Building Community Collaboration

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Abstract. Working within local communities often requires an intimate knowledge of the community in order to enable effective research and design. However, more often than not, it is not easy to substantially engage the local community while conducting research and design, due to constraints and barriers both within and without the project's domain. Common constraints and barriers include navigating socio-cultural, socio-economic and socio-political issues, poor or unfamiliar infrastructure, time and funding constraints, and organizational requirements from both funding agencies and local partners. Moreover, communities may view outsiders with distrust, making collaboration difficult. Consequently, eventual design solutions may be met with resistance or altogether be rejected due to the negative attitude maintained toward the researcher, the funder or the research area. In avoidance of this unfavourable likelihood, researchers and designers have relied on local partners to facilitate their research and design efforts and/or by adapting their processes to suit the local communities. The question posed here however is, how do we ensure rich collaboration with local communities to mutually benefit everyone?

To facilitate discussion and answer these and related questions, a one-day workshop will be conducted to explore best practices in addressing challenges and opportunities associated with collaborating with/in communities. We will explore the value of community-based, community-driven and participatory design and research from different perspectives, and discuss local communication protocols on how to gain trust and manage social change effectively. Best practices and lessons learnt in local community collaboration will be explored, culminating in recommendations for HCI designers and researchers active in the field of local development.

The target audience of this workshop is researcher and practitioners who is interested in, or are already working within local communities.

Read more about the workshop here: http://bit.ly/10pH8sN

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