



Launch of WHO GIS Centre for Health

9 May 2022 - 9am-5pm

In conjunction with the GIS for a Sustainable World Conference 10-11 May, Geneva

Background

The seminal work of John Snow from 1854 illustrated the power of mapping and geographic systems to respond to the cholera outbreak in London. Today, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) enable the spatial representation of data to inform public health planning and decision-making. Geospatial data and techniques are an effective tool to collect and monitor real-time, reliable and actionable data to achieve the SDGs and deliver on the [GPW 13 Triple Billion targets](#).

The Department of Data and Analytics (DNA) within the Division of Data, Analytics and Delivery for Impact (DDI) recently established the [WHO GIS Centre for Health \(GIS Centre\)](#) to support various programs within WHO and its Member States in the areas of GIS and mapping.

The health sector can benefit from leveraging innovations in GIS technology both during emergency and non-emergency settings to respond to an outbreak, map cases over local geographies, track vaccine delivery, collect samples, and explore spatial patterns in areas of case reporting, among other uses.

Many countries currently miss out on these benefits. By expanding its collaboration with partners, the WHO GIS Centre for Health aims to bridge inequalities within and across the Member States and connect maps, apps, data and people to deliver measurable impact in communities.

There is significant scope for every country to leverage the full benefits of GIS. Specific services include:

- Supporting geospatial data and analytics to improve compliance and stewardship with WHO Standard Operating Procedures for maps and Web GIS applications;
- Increasing the efficient use of GIS by the Member States and partners.
- Strengthening country and regional data, analytics, and making the health information system more robust;
- Augmenting timely assistance and expertise through a network of UN agencies and trusted geospatial partners;
- Promoting a GIS community of practice through providing training and technical expertise in innovative technology.

Participants

The intended audience is the wider public, GIS experts, partners, collaborators, WHO colleagues, donors.

Event modality

To mark the launch of the GISCFH as a new unit of DDI, a day-long in-person event will take place on the 9th of May, at WHO Headquarters in Geneva. The event will also be live streamed on the WHO workplace and YouTube channel. Any Geneva-based colleagues are welcome to join in-person at WHO Headquarters.

The event will include:

- Opening and closing remarks by WHO senior leadership
- An introduction to the GISCFH team
- A highlight on partners, collaborators, regional offices, and inspirational speakers
- A panel discussion,
- A Q&A session
- A half-day live GIS workshop also streamed online around the theme of data collection, map making, and storytelling.

Aim and objective

Theme: Celebrate, Inform and Envision.

We are celebrating becoming an official team serving all of WHO as it was initially developed in the Polio program. We are informing the audience of the work completed and in progress by the team. And we are envisioning the future together as there are many opportunities and challenges to overcome in the road ahead. The objective of the launch is to bring awareness about the team, about the key features and services of the GISCFH, and to bring people together to build global capacity and encourage collaboration.