



UN-GGIM Virtual Seminar Series
**COVID-19: Strategies for a Geospatial Response in
the Americas**

Facilitated by UNECLAC and UN-GGIM: Americas

Friday, 15 May 2020

11:00 – 13:15 (CST, UTC-4)

CONCEPT NOTE

The COVID-19 pandemic, its global spread, and an unprecedented need to understand that spread and those impacted, starkly illustrates the significance and potential of geospatial information, for governments, decision-makers, first responders and the global public to make informed decisions. While the need for trusted, accurate and reliable geospatial information has been recognised by global development agendas, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sendai Framework and others, in this global health crisis there is a critical and urgent need for Member States to act now to collect, analyse and disseminate data to support decision-making.

Several Member States and the international community have leveraged geospatial information capabilities to support and communicate key response efforts. However, this response has been unequal, with many countries being left behind. A more structured and coordinated policy response, as advocated by the WHO, the United Nations and other multilateral policy institutions, serves as possibly the most promising path out of a looming crisis. Therefore, the Regional Commissions for Africa, Asia-Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean within Regional Committees of UN-GGIM for Africa, Asia-Pacific, and the Americas, with support from the Secretariat of UN-GGIM and other key stakeholders, are convening a Virtual Seminar Series to help initiate a global discussion that will explore the influence and impact, and strengthen the response of the geospatial data ecosystem in responding to the global COVID-19 pandemic.

As an example, geospatial information and enabling technologies to have been at the heart of the numerous visualization and information dashboards that have been established to support the measurement and monitoring of the pandemic globally. These dashboards, including from sources such as the WHO and Johns Hopkins University, demonstrate that when the geographic dimension is considered, information can be conveyed in a clearer, more useful manner than just with statistical data alone. This requires several key components, including available and accessible geospatial information, which can be integrated with statistics and then disaggregated by age, gender, demography and geography, whether at the local, national, regional or global level. This is all then dependent on available technology and the technical skills to develop and deploy an interactive dashboard, among other issues.

The overarching aim of this Virtual Seminar Series is to provide Member States and stakeholders with instruction and opportunity to share and collaborate on geospatial methods, procedures, technology and data in the COVID-19 response. This will serve to deepen collaboration and foster knowledge exchange to enable Member States; the United Nations, its Regional Commissions and other organs; international organisations; academia; and, the private sector to use geospatial information to meet the challenge of COVID-19. Specific items which will be presented and discussed in the Seminar Series will include:



- Discussing experiences from Member States and Regional Commissions on how they have met the challenge of COVID-19, reviewing progress and identifying challenges faced;
- Demonstrations on developing a national dashboard, which highlights data needs, available resources and good practices on developing a COVID-19 dashboard;
- Highlighting good practices on using geospatial information for public health and safety through bringing more intelligence and situational awareness to the data and decision-making;
- Providing a discussion on the challenges and tensions of using geospatial information to strengthen safety, while balancing the privacy implications;
- Providing principles and guidance on immediate actions to strengthen capacity;
- Identifying available resources for Member States and others to use in their COVID-19 response; and,
- Providing discussion on how to optimise resources to respond in the short and medium-term impact of COVID-19, while preparing for the long-term implications of public health and safety crises or emergencies.

Proposed Agenda

- 11:00 – 11:15** **Welcome and Setting-the-Scene**
Moderator: Ms. Paloma Merodio Gomez, President, UN-GGIM: Americas
- Welcome (5 minutes)
Ms. Paloma Merodio, UN-GGIM: Americas
Mr. Rolando Ocampo, UNECLAC
- Setting the Scene (10 minutes)
Mr. Greg Scott, UNSD
- 11:15 – 11:35** **The Latin American and Caribbean Response Context**
Moderator: Ms. Macarena Perez, Vice President, UN-GGIM: Americas
- Regional Overview and UNECLAC COVID-19 Observatory
Mr. Rolando Ocampo, ECLAC (10 minutes)
Results of the Latin America and Caribbean Response to COVID-19 Questionnaire
Mr. Alvaro Monett, ECLAC (10 minutes)
- 11:35 – 12:05** **Presentations**
Moderator: Mr. Greg Scott, UNSD
- COVID-19 Sharing and Collaboration Platforms
Mr. Charles Brigham, ESRI (10 minutes)
Responding from the Front in Ireland
Mrs. Lorraine McNerney, Ordinance Survey Irlanda (10 minutes)
From Visualization to Communication
Mrs. Macarena Perez, SNIT, Chile (10 minutes)



12:05 – 12:45

Good Practices Examples

Moderator: Mr. Alvaro Monett, ECLAC

México

Mr. Luis Gerardo Esparza, INEGI México (10 minutos)

Colombia

Mrs. Sandra Moreno, DANE Colombia (10 minutos)

Antigua y Barbuda

Mr. Andrew Nurse, Survey & Mapping Division (10 minutos)

Panamá

Mrs. Isis Tejada, Instituto Geográfico Nacional Tommy Guardia (10 minutos)

12:45 –13:15

Questions and moderated discussions

