

Advancing Continental Geospatial Governance for Africa's Transformative Future

Andre Nonguierma (Burkina Faso)

Key words: Plenary; United Nations Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM); Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF); Global Statistical Geospatial Framework (GSGF); National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI); Geospatial Governance

SUMMARY

Geospatial information has evolved from a supporting input to a strategic public infrastructure that underpins sustainable development, effective governance, and integrated spatial decision-making. Across Africa, geospatial data, analytics, and applications are essential to land administration, infrastructure planning, climate action, risk management, and the monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Yet their full value remains constrained by fragmented governance arrangements, uneven standards adoption, and limited institutional capacity.

This paper presents the continental strategy and leadership of the Regional Committee of the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa (UN-GGIM: Africa) in advancing integrated and interoperable geospatial information systems aligned with the FIG 2026 theme, "The Future We Want: The SDGs and Beyond." It argues that achieving development impact at scale requires moving beyond isolated national initiatives toward coordinated, standards-based, and policy-driven spatial information management frameworks.

UN-GGIM: Africa is leading a sustained effort to strengthen national and regional geospatial ecosystems through the operationalization of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (IGIF), harmonized geodetic and reference systems, and continent-wide spatial data infrastructures that integrate geospatial and statistical information. These efforts support consistent data production, interoperability, and authoritative spatial data services essential for SDG monitoring and post-2030 development planning.

Beyond technical infrastructure, the strategy emphasizes institutional reform, professional capacity development, and education, recognizing that sustainable spatial information management depends on skilled professionals, spatially enabled institutions, and informed policy makers. Collaborative

data initiatives, shared platforms, and targeted outreach are central to expanding access and use across sectors.

The paper concludes by highlighting sustainable financing and long-term governance as critical enablers. Through collective action, UN-GGIM: Africa is positioning geospatial information as a cornerstone of Africa's future development architecture—transforming spatial data into decisions, accountability, and impact.

Advancing Continental Geospatial Governance for Africa's Transformative Future (14157)
Andre Nonguierma (Burkina Faso)

FIG Congress 2026
The Future We Want - The SDGs and Beyond
Cape Town, South Africa, 24–29 May 2026