

EMPOWERING GOVERNMENTS TO RESPOND TO AND MANAGE SHARED GLOBAL CHALLENGES THROUGH THE USE OF INTEGRATED STATISTICAL AND GEOSPATIAL DATA

Introduction

This report constitutes a Background Document to 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), submitted as E/C.20/2023/9/Add.1.

The document offers a comprehensive overview of the SDG Data Alliance's journey, achievements, and progress over the past year. As the SDG Data Alliance continues to evolve and expand, a noticeable surge in interest from potential partners, government entities, and geospatial experts who are keen to join the effort and gain a deeper understanding of the SDG Data Alliance's work.

The SDG Data Alliance is striving to accelerate achievement of the SDGs made possible by advances on individual United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF) Country-level Action Plans for developing nations throughout Latin America, Asia-Pacific, and Africa. In August 2022, and in making [decision 12/105](#) at its twelfth session, the Committee of Experts requested the SDG Data Alliance to report back on its progress. This report is created in response to that request, offering a snapshot of the Alliance's progress so far and a vision for the future.

Prepared in parallel with the report of the HLG-IGIF this background document will be accessible on the website of the thirteenth session of the Committee of Experts under Agenda Item 7. This report will ensure a comprehensive understanding of both the Alliance's specific contributions and the broader global efforts in geospatial data advancement for sustainable development.

What is the SDG Data Alliance?

The SDG Data Alliance is an open, community-driven, multi-stakeholder partnership comprising the private sector, foundations, UN organizations, and local and national governments. The collaboration and support of each partner is what makes the work of the Alliance possible. The founding partners are PVBLC Foundation, Esri, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, and the United Nations GGIM Secretariat. Esri and W.K. Kellogg Foundation are also contributing partners alongside Chia Network.

Countries are beneficiaries. The SDG Data Alliance's technology, expertise, and financial support enables countries to plan for the implementation of the UN-IGIF and to measure, monitor and report on progress towards implementation of the SDGs. More precisely, the Alliance makes it possible to allocate resources to address all forms of inequity (with a focus on SDG 10: reducing inequalities) which is fundamental to achieving all SDGs, and creating a just, healthy, and prosperous world where no one is left behind and everyone can thrive.

Scope

Launched at the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in New York in July 2021, the SDG Data Alliance was created to bring geographic information systems, or GIS,

technology and capabilities to developing nations in order to accelerate achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Alliance works with countries to support the development of:

- **SDG Data Hubs for national governments to share data, monitor public investments, track SDGs and engage stakeholders.** Data hubs allow countries to monitor progress towards the SDGs by goal, target and indicator. The creation of [SDG.org](https://sdg.org) and the development of SDG Data Hubs not only serves as a mechanism to achieve the SDGs, but also to bring awareness to key issues and will make it easier for countries, communities and investors to make better choices about how they achieve SDG impact.
- **UN-IGIF Country-level Action Plans (CAP) to ensure geospatial information is developed, maintained and accessible.** The main goal of the CAP is to improve national geospatial information management, which is an essential element of national digital infrastructures that contributes to the achievement of national development, including attaining the SDGs. The SDG Data Alliance's country-level initiative addresses three key influences: governance, technology and people. The ultimate goal of the CAP is that countries are able to act on SDG indicators to achieve meaningful results.

Key Accomplishments and Progress

The SDG Data Alliance has evolved into a successful initiative with five collaborating partners, three implementing partners and 19 participating country governments. The Alliance is having a positive impact on moving each country toward capabilities, capacity, and sustainability of geospatial information management. Prior to the Alliance, there was no resource that offered a holistic approach to supporting the UN-IGIF Country-level Action Plans and SDG Data Hubs. This unique approach is allowing countries to not only track progress towards achieving the SDGs but also develop the capabilities to make data-driven decisions. Below is a summary of the Data Alliance's accomplishments and progress made since August 2022 to date.

Stakeholder Workshops

Stakeholder workshops are a crucial component of the UN-IGIF Country-level Action Plan's development process. These workshops serve as a valuable platform for sharing knowledge, building trust, encouraging dialogue, and ensuring the active participation of all relevant stakeholders. They provide an opportunity for a diverse range of voices to be heard and contribute to shaping the 'national' Action Plan.

The SDG Data Alliance recognizes the importance of these workshops and has actively supported them in several ways. Our contribution extends to assisting with organization and coordination, providing essential financial support, and when feasible, participating in person.

Mozambique Stakeholder Workshop

In collaboration with the SDG Data Alliance, the Government of Mozambique, through the National Geospatial Development Agency, held a Stakeholder Engagement Workshop in Maputo, Mozambique, on 9 May 2023. With an objective to engage stakeholders in the sharing of strategic information that would support the elaboration and advancement of a national UN-IGIF Country-level Action Plan (CAP) to improve the management and use of geographic information for acceleration and monitoring of the achievement of the SDGs. Sixty stakeholders attended the event, making it a success in terms of participation and the identification of next steps for the CAP.



A significant portion of the Workshop was dedicated to analyzing Mozambique's current and future standing concerning geospatial information through completing the baseline UN-IGIF CAP resource material for the geospatial information ecosystem in Mozambique against each of the nine strategic pathways of the UN-IGIF. This included validating the work accomplished thus far, such as the surveys, as well as determining a Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles. The country also worked on the PEST (Political, Economic, Social, Technological) and SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analyses on the integrated management of geographic information.

The Workshop offered stakeholders a platform to assess the existing conditions, explore potential future scenarios, and identify key influencing factors towards a future roadmap. These collective insights will strengthen Mozambique's approach towards integrating geospatial information into their planning and decision-making processes.



Panama Stakeholder Workshop

In collaboration with the SDG Data Alliance the Government of Panama, through the Tommy Guardia National Geographic Institute, held a Workshop as a 'High-Level Session on Geospatial Information' on 22 June 2023 in Panama City, aimed at fulfilling task 7 of the UN-IGIF Country-level Action Plan (CAP) and engaging all relevant stakeholders in the overall UN-IGIF process. In Panama, the process of implementing the UN-IGIF began with the signing of resolution No. 002 of 27 September 2023, of the National Land Administration Council, which authorizes the General Administrator of the National Land Administration Authority (ANATI) to start the project.

The Workshop was attended by 40 diverse stakeholders, including representatives from Panama's government, business sector, and community members. Therefore, an additional aim was to inform decision makers and representatives of key institutions in the development of geospatial data, as well as allied companies, what within the project is called 'interested parties.' As a result, the development of CAP also gained the support of wider government.

Objectives of the Workshop included:

- Fulfilling task #7 for the implementation of the UN-IGIF CAP.
- Publicize the progress of the Data Alliance Project in Panama.
- Recognize the importance of geospatial information in public management.
- Contribute to reinforce critical thinking in the current state of geospatial information.
- Present examples of implementations of other countries on the National Geospatial Plan.
- Provide an opportunity to dialogue with decision makers on the formulation of strategies for the consistent development of geospatial data.

Outcomes of the Workshop included:

- Reviewed the project's activities and the role of each stakeholder.

- Briefed directors about the project and communicated its importance.
- Analyzed the current state of geospatial information, geographical standards and the role of each institution on this front.
- Obtained the commitment from institutions to support the various tasks being carried out for the development of the National Action Plan on geospatial information.

The incorporation of critical thinking allowed participants to carry out analyses on the state of geospatial information in their institutions and the responsibilities that each actor has in the face of geographical norms and standards.



SDG Data Hubs

Various hubs have made significant progress in the last six months:

- Burkina Faso is finalizing its hub and expects to launch an initial version this August.
- South Africa is actively working on its hub with an expected launch this August.
- The University of Minnesota created an initial "hub of hubs," with the goal of collecting data from the entire State of Minnesota, serving 87 counties with tracking of SDGs and relevant data for decision-making. The hub has been published.
- Grenada, Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia, and Republic of the Marshall Islands are expected to launch their hubs this year.
- More than a dozen meetings and training sessions have been held to provide countries with geospatial capabilities and promote information exchange.

Country-level Action Plans

- **Burkina Faso:** Recently, a Workshop was held with the Ministry of Finance to finalize the UN-IGIF Country-level Action Plan. As a result, the National Strategy was improved, and the Geographic Institute of Burkina Faso (IGB) was encouraged to seek funders for the various activities. Work continues on a national geospatial strategy with a target date of October for approval by the Council of Ministers.
- **Ethiopia:** The UN-IGIF Country-level Action Plan was completed and launched at an event held in December 2022. Ethiopia is now looking at possible funding to commence the implementation of the CAP.
- **Tonga:** Had its UN-IGIF Country-level Action Plan endorsed by its National Cabinet of Ministers. This is an important step for the adoption and implementation of the Plan.

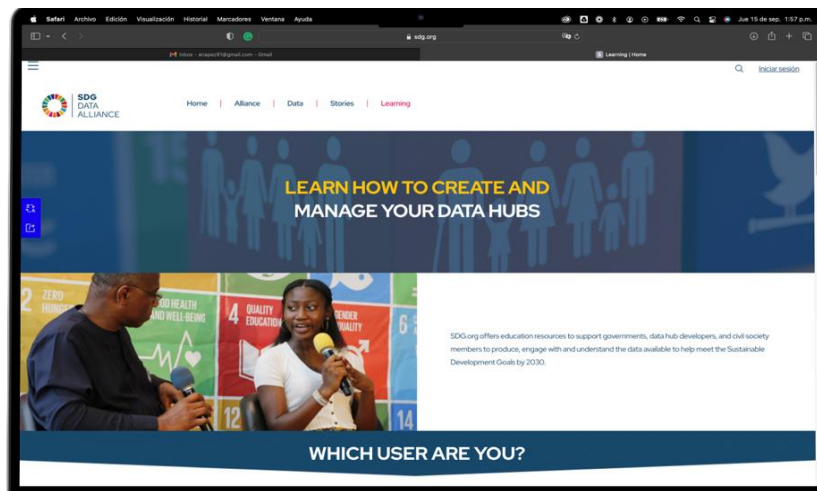
Awards and Recognition

- Two SDG Data Alliance country participants, Mr. Patrick Ouedraogo, Geographic Institute of Burkina Faso, and Ms. Catalina Tapia Johnson, Ministry of National Assets, Chile, each received [Rising Star Awards](#) in May 2023 at the Geospatial World Forum in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. The recognition of Patrick and Catalina as Rising Stars is a testament to the impact of their work and the Data Alliance's efforts in creating a community-driven partnership to achieve the SDGs.
- At the same event, PVBLC Foundation was recognized as the [Development Organization of the Year](#) by the Geospatial World Leadership Awards jury for its excellent work in promoting and advancing the 2030 SDG Agenda to the global community. Geospatial World has constituted these awards since 2007 with an objective to recognize, honor and celebrate professional excellence, contributions, and achievements of professionals, institutions and organizations. In particular, those looking for new solutions to address critical challenges, and in the process create a lasting impact on society.



SDG.org and Community Engagement

- [SDG.org](#) is transitioning into a virtual center of excellence, creating a space for all hubs to live while providing valuable resources to countries on how to build hubs.



- [SDG.org](#) was recently revamped with the purpose of including a fresh design, language from the new SDG Data Alliance Strategy, and to better tell the story of the Alliance.

- A communications strategy was developed this year and is being implemented. As part of this strategy, every month new content is posted on [SDG.org](https://www.sdg.org) and social media channels. Examples of content posted include a new story highlighting the SDG of the month, weekly social media posts promoting the Alliance and resources and events.
- A [video explainer](#) about the SDG Data Alliance was developed and posted on the website to inform governments, organizations and citizens about the value of the Data Alliance and increase engagement with the website.

Advancing SDG 10

SDG 10 is a complex and multifaceted Goal that requires the consolidation of numerous resources and strategies. PVBLIC Foundation has created content and developed innovative tools like StoryMaps to advance this cause. Here are some of the initiatives:

- **Content Creation:** The Data Alliance has been active in creating rich and informative content aimed at raising awareness about SDG 10. This includes reports, articles, blogs, and infographics that provide a deeper understanding of the issues at hand and the actions needed to reduce inequalities.
- **Storymap Development:** Storymaps are interactive tools that integrate maps, data, images, and narrative text to tell a story about a specific topic or issue. The Data Alliance is leveraging this technology to highlight the geographic dimensions of inequality and visually illustrate how different policies and interventions can impact SDG 10.

Event Organization and Participation

United Nations High-level Political Forum (HLPF), New York - The SDG Data Alliance is actively conducting a series of workshops and engagement activities with Member States, focusing on Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) and data hubs. These activities coincide with the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) in New York in July. The primary objective being to simplify the process of SDG data reporting and investigate the connection between VNRs and data hubs. Through the workshops and engagements, we aim to leverage this forum to highlight the importance of data in tracking and driving progress towards the SDGs.

Strategy 2023-2028

The [SDG Data Alliance Strategy 2023-2028](#) was developed under the leadership of PVBLIC Foundation and the Alliance partners to describe the scope of work of the Data Alliance, its governance, and overall vision and strategy for the next five years. The document is being used as a tool to stay on track with goals and objectives as well as to communicate progress to partners, funders and governments.

SDG Data Alliance partners developed and incorporated a plan of action for 2023 and 2024 to guide the work of the Data Alliance. The plan of action includes objectives, milestones and metrics for the next grant period.



What's Next for the SDG Data Alliance?

The SDG Data Alliance remains committed to supporting developing countries in achieving their Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As part of this endeavour, the Alliance has formulated a detailed roadmap within its 5-year strategy that outlines the key milestones it aims to achieve.

- **Completion of SDG Data Hubs:** We aim to establish and fully operationalize SDG Data Hubs in our target countries. These hubs will serve as central points for the collection, analysis, and dissemination of SDG-related data, facilitating effective monitoring and decision-making.
- **Transformation of SDG.org:** Our goal is to transform SDG.org into a center of excellence, a platform that provides cutting-edge resources, best practices, and expertise on SDGs and related data issues.
- **Implementation of IGIF Country-level Action Plans:** We plan to support the implementation of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (IGIF) Country-level Action Plans, enhancing the use and management of geospatial information in our target countries.
- **Wide Access to Training:** We aim to offer wide access to training for various stakeholders, enhancing their capacity to use and interpret SDG-related data.
- **Increased Stakeholder Engagement:** Our roadmap includes increased engagement with stakeholders across sectors, promoting a more inclusive and participatory approach to achieving the SDGs.
- **On-going Funding:** We recognize the importance of sustainable financing for our work, and thus, we aim to secure ongoing funding for our initiatives.
- **Adaptation to Emerging Technologies:** As we look to the future, we understand that new technologies will emerge that could potentially reshape our work. We are prepared to adapt and harness these technologies for enhanced impact.

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