

Context and Background

UN Maps is on the mission to harness the power of open geospatial data to support UN peacebuilding and humanitarian efforts. In line with this, UN Maps mobilizes and fosters a community of mappers and users, the UN Mappers.

UN Mappers is a collective of open mapping enthusiasts dedicated to building accurate and crowd-worked geospatial data with UN Maps. As of writing, there are about 5,500 UN Mappers who contributed to more than 1.5 million map edits. To ensure accessibility and quality of mapping, we provide capacity building training and knowledge sharing through the UN Maps Learning Hub and various community events and webinars. In addition, we recognize exceptional contributors every month through the UN Mappers' Mapper of the Month.

Building upon the success and best practices of other open mapping communities, we are exploring to set up a UN Mappers Ambassadors and Chapter initiative to expand the community and establish a community-owned data production and sustainability.

How you can get involved

We aim to co-create a UN Mapper's Ambassadors and Chapters Initiative plan with the UN Mappers community to consider community inputs and feedback into the plan.

- Read this concept note and comment your thoughts directly to the document, especially the sections below
- Participate in discussion via the UN [Mappers Discord channel](#) [#un-mappers-chapters-discussion](#)
- Join the live discussion:
 - ~~[Mappy Hour on 30 May, 10:00 UTC](#)~~
 - [Community discussion: Ambassador Initiative on 10 July at 09:00 UTC](#)

Timeline: The co-creation process will run from May to June 2025.

Our concept

• UN Mappers Ambassadors

We envision the UN Mappers Ambassador to be similar to the Youthmappers Regional Ambassadors. UN Mappers Ambassadors are exceptionally recognized UN Mappers who champion UN Maps' mission and community building. Potentially, they will support field mapping

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activities as well as serve as community engagers and UN Mappers representatives who will lead on building UN Mappers Chapter communities.

- **UN Mappers Chapters**

UN Mappers Chapters are local UN Mappers collectives who contributes to UN Maps' data production and promotes the power of open data in their communities. Potentially, the Chapters are composed of contributors in their local area and where UN Maps missions are.

Factors to consider

- Language
 - As a global network, UN Mappers commit to ensuring language is taken into consideration in this initiative
- Roles:
 - Ambassadors
 - Roles would be OSM Instructors and collaborators
 - Chapters
 - Geographic Scope of Chapters: regional, national, community/university level

Hierarchical structure? University -> regional -> national

- Compensation
- Affiliation/representation of UN
- Security and safety in UN Missions countries
- **Criteria for Ambassador**
 - what qualifies someone beyond being an “exceptional contributor”
- **Time commitment**
- **Reachability of one's actions**
- **Level of literacy of target population**
- **Coordination and collaboration constraints**
- **Collaboration with companies too .**
- **Frequent monitoring monthly report etc**

Questions

- How to best frame or call (title?) the UN Mappers ambassadors and chapters?
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- **Geographical scope: possible to make a map of contributor locations? E.g., map schools/universities joining the project. Goal: to make it easier to find where to go to contribute, i.e., provide community input / feedback; identify zones where an enquiry to join may be made**

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- *Which factors attract and facilitate one's adherence to the program? Which factors hold one back from joining? Compensations attract, but what are the barriers of access? More than what makes me join, what stops me from joining?*
- comment here
- comment here

Next steps

- ~~Live discussion during the May Mappy Hour on 30th May, [register here](#)~~
- Live discussion on 10th July, [details here](#)

Mappy Hour: Community Discussion

30th May, MS Teams

Takeaways:

What would encourage you to participate in the Ambassadors / Chapters Initiative?

1. Awareness / knowing about the following:
 - a. Responsibilities
 - b. Time commitment
 - c. Skills requirement
 - d. Tasks
 - i. Task diversity
 - e. Target Audience
 - f. Age factor, if any
2. Clear communication/coordination eg calendar of activities
3. Capacity building and learning opportunities
4. Networking / Affirmative environment
5. Recognition
 - a. Letterhead
 - b. Certificates
 - c. Access to UN Mappers tools
6. Understanding local context

What may stop you from joining?

1. Lack of Awareness or Clarity
2. Time Constraints
3. Sustainability and Engagement
4. Organizational barriers eg bureaucracy
5. Inaccessibility eg if it's too far
6. No Compensation
7. Language barrier
8. Different levels of literacy and computer proficiency
9. No recognition
10. Repetitive task

Next steps:

- Incorporate community inputs to the programme design including ToR
- Enable async community feedback and schedule another discussion session
- Discuss/consult with Youthmappers and other geo communities with similar program/s?
- Engage / consult with UN staff?
- Determine what is our added value that will make it click and differentiate (or even complement) from other similar program/s?

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UN Maps Ambassadors: Pilot Initiative Plan

Target No. of Ambassadors: 4

Location: Ambassadors will be based on their home country and/or UN missions' area

Duration: At least three* (3) months (with possible extension).

Time commitment: 1-4 hours a week/ at least 4 hours per month [can be discussed]

Goal

The UN Maps Ambassadors will help enhance geospatial data by providing accurate field data and street-level base maps (e.g. POIs), as well as improve community outreach activities to foster and expand the UN Mappers community locally, establishing at least one (1) UN Mappers Chapter Community.

We hope the insights of this pilot project will provide grounds for further support and strengthen the UN Mappers Ambassadors Initiative and UN Maps Local Chapters/Regional Bases Strategy.

Ambassadors' Responsibilities

Work in progress

- Contribute to UN Maps' field geospatial databases and collect geospatial data in the field through OSM or other GIS tools (i.e. POIs)
- Support the exploratory establishment of local/regional UN Mappers chapter/s or community/ies
- Deliver mapathons/training opportunities and field mapping activities with the local community.
- Serve as UN Mappers mentors and coordinators in their community
- Collaborate with the UN Maps Crowdsourcing & Outreach Team and deliver documentation reports highlighting the field mapping activities, lessons learned and challenges about the UN Mappers Ambassadors Initiative and UN Maps Local Chapters/Regional Bases Strategy.

Ambassadors Criteria

Work in progress

- Must be part of the UN Mappers community in Discord
- Must have been contributing to UN Maps projects for at least 6 months
- Have knowledge and skill in mapping in OpenStreetMap thru various editors and project tools (iD editor, HOT TM, JOSM, MapRoulette, fieldpapers, field mapping, OAM etc)
 - Preferably with advanced mapping skills
 - Preferable with mapathon organizer/training experience
- Age must be 18 and above

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- Must adhere to the [UN System Code of Conduct](#)
- Must be motivated to advocate for UN Maps, open data, and open mapping in their local communities

UN Mappers Ambassadors' Incentives and Entitlements

Work in progress

- serve as local community representatives on behalf of the UN Mappers community
- UN Maps Certificate of Ambassadorship
- Recognition across UN Mappers channels
- Use of UN Maps letterhead for coordination and communication with local agencies
- Mentorship support from the UN Maps Crowdsourcing & Outreach Team and fellow Ambassadors (peer-to-peer support)
- Use of UN Mappers logo ?

Community Discussion: Ambassadors Pilot Project Plan

10th July, MS Teams

Takeaways:

1. We started the session with a [mindful box breathing](#)
2. Recap: What have we done so far from late April to June - [Blog write up here](#)
3. Discussion: [Pilot Project Plan](#)
 - a. Salim from TomTom: I joined late but in case you mentioned or not, what are the geographies of these initiative? are you going to improve the map in OSM?
 - i. Yes our main platform will be OSM
 - ii. For the pilot project, we target where active UN Mappers are and where the missions are
 - b. Patrick: What is the long term vision of the role of the ambassador (after the 3 months "program")? What mapping she/she should be involved? UN mappers projects or also external mapping initiatives?
 - i. The long term vision is to have field mappers on the ground supporting data production for UN peacekeeping missions, as well as institutionalize open geospatial data (such as OSM data) in the UN through forming ambassadors and chapters
 - ii. Aside from UN Maps mapping tasks and for the pilot project, ambassadors and their community can map POIs on the field/in their country (ie neighborhood mapping)
 - c. Salim: How can TomTom and others best support your field mapping and data validation efforts? What training or mentorship needs do Ambassadors and Chapters currently have that TomTom could help address? Would you be interested in TomTom-led mapathons, webinars, or skills workshops for your community? TomTom would be happy to support through training, data validators, support directly for local ambassadors, and collaborate in projects in the same geography. will await your 3rd party collaboration model/section great pilot, wishing you all the success
 - i. We will keep that in mind, and discuss and add how partnerships and collaborations with different organizations look like in the project plan
 - d. Pawan: I would like to create this initiative in India during the weekends with schools , colleges and companies. I would like to train further mappers here , can mentor remote mapathons with TomTom Pune too .
 - e. Arnold: want to know, the aim is to have one person as ambassador in each country ?
 - i. Brazil: Only 1 person for the pilot is good, instead of dividing, I think 1 community/chapter is better
 - ii. The aim is to have one, but can be negotiated if the ambassador cover a different area (eg a rural vs urban area on the same country)

- f. Patrick: We have been struggling to motivate our members to map. How do you motivate mappers? Aside from recognition?
 - i. Pawan: To Answer Patrick these days it is tough as I have work to do to earn money but working and doing work for UN has given our resume and the joy of working for developing humanity and communities , we have got great recognition in this regard .
 - ii. Brazil: Showcase Skill, Global Connection, Learn Skills, Represent Yourself
 - iii. Francisco: A question on top: how to show the result of the performed mapping? Seeing results can help to increase motivation. How can one use the map to which themselves have contributed
 - iv. Michael:
 - 1. Certificates / formal recognition (also on social media)
 - 2. Understanding of importance (availability of free open data for everyone / contributing to the work of the United Nations)
 - 3. Education (if you contribute for UN Mappers you learn how to map new things on OSM)
 - 4. Study cases on how map data is used (by UN entities / by local communities themselves / community or personal success stories)
 - v. Arnalíe: making motivatio and use cases personalized. What matters for other contributors may be of low priority for me. We'd like to have more community blogs like <https://maps.un.org/news/un-mappers-stories-new-passionate-cartographer-ghana>
 - g. Brazil: when will the project start?
 - i. Soon :) we hope to get the discussion with UNV going and we will launch soon after that
4. Next Steps
- a. Discuss and add how partnerships and collaborations with different organizations look like in the project plan
 - b. UN Maps team to discuss with UNV

