“Support of geographical names data files and gazetteers to UN-GGIM activities and 2030 Agenda”

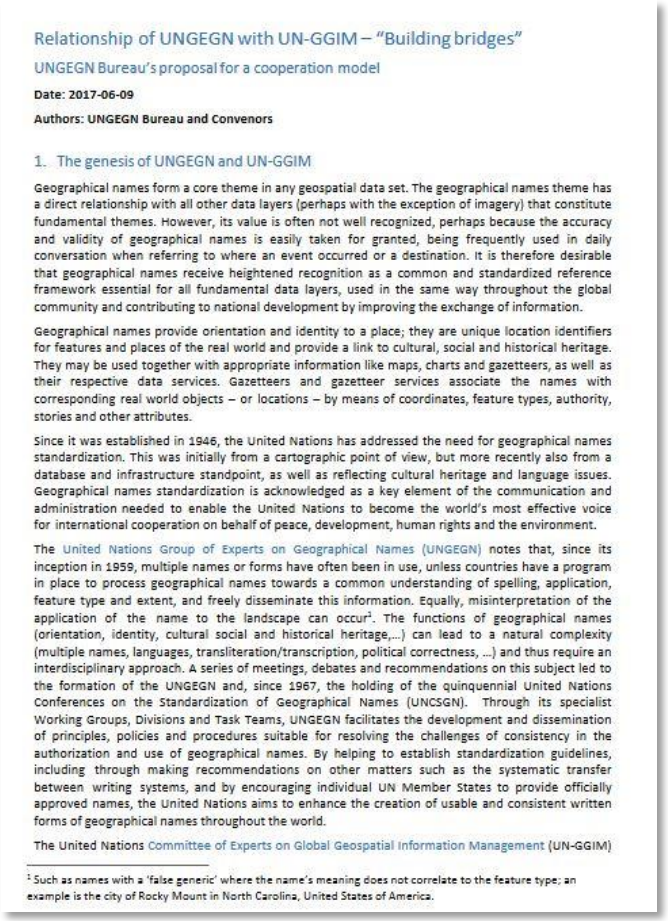
Pier-Giorgio Zaccheddu, Convenor of the Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers of UNGEGN, Federal Agency for Cartography and Geodesy (BKG), Germany;
Catherine Cheetham, Head of the Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (PCGN), United Kingdom

--- Joint UNGEGN Working Group Meetings, 10-13 October 2018, Brussels (BE) ---

Content

- What has been the collaboration between UNGEGN and the Committee of Experts of GGIM?
- What came out of the 8th Committee of Experts of GGIM?
- What is the Agenda 2030 / Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?
- What are the opportunities for UNGEGN to contribute to the Agenda 2030/SDG indicator discussions and monitoring?

Recalling the Relationship document of UNGEGN with UN-GGIM – „Building Bridges“



Relationship of UNGEGN with UN-GGIM – "Building bridges"

UNGEGN Bureau's proposal for a cooperation model

Date: 2017-06-09

Authors: UNGEGN Bureau and Convenors

1. The genesis of UNGEGN and UN-GGIM

Geographical names form a core theme in any geospatial data set. The geographical names theme has a direct relationship with all other data layers (perhaps with the exception of imagery) that constitute fundamental themes. However, its value is often not well recognized, perhaps because the accuracy and validity of geographical names is easily taken for granted, being frequently used in daily conversation when referring to where an event occurred or a destination. It is therefore desirable that geographical names receive heightened recognition as a common and standardized reference framework essential for all fundamental data layers, used in the same way throughout the global community and contributing to national development by improving the exchange of information.

Geographical names provide orientation and identity to a place; they are unique location identifiers for features and places of the real world and provide a link to cultural, social and historical heritage. They may be used together with appropriate information like maps, charts and gazetteers, as well as their respective data services. Gazetteers and gazetteer services associate the names with corresponding real world objects – or locations – by means of coordinates, feature types, authority, stories and other attributes.

Since it was established in 1946, the United Nations has addressed the need for geographical names standardization. This was initially from a cartographic point of view, but more recently also from a database and infrastructure standpoint, as well as reflecting cultural heritage and language issues. Geographical names standardization is acknowledged as a key element of the communication and administration needed to enable the United Nations to become the world's most effective voice for international cooperation on behalf of peace, development, human rights and the environment.

The United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) notes that, since its inception in 1959, multiple names or forms have often been in use, unless countries have a program in place to process geographical names towards a common understanding of spelling, application, feature type and extent, and freely disseminate this information. Equally, misinterpretation of the application of the name to the landscape can occur[1]. The functions of geographical names (orientation, identity, cultural social and historical heritage,...) can lead to a natural complexity (multiple names, languages, transliteration/transcription, political correctness, ...) and thus require an interdisciplinary approach. A series of meetings, debates and recommendations on this subject led to the formation of the UNGEGN and, since 1967, the holding of the quinquennial United Nations Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names (UNCSGN). Through its specialist Working Groups, Divisions and Task Teams, UNGEGN facilitates the development and dissemination of principles, policies and procedures suitable for resolving the challenges of consistency in the authorization and use of geographical names. By helping to establish standardization guidelines, including through making recommendations on other matters such as the systematic transfer between writing systems, and by encouraging individual UN Member States to provide officially approved names, the United Nations aims to enhance the creation of usable and consistent written forms of geographical names throughout the world.

The United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM)

[1] Such as names with a 'false generic' where the name's meaning does not correlate to the feature type; an example is the city of Rocky Mount in North Carolina, United States of America.

„Background document“ and submission of a report to 7th Committee of Experts of GGIM (August 2017):

1. The genesis of UNGEGN and UN-GGIM
2. The essence of a relationship
3. The common principles
4. The proposal for a cooperation model

http://ggim.un.org/docs/meetings/GGIM7/E-C20-2017-17%20Strengthening%20Collaboration%20with%20UNGEGN%20Report.pdf

2nd Report of UNGEGN to the 8th Session of the Committee of Experts on GGIM

Item 16:
"Strengthening collaboration with the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN)"

I. Background
II. Collaborative activities
III. Other UNGEGN areas of work
IV. The way forward
V. Points for discussion

UNITED NATIONS E/C.20/2018/17/Add.1

Economic and Social Council 20 July 2018

Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management
Eighth session
New York, 1-3 August 2018
Item 16 of the provisional agenda*
Strengthening collaboration with the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names

Strengthening collaboration with the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names

Note by the Secretariat

Summary of the report

The present paper contains the report prepared by the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names for consideration by the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management.

At its seventh session, held in New York from 2 to 4 August 2017, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 7/114, in which it welcomed the report of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names and endorsed the proposal to build a stronger relationship between the Group of Experts and the Committee to advance the cause of geographical names and geospatial information management, keeping the process technical and not political in nature. In addition, the Committee expressed support for the common principles of cooperation as a positive communication tool, a means for closer collaboration, and for the strengthening of arrangements in geospatial information management. Furthermore, the Committee recognized that the real benefits of cooperation and collaboration would need to be anchored at the national level and that it would be critical for national delegates from the Group of Experts and the Committee to establish and continue their outreach on an ongoing basis. In this report, the Group of Experts presents its activities undertaken at the global and national levels as part of its efforts to strengthen collaboration and implement the decisions made by the Committee at its seventh session. The report includes information on the first physical meeting convened between the two Bureaux, in August 2017; the contribution of the Group of Experts to the work on global fundamental geospatial data themes; an update on the modernization of its operations, including changes to the duration and frequency of meetings, and the drafting and approval of its new rules and procedures and draft agenda; an overview of its working groups and divisional activities and proposals for strengthening collaboration between both Bureaux for consideration by the Committee.

* E/C.20/2018/1

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http://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/8th-Session/documents/E-C20-2018-17-Add_1Strengthening-Collaboration-UNGEGN-27July2018.pdf

II. Collaborative activities

- Meetings of the Bureaux in August 2017 and 2018
- Participation to sessions in 2017 and 2018
  - UNGEGN at 7th and 8th Committee of Experts of GGIM
  - GGIM at 30th UNGEGN and 11th UNCSGN
- UNGEGN's contribution to UN-GGIM's work on global fundamental data themes since May 2017…

- Regional collaboration, geographical names database development for Africa
  - UNGEGN's contribution and support of UNECA's GeoNyms application

IV. The way forward – Future opportunities

1. Continue to support the UN-GGIM Working Group on Fundamental Data Themes
2. The creation of a liaison group
   - develop a SMART plan for collaborative engagement
3. UNGEGN's contribution to the Agenda 2030 / SDG indicators
4. UN-GGIM experts to contribute to UNGEGN's WG on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers
5. Work jointly to encourage and communicate the benefits of geographical names standardization and the importance of creating names authorities/committees

IV. The way forward – Future opportunities

6. Regional collaboration – support UNECA's Geonyms project to create a web based geographical names gazetteer for African Member States
7. Explore with the support of the Academic Network strengthening the infusion of toponymy in GIM university programmes

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What came out of the 8th Session of the Committee of Experts on GGIM?

On Friday 3, August 2018, the report E/C/20/2018/17, Item 16 "Strengthening of collaboration with the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names", was presented by Trent Palmer, UNGEGN Rapporteur (USA), on behalf of the Chair Mr. W Watt (Australia).

To see the recording of the 5th meeting of the 8th Session of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, with Trent presenting UNGEGN's report, go to the following: https://bit.ly/2Ly212i

There were **10 interventions** on item 16 from:
Canada, Belgium, Germany, Japan, Sweden, Australia, Italy, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and the Economic Commission for Africa

What came out of the 8th Session of the Committee of Experts on GGIM?

10 interventions emphasize:

- *"Promoting the collection, standardization and dissemination of geographical names"*
- *"Geographical names are an essential part of geospatial information management and its fundamental data themes"*

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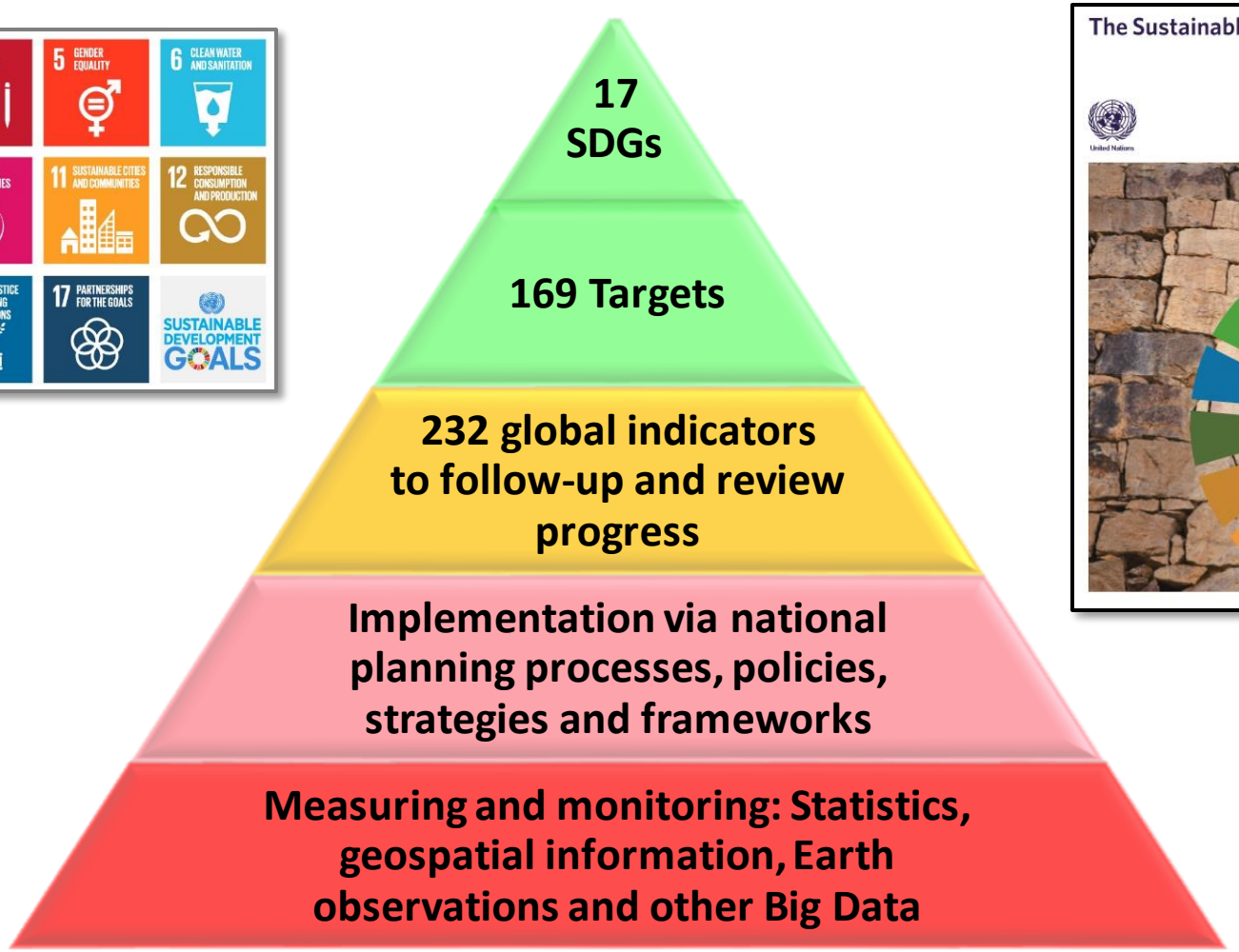
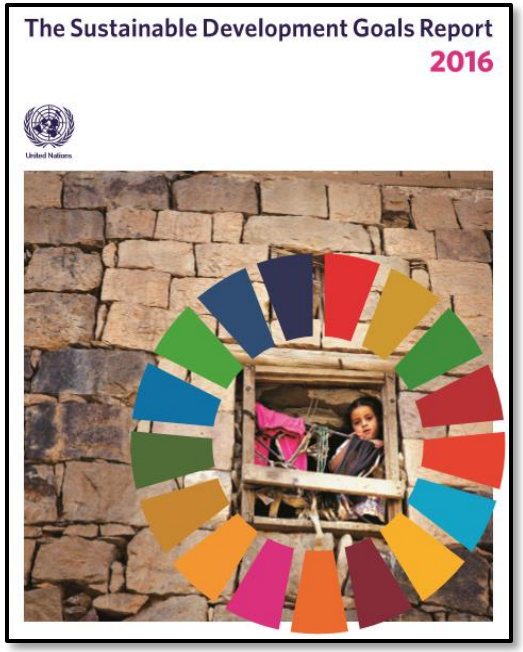
2030 Agenda: Goals, targets, indicators





United Nations Group of Experts
On Geographical Names (UNGEGN)

Promoting the collection, standardization and dissemination of geographical names

Short list of ”geospatial” indicators

https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/iaeg-sdgs/

Report @ UN-GGIM-7

of the **Working Group on Geospatial Information** established by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators emphasizing which SDGs have to be analysed under a “geospatial lens”

Shortlist

results of the analysis of the Global Indicator Framework with a “geographic location” lens

Table A:
List of Indicators where geospatial information has a direct contribution
Table B:
List of additional Indicators where geospatial information has a significant/supporting contribution.

Table A *(annotated)*
List of Indicators where geospatial information has a direct contribution

Goal	Target	Indicator	Tier	
Goal 2 End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture *(Reviewed in depth by HLPF in 2017)*	2.4 By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality	2.4.1 Proportion of agricultural area under productive and sustainable agriculture	Tier III *(FAO & UNEP)*	(1)
Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all *(Review in depth by HLPF in 2018)*	6.3 By 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse globally	6.3.2 Proportion of bodies of water with good ambient water quality	Tier III *(UNEP & UN-Water)*	(2)
	6.5 By 2030, implement integrated water resources management at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation as appropriate	6.5.2 Proportion of transboundary basin area with an operational arrangement for water cooperation	Tier II *(UNESCO-UIS/ UNECE & IUCN)*	(3)
	6.6 By 2020, protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes	6.6.1 Change in the extent of water-related ecosystems over time	Tier III *(UNEP & UN-Water, IUCN, Ramsar)*	(4)

Examples for goals, targets and indicators

Goal 6:

Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

Targets:

6.1: By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all

[…]

6.6: By 2020, protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes

One proposed indicator is 6.6.1: „Percentage of change in the extent of water-related ecosystems over time".

Goal 11:

Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Targets:

[…]

11.7: By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities

One proposed indicator is 11.7.1: „Average share of the built-up area of cities that is open space for public use for all, by sex, age and persons with disabilities".

United Nations Group of Experts On Geographical Names (UNGEGN)

Shortlist & Fundamental Data

Water

Indicator	
2.4.1	Proportion of agricultural area under productive and sustainable agriculture
6.3.1	Proportion of wastewater safely treated
6.3.2	Proportion of bodies of water with good ambient water quality
6.5.2	Proportion of transboundary basin area with an operational arrangement for water cooperation
6.6.1	Change in the extent of water-related ecosystems over time
9.1.1	Proportion of the rural population who live within 2 km of an all-season road
9.c.1	Proportion of population covered by a mobile network, by technology
11.2.1	Proportion of population that has convenient access to public transport, by sex, age and persons with disabilities
11.3.1	Ratio of land consumption rate to population growth rate
11.7.1	Average share of the built-up area of cities that is open space for public use for all, by sex, age and persons with disabilities
14.2.1	Proportion of national exclusive economic zones managed using ecosystem based approaches
14.5.1	Coverage of protected areas in relation to marine areas
15.1.1	Forest area as a proportion of total land area
15.1.2	Proportion of important sites for terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity that are covered by protected areas, by ecosystem type
15.3.1	Proportion of land that is degraded over total land area
15.4.1	Coverage by protected areas of important sites for mountain biodiversity

Shortlist & Fundamental Data

Land Cover and Land Use

Indicator	
2.4.1	Proportion of agricultural area under productive and sustainable agriculture
6.3.1	Proportion of wastewater safely treated
6.3.2	Proportion of bodies of water with good ambient water quality
6.5.2	Proportion of transboundary basin area with an operational arrangement for water cooperation
6.6.1	Change in the extent of water-related ecosystems over time
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Shortlist & Fundamental Data

Geo-graphical Names

Indicator	
2.4.1	Proportion of agricultural area under productive and sustainable agriculture
6.3.1	Proportion of wastewater safely treated
6.3.2	Proportion of bodies of water with good ambient water quality
6.5.2	Proportion of transboundary basin area with an operational arrangement for water cooperation
6.6.1	Change in the extent of water-related ecosystems over time
9.1.1	Proportion of the rural population who live within 2 km of an all-season road
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United Nations Group of Experts On Geographical Names (UNGEGN)

Promoting the collection, standardization and dissemination of geographical names

Example **Geographical Names:** Do they play a specific role for the SDGs?

Goal 11:

Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Targets:

[…]

11.7: By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities

One proposed indicator is 11.7.1: Average share of the built-up area of cities that is open space for public use for all, by sex, age and persons with disabilities

This indicator is an example for **social issues** which have to be addressed and monitored as well.

Apart from the importance of standardized geographical names for the identification of the features ‘open spaces’, the **cultural aspects** and the **language issues** related to geographical names become crucial here.

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Opportunities for UNGEGN to contribute to the Agenda 2030/SDG

- How do geographical names **data files and gazetteers** fit within the big picture of the SDGs?
- Are the issues related to **production (quality) or accessibility**?
- Is toponymic information like **language, status of a name/language**, etc. needed for all SDG indicators where geospatial data is needed?
- What is **UNGEGN's contribution** to this overall UN/DESA - ECOSOC work program - 2030 Agenda – leaving no one behind?

UNGEGN Bulletin No. 54:
"Geographical names supporting sustainable development" already published in June 2018

Just one tool to support UNGEGN's contribution to the Agenda 2030/SDG…

"Inviting Members of UN-GGIM Working Group on Fundamental Data Themes to ***contribute to UNGEGN's Online Discussion Forum*** *on the SDG and 2030 Agenda issues related to geographical names as part of fundamental data themes"*

https://wiki.gdi-de.org/display/wgtdfg/Discussion+forum

Just one tool to support UNGEGN's contribution to the Agenda 2030/SDG…

Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers /… / Forum 5 - Support of UNGEGN to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) indicator framework

F5-Q2: Is toponymic information like language, status of a name/language, etc. needed for all SDG indicators where geospatial data is needed?

Erstellt von Sabine Afflerbach-Thom am Nov 28, 2017

Keine Stichwörter

2 Kommentare

Sabine Afflerbach-Thom sagt:

[Contribution by Eman Orieby]:

Country level, admin level and low level like streets, standardized country names are important. Addresses are important for investigating who has electricity and so on, therefore it is necessary to have standardized street names to have good data on that.

- Nov 28, 2017

Pier-Giorgio Zaccheddu sagt:

At the 5th UN-GGIM: Europe Plenary Meeting in June 2018 a workshop was conducted to discuss the work and output of the global UN-GGIM Working Group Global Fundamental Data Themes. I took the opportunity to emphasize the importance of the geograpghical names standardization for the fundamental data theme "geographical names". By that I provided examples for SDG indicators where language is crucial.

The UNGEGN Biulletin #54 provides examples where geographical names associated to attributes providing language and cultural heritage information play an important role: https://unstats.un.org/UNSD/geoinfo/UNGEGN/docs/Bulletin/UNGEGN_bulletin_54_finalver.pdf

- Aug 07, 2018

https://wiki.gdi-de.org/display/wgtdfg/Discussion+forum

Thank you!

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