

The last five years have seen tremendous growth in telephone ownership and use in developing countries. But what impact has the telephone had on livelihoods – on how people live their lives, protect themselves against vulnerability and take opportunities for a more prosperous future? Gamos has been involved in a research project assessing the impact of the telephone on the lives of the rural poor in three developing countries – in the state of Gujarat in India; in Mozambique; and in Tanzania.

The research indicated that telephones are:

- Considered very important for use in emergencies
- Extensively used to maintain social networks, especially contact within the family
- Valued more for saving money than for earning money
- Valued more by richer and better educated people than by the poorer, less educated or more marginal members of society – especially where financial value was concerned
- Considered unimportant for information gathering



The findings of this study provide the first detailed evidence of the impact of telephony on communications behavior and livelihoods in rural communities in developing countries. The strong consistency of many of the findings across the three research countries suggests that they are likely to be relevant in many other similar contexts.

A summary report is available to read here: [The Economic Impact Of Telecommunications On Rural Livelihoods And Poverty Reducation - Summary](#)

The full report and other project documents are available to read on the project website <http://w>

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