



aWHERE WEATHER

Area of Focus: Weather information and analytics

How it works: aWhere Weather is a free online platform that provides graphically displayed weather data—both historical and forecasts—for South Asia, and West, East, and Southern Africa. The observed and forecast station data comes from AWIS Weather Services, which aWhere then interpolates utilizing surrounding weather stations to provide localized weather data in 9km grids. Within the next few months, they also plan to begin feeding in daily satellite-derived rainfall data for Africa (provided through NASA in conjunction with Colorado State University) to further strengthen the accuracy of the localized observed precipitation data. Currently, the platform provides 3-5 years of historical data, daily observed data, and forecasts on precipitation, minimum/maximum temperature, relative humidity, and wind speed, solar radiation, and accumulative growing degree days. All data is available for download in Excel format by users for further manipulation, such as for crop modeling or drought monitoring. Users can also sign up to receive daily or weekly email weather notifications for specific locations, which they can also format for SMS upon demand (although the platform cannot send SMSs directly). The daily notifications include daily observed data and an eight day forecast, while the weekly notifications also include a ten day history.

Technology used: Online database

Implementer/Funder: This initiative is currently funded by the Gates Foundation on an annual renewal basis.

Fees: Use of the platform is free as long as funding continues from the Gates Foundation. Other services, such as custom data delivery, including pest models, and drought or flood indices and models, can be requested for a fee assessed on a case by case basis. They can also provide weather data for other regions, such as Southeast Asia or Latin America, on a subscription basis.

Primary Markets: West, East, and Southern Africa, and South Asia

Users: There are currently more than 500 users of the platform, most of whom are development practitioners. A significant number of users have been using it for agricultural research, particularly for monitoring field trials.

Business Model: Although aWhere Weather is currently paid for by funding from the Gates Foundation, aWhere generates revenue through fees from other modules (such as monitoring and evaluation) and services it offers.

Impact: As the online platform only launched in its present form in early 2012, they have not yet conducted any impact assessments. Anecdotally, at least, they have received feedback from farmers, cooperatives and agri-service providers stating that the forecast information has been beneficial to them.

For more information visit: <http://www.awhere.com/>

Sources: Interview with John Corbett, President and CEO of aWhere in February 2013

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