

# Second International Workshop on Operationalizing the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework

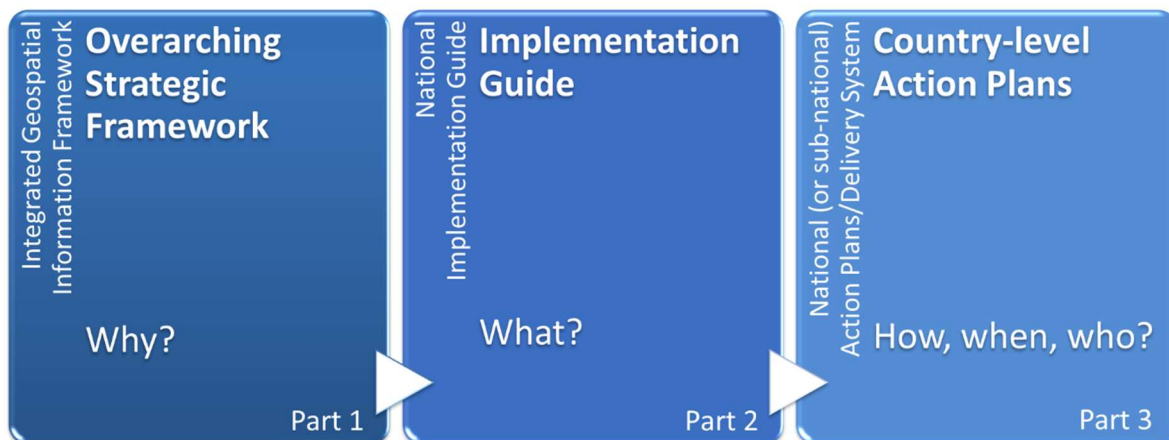
Conference Room 3, United Nations Conference Center

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

30 September – 2 October 2019

## SUMMARY REPORT

In August 2018, the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) adopted the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (IGIF), which was jointly developed by the World Bank and the United Nations Statistics Division. The IGIF provides a basis, a reference and a mechanism for countries when developing and strengthening their national and sub-national arrangements in geospatial information management and related infrastructures. The Framework translate high-level concepts to practical implementation guidance and does this by leveraging seven (7) underpinning principles, eight (8) goals and nine (9) strategic pathways as a means for governments to establish and maintain more effective geospatial information management arrangements. The Implementation Guide will provide the specific guidance and recommends actions to be taken by Member States to improve and strengthen their national geospatial information management, systems and infrastructures.



This second international workshop, an awareness raising and peer-to-peer learning event over three days sought to raise and improve awareness, knowledge and understanding of the IGIF, introduce, inform and work through with participants from the Africa the implementation guidance, conceptual approach and available resource materials to operationalize the IGIF according to their national circumstances. The conceptual approach to operationalize the IGIF included a series of tasks to support the preparation of an execution plan that leads towards the development of a country-level action plan for integrated geospatial information management.

This International Workshop seeks to contribute to the strengthening of nationally integrated geospatial information management towards the producing, disseminating and applying of geospatial information for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The agenda and organization of work addressed the availability, accessibility and integrative value of geospatial information, inter-alia, the data demands nationally and sub-nationally in support of national development priorities as well as for national implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This data demands required coordinated efforts at all levels including the integration of geospatial information, statistical data, and other information for measuring and monitoring progress, recognizing that all events, activities and decisions have a temporal and geographical context.

The international workshop was attended by 27 participants from fifteen African countries<sup>1</sup>, UNECA and one of its regional training entities<sup>2</sup>. It was highly participatory, where invited participants presented and discussed their national situation and progress over the years to establish a national spatial data infrastructure. Participants lamented on their lack of progress, discussed the effectiveness of what they termed as their ‘technician’s bottom-up’ approach, postulated the need for more political awareness and buy-in, and also resources. The organization of work and the facilities at the UN Conference Center with simultaneous English French interpretation further aided the interactions and discussions, provided a participatory and engaging environment.

Participants had at the onset expressed the need to raise and communicate awareness of their mission and activities inside their countries. The IGIF Part 1 - Overarching Strategic Framework is intended for a wide range of stakeholders, primarily being high-level policy and decision makers, institutions and organizations within and across government.

The Overarching Strategic Framework was explained to the participants. It is a forward-looking Framework built on national needs and circumstances, provides the overarching strategic messages and more expansive and integrated national framework, particularly focusing on policy perspectives and elements of geospatial information. It sets the context of ‘why’ integrated geospatial information management is a critical element of national social, economic and environmental development. It has both a Vision and Mission statement, to communicate the overarching aim of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework.

Participants were presented and interacted on draft Implementation Guide that aims to provide the ‘what’, the specific guidance and options to be taken by countries in implementing the IGIF. The Guide captures strategic to operational needs with guiding principles, not detailed nor prescriptive. It expands on each of the nine strategic pathways, comprises references, good practices and specific principles and actions for each of the Pathways, including those generated through each of the Subcommittee, Expert and Working Groups of UN-GGIM. The intention of the Guide is to provide guidance for governments to establish ‘nationally’ integrated geospatial information management in such a way that transformational change is enabled, visible and sustainable.

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<sup>1</sup> Benin, Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Togo, Uganda and Zambia

<sup>2</sup> African Regional Institute for Geospatial Information Science and Technology (AfriGIST)

The conceptual approach was introduced to the participants, with three components and recommended tasks that will lead to the development and preparation of country-level Action Plans according to national circumstances.

**a) Component One – Developing an Execution Plan**

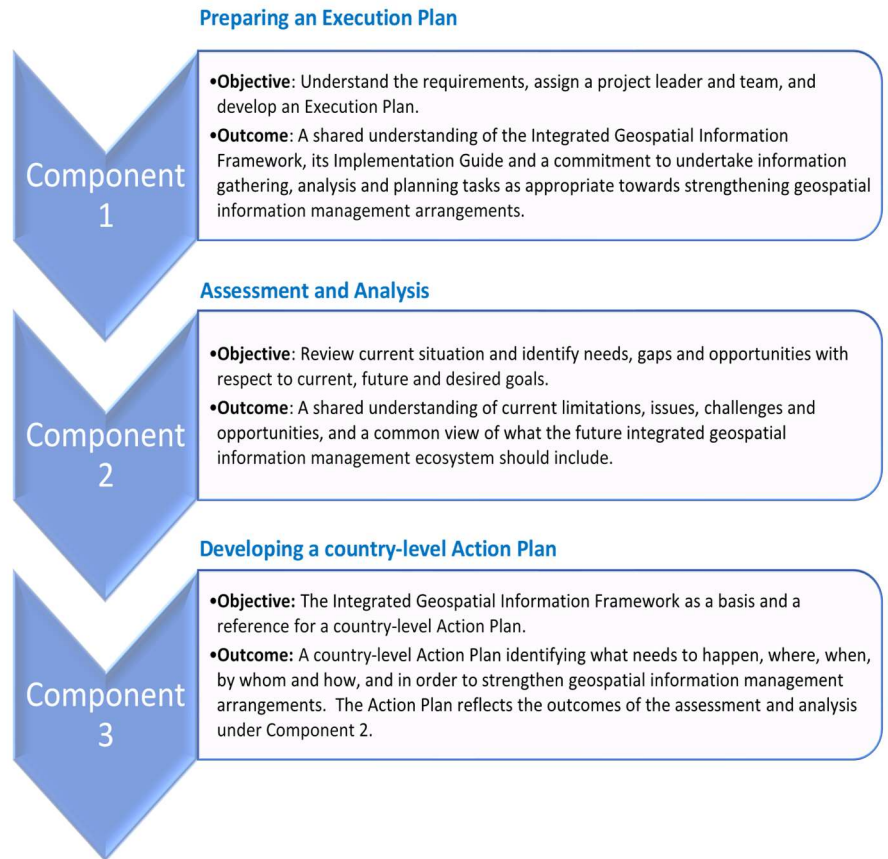
- 1) Project Initiation and Pre-needs Assessment
- 2) Project Execution Plan

**b) Component Two – Assessment and Analysis**

- 3) Current and Desired (or Future) Situation Assessment
- 4) Baseline Survey
- 5) Environmental Scanning and Analysis
- 6) Stakeholder Identification and Analysis
- 7) Stakeholder Engagement Workshop
- 8) Strategic Alignment (and Benefits)
- 9) Vision, Mission and Goals
- 10) Gap Analysis Matrix
- 11) Needs Assessment and Gap Analysis Report

**c) Component Three – Developing a country-level Action Plan**

- 12) Country-level Action Plan (Template)
- 13) Strategic Pathway Actions and Sub Tasks
- 14) Implementation Schedule
- 15) Budget Estimations
- 16) Ascertain Success Indicators



Participants had considered the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the significance of nationally integrated geospatial information management for evidence-based policies, decisions and actions for sustainable social, economic and environmental development. The overarching strategic framework is forward looking, build on national needs and circumstances, and sets the “why” integrated geospatial information management is critical element of national sustainable social, economic and environmental development. The Implementation Guide was better understood, provides the “what”, the specific guidance and options to be taken by countries when operationalizing the IGIF, captures strategic to operational needs with guiding principles, and not prescriptive. The Guide expands each of the nine strategic pathways to provide guidance for governments to strengthen geospatial information management nationally.

The approach to operationalize the IGIF through a country-level Action Plan was feasible, and through a series of assessment and analysis, determine “which” actions are a priority and “where” they will have most impact. Country-level Action Plan was also better understood, viewed as the ‘requirements document’ for national integrated geospatial information management, it references the specific guidance, options and actions provided in the Implementation Guide and addresses each of the nine strategic pathways taking into consideration national circumstances.

Participants acknowledged that they were better informed and improved their knowledge and understanding on the IGIF - the Overarching Strategic Framework (IGIF Part I), the Implementation Guide (IGIF Part II), and the Country-level Action Plan (IGIF Part III). There was improved awareness of the implementation guidance and recommended actions which they are able to tailor to their national circumstances to strengthen their national arrangements in geospatial information management, infrastructures and capacities. The conceptual approach to operationalize the IGIF towards nationally integrated geospatial information management was welcomed, considered feasible and workable. Participants welcomed the fact that country-level Action Plan is designed and developed by them with assessment and analysis including stakeholder engagement, and also implemented by them.

The issues and constrains in establishing national spatial data infrastructure within the UNECA continental initiative was discussed at length. Efforts at achieving an NSDI was viewed as focusing on creating an NSDI rather than developing geospatial capacity to address day-to-day activities and decisions of society, economy and environment. The IGIF and the approach as presented allow the few that have implemented NSDI to build upon its existing progress and investment, and for the many, a new paradigm and a mechanism to further strengthen nationally integrated geospatial information management and the desired transformational change. Importantly, the approach is one that recognize the importance of capacity and capability development from the onset, beginning with the process to develop and prepare a country-level Action Plan, a process that is participatory and inclusive.

The need to promote and share the guidance, resource materials and tools as they are developed and become available to operationalize the IGIF was acknowledged. Also, the importance of capacity development activities to introduce, instruct and sustain the process to prepare, develop and subsequently to implement a country-level Action Plan.

This International Workshop was an activity under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-fund<sup>3</sup> of the United Nations Trust Fund for Peace and Development<sup>4</sup>. It is the second of three programmed workshops on operationalizing the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework. In line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-fund Project, the IGIF focuses on improving and strengthening national geospatial information management, systems and infrastructure, capacities and capabilities towards achieving national development priorities and national implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, and to leave no one behind. The IGIF anchored by its nine strategic pathways, together with the Implementation Guide, provides Member States a mechanism for articulating and demonstrating national leadership in integrated geospatial information management, and the capacity to take positive steps.

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<sup>3</sup> 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-fund Project “Strengthening National Geospatial Information Management Capacities towards Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”

<sup>4</sup> Established in 2016, following the pledge by the Government of the People’s Republic of China to contribute to the United Nations over a ten-year period with the aim to work together to achieve the goals of the Charter of the United Nations through implementation of innovative, forward-looking and pro-active projects and activities financed by the Trust Fund.

