



Barriers to women's participation in mobile-phone mediated services

Participatory approaches to technology for social good
Brighton Digital Festival

Dr Rachel Masika



Participation and value-added services

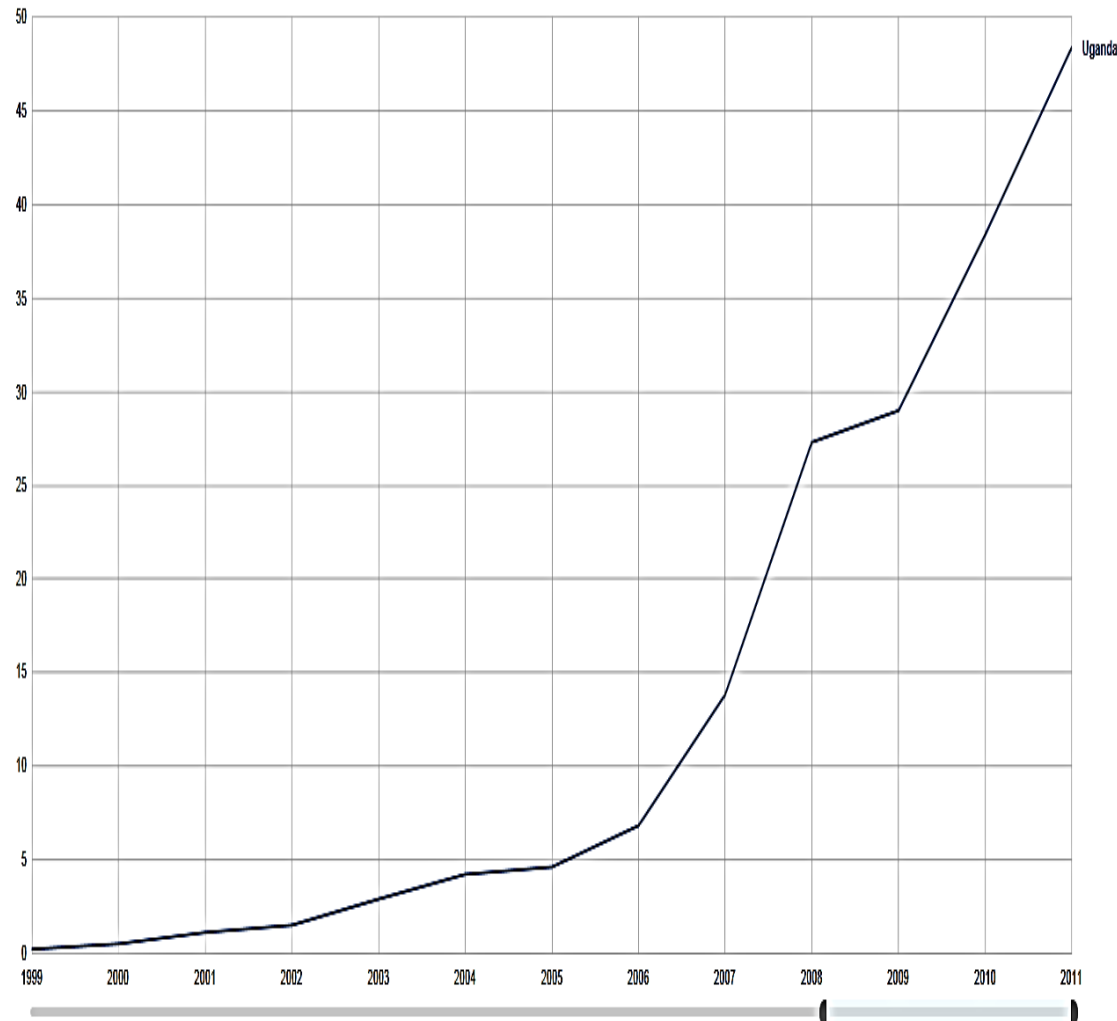
- Mobile phones present low-income groups with opportunities to participate in broader flows of information, the economy, governance services and leisure activities enabled by mobile phone innovations
 - M-governance
 - M-banking
 - M-education and M-learning
 - M-health
 - M-entertainment



Mobile phone research

Mobile phone penetration

- Micro-entrepreneurs on four streets in the central business district of Kampala, Uganda
 - Use of mobile phone-enabled networks
 - Governance and political
 - Business
 - Social and leisure



Source: ITU, 2012

Gender divide – participation in M-governance services and political activities

Table 1: M-political participation and m-governance services

	Women % of women	Men % of men	Combined %
Politically activity using mobile phones	14	41	29
Participation-m-governance services	17	38	29
Engagement with public officials	26	41	34
Participation in local-level/community initiatives	37	36	37

Table 2: Intention/willingness

	Women % of women	Men % of men	Combined %
Willingness to engage with public officials (KCC)	44	48	46
Willingness to engage with local level initiatives (LRCs)	43	45	44

Barriers

- Financial constraints
- Functional and ICT illiteracies
- Information and communication capabilities
- Lack of confidence and political capabilities
- Fear of reprisals
- Socio-cultural barriers



Socio-cultural issues

- Socio-cultural shaping of technology
 - Mobile phones and their use appropriated into existing divisions of labour
 - Time
- Socialization into political participation
 - Politics perceived as not a space for women
- Participatory technology or technology of control?



Enhancing women's participation

- Identify learning opportunities
- Build political capabilities and confidence
- Engender trust
- Minimise costs of participation (financial and time)

