



Ministry of Science, Technology
and Innovation

Experts and policy-makers share knowledge on potential benefits of geospatial technologies for Uganda

Press Release

9 March 2020, Kampala – Uganda stands to benefit from the range of evolving technological tools used to geographically map and analyse the earth and human activities, known as geospatial technologies. A special workshop for policy makers in Kampala today, raised awareness of the important role that these new technologies could play in support of development efforts in the country.

The event, organized by the UN Technology Bank in partnership with the Ugandan Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, and the UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) Operational Satellite Applications Programme – UNOSAT, followed a one-week course in which local experts were trained in the use and interpretation of satellite imagery, with a specific focus on disaster risk management.

“This workshop, provided timely platform to demystify geospatial technologies and raise awareness of the important role, that they can play supporting Uganda’s development efforts.” Said Dr. Maxwell Otim Onapa, Director of Science, Research and Innovation at the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, Uganda.

The Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation will continue to strive for stronger Science, Technology and Innovation ecosystem through collaboration, coordination and partnerships at national, regional and at international levels.

Geospatial technologies and remote sensing offer a crucial location element to the monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals and their targets and indicators. Allowing for example, specific and accurate data before intervening by mitigation, preventing or responding to natural hazards, climate change impacts, household economics and disaster risk reduction.

“The United Nations Technology Bank is excited to be part of this workshop and training, something we plan to replicate in Mozambique and The Gambia this year,” said Joshua Setipa, Managing Director for the United Nations Technology Bank. “Least developed countries face barriers in adopting and staying up to date with the changing technology. We hope that this series of workshops in Africa will help to build awareness and boost support for these important technological tools.”

Despite the tremendous potential geospatial technologies offer international development, a gap still exists between the world of technology and that of decision and policymakers, particularly in least developed countries. Limited technology capacity and traditional fears that prevent their

uptake in policymaking persist and their rapidly evolving nature makes it difficult for practitioners to track updates about the potential use and application of technologies, such as geographic information systems and remote sensing.

“With orbiting satellites generating increasing amounts of data, the future of earth observation is now moving from data to information. UNOSAT is fully committed to leverage new developments of Earth Orbital technology in least developed countries by enhancing capacities and empowering Governments to access key information for informed decision-making,” said Einar Bjorgo, Director of UNITAR’ Division for Satellite Analysis and Applied Research.

Geospatial information, technology, satellite imagery, analysis and data visualization will play a central role in understanding the geographic extent and severity of disaster events. Today’s workshop raised awareness among senior government officials and decision makers on geospatial information technology as an evidence-based data for analysis, processing and usage methodology.

About the UN Technology Bank

The UN Technology Bank is a new global organisation, dedicated to enhancing the contribution of science, technology and innovation for sustainable development in the world’s 47 least developed countries. Least developed countries are low-income countries confronting severe structural impediments to sustainable development. They are highly vulnerable to economic and environmental shocks and have low levels of human assets.

The UN Technology Bank supports national and regional technological efforts in least developed countries, reinforcing partnerships across sectors and helping nations identify and use appropriate technologies to transform their economies and improve livelihoods.

Website: www.un.org/technologybank

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