

**Twenty-seventh session
New York, 30 July and 10 August 2012**

Item 3 of the provisional agenda

Report of the working groups

**Evaluation of the 26th Session of UNGEGN:
A Review of the Questionnaire Survey Results ***

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Evaluation of the 26th Session of UNGEGN: A Review of the Survey Results

SUMMARY

A total of seventy-seven responses of the evaluation questionnaire forms were received at the 26th Session of UNGEGN. An analysis of the likert scale evaluations on the programs, contents and logistics of the meeting indicated an overall satisfaction with the meeting. Of UNGEGN's goals the most important were viewed as: (a) to provide a forum for discussion of geographical names standardization, and (b) to provide updates on working on geographical names standardization around the world. The collection of responses and tabulation of basic statistics were contributed by the UNGEGN Secretariat.

Overview

At the 26th Session of UNGEGN in Vienna, May 2011, one evaluation questionnaire form was circulated for responses (see Annex 1). This was an amalgamation of two forms distributed at the 25th Session in Nairobi, one of which was on programs and contents (UNGEGN Secretariat), and the other on logistics (Conference Services). The questionnaire length was not to exceed two pages or one double-sided sheet in English version, although the French and Spanish versions turned out to be three pages after translation. A total of seventy-seven responses were received, which was much more than in the previous session (eight responses in 2009) when Conference Services had been first to distribute their evaluation form. 23 respondents (33.3%) participated for the first time at an UNGEGN Session, while 13 respondents (18.8%) attended two to three times, and 33 respondents (47.8%) more than three times. The collection of responses and tabulation of basic statistics were done by the UNGEGN Secretariat, Ms. Sabine Warschburger and Ms. Vilma Frani.

Evaluations on the Programs and Contents

An overall assessment of the Session was very positive. Most of the respondents indicated that it had met their expectations (76 out of 77, 98.7%) and rated the success of the Session highly or very highly (69 out of 73, 94.5%).

When divided by each element of the Session, reading and discussing working papers was evaluated to be the most useful. Talking and networking with other experts and Working Group meetings also received very positive evaluations. Division meetings, workshops and special presentations turned out to be moderately satisfactory, while exhibitions and displays seem to have left something to be desired.

In regards to the logistics of the Session, the five-day session duration was generally evaluated positively, but there were also negative responses (7 out of 72, 9.7%). The duration issue seems to be related to the time available for WG and Division meetings outside the Session. This item also received some negative responses (9 out of 71, 12.7%). All the other items, including time

allocation to agenda items and working papers, distinguishing ‘discussion’ papers from ‘information’ papers, summarizing groups of documents, retaining Working Group activities as agenda items, were given positive responses with more than 80 percent ‘positive’ or ‘very positive’ evaluations.

Table 1. Evaluation of the usefulness of each program and content of the Session

	very high	high	moderate	low	very low	% high and very high
Usefulness of WPs	20	47	8			89.3
Usefulness of special presentation	16	35	20	4		68.0
Usefulness of workshops	9	35	12	4		73.3
Usefulness of WG meetings	17	38	11	1		82.1
Usefulness of Division meetings	15	36	14			78.5
Usefulness of exhibitions/displays	6	25	30	11		43.1
Usefulness of talking/networking with experts	27	37	9	1	1	85.3

Table 2. Evaluation of the logistics of the Session

	very positive	positive	neutral	negative	very negative	% positive and very positive
Session duration: 5 days	26	25	14	6	1	70.8
Time allocations	19	41	11			84.5
Discussion versus information papers	26	33	14			80.8
Summarizing groups of documents	30	29	10	2		83.1
WG activities as agenda items	26	35	10			85.9
Time for Division and WG meetings	15	32	15	9		66.2

Goals of UNGEGN

Of UNGEGN’s goals the most important were viewed as, first, providing a forum for discussion of geographical names standardization and, second, providing updates on working on geographical names standardization around the world. These goals were followed by meeting and networking with others, learning of best practices and raising awareness of standardization issues.

Table 3. View on the Goals of UNGEGN

rank	goals	counts
1	To provide a forum for discussion of geographical names standardization	50.3

2	To provide updates on work on geographical names standardization around the world	41.0
3	To meet and network with others	34.8
4	To learn of best practices	29.8
5	To raise awareness of standardization issues	29.3
6	To discuss Working Papers	12.5
7	To promote awareness of UNGEGN	8.8
8	To seek help for your program	7.3

Comments and Suggestions for the Next Meetings

The following groups of comments and suggestions were noted for the UNGEGN activities and working of next meetings:

- raising awareness of the standardization of geographical names and promote activities of UNGEGN by more publicity and funding
- increasing the implementation of the UN resolutions for the standardization of geographical names
- having more discussions on geographical names as culture heritage, minority and regional language group geographical names, and more case studies applying names standardization to topics on crisis, tourism, or economy
- enhancing toponymic data standards and interoperability and sharing more geographical names database practices
- attempting to involve a larger number of member states, especially African, Latin-American and Caribbean countries, and trying to activate the Divisions
- organizing more toponymy training courses and practical workshops, possibly running parallel to the conference or through websites
- increasing relationships with the UN-GGIM initiative

25 countries answered yes to the question on the assistance need for establishing a geographical names standardization programme. Assistance was mostly required in the fields of technical and financial issues, toponymic training and guidelines, exchange of expertise and best practices, and social networking.

Annex 1

EVALUATION

**26TH Session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names
Vienna, 2-6 May 2011**

Your information: Country

How many times have you attended UNGEGN sessions? Once 2 or 3 times More than 3 times

I. Overall Assessment

Did the Session meet your expectations? Yes No

How would you rate the success of the Session? Very high High Moderate Low Very low

II. Programs and Contents

1. How useful was each of the following programs and contents for you?

	very high	high	moderate	low	very low
a. Working papers – reading and discussion					
b. Special presentations					
c. Workshops					
d. Working Group meetings					
e. Division meetings					
f. Exhibition/displays					
g. Talking and networking with other experts					

2. What changes would you suggest for future UNGEGN Sessions? Please specify.

3. Please make suggestions for special presentations and workshops for the next Session (topics, presenters, organization, logistics, etc.).

4. What is your reaction to each of the following?

	very positive	positive	neutral	negative	very negative
a. Duration of UNGEGN Session: 5 days					
b. 26 th UNGEGN allocation of time to agenda items and working papers					
c. Distinguishing "discussion" papers from "information" papers					
d. Summarizing groups of documents, rather than individual presentations					
e. Retaining Working Group activities as agenda items					
f. Time available for WG and Division meetings outside the Session					

5. From the following list, select the three most important goals of UNGEGN sessions.

(1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____

a. To provide a forum for discussion of geographical names standardization
b. To provide updates on work on geographical names standardization around the world
c. To raise awareness of standardization issues
d. To discuss Working Papers
e. To learn of best practices
f. To seek help for your program
g. To meet and network with others
h. To promote awareness of UNGEGN

6. What are the most important items that you would like to see UNGEGN undertaking before the 10th Conference?

7. Does your country need assistance in establishing a geographical names standardization programme? Yes No

If yes, what type of help do you want? _____

8. Do you have any other comments you wish to make?
