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English

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**United Nations Group of Experts on  
Geographical Names**

**2023 session**

New York, 1 – 5 May 2023

**Item 9 of the provisional agenda \***

**Issues of publicity for the Group of Experts and funding of Group projects**

**Report on the activities of the Working Group on Publicity  
and Funding**

Submitted by the Convenor of the Working Group on Publicity and  
Funding \*\*

**Summary**

The full report highlights the aims and activities of the Working Group on Publicity and Funding concerned with raising awareness of the need for the standardization of geographical names and the work of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, in particular efforts to advance its digital presence. Among other things, the report highlights the onboarding activities organized and conducted by the Group of Experts for new experts attending the sessions of the Group.

The activities of the Working Group have been affected by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and national recovery efforts, resulting in much-reduced support and engagement.

The report also contains information on the Working Group's future plans, particularly with regard to the involvement of the Working Group in the implementation of strategy 5, promotion and capacity-building, of the strategic plan and programme of work, 2021–2029, of the Group of Experts.

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\* GEGN.2/2023/1

\*\* Prepared by the Convenor of the Working Group on Publicity and Funding, Peder Gammeltoft, Norway.

## Report of the Working Group on Publicity and Funding

### Convenor's Report

#### A. Aims of the Working Group on Publicity and Funding

1. Established following the Sixth UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names in 1992, the Working Group on Publicity and Funding aims to make the activities of the UNGEGN more visible and, where appropriate, to seek or help identify funds to support:

- Publication and dissemination of material relevant to the advancement of geographical names standardization;
- Provision of training for the development and management of geographical names administration;
- Establishment of names authorities; and
- Participation of delegates in UNGEGN events and activities.

#### B. Working Group Meetings

2. Meetings of the Working Group on Publicity and Funding have traditionally been held jointly with the Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation. However, owing to effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, the two working groups have not been able to gather for since the First UNGEGN Session in New York on 3. May 2019. The next joint Working Group Meeting for Working Groups on Evaluation and Implementation and Publicity and Funding will take place at this session in Conference Room CR-7 on Wednesday May 3rd, 2023, at 13.15-14.30. The meeting is an open event, and everyone is welcome.

#### C. Press and Publicity Efforts

3. Webpage: The current UNGEGN webpage has been in production since late 2018 and is found at: <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/>.

4. The Working Group welcomes input and constructive suggestions for improvement, as webpages are always possible to update. A suggestion forwarded by the Norden Division to dedicate space for the hosting of division reports is discussed in a separate report: GEGN.2/2023/77/CRP.77.

5. UNGEGN Information Bulletin: The Information Bulletin is being published biannually and informs UNGEGN Experts about current and upcoming items of interest to the organization. According to the UNGEGN Secretariat, there are more than 860 persons and institutions on the mailing list.

6. Since 2014, the Bulletin has had themed issues, where themes relevant to UNGEGN and standardization of geographical names are explored. Since the last report, the Bulletin has been issued with the following themes, including the Special Edition mentioned above:

- #61 (June 2021) - Minority Names and Geographical Names in a Multilingual Setting
- #62 (Nov. 2021) - Geographical Names in an Urban Environment
- #63 (June 2022) - Geographical Names as Indicators of the Environment
- #64 (November 2022) - Making Geographical Names Data Accessible

7. Thematic issues have created a more attractive and relevant medium for information and for contributions. In order to keep this positive development ongoing, the Working Group urges experts to keep contributing with relevant articles for the bulletin.

#### **D. Funding**

8. Sponsorship: The need for supporting representative of developing countries remains as crucial as ever to this Working Group. At the 2021 Session, the virtual format rendered sponsorship unnecessary. This time, however, the Secretariat and the Working Group has been approached by 11, of which UNGEGN has been able find funding for six persons from Africa, Asia and South America. In addition, the Francophone Division has generously supported participation for a member of its division from Africa.

9. Training events: The UNSD, at the request of a Member States or a Linguistic/Geographical Division, may provide funding to support one regional or international training session annually. The host country and national organization will be required to cover local costs such as venue, technical costs – microphones, consumables, transportation among others.

10. The Working Group would very much like to hear from experts or organizations planning or wishing to undertake international or regional training events in cooperation with UNGEGN. To initiate the proper procedure for convening UNGEGN training events, requests for support should approach the convenor of this working group. The requestors should have completed the training request proposal form (provided as an attachment to this report). The request will be evaluated, and a decision taken pending the availability of funds from the UNSD and trainers.

11. Requests for UNGEGN training support should be submitted in advance of biennial sessions to enable the Working Group on Publicity and Funding to make the necessary decisions and arrangements so that such requests may be presented to a session of the Group of Experts for their approval.

12. The next training event will take place in Bali, Indonesia, on June 19th-24th in collaboration with Badan Informasi Geospasial (BIG) Indonesia. This training event has been underway for some time, but the unforeseen global pandemic has hitherto delayed the event in taking place. For more on this training event, please see the report of the Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy, GEGN.2/2023/14/CRP.14. Four to five participants from developing countries will be funded by the UN Statistics Division.

#### **E. End of Convenorship**

13. The current convenor of this working group has gained new work responsibilities and is now unable to manage two convenorships for the Expert Group. This therefore serves to notify the Group of Experts that the period of service as convenor of the Working Group on Publicity and Funding ends effective 5th May 2023 at the end of the 3rd UNGEGN Session.