Global water resources are important for societies, economies, and the environment. In Niger, limited water resources restrict the expansion of communities and agriculture. Mercy Corps currently works in over 40 countries around the world to address a variety of stresses which include water resources and building long-term food resilience. As Mercy Corps seeks to integrate the use of Earth observations into their resilience building process, NASA DEVELOP established a partnership to help facilitate this effort incorporating the Tropical Rainfall Measuring Mission (TRMM), Global Precipitation Measurement (GPM), and Climate Hazards Group InfraRed Precipitation with Station data (CHIRPS) to create a standardized precipitation index that highlights low and high rainfall from 1981 to 2016. The team created a Google Earth Engine tool that combines precipitation data with other metrics of stress in Niger. The system was designed to be able to incorporate groundwater storage data as they become available. This tool allows for near real-time updates of trends in precipitation and improves Mercy Corps’ ability to spatially evaluate changes in resiliency by monitoring shocks and stressors.

Objectives

- Enhance Mercy Corps’ ability to assess the role of precipitation as a shock or stressor in Niger
- Address historical precipitation trends to identify the average start of the growing season and significant deviations
- Provide an interface for developing a strategy to increase food security for all citizens

Study Area & Earth Observations

- NGOs
- Scientists
- Community members

Results

Rainfall Analysis INtegration (RAIN) – Google Earth Engine

Conclusions

- Harmonic analysis was used to determine the seasonal trends in each agricultural zone.
- An interactive map of environmental and socio-economic layers was generated to dynamically query and visualize weekly data.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Theodore Kabore, Sandrine Chetail, Kate McMahon, and Eliot Levine at Mercy Corps for providing guidance in this effort. Additional thanks to James Favors, Dr. John Bolten, Dr. Kenton Ross, Dr. Frederick Policelli, Dr. Eric Brown de Colstoun, Dr. Bailing Li, and Dr. David Green at NASA for their scientific advising throughout the project.