

MOBILE PHONES AS A CATALYST FOR DEVELOPMENT IN CENTRAL AFRICA

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ABSTRACT

Despite its wealth of natural resources and the infusion of billions of dollars in infrastructure expenditures, central Africa remains, economically, the most underdeveloped region of the world. Notwithstanding the overall slow physical development, in recent years one segment of the information and communication technology infrastructure has experienced phenomenal growth, that is, the widely adopted mobile phones. Though telecommunications companies, motivated by various incentives, developed extensive underlying networks throughout the region, it was the tremendous market response in cell phone purchases that joined millions of people together in a region with little electricity, running water, or roads. The present study contains an elaboration of a logical framework demonstrating how the widespread adoption of cell phones, with their intrinsic requirement of a small amount of power for recharging, acted as a catalyst to a series of events effecting the overall development of electricity in central Africa.

Keywords: *Mobile Phones, Recharging Mobile Phone Batteries, ICT for Development, Sub-Saharan Africa, Physical Infrastructure, Electricity in Sub-Saharan Africa, Sustainable Development*