



IDRC Small Grants Programme for ICTD Research Capacity Building

Strengthening Information Society Research Capacity Alliance (SIRCA II)

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Programme Evaluation Report

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Strengthening Information Society Research Capacity Alliance II Programme Evaluation Report

This document presents the results of SIRCA II’s final evaluation amongst emerging scholars. A short electronic survey was sent to all 15 emerging scholars and 11 responses were received (73%). The survey consisted of three sections: 1) quality of the SIRCA mentorship programme; 2) outcomes attributable to participation in the workshops and conferences; and 3) self-reported capacity building outcomes related to the individual. This report summarises the results according to each of these sections. The appendix contains the questionnaire circulated.

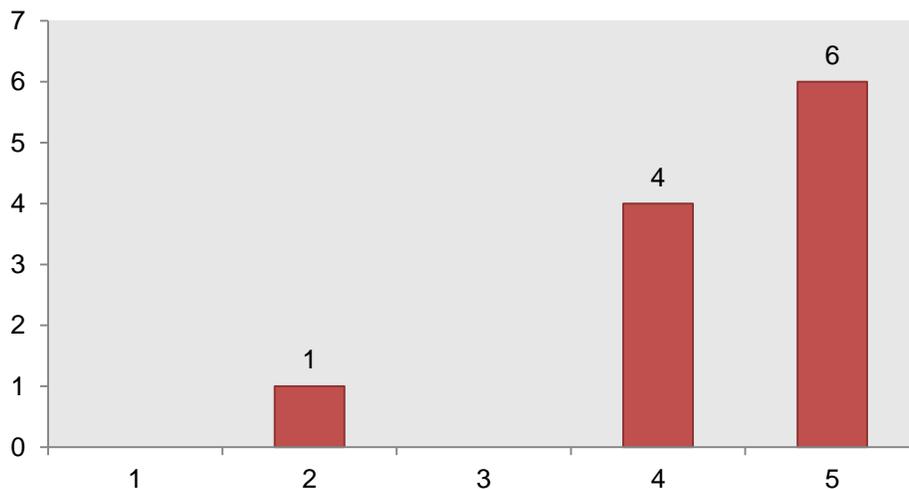
Quality of the SIRCA II Mentorship Programme

The majority of the emerging scholars found the mentorship programme to be extremely beneficial (Figure 1). Ten of eleven respondents found the SIRCA mentorship programme as extremely beneficial or beneficial.

Seven out of the eleven scholars reported that their mentor’s expertise was suitably matched to their project (Figure 2). The most common knowledge and skill areas that mentors assisted with were knowledge in ICTD research theory (72.7%), writing skills (63.6%), publication skills (63.6%), knowledge in ICTD methods (54.5%) and fieldwork skills (54.5%) (Table 1).

The three areas of concern were dissemination skills (27.3%), and knowledge in research ethics (29.3%) and accountancy skills (18.3%). These were subsequently addressed in the SIRCA workshops.

Figure 1 - How beneficial was SIRCA’s mentorship programme?



1 - Not beneficial at all, 5 - Extremely beneficial

Figure 2 - Suitability of mentor's expertise

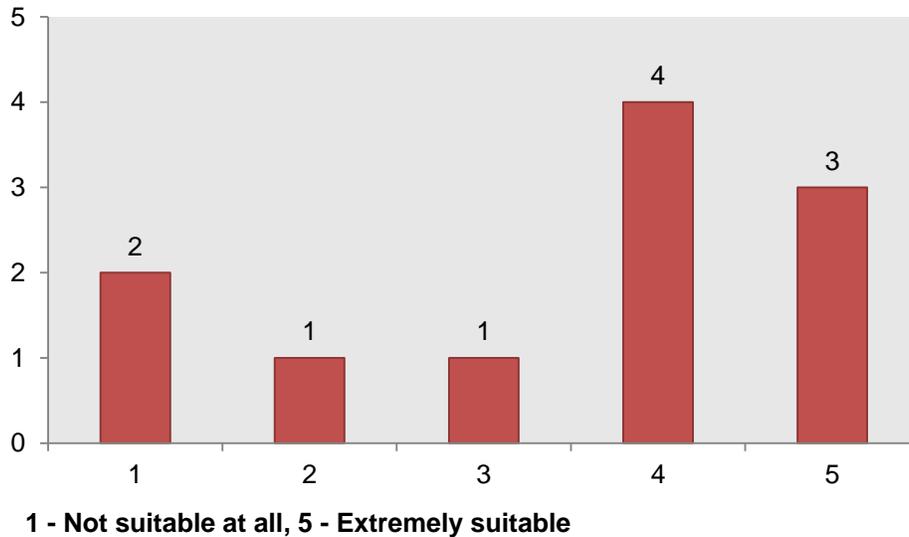


Table 1 - Knowledge and skill areas most supported by mentors

Knowledge and skill area	No.	%
1. Knowledge in ICTD research theory	8	72.7%
2. Writing skills	7	63.6%
3. Publication skills	7	63.6%
4. Knowledge in ICTD methods	6	54.5%
5. Fieldwork skills	6	54.5%
6. Dissemination skills	3	27.3%
7. Knowledge in research ethical issues	3	27.3%
8. Knowledge and skills in accountability and transparency issues	2	18.2%

Outcomes attributable to participation in SIRCA workshops and conferences

The scholars were asked to consider their experience at all three workshops and conferences – Workshop 1 (Atlanta 2012), Workshop 2 (Jamaica 2013/ Mauritius 2013) and Workshop 3 (Cape Town 2013). They were asked about what knowledge and skills were improved through these experiences. The majority of scholars reported that the workshops improved their capacity in at least seven areas with networking skills, ICTD research theory, publication skills and dissemination skills being the most common (Table 2).

In particular, the workshops focused on networking skills (90.9%), ICTD research theory, (81.8%), and publication skills (81.8%). Note that Dissemination skills, identified as a weakness earlier was directly addressed by the workshop, becoming a strength (81.8%).

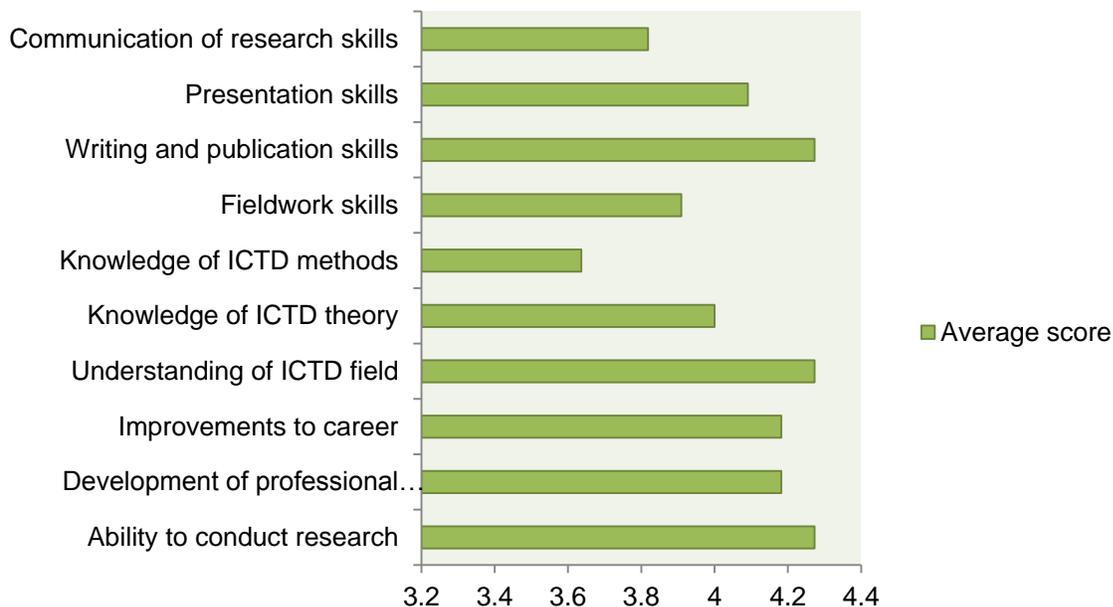
Table 2 – Knowledge and skill areas most supported by workshops and conferences

Knowledge and skill area	No.	%
1. Networking skills	10	90.9%
2. ICTD research theory	9	81.8%
3. Publication skills	9	81.8%
4. Dissemination skills	9	81.8%
5. Presentation skills	8	72.7%
6. Exposure to ICTD Resources (people, associations, websites, or literature)	8	72.7%
7. ICTD research methods	6	54.5%
8. Writing skills	5	45.5%
9. Accountability and transparency issues in research	4	36.4%
10. Quantitative/Data analysis/Statistical analysis skills	3	27.3%
11. Qualitative data analysis skills	2	18.2%

Capacity building outcomes in general

Overall, SIRCA scholars reported that the SIRCA II programme contributed significantly to a wide range of capacity building outcomes (Figure 3). Ability to conduct research, writing and publication skills, improvements to career, understanding of the ICTD field, presentations skills and knowledge of ICTD theory had the most agreement with 70-90% of respondents all scoring these areas with a 4 or 5 (extremely high contribution).

Figure 3 SIRCA’s contribution to capacity building outcomes



1 - No contribution at all, 5 - Extremely high contribution

It seems appropriate to end this evaluation report with words from the scholars themselves that indicate how the programme helped build SIRCA PIs capacities as researchers:

The SIRCA II programme helped me tremendously as a new researcher. Not only that it developed my research skills, but more importantly it gave me the possibilities to meet, network, and collaborate with world-class researchers. In addition, I also really appreciate the opportunity to attend leading ICTD conferences, which wouldn't have been accessible otherwise.

The most valuable experience in terms of developmental feedback was the one to one interaction with mentors, journal editors and reviewers in the workshops. Also interacting with researchers from all around the world was important in broadening my



perspective. Above all the program beautifully integrated learning with fun. Thanks to all the organizers, coordinators, mentors and program participants.

Appendix: SIRCA Capacity-building Questionnaire

Evaluation of SIRCA II Programme

This survey has three sections and should take approximately 10-20 minutes to complete.

Please answer the questions openly and honestly as results from this survey will help us to improve our programme in the present round. The responses will also be used to compile the final evaluation report for SIRCA II.

I. Quality of the SIRCA Programme

1. How beneficial has SIRCA's Mentorship Programme been to you?

1 2 3 4 5

Not beneficial at all Extremely beneficial

2. How suitable was your Mentor's expertise matched to your project?

1 2 3 4 5

Not suitable at all Extremely suitable

3. Did your SIRCA Mentor support your growth in the following knowledge and skill areas?
Please select one or more items below that apply

- Knowledge in ICTD research theory
- Knowledge in ICTD methods
- Fieldwork skills
- Writing skills
- Publication skills
- Dissemination skills
- Knowledge and skills in accountability and transparency issues
- Knowledge in research ethical issues

II. Workshops and Conferences

4. Did Workshop 1 (Atlanta 2012), Workshop 2 (Jamaica 2013/ Mauritius 2013) and Workshop 3 (Cape Town 2013) build your capacity in terms of:

Please select one or more items below for which your answer is 'yes'

- ICTD research theory
- ICTD research methods
- Quantitative/Data analysis/Statistical analysis skills
- Qualitative data analysis skills
- Writing skills
- Publication skills
- Dissemination skills
- Presentation skills
- Networking skills
- Accountability and transparency issues in research
- Exposure to ICTD Resources (people, associations, websites, or literature)
- Other:

III. Capacity Building Outcomes

5. Overall how would you rate SIRCA's contribution to the following:

	1- No Contribution at All	2	3	4	5- Extremely High Contribution
a. Your ability to conduct research	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Development of your professional network	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Improvements to your career	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Understanding of ICTD field	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. Knowledge of ICTD theory	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. Knowledge of ICTD methods	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
g. Fieldwork skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
h. Writing and publication skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
i. Presentation skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
j. Communication of research skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. Please comment on your overall experience of the SIRCA II programme. What did you find most (or least) valuable to your professional development and why?
