



UN-GGIM
UNITED NATIONS
COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON
GLOBAL GEOSPATIAL
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Expert Consultation and Meeting on Enhancing Geospatial Information Management Arrangements and Accelerating the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals together with the Sub-regional Workshop on United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF) for Central America and neighboring Latin American countries
‘Implementing geospatial strategies: challenges and opportunities’
Panama City, Panama, 1 - 5 December 2025

Concept Note and Provisional Agenda

Preamble

The world is not on track to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, prompting urgent calls for more integrated implementation strategies, equitable development, and improved financing mechanisms. In September 2024, UN Member States agreed to a forward-looking [Pact for the Future](#) that highlights science, technology and innovation as critical drivers of sustainable development. Rapid technological advancements – including digital and geospatial technologies – can accelerate progress on the 2030 Agenda by enabling novel solutions, broader inclusion, and data-driven decision-making. The accompanying [Global Digital Compact](#) underscores the need to close all digital divides and recognizes the importance of digital public infrastructure and data as key enablers to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)).

Geospatial information is a fundamental component of national digital public infrastructure, providing crucial data and location intelligence to inform policies and services. As such, integrated geospatial information management is a key enabler for economic growth, national security, sustainable environmental management, and social well-being. Over the past decade, the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management ([UN-GGIM](#)) has developed frameworks, strategies and guides notably the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework ([UN-IGIF](#)) to help countries modernize and integrate national geospatial information management for national priorities and global agendas.

Background

Reliable, timely and disaggregated data – including geospatial information and Earth observations – are essential for tracking SDG progress and informing policymakers, particularly in developing countries. Many countries in Central America, Latin America, and the Caribbean face persistent sustainable development challenges such as economic inequalities, climate change impacts, disaster vulnerability, and gaps in digital connectivity. Strengthening data ecosystems, resilience, and institutional capacity in the region has become a priority in order to “leave no one behind”. Geospatial information serves as a crucial enabler in this context, helping to bridge digital divides, support public health and economic growth, strengthen climate and disaster resilience, and promote environmental sustainability. The UN-IGIF provides a practical roadmap for countries to address these challenges by facilitating data-driven decision-making and integrated, whole-of-government approaches to sustainable development planning.

In adopting [resolution 2022/24](#), entitled “Enhancing global geospatial information management”, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) reiterated “the importance of strengthening and enhancing the effectiveness of the Committee of Experts, particularly for the achievement of its operations focused on the Sustainable Development Goals and the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, to strengthen and ensure its continued effectiveness and benefits to all Member States.”



At its fifteenth session, the Committee of Experts requested the regional committees to actively contribute to the Committee’s effectiveness—particularly for operations focused on the SDGs and the UN-IGIF—and to pursue collaborative partnerships that strengthen regional and interregional cooperation. In [decision 15/105](#), the Committee commended the High Level Group on UN-IGIF (HLG-IGIF) leadership, encouraged all Member States to implement the UN-IGIF as a foundational element of national geospatial information management, to share country-level action plans, welcomed communication materials and the sustainable funding guide, and recommended an annual global survey on IGIF implementation led by the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre (UN-GGKIC), in collaboration with the regional committees. In [decision 15/115](#), it welcomed reports by the UN-GGKIC, called for sustained capacity development and training aligned with the 2025–2030 Strategic Framework, and urged the Centre and the Secretariat to provide practical, results-oriented support to Member States for national IGIF implementation.

During the 2023-2025 period, the UN-GGIM Secretariat, the UN-GGKIC, the SDG Data Alliance, and other partners supported series of expert consultations and meetings on enhancing geospatial information management arrangements and accelerating the implementation of the SDGs. As a result, regional capacity development and knowledge transfer workshops on the UN-IGIF were convened in Cape Town, South Africa (August 2023); Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (October 2023); Bali, Indonesia (November 2023); [Aguascalientes](#), Mexico (January 2024); [St. Johns](#), Antigua and Barbuda (October 2024); [Suva](#), Fiji (November 2024); [Maputo](#), Mozambique (March 2025); and [Astana](#), Kazakhstan (September 2025). This series of sub-regional workshops around the world reflects a growing commitment for capacity development to operationalize the UN-IGIF at country level through knowledge exchange, sharing of good practices, and technical cooperation.

At the regional level, UN-GGIM: Americas and partners have underscored the UN-IGIF’s importance for sustainable development. In 2022, the Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH) adopted a resolution calling for alignment of regional geospatial activities with the IGIF, urging coordination with UN-GGIM Americas to address connectivity, climate and energy security, health security, and gender equity. In August 2025, the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) reported concrete progress on the UN-IGIF implementation in Latin and Central America and the Caribbean, highlighting how geospatial and statistical integration is informing public policy. This sub-regional workshop in Panama builds on these global and regional mandates and initiatives and aims to translate them into practical action across Central America and neighboring Latin American countries (spanish-speaking) of the region.

Objectives

The Expert Consultation and Meeting is being convened at a pivotal moment, five years away from the target of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. Under the overarching theme “Implementing geospatial strategies: challenges and opportunities,” the event aims to accelerate the adoption and implementation of the UN-IGIF, while strengthening national geospatial information management capabilities in Central America and neighboring countries (Spanish-speaking), with particular focus on addressing each country’s national priorities and development challenges. Aligned with the recommendations of the High-level Group on the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework ([HLG-IGIF](#)) and recent decisions, the workshop will bring together key implementation partners – including the UN-GGKIC, the SDG Data Alliance, the leadership of UN-GGIM: Americas, and the UN-GGIM Secretariat – to operationalize the UN-IGIF across the region. By convening stakeholders from government, international organizations, and the geospatial community, the meeting will facilitate coordination and coherence across global, regional, and national efforts to maximize the impact of the UN-IGIF and deliver on shared understanding, good practices, opportunities, and challenges in implementing the UN-IGIF for national benefits and global agendas.

This sub-regional consultation and workshop, supported by the UN-GGKIC, focuses on developing geospatial capacity and leadership; improving national geospatial information management arrangements; sharing

good practices; and supporting the development and implementation of country-level action plans that leverage geospatial information to accelerate SDG progress – especially in developing countries.

Implementing geospatial strategies: challenges and opportunities

The combined event (expert consultation and UN-IGIF workshop) is jointly organized by the Government of Panama’s Instituto Geográfico Nacional “Tommy Guardia” and the Autoridad Nacional de Administración de Tierras (ANATI), together with the UN-GGIC, and the UN-GGIM Secretariat (Statistics Division, UN DESA). The five-day programme (1–5 December 2025) will open with a concise high-level leadership session bringing together senior officials, national geospatial leaders, regional and international partners, and technical experts to take stock of progress, surface challenges and opportunities, and underscore how strengthened geospatial strategies and governance can bridge digital divides and accelerate SDG implementation.

The remainder of the week will proceed as an interactive UN-IGIF workshop focused on practical, country-driven implementation—peer exchange and cross-country collaboration to improve geospatial data ecosystems, governance structures, resource mobilization, and leadership. Through facilitated discussions and group exercises, participants will identify common priorities, gaps, and context-specific pathways, and outline or refine UN-IGIF Country Action Plans aligned with national priorities. Overall, the event seeks to foster regional cooperation by convening heads and experts of national geospatial agencies from Spanish-speaking Central American and neighboring countries, who—together with global and regional partners—will chart priorities and strategic pathways to strengthen integrated geospatial information management and accelerate progress on the SDGs in the region.

Provisional Agenda

The provisional agenda for this event will comprise a series of interconnected segments.

Date	Session / Item	Purpose & Notes
Mon 1 Dec	Registration; Welcome, Introductions and Opening	Opening remarks by the host and organizers; regional perspective; objectives, format and agenda; group photo & networking; short participant introductions and expectations
	Session I-1: Setting the Scene (Countries)	Country status reports on geospatial arrangements, challenges, opportunities, and needs
	Session I-2: Setting the Scene (Countries) – Continued	Continuation of country inputs as needed
	Session I-3: Setting the Scene (National Partners in Panama)	Inputs from national partners (public sector, academia, private sector, UN entities); Q&A; wrap-up of Day 1 and preview of Day 2
Tue 2 Dec	Session II-1: Setting the Scene (Global & Regional Partners)	Global/regional context and partner support for strengthening national geospatial information management and accelerating SDG implementation
	Session II-2: Introduction to the UN-IGIF & CAP Process	UN-IGIF overview and the country-led approach to preparing a Country Action Plan (CAP); Q&A
	Session II-3: UN-IGIF & CAP – Continued (Case Studies & Tools)	Country experiences and tools (self-assessment/diagnostics); open discussion; day wrap-up; optional cultural/networking activity
Wed 3 Dec	Session III-1: National Priorities	Identify national priorities and corresponding geospatial needs; breakout work
	Session III-2: National Priorities – Continued	Plenary presentation and discussion of group work
	Session III-3: Addressing Major Challenges & Barriers	Partner lightning inputs; discussion on regional resources to support countries

	Session III-4: Leadership, Engagement & Partnership	Open discussion on leadership and stakeholder engagement to enhance arrangements and capacities
	Session III-5: Institutional Capacity	Strategies to strengthen institutions and mitigate brain drain through digital/geospatial innovation
	Session III-6: Financial Resources	Approaches to mobilize and sustain financing for geospatial development; day wrap-up
Thu 4 Dec	Session IV-1: Data Availability, Quality & Accessibility	Open discussion on data gaps and how to address them
	Session IV-2: Addressing Common Barriers via Regional Cooperation	Identify how regional priorities/resources and global/regional IGIF surveys can help address shared challenges
	Session IV-3: Countries' Takeaways & Way Forward	Countries summarize key takeaways, next steps, and support needs; wrap-up of Day 4; optional host-led technical/site programme
Fri 5 Dec	Session V-1: Where Countries Are Today & Where They Need to Be	Facilitated discussion to identify remaining gaps and priorities; country summaries
	Session V-2: Country-led Approach to Implement the UN-IGIF	Resources and support to embark on or advance CAPs aligned with the nine IGIF pathways
	Session V-3: Global & Regional Way Forward; Summary & Close	Define follow-up at regional/global levels; early actions and quick wins; closing remarks

Organizers

This event, an expert consultation and meeting and sub-regional workshop, is organized jointly by the Instituto Geográfico Nacional “Tommy Guardia” (Autoridad Nacional de Administración de Tierras, ANATI), the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre (UN-GGKIC), and the Secretariat of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) in the Statistics Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The event is also organized in close cooperation with the ECLAC (the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean) and the SDG Data Alliance.

Language

This expert consultation and meeting and sub-regional workshop will be conducted in English, with simultaneous interpretation into Spanish.

Participation

This event is an in-person closed event, and participation is by invitation only. Participants are expected to be designated geospatial information management representatives, lead or focal persons, and subject matter experts from Central America and neighboring Latin American countries (Spanish-speaking). Participants are responsible for obtaining the necessary transit and entry visas, including necessary travel and health insurance as applicable.

Meeting Venue

The meetings will be held at the Ciudad de Las Artes, Panama City, Panama.



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Dates

The dates for this event are 1 – 5 December 2025.

Logistical Information

Local logistical information and arrangements will be provided separately via e-mail, when information is made available by the local organizers.

Health and Safety

Participants are responsible for making their own inoculations and medical/health insurance arrangements, including life, health, medical evacuations and treatments, and other forms deemed appropriate. The organizers and the United Nations do not take responsibility for the ill health of any participants during their travel to and stay in Panama City, Panama. For a safe meeting environment, any prevailing local government measures related to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) at the time of the meeting shall apply.

Points of Contact

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