

ANNEX 1

Terms of Reference for the United Nations System¹ Network

1. Mandate

The establishment of the United Nations System Network (Network) was agreed by the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) at its seventh session in August 2017.²

2. Aim and Objectives

The aim of the Network is to strengthen the coordination and coherence of geospatial information management³ within the United Nations system.

The objectives of the Network are to:

2.1 Strengthen coordination, collaboration and sharing mechanisms on geospatial information within the United Nations system, including relevant policies, capacity building, delivery infrastructures and systems, as well as geospatial information management, collection, dissemination, usage and sharing;

2.2 Increase communication and awareness to senior management of the relevance of geospatial information and its management, including the collection, creation, production, dissemination and use of geospatial data, aiming at effective cooperation and collaboration of geospatial activities, in relation to the mandates of the United Nations system;

2.3 Ensure the availability and accessibility of coordinated geospatial information and related systems to create quality, timely and reliable products and effective services to support Member States and United Nations mandates on local, national, regional and global issues, including the Sustainable Development Goals;

2.4 Promote the use and relevance of geospatial information for Member States and the United Nations for better decision-making through increased collaboration and coordination of geospatial information resources, data, skills, technology and policies within the United Nations; and

2.5 Support the aims and objectives of UN-GGIM, including in the development of norms, frameworks, principles and guides, and capacity development initiatives, as appropriate.

3. Key functions and activities

3.1 Foster collaboration among United Nations system entities, including identifying and addressing overarching trends, shared interests and common topics;

3.2 Provide a platform within the United Nations system through which geospatial knowledge, education and training, technology, practices, data, needs, partnerships and collaborative arrangements with external entities can be shared, so as to avoid duplication and create synergies;

¹ United Nations system refers to departments, regional commissions, agencies, funds and programmes hereinafter grouped under the term “entity” or “entities”, acronyms of entities are provided in the attachment

² Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, Report of the seventh session (2017), Decision 7/115
http://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/7th-Session/documents/GGIM-7_Report_e.pdf

³ ECOSOC 2016/27: Strengthening institutional arrangements on geospatial information management, paragraph 5
http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=E/RES/2016/27

3.3 Consider and recommend an overarching governance model on geospatial information management within the United Nations system, in accordance with existing mandates;

3.4 Identify and engage UN-GGIM concerning challenges that may arise while fulfilling various United Nations mandates in relation to the availability and management of geospatial information, and propose initiatives and activities, as appropriate, to address such challenges; and

3.5 Develop biennial work programs, informed by broad consultation within the Network, to create synergies and address the objectives of the Network while ensuring that there are no overlaps or duplication of initiatives.

4. Membership and Composition

4.1 United Nations system entities that wish to participate as a member of the Network will designate their most senior professional working in the field of geospatial information management as their designated representative. An alternate representative should also be nominated in addition to the designated representative. A member may replace its designated or alternate representatives by informing the Chair and the Secretariat.

4.2 Any geospatial practitioners of the United Nations system are able to participate and contribute actively to the proceedings and work of the Network, in close coordination with their entity's designated representative.

4.3 Membership in the Network places no obligations on the participating entities. A member may withdraw from the Network at any time upon informing the Chair and the Secretariat.

4.4 Participation in the work of the Network is solely on a 'best effort' basis and within existing resources. The Network has no access to any budgets and cannot therefore provide any type of funding for its membership and activities. However, the Network can be funded by voluntary contributions from external agencies that may wish to support the activities of the Network.

4.5 A list of members, designated representatives and alternate representatives will be maintained by the Secretariat and reviewed annually. The list will be made available to the Chair, Network Steering Group and members of the Network.

5. Governance, Term of Office and Procedural

5.1 A Network Steering Group (Steering Group) will have oversight of the Network. The Steering Group will comprise a Chair, two Vice-Chairs, the Secretariat and two representatives from each of the following groups: a) UN Secretariat; b) UN Regional Commissions; c) UN funds, programmes, research and others; and d) UN specialized agencies and-related Organizations (refer to Attachment), if they are not already represented by the Chair and Vice-Chairs.

5.2 The Steering Group will consider matters brought to the attention of the Network by members and/or UN-GGIM, and discuss and propose or otherwise plans of action for consideration by the Network.

5.3 The Chair of the Network will call for and preside over meetings of the Network and the Steering Group. The Chair may speak on behalf of the Network on matters previously discussed and agreed upon by members of the Network, and will represent the Network on the Expanded Bureau of UN-GGIM.

5.4 The two Vice-Chairs of the Network will actively support the Chair to advance the aim, objectives and functions of the Network.

5.5 Members of the Network Steering Group will be selected at the Network's Plenary Meeting for a term of two years. Members of the Network Steering Group may serve for no more than two consecutive terms.

5.6 The Network Steering Group will oversee and assess the activities of the Network, including that of any of the Network's sub-groups or task teams, and make recommendations for future work programmes.

5.7 The Secretariat will preside over the selection process for the members of the Network Steering Group, the Chair and Vice-Chairs. Candidates must be from members that have the support of two other members, one of whom shall be from another group (Attachment). The selection will be by simple majority decision of all members present and participating in the selection process. There will be no more than one representative from each member participating in the selection process, either as a candidate or in the decision.

5.8 The Network may set up time-bound ad-hoc Task Groups consisting of members of the Network. These Task Groups, voluntary in nature, will be disbanded after completion of their tasks, reporting its outcomes and agreement by the Network.

5.9 Members will contribute to the deliverables of the Network, and will generally adopt action plans, reports, statements, and other deliverables by consensus. If consensus cannot be achieved at any given time the Chair, or in their absence the Vice-Chair, may call for individual comments and opinions regarding the deliverables, and will be considered adopted when not less than two thirds of the members present comment in favor.

5.10 The Network will review its terms of reference every two years during a plenary meeting.

6. Frequency of Meetings

6.1 The Network is expected to convene annual plenary meetings coinciding with the annual sessions of UN-GGIM.

6.2 The Network will hold special meetings upon request and as required from its members or from UN-GGIM.

6.3 The Network will operate virtually and meet when the opportunity arises, normally in concurrence with related UN-GGIM events.

7. Reporting Procedure

7.1 The Network will report to UN-GGIM at its annual session, and will include the preparation of written reports and background documents as appropriate. The preparation of an annual report to UN-GGIM will be coordinated by the Network Steering Group in consultation with the members.

8. Secretariat

8.1 The UN-GGIM Secretariat⁴ will serve as the Secretariat of the Network.

8.2 In cooperation with the Chair, the Secretariat will coordinate and assist with the organization and preparation of the agenda for the meetings of the Network, prepare the annual report, issue notices, assist with the selection of the Steering Group and perform any other support activities deemed appropriate and necessary.

9. Direction

9.1 The UN-GGIM Bureau can periodically review and evaluate the progress of the Network. It may propose revision of the terms of reference based on the accomplishments of the Network and any new items that UN-GGIM would like the Network to consider and address.

⁴ Comprised of the Geospatial Information Section (DFS) and the Statistics Division (DESA). Resolution 2011/24: Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, para 7. <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/docs/2011/res%202011.24.pdf>