

Joint Production of the Monthly Crop Monitor for Early Warning

The Opportunity

The G-20 endorsed GEOGLAM initiative provides an umbrella for groups that regularly monitor crop conditions. Each has different strengths and weaknesses with respect to monitoring resources: remote sensing, models, station networks, and experts on the ground.

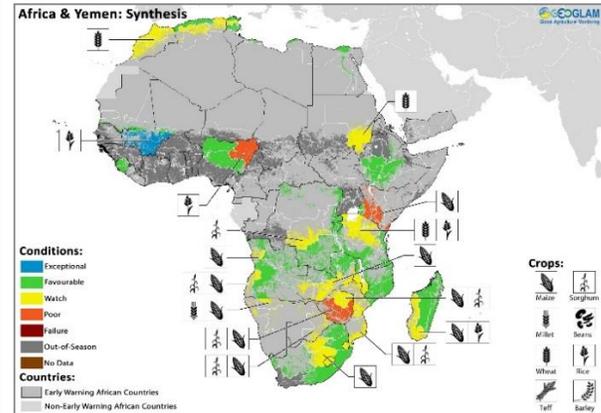
The Goal

To sustainably share crop condition assessments through joint production of an international monthly crop condition bulletin for countries at risk of food insecurity.

The Network

GEOGLAM brings together crop condition monitoring experts from a wide range of institutions, including: European JRC; WFP VAM; FAO GIEWS; Agricultural Research Council of South Africa; Asia RiCE; IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Center (ICPAC); Monitoring for Environment and Security in Africa (MESA); Republic of Uganda; Tanzania Ministry of Agriculture; Applied GeoSolutions; and FEWS NET.

Crop Condition Map for Africa, March 2018



Source: GEOGLAM

Key Activities

- Ad hoc discussions in 2014 among FEWS NET, JRC, WFP, and FAO at technical conferences led to a concept note and prototyping of the Crop Monitor for Early Warning (CM4EW) by FEWS NET with new science partner UMD.
- Prototyping progressed in 2015, and a technical meeting was hosted by FAO in Rome to develop crop condition classification standards; regular publication of the CM4EW began in February 2016.
- Regional and national organizations joined as contributors in 2016 and 2017, and new ones continue to be welcomed.
- Each month, analysts upload subnational crop condition assessments to UMD. Discrepancies among partners are identified and mapped; a consultative web meeting resolves differences to reach consensus for publication.
- CM4EW bulletins have >1,000 list serve subscribers + hundreds of web readers in many countries each month; featured in online articles and reports; on Twitter; and the maps often appear in FEWS NET food security briefings.

Factors that have Enhanced Success

A pre-existing umbrella organization (GEOGLAM) bringing together the crop monitoring community of practice.

Inevitable shortcomings of individual systems and need for additional crop condition information by all partners.

Factors that have Hindered Success

Extra work of uploading crop condition assessments to the UMD platform. In most cases, though, the effort is marginal. Many initially tedious aspects of using the platform have been improved by UMD web programmers.

What Elements Make this a Sustainable Network Development Effort?

- Participating organizations are regularly producing crop condition assessments in any case.
- The benefits accrued by participation outweigh the costs of uploading assessments and resolving discrepancies.
- Consensus assessments, presented in an accessible and appealing format, enhance the credibility of reporting.