



NEWS
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NASA AND MERCY CORPS JOIN FORCES TO TACKLE CRITICAL DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES USING SATELLITE EARTH OBSERVATIONS

Collaboration aims to help vulnerable communities build resilience in the face of climate change, population growth and resource scarcity

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ABOUT MERCY CORPS

- Leading global organization powered by the belief that a better world is possible
- Empowering people to survive through crisis, build better lives and transform their communities for good
- Meeting the urgent needs of today through emergency response and disaster preparedness
- Building a stronger tomorrow by connecting people to the resources they need to strengthen their community from within
- About 5,500 team members reaching nearly 28 million people
- \$471.8 million total operating revenue in FY2018; 86% channeled directly into programs in more than 40 countries

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WASHINGTON — The global organization [Mercy Corps](http://mercy Corps.org) and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) are teaming up to help vulnerable communities in the most fragile places on Earth build resilience and better withstand stresses like population growth, conflict, resource scarcity and climate change.

By pairing NASA's state-of-the-art Earth observation capabilities, including satellite data, imagery, modeling and analysis, with Mercy Corps' deep local insights and development expertise working in more than 40 countries, the partnership aims to tackle some of the biggest development challenges on the planet, shifting the paradigm of disaster relief and response to crisis prevention and resilience.

"We believe that equitable access to the Earth's resources is a basic human right, and one that is essential for people to survive through crisis, build better lives and transform communities for good," says Eliot Levine, Mercy Corps Director for Energy, Environment and Climate. "NASA's data and unparalleled expertise can help us better understand the Earth's resources in fragile areas where communities are increasingly vulnerable to existential threats like climate change and conflict. Our response to these challenges must become more sophisticated, transcending typical development and humanitarian practices."

In an initial project in Niger, NASA and Mercy Corps are exploring how NASA's satellite data measuring changes in groundwater can help the drought-prone and farming-intensive country create sustainable livelihoods for the 80 percent of Nigeriens who are subsistence farmers. Nigeriens often don't know where or how much underground water resources exist, or if the amount currently extracted for agriculture is sustainable. NASA's earth observations can fill that knowledge gap, as well as provide complementary information such as variance in soil moisture and land cover.

"This partnership enables NASA and Mercy Corps to amplify our collective capacities to reach communities in the most risk-prone regions of the world with the information they need the most," said David Green, disasters program director in NASA's Earth Science Division, Washington. "As NASA seeks to



expand our understanding of the integrated Earth system from global to local scales, Mercy Corps’ extensive and practical knowledge of the human element – social, environmental, economic and political – is critical.”

Through the partnership, Mercy Corps aims to integrate NASA’s data and tools into the organization’s analysis and program design processes as well as to make NASA’s data available to local decision makers. This would help national or municipal governments and local community groups better design and implement their own sustainable, data-driven policies and programs in response to the critical challenges they face.

Mercy Corps and NASA signed a Space Act Agreement in March 2019, which empowers NASA to work with any entity that enables fulfillment of the Administration’s mandate, as part of the 1958 federal statute that created NASA.

About Mercy Corps

[Mercy Corps](#) is a leading global organization powered by the belief that a better world is possible. In disaster, in hardship, in more than 40 countries around the world, we partner to put bold solutions into action – helping people triumph over adversity and build stronger communities from within. Now, and for the future.

About NASA

For more than five decades, NASA has used the vantage point of space to understand and explore our home planet, improve lives and safeguard our future. NASA brings together technology, science and unique global Earth observations to provide societal benefits and strengthen our nation.