Global Earth Observation System of Systems Capacity Building in Africa

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The Group on Earth Observation (GEO) seeks to coordinate and build upon existing efforts worldwide to increase the efficient use of limited resources. Such coordination can bring additional partners into the GEO community and can help fill gaps in current Earth observation capacity. The GEO capacity building strategy has five key strategic objectives, namely:

- Identify, coordinate and build synergies between existing and future efforts.
- Encourage and enable developing countries to identify and address their capacity building needs to access, use and produce Earth observation data and products on a sustainable basis.
- Enhance access to data and information, especially on a real-time and near real-time basis and encourage information and infrastructure sharing.
- Prioritize the inclusion of capacity building as a component of all GEO societal benefit and transverse areas.
- Facilitate coordination among GEO Members and Participating Organizations as they seek further resources for identified capacity building priorities.

These capacity building strategic objectives apply to all regions, including Africa, where earth observations are applied for key economic and societal decisions. Various GEO contributions, across Societal Benefit Areas (SBAs) have an Africa focus and address the three arms of capacity building: human, infrastructure and institutional. Examples of these programmes include GEONETCast, CBERS data for Africa, SERVIR Africa, TIGER, and the Meningitis Environmental Risk Information Technologies (MERIT). Furthermore, the Call for Proposals (CFP) announced by the GEO Capacity Building Committee and the User Interface Committee, seeks to identify and promote practical applications of Earth observations to improve decision making. The necessity for capacity building efforts to address user needs is central and is included in GEO's approach.