

**UNITED NATIONS COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON GLOBAL GEOSPATIAL
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT (UN-GGIM)
HIGH-LEVEL GROUP OF THE INTEGRATED GEOSPATIAL INFORMATION FRAMEWORK (HLG-IGIF)**

Second Meeting (virtual)
Thursday, 20 May 2021,
10:00 hrs. – 12:00 hrs. (UTC)/06:00 am. – 8:00 am. (EDT/UTC-4)

SUMMARY REPORT

Background

At its virtual first meeting, the HLG-IGIF confirmed its mandate, objectives, role, membership composition and methods of work, and unanimously adopted its Terms of Reference. The HLG agreed that its immediate priority is to begin consideration of and to develop its initial Programme of Work comprising Strategic Plan and Plan of Work as its roadmap to prioritize and guide its focus and activities for the next 1-2 years. In that regard, the HLG-IGIF agreed that key elements include: a) refinement and finalization of the IGIF Implementation Guide; b) update of the IGIF Overarching Strategy; c) developing a communication strategy; d) establish a dialogue with the UN Regional Commissions and Regional Committees of UN-GGIM; and e) strengthen cooperation, coordination and advocate resource mobilization.

Participants

Seventeen of the twenty-one Member States of the HLG-IGIF participated in its virtual second meeting. They are the expert representatives of Algeria, Belgium, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chile, Ethiopia, Germany, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, the Netherlands, Panama, South Africa, Sweden, Tonga, United Kingdom and United States of America. The meeting was facilitated by the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management Section/UN-GGIM Secretariat, Statistics Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

Welcome and Introductions

The co-Chairs welcomed all participants to the virtual second meeting of the HLG-IGIF and applauded the executive leadership and influence the HLG-IGIF bring to global geospatial information management. It was reiterated that the IGIF is globally accepted and its implementation and sustained success needs executive leadership, guidance and support and executives as champions serve to motivate and encourage others along. It was also reaffirmed that the HLG-IGIF *“aims to: provide the strategic leadership, promotion, coordination, planning and oversight to successfully sustain the uptake and implementation of the IGIF; explicitly demonstrate the societal value and impact of the IGIF, and associated progress towards enabling the achievement of the SDGs; provide expertise and advice to assist countries in their implementation of the IGIF at the country level; and mobilize needed resources for implementation and to maintain the momentum and evolving refinement of the IGIF with Member States and other key stakeholders.”*

The strategic leadership, guidance and championing at this foundational phase of the IGIF are crucial, the steps and decisions taken collectively by the HLG-IGIF will have profound impact on Member States, particularly those developing countries where geospatial information is critical to their futures and sustainable development. The HLG-IGIF is expected to deploy their executive-level expertise to advance and sustain the IGIF towards transformational change.



The co-Chairs urge the HLG-IGIF to begin with an initial step - develop and then realize its strategic plan. The development of the strategic plan being the main focus of the virtual second meeting.

Agenda and Organization of Work

The HLG-IGIF concurred with the co-chairs, adopted the following agenda and organization of work for the meeting -

00:01	1) Welcome and Introductions (Secretariat and Co-Chair)
	a) Acknowledgement of members of the HLG and their executive role in sustaining and advancing the IGIF
	b) Primary focus of the Meeting – the Strategic Plan
00:10	2) Adoption of Agenda and Organization of the Meeting (Co-Chair)
00:15	3) Review and Discussion of the proposed HLG-IGIF Strategic Plan (Co-Chair)
	a) Goal 1 – Strengthen Communication
	b) Goal 2 – Improve Data Governance, Sharing and Accessibility
	c) Goal 3 – Strengthen Capacity Building to foster Implementation of the IGIF
	d) Goal 4 – Support appropriate funding for operationalizing the IGIF at the country-level
	e) Goal 5 – Expand collaboration among regions and Member States
	f) Goal 6 – Contribute to improvements of the IGIF
00:45	4) Develop a High-Level Plan of Action (Co-Chair)
01:15	5) Working modality for HLG-IGIF (Co-Chair)
01:30	6) Schedule of work for the HLG-IGIF (next 12 months) (Co-Chair)
	a) Tasks in preparation for 11 th Session of UN-GGIM
	b) Development of a 12-month schedule for advancing the Strategic Plan
	c) A start to a proposed Plan of Work (Work Plan)
01:55	7) Conclusions (Co-Chair)
	a) Meeting summary and outcomes
	b) Next Meeting
02:00	

Review and Discussion of the proposed HLG-IGIF Strategic Plan

The co-Chairs undertook the task to develop and provide some initial thinking towards the preparation of a Strategic Plan for the consideration the HLG-IGIF. The proposed strategic goals are informed by the key functions of the HLG-IGIF as provided in its adopted Terms of Reference. With this approach, the co-Chairs sought alignment between the Terms of Reference and the Strategic Plan. An outline of the plan was shared and it included: a) Purpose; b) Strategic goals of the HLG-IGIF; c) Strategic objectives of the HLG-IGIF; d) Terms of Reference for the HLG-IGIF and its key functions; e) Potential impacts on the HLG-IGIF strategy; f) Operating environment; g) Actions to consider in the HLG-IGIF work plan; and h) Example of an HLG-IGIF work plan.

The co-Chairs proceeded to outline six strategic goals and for each goal, outlined the desired outcome(s), focus area(s)¹ and proposed some points for discussions.

Strategic goals:	Proposed discussion points:
1 - Strengthen Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) How best to promote and communicate the IGIF? Regular blogs and/or newsletter, position paper, online folders, ambassadors, young ambassadors, etc. Requires resources. ii) What actions are needed? iii) Who should we be engaging? What are the key messages? How to iv) communicate, promote, market, and grow understanding of geospatial information to decisions makers all over? v) How to coordinate all these efforts
2 – Improve Data Governance, Sharing and Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Consider societal values such as economic growth, socially inclusive development, poverty alleviation and improved health services, protection of the environment, water resource management, disaster response, industry development, and agricultural productivity. ii) Develop strategies for gaining recognition at highest level of government on the importance and value of integrated geospatial information through the IGIF iii) Recognize needs at country-level vary from basic food security, to health care, to economic opportunity and economic development, to housing, to national defence, to sustainability, innovation, and prosperity of the Member State. iv) Assist in solving complex problems – COVID-19 is just one – but the many areas as highlighted in the recent Global Geodesy Forum. v) Clarify the connection of integrated geospatial information with the SDGs. vi) Engage with Standard Development Organizations and statistical/census organizations/experts
3 - Strengthen capacity building to foster the implementation of the IGIF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Is training included? What kind of training? How will it be conducted? ii) At what levels should training be considered? Executive level; Managerial level; or Professional workforce level iii) In-country workshops? iv) E-Learning, e-Books –how to ensure consistency in training material? World Bank had developed e-Learning modules. v) Accredite “IGIF” course at universities?
4 - Support sustainable funding and capacity building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Some level of support is occurring using different approaches. For example, the World Bank has country-specific development projects and can include a geospatial component or capacity development. Some Member States have bilateral arrangements to support and improve geospatial information management capabilities.

¹ Please refer to the presentation that guided the virtual second meeting of the HLG-IGIF, provided as an appendix to the summary report.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ii) Would it be beneficial to know where these arrangements are happening? and their impacts? If so, how is this information collected and used? What are the resource implications for managing this function? iii) If a Member State requests assistance, is there a role for the HLG? How is a request managed?
5 - Expand collaboration among regions and Member States	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Consider suggestions and develop methods for engaging institutions outside the geospatial information community. HLG-IGIF members could volunteer to reach out to foundations, development assistance organizations and different domains beyond geospatial (related to Goal 1)
6 - Contribute to the improvement of the IGIF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Through implementation and with varied experiences and new developments, updates to the IGIF, particularly Part 2, will be required. Should there be a periodic review process to determine if updates are needed? What is the frequency? How will the updates and revisions be carried out?

The co-Chairs concluded their presentation of their initial thinking on the preparation of the Strategic Plan with goals, outcomes and focus areas, and had posed a series of discussion points for HLG-IGIF to consider. The co-Chairs reminded the HLG-IGIF that the Strategic Plan should focus on strategic governance needed to promote, implement and use the IGIF to address the integrated geospatial information needs of Member States. The HLG-IGIF was invited to comment and provide feedback, including the overall structure of the document, any edits and refinements needed, and if there are any gaps and ‘something’ missing that are needed in the Strategic Plan.

In the open discussion, it was observed that the co-Chairs’ initial thinking and draft were a good starting point, and key areas of needed focus are generally covered in the outlined Strategic Plan. There were several views on the need to be strategic and avoid being technical. The emphasis should be on the outcomes and benefits that garner attention and support from decision-makers and politicians. It was noted that the geospatial community is very comfortable in their discipline and can quickly move into technical details, but that’s not where to begin the conversation particularly for goals 1 and 2. Additional remarks to the draft Strategic Plan included the importance of focusing on societal benefits, the societal value of geospatial information with the IGIF serving as the means. It was observed that all six goals are cross-cutting. It was agreed that it is most appropriate to have strengthening communications as the first goal given its importance.

It was also remarked that it is important to focus on outcomes and with regards to goals 3 and 4, it would be valuable to share and exchange how countries are leveraging the IGIF to promote and propel its integrated geospatial information management. Such experiences can be documented to raise awareness and promote training. There are also experiences in developing e-learning packages such as by the World Bank and PAIGH that could be helpful resources.

The Strategic Plan should emphasize implementation and could help to convey what is needed by a country internally, as well as externally in advancing support to developing countries. It was noted that goal 4 is important, that without sustainable funding, the implementation of the IGIF at the country-level could not be sustained. It was remarked that goal 4 should also focus on promoting and raising political support to ensure adequate resources are made available for national implementation of the IGIF.

It was suggested that goal 3 should solely focus on capacity development and goal 4 on sustainable funding. It was further suggested that Goal 4 be revised to: Support sustainable funding for the implementation of IGIF.

To a question whether the SDGs are the sole compelling rationale, it was agreed that the implementation of the IGIF must be driven by national priorities and circumstances. However, it was observed in many developing countries, national priorities are closely aligned with several SDGs.

The HLG-IGIF was requested to consider the 'executive' role and responsibilities needed to deliver the Strategic Plan and the mandate of the HLG-IGIF. It was observed that the HLG-IGIF is a group of executives from national geospatial information entities. It was remarked that, as a high-level group, the HLG-IGIF must be clear of its strategic and executive roles, responsibilities and actions with regards to the proposed six strategic goals. The question of what role members of HLG-IGIF play was revisited. For example, one option is for members to communicate and collaborate with political, organizational, and business leaders while leaving the experts in their organizations to focus on the details of the IGIF.

The co-Chairs welcomed the energetic and thought provoking discussions, and expressed appreciation for the comments and feedbacks by the HLG-IGIF. The HLG-IGIF was urged to review the draft provided and provide inputs and feedbacks via emails to the co-Chairs, preferably over the next two weeks. It was further suggested that the HLG-IGIF finalize the Strategic Plan ahead of the eleventh session of UN-GGIM.

High-Level Plan of Action

The co-Chairs invited discussions on the prioritization of goals, and suggested prioritizing goals 1, 2 and 4 in its plan of action ahead of goals 3, 5 and 6. The importance of having the HLG-IGIF consider and agree on the prioritized goals was emphasized. This outcome will then flow into the development of the high-level plan of action. It was suggested that a simple Google form be used to gather members' views on the top three priority goals. It was further suggested that the form be used to indicate interest or ability to provide leadership in priority goals' actions. The HLG-IGIF was urged to expeditiously respond once the form has been provided.

Working modality for the HLG-IGIF

The Terms of Reference provided the methods of work of the HLG-IGIF. The co-Chairs expressed the general expectation that HLG-IGIF would reach back into their respective national organizations for resources and expertise, and coordinate any such 'internal resources' when members are taking up any tasks and actions. The co-Chairs anticipated ad-hoc sub-groups or task teams to be formed with specific objectives, deliverables and milestones to deliver the Strategic Plan and its Plan of Action. It was remarked that a member of the HLG-IGIF can be in more than one groups, depending on the member's willingness, abilities and resources available.

Schedule of work for the HLG-IGIF

The co-Chairs outlined a schedule of work over the next three months. Tasks included: a) preparation for the eleventh session of UN-GGIM including preparation of the report under the agenda item on Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and planning a side-event; b) develop a 12-month planning schedule to advance the Strategic Plan and c) formulate the HLG-IGIF Plan of Action based on agreed priority goals.

Conclusions

The co-Chairs summarized the main discussions and outcomes. They were –

- The HLG-IGIF discussed and reached consensus on its formulation including its six strategic goals. HLG-IGIF were urged to provide additional inputs and feedbacks via email and respond to the Google form on the prioritization of the goals. The co-Chairs requested the HLG-IGIF to contribute to the finalization of the Strategic Plan.
- The HLG-IGIF were urged to prioritize the strategic goals and to indicate their willingness and ability to provide leadership to implement the Strategic Plan.
- The co-Chairs proposed to consider, based on inputs and feedbacks including responses via the Google form, the establishment of any ad-hoc sub-group or task groups. Any groups established will have defined item(s) of work, deliverables and milestones. The co-Chairs encouraged members to contribute to any ad-hoc sub-group or task teams that may be established by the HLG-IGIF.
- Work with the Secretariat to prepare its report to the eleventh session, and to scope, organize and convene a side-event on IGIF on the margins of the eleventh session of UN-GGIM.

It was further indicated, given that the eleventh session would be held in a scaled down virtual format, that the next meeting of the HLG-IGIF be convened soon after the eleventh session.

There being no other matters, the co-Chairs concluded the virtual second meeting with expression of thanks and appreciation to all participants.

Annex 1: Participants of the virtual second meeting of the HLG-IGIF

UN-GGIM Bureau	
Belgium	<i>Ms. Ingrid Vanden Berghe, Johannes Van Geertsom and Joep Crompvoets, National Geographic Institute</i>
Tonga	<i>Ms. Rosamond Bing, Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources</i>
Cameroon	<i>Mr. Fernand Isseri, National Institute of Geography</i>
UN-GGIM: Africa	
Burkina Faso	<i>Mr. Bako Ferdinand and Mr. Sanon Oumar on behalf of Halidou Nagabila, Institut Géographique du Burkina</i>
Ethiopia	<i>Mr. Tulu Besha Bedada, Geospatial Information Institute</i>
South Africa	<i>Ms. Maroale Mimi Chauke, Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Reform</i>
UN-GGIM: Americas	
Chile	<i>Mr. Cristián Araneda Hernández, SNIT-IDE de Chile</i>
Jamaica	<i>Ms. Simone Lloyd, Ministry of Housing, Urban Renewal, Environment & Climate Change</i>
Panama	<i>Ms. Isis Tejada, Instituto Geográfico Nacional Tommy Guardia</i>
United States	<i>Ms. Deirdre Bishop, Census Bureau</i>
UN-GGIM-AP	
Indonesia	<i>Mr. Arief Syafii, Mr. Syahrudin, Ms. Diah Retno Minarni, Mr. Dheny Sampurno, Mr. Muhammad Nurman, and Mr. Aris Haryanto on behalf of Mr. Antonius B Wijanarto, Geospatial Information Agency</i>
Kyrgyzstan	<i>Mr. Bakytbek Djusupbekov and Mr. Almaz Abdiev, State Agency for Land Resources</i>
Nepal	<i>Mr. Susheel Dangol, Survey Department</i>
UN-GGIM: Arab States	
Algeria	<i>Mr. Hamid Oukaci, Mr. Armine Laredj, Conseil National de l'Information Géographique</i>
UN-GGIM: Europe	
Germany	<i>Mr. Pier-Giorgio Zaccheddu, Federal Agency of Cartography and Geodesy</i>
Netherlands	<i>Mr Frank Tierloff, The Netherlands' Cadastre, Land Registry and Mapping Agency</i>
Sweden	<i>Mr. Anders Sandin, Lantmäteriet</i>
United Kingdom	<i>Mr. Jamie Clark and Ms. Olivia Powell, Geospatial Commission</i>
UN-GGIM Secretariat	
	<i>Mr. Stefan Schweinfest</i>
	<i>Mr Greg Scott</i>
	<i>Ms. Eva-Maria Unger</i>
	<i>Ms. Cecille Blake</i>
	<i>Mr. Tim Trainor</i>
	<i>Mr. CheeHai Teo</i>
Apologies from:	
Jordan	<i>Mr. Mu'ammam Kamel Haddadin, Royal Jordanian Geographic Center</i>
Mongolia	<i>Mr. Tsevelsodnom Gankhuu, Agency for Land Administration and Management, Geodesy and Cartography</i>

Morocco

Mr. Kamal Outghouliast, Agence Nationale de la Conservation Foncière, du Cadastre et de la Cartographie

