

# Project Summary

## Weather Wise

### Introduction

The project aimed to improve the access and knowledge of climate and weather information among farmers, pastoralists, and fishermen living in Northern Kenya, around the Lake Victoria shores of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania; and the coastal strip of Kenya. This was carried out through remote and on the job mentoring for journalists from 10 partner stations, bespoke training for journalists and scientists on communicating weather and climate information effectively, production of weekly weather and climate radio content that meets the weather and climate information needs of the target audiences, and the provision of good quality radio equipment to boost the broadcast capacity of partner radio stations.

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## Capacity Strengthening

BBC Media Action supported media practitioners to produce high quality media content aiming to help people understand climate and weather information and use this to make informed livelihood decisions. This focused primarily on:

- A range of residential workshops to bring together journalists from partner and other radio stations with meteorologists and sector specific experts to deliver training on the effective reporting of weather and climate related information, interviewing skills for experts, post-production skills and programme marketing. Additionally, BBC Media Action arranged for a number of journalists to attend other weather and climate related events such as the Greater Horn of Africa Climate Outlook Forum ('GHACOF') and climate cafes organised by the Network of Climate Journalists of Greater Horn of Africa ('NECJOGHA'). BBC Media Action also partnered with ICPAC to produce short audio explainers, breaking down scientific terminologies used by scientists and climate change concepts that journalists struggle to understand and subsequently explain to their audiences such as climate change and evidence it exists, and the difference between weather and climate.
- Mentoring the journalists at partner radio stations was undertaken to develop their production, technical, and editorial skills as well as their ability to interact with audiences through research. The BBC Media Action broadcast mentor provided the partner stations with on-the-job mentoring as well as remote support. In-depth interviews with journalists and experts were also conducted during station visits to track learning and application of the knowledge and skills shared during workshop trainings and mentoring sessions.

The project also helped to improve the journalists' ability to use research to understand their audiences better and develop programming that addresses their needs and concerns. In the residential workshops, the participants discussed the importance of conducting audience research, research methods, field preparation, interviewing skills, and how to use insights from the research to improve programming. Five partner stations received additional hands-on support to set up and run listening groups. These activities led to over 400 journalists and scientists attending media workshops, climate events and seasonal forecast downscaling events.

## Enhancing the Reach of Weather and Climate Programmes

The project undertook formative research to understand the target audience's knowledge levels around weather and climate issues, information needs and their media consumption patterns and preferences. The research also helped identify the ideal time to broadcast the weather and climate radio programmes produced by our partner stations. Journalists from partner stations worked closely with scientists from their local Met agencies to co-produce weather and climate radio programmes for farmers, fishermen and pastoralists that were relevant, informative and accurate. The project also worked with local scientists to ensure that they understood the context in which their audiences live, the climate related challenges they face and how to make radio content engaging and easy for audiences to

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understand. This ensured the radio programmes produced by partner stations were contextually relevant and could be used by the target audience to make practical decisions. Additionally, during the project, radio partners were trained in gathering audience feedback to determine whether the programmes they were producing were meeting the information needs of audiences. Audience feedback was then gathered by journalists through SMS and call-ins, and by holding radio listener groups to encourage listenership and discussion around the topics addressed in the programmes. This enabled the project to reach at least 600,000 listeners.

## **Conclusion**

At the project closure, journalists working in the 10 partner stations reported improved understanding of weather and climate issues and increased capacity to produce radio content on the subject. Alongside an improvement to their production and editorial skills, they have developed good working relationships with their local Met offices, and all the stations have committed to continue broadcasting weather and climate radio content after the project ended as they recognise its relevance to their audiences.

Scientists reported improved capacity to communicate weather and climate information to their audiences. They now call on the journalists working in partner stations to pass on important weather and climate information to community members that could potentially save lives, improve livelihoods and encourage the adoption of critical climate change mitigation and adaptation practices.

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