Quality Assurance Report
2017-18

September 2019

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Contents

Since the start of the UCT Knowledge Co-op in 2010, regular quality assurance feedback on our projects has been collected. For the first three years, while piloting the model, an NRF-funded study evaluated this process, resulting in a final report. Since then annual Quality assurance (QA) reports have been produced, with an exception of 2018 when we lacked capacity to compile the 2017 report.

The current report covers feedback received for projects from years 2017 and 2018. Themes from the Qualitative data are shown in the three sections below; the complete set of somewhat edited comments can be found in the Appendix.

1. Impact Assessment

a) From Academics

To assess impact in the academic sphere we requested feedback from each academic supervisor – and those students we could still reach – on publications, conference papers, further research or personal impact. Due to the slow progress into publications we included here projects from the period since the start of the Co-op, i.e. **2011 to 2018**.

In total out of 49 projects for which we requested information we received feedback on 41; 20 of these yielded some impact to date. Some book chapters and articles are pending publication.

The following Outputs were reported:

- 4 published articles.[1]
- One book chapter[2]
- One study contributed insights towards a published article with a wider scope.[3]
- An academic acted as advisor for research and the resulting article.[4]

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[1]. **W Barnett**, G Patten, B Kerschberger, K Conradie, D B Garone, G van Cutsem, C J Colvin. Perceived adherence barriers among patients failing second-line antiretroviral therapy in Khayelitsha, South Africa. *S Afr J HIV Med* 2013;14(4):170-176. DOI:10.7196 /SAJHIVMED.981; **Learmonth, D., Hakala, S. & Keller, M.** (2015). "I can't carry on like this": barriers to exiting the street-based sex trade in South Africa. *Health Psychology and Behavioral Medicine, 3*(1), 348-365. **Beatrice Conradie, I L Hansen & M Oosthuizen** (2018): Experiences with and the viability of a recycling pilot project in a Cape Town township, *Development Southern Africa*, DOI: 10.1080/0376835X.2018.1484699. **S M Peters, S Kessi and F Boonzaier,** Forthcoming in 2019. "Narrative identity: the construction of dignified masculinities in Black male sex workers' narratives". *Social Dynamic* special edition.

[2] **Boonzaier, F.** (2019). Researching sex work. Doing decolonial, intersectional narrative analysis. In J. Fleetwood, L. Presser, S. Sandberg & T. Ugelvik (eds), *The Emerald Handbook of Narrative Criminology*. Emerald Publishing Limited.

[3] M Dyer, R Mills, **B Conradie** & J Piesse. "Harvest of Hope: The Contribution of Peri-Urban Agriculture in South African Townships". 2015. *Agrekon* Vol. 54 , Iss. 4, 73-86, DOI: 10.1080/03031853.2015.1116400

[4] **Marianne Brittijn** (2013). "We're not boys anymore, we need to be courageous": Towards an understanding of what it means to be a man in Lavender Hill, *Agenda*, 27:1, 49-60.

- A CSSR working paper.[5]
- Three conference presentations by the academic supervisors[6] and six more by Masters students.[7]

Longer-term engagement / personal development:

- One academic continued her research with the community partner for years; another became a Board member of the NGO she was introduced to;
- A 3-year NRF-funded study with the same NGO developed from a project.
- A follow-up study was developed to deepen the findings of a project.
- One student went on to do her PhD in Scotland in the same field.
- One project created an awareness in both students, who were subsequently much involved in NGO initiatives; it also helped prepare them for opportunities in the corporate world.
- One student reported that her thesis research equipped her with skills and perspectives for her subsequent position as a Qualitative Research Analyst.

b) From Community Partners (n = 10)

One year after completion of projects we sent questionnaires to community partners asking for feedback on the impact of the project in the community realm. This may include raising awareness, changing public policy, helping organisations secure funding. We targeted 31 projects and received feedback from 10 community partners.

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[5] **R Odendaal, J Morar, B Conradie**, "A cost benefit analysis of a technology bundle aimed at improving the resilience of urban households in Rocklands, Mitchells Plain". CSSR Working paper 332, Oct 2013.

[6] **Conrad N, Mutsvangwa T, Doyle A and Douglas T**. "User-centred Design as used in Health Innovation and Design: Addressing Hearing loss in the Elderly." Biomedical Engineering Society Annual Meeting, October 2016, Minneapolis, Minnesota. **F Boonzaier**, C Squire. "Health as social citizenship: Rethinking health research and social research in South African contexts". International Society of Critical Health Psychology Conference, Grahamstown, 2015; presentations in Athens & New York. **F Ross**, "The First Thousand Days: temporality, gender and futurity." Paper presented at 2019 Finnish Anthropological Society Conference "On Time". Helsinki, August 29–30, 2019 & Gendered Temporalities: Anthroplogical Perspectives Symposium. Aarhus, Denmark, 26-27 August 2019

[7] **Z Ndzendze**, "The Role of Trust in Childcare". Contemporary Ethnography Across the Disciplines Conference,15 – 18 November 2016, University of Cape Town. **Z Ndzendze**, "Luring the Infant to Life". Anthropology Southern Africa Annual Conference, 30 September - 2 October 2016, University of Venda. **Z Ndzendze**, "Breast is best: Understanding the low breastfeeding rate in the Western Cape". Anthropology Southern Africa Annual Conference, 29 June - 2 July 2014, Rhodes University – Grahamstown. **S Peters**, "'But Sex Work is Good but I don't want to Do It': Black Men's Narratives of Selling Sex". Presentation, Narrative Enquiry for Social Transformation Colloquium, 6 October 2016, Melville, Johannesburg. **K Marais,** 2016, presented the Mothers Matter research at the Western Cape Government Dept of Health, Provincial Research Day: "The First 1000 Days", as well as at the Anthropology Southern Africa Annual Conference. **S Pitcher & F Boonzaier**. "Invisibility and hypervisibility: Methodological reflections on Photovoice from a photo-narrative project with transgender youth", Psychological Society of South Africa Congress, Johannesburg 3-6 Sep 2019

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This section of the report summarise the responses; for the complete set of responses see section a in the Appendix.

- **Raising awareness:**

9 of the respondents *agreed* that the project results helped raise awareness of the issue(s) more widely; 5 of them *agreed strongly* with this.

Specific examples of this included using the project information to enhance the CP's social media presence, to create annual and donor reports, or to give context to a larger-scale programme or campaign. Others reported that project participants implemented some of the solutions presented to them or shared what they had learnt with others.

- **Improvements in an existing policy, programme or service:**

7 respondents *agreed*, 2 of them *agreed strongly*, that project results led to improvements in an existing policy, programme or service; while 2 *disagreed*.

They mentioned the useful booklet produced, improved marketing materials, and increased capacity of the project team. Findings were also used for eliciting more support for a programme and adjust in a support programme for mothers.

- **Increased capacity to get project funding:**

In 4 cases the project increased the partners' capacity to get project funding; while in another 4 cases it did not.

- **The most important impact of the project:**

Some CPs regarded the data they received through a project most valuable as it offered an opportunity for reflection on the programme within the bigger South African context; could be used to inform their campaigns or to build donor confidence; it confirmed the programme's positive impact on beneficiaries or acted as baseline data for future monitoring. For others it was the practical impact they valued most: the opportunity to improve social media or the education of their beneficiaries, receiving suggestions they were able to implement.

- Only one CP reported appearances or contributions in **public media** via a webpage designed for them.
- There were two cases of the project resulting in **mentions in non-academic publications** /documents, i.e. in fundraising proposals and reports.
- No instances of **presentations in academic conferences** were mentioned; while two CPs referred to **participations in non-academic conferences -** a project was presented at the African Marine Debris Conference, another to the Department of Health new projects development team. Findings of a study into e-cigarettes were presented by CANSA at an event where the national Department of Health reviewed research evidence to inform the revised tobacco control act.
- CPs were not aware of **any new research projects** on the same or related theme, although one CP was planning to take the research further themselves; nor had any CP received requests for **advice on policy or legal issues** relating to the project topic.

2. Dissertation Research: Evaluation at completion of projects

All dissertation projects completed during the 2017 and 2018 academic years were included in the QA process. The projects consisted primarily of student at Honours and Masters level, with a few under-graduate team-based research projects. In these research-based projects all stakeholders, i.e. students, community partners (CPs) and academic supervisors were surveyed.

Each stakeholder was sent a link to an online questionnaire soon after completion of a project to assess the following areas:

- **Outputs:** Was the final project academically sound and did it address the community partner's needs? Did the student learn from the experience?
- **Experience:** Were all stakeholders satisfied with the process and how it was supervised?
- **Involvement:** What was the value of the partnership to those involved? How did they contribute to it?

There were four options for assessing each statement - Agree Strongly, Agree, Disagree, Disagree Strongly. In a qualitative section, respondents were asked to give narrative feedback on the most useful aspect of the project and as well as sites for improvement.

We targeted 16 projects and received feedback from 12 community partners, 18 students, and 4 academics (two of whom were supervising two projects, i.e. feedback on 6 projects). The majority of responses to both our Quantitative and Qualitative questions were positive, with most finding their projects well-planned and executed. Fewer than 5% of quantitative responses were negative and some critical qualitative feedback helped us understand these.

The following sections of the report summarise the responses; for the complete set of qualitative responses see Sections b) to d) of the Appendix.

a) Reponses from Academics (n = 6)

Quantitative feedback:

OUTCOMES	STUDENTS
Academics *agreed* that the outcomes of the project were significant academic research; they also *strongly agreed* that the outputs were consistent with the overall objectives of the project; and they *strongly agreed* that the expectations of the project partners were met.	Academics strongly *agreed* that the projects improved students' abilities to perform research, and that it developed students' insight into the nature of working with community partners; they *strongly agreed* that students received appropriate supervision; and they *strongly agreed* that students show satisfactory commitment to the projects, with one *disagreeing*.

EXPERIENCE	INVOLVEMENT
Academics *generally agreed* that participants seemed satisfied with how the projects ran, with one disagreeing; the *strongly agreed* that forming a partnership was beneficial to all partners, with one *disagreeing*.	Academics *strongly agreed* that both community partners and the Knowledge Co-op staff showed satisfactory commitment to the projects; and they *strongly agreed* that they themselves showed satisfactory commitment to the project.

Qualitative feedback:

The most valuable aspect of the project: Academics most valued the contribution the project made to their students. **All** of them regarded it as an important opportunity for students to learn about the NGO reality, and also about professional research coming as close as possible to a real-life experience.

There was appreciation for the Co-op's role in brokering tricky partnerships. Some commented on the value of having learnt about the Co-op. Two academics appreciated the chance their students had to add value to the CP – and to an area of research; another the access to informants from marginalised groups.

How the project could have been improved: Academics suggested:

- More clarity at the outset of a project to manage expectations, particularly around what a discipline can offer in addressing a specific topic.
- Fostering synergy between objectives and timeframes of students and CPs
- Travel stipends for distant research sites.
- Have the academic driving the project rather than the student to ensure continuity.

b) Responses from Students (n = 18)

Quantitative feedback:

INVOLVEMENT	OUTCOMES
Students all *agreed* that they showed commitment to the project; they *agreed* that academics showed commitment to the project, and strongly *agreed* that community partners showed commitment to the project; and they mostly *strongly agreed* that the Knowledge Co-op showed satisfactory commitment to their project and provided satisfactory support, with one student *strongly disagreeing*.	Students mostly *agreed* that the outcomes met the community partners' needs, with one *disagreeing*; they mostly *agreed* that the final outcome represented significant academic research, with two *disagreeing*; and they mostly *agreed* that the project outputs were consistent with the overall objectives, with two *disagreeing*. Students also *strongly agreed* that their research abilities were improved through their project involvement, and that they developed knowledge into how community partners work.

Qualitative feedback:

The most valuable aspect of the project: what students valued most (n **=** 12) was experiencing the CP reality; specifically the support they received there, the opportunity to meet new people and be inspired by them, and having eye-opening experience that shattered their perceptions.

There was appreciation for the Co-op's role in this context (n = 9), for the skills it taught them, for ensuring accountability to the projects and generally for the support it offered.

Many students valued the opportunity for co-learning through the partnerships (n = 5), particularly for a chance to learn about the NGO reality and the marginalised groups serviced by them. Others were grateful for the CP's commitment to their projects (n = 4) and for the chance to contribute to a research area (n = 2).

Communication was mentioned repeatedly, twice as a positive experience and once as a negative one. Feedback on the commitment of the CP was also mixed, with one student experiencing it as helpful, and 3 others wishing for more time to meet with the CP staff.

How the project could have been improved: As with the CPs, some students (n = 3) wished for more clarity at the start of their project; issues mentioned were information on the most suitable participant group, the scope of the study, the CP's expectations in general and regarding deliverables, and from their side what their discipline could (and could not) offer on the topic.

c) Responses from Community Partners (n = 12)

Quantitative feedback:

OUTCOMES	STUDENTS
Community partners generally *agreed* that the final outcome met their needs, with two *disagreeing*; they all *agreed* that the final outcome represented significant academic research; they all *agreed* that the final report received was understandable; and they all *agreed* that the project outputs were consistent with the overall objectives.	Community partners all *agreed* that students involved in the project improved their ability to do research; they generally *agreed* that students involved developed insight into the nature of working with community partners, with one *disagreeing*; they generally *agreed* that students involved received appropriate supervision, with one *strongly disagreeing*; and they all *agreed* that students involved were sufficiently committed.

EXPERIENCE	INVOLVEMENT
Community partners all *agreed* that participants involved with the project were satisfied with how it ran; they generally *agreed* that the overall expectations of the partners were met, with three disagreeing; and they generally agreed that forming a partnership was beneficial for all stakeholders, with two *disagreeing*.	Community partners all *agreed* that academic supervisors were committed to the project; they *strongly agreed* that the Knowledge Co-op was committed to the project; and they *strongly agreed* that they themselves were committed to the project**.**

Qualitative feedback:

The most valuable aspect of the project: 11 of the partners most valued the new insights they gained from projects to inform their practice, specifically into the experience of their beneficiaries and collaboration with academia; others valued access to independent research to inform their advocacy work.

Some parties expressed appreciation for the partnership and for the role of the Knowledge Co-op in it. Other valued aspects included the commitment of students to the project and having their needs met. There was even one immediate practical impact in a CP who used the report to gain support for expanding the programme which had been studied.

How the project could have been improved: The most common improvements suggested (n = 10) were to find better synergy between the objectives of the students and those of the CP. They suggested allocating more time to work towards that and pleaded for ensuring greater clarity at the start of projects, particularly around the reality within the CP and how that would impact research, the needs of CPs, and what students will be able to deliver.

Other critical feedback mentioned a promised product that was not completed; or suggested a wider scope for the research, closer collaboration during the project and better planning around timing of the data collection.

3. Short Projects: Evaluation at completion of projects

A smaller number of short projects were also evaluated. These involve compulsory community service in the Information Systems (IS) Honours and the Architecture 2nd year program which are unsupervised; as well as a 3rd year IS project applying design thinking in a real context. Most of these projects were conducted by small teams. As academics were less involved in the partnership, only students, student mentors and community partners were surveyed.

We targeted 12 projects and received feedback from 22 students (including 3 mentors) and 9 community partners. Participants in all projects were sent a link to an online questionnaire to assess the following areas:

* **Outputs:** Was the final project academically sound and did it address the community partner's needs? Did the student learn from the experience?
* **Experience:** Were all stakeholders satisfied with the process and how it was supervised?
* **Involvement:** Were all partners sufficiently committed to the process to allow it to succeed?

There were 4 options for assessing each statement (Agree strongly, Agree, Disagree, Disagree strongly). In a qualitative section, respondents gave feedback on the most useful aspect of the project and suggested improvements.

a) Quantitative feedback from Students (n=19 + 3 student mentors) and Community Partners (n=9)

OUTCOMES
Students and community partners all *agreed* that the outputs met the community partner's needs; they mostly *agreed* that students developed insights into the nature of the work community partners do; they mostly *agreed* that the projects were consistent with their overall objectives, with one student strongly *disagreeing*.

EXPERIENCE	INVOLVEMENT
Students and community partners mostly *agreed* that the projects ran satisfactorily, with two *disagreeing*, and one *strongly disagreeing*; they mostly *agreed* that the expectations of all stakeholders were met, with two *disagreeing*; they mostly agreed that the partnership was beneficial to all stakeholders, with one *disagreeing*.	Students and community partners mostly *agreed* that students were showed satisfactory commitment to the partnership, with three *disagreeing*; they mostly *agreed* that community partners were showed satisfactory commitment to the partnership, with one *disagreeing*; and they mostly *agreed* that the Knowledge Co-op showed satisfactory commitment to the partnership, with three *disagreeing*.

The following two sections of the report summarise the responses; for the complete set of qualitative responses see Section e) and f) in the Appendix.

b) Qualitative feedback – students

The most valuable aspect of the project: In the shorter projects the most common value students reported was again the experience of a community or CP, meeting new people, getting out of their comfort zone (n = 7). They also highly valued the chance to make an impact in the community through their intervention, and what they themselves learnt in the process (both n = 6). The commitment to the collaboration was also appreciated, that of the students themselves, of the CP, the time invested, though one of them wished for more commitment. Another aspect mentioned was the opportunity it offered them for self-discovery and self-development.

How the project could have been improved: Here students suggested more site visits, more time to meet with the CP staff. Themes from above were mentioned again: clearer information at the start, a travel stipend and better communication – though two experienced this area as a strength. Some students felt that things would have been better if they had been more creative, had had better preparation for the context they went into.

c) Qualitative feedback – Community partners

The most valuable aspect of the project:

Almost all CPs mentioned appreciation for new skills learnt through the project, though one wished the project had included building their own capacity to take over once the students left. Others valued the practical impact of the student involvement (n = 4), for instance that they were able to present the output to council, or could use it to get more community participation.

There was appreciation for the creativity and effort of students as well as for their interest and commitment.

How the project could have been improved: Here only a few suggestions were made: better organisation of the project, and a more flexible team; some wished for better communication and another for more time to meet with the students.

4. Appendix: Qualitative feedback

a) Impact Assessment – Responses from Community Partners (n = 10)

- **Raising awareness:**

The student developed a website and content that we have been able to share through our social media links. The content was really beautifully developed

The information collected and the analysis has given very useful context to the large scale Natural Resource Management programme we run on the Agulhas Plain.

A simply illustrated document was prepared by the student and distributed amongst people within the "target market" i.e. people living in informal settlements.

Besides being amused by some of the content, many people have actually implemented some of the solutions presented in the booklet.

The mothers who attended the course openly shared what they had learnt with others and this has encouraged others to attend the course.

Awareness that there is something which could help people with hearing loss.

The project report/information was used to inform an anti-litter campaign specifically targeting cigarette butts. A special purpose bin was designed, trialled and funding sought to install at various butt hotspots. Other campaigns are being developed using the project information too.

- **Improvements in an existing policy, programme or service:**

The booklet is particularly useful. This has been handed out to some members

We don't have a marketing or communications department so improvements on the quality of materials we share with the world always help.

The results enhanced the understanding of the Project Management Team

Our proposals for funding are able to put the case for support with more credibility now that we have a study that has explored land owners attitudes to conservation and land management

It raised awareness on the need for mothers to have the support of other mothers in their community, resulting in us running our programmes on a more relational level.

- **Increased capacity to get project funding:**

We were able to more effectively monitor the impact achieved.

The project information was incorporated into a funding application/proposal with mixed success.

- **The most important impact of the project:**

It did provide opportunity for reflection on the programme and the project helped in understanding it against the backdrop of the bigger South African context in relation to eg. realizing freedom.

To get a webpage and YouTube.

This would be education. Not only for the members with Iron deficiency anaemia but all others as a healthy diet and lifestyle benefits all.

Besides the quality material, it was wonderful to see how our beneficiaries and Zakiyah became friends and bonded over the time.

The impact of properly research on the project and the capacity to get project funding is that it helps to build donor confidence through their heightened awareness of: * researched issues and results of research * noticeable collaboration with a respected learning institution

To have this baseline data gives us a foundation against which to compare and measure the impacts of future work

The physical implementation of suggestions presented in the document was clearly the greatest endorsement of the project.

Confirming that what we had been rolling out was making a positive impact on the lives of those attending.

Awareness.

To inform the anti-litter campaigns that Whale Coast Conservation have and are busy creating.

- **Further general comments:**

Although not reflected above, we did appreciate the intern's presence with and impact on the programme. Perhaps the project was not an exact fit for expectations mentioned here.

If you can ask the volunteers to speed up the process.

It is always a pleasure working with the Knowledge Co-op, as the ideas the students come up with are very innovative and useful.

It is not always the 'what' but the 'how'. Zakiyah was such a warm wonderful person that she really made a difference in our benefiacires by just interacting with everyone so warmly and in caring fashion. This helps in the rehabilitation and reintegration process of those that have so long been socially excluded

The Township recycling research report has been very helpful in informing our approach to our current Imizamo Yethu Waste Minimisation Project, and made us hesitant to go the route of incentives. It will also be helpful in planning for a proposed Materials Recycling Facility in Hout Bay. In the Food Gardening Research report, the Factorial Influence table was particularly helpful in helping us understand impact of food gardens

The information from Naomi's study is really important historical information to be able to track changes in the landscape. We are embarking on a new drive to secure the water resources of the area together with landowners. Naomi's study will be valuable in shaping this initiative.

Many of the questions above do not apply to the research work that we had undertaken by the student. It was a practical research into ways of improving living conditions within informal settlements. The fact that several of the ideas within the research booklet were implemented in reality, is a clear manifestation that it was worthwhile research.

The participants enjoyed the time with the students especially the final presentation but there was no follow up for any practical solution to gain access to any new hearing aids.

The information contained in the report was useful to Whale Coast Conservation staff designing various campaigns to reduce littering of particular waste items.

b) Research projects – Reponses from Academics (n = 9)

- **Most valuable aspects for academics:**

The student was enabled to spend significant amounts of time in the NGO to learn more about the context and people. This exposure has been important for her personal development and essential for her research.

Working with a student who is committed to community-based work.

Learning about the Knowledge Co-op.

The learning process for an Hons student.

Helping students to do research that has value to external partners, and demonstrating why anthropological methods are useful in exploring social questions.

Exposing the student to a research environment at an advanced professional level.

I am especially delighted that we were able to afford an Hons student who plans to go into policy-related fields an opportunity to work in an actual policy implementation process.

The experience that the student gained, and the findings of her dissertation which are incorporated into project implementation and what that could mean for healthcare workers and patients.

The student gained access to marginalised individuals whose stories are normally very difficult to access.

- **Possible improvements suggested by academics:**

I think the project should be driven more between the Knowledge Coop, the partner and the supervisor, rather than directly with the student. It is difficult to invest time in a particular partner and then have the project terminate because the student is gone.

The partnership request came to me individually in the first instance. It would have been much better had it come to the Co-op in the first place, as the Co-op has knowledge and expertise to manage the process efficiently.

There are some major differences in how different disciplines approach authorship. I felt pressured to accept a publication agreement that is not entirely beneficial to the student and supervisor.

The report and data synthesis required by the Community Partner took up a large amount of the student time, and their expectations of the report were not entirely clear.

- **General comments:**

Getting students to site is really challenging. Transport difficulties significantly limit the ways that anthropological work can happen.

I think that this was a good project with useful recommendations that can be easily implemented.

Conducting the research through the Knowledge Co-op as a partner created an environment for the student which was closest to working within a real-life work environment. I feel the level of professionalism and seriousness of the work was enhanced as a result of the more structured process.

I think that the collaboration has been difficult, possibly because of unspoken assumptions or expectations about what a collaboration could and should be.

With hindsight, it seems that the CP wanted both an evaluation/documentation of its project and at the same time a partnership. For an anthropologist, this is actually a confusion of roles.

One area of complexity arises in relation to the position of the Community Partner as both originator and author of the research. Also, the subject position held by a researcher-who-is-a-partner is different to that of a researcher-as-evaluator, and in each case, the status of the CP differs. In the former, CP members are participants; in the latter, subjects of the research.

c) **Research projects – Responses from Students (n = 18)**
   - **Most valuable aspects for students:**

Being able to do research/a project that may have impacted someone even in a small way.

Creating further research about trans youths' lived experiences in South Africa.

Being able to work with a community partner that is extremely knowledgeable and well-connected and could thus give guidance on how best to approach working with a marginalised group.

Meeting with the various members from the Community Partner.

Learning about the complexities of doing community-based work and navigating different responsibilities towards different agents.

Gaining insights about the experiences of individuals from a marginalised community from their own perspectives.

Working with an NGO that supported me throughout my research.

Getting to know various respondents' perspectives even if their backgrounds and positions of authority were different.

I learned a great deal from the 'in-the-field' research and also gained great insight from the people that I worked with. I felt inspired by these incredible people that love their community and people.

Support, communication and commitment from all partners.

Learning to navigate a new environment.

Providing feedback and assist the CP with public health planning for vulnerable mothers and children

Building relationships with members of this community.

The most valuable aspect of the project was being able to communicate with the Community Partner individuals. I especially appreciate that I was able to relay their stories to the broader public via a website. These participants helped to shatter negative perceptions I had of street-based people.

Interaction with the community members and working together with the Community Partner. The support that I got from Knowledge Coop was phenomenal

Provision of participants.

- **Possible improvements suggested by students:**

I think, from the beginning, we should have tried harder to work with a pre-existing group as this would have made the participant recruitment much smoother and also allowed for the PAR aspects of the projects to be stronger.

Making it more long-term rather than single interviews.

Clearer specification in the Memorandum of Understanding (and understood between all partners) of the deliverable objectives within the agreed scope. I think that, although I highlighted an important topic in my research, that I could have delivered something closer to what the partners expected if the project had been framed.

If the NGO had baseline data for me to work with.

Consistent communication between the student, UCT Knowledge Co-op and the Community Partner.

We could have improved the project by taking more time out to visit the various sites that we obtained data from.

If one is doing a report, a template of the report that is expected should be provided to the student, especially if it is the first time a student it writing a feedback report.

Being less ambitious in scope and timeline.

I hope that in future, more people could be involved including senior members of the organisation.

Better commitments from Community Partner. We encountered a few problems with them.

- **General comments:**

I learned so much from everyone involved.

I think that it is important for partners to understand what students from different disciplines are able to offer as research outputs.

The Knowledge Co-op acts as a great platform for connecting those students and organisations which are interested in conducting community-based research. It promotes important partnerships between researchers and organisations, and this can make various, relevant projects and social change possible. I therefore strongly recommend for other students to connect with the Knowledge Co-op.

Learnt a lot from Knowledge Co-op as I went through my thesis journey it taught me life skills that I took for granted as I work with various partners in the project and I have to use for my future endeavours.

We really valued the role that the Knowledge Co-op played as a third party ensuring accountability - this helped us with both the motivation that was needed during the beginning stages of the research process, and with moving the project towards completion.

I want to thank Community Partner and Knowledge Co-op for their help and commitment overall.

I am really grateful for the assistance from the UCT Knowledge Co-Op. It was great working with the CP team, and I hope to do so again in future.

An excellent partnership. I will definitely be recommending the Knowledge Co-op to other students and communities.

I'd really like to thank the Knowledge Co-Op for their amazing support throughout the carrying out of my project for always checking up on me and asking whether I needed anything in the process of completing my task. My MA has undoubtedly been the best few years I've spent at UCT. I really hope more students find out about the Co-Op and all its wonderful projects offered to students.

I am hoping that Knowledge Coop will continue supporting young aspiring researchers and academics like myself, while contributing positively to South African communities.

d) Research projects – Responses from Community Partners (n = 13)

- **Most valuable aspects for CPs:**

We gained further insight into the UCT extended degree programme, and the ways in which our work should take the work happening in this space into account. It was also valuable to get a sense of student's experiences of this, and how our work could combat or contribute to these issues.

Research feedback and involvement of foster mums.

Platform for unheard voices to come through, teaching us a new way of doing so.

Having a final report product that can be directly put in our project's practice and helps further project decision making.

The co-working with the student worked extremely well and the coordination with the Knowledge Co-op was also well done.

Learning how or how **not** to engage with academia for research.

The independent research and reporting of the project which made the results more acceptable to the community involved in the project and to the City of Cape Town Solid Waste Officials.

The ability to systematically gather insights into an issue which has relevance for our organization's goals.

The student's committed presence.

Providing us with an independent perspective as well as interpretation of the relationship between crime and other social challenges related to liquor outlets.

- **Possible improvements suggested by CPs:**

While there was benefit in the project, my sense is that the syngergy between the student's interests and the organisation's needs was not as strong as it could have been.

If the student had worked with more learners and maybe research with others who were not beneficiaries of our project to see how they cope.

Clarity that we sought very specific research.

We could have got more farmers answering the questionnaires if the students would have entered in contact with us at least 8 weeks before the deadline of the project.

It is quite difficult for partners and students to truly collaborate when students have an idea of what they'd like their topic to be, and partners submit a proposal for what a topic should look like, but there's little opportunity for both groups to co-create a topic. Finally, the timeframes for university students to complete research can be long, which means the best fits will occur where partners have a problem does not need an urgent answer.

Having clarified the organisation's needs in terms of outcomes re. assessing the programme and making recommendations which can for example be used in terms of fundraising

If the researcher had more time allocated to the project I believe further research would have strengthened the argument.

- **General comments:**

We were extremely satisfied with the collaboration and it was fruitful for us reporting back to our partners and gave us some further impact insights into our project from an angle we never had the resources to work on before.

Thanks so much for partnering with us and giving us insights that we were not aware of before.

Thank you for the support and we are glad the project in the end was a success and met our needs.

We were disappointed that the Final Report required for the funder was not written by the students. However the paper written and the Power Point slides created by the students and their supervisor were extremely helpful in putting together a report for submitting to the funder. As a result of the project, the City of Cape Town is now seriously exploring a partnership with us in conducting another waste minimisation pilot.

The research was welcome producing very significant insight and information, and was presented by the researcher at our AGM.

We are piloting the Pre-programme Questionaire at present and it seems to have been accepted by the groups. I'm sure the work on this and the Depression tool will be useful.

e) Short Projects – Responses from Students (n=22)

- **Most valuable aspects for students:**

The most valuable aspect of the project was arriving at the Creche and seeing who we were doing this mural for. I loved doing something so small for a community which would bring joy and happiness.

Giving back to the community

Engaging with less fortunate individuals and making a difference in their lives by empowering them with new knowledge.

The most valuable aspect of the project was reaching out to partners and working together to develop an idea to solve an issue in our community.

It was the community based work linking the students to the community.

Having HOCIP students facilitate our classes and lead our sites, and committing to doing so for an entire module.

Getting to meet new people and share with them our knowledge. We also got to learn from them.

The most valuable aspect of the project for my team was learning to work together and resolve group conflict.

The experience of working in teams to work with a real life project and communicating with external stakeholders.

Being able to make on impact of the community.

Working with real people and real communities.

By the end of the project, the students could see how each of the decisions they were making were going to be incorporated and had implications

"The CP" by far. He was a great stakeholder and the teams managed to meet up with him several times and he was very responsive to emails.

The students engaging with the project owners and taking responsibility for an end product that will benefit all parties.

Discovering a new side to my community. Being able to improve the day-to-day operations of Community Partner.

Learning about community dynamics and being given the opportunity to impart knowledge onto others. Helping the students learn how to use computer applications.

The experience was the most valuable aspect; Helping better equip the staff to improve the lives of foster children around Cape Town.

I personally feel like the experience I got throughout the course of the project was necessary as I got to discover more about myself, things like my strengths and weaknesses and in overall the project taught me to come out of my comfort zone. From the sending of emails, presentation and communicating with stakeholders, this was something I never expected to do soon in my career journey.

I enjoyed this experience very much, it was valuable to my development. I think more courses should do things like this.

There were many topics covered during the course and we shared as much as we could with the learners with limited time. The leaners were a great group and their enthusiasm and positive spirit helped make our time with them both productive and fun.

- **Possible improvements suggested by students:**

I think the project was organised really well. Communication was easy.

Communication between the partner and students could be improved.

Confirming students' availability as soon as it is known, and getting them to commit to set dates for facilitating in advance

We could have come up with more ideas and creativity.

Communication was hard, would have been nice to meet with stakeholders more often. Go to Khayelitsha more than once

Mentally preparing the students in advance as to the nature of the projects.

We struggled with getting more meetings with the stakeholders

Allocating a limited transport only stipend to students. This would encourage them to fully engage with the problems without worrying about the monetary implications for the trips to the lab.

If members of staff were more available to meet the students.

Clearer information from Community Partner on exactly what information she has access to and in what form

Have a set syllabus which is designed by taking into account the learners' current knowledge and pace of learning. It should be made compulsory for the learners to attend the classes.

Better logistics. No one really knew what was going on. We never even met the students. We weren't able to interact with the kids which was why I chose the project. I would have liked to meet and talk with them but going to Khayelitsha was not feasible.

We found working with the partner to be quite difficult and often stressful due to the fact that emails were not responded to on time, which lead to delays in the final output.

f) **Short Projects – Responses from Community Partners (n=9)**
- **Most valuable aspects for CPs:**

Children received computer skills.

The Excel training was most valuable.

The development of the website and knowledge gained with regard to the registration thereof.

Our creche and therapy room both have a lovely mural.

The community obtained material that could be used to take the project further. There were two teams, each with a completely different approach:

1) We now have a viable solution with which we can approach the City Council.

2) We have excellent material (slides and models) with which to present the solution - both to City Council and to the community.

3) The material will assist in getting more community involvement.

The development of the tool to update contact details for possible suppliers and partner institutions. The second project helped us a great deal to structure the development of training material.

The media suggestions, including the strategies suggested, as well as the website prototypes.

Our social work team gained greater understanding of Excel and general computer skills.

The meetings where CP's systems were discussed in order to build a functional database.

The knowledge gained from the classes.

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The creative thought, the work and time they put into it is much appreciated. I will keep the team informed about our progress as I take this forward.

We think that our previous experience with student projects have helped us to improve the value of this project and to ensure that our expectations are realistic in this regard

The student was easy to work with and showed real interest in the project - even going beyond the allocated hours for it.

Thanks to UCT Co-op students for the help with teaching us Excel. As social workers we are not all technologically savvy and the classes really helped me improve my skills

- **Possible improvements suggested by CPs:**

If students were a bit more flexible and organised.

Support and training so that school could sustain project.

Maybe a bit more communication re when students were available to do the project

Time frame was too short. More interaction between the community partner and the teaching staff could have helped to add value to the inputs by the community partner.

More organisation from our side with regard to everybody being serious about the classes.