



Strengthening weather services with open weather data and public digital goods

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Reliable, usable, understandable and accessible weather forecasts are of great importance for emergency preparedness, planning and efficient use of resources in a number of sectors. However, individuals and organisations in many developing countries currently have poor access to this type of services, products and/or data. According to the World Bank, the capacity of more than 100 national meteorology and hydrology services in several regions have gradually deteriorated over the past 15-20 years. This happens partly due to a lack of funding, economic changes and, in some cases, military conflicts. At the same time, both the frequency of extreme weather and the number of people exposed to the consequences increase.

A survey conducted by World Economic Forum placed extreme weather events on top of the global risk landscape.

Norwegian Meteorological Institute (MET Norway) has been engaged in bilateral work to strengthen National HydroMeteorological Services (NHMSs) for several years.

MET Norway contributes to strengthening weather and climate services in Africa and Asia. This includes long-term capacity building of national meteorological and climate services through the World Meteorological Organisation, World Bank funded programme and through Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) capacity building programs. Norway is a large contributor to the Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS).

We have a strong focus on capacity building related to weather and climate services within the NMHSs in our partnership countries.

By in-house developed open source tools - in daily use at MET Norway - and other open source software we provide hands-on training and teaching in weather and climate related topics. Such a model for partnerships also gives MET Norway benefits in form of robust technical solutions and increased knowledge of weather and climate.

In the future we plan to focus more on end-users and try to target weather forecasts and climate information to their benefit. A substantial amount of work needs to be done to ensure that the forecast is communicated and understood properly.

From our experience with our weather service, Yr, we see how focus on end-users can be stimulate digital development and modernisation. In bilateral work this needs to be done in a partnership with NHMSs. Yr and the weather data (MET Norway weather) are web and internet driven examples of creation, development and production of digital goods and services.

For the next years NORAD plans to finance a project in Africa where MET Norway together with NHMSs will build an open digital weather service.