



## UN-GGIM International Forum on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters

Hilton Hotel, Bridgetown, Barbados  
4-5 and 8 September 2016

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### Concept Paper

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#### Background

When a crisis occurs, each decision made, each additional minute spent on an issue, directly impacts the way affected populations will receive and benefit from much needed aid and relief, sometimes to the point of making a difference between life and death. The most valuable currency to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of critical and time dependent decision making processes is current, complete and consistent information of the situation on the ground and of the resources available to first responders and crisis managers.

At that particular time, all of the best quality geospatial information necessary to support decision making should be accessible from authoritative sources, so that all stakeholders are able to use the same consistent information to ensure a common operational picture of the situation during the emergency response. Such an arrangement would also ensure better coordination during the post disaster recovery and reconstruction phases.

The mechanisms and resources that would allow for the aforementioned to unfold are generally not in place before a crisis happens. As a result, the many actors simultaneously engaged in the response are not only generating an important volume of concurrent and frequently overlapping geospatial information but their competing priorities, combined with a lack of coordination and collaboration, are also adding to the burden of the local institutions, which already have to deal with significant demands on limited resources.

Building on the results of a fact finding analysis, and in line with the report of the Secretary-General on the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) mandated the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) to establish a Working Group on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters in 2015. The Working Group, co-chaired by the Philippines and Jamaica, has formulated a strategic framework which, when implemented, will address the above mentioned challenges and provide accurate, timely and reliable geospatial information and services, in a coordinated way, to decision makers and operational leads before, during and after disaster events. It will also support the implementation of globally agreed



frameworks including the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Upon approval by the Committee of Experts, the Strategic Framework, its means of implementation and an accompanying resolution will be presented to ECOSOC for consideration and approval.

## Objectives of the Forum

The UN-GGIM International Forum on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters will provide a platform for discussing the means and methods of implementing the UN-GGIM strategic framework on geospatial information and services for disasters that could serve as a new global guideline to ensure the availability and accessibility of quality geospatial information and services across the entire emergency cycle. The Forum will consist of a number of themes and sessions that will enable participants to engage with leading international experts to share their experiences and methodologies in the following areas:

- Best practices and approaches, including legislative and regulatory frameworks, in the provision and use of geospatial information and services to make improved decisions for emergency management/disaster risk reduction;
- Country and humanitarian response experiences in geospatial information and services for disasters; and
- Future challenges and trends to be considered in support of the implementation of the UN-GGIM Strategic Framework on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters as well as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

## Organizers

The United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) and the United Nations Geospatial Information Section (UNGIS), as the joint Secretariat of UN-GGIM, will jointly organize this workshop with the Urban and Regional Information Systems Association (URISA) Caribbean Chapter, in cooperation with the Government of Mexico through the Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation (AMEXCID), with the technical collaboration of the National System for Territorial Information from the Chilean Ministry of National Assets, and the Government of China through the UN-GGIM Chinese Trust Fund.

The UN-GGIM International Forum on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters will be convened on the margins of URISA's 2016 Caribbean GIS Conference, which will be held at the Hilton Barbados Hotel from 5 to 8 September 2016. The International Forum will be convened from 4 to 5 September 2016, followed by the URISA Conference. The UN-GGIM Working Group on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters (WG-Disasters) will meet on 8 September to develop further and finalize its strategic framework.

## Participation

It is expected that up to 20 participants from both the geospatial and disaster management /emergency response professional communities will attend from the Latin American and Caribbean region, a further 10-15 participants from the Asia Pacific and Africa regions, as well as international organizations, non-governmental organizations, academia, research institutes and the private sector. Attempts will be made to include high level experts from all UN-GGIM regions.



## Forum Format

The UN-GGIM International Forum will be unique as it will bring together a pool of global geospatial and emergency management/disaster risk reduction experts. The draft agenda of the Forum is provided in the table below:

Day	Subject	Time
<b>Forum Sunday 4 Sept</b>	<b>Opening Ceremony and Keynote Addresses</b>	09:00-12:30
	<b>Session 1</b> The UN-GGIM Strategic Framework on geospatial information and services for disasters - fact finding study, work done by the WG-Disasters and presentation of the latest version of the framework document.	
	Lunch	12:30-14:00
	<b>Session 2</b> Experiences, practices, approaches and challenges towards the implementation of the UN-GGIM Strategic Framework on geospatial information and services for disasters across the entire emergency cycle. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Before disasters</li> <li>• During disasters</li> <li>• After disasters</li> </ul>	14:00-17:30
<b>Forum Monday 5 Sept</b>	<b>Session 2 (continue)</b> Experiences, practices, approaches and challenges towards the implementation of the UN-GGIM Strategic Framework on geospatial information and services for disasters across the entire emergency cycle. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Before disasters</li> <li>• During disasters</li> <li>• After disasters</li> </ul>	09:00-12:30
	Lunch	12:30-14:00
	<b>Session 3</b> Potential areas of collaboration between the UN-GGIM Strategic Framework on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.  Presentation of the UN-GGIM strategic framework and draft Resolution to the UN-GGIM Bureau to be considered for submission of a draft Resolution to ECOSOC.	14:00-17:30
<b>WG Meeting Thursday 8 Sept</b>	<b>UN-GGIM Working Group Meeting on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finalization of updated/revised the UN-GGIM strategic framework</li> <li>• Finalization of the draft Resolution to be presented to the UN-GGIM Bureau for next steps</li> <li>• Preparation for the forthcoming International Forum on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters to be held in Kunming, China in 2017.</li> </ul>	09:00-17:00



## Expected Outputs and Outcomes

The following outcomes from the International Forum are envisaged:

1. Identification of potential challenges towards the implementation of the UN-GGIM strategic framework on geospatial information and services for disasters;
2. A closer interaction between national entities and the international humanitarian and response community;
3. Possible pilot project that demonstrates the steps and processes required to implement the UN-GGIM strategic framework on geospatial information and services for disasters; and
4. Support from the national stakeholders and international humanitarian and response community in presenting a Resolution adopting the UN-GGIM strategic framework to ECOSOC.

Updated: 14 June 2016

