



Seventh Session of the Committee of Experts on UN-GGIM

UN-GGIM – World Bank Forum

Geospatial Information for Development

Monday, 31 July 2017

3:00 pm - 6:00 pm

Venue: Conference Room 3 (CR-3)

United Nations Headquarters, New York

Background

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development demands the need for new data acquisition and integration approaches, including supporting developing countries in strengthening the capacity of national data systems to ensure access to high quality, timely, reliable and disaggregated data. This includes exploiting the contribution to be made by Earth observations and geospatial information, while ensuring national ownership in supporting and tracking progress. As described in Goal 17 in the area of data, monitoring and accountability, there is a need to: “By 2020, enhance capacity-building support to developing countries, including for least developed countries and small island developing States, to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts.”

While the 2030 Agenda itself is global, it takes different national realities and circumstances into consideration and is intended to guide governments to incorporate the SDGs into their national planning processes and strategies according to individual priorities. However, within the confines of national government structures there needs to be more integration across the various national data information systems and platforms, particularly statistical (socio-economic) and geospatial (environmental), in order to institutionalize inclusive mechanisms and leverage the best and most effective data and analysis so that a wider range of stakeholders have the capacity to be involved in implementing the 2030 Agenda and subsequent evidence-based policy and decision-making. These capacities are currently very limited.

In most instances, and more so with developing countries, there is presently no evident national policy or framework for governments to determine how geospatial information can be implemented and integrated into their development agendas. This lack of policy and guidance is a visible impediment to developing countries and those most affected by the challenges and need to achieve national development. Part of the solution to this problem lies in policy-making that takes into account the social and economic value of geospatial information. Another lies in the regular and sustainable production and dissemination of geospatial data that reflects the physical world we must measure and monitor. Both of these strategies are vital and complement each other if we are to support, invest in, and advance the knowledge agenda for developing countries, and bridge the geospatial digital divide.

“This is an open forum and all Session Attendees are invited”



Objectives of the Forum

For the past 2 years, and facilitated by the Secretariat, the UN-GGIM Expanded Bureau and the World Bank's Global Practice on Social, Urban and Rural Development, and Resilience (GSURR) have discussed and progressed possible mechanisms and modalities to build the geospatial information topic with greater potential reach and benefit to countries, and for creating an enabling environment for geospatial data, infrastructure and policies to be embedded more holistically within concessional financing, technical assistance and knowledge-sharing services and their subsequent implementation in developing countries. With the enabling global mechanism of the 2030 Agenda, the challenge is how to most effectively transfer quickly evolving technology and data richness, availability and connectivity to the technology and data poor.

As an outcome of these discussions, the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) and the World Bank GSURR have decided to collaborate in carrying out common objectives and activities related to assisting lower and middle income countries to 'bridge the geospatial digital divide' to move towards e-economies, improve services to citizens, build capacity for using geospatial technology, and enhance informed government decision making processes. While this collaboration will be formalised with the signing of an Agreement between UNSD and GSURR at this seventh session of the Committee of Experts, this Forum will inform participants of the details of the collaboration; ***to develop an overarching Geospatial Framework that countries could reference when using geospatial information to develop national systems tailored to their own situations.***

It is envisioned that the Geospatial Framework will consist of principles, reference guides and good practices for topics such as geospatial policy, law, institutional arrangements, standards, technical systems and geodetic infrastructure, fundamental datasets, capacity, and use/applications of geospatial data, as well methods to calculate the economic impact and value of spatial data infrastructures (SDIs). The Framework would include an action plan and road map on means for implementation, as well as elements such as the economic impact and value of geospatial information systems, investment needs and associated tools, guides and good practices. The aim is to develop and implement mechanisms to establish the Geospatial Framework holistically in countries in such a way that transformational change is enabled, visible and sustainable.

Hosted by UNSD and GSURR, topics for discussion will include:

- The challenges facing low and middle income Member States in being able to realise gains in terms of the Sustainable Development Goals and economic growth;
- Explain the Agreement between the World Bank and Statistics Division and the program of activities envisaged to bridge what is described as the geospatial digital divide;
- Considering the development of a global Geospatial Framework;
- Introduce the World Bank SDI toolset and its role in creating country-specific SDI action plans; and
- Identify mechanisms for consulting Member States and the global SDI community in implementing this initiative.

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Programme Agenda

Moderator: Ms. Dorine Burmanje, Director-General, Kadastar, the Netherlands

- 1. Welcome and Introductory Remarks (20 minutes)**
 - Mr. Stefan Schweinfest, Director, UN Statistics Division
 - Mr. Wael Zakout, Global Lead for Land and Geospatial, GSURR, World Bank
- 2. The Data Challenge – Bridging the Geospatial Digital Divide (20 minutes)**
 - Mr. Greg Scott, UN Statistics Division
- 3. Purpose and Scope of UNSD – World Bank Collaboration (20 minutes)**
 - Mr. Wael Zakout, Global Lead for Land and Geospatial, GSURR, World Bank

Moderated Discussion with Participants (20 minutes)

- 4. Developing an Overarching Global Geospatial Framework (20 minutes)**
 - Mr. Greg Scott, UN Statistics Division
- 5. World Bank SDI Toolset – Assisting Country Action Plans (30 minutes)**
 - Ms. Kathrine Kelm, Senior Land Administration Specialist, GSURR, World Bank
 - Mr. Andrew Coote, Director, ConsultingWhere

Moderated Discussion with Participants (20 minutes)

Wrap up and Next Steps (20 minutes)

Updated: 21 July 2017

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