

**PRESS RELEASE****Ericsson, Zain, and the Earth Institute fight poverty in Millennium Village in Nigeria with mobile technology.**

**The provisioning of mobile telecom services to the Millennium Village in Pampaida, Kaduna State, Nigeria, is helping to advance achievement of the Millennium Development Goals**

Leading telecom supplier, Ericsson (NASDAQ:ERIC), and leading mobile operator in the Middle East and Africa, Zain, have joined partners to lift 5,000 in rural Nigeria, out of the throes of poverty through the provision of mobile telecom service.

Working with the Millennium Villages Project which is run by the Earth Institute at Columbia University, Millennium Promise and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) these world-renowned organizations have deployed communications services to fight poverty in a largely rural area of the country, pushing some of the poorest regions of Nigeria towards achieving the nationally endorsed UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The installation of mobile technology is part of the Millennium Villages Project which is a community-based initiative designed to empower the people of Pampaida in Ikara Local Government Area of Kaduna State of Nigeria. It is helping to improve agricultural production, a foundation of the region's economy, thus reducing poverty. Additional benefits include improving access to health, education and infrastructure, all under the umbrella of achieving the MDGs by 2015.

With the aim of bridging the digital divide and breaking the isolation that hampers development in rural Africa, the Millennium Village Project has a set objective of bringing mobile communication and the internet service to more than half a million people in select villages in 10 countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

The Chief Executive Officer of Zain Nigeria, Bayo Ligali says the company is collaborating with Ericsson to provide communications solutions that will help to improve the quality of life of people in one of the remotest parts of Nigeria.

"The Pampaida project is part of Zain's Corporate Social Responsibility Programmes of creating and helping people to appreciate a wonderful world. The communication solutions that have been deployed will enable the people of Pampaida to make calls, access health services and education and improve their economic status," he said.

"We are creating enormous opportunities for this community and we expect the impact of this project to outlive our generation. Jobs will be created, relationships will be enhanced and the communication gap between this community and the rest of the world will be bridged and a whole new communication experience, a truly wonderful world, will be created for the people of Pampaida."

"The power of access to mobile communication to potentially transform lives in rural African villages and improve life, provide access to health care and education, create new business opportunities and create access to markets, and ultimately to help eradicate extreme poverty is well documented across the world.

According to him, "at Zain Nigeria, we are convinced that the attendant benefits and potential of this project will fast-track transformation of the lives of many of the residents of Pampaida from their current status especially economic position to one of 'wealth', he added.

Also speaking about the project, Leif Edwall, President of Ericsson Nigeria says "By working with Zain and the Earth Institute, Ericsson is able to focus its contribution on bringing mobile voice and internet services to the community which enable access to health, education and small business. The project is one concrete example where we are realizing our commitment to the MDGs, while at the same time stimulating positive business impacts in Africa.

Zain and Ericsson have deployed a 2G/3G network in this village. Ericsson's Fixed Wireless Terminals will improve coverage and connectivity in schools, health clinics, community centers and ICT kiosks. Zain will also provide a toll-free number and established emergency numbers to improve access to healthcare and emergency services especially to connect patients with on-duty medical personnel while Sony-Ericsson has provided handsets to community health workers.

#### **Notes to editors:**

Pampaida is a rural community in Ikara Local Government Area of Kaduna State in North West Region of Nigeria. It has a population of about 5000 people. It is one of the poorest villages in the State, and its economy is hinged on agriculture. It is one of two Millennium Villages located in Nigeria.

Apart from Pampaida other communities where Zain, Ericsson and the Earth Institute are involved in providing communication services include Dertu in Kenya, Ruhira in Uganda and Mbola in Tanzania.

Dertu, Kenya, is situated in the northern part of the country, situated 100 km north of Garissa, close to Somali border. It spreads on area of 750 square kilometers with a total population of just over 5,200, mainly pastoral and nomadic society.

Uganda's Ruhira Millennium Village cluster is situated south from Mbarara on 338 square kilometers with a population of over 43,000. The hilly terrain and poor roads and communication systems make transport in Ruhira exceptionally difficult.

Tanzania's Mbola cluster is about 20 communities spread out over 700 square kilometers with a total population of 30,000. Located in the Uyui district in midwestern Tanzania, the nearest city center is Tabora which is located 36 km away.

#### **About Millennium Villages project**

The Millennium Villages project, based at The Earth Institute at Columbia University, is a science-based bottom-up approach to lifting rural villages out of the poverty trap that afflicts more than a billion people worldwide. The community-drive initiative currently operates in 11 sub-Saharan African countries where it tackles challenges related to health, education, nutrition, livelihoods, gender equality and other vital issues.

For more information about the Millennium Villages project, [click here](#).

Ericsson's multimedia content is available at the broadcast room:

[www.ericsson.com/broadcast\\_room](http://www.ericsson.com/broadcast_room)

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**About Zain**

Zain is a leading emerging markets player in the field of telecommunications aiming to become one of the top ten mobile operators in the world by 2011. Today it is the 4th largest mobile network in the world in terms of geographic presence with a footprint in 23 countries spread across the Middle East and Africa providing mobile voice and data services to 63.5 million active customers (as at 31 December 2008). Zain operates in the following countries: Bahrain, Burkina Faso, Chad, the Republic of the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Ghana, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Malawi, Madagascar, Niger, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. In Lebanon, the company manages the network on behalf of the government operating as mtc-touch. In Morocco, Zain in a joint venture owns 31% of 'Wana'. The company offers innovative services in its markets such as One Network, the world's first borderless mobile telecommunication network enabling customers to receive and make calls throughout many countries in Africa and the Middle East at free or local rates. The Zain brand is wholly owned by Mobile Telecommunications Company KSC, which is listed on the Kuwait Stock Exchange (Stock ticker: ZAIN). Zain is listed in the Financial Times' Global 500 Index which ranks the world's largest companies based on market capitalization. For more, please visit [www.zain.com](http://www.zain.com)

**About Earth Institute**

The Earth Institute at Columbia University is the world's leading academic center confronting the Practical challenges of sustainable development. Its core activities include educating and training the next generation of global leaders, advancing scientific research, and implementing practical solutions to create a more sustainable world. Read more at [www.earthinstitute.columbia.edu](http://www.earthinstitute.columbia.edu)