

Speaker Note

Field Data Collection for Geographical Names in Brunei Darussalam

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**Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh and
a very good morning to all distinguished delegates.**

Introduction:

The tasks and activities of geographical and road naming in Brunei Darussalam is spearheaded by the Brunei Darussalam National Geographical Names Committee (JKNG) chaired by the Survey Department. This National Committee comprises of government agencies including the Language and Literature Bureau, the Museums Department, Ministry of Education and the District Departments.

Today, it is my pleasure to present an overview of our efforts in the field data collection especially for geographical names in Brunei Darussalam.

Goal:

The goal of this activity is to record, document and standardise geographical names for official and public use. This would also include to collect accurate data on the location, spelling, origin / history and usage of names. This is important to ensure consistency across all platforms.

Methodology:

To achieve this,

- Review existing maps and digital data
 - To define the AOI and so that the field activity can be done systematically
 - In Brunei, this is done according to the areas in the map sheet
- Field survey using GPS
 - To record the location of the geographical feature / place
 - There is a plan to share this information in the Geoportal Ukur
- Community engagement
 - Interviews with local communities and authorities
- Photographic and audio documentation
 - To support verification purposes

Elements Collected:

- Geographical name – local spelling & pronunciation
- Feature type – e.g. river, hill, etc
- Coordinates
- Language origin / history and meaning
- Usage – educational, farming, mining, etc
- Photos and audios

Challenges:

- Coordination with agencies
 - Ensuring effective coordination with various government and local agencies
 - Difficulty in arranging a time and date when all relevant parties are available for joint field visits, meetings, or validation discussions – this often causes delays
- Selection of informants
 - Should consist of native speakers who are healthy and have good memory.
 - The age of the informant (between 60 and 75 years old)
- Accessibility
 - Especially for remote areas that require significant effort to reach the place
- Variations in language, spelling and pronunciation
 - Different dialects or conflicting spellings passed down through generations, which makes standardisation more difficult
- Verification
 - Every name must be checked for accuracy, cultural sensitivity, and compliance with naming conventions

Closing:

A successful field activity will result in an updated, accurate and standardised database / record of geographical names. We are also able to preserve the rich cultural heritage and local knowledge of the place, in relevance to the names.