

UNGEGN 2025 SESSION - NATIONAL DIALOG

BRAZIL:

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Speaker Notes:

Good morning/afternoon, everyone. I'm here to present a manual for the collection of geographical names, developed by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics — the IBGE.

This manual follows the resolutions of the former United Nations Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names, as well as the procedures described in UNGEGN's *Manual for the National Standardization of Geographical Names*.

It describes and details the three phases of geographical names collection: preparation in the office, field collection of geographical names, and the post-fieldwork organization of the information gathered.

Its purpose is to document the institutional process of collecting geographical names at the IBGE. But more broadly, it aims to provide other national mapping institutions — and any other organizations that work with geographical names or would like to — with a consistent methodology. This methodology has been tested, refined over the years, and successfully applied by the IBGE, which coordinates Brazil's National Cartographic System.

Since Brazil doesn't have a National Names Authority, achieving some level of uniformity in the collection and processing of names may help minimize inconsistencies in our set of geographical names.

But beyond that technical role, I'd really like to highlight the manual's contribution to preserving, disseminating, and promoting the cultural heritage of the many human groups that make up the Brazilian people.

In our work, we don't just collect the names themselves — we're especially interested in how those names relate to the cultural heritage of the people who created them. We want to know

the stories behind the names: what motivated them, the *whys* and *hows* those names came to be.

All this information is entered into the Brazilian Geographical Names Database — the BNGB — which was launched in December last year. The use of this manual by other actors gives us the chance to make our database even more complete, especially with names that fall outside the cartographic scales used by the IBGE. And it's important to highlight that names from minority groups and languages often fall into this category.

Some of the strengths of this manual are that its methodology doesn't rely on digital resources, and its language is very simple and direct — making it accessible even to people with low levels of formal education. This makes it a great tool for school projects focused on early toponymic education and the appreciation of cultural heritage.

It also offers an opportunity for minority communities to collect their own geographical names and tell their own stories — regardless of the educational level of their members — and, moreover, have their cultural heritage shared and promoted by a national institute like the IBGE.