CREATING AN EQUAL SOCIETY THROUGH GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

UNEGGN 2. Session
Panel Discussion, May 5. 2021
A sense of belonging?

- Does geographical names reflect society?
- Are we all given identity through geographical names?

- The Covid-19 pandemic laid bare societal inequalities in terms of
  - Race
  - Gender and sexuality
  - Class
- The movement, Black Lives Matter, showed that systemic inequality perpetrates society
- ... also in geographical names
Symbols of power

- Geographical names are strong identity markers
  - they give individuals a sense of belonging and bootstrap a national awareness

- Those that control naming, control identity and how society is perceived

- What if society standards change?
  - should geographical names reflect these changes and respond to new demands?
  - and how?
To achieve inclusion

RESTORATION & REVIVAL

LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION

IDENTITY & VOICE

RESPECT
Responding to change

- More inclusive and equal geographical names
  - how do we achieve this?

- In relation to geographical names standardization:
  - Respect for indigenous peoples, colors and creeds
  - Respect for all national, ethnic and religious minorities
  - Work for gender balance
  - Avoid outright offensive and disrespectful geographical names
  - But respect existing naming fabric
The panel:

a. Carla Jack - restoring indigenous geographical names
b. Tara Wallace - dealing with derogatory geographical names
c. Rikke Olesen - gender equality in new urban naming
d. Annette Torensjö - equality in naming seen from a cultural heritage perspective
Wrapping up
The way forward

INCLUDE ALL OF SOCIETY

ACKNOWLEDGE SOCIETY NORMS CHANGE

MONITOR POTENTIAL ISSUES
Acting on call for change

◦ More inclusive and equal geographical names
  – how do we achieve this?
◦ Develop mechanisms for geographical names standardization to:
  ◦ Respect geographical names of indigenous peoples
  ◦ Work for gender balance in naming situations
  ◦ Respect for all colors and creeds
  ◦ Avoid outright offensive and disrespectful geographical names

◦ Set up mechanisms for regular reviews of compatibility of standardization rules with societal needs
◦ Public consultation is critical
◦ Relation building with indigenous and minority communities is a beneficial outcome
Work with

- Processes of Standardization
- Processes of Involvement
- Evaluate & Re-evaluate
- Benchmarks
## Plan for the Side event

| 1. | Opening remarks – Chair UNGEGN, Pierre Jaillard | 7:30 - 7:35 |
| 1. | Introductory statement and setting the scene - Moderator, Peder Gammeltoft | 7:35 – 7:45 |
| 1. | Panellists – Introduce their topic |
| a. | Carla Jack, Canada: ‘Restoring indigenous geographical names’ | 7:45 – 8:05 |
| b. | Tara Wallace, United States of America: ‘Derogatory names’ |
| c. | Rikke Olesen, Denmark: ‘Equality in new urban naming’ |
| d. | Annette Torensjö, Sweden: ‘Inclusion in view of cultural heritage’ |
| 1. | Panel discussion led by the Moderator | 8:05 – 8:25 |
| 1. | Open discussion with questions from the virtual floor | 8:25 – 8:45 |
| 1. | Wrap up and closing | 8:45 – 8:50 |

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