SAICSIT 2015 - ICT4D Workshop: Towards a Strategic Agenda for Local Research in ICT for Development

The Centre for ICT for Development (ICT4D) at the University of Cape Town organized a workshop at the 2015 South African Institute of Computer Scientists and Information Technologists (SAICSIT) conference. This was a joint venture that combined two workshop: The first half of the day was dedicated to the AISSAC workshop, proposed and organized by Emma Coleman; and the afternoon was dedicated to the ICT4D workshop, proposed by Hussein Suleman and Melissa Densmore [1].

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[1] Organizing Committee: Catherine Chavula, Josiah Chavula, Wallace Chigona, Brian DeRenzi, Haji Ali Haji, Mmaki Jantjies, Maria Keet, Charity Mbogo, Yamiko Msosa, Sinini Ncube, Blessing Ojeme, Jorgina Paihama, Lighton Phiri, Thomas Reitmaier, Ulrike Rivett, Fiona Ssozi, Hussein Suleman, Jean-paul Van Belle and Marion Walton.

ICT4D Workshop

ATTENDANCE

The workshop was attended by 32 people from the following institutions: Cape Peninsula University of Technology, Caribou Digital, The CSIR Meraka Institute, Manchester Metropolitan University, North-West University, Polytechnic of Namibia, Research ICT Africa, Rhodes University, University of Cape Town, University of Fort Hare, University of Kwazulu Natal, University of Pretoria, University of South Africa and University of the Witwatersrand.

The workshop activities[2] included two talks from industry presenters, followed by breakout sessions to discuss various pertinent ICT4D issues. The guest speakers were Alison Gillwald - Executive Director of Research ICT Africa and Adjunct Professor at the University of Cape Town Graduate School of Business and Jonathan Donner - Senior Director of Research at Caribou Digital.

INVITED GUEST TALKS[3]

Jonathan Donner

In his talk Jonathan presented some remarks from his book, entitled *'After Access: Inclusion, Development and a More Mobile Internet'*.
He enticed us with various of issues covered on the book, including: the meaning of the term Mobile Internet, how do we define who is an internet user, a shift to a more mobile internet and its outcomes in terms of development and inclusion.

Alison Gillwald

Alison's talk was framed around Development Theory and ICT4D. Touching on issues such as: understanding the D in ICT4D, the history of Development Theory, and how do ICT4D projects connect to sustainable development and poverty alleviation, as well as global governance.

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[2] For more details see the programme at http://ict4d.cs.uct.ac.za/events/saicsit2015workshop
[3] Video footage of the ICT4D workshop, which includes the two talks can be found at https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLubb3AIPdPhZTz9ZEqA5leoOmAPUnxG0c

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Set Up

There were four breakout sessions. Workshop participants were presented with 4 topics and asked to join one of the groups to discuss the topic they found to be most interesting to them. Each one of the breakout groups was given a topic and a set of questions to start the discussion, but they were also given the freedom to take the discussion wherever it lead them.

Group 1—Structure and Dissemination

Topic: Structure and Dissemination
Discussion Guidelines/Questions:

Feedback/Report/Outcomes

- Special interest group in ICT4D
    - Explore the possibility of establishing a special interest group in ICT4D
    - Responsible
        - Hussein Suleman (UCT) and Melissa Densmore (UCT)
- Alignment with existing publication venues
    - Work towards optimising and aligning existing publication venues
    - Potential publication spaces include
        - SAICSIT; AfriCHI 2016; IDIA; IFIP 9.4; ICTD
    - A special issue in ICT4D at an existing publication venue
    - Responsible
        - Hussein Suleman (UCT) and Melissa Densmore (UCT)
- ICT4D mailing list
    - Revival of the ICT4D mailing list
    - Responsible
        - Judy Van Billion (UNISA)
- ICT4D knowledge platform
    - Set up a national ICT4D knowledge sharing platform
    - Responsible
        - Judy Van Billion (UNISA)

Group 2—Research Priority Areas

Topic: Research Priority Areas
Discussion Guidelines/Questions:

Feedback/Report/Outcomes

- SDG Gap Analysis
    - Perform a localised gap-analysis of the Sustainable Development Goals
    - Responsible
        - Jean-Paul Van Belle
- ICT4D artifact design
    - Work towards establishing methodologies for designing ICT4D artifacts
    - Responsible
        - Kristin Krauss (Rhodes)
- Lobbying
    - Lobby for funding; potential—funding sources include NRF, University, UNESCO and the World Bank
    - Responsible
        - Kirstin Krauss (Rhodes) and Irwin Brown (UCT)

Group 3—Engagement and Collaboration

Topic: Engagement and Collaboration
Discussion Guidelines/Questions:

Feedback/Report/Outcomes

- Xxxxx
    - Infrastructure with existing organisations
    - Work towards creating tools instead of "ready-made solutions"
    - Participation/long-term engagements
    - Avoid specific research questions
- Xxxxx
    - Mailing lists, social media group (e.g. ICTDEvers), meetups
    - What about the less connected
    - Acknowledge/promote local researchers
    - Conferences/research status—radio; popular media

- ○ Common repository—e.g. Website, magazine
  - ○ Equal participation and partnerships
- ● Xxxxx
  - ○ Knowledge hub—repository
  - ○ Coordinate collaborations
  - ○ ICT4D network Africa
  - ○ Marketing
- ● Xxxxx
  - ○ Coorporates
  - ○ Fundraising ventures
  - ○ Funding proposals
- ● Action points
  - ○ Responsible
    - ■ Collin Stanely (UCT)

Group 4—Curriculum and Teaching

Topic: Curriculum and Teaching
Discussion Guidelines/Questions:

Feedback/Report/Outcomes
- ● What do we need to teach
  - ○ What is 'Development'
  - ○ What is ICT4D
  - ○ Contemporary national, regional and global developmental challenges
  - ○ Evaluation of ICT4D projects
- ● How can we create an appreciation for ICT4D in all teaching
  - ○ Involve undergraduate students in existing ICT4D projects
  - ○ Give guest lectures at appropriate ICT4D venues
- ● Funding
  - ○ Government bodies
  - ○ Private sector
- ● Action points
  - ○ CUrriculum design by players from different institutions
  - ○ Conduct a workshop at appropriate local conference—e.g. SACLA
  - ○ Responsible
    - ■ Caroline Khene (Rhodes)

WORKSHOP OUTCOME AND WAY FORWARD

Individuals listed under the various topics will work towards the goals listed, especially those related to community building and the hosting of events in future years.