

The Global Statistical Geospatial Framework

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Abstract: The Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information (EG-ISGI) was established in 2013, comprising members of both the statistical and geospatial professional communities from Member States, and has since reported back to both the Statistical Commission and the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) at each of their respective annual sessions. One of the functions of the Expert Group has been to pursue the implementation of a statistical geospatial framework in the 2020 Round of Censuses with the understanding it would apply to other initiatives including other censuses, and global initiatives such as the post-2015 development agenda and Big Data. The Expert Group circulated its first draft of a Global Statistical Geospatial Framework in December 2015 for consultation. Since then, the five guiding principles of the Framework have been adopted by the UN-GGIM at its 6th session in August 2016 and endorsed at the 48th session of UNSC in March 2017.

The Global Statistical Geospatial Framework provides a common method for geospatially enabling statistical and administrative data, as well as ensuring that this data can be integrated with geospatial information. The Framework's five guiding principles set a foundation enabling common language exchange, processes, standards and methods across both statistical and geospatial communities. This paper details the history and context around the development of the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework and outlines the proposed next steps in its consolidation and implementation.

1 Background

The UN Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information (EG-ISGI) was established in 2013, comprising members of both the statistical and geospatial professional communities from Member States, and has since reported back to both the Statistical Commission and the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) at each of their respective annual sessions.

One of the functions of the Expert Group has been to pursue the implementation of a statistical geospatial framework. The framework was considered to be a key enabler in supporting and encouraging greater integration of statistical and geospatial information, and support collaboration between the statistical and geospatial communities. The context of the 2020 Round of Censuses was seen as very important for the framework, with a broader understanding that it would apply to other initiatives, including other censuses, and global initiatives such as the post-2015 development agenda and Big Data. To achieve this, the Expert Group was tasked with evaluating the statistical geospatial framework developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and determining if and how this could be internationalized.

The Expert Group circulated its first draft proposal for Global Statistical Geospatial Framework (GSGF) to its members for consultation in December 2015. An advanced

draft of the framework proposal was then provided as a background document to the Statistical Commission at its 47th session in March 2016, where no issues were raised. In May 2016, UN Statistics Division as Secretariat conducted a global consultation on the proposed global statistical geospatial framework, involving both the statistical and geospatial communities. UN Statistics Division received a very encouraging number of responses (in excess of 58), ranging from full support to support with comments, recommendations and adjustments. However, there was strong consensus around the five guiding principles which anchor the framework.

The five guiding principles are:

Principle 1: Use of fundamental geospatial infrastructure and geocoding;

Principle 2: Geocoded unit record data in a data management environment;

Principle 3: Common geographies for dissemination of statistics;

Principle 4: Interoperable data and metadata standards; and

Principle 5: Accessible and usable geospatially enabled statistics.

The Global Statistical Geospatial Framework is designed to provide a model that enables consistent geospatially enablement of statistical data and facilitates its release in safe, accessible and usable geospatial formats. The framework also encourages interoperability between statistical and geospatial communities through encouraging the use of fundamental geospatial datasets, and the application of geospatial standards.

At its sixth session, convened in New York in August 2016, the UN-Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management adopted the five guiding principles of the global statistical geospatial framework.

At the 48th UNSC in March 2017 these principles were also endorsed by the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC).

The work of the Expert Group relating to the GSGF is now focusing on the following areas:

(i) Consolidation and implementation of GSGF;

(ii) Capability building;

(iii) Knowledge management; and

(iv) Interaction with existing and emerging bodies, global or regional, in the development and implementation of GSGF.

2 The Global Statistical Geospatial Framework

The paper presented to UN-GGIM and UNSC proposing the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework provides the most current, agreed resource that documents the

framework. The link provided below contains this paper – *Proposal for a Global Statistical Geospatial Framework* - and completes this paper.

Proposal for a Global Statistical Geospatial Framework:

<http://ggim.un.org/docs/meetings/GGIM6/Background-Paper-Proposal-for-a-global-statistical-geospatial-framework.pdf>

References

United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, Sixth session, New York, 3-5 August 2016, Item 9. *Integration of geospatial, statistical and other related information*. UN Document E/C.20/2016/9/Add.1

Available from

<http://ggim.un.org/docs/meetings/GGIM6/E-C20-2016-9%20Integration%20of%20Geospatial,%20Statistical%20and%20Other%20Related%20Information.pdf>

United Nations Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information 2016. *Proposal for a Global Statistical Geospatial Framework*

Available from

<http://ggim.un.org/docs/meetings/GGIM6/Background-Paper-Proposal-for-a-global-statistical-geospatial-framework.pdf>