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Kirstin Krauss · Marita Turpin  
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# Locally Relevant ICT Research

10th International Development  
Informatics Association Conference, IDIA 2018  
Tshwane, South Africa, August 23–24, 2018  
Revised Selected Papers

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## Preface

There is still little consensus among scholars on what development means, who and what needs to be developed, and for what purpose. This raises fundamental questions for future directions in development informatics research and brings to mind Professor Geoff Walsham's question, "Are we making a better world with technology?" (Walsham, 2012). A predominant perspective is that ICTs can support the development, promotion and realization of a model of development that is holistic, inclusive, just, and sustainable, which will lead to an appropriate quality of life for each individual on the planet. However, ICTs have not delivered on the promise of making a better world for all; and there is evidence that technology has increased inequality in many cases (Toyama, 2015).

As such, the goal of the IDIA conferences is to provide delegates with an opportunity to share ideas and research on the use of ICT for developing economies and societies, where different constraints impact on the use of ICT compared to highly developed regions. IDIA aims to balance the need for a high level of academic input from all involved with the need to develop emerging researchers. The 10th IDIA conference offered the opportunity to look back, take stock, and debate the way ahead. Accepted papers reflect local and international discourses in ICT4D, in keeping with the 10th IDIA conference theme of "Making ICT Research Locally Relevant." Given the interdisciplinary focus of our conference theme, we recognized that the debate would not be complete without industry and government representation or without a renewed emphasis on quality research education. Inevitably, we also asked questions about how to better understand these problems and challenges.

In a keynote at the third IDIA conference, Professor Ron Weber reflected on how our discourse is sustained by the research findings we present: "Is the field of ICT4D research still driven too much by rhetoric and not enough by rigor and have we been able to gain reasonable levels of consensus about the realities we face?" (Weber, 2009). We believe that our review processes should not be divorced from what we seek to interrogate with our conference theme. We therefore invited papers that reflect on the local relevance of the research undertaken. Full research papers that considered novel designs, new technologies, project assessments, policy analyses, impact studies, theoretical contributions, and social issues around ICT and development were considered. Manuscripts were evaluated according to their novel research contribution, methodological soundness, theoretical framing and reference to related work, quality of analysis, and quality of writing and presentation. Authors were encouraged to address the diversity of approaches in their research by providing context, implications, and actionable guidance to researchers and practitioners beyond the researchers' primary domains.

This year we were fortunate to have Professor Geoff Walsham from Judge Business School, University of Cambridge, as keynote speaker. We also co-hosted an IFIP 9.4 Masters and Doctoral Symposium for Sub-Saharan Africa (Southern and Eastern). This

was chaired by Professor Caroline Khene and Ms. Gugu Baduza with Professor Walsham and the IFIP 9.4 Chair, Professor Robert Davison from the City University of Hong Kong, as invited speakers. Our international Program Committee of 66 members contributed hugely to the quality of the papers. A total of 61 papers were submitted. Each paper was reviewed by at least three Program Committee members in a rigorous double-blind peer review process. Authors had to submit corrected versions of the papers before final decisions were made about the papers' acceptance. The review process concluded with 20 papers and an acceptance rate of 33% for the Springer CCIS volume.

Thank you again to our Program Committee and authors for making this conference a success, and a great thanks to Ms. Cecile Koopman and her team, who so diligently managed paper submissions and Springer template compliance checks.

October 2018

Kirstin Krauss  
Marita Turpin  
Filistea Naude

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# Contents

## ICT Adoption and Impact

- An Investigation of the Government-Related Factors that Inhibit Small to Medium Enterprises' Adoption and Effective Use of Information and Communication Technology in Developing Countries: The Case of Zimbabwe . . . . . 3  
*Peter Makiwa and Riana Steyn*
- It Should Be There, but It Is Hard to Find: Economic Impact of ICT in Sub-Saharan Economies . . . . . 17  
*Sergey Samoilenko and Kweku-Muata Osei-Bryson*
- Domestication of ICTs in Community Savings and Credit Associations (Stokvels) in the Western Cape, South Africa . . . . . 35  
*Nokwazi Biyela, Pitso Tsibolane, and Jean-Paul Van Belle*
- Rethinking ICT4D Impact Assessments: Reflections from the Siyakhula Living Lab in South Africa . . . . . 48  
*Hafeni Mthoko and Caroline Khene*
- Supporting the Identification of Victims of Human Trafficking and Forced Labor in Thailand. . . . . 61  
*Hannah Thinyane*

## Mobile Education

- Youth Unemployment in South Africa and the Socio-economic Capabilities from Mobile Phones . . . . . 77  
*Hossana Twinomurinzi and Joshua Magundini*
- Smartphone Paradoxes in Working Mothers' Pursuit of Work-Life Balance . . . . . 94  
*Karen Sowon, Olga Sikhwari, Mphatso Nyemba-Mudenda, and Wallace Chigona*

## E-education

- Development Outcomes of Training for Online Freelancing in the Philippines . . . . . 109  
*Karsten Eskelund, Richard Heeks, and Brian Nicholson*

A Qualitative Analysis of an E-education Initiative in Deep Rural Schools  
in South Africa: A Need to Build Resilience . . . . . 125  
*Sifiso Dlamini and Abraham van der Vyver*

**Community Development**

Global Standards and Local Development . . . . . 141  
*Simon Pettersen Nguyen, Petter Nielsen, and Johan Ivar Sæbø*

Enablers of Egalitarian Participation: Case Studies in Underserved  
Communities in South Africa. Processes of Creativity “Not for the  
Sake of it” . . . . . 156  
*Maria Rosa Lorini, Wallace Chigona, and Malcolm Garbutt*

The Role of Local *Bricoleurs* in Sustaining Changing ICT4D Solutions. . . . . 171  
*Elisabeth Fruijtjer and Wilfred Senyoni*

**Design**

Building Empathy for Design Thinking in e-Health: A Zimbabwean  
Case Study . . . . . 189  
*Masiya Alex Marufu and Alta van der Merwe*

Coming to Terms with Telemetry: A Scoping Review . . . . . 206  
*Martin Weiss, Adele Botha, and Marlien Herselman*

Towards a Provisional Workplace E-learning Acceptance Framework  
for Developing Countries . . . . . 223  
*McDonald van der Merwe and Gavin Armitage*

Localize-It: Co-designing a Community-Owned Platform . . . . . 243  
*Maria Rosa Lorini, Melissa Densmore, David Johnson, Senka Hadzic,  
Hafeni Mthoko, Ganief Manuel, Marius Waries, and André van Zyl*

**Innovation and Maturity**

The Role of the Marginalized and Unusual Suspects in the Production  
of Digital Innovations: Models of Innovation in an African Context . . . . . 261  
*Paul Mungai, Andrea Jimenez, Dorothea Kleine,  
and Jean-Paul Van Belle*

Investigating Business Intelligence (BI) Maturity in an African  
Developing Country: A Mozambican Study . . . . . 279  
*Sunet Eybers, Marie J. Hattingh, and Osvaldo M. P. Zandamela*

The Project Management Information System as Enabler for ICT4D  
 Achievement at Capability Maturity Level 2 and Above ..... 295  
*Mark Jonathan Corrigan, John Andrew van der Poll,  
 and Emmanuel Samuel Mtsweni*

**Data**

Identifying the Constructs and Agile Capabilities of Data Governance  
 and Data Management: A Review of the Literature ..... 313  
*Theresa Lillie and Sunet Eybers*

**Author Index** ..... 327