

Current Challenges and Opportunities for Famine Early Warning

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FAO Global Information and Early Warning System

Since 1975:

- *“to monitor the food supply and demand situation at global, regional and country levels”*
- *“to provide early warnings of impending serious food shortages”*

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Services to the International Community

- **Monitoring & Reporting:**
Current food production/supply, utilization, import requirements and food aid needs
- **Early Warning:**
Impending food security crises
- **Needs Assessments**
With WFP, others, at the country level

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Famine / Food Insecurity

- Famine: catastrophic, extreme, long-term process
- About 900 million undernourished people in the world
- 2007/2008 high food prices: >50 million added to the numbers
- Impact of the global financial/economic crisis?

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Effective Early Warning

Leads to effective early response...
because:

- Credible, science-based
- Convincing, understandable
- Provide guide to response interventions

Challenges (1)

- EO systems are developed for specific purposes, which determine geographic coverage, resolution, technological choices (e.g. 'Defourny diagram') and in extent of data accessibility...
- Profusion (some advantages) is confusing to users

Challenges (2)

- Wide differences in the extent of terrestrial applications, and to validation, ground-truthing
- e.g. applications in 'home country' vs. through other regional or national institutions, or only through 'observation'

Challenges (3)

- Some progress, but still wide differences in the technical specifications of data/information produced and exchanged

Opportunities (1)

- Technical progress and richer 'ecology' of satellites and EO products
- > Requires a good interface between users and the EO community

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Opportunities (2)

- Increased 'blending' of disciplines and methods
- For example, weather indexing for insurance, facilitating access to credit
- LEAP in Ethiopia: livelihood protection, mixing WRSI, livelihood systems, HE data

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Opportunities (3)

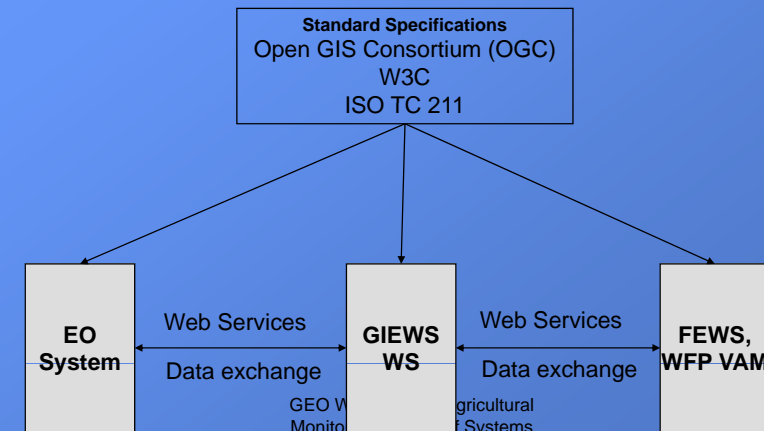
- Progress in the quality/relevance of standards and data sharing mechanisms
- Consultative processes (based on specialized tools) to achieve authoritative monitoring and information, e.g. joint missions

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Harmonization of Systems

Involves standards for interfaces/encoding. The FAO GIEWS Workstation has implemented standards and mapping technologies to exchange and use data from other systems.

Metadata standards are used for **catalogue search** and for data documentation



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GIEWS

The Global Information and
Early Warning System on
Food and Agriculture

THANK YOU

谢谢!

Visit <http://www.fao.org/giews>