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**Committee of Experts on  
Global Geospatial Information Management  
Thirteenth Session**  
New York, 2–4 August 2023  
Item 7 of the provisional agenda \*  
**Integrated Geospatial Information Framework**

## **Integrated Geospatial Information Framework**

### **Note by the Secretariat**

#### **Summary**

The present paper contains the report of the High-level Group of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (HLG-IGIF) for consideration by the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM).

At its twelfth session, held from 3 to 5 August 2022, the Committee of Experts adopted [decision 12/105](#), in which it congratulated the HLG-IGIF for its continued efforts to advance the role and relevance of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (IGIF) through its Plan of Work, including establishing work groups and hosting side events, webinars, and in-person meetings to improve communication and enhance capacity development. The Committee emphasized the ongoing priority and urgency of adequately resourcing, supporting, and ensuring the refinement, finalization, translation, digital publication, and dissemination of the Framework suite of documents, including the Overarching Strategy, the Implementation Guide, and resource materials related to Country-level Action Plans, so that the documents are accessible, understandable, and translated.

The Committee of Experts noted the ambitious Plan of Work of the HLG-IGIF, anchored by its three priority goals and associated tasks, encouraged expanded and equitable participation and engagement in the work of the Group, encouraged the HLG-IGIF to find solutions to the resource issues and stronger governance and resourcing of the Group and encouraged Member States to support the work of the HLG-IGIF facilitating the mobilization of necessary resources and providing guidance on expanded participation and engagement in the HLG-IGIF work groups. The Committee commended the ongoing efforts in the promotion and communication of the IGIF, acknowledged that promoting positive outcomes and impacts at the country level further encourages the implementation of the IGIF, and urged Member States and relevant stakeholders to develop and share their IGIF case studies to build a library of shared knowledge, experiences and good practices.

The Committee of Experts reiterated the importance of implementing the IGIF as a forward-looking framework at the country level, across the programme of work of the Committee, within priority areas in the workplans of the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management regional committees, with interlinkages with other regional-to-global frameworks and in response to increasingly challenging national, regional and global demands. The Committee welcomed the establishment and success of the SDG Data Alliance initiative as a concrete mechanism to mobilize resources to assist developing countries in accelerating achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), made possible by advancing and implementing individual Country-level Action Plans and data hubs for countries throughout Africa, Asia and the Pacific and Latin America, and requested the SDG Data Alliance to report back to the Committee on its progress.

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\* E/C.20/2023/1

In this present report, the HLG-IGIF provides information on its progress and activities, including in particular its working methods and meetings, as measured against its three priority goals: improving communication, strengthening capacity development and mobilizing sustainable funding. The Group convened virtual and in person meetings during the intersessional period to advance the achievement of the three priority goals and agreed tasks. At the beginning of 2023, the Group conducted an exercise to refresh its membership in accordance with its terms of reference and invited United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management regional committees to review and consider their contribution, participation and representation. The Group regularly reviews its plan of work to advance its three priority goals and, at its meetings, discussed how it would incorporate the remaining three goals into the plan of work for 2024–2025. The Group leadership team (consisting of the co-Chairs, work group co-leads and the Secretariat) meets monthly to review progress on the plan of work, resolve questions and concerns and coordinate efforts across the three work groups.

In the report, the HLG-IGIF highlights progress in each of its three work groups, including efforts to expand work group representation from Member States and from regional committees, functional groups, and thematic networks of the Committee of Experts. The Group continues to promote strong collaboration, encourage synergistic efforts and avoid duplication. In addition, the report serves to inform the Committee of continuing efforts to extend the IGIF into interrelated domains, principally land administration and management, marine geospatial information and the integration of statistical and geospatial information. The Group connected with and promoted the work of the Committee's functional groups as it related to the Framework, the Framework for Effective Land Administration and the Operational Framework for Integrated Marine Geospatial Information Management.

The report also provides information on the HLG-IGIF's communications efforts, including the adoption of a tagline, the finalization of generic presentation materials and the use of social media and newsletters to communicate and promote the Group's activities and progress. In addition, the report includes a discussion of initial efforts to create communication materials, including developing an IGIF brochure for decision-makers and a case study template and documenting case studies that promote the positive impacts of the IGIF to share examples and positive outcomes. Moreover, the Group highlights communications engagements, including the convening of forums and sessions at global events to promote the Framework and share good practices and successful strategies in order to encourage implementation at the country level.

In the report, the HLG-IGIF provides information on progress towards refining, finalizing and translating the suite of IGIF documents, including the Overarching Strategy and documents comprising the Implementation Guide. In addition, progress on translation into languages other than English to ensure that the suite of documents are understandable and utilized by a broader audience will be discussed. The report includes information on the Group's efforts to mobilize sustainable funding for the implementation of the IGIF at the country level, including progress on the development of a sustainable funding guide to provide Member States with needed information on potential funding sources and requirements, value propositions, and impacts and benefits of investing in the Framework to enhance nationally integrated geospatial information management. The report also includes an update from the SDG Data Alliance on its progress and activities, including those aimed at mobilizing resources and providing remote technical assistance to developing countries for advancing the IGIF through the development of Country-level Action Plans and implementing data hubs to help accelerate the achievement of the SDGs.

The HLG-IGIF welcomed and noted Economic and Social Council resolution [2022/24](#) and, in particular, the reiteration of the importance of strengthening and enhancing the effectiveness of the Committee of Experts, particularly for the achievement of its operations focused on the SDGs and the IGIF to strengthen and ensure its continued effectiveness and benefits to all Member States. The Committee will be invited to provide further guidance on the way forward for Member States to implement the IGIF as an overarching paradigm and a forward-looking Framework at the country level and across the work areas of the Committee and its regional committees, functional groups and thematic networks, as well as guidance on the Framework's interlinkages with other regional-to-global frameworks and its continued adoption in response to increasingly challenging national, regional and global demands.

## I. Introduction

1. At its eleventh session, held virtually on 23, 24 and 27 August 2021, the Committee of Experts endorsed the HLG-IGIF Strategic Plan, including its six defined goals and focus actions, and supported the three priority goals (Improve Communication, Strengthen Capacity Development, and Mobilize Sustainable Funding) identified for immediate attention as a means for developing the HLG-IGIF initial Plan of Work to guide its activities for the next two years.

2. The HLG-IGIF Strategic Plan was developed based on the mandates and key functions vested to the HLG-IGIF by the Committee of Experts, as outlined in the HLG-IGIF's Terms of Reference. A key objective was to quickly leverage the collective executive-level expertise, knowledge, experience, and commitment of the members of the HLG-IGIF, and to ensure that appropriate plans are formulated for assisting all Member States, independent of their maturity in geospatial information management.

3. The six strategic goals pertaining to the implementation and sustainability of the IGIF at the country level are:

**Goal 1:** Improve Communication

**Goal 2:** Promote Data Governance, Availability, and Accessibility

**Goal 3:** Strengthen Capacity Development

**Goal 4:** Mobilize Sustainable Funding

**Goal 5:** Encourage Collaboration, Exchange and Sharing

**Goal 6:** Oversee Improvement and Review

4. The HLG-IGIF held its first in-person Plenary Meeting at United Nations Headquarters from 26–28 April 2022. The meeting was held jointly with the UN-GGIM Bureau and Friends of the Co-Chairs of UN-GGIM and had 24 Member States in attendance. The meeting was successful in raising awareness of the IGIF as an overarching paradigm and umbrella Framework for the programme of work of UN-GGIM, underpinning the value proposition of UN-GGIM to all Member States, and helping to confirm the urgency and importance for the strengthening of institutional arrangements on global geospatial information management. It was underscored that sustainable resources must be made available to implement the IGIF, strengthen national geospatial information management, and develop geospatial capacity and capabilities at the country-level to achieve the SDGs.

5. During the meeting, the initial HLG-IGIF Plan of Work, which was developed based upon the three priority goals, was agreed upon and work groups were formed for each of the priority goals. Co-Leads were identified for each of the three work groups, with the United Kingdom and Indonesia leading Goal 1: Improve Communication; Sweden and Argentina leading Goal 3: Strengthen Capacity Development; and South Africa and Jamaica leading Goal 4: Mobilize Sustainable Funding. The co-Leads organized breakout sessions where they reviewed the tasks on the Plan of Work for their goal and started the process of assigning initial tasks to work group members.

6. At its twelfth session, held from 3 to 5 August 2022, the Committee of Experts welcomed the report of the HLG-IGIF ([E/C.20/2022/9/Add.1](#)) and congratulated the Group for its continued efforts to advance the role and relevance of the IGIF through its Plan of Work, including establishing work groups and hosting side events, webinars, and in-person meetings to improve communication and enhance capacity development. As detailed in the expanded Summary (above) of this present report, in making [decision 12/105](#), the Committee of Experts noted several suggestions for the HLG-IGIF to consider as it moves forward with its Plan of Work.

7. In this present report, information is provided on the progress and activities of the HLG-IGIF, including its working methods, its work groups, the meetings it has held virtually and in person, and how the Group incorporated the suggestions of the Committee of Experts into its Plan of Work. The report further serves to inform the Committee of Experts of the efforts and progress made on the Plan of Work, including efforts to refine, finalize, and translate the Implementation Guide, as well as the resource materials to aid in the development of Country-level Action Plans to strengthen national geospatial information arrangements in Member States, particularly in developing countries.

8. The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the activities of the HLG-IGIF and way forward on the further refinement and development of the IGIF suite of documents in three interconnected parts (part one, comprising the Overarching Strategy; part two, comprising the Implementation Guide; and part three, comprising the Country-level Action Plan), on the resource materials to support the recommended implementation approach and on the strategic leadership and coordination of and oversight by the Group to ensure the sustained success of the Framework. Points for discussion and decision are provided in paragraph 58.

## **II. Activities of the HLG-IGIF**

9. At its Seventh Meeting, held on 1 August 2022 on the margins of the twelfth session of the Committee of Experts, the HLG-IGIF work groups had the opportunity to convene their first in-person meeting since the work groups were established in April 2022. The work groups shared work plans, progress, challenges, and solicited strengthened and inclusive engagement in the work groups from Member States and other regional, functional, and thematic groups to garner additional resources for the effective implementation of the HLG-IGIF Plan of Work. The meeting included regional committee Chairs and Friends of the UN-GGIM co-Chairs in an effort to solicit additional support for the work groups. During the meeting, the HLG-IGIF engaged with the Working Group on Marine Geospatial Information to hear progress on the Operational Framework for Integrated Marine Geospatial Information Management (UN-IGIF-Hydro).

10. On the margins of the twelfth session, the HLG-IGIF held a meeting and two forums to engage with key stakeholders, to promote the widespread benefits of the IGIF globally, and to share best practices and lessons learned from its implementation. During these forums, the HLG-IGIF engaged with regional committee Chairs, funding experts, and Member States implementing the IGIF. An overview of these sessions and the results are detailed in this report.

11. The HLG-IGIF convenes regular monthly virtual leadership team meetings with the co-Chairs, Secretariat, work group co-Leads, and SDG Data Alliance advisor. The monthly meetings are utilized to report progress to the co-Chairs and to facilitate stronger coordination and reduced duplication of activities across the work groups. These meetings have been very effective at sharing important information each month and are key to tracking progress against the Plan of Work.

12. Work groups generally meet once per month to facilitate progress against the tasks and activities outlined on the Plan of Work. During these meetings, the work group co-Leads identify task owners, receive progress updates, and work through questions or concerns. Progress is then reported at the monthly leadership team meetings to keep the leadership team updated on progress and any concerns that arise during the work group meetings. Per the guidance provided by the Committee of Experts at its twelfth session, the work group co-Leads have made significant efforts to build and strengthen the work groups to include greater representation from across the regional, functional, and thematic groups of UN-GGIM. These efforts are outlined further in this report.

13. At its Eighth Meeting, held virtually on 11 May 2023, six new Member States were welcomed to the HLG-IGIF; following a membership review process that was undertaken with the aim to strengthen participation and contributions from Member States. The new Member States include India, Malaysia, Mozambique, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation and Rwanda. The HLG-IGIF thanked the outgoing Member States (Ethiopia, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Nepal and South Africa) who were encouraged to stay involved with the HLG-IGIF work groups.

14. The membership of the HLG-IGIF expressed their gratitude to the outgoing co-Chair of Ethiopia (Ethiopian Geospatial Information Institute) for his strong leadership and guidance during the fundamental and formative establishment phase of the HLG-IGIF. The HLG-IGIF welcomed Cameroon (National Institute of Cartography) who joins the United States of America (Census Bureau) as co-Chair of the HLG-IGIF to continue the strong level of executive leadership going forward. The HLG-IGIF also thanked Indonesia (Geospatial Information Agency) for its co-leadership of the Communication work group and agreed to work to identify a new co-Lead for the work group at this thirteenth session.

15. During its Eighth Meeting, the HLG-IGIF began preparations for this thirteenth session of the Committee of Experts, including the collection of inputs for this present report, and planning for an in-person HLG-IGIF meeting and IGIF Forum. The co-Leads made recommendations to streamline the Plan of Work and reduce duplication across the three work groups and shared the updated Plan of Work for 2022-2023, based around the three priority goals. The HLG-IGIF also began preliminary discussions on how the Group would incorporate the remaining three goals (Goals 2, 5 and 6) into the Plan of Work for 2024-2025. During the meeting, the co-Leads also reviewed progress against the Plan of Work. Current progress against the three goals in the Plan of Work is discussed below.

### **III. Improve Communication**

#### **IGIF Communications Work group, Strategy, and Plan**

16. As identified in the HLG-IGIF Strategic Plan, improving communication, and specifically, developing and implementing a communication strategy and plan to create awareness on the importance and relevance of the IGIF for policy and decision-makers, is a key strategic goal and a priority. The Communications work group is led by the United Kingdom, but the HLG-IGIF is actively seeking a new co-Lead to assist the United Kingdom with leadership of the work group. The Communications work group continues to seek additional expertise, in particular skilled communications and graphics expertise, to add to the work group. Since the successful engagements on the margins of the twelfth session of the Committee of Experts, the work group has now grown to include 10 Member States. In this regard, the Committee of Experts is invited to provide thoughts on expanded participation from Member States or other entities with strong communications resources. At its sixth virtual meeting in June 2022, the Communications work group finalized the Communication Strategy and Plan. The work group has commenced to advance the Communications Plan through the implementation of several workstreams and associated activities as highlighted below.

#### **Initiate IGIF Forums and Communication Engagements**

17. During its seventh meeting held on the margins of the twelfth session of the Committee of Experts, the Communications work group facilitated an important panel discussion with the regional committee Chairs to foster strong communication and collaborative efforts on the IGIF throughout the regions. The regional committee Chairs shared plans for IGIF implementation in the regions, and the HLG-IGIF shared current progress and activities with the regional committee Chairs. The engagement proved very successful, establishing strong commitment on both sides to work cooperatively on IGIF implementation. During the discussion, three areas were identified where the HLG-IGIF could help the regions:

- Develop a case study library to show specific examples and outcomes of IGIF implementation in different countries;
- Compile and post example IGIF materials such as Country-level Action Plans and Socio-Economic Impact Assessments completed by other countries; and
- Finalize, translate, and post the IGIF Overarching Strategy, Implementation Guide, Appendices, Country-level Action Plan and supporting resource materials, so they are easily accessible and usable by all Member States.

Progress on each of the above items is included in this report.

18. An area identified where the regional committee Chairs could assist the HLG-IGIF to advance implementation of the IGIF regionally, was to develop or strengthen regional IGIF work groups. Since hosting the panel discussion, four of the regional committees (UN-GGIM: Americas, UN-GGIM: Arab States, UN-GGIM: Asia Pacific, and UN-GGIM: Europe) have now formed regional IGIF work groups that are actively engaged in advancing the IGIF regionally. In order to ensure coordination and synergies between the three HLG-IGIF work groups and the regional IGIF work groups, each of the three HLG-IGIF work groups now includes representation from the regional committees.

19. The HLG-IGIF and its work groups have utilized global and regional forums, workshops, and side events to share progress of the HLG-IGIF, communicate the importance of the IGIF, share best practices and lessons learned. These engagements have included the World Geospatial Information Congress, Geospatial World Forum, International Federation of Surveyors, and regional committee meetings, sessions, and virtual and in person workshops.

20. At this thirteenth session, the Communications work group will again invite the regional committee Chairs to engage with the HLG-IGIF during Group's Second Plenary Meeting, to be convened on Monday, 31 July 2023, to share progress of the HLG-IGIF, to hear about IGIF implementation activities in the regions, and to continue discussions on collaborative efforts to implement the IGIF. The regional committee Chairs will also be encouraged to invite their regional IGIF work group leads to attend the meeting and share experiences and updates with the HLG-IGIF. This engagement will be utilized to promote collaborative efforts, to encourage cross-pollination of work groups, and to better understand how the HLG-IGIF and the regional committees can best work together to leverage and advance the IGIF regionally.

21. The thematic networks of UN-GGIM will also be invited to participate in the HLG-IGIF's Second Plenary Meeting to learn about progress of the HLG-IGIF, to share what the thematic networks are doing to support implementation of the IGIF, and to discuss potential areas for collaboration. This engagement will be utilized to promote synergy and coordination efforts, to encourage broader engagement on the HLG-IGIF work groups, and to better understand how the HLG-IGIF and thematic networks can best work together to advance the IGIF.

22. There is a significant amount of work being done by the regional committees to advance the IGIF, and the HLG-IGIF Communications work group aims to communicate across the regions to share ideas and best practice examples. The work group has compiled an IGIF events calendar that will enable promotion of the excellent work undertaken by the regional committees and sharing of best practices and materials wherever possible. Global and regional efforts will be promoted, and shared utilizing multiple communication channels discussed below.

#### **Identify inclusive communication channels**

23. The Communications work group aims to provide the IGIF messaging, and information needed to support Members States in a comprehensive way through a range of communication channels. To support a consistent approach across all of the various channels and materials, the Communications group has worked to develop and establish an IGIF brand

and visual identity that can be adopted across the various HLG-IGIF materials to provide a consistent style and approach. The branding package includes an IGIF logo, tagline, elevator pitch, and PowerPoint Template.

24. This visual identity has been utilized across multiple communication channels. One example includes the @UN\_IGIF Twitter account, through which the Communications work group has been promoting the various engagement activities that have been undertaken since the Twelfth Session, sharing news on new or updated materials, and promoting regional activities and best practices. The @UN\_IGIF Twitter account was recently refreshed to include the new logo and visual identity, promoting a consistent and recognizable IGIF brand.

25. A new communication channel developed to share information and updates on the IGIF is a Quarterly IGIF Newsletter. The Newsletter highlights regional and global events and leadership, shares best practices, and provides information on new or updated IGIF resources and materials. The Newsletter is globally distributed and posted on the HLG-IGIF page of the UN-GGIM website.

26. The Communications work group is working closely with the Secretariat to identify how best to utilize the UN-GGIM website and HLG-IGIF page of the website to communicate and effectively share documents and materials being produced by the work groups, with a goal of promoting the materials far and wide to the broadest possible audience. The goal is to have translated documents, collateral material, guides, online resources, and training all hosted together in one central location. Having this central location will aid in distribution and ease of access for Member States. The Communications work group has begun collecting IGIF Country-level Action Plans that will be shared on the website as examples that other Member States can utilize as a reference when developing their own Country-level Action Plans.

#### **Creating awareness on the importance and relevance of the IGIF**

27. The HLG-IGIF identified a need to engage non-technical stakeholders, including finance ministers and key decision makers, on the positive outcomes and impacts of implementing IGIF at the country level. Consequently, the Communications work group commenced creation of collateral materials to support Member States in these conversations with decision makers to help garner support for implementation of the IGIF. The work group has developed a case study template that highlights a specific use case, including the challenges faced by the Member State, the IGIF solution and pathways implemented, and the benefits realized. The first case study was developed working with colleagues from Indonesia, highlighting how the IGIF has enabled the more effective management of Palm Oil Production. Further case studies are under development with Mongolia and the Ukraine. The work group is currently seeking additional volunteer Member States willing to share their IGIF implementation experiences and the benefits that have been realized, so that others can benefit from their experiences.

28. The Communications work group has been developing a brochure aimed toward key decision makers and finance ministers that may not be familiar with geospatial data and the value of the IGIF. The document aims to introduce the core concept of geospatial data and how IGIF offers a framework on which a Member State can develop and build their national geospatial capabilities. The brochure will highlight the IGIF resources materials that are available, promote the broad benefits of the IGIF across all sectors, and lay out the key first steps on how Member States can start their IGIF journey. The IGIF case studies and brochure will be published in the coming weeks.

## IV. Strengthen Capacity Development

### Capacity Development Work Group

29. The Capacity Development work group is co-led by Argentina and Sweden, with notable administrative support provided by Argentina. The co-Leads have worked to build broad and inclusive participation in the work group, with 20 Member States serving on the work group from across 4 of the 5 regions, as well as representation from the UN-GGIM regional committees, a regional commission (UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean), and the UN-GGIM: Americas Academic Network. The work group is actively seeking representation from the UN-GGIM: Africa region.

### Refinement and Finalization of the Implementation Guide and Resource Materials

30. In making [decision 12/105](#) at its twelfth session, the Committee of Experts also emphasized the ongoing priority and urgency of adequately resourcing, supporting, and ensuring the refinement, finalization, translation, digital publication, and dissemination of the IGIF suite of documents, including the Overarching Strategy, the Implementation Guide, and resource materials related to Country-level Action Plans, ensuring the documents are accessible, understandable, and translated. As such, the Secretariat and the Capacity Development work group continue to work to refine, finalize, translate, and digitally publish the IGIF suite of documents.

31. The [Overarching Strategy](#) document has been updated to reflect changes made to the Implementation Guide and was recently posted on the IGIF website. The [Solving the Puzzle](#) chapter of the Implementation Guide was also updated to incorporate feedback from the global consultation process and was also recently posted on the IGIF website. As of this thirteenth session, seven out of ten chapters of the Implementation Guide are currently updated with feedback from the global consultation process and are now posted online. Finalizing the remaining three chapters of the Implementation Guide, and the resources to do so, remains a high priority for the Secretariat and the work group.

32. Recently, the Secretariat published the [UN Recommended Approach to Design and Develop a Country-level Action Plan](#) resource materials. The approach and related tasks and resource materials are designed to consider national circumstances, recognizing that one size does not fit all. The approach is intended to be inclusive and participatory, and one where existing institutional capacity and capabilities are recognized, and consideration is given to the development of new capacity and capabilities needed to implement the IGIF and address critical national priorities. The recommended approach has resource materials to support each of the tasks to be undertaken. To date, the Secretariat has published resource materials to support 11 of 16 tasks outlined in the approach. Finalizing and publishing the resource materials that support the last 5 tasks, and the resourcing to do so, remains a high priority for the Secretariat and the work group.

33. In order to make the IGIF suite of documents more broadly accessible to Member States, the HLG-IGIF Capacity Development work group established a Translation Team to translate the IGIF documents into other languages. These documents include the Overarching Strategy, all the Implementation Guide documents and appendices, and the Country-level Action Plan and related resource materials. The Translation Team, coordinated by the UN-GGIM: Americas Academic Network, has developed a repeatable process for the translation of the IGIF documents and related resources that will ensure a quality translation. The translation process is based on volunteer resources that can be provided by any Member State.

34. The Translation Team began implementing the process in March of 2023 and are currently working to translate the IGIF documents into Arabic, French, Portuguese, and Spanish. The translation of these documents is being led by the following Member States: Arabic translations by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Kingdom of Morocco, and United Arab Emirates; French translations by Belgium and Canada; Portuguese translations by Brazil and

Mozambique; and Spanish translations by Mexico and Argentina. The Translation Team has prioritized the translation of the Implementation Guide documents and anticipates that by this thirteenth session of the Committee of Experts, Strategic Pathway 1 will be translated into Arabic, French, and Portuguese; Strategic Pathway 3 into Portuguese; Strategic Pathway 6 into Arabic; and Strategic Pathways 7 and 9 into French.

35. The translation process has been an enriching experience for the Member States involved in leading the translation efforts. These Member States are not only providing a service to other Member States by delivering translated documents, but they are also greatly increasing their own knowledge and understanding of the IGIF, facilitating learning and exchange both within each Member State and amongst the Member States involved in the translation process. Therefore, the HLG-IGIF Capacity Development work group invites and welcomes more Member States to join the team and contribute to the translation of the IGIF documents.

### **Training for the IGIF**

36. The IGIF lays out a robust and detailed framework to build and strengthen national geospatial information management capabilities in Member States. Mindful of this, the Capacity Development work group will consider the necessary training needed to support the IGIF. The work group will make recommendations for a comprehensive training program for the IGIF and is currently working to identify Member States to lead the training development efforts and identify the necessary resources to support this effort. The goal is to have a comprehensive training program for the IGIF that includes all resources and materials related to the IGIF and ensures a cohesive and inclusive approach that is accessible to all Member States.

### **Global and Regional Forums, Workshops and Side Events**

37. Given the continued difficulty of global travel for in-person capacity development and training, the Secretariat and the HLG-IGIF have utilized forums, virtual workshops, and side-events to share best practices and provide training and capacity development opportunities for Member States, including the sharing of good practices and successful strategies for implementation of the IGIF at the country level. These activities are discussed below.

38. On the margins of the twelfth session of the Committee of Experts, the HLG-IGIF held an IGIF Forum to share knowledge and build capacity in Member States. During the Forum, the HLG-IGIF hosted Member States implementing the IGIF in a panel discussion to share good practices and successful strategies for implementing IGIF at the country level. This engagement was followed at the Second World Geospatial Information Congress held in Hyderabad, India, 10–14 October 2022. The main theme of the Congress was ‘Geo-enabling the Global Village: No one should be left behind’, and the nine strategic pathways of the IGIF were prominently featured as a means to make that theme a reality. The HLG-IGIF co-Chairs and work group co-Leads shared IGIF presentations and participated in, or facilitated, panel discussions with Member States implementing IGIF to help others increase their knowledge and build geospatial capacities and capabilities within their countries. The HLG-IGIF reinforced how national geospatial and mapping agencies can utilize the nine strategic pathways of IGIF to make changes in their institutions to ensure the widest and most complete use of geospatial information in the advancement of global and national development agendas.

39. In addition, all UN-GGIM regional committees are conducting capacity development workshops and events to promote widespread implementation of the IGIF, including during their annual plenary meetings.

- At its Eighth Plenary Meeting in October 2022, UN-GGIM: Africa conducted sessions on the IGIF, the SDG Data Alliance, and also on business models for sustainable financing for geospatial information and the IGIF, including an e-learning

course taken in advance, and an in-person panel discussion to help Member States better understand options for sustainable funding for the IGIF.

- UN-GGIM: Americas, in collaboration with the Secretariat and the HLG-IGIF, conducted an IGIF Virtual Webinar in July 2022, entitled ‘Why implement the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (IGIF) in my country?’ UN-GGIM: Americas also supported a virtual and in-person Caribbean workshop on the Suggested Approach to Implementing the IGIF and the Development of Country-level Action Plans. The in-person workshop was hosted in Castries, Saint Lucia, from 19-21 April 2023 and was organized by the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN-ECLAC), the Caribbean Geospatial Development Initiative (CARIGEO) with the support of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), and the University of the West Indies.
- During its Tenth Plenary Meeting in February 2023, UN-GGIM: Arab States held a workshop on ‘Enhancing National Geospatial Information Management’, in which the IGIF was featured. The workshop fostered and facilitated peer sharing, interaction, and learning leveraging the IGIF. The UN-GGIM: Arab States regional IGIF work group is conducting an orderly study and sharing of the IGIF Strategic Pathways, focused on the 6 strategic pathways they have not already covered, and is also reviewing the newly translated Implementation Guide chapters in support of the HLG-IGIF Capacity Development work group.
- UN-GGIM: Asia Pacific has also formed a regional IGIF work group, and plans are underway for several training and capacity development events to share ideas, experiences, and best practices, including a regional IGIF seminar/workshop in conjunction with their Twelfth Plenary Meeting in November 2023 in Bali, Indonesia.
- During its Ninth Plenary Meeting in June 2022, UN-GGIM: Europe established an IGIF work group with a specific mandate to contribute to the global tasks of the HLG-IGIF and make sure regional concerns and issues are addressed. The work group is collaborating with the HLG-IGIF Capacity Development work group to assist with the development and completion of training and capacity development materials associated with the IGIF. The regional IGIF work group is also launching a webinar series to raise awareness of the IGIF within European Member States, to share experiences and lessons learned in the development of Country-level Action Plans.

## V. Mobilize Sustainable Funding

### Sustainable Funding Work Group

40. The HLG-IGIF Sustainable Funding work group is co-led by South Africa and Jamaica, with administrative support provided by Cameroon. The co-Leads have worked to build broad and inclusive participation in the work group, which now includes eight Member States, as well as representation from the Academic Network, Private Sector Network, and two regional committees of UN-GGIM. The co-Leads seek to continue building the work group with individuals and Member States with expertise in this area.

### Sustainable Funding Successes

41. At its eleventh session, the Committee of Experts noted the need for clear mechanisms to provide adequate resources to support the implementation of the IGIF in developing countries, to develop national Country-level Action Plans that could be effectively operationalized and, with a view to having a significant impact for geospatially enabled services, embarking on a path towards digital transformation and to bridge the geospatial digital divide. The work group has achieved some success with World Bank support, some bi-lateral funding, and most recently the SDG Data Alliance – a partnership between the United Nations and philanthropic and business partners. The work group and Secretariat will

continue to build on these successes to mobilize sustainable funding to help developing countries to effectively operationalize the IGIF.

### **Sustainable Funding Guide and Support Resources**

42. The Sustainable Funding work group engaged with several geospatial agencies and funding experts to learn from their efforts to establish sustainable funding for IGIF at the country level. The work group is developing a Sustainable Funding Guide, to provide information to Member States on potential funding sources and their requirements, as well as information to help Member States identify investment and budget needs, and associated cost/benefit analysis. This effort is being led by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Belgium, Jamaica, and representatives from the Academic and Private Sector Networks. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has commenced a document review of related materials on this subject and is leading a focused consultation process to engage finance ministers and treasury representatives from less developed countries, developing countries, and developed countries, as well as representatives from a banking institution and donor organization. Results of these consultations will inform the Sustainable Funding Guide.

43. Additionally, an online Geospatial Value Study Inventory (GeoVSI) tool has been developed to respond to Member State requests for relevant examples of cost justifications performed by other Member States, and also industry reports that help quantify the value of geospatial information to help justify investment in the IGIF, aid in development of Country-level Action Plans, and the necessary cost/benefit and budget analysis. The tool is searchable in several ways, including geographic area and type of report. The GeoVSI will be referenced in the Sustainable Funding Guide as a tool to help Member States through some of the necessary steps to develop a budget and justify investment in the IGIF.

## **VI. SDG Data Alliance**

44. In making [decision 12/105](#) at its twelfth session, the Committee of Experts welcomed the establishment and success of the SDG Data Alliance initiative as a concrete mechanism to mobilize resources to assist developing countries in accelerating achievement of the SDGs, made possible by advancing and implementing individual Country-level Action Plans and data hubs for countries throughout Africa, Asia and the Pacific and Latin America, and requested the SDG Data Alliance to report back to the Committee on its progress.

45. UN Statistics Division, through its Global Geospatial Information Management Section as Secretariat for the Committee of Experts, in partnership with the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Esri, Chia Network, and the PVBLIC Foundation, launched the SDG Data Alliance at the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in July 2021. An international multi-stakeholder partnership, the Data Alliance utilizes the IGIF guidance and tools to develop and implement IGIF Country-level Action Plans and is supported by Esri enabling technologies to stand up data hubs that will assist developing countries to measure, monitor, and report their progress toward achievement of the SDGs, and in particular progress against Goal 10 - Reducing Inequality, to empower Member States to ensure inclusiveness and equality.

46. The vision of the SDG Data Alliance is that governments, non-governmental organizations, and partners from the national to the local level are able to achieve the SDGs with people, technology, and processes, creating a just, healthy, and prosperous world where no one is left behind and everyone can thrive. The mission is to build the capacity of governments and other key stakeholders to achieve the SDGs through the creation of effective systems and frameworks for monitoring progress on sustainable development using leading geospatial technology.

47. A separate document on the SDG Data Alliance has been provided as a background document to this present report. It provides a comprehensive overview of the Alliance's journey, achievements, and progress during the intersessional period and offers a view and

vision for the future of the SDG Data Alliance. Additional information, including the SDG Data Alliance's recently published Strategy 2023-2028, can be found on the [SDG Data Alliance website](#).

48. The SDG Data Alliance partners, and guided by the UN-GGIM Secretariat, are working with several African countries to develop IGIF Country-level Action Plans and SDG data hubs which are country owned and country led. Following this thirteenth session of the Committee of Experts, the SDG Data Alliance partners, supported by the Government of South Africa, the International Cartographic Association, and the UN-GGIM: Africa regional committee, will deepen the ongoing engagement with African countries during the convening of the Ninth Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM Africa and the 31st International Cartographic Conference (ICC 2023), both being convened from 13-18 August 2023 in Cape Town, South Africa. Two SDG Data Alliance Workshops 'Accelerating the achievement of the SDGs' will be convened on 17 and 18 August as key capacity development and knowledge transfer elements of the UN-GGIM: Africa and ICC 2023 international meetings. The Workshops will be tailored towards enabling African Member States, including SDG Data Alliance partner countries, to accelerate the creation and implementation of national IGIF Country-level Action Plans and the deployment of sustainable SDG data hubs, supporting the achievement of the SDGs. The Workshops will also provide African countries with the opportunity for peer-to-peer engagement and interaction to share knowledge and understanding between and from each other and will amplify and strengthen knowledge across the SDG Data Alliance partner community. The SDG Data Alliance is funding several SDG Data Alliance countries, so they are able to attend the events.

## **VII. Opportunities and Next Steps**

49. At the most recent virtual meeting of the HLG-IGIF, convened on 25 May 2023, the Group discussed progress against the updated HLG-IGIF Plan of Work, which is provided as a background document for the Committee of Experts. Following successful engagements at the twelfth session of the Committee of Experts and the subsequent Second World Geospatial Information Congress, the work groups have continued to grow and expand to be more inclusive and include stronger representation from across the regions. The work groups generally meet once per month to ensure progress against the tasks and activities on the Plan of Work. The Communications work group seeks an additional co-Lead for the group and expanded and active participation from those with skills in the communications arena.

50. Work group co-Leads have noted that communication across work groups will be important to identify areas where the groups can work together on tasks and activities and to avoid duplication of efforts. The co-Leads have updated the Plan of Work to clarify tasks and to reduce duplication across the work groups. The HLG-IGIF also established monthly leadership meetings to help foster communication across the work groups and have identified members to attend other work group meetings to share across the groups and ensure no duplication of efforts.

51. There is a need to coordinate the Plan of Work with the regional committees of UN-GGIM to contribute, combine, and coordinate the work in the most effective and efficient way. The work groups have now expanded to include regional committee representation as well as broader representation from the thematic networks, and Member States from across the five regions. Increased regional participation in the work groups needs to be encouraged to ensure greater representation and geographic diversity across all the regions. In support of this effort, the HLG-IGIF has recently updated its Terms of Reference to allow regional committee Chairs to also serve on the HLG-IGIF. This will help strengthen coordination, cross pollination of work groups, and regional implementation of the IGIF. This thirteenth session of the Committee of Experts will be utilized to share progress and to promote and spread ideas, experiences, knowledge, and resources across all regions.

## **Finalizing the IGIF Implementation Guide and Country-level Action Plan Resource Materials**

52. As mentioned in the Summary of this present report, attention and resources need to be directed to finalizing the remaining chapters of the Implementation Guide, Implementation Guide Appendices, and the resource materials that support the UN Recommended Approach to Design and Develop Country-level Action Plans, so they can be translated and utilized by all Member States. The Capacity Development work group, in conjunction with the Secretariat, are working to identify the necessary resources to complete this task. This is necessary to ensure the successful global implementation of the IGIF.

53. The Capacity Development work group is also working to promote and engage with Member States on the UN Recommended Approach to Design and Develop Country-level Action Plans, and to develop a comprehensive training approach for all Member States utilizing all of the various IGIF related resource materials available to support each step of the suggested implementation approach. The work group is exploring how this might be developed and is working to identify Member States to lead this effort.

54. The IGIF has taken on a globally prominent role in the geospatial community and supports the implementation of global and national development agendas. The IGIF suite of documents serves as key resources to help Member States succeed and demand for these documents in different languages continues to increase. As such, completion of the IGIF suite of documents and their translation remains a high priority for the Capacity Development work group and the Secretariat.

### **Interlinkages with the IGIF**

55. As a Framework for all countries, the IGIF is being implemented in many Member States and referenced in national geospatial policies and strategies. In addition, development partners such as the World Bank, the Food and Agriculture Organization, and the SDG Data Alliance are embedding the IGIF into their programs to help coordinate, develop, strengthen, and promote the efficient and effective use and sharing of geospatial information for policy formulation, decision-making, and innovation. The IGIF is also embedded across all the work areas of the Committee of Experts, as can be observed separately in other reports provided to this thirteenth session.

56. Most recently, the Working Group on Marine Geospatial Information Management embedded the IGIF in their approach with the Operational Framework for Integrated Marine Geospatial Information Management (UN-IGIF-Hydro). The Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information (EG-ISGI) has also embraced the importance of the IGIF, appointing Canada and Mexico to lead a task team on 'Expanding the IGIF for the Statistical Domain'. This team is working on a White Paper that elaborates on the impact and importance of the IGIF for the statistical domain. The co-Chair of UN-GGIM, the co-Chair of the HLG-IGIF, and the EG-ISGI attended the 54th session of the United Nations Statistical Commission in March 2023 together to share the importance of the IGIF for the integration of statistical and geospatial information.

57. As an integrated Framework, the IGIF is a mechanism to strengthen nationally integrated geospatial information management and drive transformational change that is required for countries and the global geospatial community. With global demand for the IGIF growing, it is critically important that the Secretariat is adequately resourced to provide robust support to Member States, particularly developing countries, to assist in global implementation of the IGIF.

## VIII. Points for discussion

58. The Committee of Experts is invited to:
- (a) Take note of the present report, express its views, and provide guidance on the activities and progress of the HLG-IGIF since its establishment;
  - (b) Express its views on the HLG-IGIF Plan of Work and provide guidance on how to attract subject matter experts with appropriate skill sets for expanded participation and engagement in the work groups;
  - (c) Provide additional resources for the finalization, translation, and digital publication of the IGIF suite of documents, including the three remaining chapters of the Implementation Guide, the Implementation Guide Appendices, and the resource materials that support the UN Recommended Approach to Design and Develop Country-level Action Plans – especially given the importance and urgency of this work;
  - (d) Provide further guidance towards resources to adequately sustain and continue to refine, as an ongoing and iterative process, the IGIF and its suite of documents for Member States and the global geospatial community;
  - (e) Provide any further guidance regarding the way forward for Member States to implement the IGIF: as a forward-looking Framework at the country level; across the work areas of the Committee of Experts and pertaining to data domains; its interlinkages with other regional to global frameworks; and its continued adoption in response to increasingly challenging national, regional, and global demands;
  - (f) Note the convening of the SDG Data Alliance Workshops ‘Accelerating the achievement of the SDGs’ as key capacity development and knowledge transfer elements of the UN-GGIM: Africa and ICC 2023 international meetings in Cape Town, 13-18 August 2023;
  - (g) Provide guidance on how to ensure the adequate resourcing of the Secretariat to support the global advancement of the IGIF.