



Background Report

Fifteenth Session UN-GGIM

Submitted by

Prof Dr Zaffar Sadiq Mohamed-Ghouse

Chair, UN-GGIM Private sector Network

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This document provides a background report from UNGGIM Private Sector Network (PSN) to the Fifteenth Session of the UN Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, 2025.

2. UN-GGIM PSN: PURPOSE

- 2.1 The UN-GGIM Private Sector Network (PSN) aims to connect and facilitate communication between private companies and Member States. This collaboration will support global geospatial initiatives and improve the world's capacity to benefit from geospatial information. The PSN will encourage ongoing collaboration among UN-GGIM members and PSN participants to enhance countries' geospatial information, technologies, and services. The PSN recognizes the private sector's expertise and will provide opportunities for their input in developing national, regional, and global policies, processes, practices, capacities, and recommendations for geospatial information infrastructure.

3. PSN BOARD VISION

- 3.1 An active Private Sector Network (PSN) of representatives working in a mutually beneficial collaboration with the members of UN-GGIM to play a leading role in setting the agenda for the development of global geospatial information and to promote its use to address key global challenges, enable citizen services and support the initiatives of the United Nations, particularly the global development agenda.

4. PSN BOARD

Chair: Prof. Dr. Zaffar Sadiq Mohamed-Ghouse *HonFGCA FRGS FIEAust*,

Vice President and Director, Advisory and Innovation, Woolpert, Australia

Deputy Chair: Ms. Valrie Grant, Founder/Chairwomen, GeoTechVision, Jamaica

Board Members:

Ms. Valrie Grant, Founder/Chairwomen, GeoTechVision, Jamaica
Mr. Peter Ter Haar, Ter Haar Geoinnovation, United Kingdom
Dr. Saad Alhamlan, CEO, Gravity Geospatial Services, Saudi Arabia
Mr. Willy Govender, CEO, Terra Analytics, South Africa
Dr. Nadine Alameh, Executive Director, Taylor Geospatial Institute, USA
Dr. Kumar Nuvulur, Founder and CEO, GeoCognition LLC, USA
Ms. Devleena Bhattacharjee, CEO, Numer8 Analytics Pvt. Ltd, India
Ms. Anamika Das, Head – Advocacy and Strategy, Esri, India
Mr. Ben Addou Idrissi Kamal, CEO, ETAFAT, Morocco
Mr. Peter Baumann, CEO, Rasdaman GmbH, Germany
Mr. Felix Orina, Managing Director, Orbital Africa, Kenya

Secretariat: Ms Megha Datta, Woolpert Australia

5. UN-GGIM REGIONAL PSN CHAIRS

UN-GGIM Asia Pacific: Prof. Dr. Zaffar Sadiq Mohamed-Ghouse HonFGCA FRGS FIEAust, Vice President and Director, Advisory & Innovation, Woolpert, Australia

UN-GGIM Americas: Ms. Valrie Grant, Founder/Chairwomen, GeoTechVision, Jamaica

UN-GGIM Europe: Mr. Peter Ter Haar, Ter Haar Geoinnovation, United Kingdom

UN-GGIM Arab States: Dr. Saad Alhamlan, CEO, Gravity Geospatial Services, Saudi Arabia

UN-GGIM Africa: Mr. Willy Govender, CEO, Terra Analytics, South Africa

6. UN-GGIM PSN MEMBERS

- 6.1 The UNGGIM: PSN comprises 183 member organizations, including 21 founding members. This network highlights the diversity in company size, offerings, and geospatial application categories and their global distribution.
- 6.2 A notable development during the reporting period was the addition of 25 new private sector members to PSN, reflecting increased recognition of the value of private sector expertise in geospatial initiatives. The launch of PSN's LinkedIn presence marked a further step in enhancing communication, outreach, and visibility within the global community. The Network also strengthened its organizational footprint through the establishment of sub-regional leadership structures in the Americas and a regional PSN committee in Asia-Pacific.

7. ACTIVITIES AND AREAS OF WORK

- 7.1 The Private Sector Network (PSN) engaged in a broad range of activities in support of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM). These included participation in working groups, contribution to technical documentation, and involvement in strategic initiatives such as the development of the Future Geospatial Ecosystem and the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF), particularly through Working Group 4.
- 7.2 To enhance its regional presence and coordination, the PSN established formal structures in the Americas and Asia-Pacific, including sub-regional leadership roles. These efforts were aimed at strengthening collaboration with Member States and regional stakeholders, and at aligning private sector contributions with regional geospatial priorities.
- 7.3 The PSN also expanded its membership base, welcoming 25 new private sector entities during the reporting period. This growth reflects increasing interest in contributing to global and regional geospatial initiatives. To support communication and outreach, the Network launched and actively maintained a LinkedIn presence, sharing updates and insights on its activities and areas of focus.
- 7.4 In support of capacity development, the PSN sponsored the participation of students in the Seventh High-Level Forum on UN-GGIM, held in Mexico. This initiative aimed to provide emerging professionals with exposure to global policy discussions and technical dialogues, contributing to the development of future geospatial leaders.
- 7.5 Regionally, the PSN participated in plenary meetings of the five UN-GGIM regional committees: Asia-Pacific (New Delhi), Americas (Mexico City), Europe (Brussels), Africa (Addis Ababa), and the Arab States (Jeddah). These engagements included forums, workshops, and planning sessions. In the Americas, the PSN supported the

Caribbean Geospatial Development Initiative (CARIGEO) initiative, co-organized a national UN-IGIF workshop in Trinidad and Tobago, and collaborated on a disaster risk webinar focused on Hurricane Beryl, in partnership with Working Group on Geospatial Information for Disaster Risk Management (WG-GI4DRM) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). It also co-hosted the event “Industry and Academia Bridge the Gap” with the Academic Network of the Americas and contributed to the formation of the GEOAI Community of Practice.

- 7.6 The PSN continued to contribute to the development of strategic documents and policy guidance, with a focus on innovation, climate resilience, and sustainability. Its participation in consultations and technical discussions helped ensure that private sector perspectives were reflected in shaping the future geospatial information ecosystem.
- 7.7 The Network also maintained its knowledge-sharing efforts through the ongoing production of the podcast series “Mapping the Conversations,” which reached 36 episodes and over 20,000 downloads.

8. REGION-WISE ACTIVITIES

8.1 UN-GGIM PSN Americas

- 8.1.1 During the intersessional period, the UN-GGIM Americas Private Sector Network (PSN) remained engaged in a range of regional and global activities aligned with the objectives of the Committee of Experts. These efforts were aimed at strengthening collaboration, enhancing regional coordination, and contributing to ongoing geospatial initiatives.
- 8.1.2 To enhance its support across the Americas, the PSN established a sub-regional leadership structure. This approach was designed to improve responsiveness to regional needs and facilitate more targeted engagement. The appointed sub-regional chairs represent the Caribbean, North America, Latin and South America.
- 8.1.3 The PSN contributed to several ongoing initiatives and events organized under the UN-GGIM Americas framework, including:
 - 8.1.3.1 Participation in workshops and virtual events hosted throughout the year.
 - 8.1.3.2 Active involvement in the eleventh Session of UN-GGIM Americas, including both virtual sessions and the in-person meeting held on 7 October 2024 in Mexico City.
 - 8.1.3.3 Engagement in the 7th High-Level Forum on UN-GGIM, held from 8 to 10 October 2024 in Mexico City, where PSN representatives contributed to discussions on advancing geospatial information management.
- 8.1.4 The PSN supported the Caribbean Geospatial Development Initiative (CARIGEO) through the following activities:
 - 8.1.4.1 Co-organization and participation in the first national UN-IGIF workshop in Trinidad and Tobago, held from 21 to 23 August 2024.
 - 8.1.4.2 Collaboration on a webinar titled “Preparation, Response and Recovery: Lessons Learnt from Hurricane Beryl”, conducted in partnership with the UN-GGIM Working Group on Geospatial Information for Disaster Risk Management (WG-GI4DRM) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).
- 8.1.5 The PSN contributed to the establishment of the GEOAI Community of Practice, including support for the development of its terms of reference and initial workplan.

- 8.1.6 Continued participation in relevant UN-GGIM working groups, offering private sector insights on technical and policy matters.
- 8.1.7 The PSN continued production of its podcast series, “Mapping the Conversations,” which reached 36 episodes and accumulated over 20,000 downloads, serving as a platform for dialogue on geospatial trends and practices.
- 8.1.8 The Network also experienced a modest increase in regional membership, growing from 44 to 50 members over the year, reflecting a 13.6 per cent increase in participation from the private sector in the Americas.
- 8.1.9 In addition to regional activities, the PSN maintained its involvement at the global level, contributing to broader UN-GGIM discussions and initiatives through its global coordination mechanisms.

8.2 UN-GGIM PSN Europe

- 8.2.1 The Regional Private Sector Network (PSN) committee participated in the Twelfth Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM: Europe. The Plenary not only celebrated the remarkable achievements of UN-GGIM: Europe over its first decade but also charted a course for the future. A key focus of the discussions was the evolving role of the Private Sector Network and the Academic Network within the future geospatial ecosystem.

8.3 UN-GGIM PSN Africa

- 8.3.1 The PSN actively participated in the Tenth Plenary Session of UN-GGIM Africa from 28 October to 1 November 2024 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, fostering dialogue on effective private sector involvement.

8.4 UN-GGIM PSN Arab States

- 8.4.1 The PSN participated in the UN-GGIM: Arab States IGIF Working Group and Regional Committee Plenary, held from 2 to 6 February 2025 in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Through its engagement, the Network contributed to advancing the role of the private sector in regional geospatial initiatives and supported ongoing efforts to implement the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF).
- 8.4.2 The UN-GGIM Arab States PSN has outlined several key initiatives for the upcoming period:
 - Increasing the active involvement of PSN members in UNGGIM Arab States activities.
 - Building stronger ties with the global UNGGIM-PSN to support joint initiatives and share best practices.
 - Coordinating with the UNGGIM Arab States Secretariat to conduct workshops aimed at capacity building and knowledge exchange.
 - Establishing collaborations with the Arab Academic Group to bridge the gap between academia and the private sector.
 - Promoting the adoption of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF) and integrating Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) within the Arab Private Sector Group to align geospatial initiatives with global sustainability objectives.

8.5 UN-GGIM PSN Asia Pacific

- 8.5.1 The regional PSN committee for UN-GGIM Asia Pacific, comprising of various private sector companies, including Woolpert, Australia, Dr. Nik & Associates, Malaysia, GPS Lands, Singapore, and PT Nusantara Agung Raya, Indonesia.
- 8.5.2 The PSN actively participated in the Thirteenth Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM Asia Pacific held in New Delhi, India in November 2024. PSN also participated in the Executive Board meeting held at the sides of the thirteenth Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM Asia Pacific.
- 8.5.3 During the reporting period, the PSN in Asia-Pacific actively contributed to the work of Working Group 4, which focuses on the implementation and advancement of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF). The PSN provided technical and strategic input, drawing on private sector experience in geospatial data management, innovation, and service delivery. Its engagement supported the development of guidance materials, shared use cases, and contributed to discussions on aligning national geospatial strategies with the IGIF's principles. This collaboration helped ensure that private sector perspectives were considered in shaping practical and scalable approaches to IGIF implementation across the region.
- 8.5.4 To enhance coordination and engagement within the region, the PSN formally established a Regional Committee for Asia-Pacific. This structure was created to facilitate more consistent dialogue with regional stakeholders, support localized implementation of global geospatial initiatives, and strengthen the PSN's ability to contribute to UN-GGIM Asia-Pacific activities. The committee serves as a platform for private sector entities to collaborate on regional priorities, share best practices, and align their efforts with the broader objectives of the UN-GGIM. It also aims to foster stronger partnerships with national governments, academic institutions, and other stakeholders involved in geospatial development.