

Report on the Digital Youth and Learning unConference and Scholar Knowledge Exchange

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August 31, 2014

IDRC Project Number: 106616-00020799-050

IDRC Project Title: Digital Youth and Learning Unconference

Country/Region: Nairobi, Kenya

Research Institution

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Abstract

Integrating ICTs into development programs is complex. Although research can inform decisions made by practitioners as they embed new technologies into learning and work strategies, the synergies between research, practice, knowledge, and learning are not always fluid. Digital Opportunity Trust (DOT), a Canadian-based international social enterprise, designed an innovative approach to address these tensions: *The Digital Youth & Learning unConference*. This project may help conceptualize more innovative approaches towards knowledge exchange and prompt critical re-thinking of scholarship and knowledge generation, particularly within a global context. African and Canadian scholars, alongside DOT's youth beneficiaries, global and regional staff, donors, and local and Canadian partners worked to increase research and learning capacity within DOT and its extended network, deepen and widen contributions to key development issues, and generate new collaboration modes. African-based research focused on ICT, youth, gender, learning and pedagogy, and entrepreneurship served as a catalyst. Outcomes include: an innovative re-usable approach to multi-sectoral knowledge exchange, the development of an online model and platform to support an unConference format, and increased capacity within the NGO to engage with the research community. This report outlines the main activities of this project as well as key learnings and important questions this project raises for future research and knowledge exchange initiatives.

Keywords: knowledge exchange, unConference, ICT, youth, research-practice, social entrepreneurship

Table of Contents

Section 1: Rationale for the Project.....	4
Section 2: Objectives.....	6
Section 3: Project Activities.....	9
Section 4: Project Outputs.....	26
Section 5: Project Outcomes.....	31
Section 6: Overall Assessment and Recommendations.....	34
References.....	36
Annex 1: Scholar Knowledge Exchange Agenda and List of Participants.....	37
Annex 2: unConference Schedule (abridged version).....	41
Annex 3: Online unConference Forums and Hotseats	43

Section 1: Rationale for the Project

Digital technologies trigger fast-paced changes that require constant examination and debate. Research activities can help mobilize such knowledge to inform decisions made by practitioners, policy makers, and beneficiaries as they embed new technologies into learning and employability strategies. That said, the synergies between research, practice, knowledge, and learning are not always clear (Kapoor & Jordan, 2009) and the tensions are well documented (i.e., Bansal et al., 2012).

Blending research, theory, and practice in pragmatic ways—with strong academic underpinnings—can potentially lead to more participatory knowledge creation and research savvy organizations, such as NGOs. However, an IDRC publication exploring the use of research in civil society organizations (Travers, 2011) highlights that although these organizations value research, work is needed to improve capacity to use research for change and to effect more productive research collaborations and broader dissemination.

This project, therefore, challenges the notion of the *knowledge exchange*: the interface between research and practice (Bartunek, 2007). This project strives to make a contribution which may help conceptualize more innovative approaches towards knowledge exchange and mobilization, particularly within a global context.

Knowledge exchanges could be considered a form of what Knorr Cetina (2001) describes as *epistemic practices*. She argues that the transition to knowledge societies involves more than the presence of experts or technological gadgets. Rather, it is the “presence of knowledge processes themselves”: *epistemic practices* (pp. 176-177). As a form of epistemic practice, knowledge exchanges encompass processes of knowledge generation and mobilization as well as knowing and learning practices. Knowledge exchange is not merely sharing information but also reworking information to create and mobilize new knowledges through interactions with others—locally, regionally, and globally.

The lead organization on this project is Digital Opportunity Trust (DOT; dotrust.org). DOT is a Canadian-based international social enterprise focused on enabling people to use information and communications technologies (ICT) to create economic, education, and entrepreneurial opportunities. DOT’s development work in Eastern Africa focuses on making these opportunities available to marginalized people, especially women and youth, in order to eradicate poverty. DOT uses a technology-enabled youth framework to increase the capacity of young people to improve their societies. The DOT model engages local post-secondary graduates (often unemployed) to become leaders of change in their communities: DOT Interns. These DOT Interns help others increase their employability, create youth-led enterprises, and coach small businesses to become more robust and sustainable.

DOT is in the early stages of developing a research program in order to more deeply understand its program models, practices, and development issues as well as input into larger research and policy agendas. Hosting a knowledge exchange event was seen as viable first step: creating opportunities for DOT—and its wider stakeholder network—to explore how to use research effectively and reflectively to inform decisions, strengthen practice and influence policy, and provide thought leadership on pressing development issues, particularly the transformative and disruptive effects of new technologies on economic and social paradigms.

The forum for this knowledge exchange was conceptualized as an unConference: *The DOT Digital Youth & Learning Unconference*. African-based research focused on ICT, youth, gender, learning and pedagogy, and entrepreneurship served as a catalyst. The unConference focused on changing the way researchers, youth beneficiaries, practitioners, and policy makers interact with each other and research knowledge. The design of the event as an unConference is innovative, disrupting traditional notions of a knowledge sharing event. IDRC funds were used to create a more vibrant forum through the inclusion of African scholars and interdisciplinary African-based research and scholarship. The intention was to mobilize insights from this event within scholarly and development communities in Canada and Africa, garnering opportunities for stronger research and knowledge sharing as well as strengthening local practices.

Section 2: Objectives

Project activities focus on two integrated events: the Scholar Knowledge Exchange and the Digital Youth & Learning unConference. The Scholar Knowledge Exchange (SKE) was held in Nairobi, Kenya on May 15, 2013, followed by the unConference May 16-17, 2013. The face-to-face gathering was augmented by online discussions two weeks prior to the event and three weeks of online hotseat discussions six months following the face-to-face event. See Figure 1.

Figure 1. Key elements and timelines.



IDRC funding was used to host the Scholar Knowledge Exchange and engage scholars in the unConference; the unConference itself was funded primarily by CIDA and The Mastercard Foundation. Discussions in this report will focus on the scholar engagement in the event and research implications as per our IDRC-related objectives. Examining the impact of the unConference in its entirety is outside the scope of this project report.

As stated in our proposal to IDRC, the objectives of the Scholar Knowledge Exchange and the Digital Youth and Learning unConference were to bring African and Canadian scholars alongside DOT's youth beneficiaries (DOT Interns); global and regional staff; donors; and local and Canadian community, private, and public sector partners to:

1. Increase research and learning capacity
 - Gain insights into the effective dissemination of research within DOT to encourage better uptake of findings and inform practice decisions.
 - Support the building of reciprocal relationships between researchers and those who co-create or use research to increase the accessibility of research knowledge and the capacity to leverage and learn from it.
2. Strengthen understanding of, and make contributions to, key development issues
 - Design an innovative technology-rich knowledge sharing event to change the way researchers, youth beneficiaries, and policy makers interact with knowledge: enable participants to be more active knowledge contributors, not merely consumers.
 - Deepen and widen understanding of interdisciplinary development issues such as innovation in policies and practices related to youth, web and mobile technologies, entrepreneurship, and alternative learning models.

3. Generate new collaboration modes

- Leverage the IDRC relationship to build partnerships that will support multi-directional exchanges between scholarly and NGO communities.
- Use this event as a catalyst for Canadian-African knowledge-sharing; generate opportunities for participatory interdisciplinary research projects; and strengthen the link between research, practice and policy.

Overall, these objectives were met, albeit to varying degrees. The next section highlights how objectives were realized and identifies several key learnings. More detailed discussion of specific outputs and outcomes follows in Sections 4 and 5.

Objective 1: Increase research and learning capacity

Engagement in this project provided insights into how research could be better integrated within DOT processes to encourage better uptake of findings and inform practice decisions. A key learning has been that in order to tap into the true potential of more purposeful engagement with the academic community—thus embedding increased research and learning capacity into everyday work practices—DOT needs to create more structured spaces for this kind of dialogue and work. One response is DOT’s subsequent development of a Researchers-in-Residence program. Having conceptualized the idea, DOT is now working to make this initiative robust and sustainable: articulating processes, marshaling resources to develop it, and garnering a critical mass of participants.

The format of the SKE and unConference is one modality that has, and continues to, yield promising ongoing engagements between the NGO and the 16 scholars in attendance. This event enabled the building of several reciprocal relationships between the scholars and this particular NGO. For example, DOT invited Dr. Paul Prinsloo to a DOT Retreat in Rwanda September 2013 to present his research and experiences with UNISA’s Open Distance Learning strategy and implementation. Dr. Prinsloo was also invited to propose a research project involving DOT’s East Africa distributed learning development model. Dr. Dorothy Okello has worked with DOT Uganda to conceptualize and propose relevant “women in ICT” projects.

The event made this group of scholars, and their work, more accessible. In this sense, it illustrates DOT’s willingness to interact more purposefully with the academic community. The interactions throughout the event also highlighted that the issues DOT is trying to address are of interest to the scholars who can now envision ways that current and future research could inform and support these initiatives. It is noteworthy that DOT intends to host future unConference events.

Objective 2: Strengthen understanding of, and make contributions to, key development issues

This project successfully delivered on its intention to design an innovative technology-rich knowledge sharing event to change the way researchers, youth beneficiaries, and policy makers interact with development-related knowledge. Data collected during the event and post-event surveys highlights how the ethos of participating and engaging with multiple stakeholders distinguished this event by enabling participants to be more active knowledge contributors, not merely consumers.

The conversations and discussions throughout the event—online and F2F—demonstrated some deepening and widening understandings of interdisciplinary development issues around youth and web and mobile technologies, entrepreneurship, and alternative learning models. Expectations varied depending on the stakeholders. For

example, the youth participants strongly asserted that engaging with a range of stakeholders, and having a voice, was a key outcome of the event for them. For the scholars, the opportunity to engage first-hand, and on multiple-levels, with many different stakeholder groups created opportunities for different, and often, richer conversations. The inter-disciplinary nature of the scholar gathering led to a rich exchange of ideas outside one's field. This is reflected in the articles that are currently being pulled together in the unConference related academic publication.

The technology-rich nature of the event has resulted in a range of accessible digital artefacts via the DOT unConference website. The public, distributed, and dynamic nature of these artefacts creates ongoing opportunities for stakeholders, including those unable to attend the event, to continue to engage in the development issues discussed. Scholars, for example, continue to access these artefacts as they write their articles for the unConference publication. The curation of these digital artefacts will also assist DOT as it plans the next unConference, tentatively scheduled for 2015.

Objective 3: Generate new collaboration modes

The involvement of IDRC in this project helped to build partnerships that have begun to support multi-directional exchanges between scholarly and NGO communities, specifically the scholars who attended this event and DOT. Post-event, many of these exchanges are continuing to develop.

For example, Dr. Paul Prinsloo, has invited DOT to lead a pre-conference workshop at the International Council on Distance Education and E-learning Conference (ICDE) to be hosted by UNISA in October 2015. The invitation also includes the possibility of meeting with UNISA and the College of Economic and Management Sciences to explore potential partnership opportunities with the Entrepreneurial Lab that is currently being established at the College.

Another example highlights how the SKE and unConference effectively served as a catalyst for Canadian-African knowledge-sharing: Dr. Brown Onguko (Kenya) and Dr. Susan Crichton (Canada/Tanzania) were invited by Dr. Marion Walton (South Africa) to speak at the University of Cape Town and a local youth development organization, Ikamva Youth.

A logical next step is to provide more structure to facilitate richer and stronger relationships to ensure these exchanges transition into robust research projects. Several possible collaborative participatory interdisciplinary research projects have been identified (see Section 4). Further work is now needed to select the most viable research projects, assemble the research teams, and develop formal funding proposals.

It is evident that links were forged between the academic and practice communities (as represented by the scholars in attendance and DOT). Although there were representatives from government (policy makers), industry and business, as well as other NGO groups, these links could have been stronger throughout the event, and certainly post-event. To do so, policy influence needs to be a more deliberate objective and supported by a stronger investment in a communication strategy with potential contributors. For example, Dr. Terrie Lynn Thompson worked extensively with the invited scholars in advance of the event and is also a peer of this group of people. As a result, this small group of scholars constructed a collective understanding and commitment prior to the event and arrived ready to engage fully in this event. An equivalent level of engagement could be sought with other stakeholder groups such as policy makers, government officials, and business leaders.

Section 3: Project Activities

Project activities focused on the design, development, and implementation of the Scholar Knowledge Exchange and the Digital Youth & Learning unConference (May 15-17, 2013). In addition to the face-to-face gathering, online components included online discussions two weeks prior to the event and three weeks of online hotseat discussions six months following the face-to-face event. There were 126 unConference participants. See Figure 2.

Figure 2. unConference participants.

	Number of Participants	Female	Male	Comments
DOT Interns	41	21	20	
DOT Kenya staff	27	13	14	
Other DOT staff	16	9	7	Lebanon, Mexico, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Uganda, Rwanda
DOT Global staff	7	4	3	
Other stakeholders	19	9	10	Public sector, Private sector, Community partners
Scholars	16	8	8	
TOTAL	126	51%	49%	

This section outlines the main activities carried out in this project:

- the decision to explore an unConference format and the implications of that decision
- selecting and engaging with the invited scholars
- the development of *The unConference Toolkit*.

An overview of how the Scholar Knowledge Exchange and unConference unfolded, along with key learnings emerging from the implementation and management of the project activities is also provided.

Why an unConference?

As we developed our IDRC proposal, it became clear that adopting an unConference approach to the design of this knowledge exchange event would be an innovative way to address the challenge of making the interface between research and practice more relevant, organic, and impactful. Traditional notions of knowledge sharing and mobilization could be challenged as the focus shifted to dialogue more akin to interaction on the web rather than speaker-audience modes of delivery.

Theoretical frameworks informing the conceptualization of an unConference move beyond traditional notions of knowledge as a thing to be acquired and passed around, learning as a transmission process, and hierarchical notions of where expertise resides. Instead knowledge, knowing practices, expertise, and participation can be seen as far more fluid, distributed, pluralistic, and contested. Drawing on practice-based theories of learning and sociomaterial approaches, knowing practices can be seen as not merely the

result of individual cognitive activity but rather the effect of interactions within a network; networks which include people, objects (including technologies) and ideas. It is the richness of the networks in which people become enmeshed that determine the kind of learning and ways of knowing that ensue. Knowing in such a context entails both consuming and creating—both taking and giving pedagogically. This more distributed, networked, and mobile conception of knowing (and therefore, knowledge exchange) necessarily raises questions about what kinds of knowledges are negotiated and legitimated through these activities and by whom/what.

One question intrigued us throughout this project, and continues to challenge us: *In a knowledge-driven, technology-laden, globalizing context, how do academics in different parts of the world exchange and mobilize knowledge in the nexus of research-practice-policy?*

It seemed at times as though we were continually attempting to disrupt binaries such as: youth—expert, participant—non-participant, global—local, digital inclusion—exclusion, knowledge as thing—knowledge as constructed and fluid, research—practice.

Challenging traditional notions of knowledge exchange shakes up notions of expertise, beliefs about who is able to produce and consume information, and where/how one locates themselves in order to learn and work. Questions that surface include:

- what counts as knowledge?
- how do global and local knowledges speak?
- how might technology increase digital inclusion even as it might also entrench exclusion?

This work also raised questions around new freedoms, inequities, tensions, and fluencies that were being made visible or invisible in the kinds of activities that unfolded in the project.

We started with the assertion that an unConference is not something you *go to*. Instead it is something you *make happen*. This framework suggests a particular view of “participation”, something we spent considerable time attempting to articulate as part of our goal of interrupting:

- traditional notions of knowledge exchanges
- knowledge itself (what happens when expertise is distributed? what does it mean to co-produce knowledge?)
- how (often marginalized) “voices” and “presences” can be better heard or understood especially through the mediation of various technologies.

We began our work on the unConference by establishing the underlying principles of participation. These principles became fashioned into “rules” that framed the ethos of this event and guided the design, development, and implementation decisions. These rules were presented as follows:

*For an unConference to be successful **ALL** participants need to be mindful and supportive of the following basic tenets:*

1. *Everyone is a participant*
2. *All participants must actively engage in activities*
3. *Everyone has a role to play in making the event successful*
4. *There are a variety of session types and formats in which to participate. Find the one that fits well with your style but be willing to explore other options. You will be a participant in many different ways throughout this event!*

5. *Maintaining the schedule and being mindful of time is a sign of respect for participants and their contributions, so we all need to be thoughtful timekeepers.*

Participation in this event was designed to create opportunities for stakeholders to dialogue outside more traditional roles of expert-novice. In an unConference, expertise is distributed: participants dialogue in a variety of configurations and new modes of collaboration are fostered. Scholars do not just give presentations; attendees do not just listen. Moving in and out of different sessions, participants in this event explored the problems and issues identified by the youth beneficiaries and generated recommendations for how to address these issues. And so, scholars took on supportive roles including mentors, discussants and moderators, session leaders, and participants. In these roles, scholars were expected to:

- share insights on how to open up issues and reframe them
- turn questions upside down
- propose theoretical lens to think through issues and help tell cases
- shift stories from one context to another as they draw on research findings (borrowing from Mol, 2010).

The intent of these strategies is to facilitate a deeper understanding of key development issues by ensuring that all participants were active contributors in this knowledge exchange.

We defined several different modes of participation:

- Lead Participant: those leading the discussion (we tried to stay away from the word “presenter” although this proved difficult)
- Facilitators: those selected as session facilitators, moderators, and discussants
- Participants: those joining in the discussion.

Such early framings guided the subsequent design, development, and implementation work. In the end, the design of this unConference reflected the ethos of an unConference but still retained several familiar touchpoints of a traditional gathering to ensure that participants would not be alienated by the proposed process. Although this was perhaps not a true unConference in which everything is organic and emergent, using this term was a powerful signifier that things would be done differently. And so, it worked effectively to capture attention and prompt more critical re-thinking of participation and outcomes. The notion of an unConference truly galvanized the program team and gave us the space and freedom to think about scholarship and knowledge generation in different ways.

The Work of the Program Committee

With the initial parameters of the event scoped out in the IDRC proposal, design work on the SKE and unConference began four months before the event. The event co-chairs were:

- Mr. Tony Vetter (Sr. Director of Operations and unConference Chair)
- Dr. Terrie Lynn Thompson (Program Committee Chair)
- Ms. Eunice Maranya (DOT Kenya Country Director and Organizing Committee Chair).

The unConference Committee, with representatives from DOT Global, Kenya, Rwanda, Ethiopia, and Uganda, as well as the three co-chairs, was convened in January 2013 to further develop the event. The Programs Committee, also with representation from DOT

Africa program teams, as well as Dr. Susan Crichton (University of British Columbia, Canada) started to come together in February 2013 and grew as more resources were required and as members took on progressively more ownership for various facets of the design. The local Organizing Committee, comprised of the local DOT Kenya team, handled all logistics. Numerous others were involved in the design, development, and delivery of the event through their involvement in event committees and sub-committees.

The major work of the Program Committee, co-chaired by Terrie Lynn Thompson and Kevin Kathuka (DOT Kenya), was to:

1. develop *The unConference Toolkit*, a detailed description of each of the session formats, modes of participation for each format, and logistical information
2. create the unConference program and schedule
3. frame the engagement of different stakeholders in the event
4. take on a training and advocacy role related to the design and delivery of the unConference prior to and during the event.

A smaller sub-group—Terrie Lynn Thompson and Susan Crichton—planned, developed, and facilitated the one-day SKE and scholar engagement in the unConference.

The unConference Toolkit

The creation of the toolkit was led by Drs. Susan Crichton and Terrie Lynn Thompson. Although unconferences have been hosted for several decades they are only recently finding their way into research-informed knowledge sharing events. As the team embarked on our project, we struggled to find relevant resources to help us design this event. *The unConference Toolkit* reflects an amalgam of resources we innovated based on what we found and did not find. We hope it will be helpful to others considering a more organic and participatory approach to sharing and mobilizing knowledge. We invite others to use, adapt, and add to the resources in this toolkit. The toolkit unfolds in six sections:

1. Welcome
2. unConference Session Descriptions
3. TIP (think—inspire—prepare) Sheets
4. unConference Schedule
5. About Graphic Facilitation
6. Integrating Web and Mobile Technologies

This toolkit became a significant, albeit unexpected, output of this project. As we began to design the unConference we quickly realized that stakeholders would need to understand this event at varying levels of detail throughout the process. And so, the toolkit became a key component in the engagement strategy. We also wanted to ensure that the basic principles that framed the event were instantiated in every aspect of the design process. One of the outputs from this project, the toolkit is available online: <http://issuu.com/ubcedo/docs/unconferencetoolkitaug27e/1?e=0/9087178>

As a working document, the toolkit became the primary resource to document event design decisions and note logistical implications. It will be an invaluable resource for planning future unConferences.

The toolkit was constructed iteratively. First, we needed to be able to share a basic framework of what the unConference could be and the toolkit was the first way to

articulate different session possibilities. At this stage, the toolkit served to evoke discussion and debate. Based on feedback, different session configurations continued to be refined. This information was also used to generate the “call for papers”. As the design team started to think more closely about how various sessions would be moderated or facilitated, the roles and responsibilities were developed. Closer to the actual event, the Format/Room Set Up and Materials columns were added to ensure that the logistical arrangements would facilitate the kind of participation envisioned in each of the different session formats. We also articulated the outcomes that would be possible vis a vis each of the different session formats. One-page “TIP (think-inspire-prepare) sheets” were created for each session format to provide participants with concise information about each format, roles and responsibilities of various participants, and tips for success.

Selecting and Engaging with the Research Scholars

Critical to achieving the project outcomes was the small group of 16 interdisciplinary scholars assembled as a result of this project. Engaging in both the SKE and unConference, the work of the scholars focused on:

- engaging with other scholars as well other stakeholders in the event, including pre and post event activities, online and offline
- being an active participant in diverse ways
- taking a leadership role to explore new modes of knowledge sharing and mobilization
- “workshopping” and participating in the production of a series of papers ensuing from the event
- exploring possibilities for further research collaboration.

The process of selecting and inviting scholars to participate in the SKE and unConference began in the fall of 2013. Terrie Lynn Thompson, DOT Researcher-in-Residence, and adjunct faculty at the University of Alberta at the time, took the lead on this process. The selection of scholars to attend this event was the result of extensive networking to connect with African scholars doing research that intersected with the main themes of the event: lifelong learning in/out of work, entrepreneurship, youth transitions and employment, technologies, digital inclusion and the digital divide, and gender.

Although this group included scholars who had expressed an interest in DOT and its programs, the majority were new to DOT and its work. A variety of scholars were selected to provide a strong interdisciplinary mix of *active* early career researchers from several fields: ICT and Computing Science, Management and Business, Education, Media Studies, and Gender Studies. Although we were looking primarily for scholars from Eastern Africa, several South African researchers who are doing interesting work in this area prompted us to adopt a pan-African focus. In future, the network could be enhanced by increased depth and breadth of disciplines and country coverage.

In order to recruit scholars it was essential to articulate how their role would be different compared to other knowledge exchange events. It was vital to find people who were receptive and willing to take a degree of risk. It was also important that this group of scholars—as the initial participants and pioneers of this fledgling initiative—had a solid track record of scholarly work and expertise and were actively doing research in areas that intersected with the main themes of this knowledge-sharing event. We also included two scholars from South Africa who were not able to attend in-person but participated virtually.

In addition to identifying potential scholars to invite, work was also done to connect with other institutions interested in collaborating on this project. This included Dr. Susan Crichton, Associate Professor and Director of the Innovative Learning Centre at the University of British Columbia. The Aga Khan University (Tanzania) and the University of Nairobi were also collaborating academic institutions. We also looked to organizations that have strong intersections with the research community. This included iHub, a Kenyan-based tech community organization with a focus on young entrepreneurs, web designers, and researchers; represented at the unConference by Angela Crandall. The International Labour Organization (ILO) was represented by Mlongetcha Louis Mkuku, Tanzania (Youth Entrepreneurship Program Coordinator).

And so, the group of scholars assembled reflected East African and intra-African confluences. Drs. Susan Crichton and Terrie Lynn Thompson provided a Canadian academic presence. Please refer to Annex 1 for a list of the scholars involved in the project. The goal of assembling this group of scholars was to nurture a network that we hope will grow organically, drawing other scholars doing interesting research in these fields who see an opportunity to make a contribution and learn through their involvement in this network.

Scholars were prepared for their participation in this event through extensive email contact and one-on-one Skype/telephone conversations prior to the event. They were also able to access *The unConference Toolkit* and event website. These conversations and resources enabled the group to begin to develop their involvement in more depth and to discuss the opportunities that the SKE and unConference might present for them professionally, for their institution, and with the network of other invited scholars.

The SKE and unConference

Scholar Knowledge Exchange (SKE)

The success of this project is due, in part, to the choreography that wove the Scholar Knowledge Exchange (SKE) with the unConference. The interplay between these two events created rich opportunities for an array of multi-directional interactions and conversations; it also created a sense of intensity, focus, and grounding in real and relevant challenges. The integration of scholars into the unConference was a proactive move to create a direct interface between researchers, DOT, and its network of beneficiaries and stakeholders. The intent was to start to build strong reciprocal relationships that could nurture ongoing knowledge exchanges, formally and informally. Not only did DOT benefit from the infusion of research expertise focused on its challenges (and thus be more likely to apply such research), researchers had the opportunity to engage directly with practitioners and youth to identify future areas of meaningful research.

The one-day SKE was designed to facilitate African-Canadian knowledge sharing as well as lay the groundwork for future collaborative research projects. Scholars were encouraged to share areas of research in which they were interested, and might create opportunities for inter-disciplinary, multi-country collaboration. However, we also encouraged a more organic approach of bringing folks together to interact in new configurations to see what interesting research questions and directions emerged.

Key outcomes for the research-focused one-day SKE were to:

- prepare the scholars for their participation in the unConference
- develop a short list of potential collaborative research projects which we could then take to the next stage: refining and writing funding proposals
- produce an outline of a special edition of a journal or book including a short outline of papers/chapters each scholar would like to contribute
- begin to scope out and build a viable network to advance a research agenda.

It was also important that the scholars had first-hand opportunities to experience several of the different unConference formats and this guided how the one-day SKE was designed.

Participants at the SKE included invited scholars and three NGO leaders. An informal evening reception, the evening before, enabled participants to meet and helped facilitate our work together the next day. As the SKE was only one day in length, the design focused on discussion and outcomes. The SKE was facilitated by Terrie Lynn Thompson and Susan Crichton. There were four main components: Welcome, unConference Briefing, Research of Interest, and Workshopping Publications. A brief description of each of the components is provided below. See Annex 1 for the SKE agenda and list of participants.

Welcome and Introductions

Two of the unConference session formats were used in the introductory activities: speed geeking and the PechaKucha. A variation of speed geeking (see *The unConference Toolkit* for a description of this approach) was used to facilitate introductions to each other and people's areas of research. During this activity, participants had a series of rotating four-minute one-on-one conversations to share:

- Why are you here?
- What are your areas of research interests (both now and in the future)?
- What are your curiosities and expectations vis a vis the SKE? the unConference?
- What contributions do you see yourself making to the SKE and the unConference?
- What are the pressing research questions of interest in your context and area of research?

This introductory activity was very successful. The room erupted into lively conversations that defined the collegial nature and intensity of the day. De-briefing focused on insights that came out of the introductions and the intersections and connections folks were beginning to see with research being done by others in the room.

Interestingly, one quote from the opening Pecha Kucha generated much discussion and was taken up throughout the day in various conversations. Terrie Lynn Thompson suggested that as learning practices increasingly unfold in a blurry confluence of local, national, regional, and global spaces, it is important to unpick the re-orderings that infuse contemporary work and learning spaces. New web and mobile technologies add to these shifts. As Savage, Ruppert, and Law (2010) write, the digital is "bound up with processes of re-territorialisation and the creation of new knowledge spaces, institutions and actors" (p. 9). The notion of *re-territorialisation* provoked questions and discussion.

Unconference Briefing

This 45-minute session was spent orienting scholars to their engagement in the unConference: their roles in the different session formats; participation outside of assigned roles and sessions; and their potential role in the "make a sessions" as participants, facilitators, and catalysts. It was emphasized that the unConference was an

opportunity for scholars to: experience it, critically reflect on this approach to knowledge exchange, write about it, and then use and adapt these strategies themselves.

Research of Interest

The purpose of this discussion was to explore opportunities for possible research collaborations. In the opening PechaKucha, Terrie Lynn Thompson presented several key findings emerging from two current research projects situated within DOT on which she was the lead investigator. First, *Learning Entrepreneurs in Cyberspace*, a qualitative research project which examined the opportunities and challenges contingent workers (entrepreneurs, self-employed, and contract workers) encounter when they venture into globally-oriented online spaces for informal work-related learning. Second, *Web2.0: Mapping Perceptions and Practices*, drew on survey methodology to examine how young adults (DOT Interns), in six countries, used Web2.0 technologies and social media applications in their work and personal lives and how these technologies were integrated into learning, knowing, working, and communication practices. Potential avenues for further research emerging from these research projects were highlighted.

Building on that presentation and the de-briefing of the opening activities, each person was invited to identify pressing research questions of interest. As ideas were shared, these were documented and tentatively grouped on various flipcharts around the room. Participants were invited to feed into and comment on the ideas that were emerging.

Based on this generation of ideas, participants grouped themselves into three clusters. Using a concept mapping approach, each group was asked to consider these areas of research in more detail, both broadening and focusing them, and how they may map into potential research projects. Each group then presented what they had been discussing. After lunch, the flipcharts were displayed (aka a Gallery Walk) and participants were invited to take a closer look at the ideas presented, discussing them with others, and annotating the flipcharts with questions and comments using post-it notes. Discussion with others was also encouraged to probe:

- what do you see that is exciting/interesting? do-able?
- what challenges do you foresee with this research focus?
- who else could be invited into this network to participate?
- how might your participation in, and outcomes of the unConference, impact these concept maps?

The result of these discussions is reported in Section 4.

Workshopping Publications

Scholars were asked to come prepared to share how they might shape their experiences in this event into a research publication. For example, by tying to other research they were doing, exploring different theoretical or conceptual framings of such a learning-knowledge space, raising questions about how this unConference ties in with other discourses, and/or or drawing on “data” generated throughout the event. One of the projected outcomes of this event was the generation of publications: a collection of papers in a special edition of a journal or book and/or other forms of open access and multimedia outputs. This outcome was of particular interest to the scholars in attendance.

As stated in the preparatory notes for the SKE:

Although we come from different research interests, and different locations, we have been brought together by this unConference event and its aim of disrupting more traditional notions of knowledge exchanges (that interface between research,

practice, and policy), of knowledge itself (who are the experts and what happens when expertise is distributed? what does it mean to co-produce knowledge globally and locally?), and how it is that “voices” can be better heard or understood especially through the mediation of various technologies. We might use this event as a catalyst to explore how such disruptive practices are being enacted – and the tensions, surprises, insights, boundary-blurring, and contradictions which emerge.

Susan Crichton outlined several considerations from initial conversations about the publication: possible formats, the importance of open access, maintaining academic integrity and rigor in the publication, and the potential overarching theme for the publication. Participants broke into two groups to discuss:

- the types of publications of most value to folks vis a vis their career stage and the desired reach and impact of the publication; this included debating whether the best forum was a peer reviewed book or a journal and the importance of open access
- the unConference (interrupting notions of the knowledge exchange) as the overarching theme; how to tie their contribution into the Unconference
- ways of mobilizing knowledge to reach non-academic audiences, including curation of other artefacts into another kind of collection and the use of blogging to start mobilizing key dimensions of the publication
- their contribution

Participants were then given 30 minutes to write a brief outline of their proposed paper. And, as/if their ideas changed over the course of the Unconference, to write a new outline for the post-event debriefing. Considerable work has been done on this initiative since the Unconference (please see Section 4).

DOT Digital Youth & Learning unConference

The scholars' involvement in the unConference was multi-faceted and designed to continue the Scholar Knowledge Exchange. A distinguishing characteristic of their participation was that they were not just present as “experts” but needed to enact their expertise through several diverse modes of engagement. The unConference design also enabled scholars to work together in different configurations, in both more and less structured ways.

The following is a listing of multiple ways in which scholars were involved in the unConference. Please also see the unConference program (Annex 2 (abridged version) and <http://www.dotrust.org/programs/events/unconference> (full version)). Details about the following roles and session formats can be found in *The unConference Toolkit* at the same link above under Resources.

- mentors in the online pre-F2F event discussions
- facilitators of online post-F2F event hotseat discussions
- opening panel PechaKuchas
- geeks in the speed geeking sessions (participants engage with an array of experts (geeks) in short, revolving conversations directed to address the participant's ideas and questions on an issue)
- Conversation Café hosts (participants join 1 of 4 conversation areas; a host shares a few thoughts and questions to generate a “whole group interactive” discussion prompted through graphic facilitation)
- representing the voice of the scholars on the Closing Plenary panel
- symposium discussants

- session facilitators and moderators
- on-the-spot facilitators and moderators for the “Make a Session” sessions (at points throughout the event, participants may decide that a particular session is needed. They come up with a title, brief description, list of lead participants, proposed facilitator and post it on the “Make a Session” board. Once a room is assigned the impromptu session goes ahead.)
- members of the Interview Panel
- host of the Poster Mosaic session
- moderator of the Closing Plenary
- lead facilitator preparing other stakeholders and invited guests for their roles as unConference facilitators and moderators
- youth graphic facilitator coach
- participants in the Home Room Groups
- active participants in all the other sessions
- a sounding board, listener, and expert in a myriad of informal conversations throughout the event.

Although much could be written about the varied roles scholars assumed throughout the unConference and how they worked constantly to link issues being explored to relevant research discourses, two points will be highlighted here. First, the value of the research knowledge shared throughout this event was evident in the way the scholars were welcomed in the *Home Room* discussions, invited into the *Make a Sessions* that emerged, and the ongoing conversations in and around the event itself between the scholars and importantly, between the scholars and all the other stakeholder groups.

Second, analysis of the online discussions (pre and post-event) offers many examples of how research and scholarly thinking helped to shape the discussions and shift perspectives. Here is one example from the online Workshop Forums prior to the face-to-face event.

posted by Susan Crichton:

Wondering if you like the term "developing countries?" Dr. Onguko and I use the term challenging contexts ... working with colleagues in East Africa we continue to describe the types of challenges facing people ... both in EA and globally ...Wonder what you think of that term?

posted by DOT Intern (Clet Iyamenye Nibeho):

@ Suzan i take that term in this context : "is a nation with a low living standard, underdeveloped industrial base. where there is a great social-economic problem in the population. is it right please? about the challenges the youth faces in EA and Globally i can say:

- *Unemployment*
- *poverty*
- *illiteracy*
- *limited possibilities of accessing education*
- *gender inequality*
- *the use of drugs*
- *HIV?AIDS,....*

posted by Susan Crichton:

I agree with your list Clet. And unfortunately these challenges happen in all sectors and in all countries to varying degrees ... what Brown, Wachira and I have collected as challenges is

- *Access to consistently available and affordable electricity*

- *Access to reliable, unfiltered or uncensored Internet*
- *Access to previous formal learning and / or opportunities for ongoing formal learning that support individual learning needs*
- *Access to non-formal, yet appropriate learning opportunities*
- *Access to or participation in learning activities due to cultural or religious reasons*
- *Access to transportation and mobility*
- *Access to prior learning*
- *Access to clean water and adequate sanitation*
- *Access to fair and just leadership*
- *Access to adequate nutrition and safe food supply*
- *Access to a safe environment free from hostilities and violence*
- *Access to support for the disabled.*

We would be interested to hear what the group thinks and wants to add ...

posted by Clet Iyamenye Nibeho:

*Excited indeed!! you did a great job with your team mates. What i can add is the problem of young women who met some **gender inequalities** which caused them to miss their chances like **Education** which is the main thing to create confidence and several opportunities to youth.*

posted by Susan Crichton:

Thanks for the addition ... I'm keen that we continue the list with the idea that one day, the list / definition might not be necessary. One of the reasons to talk about challenging contexts rather than developing worlds, etc. is that many of these challenges, to varying degrees, happen everywhere in the world - downtown London, rural Canada, everywhere ...

posted by Clet Iyamenye Nibeho:

Good!! Thanks a lot Susan for Clarification. Now i well understood the reason why you were Wondering if i like the term "developing countries? these challenges are easily faced by the youth everywhere in the world.

Integration of Web and Mobile Technologies

One distinguishing feature of this unConference was the extensive use of web and mobile technologies prior to, during, and post event. Technology was used purposefully to disrupt troublesome inequities in more traditional conceptions of knowledge exchange. The intent was to intensify and extend opportunities for various stakeholders to interact and dialogue and also to create alternative channels for such communications through text, images, and video. The use of technology aligned with the overall approach of this unConference to:

- disrupt notions of expertise
- emphasize knowledge contributions (not just consumption)
- work across boundaries (youth – scholars – practitioners / research-practice)
- extend the reach of the event to those not able to attend in-person
- provide a public, open, and persistent documentation of the event and curation of digital artefacts.

The unConference design integrated web and mobile technologies in five ways:

1. Online forums in the two weeks leading up to the face-to-face (F2F) event (Mon April 29 – Thurs May 16/2013). Refer to Annex 3 for detailed listing of forums and moderators. Youth who were selected to present papers and/or facilitate

sessions at the event engaged in online workshop forums. The mentors for the forums were a mix of scholars, DOT staff, and other stakeholders. Each forum focused on one of the session formats in which the youth participants would be lead participants. Participant papers were made available online to support the discussions. These online forums were designed to:

- enable youth participants to work with Session Mentors to think through their papers and event participation more deeply
 - broaden ideas, engage with current thinking and research around their topic of choice, and think critically about their approach
 - to explore linkages with other papers being presented in their session.
2. A series of three online hot seat discussions (each one-week long) six months after the F2F event. Refer to Annex 3 for detailed listing of forums and moderators. Designed to re-engage with the topics that surfaced during unConference, these online discussions were facilitated by members of the scholar network and NGO staff: the geekers. The geekers were expected to kick off the conversation, introduce some of the ideas that they were exploring in the paper they were writing for the unConference publication, pose questions, follow the online conversations and provide comments, and offer closing thoughts. DOT moderators also helped to facilitate the online conversations throughout each week.

The focus for the hotseat discussions were extensions of issues widely debated during the SKE and unConference:

- Making participation count: Strategies for facilitation and networking (using social media)
 - Gender and new youth-driven opportunities
 - What do mobile technologies mobilize? Youth entrepreneurship and poverty alleviation.
3. the inclusion of two scholars in the unConference virtually (via Skype)
4. live casting of several unConference sessions
5. blogging and tweeting throughout the event – by both the designated rapporteurs and other participants.

A few elaborations describe the scope of the technology integration into this knowledge exchange.

A social media team was created to engage with various technologies during the event. For example, during the sessions that were live cast, one social media team member blogged and tweeted about what was going on in the session they were observing; the other social media participant monitored and responded to online participation in the chat room as well as shared any questions posed by virtual participants. Recordings were made available immediately after the sessions. Therefore, virtual participants could watch either the live or recorded sessions and interact in a chat room for each session. Social media team members met immediately after each session to assemble a blog post about the session: selecting photos, highlighting virtual participation and tweets, summarizing the sessions, and posting to the public unConference site.

Live casts of several sessions created the possibility for others to engage in this event. However, participation was modest. Approximately 10 people participated in the chat rooms throughout the event, four posed questions virtually, and there were 10-20 viewers of each live-streamed event. The technological infrastructure worked well and in future, more concerted efforts could be made to extend the reach of such an event beyond the physical space. Much of the attention for this inaugural unConference was on managing the logistics of the face-to-face participation. This event demonstrated that the technology infrastructure could support rich virtual engagement. A recommendation for future event would be to consider a more extensive communication campaign to invite and encourage virtual participation.

Not all sessions were live cast. Sessions that would be easy to broadcast and/or have a more traditional interactive component were selected because a single camera and microphone could capture most of it: the opening and closing plenary sessions, panel discussions, and symposiums. The more distributed and multi-interactive sessions such as speed geeking, poster mosaics, Home Room groups and Conversation Cafes were not live cast because the logistics of capturing multiple simultaneous, un-timed/un-scheduled discussions were too challenging. Innovating strategies and other ways to share these sessions more widely is a consideration for next time.

The online forums were generally well populated and included a mix of DOT youth and staff as well as scholars. For the third post-event hotseat, 39 post-graduate students from The Aga Khan University in Tanzania participated (invited by Dr. Nicholas Wachira, one of our scholars and co-moderator of this hotseat). The pre-event online forums involved 75 participants generating 502 posts. The post-event hotseats engaged 53 participants in 308 postings.

The inclusion of two scholars from South Africa participating virtually was successful, although some work arounds were needed to ensure connectivity. Dr. Cheryl Brown co- led one of the Conversation Cafes via Skype; Dr. Dick N'gambi participated as a geek in one speed geeking session. Although Dr. N'gambi started out on Skype via a laptop, the work around when technology became problematic became a mobile phone connection. Fortunately, the small size and nature of the speed geeking sessions meant that such a configuration was still workable (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. Speed geeking session



In sessions where scholars were participating virtually, a social media team member was assigned to manage the onsite technology, connection, and move the on-screen scholar around. The biggest challenge was internet connectivity. When virtual scholars were participating in the session, the wifi network had to go down to free up as much bandwidth as possible. The virtual scholars were most effective in the speed geeking sessions where they were interacting with small groups.

The use of social media, while interesting, could be more robust. Twitter participation was primarily participants re-tweeting official messages and/or tweeting photos, quotes and statements from sessions. There was very little interaction between users or real engagement with the ideas. Yet, tweeting did result in online interaction by those participants who were not a part of the social media team. Tweets with the #DOTUnconf hashtag were displayed with a projector on a screen in the main hall using <http://visibletweets.com>. This visual presence and reminder of the outward reach of this event was significant.

One of the post-event hotseats, facilitated by Dr. Marion Walton (University of Cape Town), explored this issue. She led off with this post:

We're particularly interested to find out what new forms of knowledge sharing were made possible for you at the Unconference through the use of Twitter, the live video feed, Facebook, email, or any other social channels. Did you use them? We also want to know if you thought that any of these strategies were bad ideas, PARTICULARLY if they excluded you or anyone else from participating.

- *So, let's start by hearing - how did it feel to see social media around you during the Unconference?*
- *How did you feel when other people's comments or tweets were displayed publically at the events?*
- *Were any of your own tweets or contributions displayed? If so, how did it feel?*
- *Did anything surprise you about these ways of sharing people's contributions?*
- *Did anything surprise you about the people who participated?*
- *Did you or anyone else ever feel left out or excluded by these methods of participation?*

Learnings

Assessment and evaluation activities focused on five main strategies. Data from these assessment and evaluation activities have been incorporated throughout this report.

1. Pre- and post-event surveys were conducted to examine awareness of key issues to be discussed at the unConference and how learnings were integrated into work practices.
2. An online unConference space was created to facilitate dialogue between participants before, during, and after the event in order to share their experiences of applying what they learned to their work.
3. DOT consolidated lessons learned and best practices from the unConference and created an online repository of digital artefacts. Uptake of unConference formats by project collaborators (or others) and/or the unConference as a topic of publications or as the focus for a potential research project will be considered a measurement of this mobilization effort.
4. A fourth measurement of project outcomes is the number and type of research collaborations that emerge as a result of the unConference.
5. It was intended that DOT would track how its approach to program design and model development incorporates research and evaluation findings learned through the event.

Both surveys were conducted online. The pre-unConference survey was completed by 118 attendees from all stakeholder groups and administered in the week prior to the event. The objective of this survey was to better understand participants' experience of the pre-Unconference activities and to establish a baseline related to professional development. This survey explored: expectations for the event, participation in and rating of the pre-event activities, and issues related to professional development and engagement with the DOT network globally. The post-unConference survey was completed by 38 attendees, predominantly interns and DOT staff, and administered online in the week following the unConference. The objective of this survey was to assess satisfaction with the unConference and determine the impact on professional development. This survey explored: expectations, planned individual follow-up actions, and rating of unConference organization. The survey also solicited views on how to improve the unConference format for future iterations.

The discussions during the online hotseat forums (six months after the event) also provided valuable insights into how the ideas explored in the unConference were being taken up, extended, challenged, or sidelined. Work was also done by DOT to reach out to their leadership team post-event to capture and document best practices and lessons learned. E-mail conversations with the scholars one year after the event provided

information on how they might be using or adapting the unConference format in their own institutions. Various research collaborations between the scholars post-event have been identified elsewhere in this document and it is expected that future research projects and publications emanating from the SKE and unConference will necessarily emerge over a longer time frame. The fifth assessment and evaluation strategy proved to be the most challenging. Although there is some anecdotal evidence of how program design within the NGO may better integrate research findings there were no formal assessment mechanisms put in place to effectively evaluate this outcome. Such work could perhaps be the focus of a future research project.

Several learnings around the implementation and management of the project's activities surfaced in our analysis. First, the effort required to introduce folks to the idea of an unConference was significant and should not be underestimated. For many it was a significant paradigm shift often demanding a leap of faith. There were some conversations with potential scholars in which it became clear that they were not comfortable with this format and therefore did not accept our invitation to attend. It was important to sort out these potential tensions in advance of the event.

Second, it was often challenging to convey and construct understandings of how this event could and would be different, especially over often sketchy web connections and without a lot of resources and examples to share. With the publication of the toolkit and curation of an array of digital artefacts, such conversations should be easier in the future. Created out of necessity, *The unConference Toolkit* reflects the significant amount of work that went into exploring, and then innovating and customizing, ways to share and mobilize ideas within the context of a research-practice-policy knowledge exchange event. It now has the advantage of being "tested" with lessons learned embedded into the designs. Reflecting productive north-south collaboration, we look forward to sharing this resource and appreciate the opportunity to make this public via the IDRC website.

Third, the team worked hard to create an ethos as well as practices that tackled a knowledge exchange between researchers and practitioners differently; to facilitate a context that could yield different experiences for participants. As noted in several post-event survey comments, when some facilitators and moderators were not consistent with this participatory ethos, it was strikingly evident and out-of-place.

Fourth, the combination of the SKE and unConference was ideal. Hosting a stand-alone SKE and bringing scholars together for a longer period of time might have yielded more extensive and focused discussions. But the engagement of the scholars as a group in the unConference (in concert with the SKE) gave the discussions a different sense of purpose, connected them in very real ways with practitioners, and also served to create opportunities to start working with each other. Such groundwork sets the stage for future collaboration on research projects.

Fifth, the extensive use of web and mobile technologies was a significant achievement that required considerable advance planning. The social media team contributed to generating a more public dialogue both outwith and within the event. The involvement of scholars virtually was notable and also enabled us to include eminent researchers who were not able to travel to Nairobi for the event given other commitments. As mentioned earlier, a logical next step would be to strategize and innovate ways to increase the virtual participation dimension.

Lastly, the venue at Kenyatta University was conducive to this event; a fact that was mentioned throughout the post-event evaluation data. The location of the university and Conference Centre kept participants focused on the event. Although we could not have

accommodated any more participants at this site, the variety of rooms we had to work with, and the strong local organizing team, enabled new room set-ups to be made flexibly and quickly in response to emergent needs; a hallmark of an unConference.

Section 4: Project Outputs

The outputs for this project cluster into three categories: digital artefacts, academic publication, and research agenda.

Digital Artefacts (practice influence achievement; unique and innovative output)

In addition to this report, digital artefacts were created to document the design and implementation of the SKE and unConference. To mobilize the learnings from this project, these artefacts are public and accessible online through the DOT unConference website. This website is an example of how a technology mediated social process was created to provide a model and legacy of the unConference for DOT and other stakeholders. Our list of digital artefacts changed slightly from what we had proposed in order to better capture what unfolded in this event. For example, the toolkit is an unanticipated and significant output. Outputs provided to IDRC are identified with an * and can be made accessible from the IDRC website. Digital artefacts include:

1. The unConference Toolkit(*): an ePublication; August 2014. Appreciation to UBC for designing and creating the ePub version of the toolkit. Link provided to IDRC: <http://issuu.com/ubcedo/docs/unconferencetoolkitaug27e/3?e=0/9087178>
2. The unConference website: hosted by DOT, this website is a gathering of the digital unConference outputs: The unConference Toolkit, event program, pre/post-event discussion forums, event blogs and tweets, photo gallery and other digital artefacts. Link provided to IDRC: <http://www.dotrust.org/programs/events/unconference>

Collection of Academic Papers (research achievement)

During the SKE, the scholars determined that the academic publication ensuing from this event would be an edited book that draws together a series of papers (each 5000-6000 words) emanating from the unConference (Terrie Lynn Thompson & Susan Crichton, eds.). Initial discussions have been held with an international open access publisher based in Canada. Authors have drafted their chapter proposals and received feedback. Next steps are writing the papers, peer review, and compilation and editing of the publication. Expected date of publication will be 2015. When the chapters and book are nearing completion there will be a series of blog posts and tweets to evoke discussion of each of the main issues raised in the book and raise awareness of the publication.

We anticipate the book unfolding in three sections, each addressing a different aspect of the notion of a knowledge exchange in a development context. Contributions will offer several viewpoints, reflecting the multi-disciplinary and multi-placed orientations of this group. Using the SKE and unConference as a springboard, this publication will: (1) analyze the unConference as a mechanism for disrupting traditional notions of knowledge exchange; and (2) critically examine, in-depth, the current research themes explored in the unConference.

In the first section, authors will draw on various theoretical and methodological frameworks to critically explore different facets of the unConference, an important site for inquiry and innovation. These chapters will engage with the current scholarly literature as well as analyze participation during the event. In the second section, each

chapter will explore one of the main themes of the unConference by drawing on emerging social and technological research and analyze how these ideas were taken up during the unConference. Recommendations for research, practice, policy and/or future knowledge mobilization will be presented. The third section will have a stronger practical orientation as *The unConference Toolkit* is introduced and shared.

The draft outline of the publication is as follows (some further finetuning expected):

Introduction chapter: Terrie Lynn Thompson & Susan Crichton

SECTION 1: Disrupting “Knowledge Exchange”

- Boundaries lost, emerging and found: (In)formal learning in flux (Paul Prinsloo & Terrie Lynn Thompson)
- Redefining scholar knowledge exchange: ICTs as appropriate tools in North to South connection (Brown Bully Onguko)
- The use of visualization to encourage multiple forms of knowledge exchange (Susan Crichton)
- Discourse analysis of key themes emerging from the unConference data (Dorothy Okello & Paul Prinsloo)

SECTION 2: Voices: Interrupting discourses of technology, entrepreneurship, and gender

- Disruptive technologies: Access for the poor (Wachira Nicholas)
- Empowering marginalized voices from heterogeneous networks for co-production of knowledge: A case of using mobile devices (Dick Ng’ambi)
- Gender and access: Promoting affordable and accessible ICT services (Dorothy Okello)
- The power of networks? Social media participation and an African youth network (Marion Walton)
- Learning entrepreneurship: Curriculum and transitions (Edith Mwebeza)

SECTION 3: The unConference Toolkit

Research Agenda (research achievement)

A third anticipated outcome from the IDRC grant was to draft a research agenda for DOT, including a short list of potential collaborative research projects, strategies for keeping scholars connected, and identification of other potential research partners. Several potential research projects have been identified (see below). DOT has now also outlined a research program to identify other potential research partners and strategies to keep this scholar network interacting and growing.

These ideas are the output of an intense but brief dialogue. More work is needed to shape these into potential research projects including a critical examination of funding opportunities and feasibility. As conversations continue to unfold, productive overlaps between these ideas will be identified, other ideas may emerge, and some of these questions may fade in importance. The group of academics assembled at this event came from several different countries and institutions, each with their own systems of metrics and emphasis on research and scholarly output. Nevertheless, the ideas presented here reflect the interest and willingness in this group to work together and move forward for mutual benefit. Next steps will focus on leveraging that willingness, focusing on promising points of intersection, and strategically advancing a more refined research agenda.

Outlined below are four clusters of potential areas of research. As mentioned above, please keep in mind that these are a tentative snapshot of possibilities that require further discussion and development.

Idea Cluster 1: research tackling issues around open access and open initiatives particularly for learning outside the context of formal educational institutions (through work and workplaces such as NGOs as well as informal everyday learning); the new digital literacies and fluencies emerging as learning, working, and knowing are increasingly enacted online; an interest in *appropriate* technologies (including those other than the web) and the blending of offline and online spaces

Idea Cluster 2: multi-disciplinary applied research to explore issues around digital access and entrepreneurship pedagogy; this could include examining appropriate access and bandwidth models, questioning of access (“for whom?” and “for what?”), and studying technology choices for successful use cases. The context for this exploration would focus on the content and process of entrepreneurship learning (formal and informal) and the positioning of entrepreneurship within the broader scope of citizenship. Would like to explore these issues in partnership with other NGOs, service and technology providers

Idea Cluster 3: research exploring how the digital is “bound up with processes of re-territorialisation and the creation of new knowledge spaces, institutions and actors” (Savage, Ruppert & Law, 2010, p. 9) and the implications of such re-territorialisation. Questions include: To what extent has un/re-territorialisation taken root in Africa? How are NGOs and the mediation of web and mobile technologies implicated in the creation of new knowledge spaces? What new knowledges and expertise are valued in these moves? What is indigenous knowledge and where does it fit? What is the pathway back/forward when marginalized or excluded? How do we generate knowledge that is contextually relevant and makes one an active and effective participant in local-national-global communities? How do NGOs fit in the liminal space between formal and informal pedagogical experiences and practices of assessing, validating, and recognizing expertise?

Idea Cluster 4: research examining sustainable ecosystems for learning and working within a context of poverty alleviation that includes examination of the connections between: infrastructure; negotiating global-local contexts and tensions; access, demand, and usage; hybrid technologies and social media (including indigenous ways of innovating and adapting technologies); managing partnerships; and the politics of inclusion/exclusion (including gender, youth, digital fluencies, and participation in a digital age)

Capacity Outputs

Sixteen scholars were involved in the SKE and unConference, actively engaged in new ways to exchange, generate, and mobilize knowledges with an array of other stakeholders. Several scholars have, or are planning, to use elements from the unConference at their institution. Two scholars attribute their leadership role and participation in this international event as contributing to their recent promotions. Several scholars have engaged in discussions to explore collaborative research work and have extended invitations to other scholars to speak at their institutions or conferences/events they are organizing.

Marion Walton (University of Cape Town) explains:

I submitted the talk I presented at the unConference to a journal and am waiting to hear the outcome. I think the most meaningful outcome for me of being invited to join the unConference was a collaboration in South Africa with Susan Crichton and Brown Onguko on design workshops for a local youth development organisation, Ikamva Youth. These led me to propose two World Design Capital 2014 projects, which were both accepted as recognised projects. I've also incorporated these ideas into teacher training I participated in at UCT.

Angela Crandall (iHub) shared:

I have indeed used some of the types of activities (SpeedDating, etc) that I learned at the unConference for other events I have run at iHub Research. I continue to engage with Dorothy Okello (WOUGnet / Makerere University) who is also part of another network that we are part of (ICT4Dem).

Brown Onguko (formerly at Aga Khan University) adds:

My experience at the unConference has been very helpful. I am currently setting up a school in Kenya and believe the experiences will be very handy as we move forward. We might even consider working with some of the DOT interns at the school. I also hope to move forward with ideas from my research which was part of my presentation at the DOT unConference. I hope to continue with other innovations including using some of the unConference formats and toolkit.

Such pockets of activity point to some increased mobilities and fluidity of these scholars and their work, particularly within a pan-African context as well as with Canadian researchers. A next step will be to mobilize larger scale networked activities, such as publications and developing research projects.

Capacity building was also evident, and perhaps more evident, in the NGO itself. For example, building on lessons learned, DOT is planning to host another unConference in 2015 that will continue to focus on marginalized populations such as women, youth, and the under/un-employed. This is an indication of increased capacity and confidence to take on this kind of multi-stakeholder event. Since May 2013, DOT has engaged with several scholars around specific learning and research objectives within the NGO (as described in Section 2). Such actions suggest a leadership role in helping to frame new research projects of value to the international development community.

One of the significant capacity building outputs of this project has been the development of a Researchers-in-Residence (RiR) program by DOT. It is a unique output that demonstrates an influence on practice and a potential longer-term influence on research activities. A key learning from the SKE and unConference events was the realization that in order to tap into the potential of more purposeful engagement with the academic community, DOT needs to create more structured spaces for this kind of dialogue and work. The Researchers-in-Residence is one response. Having now conceptualized the idea, DOT is working through the logistics and assembling resources to support this initiative. A brief description of the program as articulated by DOT:

The DOT Researchers-in-Residence (RiR) program creates opportunity for ongoing collaboration between academic researchers and the DOT programming team. The program promotes exploration of emerging trends in technology education, learning theory and learning technologies. By putting theory into practice, DOT is able to engage in meaningful discussion, to raise questions and to help answer them. The DOT RiR program brokers a discussion between the scholarly community, policy makers, and learning practitioners. The DOT RiR program gives us a deeper understanding of our impact, practices and the contexts in which we work. DOT actively puts theory into practice and

shares results in a variety of global and local networks, fostering debate and thought leadership. Researchers benefit from our historical data, existing partnership, and access to numerous field activities.

Our intention is to:

- *drive a research agenda from within the DOT leadership group*
- *build relationships with multiple researchers covering a broader range of research questions and geography*
- *commit to a written agreement with RiR's so as to better define the nature of the relationship and IP ownership*
- *limit the scope of the relationship (research themes / length of tenure / access to DOT resources)*

Research areas of specific interest include:

- *How are information and communication technologies (ICT) impacting lives and work?*
- *How can we mitigate the growing digital divide and promote digital inclusion?*
- *How can we accelerate learning content creation and increase learning access?*
- *How are countries differentially impacted by the advent of ICT as a learning accelerator?*

Section 5: Project Outcomes

This project achieved three main outcomes:

- an innovative re-usable approach to multi-sectoral knowledge exchange
- the development of an online model and platform to support an unConference format
- increased capacity within the NGO to engage with the research community.

Learnings around the implementation and management of the project's activities and the production of outputs have been outlined in earlier sections. Here, we consider what was learned about the overall design elements in this project and identify key aspects in this project that were particularly important to success and challenging to address.

Innovative re-usable approach

The design and development of a SKE and unConference event, which unfolded both online and offline, helped to disrupt some troublesome inequities in more traditional conceptions of knowledge exchange. This project produced a tested model and documentation of lessons learned to guide subsequent uptake by this NGO or others. Also generated were an array of resources to record and evidence the event as well as support others who may embark on a similar initiative (as mentioned, we had difficulties sourcing appropriate existing models and resources). The development of digital facilitation skills through active engagement in web-based knowledge contributions was evident throughout this event. However, based on the evaluation data, it is difficult to ascertain more precisely how widespread this learning was and more specifically, what digital fluencies were developed.

It was also anticipated that longer term, this model could be adapted for use within Canadian and African teacher and adult education university programs as a method for fostering youth-on-youth engagement and knowledge creation. Similarly, potential impact on university international initiatives (such as UBC's Go Global program) and community service learning initiative is anticipated. Initial evidence suggests that a few scholars involved in the event are engaging with this model. More concerted efforts are needed to achieve this outcome within the longer-term timeframe. With the publication of the toolkit, unConference website, and the related edited book, as well as continued efforts to work this model into partner institutional practices, we could see more uptake of the model.

Development of online model and platform

The purposeful design and development of an array of online and mobile technologies into the SKE and unConference is also an important outcome. These strategies enabled us to extend the reach of the event: in time (before and after a face-to-face gathering); to those within the NGO not able to attend; and to participants outside the NGO. Such extensive use of technology also enabled the project to generate a public and persistent documentation of the event through an array of digital artefacts. The alignment of technology access and use to the ethos of an unConference enabled this project to:

- disrupt notions of expertise and give voice to the often marginalized
- emphasize knowledge contributions (not just consumption)
- work across boundaries (youth – scholars – practitioners).

Further steps would be to engage more critically with the technology mediated processes being adapted and innovated by considering the impact of such entanglements. In addition, ability to leverage the technology to help support more research-informed critical dialogue is important. In this sense, focusing on *how* and *what* knowledge is being generated and mobilized.

Increased capacity to engage with the research community

Several changes in capacities, actions, and relationships between the NGO (research user) and the research community have been noted throughout this report. The event served to galvanize the NGO by validating their questions and providing them with access to experts and different ways of thinking about development issues.

Within the NGO there is evidence that capacity was increased to purposefully leverage connections with researchers active in areas that intersect with the NGO's mandate. The nascent DOT RiR program, for example, is intended to broker a discussion between the scholarly community, policy makers, and learning practitioners. Beyond that initiative, several exchanges have occurred organically, the result of conversations sparked during the unConference (see Section 2).

There is still work to do in order to strengthen and build these initial linkages. Longer-term impact focuses on improved capacities of this particular NGO, and its stakeholder network, to use research strategically and thoughtfully to inform policy and programmatic practices. In future, more deliberate facilitation post-event to better articulate key research findings that emerge from such an event and map their potential influence to specific practice and policy decisions is suggested.

Although this event was an important first step, research-informed practice is not yet part of the fabric of the organization in a systemic and organized way. Of course, this is not a realistic expectation from this one event—it must unfold over a series of strategic actions. Critical is foregrounding the interplay between research and practice and making the connections very deliberate. For example, more extensive work with the academic community to enhance the NGO's ability to develop more conceptual frameworks and critical analysis to guide programmatic decisions could be beneficial. More involvement in larger-scale rigorous research projects would also help to build further capacity.

The SKE and unConference drew researchers' attention to pressing issues and questions within the NGO's practices. The scholars agreed to the need to follow up on these ideas. These reciprocal exchanges helped to verify and validate potential research projects that could lead to meaningful and impactful research. This project pushed stakeholders to generate some different imaginings around the role of the academic in framing social entrepreneurship and the work of NGOs with this mandate. It is logical to anticipate that new forms of scholarship can emerge from such imaginings—not just around notions of knowledge exchange but also anticipating more digital and representative ways of going about such research.

Lessons Learned

Reflection on the lessons from this experience highlights the importance of building relationships across multiple stakeholders.

Because of the timelines of the IDRC funding *vis a vis* the delivery of the event, we were necessarily at advanced stages of the planning and design work before we could confirm scholar attendance and begin extensive engagement with them. As a result, we were not able to involve the scholars in-depth in the design of the unConference. Such involvement would be advisable for future events. On a related note, a more thorough de-briefing of scholars post-event would help to highlight more nuances of the potential impact of the event.

This project yielded a small committed network of scholars. The network needs to grow. We anticipate this can now happen more organically as colleagues identify others whose research will be valuable and of interest to this particular network: African-based research that focuses on issues of technology, youth entrepreneurship, pedagogy, and gender.

As mentioned earlier, the engagement strategy with the scholars was very effective, resulting in highly engaged participants before, during, and after the gathering in Nairobi. A similar sort of approach should be applied to the recruitment and participation of representatives from the policy and private sectors. This could include involving policy delegates alongside the scholars in the SKE preceding the event. Feedback in the post-event survey suggests that participants would appreciate the involvement of participants from other NGOs—expanding the breadth and depth of issues and experiences that could be explored. Building more of these relationships into the fabric of the unConference is another learning from this event.

Section 6: Overall Assessment and Recommendations

Questions we had going into this event, and are still working through, focus on how academics experienced the ways their knowledge/expertise “located” them at the event (including how it was recognized), what was comfortable or uncomfortable about that positioning, and how it shaped their interactions. We wonder:

- How does the use of social media and ability of people to re-purpose the content impact conceptions of “knowledge” and “exchange”?
- How do various session formats encourage participant voice and interaction?
- How do specific session formats include / exclude various participants, recognizing learning styles, abilities, and disabilities?
- How might the unConference format accommodate issues of gender, power, age, career stage, ethnicity, and/or culture?
- How might the unConference format foster a democratic and dynamic interface amongst participant groups?
- How does the unique “event-ness” of an unConference nurture new possibilities for knowledge exchange?

The notions of knowledge exchange in this project speak to social justice agendas of inclusion and reinforces the importance of social democratization of knowledge (Raza, Kausar & Paul, 2007), expanded definitions of knowledge and recognition of indigenous knowledge systems (Odora Hoppers, 2009), and an emphasis on fostering new relations between forms of knowledge and people in the knowing process (Semali, 2009, p. 48). Knowledge generation, exchange, and mobilization is about how one is positioned in knowledge building practices. Law (2009) contends that practices are assemblages of relations that do realities and since realities are done in particular ways, the implication—the ontological politics—is that they could have been assembled differently.

This project focused on fostering different assemblages of actors. There was a considerable investment of time and effort in developing and hosting this event. However, it was a very important project as it marked the beginning of a new direction for the NGO—more purposeful and systematic relationship building with the research community. Through such collaborative knowledge sharing, DOT hoped to improve its capacity to learn from its own experiences, one of the IDRC Canadian Partnership’s outcome areas. This was also a significant project because of the opportunity it created to innovate an approach, such as an unConference, to challenge assumptions about expertise, ways of knowing, and dialogue across perceived boundaries. For these reasons, the return on investment of time and effort was substantial.

That discussions were already underway about the next unConference before this one was even complete, speaks to the impact it had in the moment. The willingness of the research scholars to engage with each other and the NGO before, during, and after speaks to their commitment and the emergence of several promising points of intersection for further research work. The completion of the scholarly publication based on this gathering will be a significant outcome. Importantly, this project signaled

the beginning of a new intertwining of research and practice for those involved, laying the groundwork for sustained engagement.

The benefits of future research into the issues that DOT is tackling through its programming and partnerships and the importance of expanding the research and scholar network around DOT, both locally and pan-African, emerged in the final plenary panel discussion of the event. The need for increased evidence and research informed practices and praxis within the NGO was also made clear. This project would not have achieved its objectives without the partnerships that brought African and Canadian researchers together with the youth and practitioners in DOT's East African programs. Each stakeholder group provided valuable insights to the other through ongoing exchange of contextually located knowledge and experience.

Project success was achieved in part because of funding received from multiple sources. Given that CIDA and The Mastercard Foundation provided the primary funding to support the overall infrastructure of the unConference, the relatively modest IDRC grant was able to be effectively leveraged by focusing on the presence and involvement of the scholarly community, creating a more vibrant forum through the inclusion of African scholars and interdisciplinary African-based research and scholarship. The evidence suggests that the participation of these scholars, and their commitment to research outputs such as a publication and further involvement in research projects, was an integral dimension of this innovative approach to knowledge exchange.

One anticipated outcome from this project was deeper awareness of the complexities of ICT and development issues in order to inform strategies of DOT and its partners. While there was certainly significant progress, as noted above, the development of more sophisticated and longer-term evaluation strategies to assess this particular outcome is required. This project's contributions to development center around concerted efforts to bring often marginalized voices to the fore as well as encourage more multi-disciplinary cross-sector dialogue.

From a research perspective, the development of a pan-African network focused on relevant scholarly work around publications and research projects is promising. The disruption of traditional forms of scholarship, and legitimization of different imaginings and alternative forms of generating knowledge (i.e., epistemic practices) helps to foreground other voices. From the perspective of the NGO, the development oriented contributions made by this project reflect capacity building of female and male African youth leaders to adopt research-orientated approaches: engaging with thought leaders to explore ideas as well as debate and validate youth-oriented research initiatives. The importance of engaging with youth to enable their social and economic inclusion and become partners in solution development is thus recognized.

Details about the development and implementation of the model used, lessons learned, and emerging best practices have been documented throughout this report. If the intention is to work at the nexus of research, practice, and policy then more strategic actions need to be taken to involve policy and private sector participants—similar to the approaches used to engaging the scholars. Another recommendation for next time would be to facilitate a more deliberate “so what-now what” dialogue between the scholars and NGO immediately following the event to make the research-practice connections (or dis-connections) more pronounced and actionable.

We hope this project will be an invaluable stepping stone to the development of a collaborative research projects and further development of a structure to support the ongoing collaboration between academic researchers and NGOs, such as DOT.

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Annex 1: Scholar Knowledge Exchange Agenda and List of Participants

Wednesday, May 15, 2013
Kenyatta University Conference Centre
Nairobi, Kenya

*Meeting from 9:00am – 4:00pm
Hall 2*

The objectives of our one-day scholar knowledge (and extension into the Digital Youth & Learning Unconference) are:

1. Increase research and learning capacity
 - Support the building of reciprocal relationships between researchers and those who co-create or use research to increase the accessibility of research knowledge and the capacity to leverage and learn from it.
2. Strengthen understanding of, and make contributions to, key development issues
 - Design an innovative technology-rich knowledge sharing event – the Unconference – to change the way researchers, youth beneficiaries, and policy makers interact with knowledge: enable participants to be more active knowledge contributors, not merely consumers.
 - Deepen and widen understanding of interdisciplinary development issues such as innovation in policies and practices related to youth, web and mobile technologies, entrepreneurship, and alternative learning models.
3. Generate new collaboration modes
 - Leverage the IDRC relationship to build partnerships that will support multi-directional exchanges between scholarly and NGO communities.
 - Use this event as a catalyst for Canadian-African knowledge-sharing; generate opportunities for participatory interdisciplinary research projects; and strengthen the link between research, practice and policy.

Key outcomes will be: (1) a short-list of potential collaborative research projects which we could then take to the new stage: refining and writing funding proposals; and (2) an outline of a special edition of a journal or book that we could co-publish as well as short outlines of proposed papers/chapters.

Appreciation to the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) Canada, Canadian Partnerships Branch, for the funding that is making this gathering of scholars and researchers possible.

There are four main components to our day together:

Welcome and Introductions

- Welcome
- Introductions to each other and our areas of research via Speed Geeking (with a twist!)

Unconference Briefing

- Program updates
- An opportunity to ask questions about the event , session formats, your roles, presentations
- Please come prepared to share your curiosities and expectations of your participation in the Unconference

Research of Interest

In this discussion we'll explore opportunities for possible research collaborations

- We start by asking each person to identify the pressing research questions that are of interest in their context and area of research – please come prepared to offer these insights.
- The intersection of different research stakeholders in such projects: Digital Opportunity Trust (DOT), including DOT youth; academic institutions; and other policy or private sector partners.
- Using a “mobile tables” approach we will then consider these research questions in more detail, both broadening and focusing them and also considering how such projects might unfold.
- We'll conclude by identifying a short-list of possibilities (we'll revisit this and revise during our post-event debriefing).

Workshopping Publications

- One of the outcomes of this event is the generation of publications: a collection of papers in a special edition of a journal or book and/or other forms of open access and multimedia outputs. Although we come from different research interests, and different locations, we have been brought together by this Unconference event and its aim of disrupting more traditional notions of knowledge exchanges (that interface between research, practice, and policy), of knowledge itself (who are the experts and what happens when expertise is distributed? what does it mean to co-produce knowledge globally and locally?), and how it is that “voices” can be better heard or understood especially through the mediation of various technologies. We might use this event as a catalyst to explore how such disruptive practices are being enacted – and the tensions, surprises, insights, boundary-blurring, and contradictions which emerge.
- Please come prepared to share how you might shape your experiences in this event into a research publication (for example, by tying to other research you have done, exploring different theoretical or conceptual framings of such a learning-knowledge space, raising questions about how this Unconference gathering tie in with other discourses, or drawing on “data” generated throughout the event).

- We also encourage you to present other ideas and options that could be a focus for a collection of scholarly papers or curation of other artefacts into another kind of collection.
- We'll workshop these ideas, encouraging people to reach out to others as potential collaborators, and end with title and outlines of the different papers people will commit to pursuing (we will also revisit this list during our de-briefing as new possibilities will no doubt emerge having experienced the event).

Participants

There are 3 collaborating higher education institutions within the IDRC grant: University of Nairobi, The Aga Khan University (Tanzania), and University of British Columbia (Canada). Other collaborating partners include Digital Opportunity Trust (DOT) and The Mastercard Foundation.

Facilitators

Dr. Susan Crichton, University of British Columbia, Canada
Dr. Terrie Lynn Thompson, DOT Researcher-in-Residence & University of Alberta, Canada

- Dr. Brown Onguko, Lecturer, Institute for Educational Development, The Aga Khan University, Tanzania
- Dr. Nicholas Wachira, Lecturer, Institute for Educational Development, The Aga Khan University, Tanzania
- Prof Samson Gunga, Associate Professor and Dean, School of Education, University of Nairobi
- Mr. Daniel Komo Gakunga, Lecturer, School of Education, University of Nairobi
- Prof Fatuma Chege, Dean, School of Education, Kenyatta University, Kenya
- Dr. Dorothy Okello, College of Engineering, Design, Art and Technology at Makerere University; also Women of Uganda Network (WOUGNET)
- Angela Crandall, Project Manager, iHub Research, Kenya
- Dr. Marion Walton, Senior Lecturer, The Centre for Film and Media Studies, University of Cape Town, South Africa
- Dr. Paul Prinsloo, Education Consultant, Directorate for Curriculum and Learning Development, UNISA, South Africa
- Edith Basilirwa, Associate Dean, Faculty of Entrepreneurship & Business Administration, Makerere University Business School
- Mr. Isaac Muasya, Lecturer, School of Education, University of Nairobi
- Mr. Mlongetcha Louis Mkuku, National Programme Coordinator, Youth Entrepreneurship Facility, International Labour Organization, Tanzania

- Dr. Cheryl Brown & Prof Dick Ng'ambi, The Centre for Educational Technology at the University of Cape Town, South Africa (joining us virtually)

- Digital Opportunity Trust Staff
 - Tony Vetter, Global, Senior Director of Operations
 - Gerard van der Burg, Global, Director of Technology and Social Media
 - Fikre Zewdie, Country Director, Ethiopia

Annex 2: unConference Schedule (abridged version)

for complete program please see :

<http://www.dotrust.org/programs/events/unconference>

Thursday May 16/2013

8:15 – 8:45	poster mosaics set up	
9:00 – 9:45	Opening Plenary Greeting Opening Mixer	Session A1
9:45 – 10:15	Introduction to Conference Introduce Janet Longmore, DOT CEO Janet's Opening Remarks What's an unConference?	
10:15 – 10:45	BREAK	
10:45 – 11:30	Opening Panel 5 @ PechaKucha Presentations Directions to Home Room Groups	
11:30 – 12:15	Home Room Groups #1	Session A2
12:15 – 1:30	LUNCH	
1:30 – 2:45	Break Out Sessions 1 Symposium (ICT & Digital Literacies) Round Tables (6) Speed Geeking (6 geeks) Make a Session	Session B1
2:45 – 3:00	TRANSITION	
3:00 – 4:15	Break Out Sessions 2 Symposium (Gender) Interview Panel Speed Geeking (7 geeks / 1 joining virtually) Make a Session	Session B2
4:15 – 5:00	Poster Mosaic Presentation and mini-reception	Session B3

Friday May 17/2013

8:30 - 9:30	Plenary	Session C1
	Conversation Cafes (4 Cafes)	
	Directions to Home Room Groups	
9:30 - 10:15	Home Room Groups #2	Session C2
10:15 - 10:45	BREAK	
10:45 - 12:00	Break Out Sessions 3	Session C3
	Symposium (Youth & Change)	
	Round Tables (6)	
	Speed Geeking (7 geeks)	
	Make a Session	
12:00 - 1:30	LUNCH	
1:30 - 2:30	Home Room Groups #3	Session D1
2:30 - 3:00	BREAK	
3:00 - 4:30	Closing Plenary	Session D2
	PechaKucha (Home Room Groups)	
	Voices Panel	
	Moderated Discussion	
	Closing Remarks by Janet Longmore	
	Thank Yous	

Annex 3: Online unConference Forums and Hotseats

Online unConference Forums

Mon April 29 – Thurs May 16/2013

Participants in these online Workshop Forums were youth selected to present papers and/or facilitate sessions at the event. Mentors for each forum were a mix of scholars, DOT staff, and other stakeholders. Each forum was focused around one of the session formats in which the youth participants would be lead participants. Participant papers were made available online. These online forums were designed to:

- enable youth participants to work with Session Mentors to think through their papers and event participation more deeply
- broaden ideas, engage with current thinking and research around their topic of choice, and think critically about their approach
- to explore linkages with other papers being presented in their session.

Session Mentors

Interview Panel

- Mondo Kyateka (Youth Commissioner, Uganda Ministry of Gender and Social Development)
- Dennis Dome (Program Assistant, DOT Kenya)

Poster Mosaics

- Susan Crichton (Associate Professor, University of British Columbia, Canada)
- Ayshah Maende (Field Officer, DOT Kenya)

Round Table

- Brown Onguko (Assistant Professor, Aga Khan University Institute for Educational Development, East Africa)
- Dorothy Okello (Researcher and Lecturer, Makerere University, Uganda)

Symposium

- Dick Ng'ambi (Associate Professor, University of Cape Town, South Africa)
- Natalie Kimbugwe (Country Program Manager, DOT Uganda)
- Violette Uwamutara (Country Director, DOT Rwanda)

Excerpt from first posting

How to get started in the Poster Session Workshop Forum:

- **Youth Presenters:** Create a new topic in this forum that is titled after your paper, and summarize your paper and ideas for your presentation. Read the other presenters' topics and share your thoughts on their forum threads.
- **Session Mentors:** Read both the Youth Presenter's forum topics as well as their papers to familiarize yourself with their theme, topic, and session goals. When/if you have suggestions related to a presentation, reply to the forum threads or start a new forum thread as appropriate.

Remember, this forum is meant to help our Youth Presenters workshop their papers and develop interesting, engaging presentations for the youth conference! Please be respectful of each other and remember that no idea is a bad idea, all criticism is constructive, and keep the "door open" to further discussion.

Online post-unConference Hotseats

Nov 18 – Dec 8/ 2013

Designed to re-engage with the topics that surfaced during unConference, these online discussions were facilitated by members of the scholar network and NGO staff: the geekers. The geekers were expected to kick off the conversation, introduce some of the ideas that they were exploring in the paper they are writing for the unConference publication, pose questions, follow the online conversations and provide comments, and offer closing thoughts. DOT moderators also helped to facilitate the online conversations.

Geeks and Topics

Hot Seat 1 (Nov 18-24) Making participation count: Strategies for facilitation and networking

Geeks: Marion Walton (University of Cape Town, South Africa) and Susan Crichton (University of British Columbia, Canada)

This first hot seat will explore how the DOT Digital Youth and Learning Unconference attempted to un-conference the conference! Innovative approaches to knowledge sharing were facilitated through approaches such as visualization (graphic facilitation and poster sessions), extensive use of social media, and even speed geeking. This hot seat invites discussion on what new forms of knowledge sharing were made possible through these facilitation and networked approaches and explores the challenges of using these more innovative methods to make participation count in new ways.

Discussion threads included:

- Shaking it up - Using different approaches
- How did it feel to extend the Unconference with social media?
- Whats up with whatsapp?
- True UNconfessions
- Sex and social media

Hot Seat 2 (Nov 25–Dec 1) Gender and new youth-driven opportunities

Geeks: Dorothy Okello (Makerere University, Uganda) and Kathy Durand (Manager, Global Results, DOT)

This hot seat continues discussions from the Unconference that began to explore the need for a gender sensitive perspective on affordable ICT access and use. New youth-driven opportunities for how women and girls may exploit the possibilities of ICT for work, learning, and living will be explored. One outcome of this hot seat should be implications of more gender aware ICT practices, programs, and policy.

Discussion threads included:

- Are ICTs affordable?
- ICT control and decision making
- Does good policy lead to equal access to ICTs?
- How are we using ICTs - and are we safe?

Hot Seat 3 (Dec 1–Dec 8) What do mobile technologies mobilize?:

Youth entrepreneurship and poverty alleviation

Geeks: Nicholas Wachira (Aga Khan University, Tanzania) and Terrie Lynn Thompson (University of Stirling, Scotland / University of Alberta, Canada)

This hot seat explores how mobile technologies (devices, applications, and services) are being taken up by youth entrepreneurs. Because many of these technologies are dramatically changing how many people in Eastern Africa conduct their day-to-day business and learning activities, they can be considered disruptive or even creatively destructive. We will explore the opportunities and challenges that mobile and web technologies create for youth-driven entrepreneurship and take a critical look at potential impact on poverty alleviation.

Discussion threads included:

- Disruptive technologies?
- Do you have nomophobia?
- Mobilities and entrepreneurship
- Our Gadgets: learning, social and work tools
- Are poor people benefiting from increased access to mobile devices?