

INTERNATIONAL TRAINING ON TOPONYMY

MODULES

DAY 1

19 - 23 JUNE 2023

BALI, INDONESIA



United Nations
Group of Experts on
Geographical Names



BADAN INFORMASI
GEOSPASIAL





UNGEGN

United Nations Group of Experts
on Geographical Names



International Training on Toponymy

Bali, 19 - 23 June
2023

MODULE 2: National Agencies, Models, and Procedures

***Cecille Blake
UN Statistics***

***Monday 19 June, 2023
Padma, Bali***



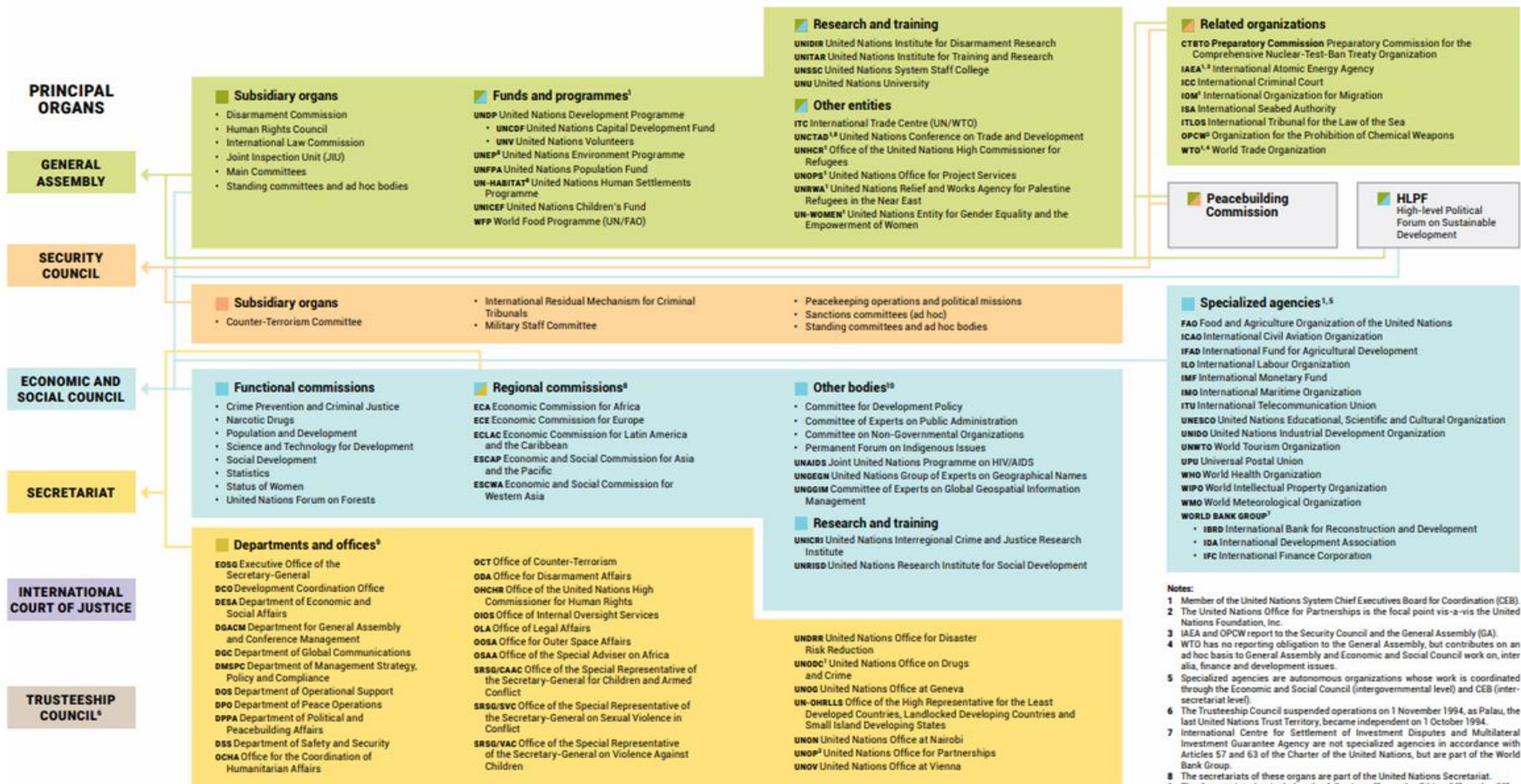


CONTENT

1. The United Nations
2. What precipitated the creation of the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names
3. Why is geographical names standardization necessary
4. The evolution of UNGEGN
5. UNGEGN Mission, Objectives and Principles
6. UNGEGN Structure and Governance
7. UNGEGN Working Arrangements
8. The UNGEGN Strategic Plan and Programme of Work
9. The Importance of National Names Authorities
10. Identifying the need for the creation of a Names Authority
11. Policy and Legislation to support the National Names Authority
12. Establishing a National Names Authority
13. Models of National Names Authorities
14. What makes for a successful National Names Authority



THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM



Notes:

- Member of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB).
- The United Nations Office for Partnerships is the focal point vis-à-vis the United Nations Foundation, Inc.
- IAEA and OPCW report to the Security Council and the General Assembly (GA).
- WTO has no reporting obligation to the General Assembly, but contributes on an ad hoc basis to General Assembly and Economic and Social Council work on inter alia, finance and development issues.
- Specialized agencies are autonomous organizations whose work is coordinated through the Economic and Social Council (intergovernmental level) and CEB (inter-secretarial level).
- The Trusteeship Council suspended operations on 1 November 1994, as Palau, the last United Nations Trust Territory, became independent on 1 October 1994.
- International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes and Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency are not specialized agencies in accordance with Articles 57 and 63 of the Charter of the United Nations, but are part of the World Bank Group.
- The secretariats of these organs are part of the United Nations Secretariat.
- The Secretariat also includes the following offices: the Ethics Office, the Office of the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services, and the Office of Administration of Justice.
- For a complete list of Economic and Social Council subsidiary bodies, see un.org/ecosoc.



KEY PRIORITIES ESTABLISHED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY



Promotion of sustained economic growth and sustainable development



Maintenance of international peace and security



Development in Africa



Promotion and protection of human rights



Effective coordination of humanitarian assistance



Promotion of justice and international law



Disarmament



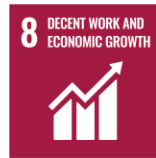
Drug control, crime prevention and combating terrorism



UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Actions requested by the General Assembly



1. An improved and more effective **institutional framework** for sustainable development
2. A global framework for financing development post-2015- **Data, monitoring and follow-up**
3. **Follow-up and review** of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level
4. Strengthening the Economic and Social Council
5. Impact of **rapid technological change** on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals



Geographical Names and SDG targets and indicators

SDG 1: No poverty

Target / Indicator

Place name connection

Target 1.4 Equal rights to ownership, basic services, technology and economic resources

Location and extent defined through place names

Indicator 1.1.1 Proportion of poverty by geographic location

Indicator 1.4.1 Access to basic services

Indicator 1.4.2 Legally recognized land ownership

MODULE ACTIVITY – Connecting the SDG's

Can you connect geographical names to other SDG'S, targets and indicators?

[Global Indicator Framework after 2023 refinement.English.xlsx \(live.com\)](#)

- i. Select one goal, one indicator and related target, then describe how geographical names are relevant to the collection of data necessary for the achievement, monitoring and management of the goal.

Copy relevant cells from the excel sheet and add a column -place name connection.





What precipitated the creation of the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names

1. Some examples of problems are:
 - a. Places having different **names in different languages** – for example, Jerusalem/El Quds;
 - b. Places having **different spellings in different languages** – for example, Geneva/Geneve/Genf/Ginebra/Ginevra;
 - c. **Different methods of transliteration** from one alphabet to another – for example from Arabic: Wadi el Jabal/Ouadi el Djebel/Ouadi el Gabal;
 - d. **Different methods of transcribing** ideographic languages(for example, Chinese) to alphabetic languages;
 - e. **Differing methods of rendering names** from unwritten languages;
 - f. The exact extent of named geographical features;
 - g. **Variations in the meanings** of common geographic terms; for example, “creek” may refer to an inlet from the sea or to a small stream far from the sea





UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names

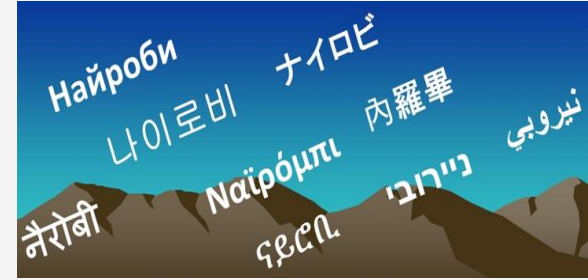
- A subsidiary body of ECOSOC
- Promotes standardization of geographical names in response to national requirements
- Creates and follows-up on the implementation of resolutions
- Provides a forum for discussion – geographers, linguists, administrators, GIS specialists, cartographers ...
- Supported by a Secretariat at UNHQ (NY)
- Creates working groups and task teams to focus on specific areas of current concern and interest
- Has 24 geographical/linguistic divisions for grassroots work





UNGEGN's aims

- Encourage the creation of national names authorities
 - backed by legislation
 - respect local usage of names
 - collect, store and disseminate authorized names - **for government and public use**
- Raise awareness of the value and benefits of geographical names standardization
- Recognize the value of geographical names both to identify place and as elements of cultural heritage
- Develop single scientifically-based systems of romanization
- Contribute to work of UN bodies and collaborate with non-UN organizations



Early days of UNGEGN

- **1959 – Resolution 715A (XXVII) of ECOSOC**
 - To bring together experts to advise on geographical names for use in UN Cartography
- **1960 – 1st meeting of experts in New York**
 - USA, France, UK, Iran, Guatemala, China
- **1967 - First Conference held in Geneva**
 - 11 conferences every 5 years until 2017
 - New York, Geneva, London, Athens, Montréal, Berlin
 - 30 UNGEGN sessions – two (2) between conferences
 - New York, Geneva, Vienna, Nairobi, Bangkok



Meredith Burrill, USA



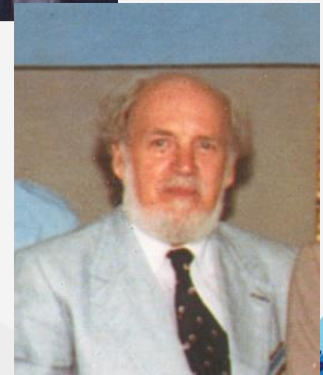


Some Major Milestones – 1970s & 1980s

- 1970** First Working Groups
- 1972** “UNGEKN” and first Divisions
- 1979** Toponymic Guidelines started – e.g. Austria
- 1982** First Toponymy Training Course - Indonesia
- 1987** Compendium of Resolutions started
- 1988** First UNGEKN Newsletter (now Bulletin)



Josef Breu,
Austria



Ferjan Ormeling, Snr
Netherlands

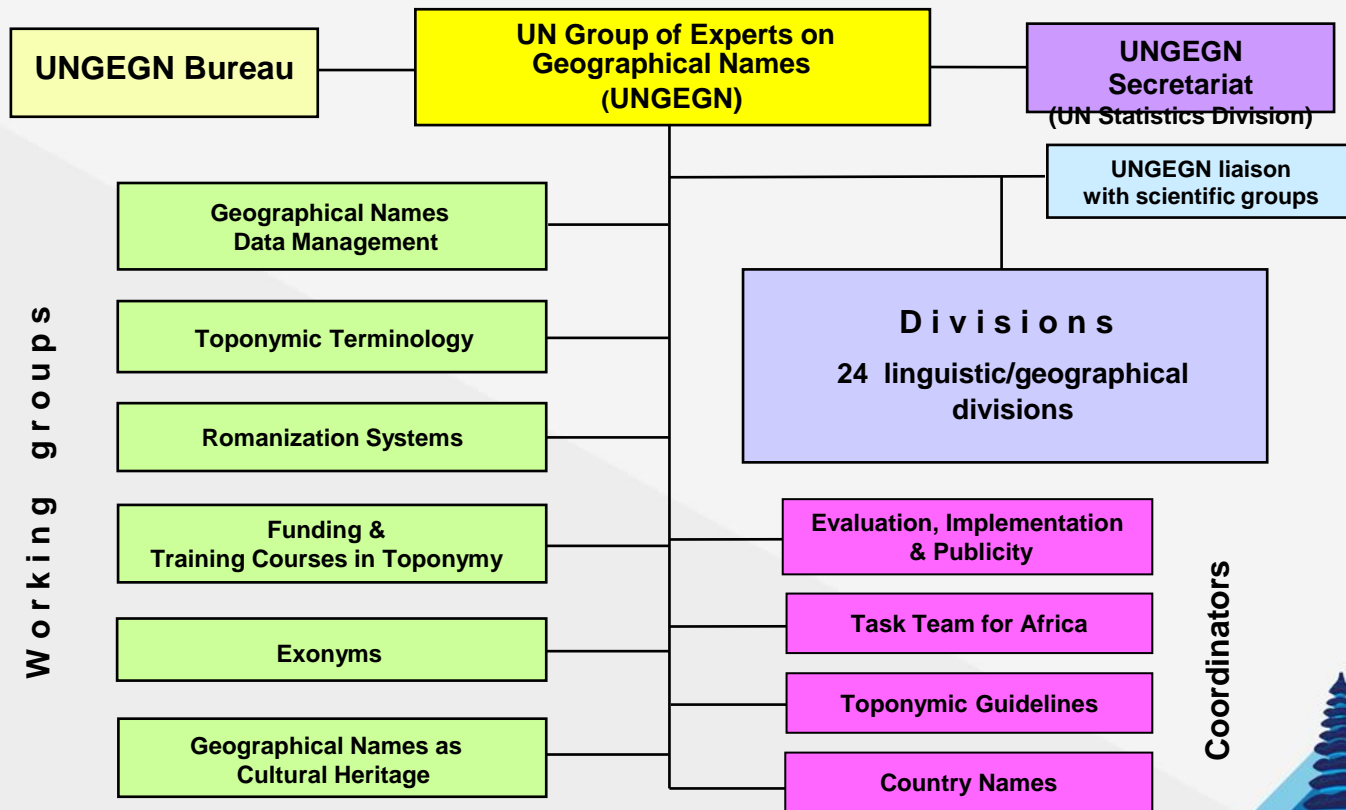


Milestones – 2000s

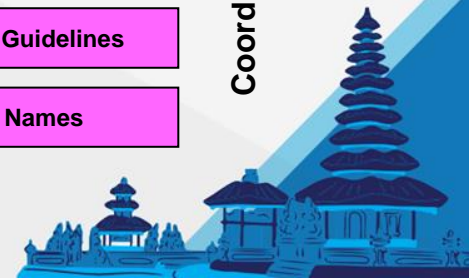
- 2001** First brochure published
- 2002** UNGEGN website launched
- 2004** Task Team for Africa
Online UNGEGN World geo-names
database
- 2010** Online database of Resolutions
- 2012** Web-based training course
- 2016** Formalized cooperation with UN-GGIM
(started in 2010)



UNEGN Structure



Supported by the
UN Statistics Division
through the
UNEGN Secretariat



UNEGN Bureau

Officers of UNEG

Chairperson

- Mr. Pierre Jaillard, France

Vice-Chairpersons

- Mr. Sungjae Choo, Republic of Korea
- Ms. Susan Birtles, Australia

Rapporteurs

- Ms. Wendy Shaw, New Zealand
- Ms. Ana Cristina Resende, Brazil



UNEGN Chairperson



Vice-Chairpersons



Rapporteurs



UNEGGN Divisions (24)

Africa Central	Baltic	India
Africa East	Celtic	Latin America
Africa South	China	Norden
Africa West	Dutch- and German-speaking	Pacific South-West
Arabic	East Central and South-East Europe	Portuguese-speaking
Asia East (other than China)	Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia	Romano-Hellenic
Asia South-East	East Mediterranean (other than Arabic)	United Kingdom
Asia South-West (other than Arabic)	French-speaking	United States / Canada



UNEGN working groups

אבתיך תיראסיק
Inuktitut Titirasiq

Romanization

Δ	ii	u	uu	a	aa
i					
Δ					
p	ti	tu	tu	ta	ta
t	ti	tu	tu	ta	ta
k	ki	ku	ku	ka	ka
g	gi	gu	gu	ga	ga
m	mi	mu	mu	ma	ma
n	ni	nu	nu	na	na
s/h	si/hii	su/hu	suu/huu	sa/ha	sa/ha
l	li	lu	lu	la	la
j	ji	ju	ju	ja	ja
v	vi	vu	vu	va	va
r	ri	ru	ru	ra	ra
q	qi	qu	qu	qa	qa
ng					

Training

Geo-names Data Mgmt

Exonyms

Terminology

Evaluation / implementation



Country names

Cultural heritage

Publicity / funding



Task Team for Africa

Coordination of Toponymic Guidelines



UNEGN Liaison with other Organizations

1. International Cartographic Association (**ICA**)
2. Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (**ICANN**)
3. International Council of Onomastic Sciences (**ICOS**)
4. International Council on Indigenous Place Names (**ICIPN**)
5. International Hydrographic Organization (**IHO**)
6. International Organization for Standardization (**ISO**) Technical Committee 211 (TC/211)
7. Pan-American Institute of Geography and History (**PAIGH**)
8. Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (**SCAR**)
9. Unicode Consortium



Rules of Procedure

Decision 2018/264

Rules of procedure of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names and draft agenda for its first session

At its 51st plenary meeting, on 24 July 2018, the Economic and Social Council, recalling its resolution 2018/2 of 10 November 2017, in which it decided that the rules of procedure of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names were to be drafted by the Bureau, in close consultation with the States Members of the United Nations, and be presented to the Council for adoption, decided:

- (a) To approve the rules of procedure of the Group, as set out in annex I to the present decision;
- (b) To approve the draft agenda for the first session of the Group, to be held in 2019, as set out in annex II to the present decision.

Annex I

Rules of procedure of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names

Guiding principles

I. Aims

The basic aims of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names are:

- (a) To emphasize the importance of the standardization of geographical names at the national and international levels and to demonstrate the benefits to be derived from such standardization;
- (b) To collect the results of the work of national and international bodies dealing with the standardization of geographical names and to facilitate the dissemination of those results to States Members of the United Nations;
- (c) To study and propose principles, policies and methods suitable for resolving problems of national and international standardization;
- (d) To play an active role, by facilitating the supply of scientific and technical help, in particular to developing countries, in creating mechanisms for the national and international standardization of geographical names;
- (e) To provide a vehicle for liaison and coordination among Member States, and between Member States and international organizations, on work associated with the standardization of geographical names;

Rules of Procedure of UNGEGN

- The policies and regulations governing the meetings of the UNGEGN are laid out in the Rules of Procedure (Decision 2018/264).
- They constitute a set of procedures and conducts that ensure the proper functioning of meetings.
- All participants are obliged to respect these rules and follow the procedures.

The Rules of Procedure are available here:

<https://www.un.org/ecosoc/sites/www.un.org.ecosoc/files/documents/2018/decision.2018.264.pdf>





UNGE GN Rules of Procedure

- **DEFINITIONS** Rule 2
- **COMPOSITION** Rule 3
- **REPRESENTATION FOR SESSIONS**
Rule 4
- **SESSIONS** Rule 5
- **AGENDA** Rule 6
- **BUREAU** Rules 7 to 9
- **SECRETARIAT** Rules 10 to 12
- **CONDUCT OF BUSINESS** Rules 13 to
24
- **DECISION MAKING** Rules 25 to 36
- **ELECTIONS** Rules 37 to 39
- **LANGUAGES AND INTERPRETATION**
Rules 40 to 41
- **DOCUMENTS** Rules 42 to 43
- **RECORDS AND MEETINGS** Rules 44 to
45
- **SUBSIDIARY BODIES** Rules 46 to 47
- **PARTICIPATION OF OBSERVERS** Rule
48
- **AMENDMENTS** Rule 49





Evolution of UNGEGN – recent history

- **2017 – Reorganization to “new” UNGEGN**
 - To convene every 2 years starting in 2019
 - Reports to ECOSOC
- **2019 – Creating Strategic Plan**
 - Including Programme of Work
 - Document (CRP.94) for approval at this session (Ag #7)
- **2021 – After approval of Strategic Plan**
 - Inviting Member States to become involved in the implementation of the Programme of Work





Overview: structure and main contents



Technical expertise



Relationships, links and connections



Effective work programmes



Culture, heritage and language recognition



Promotion and capacity building

Five strategies are:

1. Technical expertise
2. Relationships, links and connections
3. Effective work programmes
4. Culture, heritage and language recognition
5. Promotion and capacity building





Overview: structure and main contents

- Composed of foreword, executive summary, introduction (UNGEGN history, outreach, SWOT), vision, values, aims, five strategies plus alignment to SDGs, programme of work for five strategies, implementation framework (organization, monitoring, reporting and evaluation, and financing), and appendix and abbreviation references.
- Programme of work provides current status and further needs, action items, actors and time frame for each strategy.

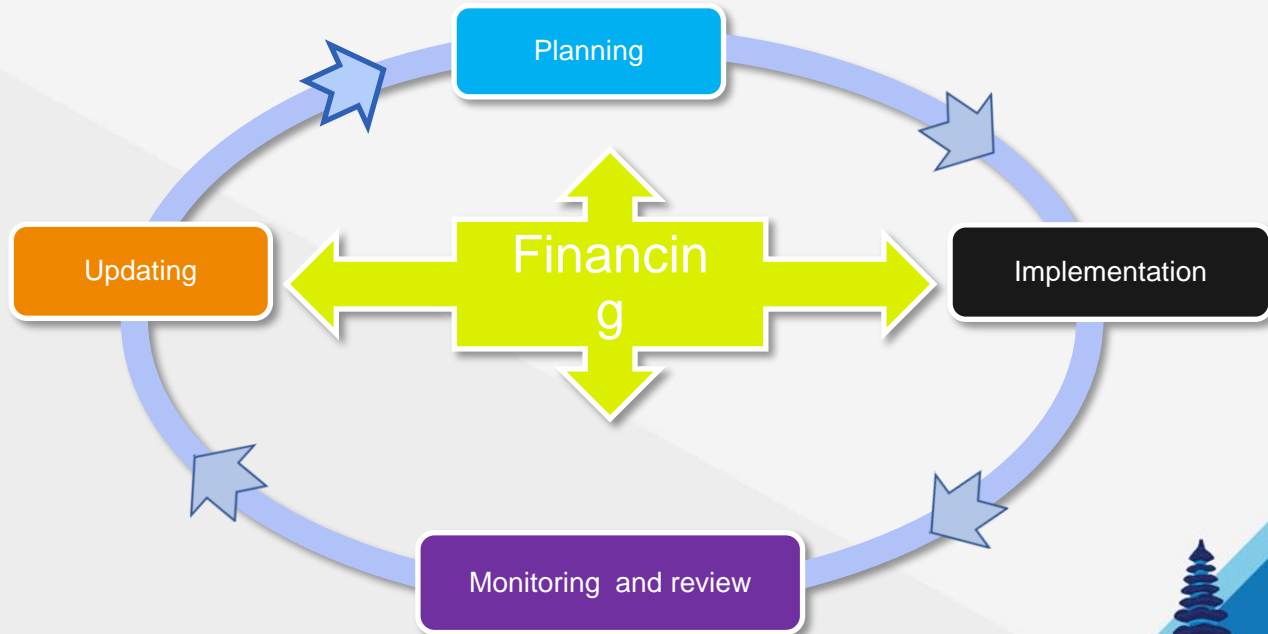


Financing, implementation, monitoring and updating

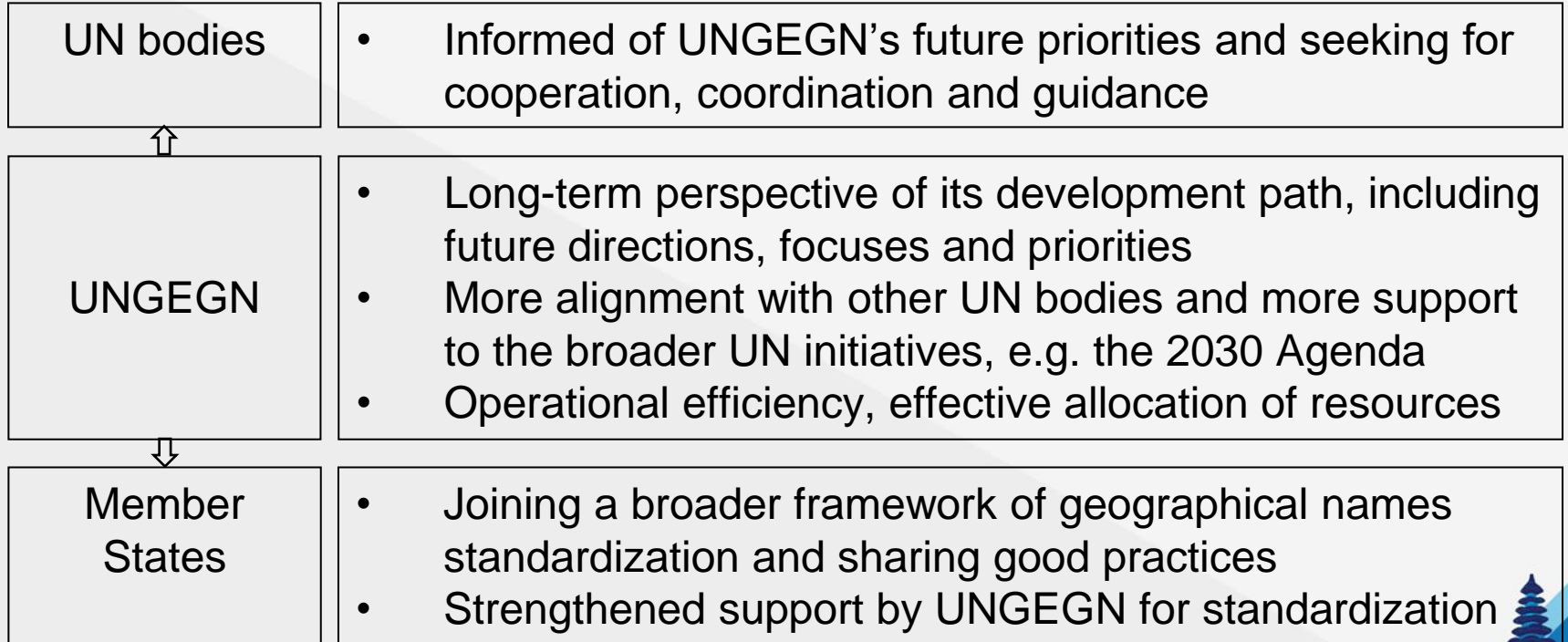
Explore possibility of establishing an **UNGEGN trust fund** for capacity building and enabling participation

A living document, subject to continued reassessment and revision

Monitoring the implementation of the plan and, proposing adjustments proposed to be done by the Bureau and the Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation with the support of the Secretariat, and report the progress to the Group of Experts for approval, at its biennial sessions – every two years



Benefits





MODULE ACTIVITY - UNGEGN Strategic Plan

Quickly review the UNGEGN Strategic Plan and Programme of work (see leaflet - [UNGEKN A3 Overview document Digital file.pdf](#))

- i. Does your National Names Body have a strategic plan and programme of work?
- ii. Consider the work being done or to be done in your National Names Body and think about how the UNGEGN Strategic Plan applies and can support your work.
- iii. Select one strategy which is most relevant and explain why.
- iv. Based on the Strategy selected, identify/develop one objective and related two activities relevant to your national names body.





THE IMPORTANCE OF NATIONAL NAMES AUTHORITIES

Why do we name places?

- i. To ensure the capacity to unambiguously identify and locate geographical entities and places, as an essential reference system for services, infrastructure and public administration.
- ii. Ensuring that the valuable record of a country's places names with its variety of sources, reflecting unique patterns of settlement is preserved and accessible.
- iii. To preserve geographical names and their variants over time, protect culture and heritage and contribute to historical information.





IDENTIFYING THE NEED FOR THE CREATION OF A NAMES AUTHORITY

One strong argument generally used focuses on the consolidation of effort with less overall costs in geographical names collection, management and dissemination, generating consistent results and greater benefit to whole of government entities, private sector and academic institutions.

UN Resolutions

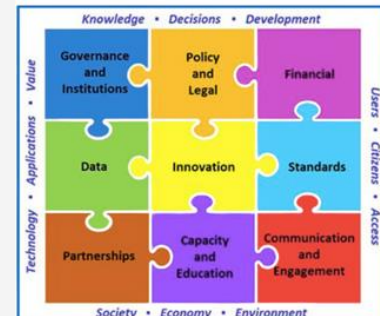
- UNCSGN resolution I/4a 1967 underlines need to establish national agencies ... again V/15 1987
- Importance of toponyms in spatial data infrastructure ... UN Regional Cartographic Conferences, 2000, 2001 and UN res. VIII/6, 2002
- Preservation of toponyms as elements of identity and cultural heritage ... VIII/9 and IX/4 + link with UNESCO





The IGIF – what is it about?

The IGIF is a multi-dimensional Framework aimed at strengthening national geospatial information management, particularly in developing countries.



Overarching Strategic Framework
PART 1

WHY?

7 Principles
8 Goals
9 Strategic Pathways

Implementation Guides
PART 2

WHAT?

9 Strategic Pathways, provides guidance
3 principle areas of influence
4 key elements per pathway
36 total key elements

Country Level Action Plans
PART 3

HOW,
WHEN,
WHO?

Specific per country
Identifies what is needed for national GIS
It is prescriptive



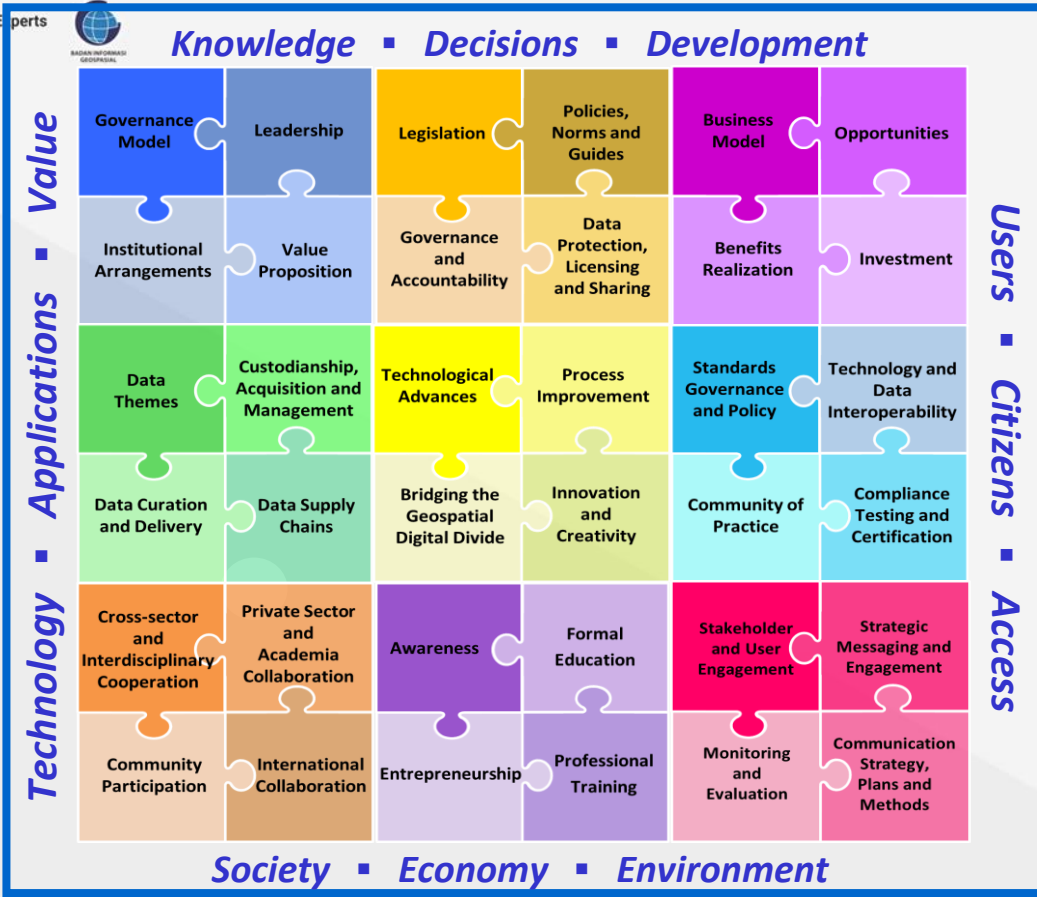


Knowledge ■ Decisions ■ Development

Governance →

Technology →

People →



Users ■ Citizens ■ Access

9 Strategic Pathways solve the IGIF puzzle ...with 36 Key Elements





THE CREATION OF A NAMES AUTHORITY

- i. Identification of a national issue (economic, social, environmental) that standardized names are critical to addressing, the issue preferably relevant to governments national development priority
- ii. Document the requirement, make the case, if possible, prepare a cost benefit analysis. Decision makers always want to know what are the costs and the benefits.
- iii. Evaluate existing government structures, the leadership, operational priorities direction and future plans of ministries and departments. Determine which body would be best suited to manage a national names body. Would it be the National Mapping Agency, the Office of the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Culture, the National Library and archives, the Ministry of Education
- iv. Identify partners, collaborators, the champion, at the senior executive level, with the advocacy, communication and networking skills needed to open the right doors and make the presentations and appeals needed from the ministry, to Cabinet to parliament (depending on your national governance arrangements.)
- v. Establish clearly defined objectives of the names authority, principles and procedures for the conduct of geographical names standardization. Once the goals, principles and procedures have been decided, one must obtain legal authority. This may be received via policy directive, an order, or legislation.



A clearly stated mandate

Many national authorities established through legislation

- Act of Parliament (1998) South Africa (SAGNC)
- Board Act: New Zealand (NZGB, 1946, 2008)
- Decree: Israel (1951); Madagascar (KPMA, 1973)
- Cabinet document: Malaysia (NCGN, 2002)

Some countries have legislation regarding names

- Ireland: Official Languages Act, 2003
- New Zealand: since 1998 Māori place names for maps
- Norway: since 1990 Norwegian, Saami & Finnish names
- Estonia: since 1996 .. include language & spelling rules





ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL NAMES AUTHORITY

Key, essential elements for the operation of an authority are -

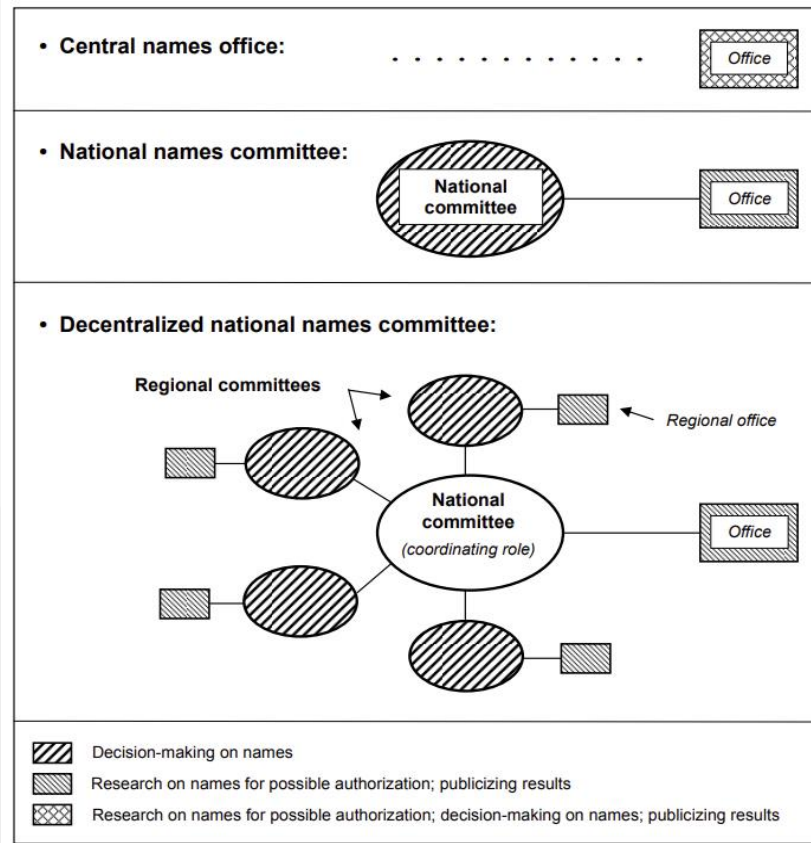
1. Leadership -providing strategic direction.
2. Staff -job descriptions outlining required qualification and skills and deciding on numbers depending on the responsibilities based on legislation and responsibilities, given size of names standardization portfolio.
3. A names committee/Board on Geographic names/national Names Advisory Council – consisting of a cross section of experts with varied backgrounds relevant to names standardization representing departments of government, academia, the private sector and civil society. Creates an environment that engenders trust, transparency and inclusion.
4. Funding
5. Communication and Awareness



MODELS OF NATIONAL NAMES AUTHORITIES

The choice depends on the nature of the country

1. Default if no names board
 - all decisions under one roof
 - by sub-committees: feature types, language
2. Centralized national names board
 - with central umbrella coordinating authority
 - with regional committees





	Country	Name	Legal Instrument for the Authority	Organisation	Membership
1	Botswana	Botswana Geographical Names Commission	Established by Presidential Directive 1967	Structure being reorganised	
2	Canada	Geographical Names Board of Canada http://www.nrcan.gc.ca/earth-sciences/geography/place-names/about-geographical-names-board-canada/9174	Established under Order in Council. First created in 1897	A multi-jurisdictional national body. Chairperson appointed by Minister of Natural Resources Canada (NRCan). Secretariat services provided by NRCan	Representatives from 10 provinces and three territories, departments and agencies of federal government
3	Cyprus	Cyprus Permanent Committee for the Standardization of Geographical Names www.geonoma.gov.cy	Formally established by decision of the Council of Minister 1979	Permanent committee appointed by Minister of Education and Culture; with sub-committees	Cross section of place name experts - surveyors, linguist, archaeologist
4	Czechia	The Czech Commission on Geographical Names	Established in 1971	Secretariat of Commission is part of the Czech Land Survey Office.	The Commission cooperates with various institutions and individuals - linguists, onomastics etc
5	Denmark	Danish Place Name Commission www.stednavne.info www.danmarksstednavne.dk .	Established in 1910 and governed by Governmental Order 1978	Commission and Secretariat in the University of Copenhagen, Institute of Names Research	
6	Italy	Commission for Italian Official Toponymy	Special Decree of March 1911 replaced by law N.605 in 1949 which was repealed in 2008.	Commission created in 2011 within the Italian Geographic Military Institute	
7	Jordan	National Committee on Geographical Names http://rjgc.gov.jo/RJG.aspx?PID=282&lang=en	Created in 1984	Royal Jordanian Geographic Centre	Inter-agency members with representation from private sector
8	New Zealand	The New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa http://www.linz.govt.nz/regulatory/place-names/about-new-zealand-geographic-board	Operates under the New Zealand Geographic Board Act 2008	Committee and sub-committees with secretariat services provided by Land Information New Zealand	Inter-agency members with representation from private sector
9	Oman	National Survey Authority	Ministerial decision of 1983	Specialised Branch in the National Survey Authority	
10	Republic of Korea	Korea Committee on Geographical Names	Operations based on Act on the Establishment and management of Spatial Information. Committee first founded in 1980	Integrated Committee that is final authority that decides on geographical names.	
11	Spain	National Geographical Institute, Specialised Committee for Geographical Names http://www.ign.es	Royal Decree 1545/2007 - Ministry of Development	State Agencies and Autonomous Communities	Members from State administration, universities, autonomous communities, academies of languages and other toponymy related institutions.





RESPONSIBILITIES OF A NAMES AUTHORITY

1. Responsibilities and scope of decisions?
2. Developing policies and guidelines to support names approval or rejection
3. Making decisions/recommendations on names
4. Assuring minutes, names decisions ... are made generally available
5. Other tasks?
 - displays, talks, workshops
 - promotion in media, conferences





MODULE ACTIVITY – Why a Names Authority

Reflecting on your national situation, identify two strong arguments in support of creating a national names authority, consisting of a Director, staff for names collection, management and dissemination and the coordination of an Names Advisory Committee

