



Introducing the Observatory

Why drylands matter

Covering two-thirds of Africa, drylands are home to half a billion people and are vital for the food security, livelihoods, and the ecological diversity they support.

Drylands in the Horn of Africa face severe challenges, including climatic fluctuations, resource scarcity, and socio-political pressures that threaten the food security and livelihoods of pastoralist communities that live in them.

Having dealt with drought and other calamities for hundreds of years, these communities are resilient and adaptable. However, today, facing more frequent and longer-lasting droughts and other compounding shocks, their abilities to cope with crises are stretched to breaking point.

In the Horn of Africa: "Climate change has made events like the current drought much stronger and more likely; a conservative estimate is that such droughts have become about 100 times more likely." (Kimutai et al. 2023 <https://doi.org/10.25561/103482>)

The Observatory

The Jameel Observatory for Food Security Early Action is a multi-disciplinary 'research-for-action' program that was established in 2021 to guide policies and provide solutions so dryland communities in the Horn of Africa can better manage droughts and other threats to their lives, livelihoods and food security.

Led by the University of Edinburgh in partnership with the International Livestock Research Institute, Save the Children UK, the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab and Community Jameel, the Observatory is centred on a community of practice that facilitates processes of brokering science, knowledge, and real-world action. Our agenda is delivered through collaborative research, capacity development and inclusive dialogue.

Our vision is that vulnerable pastoral and agro-pastoral communities in target regions of the Horn of Africa are more informed, prepared for and resilient to the effects of evolving environmental shocks and stresses on their food security and nutrition.

Our agenda

Working at the intersections of food security, humanitarian and climate actions, our challenge agenda has five elements:

Data - getting the right information into the right hands at the right time, enhancing the usefulness of early warning systems.

Coordination - having well-conceived and connected policies and practices that lead to timely and integrated interventions.

Finance - ensuring that sufficient resources are invested ahead of a crisis, addressing threats before they become emergencies.

Community knowledge - including the knowledge of dryland communities in early action plans, actions and decisions.

Trust - raising people's confidence in the quality and reliability of early warning data and evidence, to make better decisions.

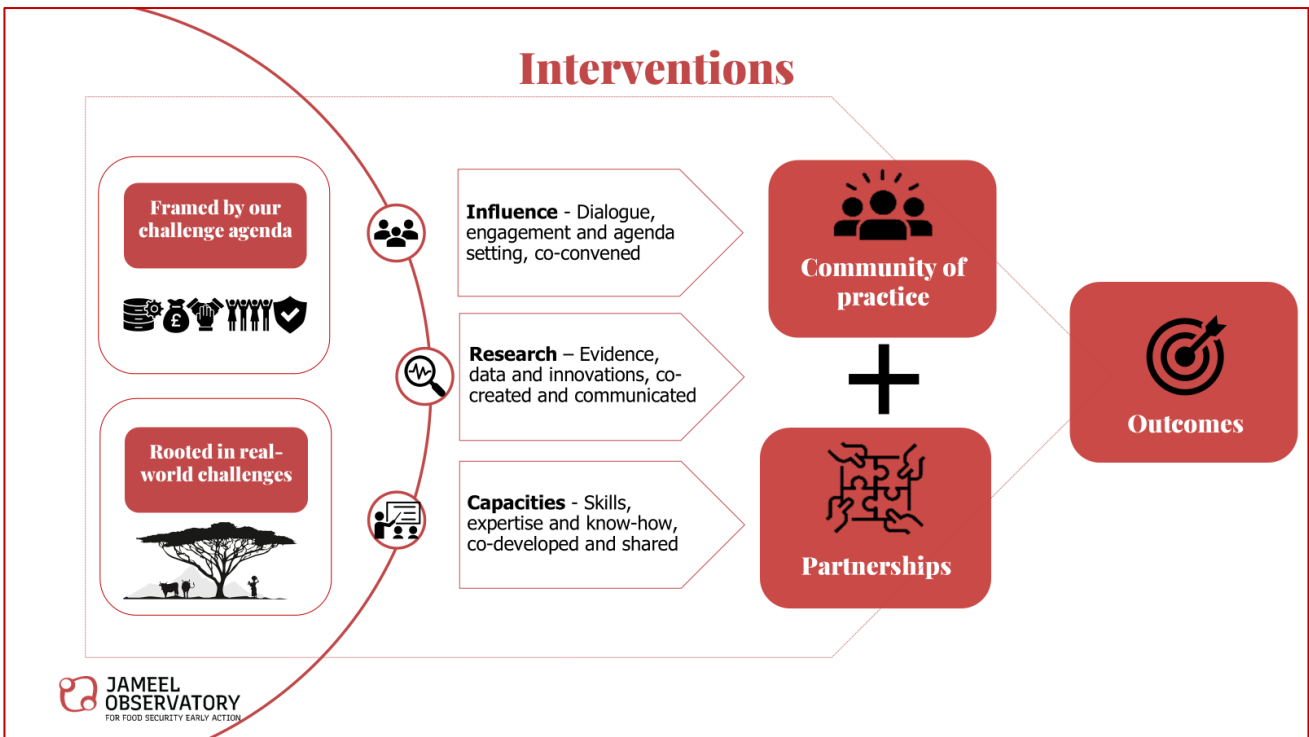
Interventions

To address these challenges, we work with a community of practice comprising key regional actors and stakeholders:

Influence - we convene inclusive dialogue, foster partnerships, and build consensus on necessary policies and interventions.

Research - we co-create evidence on the bottlenecks to effective early action, devising and testing solutions that can bring change.

Capacities - the *Dryland Futures Academy* brings partners together to strengthen capacities to achieve more resilient drylands.



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