GENDER, AND MOBILE PHONE ECONOMY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN CAMEROON,c.2000-2013

Walter Gam Nkwi, University of Buea

University Of Buea, South West Region, Republic Of Cameroon

ABSTRACT

This article focuses on gender, sustainable development and the economy of mobile phone communication in Cameroon. Mobile Phones as forms of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) are playing important roles in connecting communities at all levels-regional, national and global   The article argues that at the introduction of mobile phones to Cameroon, it was essentially a male artefact. It raised the men's social status and consequently enhanced their prestige. Women eventually entered the arena of mobile phone use and appropriated them in more creative and meaningful ways hitherto unknown to men. Through the mobile phone women used it to combat poverty, promote economic growth and support developmental efforts. This was done through the establishment of kiosks or "call boxes" and from the money they got from these call boxes they altered the breadwinner trend of the family by accessing better medical services, paying the children's' school fees and affording comfortable housing accommodation. The paper interrogates what ways in which women and men in Cameroon have used the cell phone creatively? From interviews and secondary literature, the article suggests that the cell phones have upset gender roles as women have become more creative and breadwinners of their families in the cell phone usage in Cameroon thus leading to sustainable development in various ways.

Keywords: Cell Phones, Gender, Cameroon, Call Box, Kiosks, Sustainable Development, Culture

INTRODUCTION: SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY AND CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS

Between 1970 and 1975 there were many initiatives which were taken at the international scenario to empower women both in Africa and the world at large. The apotheosis of those initiatives was unarguably between 1975 and 1985. That decade was dubbed by the United Nations Organizations as the Decade for Women. The Nairobi World Conference of Women Forum and the Beijing Conference on women took place in 1985 and 1995 respectively. The redline of these gatherings was that more awareness and consciousness was created and above all women were integrated into the developmental processes of the various countries of the world. Although these efforts were laudable enough, the under representation of women in matters of sustainable development has continued to take centre-stage in scholarship concerning gender and women studies. In 2006 a special issue of the *CODESRIA Bulletin* was specifically devoted to the African woman. Scholars like (Fonjong, 2001, Aboderin, 2006; Amuyunzu, 2006; Kiletu and Mwangola, 2006) have also contributed in the debate on women and sustainable development.

Arguably, developing countries as well as international development agencies have begun to create steps which are meant to slot in telecommunications policies into their mainstream economic policies aimed at guiding sustainable development. As a concept sustainable development took its roots in 1981 following the work of Brown and in 1987 through the Gro Harlem Brundtlandt Commission. It is a planned cultural, economic, social environmental and political change for the better. It also calls for cooperation at all levels by all stakeholders geared towards the well being of the masses and by the masses. It fosters inter and intra-generational equity. The respect for other cultures be they inferior or dominant, high or low is a condition-*sine qua non* for a global attempt to achieve sustainable development with every stakeholder getting involved and staying engaged (Braddotti,*et. al,* 1994).

Generally, sustainable development is understood as development which meets the needs of the present without altogether compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It is often built on three pillars viz. social, economy and environment. To achieve sustainable development the needs of people must be met. These needs amongst other things are: access to medical care, affordable and suitable housing, better education and food. However, sustainable development has recently become a cumbersome subject to pin down because it encompasses so many different things as well as actors and actresses. The complexity of the subject makes it imperative to look at the significance of sustainable development in a more holistic way. In conventional practice, it has been widely held that development be it sustainable or not characteristically comes from above (Kiawi and Mfoulou, 2002) The social distance in conventional thinking, between development planners and beneficiaries is too wide with the beneficiaries gaining almost nothing (Pitt, 1976). In other words it is externally impose by governments or other actors. Yet this article demonstrates that men and women at grassroots has in their own right chart a path towards sustainable development by using just the cell phone in a myriad of ways. Thus the place of gender in sustainable development notwithstanding appears to have played a role that cannot be downplayed (Weaver & Kusterer, 1997; Wolfensohn, 1998; Harcourt, 1994; World Bank Group, 2001; Eyong, 2003).

Despite genders' ascendancy in both academic and policy-making circles in Africa, it will appear that it has been misconstrued. In African studies gender has come to be a synonym for 'women'. Consequently, it is imperative to

clarify at the onset how it will be employed in this article. Like Konings (2012: 2), it is the position of this article that 'gender refers to the social and historical construction of masculine and feminine functions but it also symbolizes relationships between and amongst men and women and their relative positions in the society. Gender roles therefore might be descriptive and at the same time prescriptive elements, describing what men and women do and how they relate'.

Since a decade ago (2000), the cell phone technology entered many areas in Africa. The expectations of its developmental potential at the level of the everyday life, are high and research endeavours too are high. The first publications have appeared and they have started questioning the development of mobile telephone in multifarious ways (Nyamnjoh 2005; de Bruijn *et. al,* 2009; Nkwi, 2009; Osama 2006, Donner 2008). The first studies that appeared and have been reviewed by Donner (2008) show that little is known about the effects and influence of these new gadgets in Africa and elsewhere in the world especially as far as gender are concerned. To understand if there are new social dynamics at play, it is essential to situate the social and cultural landscape it introduced (de Bruijn, 2009).

According to de Bruijn (2009) 'Insights into the nexus between technology and environment suggest that there is a mutual shaping of technology and society. Individuals and thus society have their own ways of appropriating the technology and of relating this technology and the new possibilities it opens to past experiences and to future expectations'. This article is interested in how this new technological artefact is being contested, used and shapes relations in everyday life amongst women and to a little extend, men in Africa with special focus on Cameroon and how it can be used to achieve some developmental objectives. Consequently it is how the appropriation of cell phone is related to sustainable development. The approach of Horst & Miller (2006) and De Bruijn *et al* (2009) and a galaxy of other scholars who have already started the journey and who put the social appropriation of technology is quite relevant in this article. Perhaps it will be better to conclude upfront that technology shapes as much society as society shapes technology, which is a process that cannot be dissociated from its cultural and social context. Thus gender relations and more in particular women show how the useful appropriation of cell phone could be a gadget for sustainable development if it is well harnessed.

Significantly the Twenty First Century has witnessed major profound changes in the communication ecology. Digital technologies and advances in telecommunication such as the mobile phone have driven the pace for development. As the internet audience continues to grow at exponential rate worldwide so also has the mobile phone with wide ramifications on development (Leckner & Facht, 2010), The mobile phone which is spreading at a remarkable rate across the developed and developing world has become the loci of attention to many private and public developmental initiatives. More and crucial is research which attempts to explore mobile technologies which are employed deliberately for sustainable developmental purposes in more economic and social sense (Donner and Tellez, 208). This article hopes to start filling such a gap.

Besides, this article positions itself on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). According to MDG number one, the full involvement of women in meaningful activity can reduce hunger and poverty through food, income,

transport, insurance and other services to households (see Waters-Bayer and Letty, 2010, p.32) W omen empowerment through such activities as operating call boxes using the cell phones and its related activities will go a long way to reduce their vulnerability to HIV/AIDS which ageing could help to redress MDG six. As this goes to explain the significance of women empowerment for sustainable development their situation could be better captured within the conceptual frame of analysis.

Theoretically, the article employs the Longwe framework. The Women's Empowerment Framework was developed by Sara Hlupekile Longwe, a gender expert from Lusaka, Zambia. Her model is explicitly political, arguing that women's poverty is the consequence of oppression and exploitation (rather than lack of productivity), and that to reduce poverty women must be empowered. The framework postulates five progressively higher levels of equality that can be achieved. These are as follows: First, control – equal control over in decision-making over factors of production. Second, participation: equal participation in decision-making processes related to policymaking, planning and administration. Third; conscientization: attaining equal understanding of gender roles and a gender division of labor that is fair and agreeable. Fourthly, access to means of equal access to the factors of production by removing discriminatory provisions in the laws. Finally welfare, which means having equal access to material welfare (food, income, medical care, education). Although from Zambia, this framework fits into the Cameroon context as far as the ways in which women have appropriated cell phones is concerned because as this study will later show it led to their emancipation.

 In what follows, the article will first stake telephone communication before the cell phone. It will then take up women, men and the gender differences. Thirdly, the article examines the creative appropriation of cell phones by women. The final part is the conclusion

TELEPHONE COMMUNICATION BEFORE THE CELL PHONE

Cameroon gained independence in 1961. She continued with communication structures left by the colonial administration which were mostly land lines. In 1980 African economies including Cameroon started ailing. As a result, the Cameroon currency (CFA Franc) was devalued; the salaries of the civil servants were slashed three times. This was at the behest of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) and it was meant to act as a palliatives to the ailing economy. This affected the telecommunication companies as well. For instance, some of the telecommunication companies were privatized. In 1998 the Cameroon Telecommunication Company (Camtel) was established by amalgamating Intelcom and the Department of Telecommunications at the Ministry of Post and Communications. The Cameroon Telecommunications Mobile Company (Camtel Mobile) was set up with the specific task of installing and exploiting mobile phones across throughout the country. According to Nyamnjoh (2005,p.209), with that initiative "…private investors such as Mobilis or Orange and MTN-Cameroon have since extended and improved upon the telecommunication services. From a fixed telephone network of around 87,000 subscribers since independence, Cameroon now boasts more than 200,000 cell phone subscribers for MTN Cameroon alone" This was written in 2005 and in 2013 must have quadrupled. Yet we need to take them as such

but bearing in mind that Orange and Camtel combined with MTN will approximately give us something nearer 1.5 million subscribers.

There is plethora of literature on the mobile phone in Africa and elsewhere. In Africa, in particular, the rapid pace of adoption has gathered particular attention from scholars (see Souter et al, 2005; Meso, Musa, & Mbarika, 2005; James & Versteeg, 2007; Carmody, 2009). Those who first got the phones were the elites but later on it became cheaper as pre-paid service was accessible to many (Nkwi, 2009 and Rogers, 2003) Some researchers have looked beyond adoption and adaptive uses in rural/urban situations which are occasioned by men and women. Lacking not only landlines but also constrained in terms of economics and infrastructure, both men and women have developed ingenious, creative and adaptive usage patterns, 'flashing' 'beeping' recipients, sharing handsets, operating call boxes and other ways of 'using without spending'. All these have summed up social construction roles between men and women. For in Burkina Faso: Hahn & Kibora, 2008 have carried out research in that direction. Further readings also suggest that such creative appropriations perhaps started with small business people. Whether in urban Rwanda as (Donner 2006b) or Nigeria as (Jagun, Heeks & Whalley, 2008) the situation has not been different. These users are new actors in complex socio-technical systems (Beijker et al, 1987) helping to shape the very technology they use (Oudshoorn & Pinch, 2007).

Research into the gendered dimensions of mobile phone use in the developing world, especially in rural Africa, is beginning to reveal a similarly complex, nuanced picture of access, usage patterns and impacts on populations across the continent. Some of the limited research so far reveals market women in southern Nigeria using cell phones to aid their business as (Jagun et al, 2007) informs us. The literature also reveals a complex and gendered disparity in access and appropriation. Examining seventeen African countries, Alison Gillwald;. William Anne and S. Christoph (2010) finds that in thirteen countries, more men than women own phones and, of those owners, men spend more on average than women. Further to Gillwald, Abraham (2008), documents two classes of women phone owners; those with airtime and 'underprivileged users' who are voiceless. Departing from Gillwald and Abraham, Comfort and Dada (2008) argues that ICT has a social status that tends to emphasize existing gender inequalities. In the southern African country of Zambia, Wakunuma (2007) research reveals that mobile phones aggravate existing gender inequality. Comfort and Dada (2008) report that Nigerian women who find mobile phones a 'mixed blessing', are bringing a sense of control but at a price while Scott *et al.* (2004) found out that women in Uganda have less access to mobile phones than men but the reverse is the case in Ghana. In 2010 Burrell found systematic exclusion of women moving outside their personal networks in Uganda. Interestingly enough these scholars have not demonstrated overtly how women have used the cell phones to empower themselves and promote sustainable development in a way.

That notwithstanding, studies on cell phones in Cameroon are generally scarce let alone those on gender. (Nkwi, 2009,p.50-68), traced the history of telephone in Buea, a University city town from the colonial period when it was the privileged few that used it to introduction of cell phones when all and sundry have access to it. Nyamnjoh (2005,

p.209) opines that "…the cell phone has become like the long arm of the village leadership, capable of reaching even the most distant 'sons and daughters of the soil' trapped in urban spaces…."He further maintains that the cell phone has been creatively used by rural/urban relations to stay in touch with kith and kin. De Bruijn (2009) links cell phones to the history of migration and mobility in the Bamenda Grassfields of Cameroon. These few studies by any standard show the paucity of studies on cell phones in Cameroon with regards to the gender roles. This article attempts to fill this gap, and to contribute to the existing scholarship on the cell phones, gender and sustainable development.

GENDER AND CREATIVE APPROPRIATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Empirical evidence shows that when the cell phone first entered Cameroon, it was a male' artifact. Men enjoyed enhanced prestige. This was because they bought phones and one could visibly see these phones displayed on the waist band of the men. They were placed on the table in drinking parlours. Eventually it became difficult for them to communicate effectively with their women folk for whatever purpose. Consequently, they had to provide the new gadgets to women.

The economic blizzard which stroke Africa in the 1980s going right into the 1990s was to have a striking effect on the appropriation of cell phones. In Cameroon in particular following the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) the International Monetary Fund recommended and, many workers were laid off. The CFA Francs was devalued and salaries were slashed by more than half. All these made life to be unbearable. Most family breadwinners who were men found it difficult to run the families in terms of paying the children's school fees, meeting up with health care and above all putting food on the table. The economy in general became more uncertain and financial insecurity set in, more women and men became more creative. Their creativity was born out of the fact that the economy is financially ill and so they had to help out themselves in one way or the other. Some operated cell phone boxes to augment the meager family income while some did so to further their education.

One of the ways which the cell phones have been creatively appropriated in the gender world of (Cameroon) has been in the call boxes or kiosks (Frei, 2013,p.7). These are found almost in all nooks and crannies of Cameroon urban and rural landscape. The color is usually yellow which is the most favorable colour of Mobile Telephone Network (MTN) Cameroon. According to Nkwi(2009,p.52), call boxes are normally about 60x60 cm, 190 cm high and are made of timber with plywood around the lower half. They have four windows that open outwards and look like wings when open. When standing inside the telephone box, only a person's top half can be seen. The roof slants and the call box can be green, brown or yellow but they are often yellow as MTN, the main mobile telephone company, has yellow as its trade mark. These boxes were ubiquitous, omnipresent and pervasive and were rapidly changing the countries' socio-landscape.

The people who used these boxes came from different social backgrounds and shared various ambitions. The call boxes were like safety valves or panacea for their problems. Of the one hundred fifty people interviewed and

observed, one hundred and one were women and ranged from the ages of 13 and 60 years. They were either working for other people and had dreams of going back to school or gain meaning access to health, better food and better housing.. Some had dropped out of school for reasons ranging from lack of money to the death of sponsors and some were widows having nobody to take care of their immediate needs, their children and future general generations. The other forty nine people were men and owned the call boxes. They sustained their livelihoods in this way. According to them it was better to be on their own working and earning money than working under someone who did not pay them enough. A few examples of this gender disequilibrium working in the call box sector will help to buttress point.

The people we spoke to were often struggling people and school dropout. They were temporarily working in these call boxes. The main aim was to raise money and continue their education. Dropping out of school had not been of their making but often either caused by the death of their sponsors or parents had died or through an accident they had become incapacitated or been laid off with no social security forthcoming. Ngea Antoinette was a woman 25 years old who had dropped out from school some ten years ago but wanted to go back now. This was after the death of her father. She had come to Bonaberi, Douala from Dschang to stay with her married sister. She worked for three years in the telephone booth of somebody whose name she refused to disclose for CFA15,000 ($34) After that she decided to open her own call box. "Everyday I make a profit of at least CFA5, 000 ($12) and play my *njangi* while planning to go back to school. I really want to go back to school" (Personal communication with Ngea Antoinette, Bonaberi, Douala, 10 August 2011)[1].

Yvette is 38 years and her ambition in the call box was to send her son to school and also to have access to better medication as well daily needs like food and shelter. She expressed her disillusion and aspirations as follows:

> After my son was about going to secondary school, I was retired from Tole Tea Estate[2]. I could not cope with that ambition. The father of my son was poor too. But he had given me a phone when our relations were still very fine. That was to enable us to always communicate whenever we wanted to. In this call box, I rent it from one man who is no more using it. From the way the business is going there is likelihood that by the beginning of next academic year I will be able to send my son to school (Personal communication with Yvette, Buea,17 August 201)

She never earned a fixed wage but had the illusion that she will raise money to send her son back to school when time came. More crucial, she will put bread on the table. What is striking in her case as far as our focus is concerned is the fact that her phone which she is using at her call box was given to her by the father of her son. Her case also shows the increase in the number of single mothers and their struggle to survive by providing their basic necessities.

---

[1] *Njangi* means a thrift and loan scheme, collectively owned by people to improve their standards of living.

[2] Until the 1990s this was a state-owned tea estate but since then it has been privatized although this did not improve workers' working conditions

It also signals the increase in population which is as a result of early marriages, sexual promiscuity and the revolutionizing of the health sector. Children especially born into unmarried homes are abandoned to their mothers to provide for their needs which include amongst others, education, health clothing and feeding. To effectively handle these challenges, women invaded spaces which hitherto belonged to their men folk.

Another category of the people uses their call boxes to increase their standard of living and at the same time consider them as self-employed. Angela lives in Bamenda, Northwest Region of Cameroon, and is a University graduate where she graduated with a degree in History. She owned a telephone call box at the motor park. . Angela was not married and her only daughter was in the Girls Presbyterian Secondary school, Limbe, Southwest Region of Cameroon, one of the prestigious schools in the country. She claimed that she had made the best out of the call box and the mobile phone as a whole. A phone according to her was a 'life wire'.

> …that is why you see many boxes cropping up everywhere around the Bamenda metropolis. In a single day I make a profit of CFA 7,000($14) and I am not working under any stress. If I am tired, I stay at home. With the money from this box I have been able to sponsor my child in secondary school who will be writing her final exams this June. With the profit I get I also pay my rent of my apartment and can afford to send some money to my parents in the village (Interview with Angela, Bamenda, Northwest Region, Cameroon, 1 September 2011).

She is   not only self-employed but she can help her daughter and her parents. The rent of her apartment was also paid.

Other women did not only use the cell phone booths. Agriculture is the backbone of most economies in Africa including women. Women farmers who cultivate crops to for commercial purposes also use the cell phone to find out the current prices in the markets before going to cell. In this case they made sure that the maximized their profits and also undercut the middlemen who most of the time reap the profits. Many women farmers/traders contacted in the fieldb during research attested to the fact that they have gained a lot through the cell phones. This because they deal now directly with their buyers and so the middlemen who used to cheat them by robbing them, off their profit margin does not happen quite often. As a result the profits which they get is used to sponsor their children in better schools afford quality health services and some even help their husbands in the construction of houses.

Apart from the women there are also men working in these call boxes. Emmanuel Suh alias Lover Boy was 25 years and started his story in Pidgin English and then continued in Standard English. "I don work for this booth since 2005 (I have worked in this call box since 2005). It is owned by my older brother who works in the Paramount Hotel. He does not really pay me but does provide for my daily needs. This is because he plans to send me to a welding workshop as an apprentice" When we raise some money we do send it to our mother who will pay the school fees of our younger ones, pay their hospital bills and also to buy food and pay rents for their electricity and

water (Personal communication with Lover Boy, Buea, 30 August 2013) The above cases are examples of young people who have ambitions of future careers after working in telephone call boxes. These young people came from underprivileged backgrounds and depend on the owner of their box for daily needs and their future. Yet we must not lose sight of the fact that whether men or women they have tend to see whether they can creatively make a living out of the cell phones.

This does not mean that a men too do not make a living out of the call box. Neither does it mean that women cannot supply their call boxes to men as well. One example of such cases was Jonathan, who was married and had a son. At first he was a bar attendant before finding employment as a worker in a call box that belonged to a woman who worked with the taxation Department in Yaoundé. Jonathan, with the money which he earned from the call box , pays his son's school fees, rents for his three room house and keeps some domestic responsibilities moving (Interview with Jonathan, Yaounde, Center Region, 12 September 2011).

All our case studies show in a way the gender situation which has taken shape since the introduction of the cell phone to Cameroon. Most of the women informants   revealed that they were more creative than their men folk. Thus they have used it to make ends to meet. While telephone technology allowed some women greater social and economic freedom, in other cases, it simple upheld previously held social status. In the areas of social interactions, education, and economics, mobile phones had a distinctly gendered impact on their users as the snapshots on Cameroon appeared to show. A profounder examination of research and case studies that focuses on women and mobile phone technology revealed that although access to mobile telephones has many benefits for female users, it was a solution to female poverty or gender inequality. This meant that no matter how it was accessed and no matter how women become creative in their appropriation of these mobile phones, gender equilibrium was still a distant dream. Nonetheless, another domain of creativity in the mobile phone industry demonstrated by women is through songs.

Put in proper perspectives, the Yvettes, Emmanuel alias lover boys Antoinettes and Judiths, all reflected the role of gender, cellphones in sustainable development. If the general idea about sustainable development is to create a structures that is sustainable enough meaning that it can keep going indefinitely into the future these informants did just that. Through the money which they got from these call boxes evidence points to the fact they either helped themselves to access better health, get to pay the school fees of their children and also help themselves nd families to access better health and afford comfortable housing.In a broader context within the sustainable developmental discourses, it is relevant and even more important to note that traditional African culture is not opposed to but is an integral to sustainable development because in most cases it commands cooperation to prepare for a common future rather than individualism.

CONCLUSION

This paper has contributed to the ongoing debate on cell phone culture, sustainable development and gender in Africa taking Cameroon as a case study. It has shown that in the beginning the cell phone was a masculine object but gradually grew into a contested arena where men and women became actors and actresses. Women used the phones in more creative ways to achieve their daily necessities. Through call boxes they could pay the school fees of their children, attained better medical services thus attaining sustainability. Consequently, the paper, based on both empirical data garnered in books has concluded that although women use the cell phones in more creative ways than men most of the informants conceded that their phones were given by the men folk finally help them to use the phones creatively for sustainable development. From a wider perspective, mobile phones have especially some dramatic ramifications in developing countries in Africa including Cameroon. They have increased mobility, reducing transaction cost, broadening trade networks and even facilitating searching for employment and new markets. Mobile telephones have provided market links for farmers and entrepreneurs. Proper access to agricultural market prices, access to agricultural trade information, facilitation of remittances from relations and friends living abroad, information on work opportunities using the phone can reduce substantial travel cost (Richardson, 1999). Once all these are well harnessed it will point ways towards sustainable development. The article has contended that through the call boxes sustainable development has been achieved at a broader based level. The gender dimension of the creative use of the phone and call boxes is quite striking. Many more women appeared to have been use to creatively using the phone than their men counterparts. Women per se belong to the 'caring economy' and so do often more than not think of how to handle their children as far as schooling, access to health and better feeding and better accommodation is concerned. Thus through their activities sustainable development becomes more real than apparent.

REFERENCES

Aboderin, Isabella. 2006. "African Women and Ageing: Nairobi, Beijing, and the Implications for African Gender Scholarship." *CODESRIA Bulletin*, *The African Woman Special Issue*, Nos 1 & 2: 23-25.

Amutabi, M. 2002. The Role of Traditional Music in the Writing of Cultural History: The Case of the Abaluyia of Western Kenya. In Toyin Falola and Christian Jennings (eds) *Africanizing Knowledge: African Studies across the Disciplines*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers.

Amuyunza-Nyamongo, Mary. 2006. "Declarations upon Declarations: When Shall Women Experience Real Change?" *CODESRIA Bulletin*, *The African Woman Special Issue*, Nos. 1 & 2: 10-11.

Bijker,,Hughes T P. and Pinch, T. (eds).1987. *The Social Construction of Technological Systems: New Directions in the Sociology and History of Technology*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Binsbergen, Wim van. 2004. Can ICT belong in Africa, or is ICT owned by the North Atlantic Region? pp.107-146. In Wim van Bersbegen and Rijk van Dijk (eds) *Situating Globality: African Agency in the appropriation of Global culture.* Leiden: Brill

Braddotti, Rosi, Charkiewicz Ewa, Hausler Sabine and Wieringa Saskia 1994. *Women,the Environment and Sustainable Development*: Towards a Theoretical Synthesi,London: Zed Books.

Brinkman, Inge . Mirjam de Bruijn and Hisham, B.2009.The Mobile Phone, 'Modernity' and Change in Khartoum. In Mirjam de Bruijn, Francis Nyamnjoh and Inge Brinkman (eds) *Mobile phone: The New Talking drum of everyday Africa*.Mankon, Bamenda and ASC, Leiden: Langaa Research and Publishing and Publishing.pp.69-92.

Burrell, J 2010. Evaluating Shared Access: social equality and the circulation of mobile phones in rural Uganda. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication,* 15(2), 230-250.

Carmody P 2009. *A New Socio-Economy in Africa? Thintegration and the Mobile Phone Revolution*, Discussion Paper No. 279. Dublin: International Institute for Integration Studies. Retrieved September 16, 2011from http://www.tcd.ie/iiis/documents/discussion/pdfs/iiisdp279.pdf

Castells M Manuel Fernadez-Ardevol J Linchuan Qiu Alexander Sey 2007. *Mobile Communication and Society: A Global Perspectives*. Cambridge, London: The MIT Press.

Castells Manuels 1996/2000 *The Rise of Network Society, 1ˢᵗ volume of Triology, The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Cheneau-Loquay Aine (ed) 2004. *Mondialisation et Technologies de la communication en Afrique: Du Telephone a internet.* Paris: Karthala.

Cheneau-Loquay Aine. (ed) 2000. *Enjeaux des technologies de la communication en Afrique: Du telephone a internet.* Paris: Karthala.

Coplan David. 1997. Eloquent Knowledge: Lesotho Migrants songs and the anthropology of Experience. In Karin Barber (ed) *Reading in African Popular Culture*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Das Vail &and Deborah P (eds) 2004. *Anthropology in the Margins of the State* (Oxford: James Curry, Santa fe, School of American Research Press.

De Bruijn Mirjam & Han Van Dijk 1995 *Arid Ways: Cultural Understanding of Insecurity in Fulbe Society, Central Mali.* Amsterdam: Thela Publishers.

De Bruijn Mirjam Francis Beng Nyamnjoh and Inge Brinkman (eds) 2009. Introduction: Mobile Communication and new social spaces in Africa. Pp11-22. In De Bruijn, Mirjam; Francis B. Nyamnjoh and Inge Brinkman

(eds)Mobile Phones: The New Talking Drums of Everyday Africa. Leiden and Mankon: Langaaa RCIPG & ASC Leiden.

De Bruijn Mirjam; Francis Beng Nyamnjoh B and Inge Brinkman (eds) 2009. *Mobile Phones: the New Talking Drums of Everyday Africa.* Mankon, Bamenda: Langaa RCIPG.

Dibakana J A 2002. Usages sociaux du telephone portable et nouvelles socialbilites au Congo *Politique Aficaine* 85: 133-148.

Diop M.-C (ed) 2002 *Le Senegal a l'heure de L'information: technologie et Societe*. Paris: Karthala.

Donner, J. 2008 "Research Approaches to Mobile Use in the Developing World: A Review of the Literature". *The Information Society*, 24(3), 140-159.

Finnegan, Ruth.1970. *Oral Literature in Africa.* Oxford: Oxford University Press

Fonjong, Lotsmart. 2001. "Fostering Women's Participation in Development through Non-Governmental Efforts in Cameroon." *The Geographical Journal,* Vol. 167, No. 3: 223-234.

Frei, Bettina Anja. 2013. *Sociality Revisited? The Use of the Internet and Mobile Phones in Urban Cameroon*. Mankon, Bamenda: Langaa Research &Publishing Initiative Group.

Gillwald, A.;Anne M. and Christoph S. 2010"Gender Assessment of ICT. Access and Usage" In Africa volume one Policy Papers 5 pp.1-44

Hahn, H. Peter. and Kibora, L. 2008. "The Domestication of the Mobile Phone: Oral Society and New ICT in Burkina Faso." *Journal of Modern African Studies,* 46(1), 87-109.

Harcourt, Wendy,. 1994. *Feminist Perspectives on Sustainable Development.* London: Zed Press.

Horst, H.A.. & Daniel. Miller 2006. *The Cell Phone: An Anthropology of Communication*. Oxford: Berg.

Jagun,A. H. R. and Whalley, J. .2008. "The Impact of Mobile Telephony on Developing Country Micro-Enterprise: A Nigerian Case Study". *Information Technologies and International Development,* 4(4), 47–65.

James, J. and Versteeg M. 2007. "Mobile phones in Africa: How much do we really know?" *Social Indicators Research*, 84(1):117–126.

Kiawi, Emmanuel Chia & Jean Mfoulou (2002) "Rethinking African Development: Social Science Perspectives" *CODESRIA Bulletin,* No. 1 & 2, pp. 12-17

Kibora, L. 2009"Telephonie Mobile: L' Appropriation du sms par une 'societe de l'oralite." In Mirjam de Bruijn, Francis Nyamnjoh and Inge Brinkman (eds) *Mobile phone: The New Talking drum of everyday Africa*. Mankon, Bamenda and ASC, Leiden: Langaa Research and Publishing and Publishing. Pp.92-110.

Kitetu, Catherine Wawasi. 2006. "Which Way Forward? Gender Theories, Debates and Practice after the Nairobi and Beijing Conferences." *CODESRIA Bulletin*, *The African Woman Special Issue*, Nos. 1& 2: 8-9.

Law. J. (ed) 1991. *Sociology of Monsters: Essays on Power, Technology and Domination.* London: Routledge.

Leckner, S and Facht, U 2009. *Nordic Media Trends 12-A Sampler of International Media and Communication Statistics 2000*. NORDICOM: Sweden

Lewis, S. G. and Joel Samoff (eds) (1992).. *Microcomputers in African Development: Critical perspectives.* Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press.

Ling, R. 2004. The adoption, use and social consequences of mobile communication. *Telektronik,* 3, 69-81.

Mbembe,Achille. 2001. *On the Postcolony.* Bekerly: University California Press

McGuigan, J. 2005. "Towards a sociology of the mobile phone". *Human Technology* 1,1, pp.45-57.

Meso, P.F. Musa Pand Mbarika, V. W.2005"Towards a model of consumer use of
mobile information and communication technology in LDCs: The case of sub-Saharan Africa." *Information Systems Journal*, 15(2), 119–146.

Molony, T.2009."Trading Places in Tanzania: Mobility and Marginalisation at home of Travel-Saving Technologies". In Mirjam de Bruijn, Francis Nyamnjoh and Inge Brinkman (eds) *Mobile phone: The New Talking drum of everyday Africa*.Mankon, Bamenda and ASC, Leiden: Langaa Research and Publishing and Publishing. Pp.92-110.

Molony. T.S.J. 2007. "Non-Developmental uses of mobile communication in Tanzania".In J.E.Kratz (ed) *The handbook of Mobile Communication in Africa*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press.

Munya, A. W. and Muriuki Mureithi 2008. Harnessing The Power of The Cell Phone By Women Entrepreneurs:New Frontiers In The Gender Equation In Kenya. Grace Project Research Report Kenya

Mwangola, Mshai S. 2006. "Looking Back, Moving Forward: Reflections on Forum '85." *CODESRIA Bulletin*, The African Woman Special Issue, Nos. 1 & 2: 6-7.

 Nkwi, Walter Gam 2009."From Elitist to the voice of Commonality of Voice Communication: A Social History of Telephone in Buea, Cameroon." In Mirjam de Bruijn, Francis Nyamnjoh and Inge Brinkman (eds) *Mobile phone: The New Talking drum of everyday Africa*.Mankon, Bamenda and ASC, Leiden: Langaa Research and Publishing and Publishing. Pp. 50-69.

 Noam E. M. (ed). .(1999.). *Telecommunications in Africa.* Oxford: Oxford University Press

Nyamnjoh Framncis Beng. 2005. .*Africa's Media: Democracy &the Politics of Belonging*. London& New York: Zed Press.

Nyamnjoh, Francis Beng. 2009. *Married But Available*. Mankon, Bamenda:Langaa RPCIG

Nyamnjoh, Francis. Beng.. 2005. "Images of Nyongo amongst Bamenda Grassfielders in Whiteman Kontri" *Citizenship Studies* 9, 3 pp.241-269.

Oudshoorn., N. and Pinch, T. 2003. *How Users Matter. The co-construction of users and technology*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Pfaff, J. 2009. "The Mobility of a Mobile Phone: Examining 'Swahiliness' through an Object's Biography". In Mirjam de Bruijn, Francis Nyamnjoh and Inge Brinkman (eds) *Mobile phone: The New Talking drum of everyday Africa*. Mankon, Bamenda and ASC, Leiden: Langaa Research and Publishing and Publishing pp.134-151.

Piot, Charles. 1999. *Remotely Global: Village Modernity in West Africa.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Pitt, David 1976. (ed). *Development from Below: Anthropologists and Development Situations*. London: Mouton Publishers.

Pongweni, A. J. C. 1997. "The Chimurenga Songs of the Zimbabwe War of Liberation". In Karin Barber (ed) *Readings in African Popular Culture*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Ras-Work, T. (ed) 1998. *Tam Tam to Internet.* Johannesburg: Mafube Publishers

Richardson, D. 1999. *The Internet and Rural Development.* FAO, Rome, Italy

Rogers. E.M. 2003. *Diffusion of Innovations*, 5th ed. New York: Free Press.

Scott. N.McKemey K. and S. J. Bachelor 2004. "The Use of Telephones amongst the Poor in Africa: Some Gender Implications". *Gender, Technology and Development*, 8: 185-207.

Skuse. A. and Cousins T. 2007. "Managing distance: The social dynamics of rural telecommunications access and use in the eastern cape, South Africa." *Journal of Asian and African Studies,* 42,(2): 185-207.

Smith, D.J. 2006. "Cell Phones, Social Inequality and Contemporary Culture in Nigeria". *Canadian Journal of African Studies,* vol.40, no. 3: 497-523.

Souter, D.;Scott, N. Garforth, C.; Jain R Mascarenhas O and McKemy K. 2005.*The economic impact of telecommunications on rural livelihoods and poverty reduction.* London: Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation.

Steenson, M. and Donner, J. 2009. "Beyond the Personal and Private: Modes of Mobile Phone Sharing in Urban India" In R. Ling and S. Campbell (eds.) *The Reconstruction of Space and Time,* v.1, Piscataway: Transaction Books. (pp. 231-250).

Tall, S. M. 2004. "Senegalese émigrés: new information and communication Technologies" *Review of African Political Economy* 31, 99 pp31-48.

Vail, L. &and Landeg W. 1997 "Plantation Protest: The history of a Mozambican Song". In Karin Barber (ed) *African Popular Culture*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Wacjman J 1991. *Feminism Confronts Technology*. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press.
Wacjman J 2004. *Technofeminism*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
Wacjman J 2007. From Women and Technology To Gendered Technoscience. *Information, Communication & Society*, 10(3): 287—298.

Wakunuma, K. 2007. "Mobiles reinforce unequal gender relations in Zambia. *id21 Insights,* 69. Institute for Development Studies." Accessed on 30 June 2009 from http://www.id21.org/insights/insights69/r2r.html

Weaver. H, Rock & Kusterer K. 1997, *Achieving Broad Based Sustainable Development: Governance, Environment and Growth with Equity.* Connecticut, USA: Kumarin Press.

Wolfensohn, J.D. 1998. *Culture and Sustainable Development: A Framework for Action, Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Development.* A Publication of The World Bank , Washington DC

World Bank Group. 2001. *Culture and Sustainable Development.* Department of the World Bank Group,Washington DC.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Walter Gam Nkwi, Phd, Department Of History, Faculty Of Arts, P.O. Box 63, University Of Buea, South West Region, Republic Of Cameroon, West/Central Africa.