



FAST MAPPING TOOL (FMT)

Training Package

Concept Note

Why did we create the fast-mapping tool?

In research projects, report writing, intervention planning, status assessment, evidence building, and impact assessment, a mapping exercise is often required to represent the data on a map. Mapping is essential, as it allows visualization of geographical distribution, tracking changes through time, and identifying patterns for better decision-making.

Often, mapping a dataset requires a set of technical capabilities, either performed with computer language data visualization packages or commercial open-access software. Therefore, practitioners who do not possess those technical data mapping capabilities could miss out on opportunities to benefit from the advantages mentioned above or will have to rely on external interventions. Both will slow down and sometimes stop their data analysis.

Through the Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System (ReSAKSS) program, AKADEMIYA2063's Department of Data Management, Digital Products, and Technology has developed extensive experience in satellite remote sensing data processing and Geographical Information System (GIS). The team has trained hundreds of individuals in GIS fundamentals and mapping across the continent.

However, stakeholders continue to require assistance in GIS mapping software after the training due to computer power, licensing-related issues, and turnover in government agencies.

What do we propose as a product?

To mitigate such difficulties, AKADEMIYA2063's Department of Data Management, Digital Products, and Technology developed the Fast Mapping Tool that allows researchers, development agencies, and governments, among other stakeholders, to map their data in an automated way without any required background in GIS mapping.

The Fast Mapping Tool is an open-access web portal available 24/7 and from anywhere globally. It only requires internet connection, your data, and a minimum of eight clicks. The Fast Mapping Tool takes data in a table format, the most commonly used for thematic mapping, and generates a downloadable map in an image format to facilitate the mapping process for the end-users. A template is available on the portal to enable the end-user data re-formatting in case it does not meet the requirement for the Fast Mapping Tool.

The fast-mapping tool is a client-based portal and ensures your data confidentiality. The data submitted to the portal by the user is not, in any case, stored or exploited in an external storage facility, and all the required process to transform your data into a map is performed at the user level. Therefore, anyone can safely use the portal with any data for thematic mapping.

Finally, the end-user can customize the final map before downloading with features such as the title, legend, font, label, and colors. The fast-mapping tool can generate maps up to level 2 administrative levels for countries and at regional levels for Africa.

What is the training about?

The Fast Mapping Tool training is a package that goes beyond the use of the portal. The training will cover the following items:

1. The fundamentals of geographical information system (GIS) mapping.
2. An introduction to the different types of thematic mapping.
3. Understanding how the Fast Mapping Tool transforms your data into maps and the terms of use.
4. Mapping your data with the Fast Mapping Tool.

The training will take one hour and will require a computer with an internet connection and a dataset at the national or sub-national level (up to level 2 - for example, departmental level in Senegal, for more information about level 2 subnational political boundaries of your country, visit this [link](#)).

At the end of the training, participants are expected to develop the following skills:

1. A good understanding of GIS and thematic mapping fundamentals.
2. How the fast-mapping tool leverages web technology to transform your data into maps.
3. How to effectively use the fast-mapping tool to generate maps in an image format.

Who needs the training?

The Fast Mapping Tool training is designed for development practitioners and researchers who need to generate thematic maps to support their data collection, analysis, and reporting. Trainees are not required to possess any technical background in GIS software to participate in or benefit from these sessions.

▶ **To learn more, download the Fast Mapping Tool Factsheet: [English](#); [French](#).**

About AKADEMIYA2063

AKADEMIYA2063 is a pan-African non-profit research organization with headquarters in Kigali, Rwanda, and a regional office for West and Central Africa in Dakar, Senegal. Inspired by the ambitions of the African Union's Agenda 2063 and grounded in the recognition of the central importance of solid knowledge and evidence-based systems, the vision of AKADEMIYA2063 is an Africa with the expertise we need for the Africa we want. This expertise must be responsive to the continent's needs for data and analysis to ensure high-quality policy design and execution. Inclusive, evidence-informed policymaking is key to meeting the continent's development aspirations, creating wealth, and improving populations' livelihoods.

AKADEMIYA2063's overall mission is to create, across Africa and led from its headquarters in Rwanda, state-of-the-art technical capacities to support the efforts by the Member States of the African Union to achieve the key goals of Agenda 2063 of transforming national economies to boost economic growth and prosperity.

Following from its vision and mission, the main goal of AKADEMIYA2063 is to help meet Africa's needs at the continental, regional and national levels in terms of data, analytics, and mutual learning for the effective implementation of Agenda 2063 and the realization of its outcomes by a critical mass of countries. AKADEMIYA2063 strives to meet its goals through programs organized under five strategic areas—policy innovation, knowledge systems, capacity creation and deployment, operational support, and data management, digital products, and technology—as well as innovative partnerships and outreach activities. For more information, visit www.akademiya2063.org.

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