

**Strengthening Collaboration between  
UN-GGIM and UNGEGN  
Project Proposal**

**A. Project Title**

Preparation of a compendium of institutional arrangements on shared good practices between national mapping agencies and national names authorities

**B. Background**

1. For the past five years papers, reports, proposals have been presented on strengthening relations between the UN Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) and the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN).
2. The Committee of Experts at its eleventh session, in decision 11/112, supported efforts and actions for strengthening interaction and collaboration between the Bureaus of the Committee of Experts and the Group of Experts, including opportunities for partnership, and also encouraged Member States to improve communication, coordination and cooperation between geospatial information management authorities and geographical names authorities at the national and regional levels, including across thematic areas, to strengthen geospatial information management.
3. Promoting strengthening of collaboration among functional commissions and expert bodies of ECOSOC is also supported in the [summary recommendations by the Vice President of ECOSOC](#), noted by the Council's decision 2022/334 adopted at its Management Segment on 2 June 2022. Reference is made to Recommendations (section III, paragraphs 15, 19, 22 and 24) which outlines ways to promote the further strengthening of collaboration among ECOSOC's Functional Commissions and Expert Bodies.
4. A significant achievement for UNGEGN on strengthening relations, was to have had two nominated experts who actively participated in work of the Committee of Experts Working Group on Global Fundamental Geospatial Data Themes. They made considerable contributions to preparing the description of the theme "Geographical Names", one of the 14 adopted Global Fundamental Geospatial Data Themes.
5. Further proposals to the Committee of Experts included: (i) meetings of both Bureaux, (ii) creating an inventory of institutional arrangements to be used to develop a typology of UN-GGIM and UNGEGN organizations, to be circulated to both bodies for discussion; (iii) exploring the possible collaboration with the UN-GGIM Academic Network to consider including geographical names in the delivery of GIS education and training; and (iv) pursuing the creation of a liaison group with representatives from both bodies to provide a regular flow of information between both expert bodies.
6. Both ECOSOC bodies may consider (i) forging links to share and exchange technical expertise, share geographical names data, and conduct joint data collection exercises among other cost saving and efficiency initiatives; (ii) work jointly at the global, regional and national level to encourage and communicate the benefits of geographical names standardization and the importance of creating names authorities; and (iii) at the global level pursue joint capacity building initiatives particularly for those countries in transition and on the cusp of implementing national geospatial information management systems.
7. In pursuance of these decisions and resolutions, the Group of Experts proposes a collaborative project to prepare a compendium of institutional arrangements on shared good practices between national mapping agencies and national names authorities.

### C. Objectives

8. This proposal invites National Mapping Agencies (NMAs) and National Geographical Names Authorities (NGNAs) to collaborate and contribute to the development of a compendium of institutional arrangements and operational good practices that strengthens working relations between mapping and geographical names authorities to support the collection, management, and dissemination of standardized geographical names.
- i. To build a stronger relationship between the Group of Experts and the Committee of Experts.
  - ii. To identify, collate and document relevant and acceptable principles, examples of good practices and guidelines/recommendations that may be used by both NMAs and NGNAs across Member States to strengthen their operations.

### D. Problem Statements

- i. In many countries NMAs and NGNAs are in separate organizations and often operate in silos with minimal collaboration on relevant and related geographical names mapping activities. In other cases, both NMAs and NGNAs are within the same government agency/organizations, yet sometimes have limited or no relations. Having no relations often leads to duplication of effort, multiple and inconsistent names data sets and overall inefficient use of resources.
- ii. Lack of awareness of and sensitivity to the importance and benefits of geographical names, and the competencies required for the authoritative standardization of geographical names.
- iii. Budgetary and human resources constraints and lack of prioritization of the importance of geographical names standardization activities and operations.

### E. Tasks

9. The following are the initial tasks identified required to undertake the exercise. They are subject to further refinement, identification of responsible parties and time frame. It is envisioned that the activities to be conducted will be voluntary and cost neutral. Should financing be available consideration can be given to contracting the services of a consultant.

#### Initial High-Level Tasks

1. Select and solicit participation of NMA's and NGNA's
2. Decide on areas to be queried and prepare questions to be asked of NMA's and NGNA's by way of interviews and or surveys.
3. Conduct desk study - one on one discussion/interview session or on-line surveys and on-line web searches of NMA's and NGNA's websites
4. Collate and analyze data from interviews, surveys and desk study.
5. Prepare first draft of compendium of good practices.
6. Review and feedback to finalize compendium of good practices.
7. Present the (draft) compendium at the 2023/third UNGEGN session and thirteenth session on UN-GGIM.
8. Conduct joint side events to discuss findings and identify future activities.

## **F. Areas for geographical names data management to be considered for interview sessions with NMA's and NGNA's.**

The number of factors to be considered in collating good practices will depend on the availability of resources to conduct the exercise. This exercise is expected to extract and identify the benefits advantages and disadvantages of the collaboration modalities and practices across NMA's and NGNA's and how these practices contribute to Member States achieving their SDG's, and development targets. The following are a list of factors to be considered in investigating working practices, taking into consideration NMA's and NGNA's that reside in the same organization and those that are separate and or in different entities. See the appendix for a list of Member States and NMA's and NGNA's. Please note that the list is high level and not exhaustive.

1. Legislation, policies, standards, guidelines and strategies, work plans and programmes
2. Institutional arrangements – operating modalities, human resources, working structures
3. Technology
4. Data management – from collection and storage to dissemination and use
5. Communication, public relations and engagement with stakeholders – efficient information exchange
6. Financial management
7. Cultural

## **G. Stakeholders/Partners**

The tasks as outlined in section E requires the participation of representatives from both expert bodies, a focal point for project coordination and management and project workers.

1. Representatives from the UN-GGIM Bureau
2. Representatives from the UNGEGN Expanded Bureau
3. Selected NMA's and NGNA's. Two tables are provided showing countries and NMA's and NGNA's, the first table lists countries having NMA's and NGNA's in the same organization and the other table list countries not where NMA's and NGNA's are not in the same organization.(Please note that the lists of Member States are not complete.)
4. UNSD -UN-GGIM and UNGEGN Secretariats

At the twelfth session of the Committee of Experts on UN-GGIM in 2022, twelve Member States in their interventions for agenda item 16, "Collaboration with the UNGEGN" indicated their support for the project proposal. The Member States are:- Argentina, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, Jamaica, Sweden, Canada, United Kingdom, Germany, Senegal, Burundi, Morocco, and New Zealand. These countries could serve as the first batch of countries to be formally invited to participate in this collaborative project exercise.

## **H. Project Implementation**

How the project is to be staffed is to be addressed. Several options have been identified and are to be explored to determine feasibility. This requires further scoping of the project in terms of factors to be considered, number of countries to be included in the survey – ensuring geographical balance across UN member states and duration among others.

### **Option 1**

The UNSD identifies and assigns existing staff within the division to coordinate and conduct the project and tasks.

### **Option 2**

The UNSD seeks the services of a UN intern for a period of six months. Lead time will be required to contract an intern.

**Option 3**

NMA's and NGNA's identify staff to be placed on virtual secondment for an agreed time and duration.

**Option 4**

NMA's and NGNA's conduct a self-study to identify good practices according to a template/questions to be designed.

**Option 5**

Contract the services of a consultant to complete the project. This option is only feasible should funding be made available through UNSD existing resources or trust fund support of a UN Member State.

Noting that implementation could be a combination of options, depending on the uptake from Member States, voluntarism, and the availability of resources.

## APPENDIX

### Geographical Names and Geospatial Data Management in same organization

Country	UNGEGN Organization	UN-GGIM Organization
	<b>Geographical Names and Geospatial Data Management in same organization</b>	
<b>Argentina</b>	National Geographic Institute	National Geographic Institute
<b>Austria</b>	Austrian Board on Geographical Names	Federal Office of Metrology and Surveying
<b>Botswana</b>	Department of Surveys & Mapping	Department of Surveys and Mapping
<b>Brazil</b>	Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics, Centro de Referencia em Nomes Geograficos	Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics
<b>Canada</b>	Natural Resources Canada	National Resources Canada
<b>Chile</b>	Instituto Geografico Militar	Ministry of National Property
<b>Cyprus</b>	Cyprus Permanent Committee for the Standardization of Geographical Names, Department of Lands and Surveys	Cyprus Department of Lands and Surveys
<b>Czechia</b>	Czech Office for Surveying, Mapping and Cadastre	Land Survey Office of the Czech Republic
<b>Democratic Republic of the Congo</b>	Institut Géographique du Congo (IGC)	Institut Géographique du Congo (IGC)
<b>Egypt</b>	Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics	Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics
<b>Finland</b>	National Land Survey of Finland	National Land Survey of Finland
<b>France</b>	IGN France International	National Institute of Geographic Information
<b>Germany</b>	Federal Agency for Cartography and Geodesy	Federal Agency for Cartography and Geodesy
<b>Hungary</b>	Institute of Geodesy, Cartography and Remote Sensing	Institute of Geodesy, Cartography and Remote Sensing (FÖMI)
<b>Indonesia</b>	Geospatial Information Agency	Geospatial Information Agency
<b>Islamic Republic of Iran</b>	National Cartographic Center of Iran	National Cartographic Center of Iran
<b>Italy</b>	Commission for the Italian Official Toponymy, Italian Geographic Military Institute	Italian Geographic Military Institute
<b>Japan</b>	Geospatial Information Authority of Japan	Geospatial Information Authority of Japan
<b>Lithuania</b>	State Enterprise Centre of Registers of the Republic of Lithuania	State Enterprise "Centre of Registers"
<b>Madagascar</b>	National Institute for Cartography and Hydrography	National Institute for Cartography and Hydrography
<b>Mexico</b>	Instituto Nacional de Estadística Geografía e Informática	Instituto Nacional de Estadística Geografía e Informática
<b>New Zealand</b>	New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa	Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand

Country	UNGEGN Organization	UN-GGIM Organization
Philippines	National Mapping and Resource Information Authority (NAMRIA)	National Mapping and Resource Information Authority (NAMRIA)
Republic of Korea	National Geographic Information Institute	National Geographic Information Institute
Russian Federation	Real Estate Department, Ministry of Economic Development	Ministry of Economic Development
Singapore	Singapore Land Authority	Singapore Land Authority
Sri Lanka	Survey of Sri Lanka	Survey Department of Sri Lanka
Sweden	Institute of language and folklore Lantmäteriet,	Lantmäteriet, (The Swedish mapping, cadastral and land registration authority)

\* Note names of organizations may not be correct as they may have changed

### Geographical Names and Geospatial Data Management are not in the same organization

Country	UNGEGN Organization	UN-GGIM Organization
	<b>Geographical Names and Geospatial Data Management are not in the same organization</b>	
Algeria	National Council of Geographical Information	National Institute of Cartography and Remote Sensing (Algeria)
Australia	Department of Natural Resources Mines and Energy - Permanent Committee on Place Names	Geoscience Australia
Cameroon	Geographical Research Division, National Commission on Toponymy	National Institute of Cartography
China	Ministry of Civil Affairs	National Administration of Surveying, Mapping and Geoinformation of China
Denmark	Copenhagen University	Danish Geodata Agency
Estonia	Place Names Board of Estonia, Institute of Estonian Language	Estonian National Land Board
Ireland	Department of Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht	Ordnance Survey Ireland
Netherlands	Dutch Language Union	Cadastre and Land Registry Agency and Mapping Agency
Norway	The Language Council of Norway/Ministry of Culture	Norwegian Mapping Authority
Poland	Commission for Standardization of Geographical Names outside Poland, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration	Geodesy and Cartography of Poland
Romania	Institute of Geography of the Romanian Academy	National Agency for Cadastre and Land Registration of Romania
Saudi Arabia	National Committee on Geographical Names in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	General Commission for Survey

<b>Country</b>	<b>UNGEGN Organization</b>	<b>UN-GGIM Organization</b>
<b>South Africa</b>	Department of Arts and Culture, south African Geographical Names Council	Department of Rural Development and Land Reform
<b>Sweden</b>	Institute for Language and Folklore Lantmäteriet	Lantmäteriet (The Swedish mapping, cadastral and land registration authority)
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Permanent Committee on Geographical Names	Ordnance Survey
<b>United States</b>	U.S. Board on Geographic Names U.S. Department of State	U.S. Census Bureau

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