

Stronger. Together.

The United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence (UN-GGCE) vision is a future where all countries have strong political support for geodesy which enables them to – together – implement the General Assembly Resolution 69/266 'A Global Geodetic Reference Frame for Sustainable Development', and accelerate the achievements of the Sustainable Development Goals to derive social, environmental and economic benefits.

ggim.un.org/UNGGCE

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP

Contributing to Africa's geospatial future

Incredible experience. Immense learning. Packed with vital insights and practical knowledge. These are some of the key takeaways from participants at the recent UN-GGCE Capacity Development Workshop for Africa on Transitioning to a Modern Geospatial Reference System.



PHOTO: WALAA ALLAHAM

NAIROBI, KENYA: Zeinebou Cheikh sid Ahmed from Mauritania (from left), Abdellah Tahayt from Morocco, Abderrahmane Dia from Mauritania, Moustapha Fall from Senegal, Victoria Obura from Kenya at the workshop.

Between 19 to 23 May, the UN-GGCE held a workshop in Nairobi, Kenya on how to transition to a modern Geospatial Reference System. It brought together 63 participants from 29 countries across Africa and included modules to help explain 'why' the change is needed as well as the 'how' to do the technical and communications activities.

The five day workshop is part of the UN-GGCE capacity development workshop series which serves as a platform to strengthen global geodetic capabilities, ensuring that all Member States are equipped to support sustainable development through accurate and reliable geospatial information.

"I cannot emphasize enough the immense learning that the member states are undertaking. Every session is packed with vital insights and practical knowl-

edge. The discussions are rich, and the collaborative, Stronger Together, spirit is fantastic", said Twapewa Chikopa who is geomatic engineer and GIS analyst at the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development in Zambia.

"I'm thrilled to participate alongside global experts in the workshop for Africa. The focus on capacity building and making science and technology more fit-for-purpose resonates strongly to me," said Israel TAIWO, lecturer at The Federal Polytechnic, Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria.

"This workshop demonstrated that the future of geodesy in Africa relies on communication and cooperation between our countries. By sharing our knowledge, experiences, and tools, we are collectively building a robust geodetic infrastructure to serve our communities," said geometric engineer Bienvenue N'Gbaba YANGOH, at Bureau National d'Études Techniques et de Développement, the Ivory Coast.

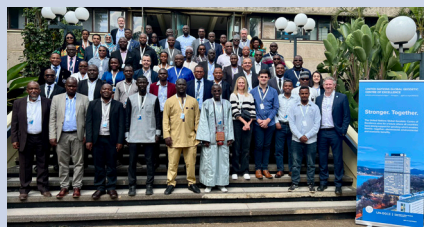
UN-GGCE Capacity Development Workshop series

The workshops series on Transitioning to a Modern Geospatial Reference System is provided across the five regions: Africa, Americas, Arab States, Asia-Pacific and Europe.

The capacity development workshop for Europe was convened in February at the UN Campus in Bonn with 45 participants from 22 countries:



UN BONN: Workshop for Europe in February 2025.



UN NAIROBI: Workshop for Africa in May 2025.

The next workshop is in Asia Pacific from 30 June to 4 July.

Read more about the UN-GGCE Capacity Development Workshops: <https://ggim.un.org/UNGGCE/#capacity-development>





PHOTO: BJÖRN-OWE HOLMBERG

NY-ÅLESUND, NORWAY: The Norwegian Mapping Authority's Johnny Welle (from left) and UN-GGCE's Nick Brown signed the Multilateral Memorandum of Understanding.

STRENGTHENING THE GLOBAL GEODESY SUPPLY CHAIN

Stronger together through multilateral collaboration

More than 40 institutions have signed the Multilateral Memorandum of Understanding (MMoU) on strengthening the global geodesy supply chain. The MMoU became operative in March 2025.

In April UN-GGCE's Head of Office Nick Brown was invited to Norway's geodetic Earth observatory in Ny-Ålesund, Svalbard to sign the MMoU with Johnny Welle, Director General at the Norwegian Mapping Authority. After signing together, they unveiled the UN-GGCE logo at the observatory.

At the ceremony 79 degrees north the Norwegian Government's Minister of Local Government and Regional Development, Kjersti Stenseng and Minister of Digitalisation and Public Governance, Karianne Oldernes Tung were present.

They were briefed on the importance of the observatory in Ny-Ålesund and the hidden risk associated with this critical infrastructure. The message was taken:

"It is part of a big international collaboration with many international players, and it is of critical importance for the world's determination of positioning and timing", said Minister Tung.

"I have learned a lot about the observatory here in Ny-Ålesund and how important this job is. For our daily life for all. The critical infrastructure for the Earth's motion and all what we use every day – it be money transactions or our mobile phone's GPS – that data is fundamental", said Minister Stenseng.

The geodetic observatory in Ny-Ålesund is the northernmost observatory of its kind and Norway's most important contribution to the global geodesy supply chain.

"I would like to sincerely thank Norway, who have been such strong supporters of global geodesy for a long time. Without the support from Norway, we really would have struggled to get the Centre established", said Mr Brown.

More about the MMoU and how to join: <https://ggim.un.org/UNGGCE/#MMoU>

Successful special session for geodesy at EGU25

To raise awareness on the vital role of geodesy in socio-economic development, UN-GGCE convened a Special Session on Geodesy at this year's European Geosciences Union (EGU) General Assembly in Vienna.

During the discussion, Richard Gross, President of the International Association of Geodesy (IAG), emphasized the foundational work that has been done in geodesy by the IAG and Member States over the past decades. However, he noted that societal needs have evolved, raising a critical question: "How can we keep geodesy sustainable in the future?"

"Education, funding mechanisms, governance, and strategic communication are key pillars for sustaining global Earth observation infrastructure", said Narelle van der Wel, Science and Communication Officer at the World Meteorological Organization. She also outlined the importance of identifying a unique niche for the geodetic community that addresses global challenges, demonstrates economic value, and promotes inclusivity and collaboration worldwide.

Germany extends funding of the UN-GGCE until 2030

On 12 February the Federal Agency for Cartography and Geodesy, BKG and United Nations Statistics Division signed the agreement which extends the German funding for the UN-GGCE in Bonn, Germany until 2030.

"Germany is committed to ensuring the world has a strong foundation for satellite based positioning, navigation and timing services. We were pleased to have established the Centre in 2023 and we are very proud to see it succeeding," said Prof. Dr. Paul Becker, President, BKG.

