate in this event organised by the Quilombo Association of Bom Jardim da Prata. The event took place on the grounds of the local school and was widely attended by members of the community. During the event, Delmo had the opportunity to report on the progress of his research to the community and meet with some of the project’s partners such as the [Federation of Quilombola Communities of Minas Gerais \(N’Golo\)](#), also participating in the event.



Figure 28. World Water Day Celebration, School Barreira dos Índios, São Francisco, Minas Gerais, 22 March 2014



Figure 29. Visiting the River Pance and La Vorágine’s wastewater treatment plant, April 2014.

**Seminar: “Water conflicts in Latin America: tensions and contradictions of the process of democratisation of water governance”, Cali, Colombia, 25th April 2014**

José Esteban Castro (Newcastle University) DESAFIO’s Coordinator, gave this seminar at the University of the Valley (UNIVALLE), our local partner in Cali, Colombia. The presentation centred on the necessity of employing an interdisciplinary approach in order to understand the linkages between water access and control, citizenship rights and the democratisation of water services. The seminar was one of several activities during the Coordinator’s visit to UNIVALLE, which included meetings with the communities of Mondomo, La Vorágine, and La Sirena, which participate in the project’s case studies.



Figure 31. Visit to La Vorágine’s wastewater treatment plant, 23 April 2014.



Figure 32. Visit to Mondomo’s water utility, 24 April 2014.



Figure 33. Visit to La Sirena’s water utility and AQUACOL’s headquarters, 25 April 2014.

**AQUACOL launches the fifth edition of its newsletter NotiAQUACOL, April 2014**

Members of DESAFIO at UNIVALLE worked in close collaboration with the Colombian Association of Community-Based Water Services Providers (AQUACOL) to produce the fifth edition of the association’s newsletter, NotiAQUACOL, after four years of inactivity.



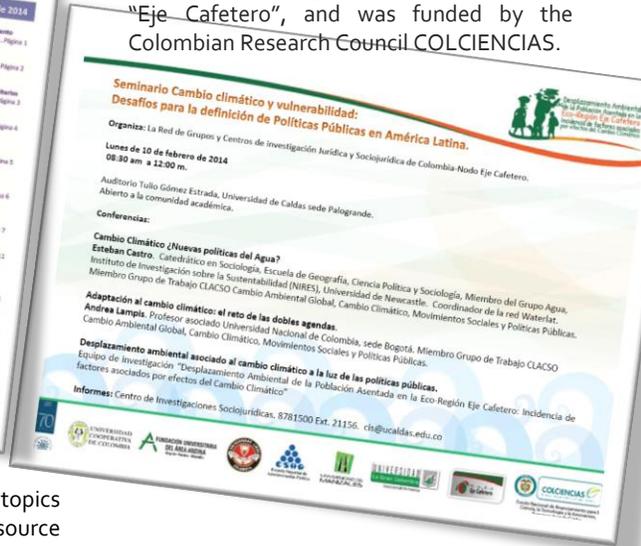
This newsletter focuses on a variety of topics such as the importance of water resource conservation and local experiences in managing community water systems. It also contains a special section called Our History, which highlights the historical processes experienced by some communities in the state of Valle del Cauca in order to gain access to water services. This collaboration is a central part of the efforts to improve the visibility of AQUACOL and rebuild the newsletter as a means of effective communication and dissemination among partner and professional organisations and institutions in the sector. The newsletter is available for download on the [website of UNIVALLE’s CINARA Institute](#).



Figure 34. Members of AQUACOL during the launch of their newsletter’s fifth edition, Colombia, April 2014.

**Conference: “Climate change: new water policies?”, Manizales, Colombia, 10 February 2014**

José Esteban Castro (Newcastle University), gave this conference at the Seminar “Climate change and vulnerability: Challenges for the definition of public policies in Latin America”. The Seminar was hosted by Javier Gonzaga Valencia, Coordinator of the Centre for Socio-judicial Research, Faculty of Juridical and Social Sciences of the University of Caldas in Manizales, and member of our [Strategic Advisory Committee](#). It was an activity of the Colombian Network of Groups and Centres of Juridical and Socio-judicial Research, Section “Eje Cafetero”, and was funded by the Colombian Research Council COLCIENCIAS.



**Seminars on “Socio-ecological inequality and injustice as obstacles to the process of democratization in Latin America?” and “The experience of international research networks”, University of Guadalajara, University Centre La Ciénaga, campuses Ocotlán and Atotonilco, Jalisco, Mexico, 29 and 30 April 2014.**

José Esteban Castro (Newcastle University) gave two seminars presenting aspects of DESAFIO and discussing the project’s experience as part of an international research network. The seminars took place in the two campuses of the UdG-La Ciénaga.



Figure 35. Seminar at the University of Guadalajara-La Ciénaga, Jalisco, Mexico, 29 April 2014.

Dr Adriana Hernández, from the Division of Juridical and Social Studies, Department of Politics and Society of the UdG-La Ciénaga, organized the seminars. The talk in the Atotonilco campus was part of an International Seminar on “The environmental scenarios of globalization: the university and the networks of social research”. Here, Castro presented the experience of DESAFIO and the research network [WATERLAT-GOBACIT](#) as successful examples of social-science-led interdisciplinary research networks.



Figure 36. Seminar at the University of Guadalajara-La Ciénaga, Jalisco, Mexico, 29 April 2014.

### DESAFIO in the news

In recent months, DESAFIO's work has called the attention of a variety of media outlets in Portugal, where the project has been covered widely in national, regional and local media outlets. Our principal investigator in Portugal, Maria da Conceição Cunha of the [Marine and Environmental Research Centre at the University of Coimbra \(IMAR-UC\)](#), has been interviewed several times about the project's research significance.

This coverage has mainly highlighted DESAFIO's efforts to work in collaboration with local community organisations, governments and other stakeholders in understanding and developing socio-technical innovations to tackle the existing social inequalities in the access to essential water and sanitation services in vulnerable communities in Latin America.

At the national level, the coverage has included media outlets such as Expresso and Visão, two of Portugal's most important weekly publications, as well as Jornal Í, a new and highly regarded daily newspaper. At the regional and local level, coverage has included prestigious media outlets such as Beiras, DC (Coimbra's main journal) and Açores9.

This media coverage of DESAFIO's work in Portugal has extended to television networks such as RTP Notícias, the oldest state TV channel, and SicN, a highly regarded private network, as well as online portals such as LocalPT, Ciência PT, SAPO and Portugal News. DESAFIO's research was also covered in the [University of Coimbra's website](#) and radio station.

Some examples of the coverage received by DESAFIO in Portuguese media outlets:

“[Scientists promote access to water and sanitation in poor regions of Latin America](#)”, RTP Notícias. Also published in [Jornal Í](#), [Açores9](#), and [Local PT](#).



Figure 37. Colin Brown (centre) with DESAFIO's Coordinator, Prof. Esteban Castro, and administrator, Dr Gisela Zapata, at UFMG. March 2014.

### OTHER LOCAL ACTIVITIES

Facebook Group created for the dissemination of DESAFIO's case study

Researchers and students involved in the case study on [Participative Generation of a Water Treatment System in a Quilombola Community in Minas Gerais \(Brazil\)](#) have created the Facebook Group “Projeto Quilombo”. This social media group aims to facilitate communication among the study participants and dissemination of the study's activities and results. The group currently has 42 members including students, researchers, representatives of Quilombola organisations and other civil society organisations and interested parties.

### ESTABLISHING LINKS

DESAFIO aims to establish links with other projects with similar objectives and interests.

#### Postgraduate student internships

Colin Brown, a native Canadian student in the final year of the master's programme in Environmental Policies and Social Practices of the Sociology department at the [University of Toulouse II – Le Mirail](#), France, has joined DESAFIO's team at the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG). Colin is collaborating in the development of the [intervention case study 4.2: Community Oriented Water and Sanitation System in a Rural Community in North East Brazil](#). He will be conducting five months of field research in the community of Itapeim (Ceará), which will be used as a control case for the comparative study that



Figure 38. Mural in Mondomo community, Colombia, stating: “A people without water, is a people without future”. April 2014



## DESAFIO Newsletter



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