Open Development SIRCA III Collaboration Workshop

June 1 – 2 Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA

The Singapore Internet Research Centre (SiRC) organized the second Open Development Collaboration Workshop, in Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA on June 1st and 2nd, 2016. The Workshop was a critical milestone within SIRCA's open development theory building programme. The Strengthening Information Society Research Capacity Alliance (SIRCA) III has two phases – a theory building phase and an empirical testing phase. This workshop was the first time that the theory and empirical teams met to discuss how the empirical projects will test the cross-cutting theoretical frameworks developed in the Theory Phase. A second goal of the workshop was to discuss the emergence of wider open development theory. The workshop was attended by at least one member from each theoretical and empirical project team.

The second phase is focused on empirical testing of cross-cutting theory, and the first part of the workshop provided an opportunity to present our newly funded empirical projects. These projects are:

1. How do farmers' digital literacy levels, socioeconomic status, literacy, gender and land ownership status, influence their ability to benefit from open data?
   By Chiranthi Rajapakse / Piyumi Gamage (LIRNEasia)

2. Can citizens' ability to access, participate and collaborate in urban services make the urban governance system more trustworthy?
   By Satyarupa Shekhar Swain (Citizen consumer and civic Action Group) / David Sadoway (Nanyang Technological University)

3. Using the critical capability approach to empirically analyze the design and implementation of the open government initiative on education sector in Tanzania
   By Goodiel Moshi / Deo Shao (University of Dodoma)

4. Digitization as 'openness'? Mapping electronic governance and shifting politics of land in West Bengal, India
   By Sumandro Chattapadhyay (Centre for Internet and Society) / Himadri Chatterjee (Jawaharlal Nehru University)

5. Understanding the structures and mechanisms that foster stewardship in open development
   By Jean-Paul Van Belle / Paul Mungai (University of Cape Town)

6. A case study of situated learning practices enabled by an Open Information System for enhancing adaptive capacity to climate change in West Bengal, India
   By Purnabha Dasgupta / Linus Kendall (Development Research Communication and Services Centre)
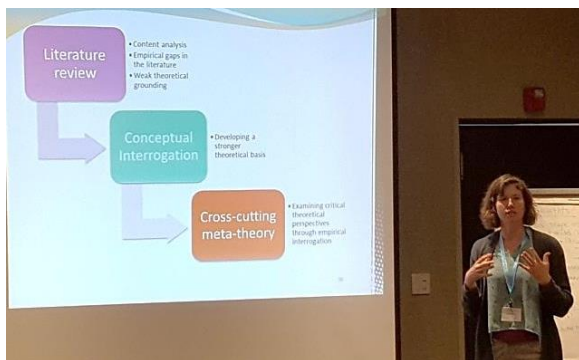
Reminding the group of the central research focus of the SIRCA programme, Programme Lead Arul Chib began the workshop by reiterating our mutual aim to investigate the application of digitally-enabled openness to different parts of social life and how it leads to positive development outcomes. The main purpose of the workshop was to provide researchers opportunities to share progress on their respective theory-building process, as well as, to work with empirical teams to iron out details of the research design of the empirical projects. The empirical teams will soon be commencing fieldwork in summer 2016. The next SIRCA III workshop is tentatively planned to be held in Yogyakarta, Indonesia on 22 – 24 May 2017.

Creating the SIRCA III Book: Critical Perspectives on Open Development

A major research output of the SIRCA programme in production is the SIRCA III Book – *"Critical perspectives on open development: Empirical investigation of theory construction"* to be published in 2017 by a major university press. SIRCA Research Associate, Caitlin Bentley began discussions of the book and invited theory and empirical teams to contribute their ideas. SIRCA has also recently launched an open call for book chapters to be included in this volume. Submissions are due **July 15, 2016.**

SIRCA III Open Session at ICTD 2016 Conference

During the ICTD conference, SIRCA III held an open session on *"Debating Open Development: Sharing and Interrogating Experiences of Developing Cross-Cutting Theory in ICTD"* at the Michigan League, University of Michigan. 35 researchers and practitioners attended the workshop and offered their thoughts and experiences about the strengths and weaknesses of the theory-building project. These participants were also invited to contribute as authors within the programme, and the [open call for book chapters](#) was presented. The second half of the session enabled attendees to discuss with principal investigators based on their area of interests to debate each distinct project.