Title of case study	**Enabling access to weather and climate services in Africa**
Name of organization(s)	**Ericsson**
Business sector	Telecommunications
Region(s) relevant to case study	☐ All regions ☒ Africa and the Arab States ☐ Asia and the Pacific ☐ Caribbean and Central America ☐ Europe ☐ Least Developed Countries ☐ North America ☐ Polar regions ☐ Small Island Developing States ☐ South America
Country(s) relevant to case study	Uganda
Adaptation sector(s) relevant to case study	☐ Business ☐ Education and training ☒ Food security, agriculture, forestry and fisheries ☒ Human health ☐ Oceans and coastal areas ☒ Science, assessment, monitoring and early warning ☐ Terrestrial ecosystems ☐ Tourism ☐ Transport, infrastructure and human settlements ☐ Water resources ☐ Other (please specify):
Adaptation activity	A new partnership between the United Nations World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and Ericsson aims to fill gaps in national ground-level weather observation systems and improve the availability of reliable weather information. Every year weather and climate-related disasters cause over 300,000 deaths, seriously affecting over 325 million people, and lead to economic losses in the range of US$ 125 billion. Sub-Saharan Africa suffers almost 25 percent of these losses and is at the most immediate risk of drought and floods. At the same time, there are more

than 5 billion mobile phone subscriptions globally. The annual growth rate of mobile subscribers in Africa is staggering (in 2008 it was over 40%) and is expected to double in coming years.

Climate change is dramatically altering weather patterns and further threatening people's lives and livelihoods. In Africa, the situation is compounded by limited access to accurate climate and weather information. As a result, the poorest and most vulnerable communities are more at risk to weather related natural hazards such as extreme rainfall droughts and flooding. This increases exposure to famine, loss of lives and livelihoods, vector-borne disease and forced migration.

Given the recent technological and analytical advances in global climate and severe weather prediction and warning systems, the potential of the combination of mobile technologies to strengthen weather forecast systems and access to weather and climate information is being increasingly recognized. The use of mobile phones to distribute weather information can help with storm warnings and disaster prevention, but also enhance economic opportunities for tens of millions of people with relevant information provided for fisheries, agriculture and small business development.

In addition, cellular towers can be used for the expansion of existing weather observation networks. National Meteorological Services in East Africa are exploring the benefits of installing Automatic Weather Stations at these sites to assist in making more accurate forecasts.

A key goal of the initiative is to couple the meteorological expertise that exists within the National Meteorological Services, with telecommunications to efficiently distribute vital and local weather information to individuals and communities in remote areas. It will also help government ministries and risk institutions to be better prepared for natural disasters. The engagement of the private sector is seen as critical to reaching this goal.

As a leading telecom provider, Ericsson uses its expertise to direct the technology stream of the initiative, and to explore the use of mobile communications to deliver weather information to rural communities. The WMO provides the technical advice and support to the National Meteorological Services.

During a pilot project in Uganda, weather forecasts and warnings will be sent to fishermen on Lake Victoria by SMS text message. Every year, around 5,000 fishermen

	die on the lake as they face sudden winds and high waves that capsize boats. By providing weather information and warnings to the fishermen, they will be able to make informed decisions about when and where to fish. This will not only help save many lives but also enhance livelihoods of the communities around the lake, as many fishermen are the sole providers for large families. In the long run, it will be rolled out to other communities around the lake, as well as farming communities who also heavily depend on weather information and warnings.
Cost-benefit	The partnership between Ericsson, the WMO and National Meteorological Services in East Africa was formed in 2009 to demonstrate how Ericsson's core technology – mobile communication – might best be utilized to enhance access to and delivery of weather and climate services in support of the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.
Case study source(s)	Mobile Weather Alerts: Enabling Access to Weather and Climate Services in Africa (business.un.org)
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