Mobile phones as tools for social change
A case study of mobile phone use and access amongst Tanzanian youth

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Abstract
Access, use and ownership of mobile phones is increasing rapidly in Tanzania, as in the rest of Africa. It is estimated that a staggering 97% of the population are able to access a mobile phone, according to a study carried out by the Centre for Economic Policy Research and Vodafone. The growing number of people using mobile phones has led to optimism and speculation regarding its effect on economic and social development. Expectations from mobile phones are high and it has already been coined as Africa’s PC. Expectations are further fuelled by sensationalist headlines in the media such as, Mobile phones join war on African poverty, The mobile revolution sweeps across Africa or Cell phones the latest tool in Africa’s fight against HIV and is shaping the discourse on mobile phones for development (M4D).

This study was carried out between January and March 2010 in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania and funded by SPIDER, The Swedish Program for ICT in Developing Regions and commissioned by Femina HIP (Health Information Project) a Tanzanian multimedia civil society initiative that expressed desire for research to be conducted on mobile phones and SMS (Short Messages Service) in Tanzania. This paper contains data from three group interviews and one quantitative survey that was completed by 97 youths. The empirical material gathered is discussed in relation to empowerment and participation, two concepts that have become mainstreamed in development theory and practice and in communication for development. The paper is structured as following. The first chapter provides the aim and purpose of the study as well as its delimitations. The second chapter discusses mobile phones for development while critically looking at the M4D and ICT4D discourse. Also incorporated in this chapter is an example of a mobile phone project that was started in Bangladesh in the late 1990s and is used as an example to represent the empowerment narrative in M4D. A short discussion on this sentiment will conclude the second part. In the third chapter I present my theory. I take a critical look at empowerment and participation, two concepts that have gained, one can say, a moral authority that effectively hides power relations amongst participants, facilitators and donors in development projects. In the fourth chapter I discuss my methodology and how I gathered my material. In the fifth part I present my data and in the last chapter I analyse the empirical material by applying the framework of participation and empowerment. I also discuss what an organisation such as Femina HIP could gain from incorporating mobile phones into their communication strategy.
Acknowledgement
I would like to thank Minou Fugelasang at Femina HIP for inviting me to take part in the fantastic and inspiring work that Femina HIP carries out. I would like to thank all the participants at the Femina HIP Youth Conference for taking the time to answer my survey on mobile phone use and access. I would also like to thank all who participated in my group discussions. Your thoughts and opinions lay the foundation for this paper. Thanks to Wendy for being a good friend and housemate. Thanks to Majuka for making me feel like one of the team. Thanks to Sebastian, I hope the SMS project will take off shortly. Many thanks to Freddie and Robert for letting me ask you a million questions and to Pushpa for being so generous and giving me rides to the office. Thanks to Lynn, my fellow Malmö student, for easing me into my Dar experience and to Zeenath, my tutor, for your speedy replies and comments! A big Ashante Sana to you all!
1. Introduction

As you drive in to Dar Es Salaam from the international airport, you can’t help but notice the vast amount of billboard adverts that pave the roads advertising various mobile phone networks. Even though Tanzania is one of the poorest countries in the world (ranked 159 out of 175 on the UN Human Development Index\(^1\)) it is clear that the mobile phone market is booming. Mobile phone companies such as Tigi, Zain, Zantel and Vodacom are fighting over the booming Tanzanian mobile phone market. Mobile phones are today accessible and affordable for many Tanzanians, and for many the mobile phone represent their only ICT resource. In a study carried out by the Centre for Economic Policy Research and Vodafone, 97 % of people in Tanzania can access a mobile phone, while only 28 % said they could access a landline.

The growing number of people using mobile phones has led to optimism and speculation regarding its effect on economic and social development. Expectations on mobile phones are high, and in Africa mobile phones are more than a communication device. Mobile phones are regarded by Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs), CSOs (Civil Society Organisations) and the United Nations (UN) and bilateral donors as important tools to reduce poverty and improve health initiatives. In addition, mobile phones have been coined Africa’s personal computer and in the future Internet access is predicted to be dominated by mobile broadband.

1.2 Aim of the study and research questions

This study incorporates research that was carried out between January and March 2010 in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania and was funded by SPIDER, The Swedish Program for ICT in Developing Regions. The study was commissioned by Femina Health Information Project (HIP) a Tanzanian multi media civil society initiative that expressed desire for research to be conducted on how to strategically work with SMS (Short Messages Service).

Femina HIP works with partners and youth across Tanzania in order to promote healthy lifestyles, sexual health, HIV/AIDS prevention, gender equality and citizen engagement. Its media products are: Fema and SiMchezo! magazines and the Fema TV Talk Show. Femina HIP also produces booklets on life skills and collaborates with partners on the production of the radio show Pilika Pilika and the website chezasalama.com\(^2\). Femina HIP use

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\(^1\) http://www.untanzania.org/one_programme_JP1.asp.htm (Retrieved on 16 June 2010)

\(^2\) According to the 2007 Steadman/Synovate TAMPS (Tanzania All Media Products Survey), chezasalama.com was the second most visited Tanzanian website. On chezasalama.com debate and interactivity are encouraged through a number of discussion forums and polls enabling youth to voice their opinions and concerns on healthy lifestyle issues such as sexuality, relationships, reproductive health, HIV/AIDS
edutainment as its main approach, aiming to entertain and educate audiences throughout Tanzania with its media products.

The increasing use of mobile phones in Tanzania presents new opportunities for Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) such as Femina HIP to communicate with its target audiences and for audiences to communicate back. It opens up possibilities for individuals to discuss and retrieve sensitive information on, for example, issues regarding Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR). Since an important aspect of Femina HIP’s communication strategy is its participatory production methods and its interactivity with its audience the mobile phone presents a new and exciting communication channel for Femina HIP in which the organisation can communicate with its beneficiaries in a two-way, direct and immediate way. It can also be used to disseminate information on various issues as well as to receive feedback on media products and carry out surveys and research. By integrating mobile phone technology into its communication strategy Femina HIP aim to benefit in the following aspects:

- To be able to gather information via SMS.
  Benefit: the information will be promptly and up-to-date
- A new communication channel.
  Benefits: the opportunity to use mobile phone technology for information dissemination. Communicating with audiences via SMS will signal that Femina HIP is a modern organisation that is up to date with technological change.
- Introduce a management information system that will store all incoming and outgoing SMS.
  Benefits: reduced administrative cost. By storing the SMS in a database will provide the organisation with a better overview of what issues the readers are interested in and in the long run can supplement field trips/interviews
- By using mobile phones to communicate with the receivers of its media products.
  Benefits: Femina HIP can track the delivery of its magazines to various stakeholders such as schools and NGOs.

This study is intended to contribute to Femina HIPs understanding of mobile technology in Tanzania and provide examples of how the organisation can engage audiences through SMS. The following research questions will lead up to an analysis of what social and economic dimensions are currently at play and how those will be impacted by the SMS project that Femina HIP aim to initiate. The questions that have guided the study are:
How are youth in Tanzania using mobile phones? What does the mobile phone mean to Tanzanian youth, how do they experience mobile phones and what role can the mobile phone come to play in their lives?

As a result the following research questions ensued:
1) How can mobile phones facilitate participation and empowerment amongst Tanzanian youth?
2) How can mobile phones be used to promote social change?

1.3 Delimitations
This study will provide general information on mobile phone use amongst youth in Tanzania. However, the people I interviewed all had connection to Femina HIP in some way, were enrolled in education and based in the capital city Dar es Salaam. Therefore, the outcome of the interviews will only provide the reader with a snapshot of a small part of the Tanzanian population. I will not be able to make any broad generalisations from these interviews. On the other hand I do believe that the information retrieved in the interviews do shed some light on important aspects of mobile phone use amongst Tanzanian youth.

1.4 Relevance of the study
At the heart of ICT4D lay the understanding that access to information is vital. In developing countries access to information that supports for example health, agriculture, HIV/AIDS and literacy can be vital. In the last two decades ICT4D has received increasing attention in international development cooperation. Among the strong advocates for ICT4D are the UN, the World Bank, and bilateral donor agencies such as SIDA (who are according to United Nations Conference on Trade and Development world leading in ICT4D), the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and the Swiss Development Agency (SDC) to name a few. One can argue that ICT4D is becoming mainstreamed amongst bilateral donors and development agencies.

The increased access to mobile phones on the African continent has been interpreted with great optimism of what the use of mobile phones can do in terms of delivering various benefits for people living in developing countries. One such benefit would be to bridge the digital divide. The idea of bridging the digital divide is, according to Robert Hunter Wade, a professor of Political Economy and Development and former employee at the World Bank, central to the ICT4D discourse. The digital divide is the gap between those who have and those who do not have access to ICTs. In Africa the mobile phone symbolises a way of
bridging this gap by making people previously identified as unreachable due to their lack of access to ICT resources, reachable.

In conclusion, mobile phones for development is currently a hot topic in the developing community and I hope that my empirical research and my theoretical discussion of ICT4D will in some way contribute to existing research on M4D and that it will provide Femina HIP and similar organisations with useful information and insights on M4D.

My personal interest in mobile phones is from a cultural studies perspective. I am interested in how mobile phones are subverting individual communication habits and what social and cultural effects they produce. I find it fascinating how mobile phones have changed our concept of time and space and how it enables the individual to build, create and maintain personal networks. Personally, I am of the opinion that the mobile phone is an empowering piece of technology in the sense that it puts communicative power directly into the hands of the individual and it is not fixed to a place. However, I am concerned about how the success stories of the mobile phone as a development tool that are buzzing around in the development community is hiding the material reality of the agents and agencies involved in the production and maintenance of mobile phones. It conceals the social and economic, often exploitive relations, that are involved in the production process as well as their environmental impact.
2. ICT4D

Since the early 1990s ICTs have gained ground within the development community as powerful tools that can strengthen the impact of development processes and initiatives. One could say that this was manifested when the UN established a ICT task force that aimed to "lend a truly global dimension to the multitude of efforts to bridge the global digital divide, foster digital opportunity and thus firmly put ICT at the service of development for all" in 2001\(^3\).

ICTs are recognised and promoted as engines of growth by organisations such as the UN, the World Bank and bilateral donor agencies such as SIDA. These organisations encourage developing states to invest in ICT infrastructure in order to achieve higher level of development. At the African Union (AU) summit in Addis Ababa in January 2010 African leaders promised to develop ICT "to speed up social and economic development"\(^4\). ICT4D is becoming an important part in development cooperation and one can argue that the notion of ICTs as important tools that can strengthen the impact of development processes and projects have now become firmly rooted within the international community.

The theory and practice of communication for development has gone through major changes which follow the paradigm shifts in development theory and policy over the last decades, namely; Modernisation theory (1950s), Dependency theory (1960s), Alternative development (1970s), Human development or neo-liberalism (1980s) and Post development (1990s). However, the starting point within communication for development has always been that access to information is vital.

Presently, communication for development theory stresses the importance of understanding communication as a process and development as a participatory and social process that should be designed to seek a common understanding amongst stakeholders in any development project. The aim of the communication process is to give those who are affected by a project the tools to guide the change, to stimulate voice and debate and create consensus on the development agenda. Key in contemporary ICT4D is dialogue and participation, so that people themselves define who they are, what they need and are able to together decide on how to get what they need.

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\(^3\) [http://www.unicittf.org/about/planofaction.html](http://www.unicittf.org/about/planofaction.html) (Retrieved on 14 July 2010)

\(^4\) [http://www.dailynews.co.tz/home/?n=7185&cat=home](http://www.dailynews.co.tz/home/?n=7185&cat=home) (Retrieved on 4 February 2010)
2.1 ICT4D critique

Some scholars are sceptical towards ICT4D and worry that the transfer of new media technology will lead to developing countries having to adapt to the socioeconomic model of the industrialised nations, which will reinforce existing power structures and intensify political and economic dependency. Diane Perrons, Director of the Gender Institute at the London School of Economics and author of the book *Globalization and Social Change*, argue that ICTs has allowed increasing integration between countries. However, since these new technologies have been developed within capitalist social relations of production and unequal gender relations, they therefore build upon, and reinforce existing spatial and social divisions\(^5\). Hence, the participation and adoption of new technologies by developing countries can put them in a position of a new form of dependency as they become more vulnerable to the increasing complexity of the hardware and software of the providers of key ICT services\(^6\). Sceptics consider ICTs to be a hegemonising force and compare it to a new form of imperialism\(^7\). This line of reasoning echoes the thinking that dominated the development discourse in the 1960’s, namely dependency theory, and view new media technologies as a continuing phase of dependency on western forms of technology and ways of organising social and political life.\(^8\)

Robert Hunter Wade, a professor of Political Economy and Development and former employee at the World Bank, and Jan Nederveen Pieterse, Professor in Global Studies and Sociology at the University of California argue that the ICT4D discourse rests on an assumption that ‘what is missing is technology’. According to Wade and Pieterse the assumption that provided with the right technology, developing countries will be able to ‘catch up’ or ‘leapfrog’ stages in the development process assumes a linear view of development and views new media technology as deterministic of social change. The leapfrogging argument echoes the thinking that dominated development policies in the 1950s. According to Modernization theory a nation became modern when it “resembled Western industrial nations in terms of political and economic behaviour and institutional attitudes towards technology and innovation, and social and psychic mobility”\(^9\). For Rostow, an American economist and political theorist and founder of the Rostovian take-off model\(^10\), economic development required not only appropriate economic, technological

\(^5\) Perrons 2004:198
\(^6\) Pieterse 2005:14, Ed Lovink and Zehle
\(^7\) http://www.ascleiden.nl/Research/ConnectionsAndTransformationsSubprogramme1.aspx, Mirjam de Bruijn, Inge Brinkman, Francis Nyamnjoh retrieved on the 18 July 2010
\(^8\) Mudhai, Tettey and Banda 2009:6
\(^9\) Banda, Mudhai and Tettey 2009:5
\(^10\) Major historical models of economic growth. It was developed by W. W. Rostow, the model postulates that economic
and demographic conditions, but also appropriate social institutions and value-systems.\textsuperscript{11} The goal was economic growth, and if states were unable to achieve economic growth on their own they should get assistance in the form of development aid, expertise and technology. I would argue that the concept of leapfrogging is very much present in contemporary ICT4D discourse and it is illustrated by the following statement made by Mohammed Yunus, founder of the Grameen bank and the 2006 winner of the Nobel Peace Prize.

“Mobile phones are already reshaping social and economic relations and have already delivered remarkable benefits in poor countries, in terms of economic growth and personal empowerment and may even enable poor countries to \textit{leapfrog} some of the traditional stages of the development process.”\textsuperscript{12}

A similar take on mobile phones and their leapfrogging potential was published in an article entitled \textit{Dial Growth} in IMF’s Finance and Development magazine. Olivier Lambert, a Telecom Sector Leader of the World Bank Group’s Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency, and Elizabeth Littlefield, Chief Executive Officer of the World Bank Group’s Consultative Group to Assist the Poor, write: “Developing countries can skip or bypass stages of economic or technological evolution that were previously rites of passage for economies embarking on industrialization... such as the establishment of a national mail service and of land-based telecommunications which were once an unavoidable stage of development”\textsuperscript{13}

It is widely held in Western culture according to the authors Jennifer Daryl Slack and J. Macgregor Wise that technology is primarily responsible for major cultural change. In their book \textit{Culture and Technology} (2005) Slack and Wise argue that technology plays a crucial part in the story of defining the characteristics of what it means to be human at any particular time. They illustrate their argument with the story of the Homo Sapien which is the story of progress by the increased use of sophisticated tools. Technology is central in defining the different stages in the story of the Homo Sapien. For example the Stone Age was characterized by the ability to craft a stone, the heavy use of metals produced the Bronze Age, the development of industrial machines produced the Industrial Age and the computer produces the Information Age. The goal of every age was to perfectly master the

\textsuperscript{11} Worsley ed Skelton & Allan 2000:31
\textsuperscript{12} http://www.nextbillion.net/news/to-fish-or-to-phone-now-youre-talking (Retrieved on 13 March 2010)
technology making “technology the end product, the effect and the raison d’etre of every age”\textsuperscript{14}.

The leapfrogging argument I believe resonates well within western cultures, since we understand technology as the end product of progress. Embedded in the ICT4D discourse is the notion that all nations will, and want to, become technologised\textsuperscript{15} and that technological change is inevitable. This technological determinism hides the fact that people are marginalised or live in poverty due to social or political reasons. Banda, Mudhai and Tettey write in the opening chapter in the book \textit{African Media and the Digital Public Sphere}\textsuperscript{16} in regards to the predictions of leapfrogging that accompanied the introduction of new media technology in Africa in the 1990s that “two decades after the old questions remain: about access, inequality, power and the quality of information available.”\textsuperscript{17}

\textbf{2.2 Mobile phone penetration in Tanzania}

According to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Africa is the continent with the fastest growing number of mobile phone subscriptions. The rapid growth of mobile phones in African countries is often presented as an economic success and as an opportunity for marginalised people and areas to overcome their isolation\textsuperscript{18}. In 1999 10 per cent of the African population could access a mobile phone. Less than a decade later, in 2008, the number of people who could access a mobile phone had risen to 60 per cent. In Tanzania the telecommunications industry was monopolised up until 1993, and owned by TTCL, a state-owned company under the Tanzania Posts and Telecommunications Corporation (TPTC). Since the liberalisation of the sector mobile phone companies have risen in numbers and there are now seven major companies active in Tanzania.

The speedy uptake of mobile phones in many African countries can be attributed to the limited penetration of fixed phone lines, the introduction of low cost handsets and the prepaid system, which has decreased the income barrier to mobile ownership and use, as well as the liberalisation of markets. In regards to infrastructure, the installation cost of mobile phone infrastructure is cheap and relatively easy to set up compared to fixed phone lines.

The increased penetration of mobile phones in African countries is often presented as

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{14} Slack and Wise 2005:3  \\
\textsuperscript{15} Slack and Wise 2005:22  \\
\textsuperscript{16} Palgrave macmillan 2009  \\
\textsuperscript{17} Mudhai, Tettey and Banda 2009:1  \\
\textsuperscript{18} http://www.ascleiden.nl/Research/ConnectionsAndTransformationsSubprogramme1.asp (Retrieved on the 14 July 2010)
\end{flushleft}
economic success and as an opportunity for marginalised people and for those living in rural areas to overcome their isolation\textsuperscript{19}. The rapid increase of mobile has sparked hope that mobile phones will help bridge the digital divide and that the global village is now attainable. In Tanzania’s National ICT policy from 2003 the digital divide is defined as the gap between those able, and those unable to participate in the knowledge economy. The ICT policy sets out to mitigate the “dangers posed by the digital divide, and the risk of being excluded further from the knowledge economy and social development\textsuperscript{20}”. The ICT situation in Tanzania, (in 2003) is described to require “urgent steps to enable Tanzanians to participate meaningfully in the knowledge economy, recognising that Tanzania has low levels of human capital development, local content creation, ICT infrastructure and access, which together lead to high costs of participation”. One of the strategies laid out by the Tanzanian government is that the relationship between the ICT industry and the government needs to be a “partnership for national development instead of being focused on taxes and tenders\textsuperscript{21}”. A recent example of a partnership between the Tanzanian government and a mobile phone company is the cooperation between the state and the company Zain in the roll out of infrastructure to support the Seacom underwater fibre-optic cable that was introduced in 2009 to increase bandwidth in Eastern Africa. The Tanzanian government had not made the appropriate preparations for the introduction of Seacom, hence Zain is supporting the government in the rollout of infrastructure and is providing the government with administrative support\textsuperscript{22}.

\section*{2.3 M4D discourse - the mobile phone revolution}

Mobile phones have gone from being just a communication tool in Africa, here they are expected to alleviate poverty, improve people’s health and enhance education. News stories and reports often feature headlines that sensationalise mobile phones as technology for development. Some examples of such headlines would include, \textit{Mobile phones join war on African poverty}\textsuperscript{23}, \textit{The mobile revolution sweeps across Africa}\textsuperscript{24} or \textit{Cell phones the latest tool in Africa’s fight against HIV}\textsuperscript{25}.

\textsuperscript{19} http://www.ascleiden.nl/Research/ConnectionsAndTransformationsSubprogramme1.asp retrieved on the 14 July 2010
\textsuperscript{23} http://www.zeenews.com/news292033.html, an Indian news site
\textsuperscript{25} http://www.mg.co.za/article/2010-03-08-mobile-phones-the-latest-tool-in-africas-fight-against-hiv (Retrieved on 14 July 2010)
In a BBC news feature, Paul Mason, a British television news correspondent, travels through Kenya to document the “mobile phone revolution”\(^{26}\). Mason reports on how the mobile phone has changed the lives of the people he visits. He talks to a farmer, who is now able to negotiate better prices for his crops by using a mobile phone. He visits the Masaii who say they are now able to communicate with their herdsmen, enabling them to keep track on their kettle. Mason also talks to a young woman Jane Arrunga who he declares is part of the mobile phone revolution. The interview is carried out in a place of commerce, in the market in the Kenyan capital Nairobi. The topic of the interview is the effect of mobile phones on the Kenyan economy. Ms. Arrunga says:

“Why are we still trying to figure out how the government can better provide the people with water sources and health care services when they haven’t been able to do this for the past 60 years, with aid money...why are we talking about the model that has failed us when we have this model that we have seen works, like magic over night...so if this model can be replicated, because we have seen that it works, the potential is enormous”\(^{27}\).

Ms. Arrunga is sceptical towards the ability of the Kenyan government to provide basic services such as clean running water and electricity to its people. The organisation of Kenyan society should, according to Arrunga, be left to market forces and to competitive individuals, with the use of new technology such as the mobile phone. The mobile phone has, according to Arrunga, given individuals more bargaining power. She says, “The mobile phone has given the person opportunity to own themselves...and people can reach you”\(^{28}\).

Mason, who in the beginning of their conversation proclaims to be sceptical towards technological determinism is persuaded by Ms. Arrunga’s statement instantly, even though she does not mention how the business model she speaks of actually works.

I believe that this news report is representative of M4D discourse. The nation state in developing countries is represented as a static entity that is inherently unable to provide basic services to its citizens. It views individuals as either entrepreneurs or as consumers who should be left to operate on the market. The example of the farmer who is able to increase his/her profit margin by receiving market information via SMS, hence enabling


\(^{27}\)http://news.bbc.co.uk/player/nol/newsid_6230000/newsid_6234500/6234593.stm?bw=nb&mp=rm&asb=1&news=1&bbcws=1 (Retrieved on 4 June 2010)

\(^{28}\)http://news.bbc.co.uk/player/nol/newsid_6230000/newsid_6234500/6234593.stm?bw=nb&mp=rm&asb=1&news=1&bbcws=1 7.50 minutes in (Retrieved on 4 June 2010)
him/her to negotiate better prices for his/her crop by cutting out the middle-man is frequently used in M4D discourse to describe the positive aspects of mobile phones in regards to economic growth and poverty alleviation. This simplifies what poverty is. Poverty is not merely about access to money, but has multiple and complex causes and are not necessarily linked to the lack of income. Therefore, poverty reduction strategies cannot only be about creating economic growth. Mobile phones may indeed help farmers in achieving a better price for their crop, however one cannot assume that this will change their lives in regards to for example, social inclusion, access to health facilities, political visibility and voice.

On the one hand one can argue that ICT4D is about market expansion, on the other hand one cannot disregard the tremendous impact of the mobile phone on the daily lives of individuals. In some places the mobile phone is the first modern telecommunication infrastructure and is undeniably putting communicative power into the hands of individuals. However, I find the buzz around mobile phones in the development context extremely one-sided. Hardly anything is ever mentioned in M4D articles, literature, statements etc about the often exploitive and hazardous working conditions for those who extract the cobalt that is used in mobile phone batteries. According to MakeITfair, it is expected that about 50,000 children work in one of the cobalt mines in Katanga in DRC. It is a dangerous job with many fatal accidents and the people working in the mines “often work without protective gear, inhaling mineral dust that might damage their lungs and irritate their eyes.” The issue of recycling mobile phones is also never mentioned. Ms. Arrunga and others who claim to be part of the “mobile phone revolution” may believe that the mobile phone can provide a person with access to clean drinking water, however, in the long term the mobile phone may in fact pollute that water.

3. Presentation and discussion of theories

The growing number of people who have access to mobile phones in Tanzania has presented civil society initiatives such as Femina HIP with new ways to communicate with its audiences, and for its audiences to communicate back to Femina HIP. Empowerment and participation are central to Femina HIP’s vision and mission; where participation is the method and empowerment is the favoured outcome. The organisation aims to educate and entertain young people in Tanzania and to give them “voice, to speak up and share experiences”. An important aspect to Femina HIP’s communication strategy is its participatory production methods and its interactivity with its audience. By engaging ‘ordinary people’ to participate in setting content agendas and to share their experiences and tell their stories through Femina HIP media products, the organisation aims to have an empowering and lifelong presence with its audience and foster a society that embraces democratic values.

This chapter will explore and discuss empowerment and participation in relation to communication for social change. This will form the theory upon which I will analyse my empirical material. I have chosen to focus on these two concepts since they are key to Femina HIP’s work. Moreover, they are integral in communication for development and social change theory and practice.

3.1 Empowerment

The concept of empowerment is associated with a bottom-up or grass-roots approach to development and became prominent in the 1970s and 1980s within the ‘Alternative development’ paradigm. Alternative development is a critique of the Modernization model for development, and puts the basic needs of people such as food, water and shelter before economic growth-maximisation. It focuses on popular participation and uses human development instead of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to measure development. Alternative development is a people centred approach that “emphasizes agency, in the sense of peoples capacity to effect social change”. The increased popularity of Alternative development, one could say was the result of the increased recognition that the alleviation of widespread inequalities and poverty could not be achieved by traditional, top down redistributive mechanisms but required the empowerment of the

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30 http://www.feminahip.or.tz/about-us/methodology.html retrieved on 5 March 2010
31 Fugelsang ed hemer & Tufte 2005:386
32 Pieterse 2001:74
33 Pieterse 2001:75
People should become aware of their situation, start to think critically about their social and political condition and recognise that they are oppressed due to political authorities and structures. Brazilian educationalist Paulo Freire calls this liberal education and the development of consciousness. Conscientization is key in order to understand one’s role in society and in order to develop political action that can alleviate one’s oppression. In order for a person to be empowered one has to become reflective and realise that deprivation and misery are not natural, but exist due to structures of exploitation and oppression. Hence, the key to overcoming mass poverty is the social and political empowerment of the poor and should be prioritised over for example access to resources via redistributive mechanisms and subsidies.

In *Mediation, Citizen Empowerment, and Transformational Politics*, Edward W. Schwerin (1995) identifies eight characteristic components of the empowerment concept. Four components that refer to citizen empowerment and four that refer to social and political empowerment. They are:

1. **Self-esteem**: High self-esteem indicates a positive attitude toward oneself and one’s behaviour. Self-esteem is basic to an individual’s mental health and strongly related to the process of becoming a self-actualised person.

2. **Self-efficiency**: High self-efficiency is a positive attitude toward one’s control over the environment and refers to the experience of one self as a cause agent. Self-efficiency is not concerned with the skills one has, but with judgements of what one can do with whatever skills one possesses.

3. **Knowledge and skills**: Refers to personal capabilities such as basic literacy and self-knowledge. Self-knowledge entails being in tune with one’s goals, values, limitations and strengths. It includes practical knowledge that enable a person to understand and being able to handle conflicts.

4. **Political awareness**: This is a special type of empowering knowledge according to Schwerin that enables people to develop their own concepts of social justice and provides conceptual tools to realize those goals.

The remaining four components refer to social and political empowerment,

5. **Social participation**: Participation in any kind of community group or organisation.

6. **Political participation**: Traditional political participation such as voting, lobbying,
fundraising and working on political campaigns.

7. Political rights and responsibilities: Refers to the traditional values of democratic societies, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion, political movement, the right to assembly and free speech and the right to organise politically. Political responsibilities refer to political participation beyond traditional political participation such as payment of taxes, obeying the law and respecting the rights of others.

8. Resources: For most theorists, increasing empowerment means increasing access to essential resources.

To be empowered is to increase one’s capacity to define, analyze and act on one’s problems. If you are empowered you have, or can gain, control over your life and if empowered you are able to create alternative practices and spaces despite degrees of subordination in structures of dominance. For poor people, empowerment is expected to contribute to immediate improvements in material living standards and expand assets and capabilities to participate, negotiate and influence control, and hold accountable the institutions that affect their lives. In addition, empowerment is supposed to add positively to a person’s psychological-social dimension, such as stronger self-respect by uncovering internalised norms and feelings of inferiority that have contributed to their oppression. This includes consciousness-raising on for example rights and the possibilities for action. However, according to John Friedman (1992) for effective participation in politics to be possible, one has to first have undergone a process of social empowerment.

3.2 Mobile phones for development; the empowerment narrative

The Village Phone project is an initiative, frequently mentioned in M4D literature, aiming to empower women in rural Bangladesh. The project was set up by the micro-credit provider Grameen Bank in 1997 and provided loans to women in rural areas so that they could afford to buy a mobile phone. The loan covered the subscription and training and the women could earn an income by selling airtime. The impact of the project is measured according to its empowerment potential and it is said to have created an army of micro-entrepreneurs and contributed to the empowerment of rural women in Bangladesh, the so called “phone ladies”.

The project is intended to empower individuals in the sense that they are able to affect their own situation. The source of income is interpreted as financial independence and is considered to be one of the empowering aspects of this project. Another empowering

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38 Grossberg, Nelson and Treichler 1992: 573
39 Degnbol-Martinussen and Engberg-Pedersen 2003: 153
The effect is that the project is said to have led to the enablement of women speaking and negotiating with males outside their family circle and that the entrepreneurialism of the project has instilled pride and confidence amongst the women who have said that they have gained respect and authority from their community and spouses.

Mohammed Yunus, the founder of the Grameen bank, considers personal economic growth as inherently empowering and believes that participating in the market will lead to people having more control over their lives. However, if one accepts the eight components of Schwerin’s definition of empowerment, having wealth does not automatically lead to empowerment. A person may be wealthy and even have the potential to dominate others, but this doesn’t necessarily mean that the person is personally empowered. He or she may for example have low self-esteem or low self-efficacy.

The empowerment narrative in Grameen Bank’s Village phone project resonates both within the Modernization view of development as well as within Alternative development. Debates in the 1970s established that poverty is not about lack of income but a complex and multidimensional phenomenon and that the poor should take part in the provisioning of their own needs instead of relying on the state to solve their problems. This line of reasoning fits well within the Village Phone project as it positions poor people as no longer under the guardian of the State but that they have to take ownership and responsibility to participate and engage in the production of their own lives and livelihoods. Micro finance projects such as the Village Phone project equal economic growth with development, however this is a neo-liberal understanding of development; where capitalism is seen as the natural way to development. It puts the responsibility of development upon the individual which, in this case are women, a marginalised group in many developing societies. The Village Phone project link women’s empowerment with access to credit and to participation in small-scale productive activities hence simplifies not only the concept of empowerment but also the concept of poverty and gender inequalities. One could say that the Grameen initiative is co-opting women’s struggle in rural areas of Bangladesh.

Agency and conscientization is promoted within alternative development. However, to express this on the market as Yunus argues, I believe, demonstrates a skewed understanding of agency. Women may be empowered by having an income, however it

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40 Friedman 1992:66
41 Friedman 1992:66
cannot be divorced from their social and political realities. Women’s oppression is not remedied by financial independence. In fact women have little ownership over this program. A man founded the program, and most loan agents are in fact male hence one can question if women are effectively able to negotiate lending terms. In regards to the social realities of women, are they able to dispose of their income as she wishes or does she have to hand it over to her spouse or the man of the house? The empowerment that is said to emanate from this project is founded on a commercial imperative instead of being established from a rights perspective. I believe that the Village Phone project illustrates how incorporated the concept of empowerment has become in development theory that it has become depoliticised, a buzzword, as it often goes undefined in literature. In the Village Phone project the concept of empowerment is understood as women's ability to carry out cash transactions, failing to address issues of power and the social and political structures that are the root to women’s oppression.

3.3 How to achieve empowerment

There are various opinions on how empowerment should be achieved ranging from a focus on individual agency to reforming political institutions and structures. Some argue that outsiders are best capable of bringing about empowerment in the sense that they can act as a catalyst, whilst others argue that doing things for people where they could do it for themselves is inherently harmful. In communication for development, empowerment is understood to be the outcome of participation, especially in the production of message.

3.4 Empowerment through participation

Participatory development is conventionally represented as emerging out of a recognition that top-down development approaches (associated with modernisation) has failed. The participatory model emphasises local knowledge and participation in development processes from setting the agenda to execution and evaluation of projects. The participatory model also stresses that needs should be formulated by the community instead of being imposed by outside agencies. The participatory approach is supposed to increase local people’s influence, decision-making power and lead to empowerment and social change. However there are different levels and degrees to participation, from passive participation, participation by consultation, participation by collaboration.

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44 Cooke and Uthari 2001:5
45 Basically information dissemination, stakeholder feedback is minimal or non existence, participation by informations
46 Stakeholder provide answers to questions posed by outside researchers or experts, input can be provided at different point in time but decision making power is in the hands of external professionals who are not under obligation to incorporate stakeholders input
47 Forms groups primary stakeholders to participate in the discussion and analysis of predetermined objectives set by the
3.5 A participatory approach in development communication

Participatory communication sees the involvement of the community as a catalyst for individual and community empowerment aiming to give voice to those who are most affected by development issues. For example, by engaging its audience Femina HIP aim to trigger a set of actions within the community that will lead to characteristics that are associated with the empowerment concept as defined by Schwerin (1995) and to social change. Communication for social change is a “process of public and private dialogue through which people themselves define who they are, what they need and how to get what they need in order to improve their own lives” 51. Through dialogue, collective problems can be identified, acted upon and the community can implement the solutions that they find appropriate.

Femina HIP’s methodology is based on four pillars of which one is participation52. For Femina HIP the interactivity with its audience is key to the production process.

“Our audience has its own valid experiences to draw from. The media products are produced interactively. By inviting ordinary people to participate in setting content agendas and share their experiences and stories through our media products, Femina HIP provides conduits for hard-hitting discussion and open talk on a broad range of contemporary issues. Participation encourages public debate, critical thinking, democratic values and personal responsibility, and contributes to behaviour and social change in Tanzania.”

Participatory communication has always focused on dialogic communication stressing the importance of participatory and collective processes in research, problem identification, decision-making, implementation and evaluation of change. Jan Servaes, Professor and Chair of the Department of Communication at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst,

\[48\] Primary stakeholders are capable and willing to initiate the process and take part in the analysis leading to a joint decision about what should be achieved and how. Outside partners are equal partners in the development of effort but stakeholders are equal partners and have equal decision-making power. Through dialogue issues are identified and analysed and knowledge exchange leads to solutions
\[49\] Tufte and Mefalopulos 2009:7
\[50\] Morris ed Hemer and Tufte 2005:124
\[51\] Tufte and Mefalopulos 2009
\[52\] The other pillars are edutainment, monitoring and evaluation and partnerships
has noted a new focus in participatory approaches in the direction of placing more emphasis on structural and social change. According to Servaes there is a consensus that participatory models can only work if the structures in societies support it. Hence, participatory communication models have to take place in relation with overall societal emancipation processes at local, national as well as at international levels. According to John Brohman, Associate Professor at the Department of Geography at the University of California, genuine empowerment and participation in development decision making cannot in the end remain dependent solely “on local pressure group politics or the whims of NGO project funding. Popular democratic structures are needed that can translate decisions from below into needed changes in macro-policy”.

ICTs can, according to Servaes be powerful tools in sharing information, expressing opinions and give voice. However, ICTs cannot solve development problems that are caused by underlying social, economic and political issues.

3.6 Participation can never be neutral

David Mosse, Professor in Social Anthropology at the School of Oriental and African Studies, is sceptical towards the mainstreaming of the participatory approach in development theory and practice. According to Mosse, the mainstreaming of the participatory approach within the development community work under the assumption that access to local perspectives leads to a “truer” knowledge. In the book Participation, the New Tyranny? Mosse draws attention to the dangers of regarding local knowledge as a fixed commodity and not recognising that it is a product of social relationships. What is taken as ‘people’s knowledge’ is according to Mosse, a construct in the context of planning and reflects the social relationships that the planning systems entail concealing the complex nature of information in the planning process of participatory projects. Knowledge should, according to Mosse, be looked at relationally, i.e. as a product of social relationships and not as fixed commodity.

Local knowledge also reflects and reproduces local power and there is a danger in participatory approaches according to Brohman to conceptualise communities in homogenous terms hence neglecting the inequalities and discrimination that exist within local communities. Giles Mohan and Kristian Stokke write in the article Participatory Development and Empowerment: the Dangers of Localism, published in Third World Quarterly (2000) that there is a tendency to essentialise and romanticise ‘the local’, down-playing local social inequalities and power relations. Another problem Mohan and

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53 Tufte and Mefalopulos 2009
54 Brohman 1996:274
55 Cooke and Uthari 2001:17
56 Cooke and Uthari 2001:17
57 Cooke and Uthari 2001:17
58 Brohman 1996:271
Stokke identify is the tendency to view ‘the local’ in isolation from broader economic and political structures. Mohan and Stokke argue that the contextuality of place, national and transnational economic and political forces is underestimated⁵⁹.

The structural context upon which projects take place and how local community organisations are related to broader socio-economic and political structures are key for the success of development projects. Mosse argues that a projects’ wider institutional setting frames any development project, and that participatory approaches are in fact often compatible with top-down planning systems⁶⁰. Since participatory development is constructed by development professionals, academics, practitioners and policy makers whose sheer ability to create and sustain this discourse, Mosse argues, is indicative of the power they possess⁶¹. Dr. Frances Cleaver at the Development and Project Planning Centre at the University of Bradford in the UK has identified, in the article Paradoxes of Participation: Questioning Participatory Approaches to Development published in the International Journal of Development (1999), limitations to participants influence to be institutional settings, time-limited activities, and instrumentality. These, Cleaver argues, prevail over empowerment in a project framework.

Dr. Sarah White, Senior Lecturer in Sociology of Development at the University of Bath writes in a chapter in the book Development, NGOs, and Civil Society published by Oxfam (2000) that even though power relations have been challenged by participatory approaches there is a danger that new patterns of domination will emerge over time. Particularly if a project creates new positions that involve some people more than others. According to White participation is highly political and questions such as who is involved, how and on whose terms have to be taken into consideration.

Professor in Postcolonial Studies at Manchester University, Uma Kothari regards the focus on the micro-level and on people who are considered powerless and marginal in the participatory approach has reproduced the simplistic notion that the sites of social power and control are to be found only at the macro and central levels⁶² pitching the ‘poor’ against some unspecified elite whose only defining feature is their non-poorness⁶³. Power hierarchies do not only reside with far away elites but also within communities. Kothari warns that participatory discourse produces dichotomies of power, macro/micro,

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⁵⁹ Mohan and Stokke 2000:249
⁶⁰ Cooke and Uthari 2001:17
⁶¹ Cooke and Uthari 2001:14
⁶² Kothari ed Cooke and Uthari 2001:140
⁶³ Mohan and Stokke 2000:253
central/local, powerful/powerless and can encourage a reassertion of control and power by dominant individuals and groups that can lead to the reification of social norms through self-surveillance and consensus building.  

For Mosse the participatory approach should be applied more as a tool for project management, instead of serving as a self-validating theory of the relationships between successful outputs and people’s involvement and shaping implementation of programmes. Mosse is sceptical to the ways in which participatory approach unfolds, such as PRA (Participatory Rural Appraisal) as some speak on behalf of others and that the project managers simplify events, problems and messages into power points and project documents.

64 Kothari ed. Cooke and Uthari 2001:142
65 Mosse ed. Cooke and Uthari 2001:30
4. Project activities and methodology

The collection of information used in this paper relies on two qualitative methods: in-depth group interviews and analysis of secondary data such as research papers, reports and literature. In order to find out how Tanzanian youth use mobile phones I carried out three semi-structured group interviews. The aim was to explore how the mobile phone is integrated into daily lives and routines, what role the mobile phone plays in terms of personal identity and perceived purpose of communication. I also asked the interviewees about their thoughts on the future impact of mobile phones on the Tanzanian society. The interviews took place in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, during January-March 2010.

I have also used new media tools such as Twitter, Facebook, blogs and podcasts in order to collect information and stay in tune with what is happening in Africa in regards to new media. Podcasts that have been useful for this study have been the South African podcast the Digital Edge produced by Cambrient a digital marketing company which has kept me up to date on news regarding new media and technology on the continent. I followed conversations on Twitter during the Mobile Web East Africa conference that took place on the 3rd-4th February 2010 in Nairobi, Kenya. This provided me with contextual information about mobile phones in East Africa. It also provided me with information on mobile phone projects for social change that have been carried out successfully in the region, and tips on organisations that are active in the field. A website that I have continually returned to during my research has been mobileactive.org. This site brings together grassroots activists, NGO staff and content and service providers on a variety of topics regarding mobile phones. The site includes research papers and discussions on various projects and papers.

4.1 The interviewee selection process

I worked together with three Femina HIP staff members. They provided me with information on how the organisation currently work with SMS and what needs the organisation has. They also assisted me in getting in touch with some of the interviewees. I carried out three semi-structured in depth group interviews during my stay in Tanzania. The first interview took place at Femina HIPs annual youth conference that was held at the end of January 2010. The Femina HIP youth conference takes place every year and invites two Femina HIP representatives from every Fema Youth Club\textsuperscript{66} in Tanzania. I selected my

\textsuperscript{66} Fema Youth clubs are a group of five or more people who believe in promoting healthy lifestyles, brought together by their trust in and devotion to the Fema magazine. Fema Youth clubs engage in activities such as peer education and community education, to small-scale environmental activities. Club members encourage voluntarism and civic engagement as well as a culture of reading.
group by using a questionnaire that was handed out during the morning and contained questions on mobile phone access and use. My aim was to put together a group that was equally divided between female and male youths with equal representation from urban and rural areas. I also had to take their knowledge of English into consideration as I had limited access to a translator. However, as my group convened after the prolonged break, there was only one boy that attended my session, instead of four. Due to the mismanagement of time in the session before and due to the break my session was cut short. The group filled out a questionnaire and then we used the short break before the next session to talk. I decided to not use the questionnaires in future group interviews since the questionnaire turned out to be too time-consuming to fill out. This interview was recorded on a MP3 player with the consent of all participants. However, due to the design of the room and another group session close by the recording was of very poor quality.

The second group I interviewed was a group of secondary school youths that I had gotten in touch with via a Femina HIP staff member. The group consisted of two girls and two boys. For this session I had more time, and all and all the interview took about 1,5 hour. This group had also taken part in another research project on social media hence they all seemed to know each other and seemed comfortable in sharing their opinions with me and each other. This interview was recorded with the consent of all participants.

The third group I interviewed were university students whom I got in touch with during a social media workshop. The students were part of Students Partnership Worldwide (SPW, now rebranded as Restless Development), an international development charity specialising in youth-to-youth education and took place at the Institute of Social Work in Dar es Salaam. This interview was not recorded due to lack of space left on the recorder. Therefore I had to take notes during the interview, which made this interview to not run as smoothly as the others.

4.2 The interviews

“The interview is a conversation with a purpose”

When interviewing it is important to keep a low profile, to watch what the subject does, to listen carefully and ask the interviewee to clarify answers in order to prevent your own conceptions and values to taint the interview. This means that the interviewer has to be aware of what is appropriate behaviour in different situations in order to uncover the respondents’ views. According to Esaiasson (2003) it is important to have a clear point of

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67 Marshall and Rossman 1999:108
reference of the issue at hand in order to evaluate interviews. In order to make the interviews as efficient and well organised as possible and to increase the amount of information from the respondents I formulated the questions that I wanted to centre the session around into an interview guide. I used the interview guide to add structure to the interviews but was also staying attentive to new topics that would arise from discussions. In all interviews I strived to create an interactive and dynamic atmosphere within the group.

The qualitative approach to research has been criticised for allowing too much scope for the interviewer to influence the interviewee’s response in terms of; revealing their own views on the matter, the way the questions are asked and through body language. However, no research is objective. All research is influenced by the values and position of the researcher in terms of questions asked, what research method is used, in terms of interpretation of data and in the reporting of research in terms of focus, selection and attention that is given to the findings. However, as a researcher it is important to be aware of your own perspective and to be open to new interpretations of data. Personally, I like the flexibility of semi-structured interviews and the way that the method allows the respondents to talk about a subject from their own frame of reference, which I think can have an empowering effect for participants.

To get the interview started I had included a short introduction to my research and my connection to Femina HIP. In order to open up and ease into the interview I introduced myself, and my project and made sure that the interviewees understood the value of their contribution not only for my project but also to Femina HIP, since the information gathered from the interviews would inform Femina HIP on how to work with mobile phone technology in the future. Since all interviewees had some connection to Femina HIP they said that they thought their participation was meaningful as it could impact the way in which Femina HIP works with mobile phones and communicates with its audiences. I believe that I established a good rapport with all the interviewees and after each interview I made sure to ask all my respondents if I could contact them again, via e-mail or mobile phone, if I needed to clarify any issues.

The interview guide was divided into five themes, these were; 1) social implications (aiming to understand the impact of mobile phone use on social relations) 2) voice and

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68 Esaiasson 2003:285
69 Henn & Weinstein 2006:161
70 Henn & Wennstein 2006:162
empowerment 3) health 4) how the mobile phone relates to other ICTs (in order to find out if the phone complements the communication needs of persons or if it is a substitute for another technology) and 5) the future impact of mobile phones on social and economic development. It is recommended to test the interview guide before the actual interview on persons who hold similar knowledge. Unfortunately I was not able to do this due to time constraints. However, I thought the interview guide worked well and I kept it throughout all the interviews.

4.3 Advantages, disadvantages and other problems encountered when interviewing

In order to understand how mobile phones are used by Tanzanian youth, I found group interviews to be the most appropriate method for this project, since I was not looking for ‘answers’ but aimed at creating a discussion around the themes that I had set out. I have carried out interviews before, however only with one person at a time. This was my first time conducting group interviews. Prior to the interviews I was worried that I would be unsuccessful in engaging all participants in the conversation. My personal experience from group discussions is that there are usually a small number of people who dominate a discussion or conversation. I think this is especially true when it comes to discussing in what is your second or third language. Although English is an official language in Tanzania and used in higher education I found that some participants seemed to not be wholly comfortable speaking or felt perhaps that they couldn’t express their opinions properly. However, I found that participants were very helpful towards each other and assisted one another in clarifying concepts and ideas. The presence of a Femina HIP staff member at the first and third interview occasion was especially helpful in order to clarify some aspects of my questions into Swahili when necessary.

4.4 Secondary data

Before leaving for Tanzania I carried out a literature study on the topics of new media in eastern Africa, mobile phones and communication for development. Having solid background knowledge is important in order to be able to place the research question within a theoretical framework prior to initiating the interviews. The secondary data formed the basis of my understanding of communication for development and how the mobile phone can fit as a tool for social change in Tanzania.
4.5 Reliability and validity

To assess the reliability and validity in qualitative studies can be difficult. Qualitative research poses problems when it comes to the generalisation of the results. I conducted research on a small proportion of Tanzanian youth. To try to generalise from these answers and apply them to all Tanzanian youth would be bold and this is not my intention. What is important is to show that the interviews have been conducted in an appropriate and reliable manner and that the material has been adequately analyzed, and that the conclusions stem from the empirical information\(^{71}\). If this study were to be replicated the conclusions may not be the same since two interview encounters are never the same. Although the statements may be a reliable representation of a person’s views or a trustworthy account of their experiences, it is important to remember that the subjects agrees to talk to you because she/he has something to say and because she/he wants to share.

The reliability of this study lies in making the interpretation of the empirical information as transparent as possible, which is the core of the qualitative approach. I would like to point out that I do not wish to claim that my interpretation of the material is “the right one” or the “only one”. Instead the aim is to show one plausible interpretation of the material on new media as tools for change. Although, I hope that this essay will add a new perspective to the current literature on mobile phones and social change amongst youth in Tanzania.

\(^{71}\) Marshall and Rossman 1999:64
5. Empirical material

5.1 Interview 1, at the Fema Youth Club conference

My first interview took place at the Fema Youth conference on the 26 of February 2010 in Dar es Salaam. Just under 100 Fema club members were invited to participate in this conference, which this year was themed ‘life skills’. Life skills are a part of a new agenda that Femina HIP is exploring. The conference presented a unique opportunity for me to obtain a vast amount of data on mobile phone use from youths all over the country. I collected the data by using a questionnaire that was handed out to all participants at the end of one of the sessions. The questionnaire contained questions regarding the Femina HIP TV talk show, social media and mobile phone access and use. It was translated into Swahili by Femina HIP staff.

5.2 Findings

On the questions regarding access to a mobile phone, 45 males and 27 females responded.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you have access to a mobile phone?</th>
<th>a) Yes, I have my own</th>
<th>b) Yes, we have a mobile phone in my household</th>
<th>c) Yes, through friend</th>
<th>d) Yes, through a vendor</th>
<th>e) No, I do not have access to a mobile phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number of people who responded = 72</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban male N=10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural male N=25</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban female N=8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural female N=19</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From all respondents that answered this question, 64% had their own mobile phone. More males than girls had their own mobile phone, 74% respectively 49%. The ownership of phones amongst urban and rural males are more or less the same, 72% respectively 80%. However, there is a great disparity between urban and rural females. Only 32% of the rural females have their own phone compared to 87% of the urban females.

I also asked the question “How many SMS text messages do you send per week”. 35 males and 27 females responded to this question. This question is highly relevant for Femina HIP in order to understand how its target audience use SMS since the organisations wants to start working strategically with SMS.
How many SMS do you send per week?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1-5 a week</th>
<th>6-10 a week</th>
<th>11-20 a week</th>
<th>21-30 a week</th>
<th>More than 31</th>
<th>No answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban males N=11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural males N=24</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban females N=8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural females N=19</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total number of people who answered = 62

Out of the 19 people who didn’t answer this question rural females and rural males are overrepresented. The most people send an average of 11-20 SMS per week.

In regards to Internet access and use, 33 females replied. One urban female said to have accessed the Internet on her mobile phone\(^22\). Out of the 38 males that replied 6 said to access the Internet on their mobile phone (5 rural and 1 urban).

When asked if you have downloaded images or videos from the Internet, 28 males said no, while 5 rural males said they had done so sometimes, and 1 rural male said yes frequently. 21 females said they had never used their phone to download images or videos from the Internet, meanwhile one urban and one rural said they, yes, sometimes, and one urban female said to do so frequently. When asked if they upload content to the Internet using their mobile phone, 33 out of 35 males said no, whilst one rural male said yes sometimes, and one rural male said yes frequently. All (26) the females replied that they had never used their phone to upload content to the Internet.

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\(^22\) One urban and one rural female said to have internet access at home, four urban females said they access the Internet at Internet cafés and one urban female responded to access the Internet at the office
I also asked if the mobile phone was ever used to download ring tones. This question is interesting as it is a way to fashion and personalise the mobile phone, hence expressing one’s identity.

![Graph showing the distribution of responses to whether respondents have used their mobile phone to download ring tones.](image)

No urban male answered yes to the question of having downloaded ring tones, meanwhile the majority of urban females and one third of the rural males had done so.

I also asked if they would like to receive information from Femina HIP to their mobile phone. All males answered yes except two and out of the females all except one answered yes (there was also one with no answer). This positive response to receiving information from Femina HIP can be attributed to the fact that these people are already involved with Femina HIP through their membership in the Fema Youth Clubs. They are already engaged with Femina HIP products and deeply familiar with the organisation and its brand. However, it still proves that Femina HIP would get a positive response from its target audience.

When asked on what topics they would like to receive information from Femina HIP, a total of 68 males answered, of whom 56% would like to receive information on life skills, 13% would like information on sexual health, 10% would like information on entrepreneurship and 21% would like to receive information on Femina HIP media products. 26 females answered the same question, of whom 58% wanted information on life skills, 19% on sexual
health, 4% entrepreneurship and 19% wanted to receive information about Femina HIP media products. There was also a category with “other, please specify” but no one wrote anything in this space.

In regards to what media products I asked “would you like to be able to SMS questions to Femina HIP staff?” 93 people answered.

The fact that life skills scored the highest percentage from both male and females can be attributed to the fact that this was the topic of the conference.

5.3 The Group session - The interviewee selection process

The questionnaire also served the purpose of selecting a group for a deeper group discussion on mobile phone use. I selected persons who had answered that they had access to - or that they had their own mobile phone. In hindsight I might have done this differently and included people in the group discussion who did not have access to mobile phones in order to understand what factors contribute to uptake and appropriation of mobile phones amongst Tanzanian youth.

In selecting the group I had to take into account the person’s level of English since I had limited access to a translator. I had therefore included a question in regards to their command of English. I wanted the groups to be equal in numbers between males and females and equal representation from urban and rural areas.
On the second day of the conference there was time for the group sessions. The different groups were announced by sheets of paper that were hung on the wall in the conference room with the names of the people who pertained to each group. However, not all showed up and in the end there was only one male in my session. I gave the members of the group a questionnaire to fill out that contained 19 questions of which the majority was multiple-choice questions and some open-ended questions since I wanted to leave space for the respondents to give more personal answers. Open-ended questions allow the respondent greater freedom of expression and open up the possibility for more qualitative style data to be generated. However, filling out this questionnaire proved to be more time consuming than I had anticipated and in the end there was less time for discussion than what I had planned for. However, the group stayed and talked during the break so we gained some time that way.

5.4 Findings group discussion 1

Six people turned up instead of eight. I had selected the interviewees so that there was going to be an equal number of male and female respondents. However, out of those who came five were females and there was only one male. The ages ranged from 18-21 years. All except one did not have access to a landline in their house. Five out of six had had their mobile phone for more than three years. One out of six had had their phone for 1-2 years. Half of the respondents had more than one SIM card. The reason for having more than one SIM card is that it makes it cheaper in case they want to communicate with people who are on different networks, and in order receive information from different networks. Half of the respondents had more than one mobile phone these were the same that responded yes to having more than one SIM card. They said having multiple handsets enables them to operate more than one SIM card at the time. All respondents were on pre-pay, no one was on a contract.

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73 Henn & Weinstein 2006:138
When asked what features are important when choosing a phone, they responded like this.

Respondents also added the following features to be important when choosing a phone; the memory card, entertainment, camera, radio, music and multimedia. Five out of six use their phone many times a day, however by use they mean using the clock or calendar and not necessarily to make phone calls or write SMS. One out of six uses it for special occasions and emergencies only.

When asked what features you use the most?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What feature do you use the most?</th>
<th>Many times a day</th>
<th>Once every day</th>
<th>A couple of times a week</th>
<th>Less than three times a week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N=6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To make phone calls</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To access the internet</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The calendar</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To listen to music</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When asked about the benefits of the mobile phone they answered like this,
Respondent A) to listen to music, communicate with other people who live far away, which helps when you have a problem.
Respondent B) Mobile phones have many benefits, for example for passing on information from one place to another place
Respondent C) To simplify communication, simply because other ways of communication took long time, like communication which use oral so the times which you can use to find someone who need to communicate can take long time
Respondent D) I think the benefit with having a mobile phone is to communicate with other friends to share some ideas to exchange some view
Respondent E) to play game, to photo the picture, and to listen music
Respondent F) 1st information from different area 2nd, to plays game 3rd to listen music 4th to photo the picture 5th to seen good themes

5.5 Group discussion 2
The second group interview took place at the Femina HIP office in Dar es Salaam on the 4 of March. I had gotten in touch with two young men and two young women that were part of a Femina HIP research group on social media. We spoke for about one hour about how they use their phones and about future expectations on mobile phones in regards to social and economic development.

All the group members were from Dar es Salaam and had had their mobile phones for a couple of years. Half of them had more than one SIM card in order to being able to benefit from the various networks' different offers and rates. The main purpose of having a mobile phone according to the respondents was to be able to chat and communicate with friends. Female 2 got her phone when her parents divorced so that she could stay in touch with her father. When male 2 got his first phone, he had to hide it from his father. His father didn’t want him to have a phone since he was worried that it would too distracting. Male 2 said that when he first got his phone, it was just for fun “for entertainment”. However, now it is very important that he has a phone in order to organise meetings and to be reachable. As for his father, when he found out that he had a phone, he couldn’t do anything about it, he just said that he should be careful so it doesn’t distract him from school.

When asked if the mobile phone has changed the way that they communicate with people they mentioned that they often get contacted by strangers that pretend to have dialled
the wrong number, but are in fact looking for someone to talk to. Female 2 said that she sometimes continues to chat with them in order not to be rude, however she wouldn’t meet up with them “cause they could be someone other than they say they are”. Male 2 says he never replies to numbers that he doesn’t recognise he thinks that “having too many numbers is a waste of time”. “Sometimes you meet new people and you exchange numbers, talk for a while and then no more, and then you have lots of different numbers”.

We talked about how they see themselves using mobile phones in five years time. Male 2 said he will “probably be so busy that he will only use it for voice calls”. He doesn’t think he will have time to send text messages anymore. He draws a parallel to his older relatives who are very busy and only use their mobile phones for voice calls, and not for text messaging. Male 1 also sees himself as being busy and only having time for voice calls. Female 2 says she will probably have a phone that has camera and Internet, but that she will still use it for both text messages and voice calls. From this point the discussion went into speculations that the reason that older people don’t use other features besides voice calls is that they don’t know how to.

In regards to people in rural areas Female 1 said many of them have mobile phones, because they are so cheap now. The cheapest phone she said cost around 10 000 tz. However, Female 2 was not convinced. She said “how can a person who lives on less than one dollar a day afford a phone, cause its not just the phone, you have to feed it too”. Meaning vouchers, charging it etc but all agreed that they thought that it would be good for people in the country side to have a mobile phone in that it would make their life easier. For example it would enable them to save a lot of time if they could receive messages on their phone instead of having to go to the post office. Post offices are usually far away in towns and you have to take time out of your busy day to travel there. Having a mobile phone they said would also be positive in regards to work opportunities. Leaving a phone number is easier than leaving an address with an employer at an interview. The employer can get in touch quickly to say if you have been given the job. Male 2 also pointed out that the mobile phone companies provide new work opportunities to Tanzanians, for example in customer service and administration.

None of the group members likes to turn off their phone. Even if they leave their phone at home, they don’t switch it off. During class it is on, even though its not allowed. Regarding Internet use, male 1 doesn’t use Internet on his phone because it doesn’t have gprs. Male 2 says he uses Internet sometimes on his phone but that the phone has a tendency to switch
itself off when he is online. Female 2 says credit is the main barrier for her to go online. Female 1 say that she uses Internet sometimes on her phone but that it is slow and uses up a lot of credit. When she is online she usually looks at pictures of celebrities. No one had uploaded any content to the Internet by using their phones.

5.6 Group discussion 3

The third group I interviewed was a group of university students who were all Students Partnership Worldwide (SPW) volunteers. SPW is an international development charity specialising in youth-to-youth education. The interview took place at the school of social work in Dar es Salaam on the 5 of March 2010. I came in contact with this group through Duncan Mgati, a SPW volunteer who had been present at a work shop on social media that Femina HIP had organised a couple of weeks earlier. I had asked Duncan at the work-shop if he knew any people or fellow students that would be interested in taking part in my study. A couple of weeks later he recommended that I would ask a Femina HIP staff member regarding a SPW training session on sexual and reproductive health that Femina HIP would take part in. Fortunately I was able to talk to the group for about one hour. None of the members of the group were directly involved with Femina HIP but they knew about the organisation. They were all at university and the ages ranged from 20-26. There were three males and three females and even though they all lived in Dar es Salaam some of them came from different parts of the country.

Most of them had had their phone for more than five years. Two persons had two phones and two persons had three SIM cards and one person had as many as four SIM cards. Most used their phone for calling or texting. No one would leave the house without the mobile phone and one woman said she felt naked if she didn’t bring her phone with her. The benefits of having a phone were perceived to be; to be able to organise meetings and to meet new people, hence extending one’s social network. The group also talked about “cold calling”. Which is when a person dials a random number in order to chat, flirt or make new friends. All the members had had experience with cold callers, and one girl had met up with a person she had ‘met’ like this.

In regards to socio-economic opportunities, all group members thought it was important to have a mobile phone in order to get a job. They said it’s crucial to be able to be reachable so that an employer can call you. Having a mobile phone was seen as enhancing employment opportunities.

74 SPW has changed name to Restless Development
We also talked about who is left out of the “mobile revolution” and what happens to those who do not have phones. One girl said that even when she goes to her village, which is remote, people there have mobile phones. Not all of them, but some do. This makes it easier for her to stay in touch with her family and relatives. In regards to SPW she is able to ask questions to HQ when she is in the village.

In regards to Internet use no one uses their phone to go online. They use computers at the university or at Internet cafés. However, they all thought that this would change in the future, as prices for surfing the web on the mobile would decrease.
6. Analysis and discussion
The aim of this essay has been to explore whether mobile phones can be effective tools in promoting social change. This final chapter will discuss the questions that have guided this study which are: How are youths in Tanzania using mobile phones? What does the mobile phone mean to them and how do they experience mobile phones and what role the mobile phone can come to play in their lives. Can mobile phones facilitate participation and empowerment amongst Tanzanian youth? And finally if mobile phones can be used to promote social change.

6.1 Interview summary and discussion
The purpose of this study was to examine how young people in Tanzania use mobile phones and what the access looks like. My aim was also to find out what the mobile phone means and how they experience them and what role the mobile phone will play in their lives in the future. My findings show a snapshot of the access and use of mobile phones amongst Tanzanian youth, both urban and rural. As a result from my survey and group discussions I have come to understand that young people in Tanzania mainly use their mobile phones to make voice calls and to send and receive text messages. Hardly anyone use his or her mobile phone to go online. From the discussions two main purposes for having a mobile phone was crystallized, one being as a entertainment piece in the sense that it enables one to chat to- and arrange meetings with friends. The second was to be reachable to for example potential employers. Being reachable was emphasized during the group discussions as very important in order to get a job.

Amongst those who participated in the Femina HIP youth conference, 72 persons answered the first question on access and ownership of mobile phones. This means that around 1/5 chose to not answer this question. Questionnaire surveys can be unreliable in the sense that the researcher can never know why respondents choose to not answer certain questions. The method has been criticised for reflecting and reproducing assumptions that the researcher holds about the social world and about the phenomena that is under investigation75. However, I thought the Femina HIP youth conference proved a great opportunity to be able to ask people from various part of the country questions regarding their mobile phone use. And since I would not be able to do face-to-face interviews with all of them, a questionnaire survey seemed to be the most adequate method.

75 Henn and Weinstein 2006:142
Out of those 72 people who answered the first question, do you have a mobile phone 64% answered that they had their own mobile phone. More males than females had their own phone, 74% compared to 49%. The group that had the lowest percentage of ownership was the rural females. Amongst the rural females only 32% had their own mobile phone compared to the urban females, where ownership was 87%. Even though these results do not tell us why the ownership amongst rural females is lower, it is interesting especially for Femina HIP or indeed any organisation that aims to communicate with rural females via mobile phone technology. When designing a communication strategy that involved SMS and mobile phone technology there is a risk that young females that live in rural areas may be left out of the conversation.

It would have been interesting to further explore why mobile phone ownership amongst rural females is low. Is it because women in rural areas do not have the same disposable income as urban females? Does the interest in technology differ from urban to rural areas amongst females? Is there not the same need for a communication tool to maintain and/or extend one’s social network? In hindsight I would like to have interviewed young people who did not have access to mobile phones in order to understand what factors impede the uptake of mobile phones. I would also have wanted to explore the shared ownership aspect in more detail, in order to understand how young people use mobile phones that are shared within the household.

For many of the respondents the mobile phone play a significant function in their life. Many of the people I talked to did not have access to a telephone prior to having a mobile phone. This has made it easier to coordinate daily life, maintain social relationships and also extend social networks. Cold calling is an example of a way for people to get in touch with new people. The majority of the people in the group discussion had come into contact with cold callers and one person said to have met up with one. However this form of extending one’s personal network seemed to be frowned upon as being untrustworthy and time-consuming.

The social aspects of the mobile phone such as the design of the phone was given equal importance to functional aspects such as battery time. Personalization of the phone, such as retrieving various accessories for the phone such as screen savers and ring tones did not seem to very popular. In many countries mobile phone accessories have become a lucrative business and a way for young people to express their identity. However, this did not seem
to be very popular in Tanzania. However, the mobile phone was seen as a highly personal device and for many as an extension of the self. One person said to “feel naked without her phone” and everybody in the group discussions said that they never leave their homes without it. Turning it off only happens occasionally, like for example during an exam. Otherwise the mobile phone is constantly switched on, even during class or when sleeping.

In the future the respondents foresee mobile phones to become more integrated into Tanzanian society, even in rural areas. They predict that the mobile phone will make life easier for people as it will simplify communication. Some said that that they would like to see mobile technology enhance or even replace some government services. One example that was discussed was the information that is currently sent via post could be sent via SMS.

The majority of the people in the group discussions expect that prizes for using the mobile web to drop. However, the issue of having adequate handsets and the knowledge to know what to do once online was raised for discussion. As technologies get more advanced, a person will need more skills to learn how to make use of that technology. One person played with the idea that in the future there might be courses in school on how to manage one’s mobile phone.

6.2 Can mobile phones facilitate participation and empowerment amongst Tanzanian youth?

The mobile phone is the ICT that is most accessible and affordable to Tanzanians today. It is said to empower people, often referring to the opportunities for economic growth that mobile phones bring to for example farmers or fishermen who are able to negotiate better prices for their crops/catch because they can access market information via SMS. The second example that is frequently used in regards to mobile phones and empowerment is the Village Phone project in Bangladesh. Here, empowerment is measured in the sense that women earn an income through the project, and gain an improved position/status in the community as they are seen as business agents.

If one accepts Schwerin’s, Friedman’s and Freire’s definition and framework of empowerment one understands that empowerment is not linked to economic growth but to individual psychological processes and to collective political action. Individuals who are truly empowered have the ability to participate, negotiate and hold institutions that affect one’s live, accountable as well as having the capacity to define, analyze and act on one’s
problems and has little to do with economic wealth. To be empowered also includes having political power, which goes beyond the ability to vote and includes the power of voice and collective action.

If Femina HIP incorporates mobile phone technology in its communication strategy as well as in its production methods I believe that Femina HIP could create spaces for empowerment through not only participation but also in creating new knowledge and skills. It can add a new dimension to the organisation’s vision, which is to create an empowering lifestyle brand for young Tanzanians in the sense that it allows for an immediate and intimate two-way communication channel with its beneficiaries. Participation in this new space can lead to empowerment by increasing people’s knowledge and skills. This in turn can set in motion reflective thought that can lead to higher self-efficiency, self-reliance and contribute to critical reflection.

94 people answered, Yes to the question that they would like to receive information from Femina HIP via SMS and 93 people wanted to be able to SMS questions to Femina HIP staff on a variety of topics. This positive response that young people would like to communicate with Femina HIP via SMS should be interpreted carefully. Since, not all those who answered this question do have access to mobile phones this response should be taken to represent the interest in communication via SMS.

The mobile phone is an intimate communication channel and from the group discussions I found that there is a deep bond between the person and their mobile phone, and leaving home without it is often fraught with discomfort. The persons have a trust in their phone, and rarely turn it off. It is the first thing they see in the morning and the last thing they see in the evening. By incorporating mobile phones into Femina HIP’s communication strategy, Femina HIP can open up a new way for youths to participate and engage with the organisation on issues that affect their lives through this intimate communication channel. However, on the question on how many SMS you send per week, the most number of people send about 11-20 SMS per week, which means about 2-3 SMS per day. This is an important number that Femina HIP need to take into account when designing its SMS strategy. How many times a week/month does the organisation wish to communicate with its audiences, and what should Femina HIP expect in terms of replies. What would be the barriers for people to send SMS back to Femina HIP? Is it the cost of SMS or is it having access to a mobile phone?
Communicating via mobile phones will produce some risks, and Femina HIP has to manage these carefully. Risks include misusing audience trust by for example not answering text messages or not incorporating audience opinions and feedback. The quality and content of the messages should be relevant and serve a purpose. Femina HIP should also take into account how their audiences use their phones, and since shared ownership is widespread amongst Tanzanian youth, Femina HIP should take this into account if sending out messages of a sensitive character to youths who want to talk about certain issues without parents or guardians knowing.

I would argue that Femina HIP has a fantastic opportunity to connect with youths via SMS since they already have records of people who have actively texted the organisation on previous occasions. Femina HIP should maintain and cultivate these contacts as well as expand their reach via their many media products. If managed in a strategic way Femina HIP can extend their relationship with beneficiaries via SMS in a way that is positive for the organisations vision and mission as well as for its audiences. Creating a constructive dialogue between Femina HIP and youths is key. Therefore it is important that Femina HIP makes a strategy for mobile phone communication so that the organisation is not confused with telemarketers or cold callers which could produce bad-will.

6.3 Can mobile phones be used to promote social change?
Since the 1990s ICTs have been considered powerful tools that can strengthen the impact of development processes. African leaders recently vowed to step up ICT efforts in order to become part of the knowledge society reaffirming the perspective found in modernisation theory, that technology drives social change. Since modernisation theory is based upon the European developmental experience it is often assumed that all countries will follow the same process. By classifying it a mobile phone revolution connotes a radical change that will fundamentally alter the existing social, political and economic system and put in place a new social order. The mobile phone revolution is often associated with leapfrogging, suggesting developing countries can leapfrog stages in development. The notion of leapfrogging echoes modernisation theory and illustrates the simplistic assumptions about the complex processes that are involved.

Technology has historically played a substantial role in social change, and it is now expected to do the same in Africa. The M4D discourse is to a certain extent ascribing mobile phones with causal power. In Africa mobile phones are combating poverty whilst fighting HIV/AIDS. However, technology in itself does not lead to social change, it is the
persons who use them that determine how they can be used in order to promote social change. For activists and citizen journalists the mobile phone has provided new opportunities to quickly access and spread information. However, traditional power structures still manifest itself in terms of use and ownership as one can see in the under representation of rural females in mobile phone ownership found in this study.

One definition of communication for social change is that it is “a process of public and private dialogue through which people themselves define who they are, what they need and how to get what they need in order to improve their own lives. Utilising dialogue that leads to collective problem identification, decision-making and community based implementation of solutions to development issues”\textsuperscript{76}. I believe that mobile phones can play a part in social change, however not in the sense of creating new spaces for economic growth but that mobile phones actually can play a part in creating a space for youths to engage in issues that affect their lives. This will lead to empowerment. In this regard organisations such as Femina HIP can act as a catalyst for debates that can trigger social change. However, for change to take place technology should be rooted in local knowledge as that creates ownership over the technology. I believe that mobile phones can create a new space, alongside Femina HIP’s other media products that facilitates dialogue that leads to collective problem identification and dialogue. In addition I would argue that mobile phones can open up a space for dialogue that is intimate and personal and has the potential to become an important resource that can challenge political and social structures that affect young people’s life in Tanzania.

\textsuperscript{76} Tufte and Mefalopulos 2009
7. Conclusion

The rapid increase of mobile phones on the African continent has sparked hope that mobile phones will help bridge the digital divide and that the global village now is attainable. Although new communication technology may bring about new opportunities to disadvantaged groups, such as for the women in the Village Phone project, it is important to understand that these kinds of projects do not instantly eradicate oppressive power structures and hierarchies. The neo-liberalism that is embedded in M4D discourse can be understood in the light of the technological determinism that is also embedded in the discourse. The concept of poverty is for example depoliticised and reduced into being about the lack of access to money. The example of the farmer who is now able to receive market information via SMS and get better prices for their crop by cutting out the middle-man is praised not only for their capitalist ingenuity but also for taking ownership of their situation. This is a neo-liberal understanding of development as equalling it to economic growth and regarding capitalism as a natural way to development. Nothing is ever mentioned in M4D literature or texts, about the middle-man who looses income opportunities. Job losses like these, it is assumed, are part of technological progress and a necessary evil in order to progress. Since technological progress is understood as inevitable, all one can do is accept these changes.

As the first ICT for many people in Tanzania, the mobile phone is presenting people with new and exciting ways in which they can communicate. The social impact of mobile phones is great and will be greater in the years to come as mobile phone penetration is predicted to increase. Social relationships are easier maintained and personal networks can be extended. From my findings I have found that the mobile phone is understood as key in furthering one’s career as one needs to be reachable for employers.

For organisations such as Femina HIP the mobile phone present a new opportunity for engaging its audiences with its media products. Femina HIP should integrate a memorable SMS number with its brand. By communicating via SMS Femina HIP signals that it is a modern and hip organisation that is up to date with technological change. Via mobile phone technology Femina HIP can disseminate information as well as communicate with its audiences in an intimate way that can further strengthen other initiatives and projects.

In regards to participation Femina HIP can tap into a new way of getting beneficiaries to participate, via SMS for example. If utilizing this channel in the right way, those who participate can become empowered for example the sense that the person can influence
the production of message and content.

7.1 Further research

This study opens up for several new questions related to mobile phones in general and in regards to development in particular. One aspect that could be further explored is the shared use of mobile phones amongst Tanzanian youth. This is an important aspect of the use of mobile phones in many African countries and it would be interesting to know more about how people share and use mobile phones.

The material reality of mobile phones would also be interesting to further explore since this aspect of mobile phones is basically absent in the M4D discourse. There are many environmental problems surrounding the production and recycling of mobile phones such as the hazardous and exploitive working conditions in the production process that often also include child labour.

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Annex
Annex 1. Used for the Femina HIP Youth Conferance
Please circle your answers

Name:
Male / female
Age:
From what district:
Name of school:

1. Languages spoken:
   Languages written:

2. Do you have access to a mobile phone?
   a) Yes, I have my own b) Yes, we have a mobile phone in my household c) Yes, through friend d) Yes, through a vendor e) No, I do not have access to a mobile phone

3. Do you have access to a computer?
   Yes: a) at home b) internet café c) school, d) at a community centre e) at the neighbours f) at an office g) a church h) at a mosque i) libraries j) parents k) other
   No: because a) I do not know how to use a computer b) There are no computers to use at school c) I have not been selected for the computer classes

4. Do you have access to the internet?
   Yes: a) your home b) on a mobile phone c) at the internet café d) school, e) from the phone of the neighbours, f) office, g) at a community centre, h) at a church i) at a mosque, j) libraries, k) parents
   No: a) I do not know how to access the Internet b) There is no internet at school c) I have not been chosen for the computer classes at school d) It is too expensive e) I have no need to use the Internet f) I don't know what the Internet is g) I can not read or write h) Internet is for other people. I) Internet access is not available to me locally j) other

5. How often do you access the internet
   a) 1-3 times per day b) 1-5 times per week, c) 1-4 times per month

6. How much time do you spend on the internet each time you use it?
   a) Less than 15 minutes b) 15 minutes to 30 minutes c) 30 minutes to 1 hour d) 1 or 2 hours e) 2 to 3 hours f) More than 3 hours g) Don’t know

7. Which websites do you visit
   1
8. How many SMS do you send per day/week?
   Per day:  Per week:

9. How many phone calls do you make per day/week?
   Per day:  Per week:

10. Have you used your mobile phone to **download** images or videos from the Internet?
    a) Yes, sometimes  b) Yes, frequently  c) No

11. Have you used your mobile phone to **upload** images or videos onto the Internet?
    a) Yes, sometimes,  b) Yes, frequently  c) No

12. Have you used your phone to download ring tones?
    a) Yes  b) No

13. Would you like to receive information from Femina HIP on your mobile phone?
    a) Yes  b) No

14. If yes, on what topics would you like to receive SMS?
    a) Life skills  b) Sexual health  c) Entrepreneurship  d) News on Femina HIP media products  
    e) Other topics, please specify:

15. Would you like to be able to SMS questions to Femina HIP staff?
    a) Yes  b) No
    If yes, in regards to what media products?
    a) Fema Magazine  b) Si Mchezo  c) Pilika Pilika  d) TV talk show  
    e) general questions regarding Life skills, Sexual health, Entrepreneurship  
    d) other topics, please specify:

Thank you for your participation. If you wish to leave more comments use the space below or continue on a separate sheet of paper.

Many thanks, Lynn O'Rourke and Adela Rodrigo