

GEO-ENABLING INITIATIVE FOR MONITORING AND SUPERVISION (GEMS)

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TEAM WEBSITE: Type [gems/](#) in any WBG intranet browser and see here.



MISSION

The aim of GEMS is to systematically build capacity among clients, partners and Bank staff to use simple and cost-free open-source tools for digital data collection and analysis, to enhance M&E, supervision and real-time risk management.

Geo-Enabling initiative for Monitoring and Supervision (GEMS)

A graphic showing the GEMS team members. On the left, it says "The GEMS initiative is supported by the" followed by logos for KTF (Korea Trust Fund for Economic and Peacebuilding Transitions) and the Korea Trust Fund for Economic and Peacebuilding Transitions (KTF). In the center, there are two rows of team members' photos, each with their name below: Hadi Al-Ashwal, Maria Anlo, Nelly Bachelot, Louis Boffan, Jan Dams, Wesley De Witt, Gaspard Dodo, Kella Deuzoune, Mitterand Madjita, Elie Kaja, Bernhard Metz, Josée Miakukila, Bernard Mitto, Miguel Toquica, Rindra Randriamanantena, Liana Razafindrasy, Tino Toupane, Astrid Uytterhaegen, Annabelle Vinois, Elma Zahir, and Yann Bourgeois. On the right, there is a magnifying glass over a globe with the text "GEMS" and "Simplicity is Key for ICT in FCV".



The unique identity of GEMS, compared to other teams working on geospatial data within the Bank, is that they work with very simple open-source tools, which can be used by anyone for free. Moreover, GEMS focuses on building capacity directly with local stakeholders of any kind, including PIUs, government agencies, NGOs, bilateral donors and Bank staff. GEMS aims to create a *Global Public Good* through skills-building in digital data collection and analysis. The team helps to implement simple solutions based on 'pocket science' (rather than 'rocket science') that work in developing countries and FCV settings with low capacity and limited resources.

The GEMS method enables project teams to use open-source tools for in-field collection of structured digital data that automatically feeds into a centralized M&E system. The integrated data can include any kind of indicators, based on tailor-made forms; photos, audio, videos; time and date stamps; barcode scans; and GPS coordinates that allow for automated geo-mapping of the information. Using GEMS systematically allows operations to enhance the transparency and accuracy of M&E, and the accountability of third-party monitoring. Moreover, it provides a platform for remote supervision, real-time risk &

safeguards monitoring, and portfolio mapping for coordination across projects and partners.

CAPACITY

TEAM

The GEMS team currently has 22 team members, 9 of them are based in the field in Africa (Abidjan, Addis Ababa, Bamako, Bangui, Conakry, Cotonou, N'Djamena, Nairobi, Kinshasa). In addition, there are GEMS focal points in around 25 WBG client countries to provide for local ownership.

WORKSHOPS/EVENTS

In terms of training, GEMS offers regular two-hour 'crash courses' for TTLs and operational staff at HQ and Country Offices 4-5 times per months, including sessions in Spanish and French as well as in the night time for colleagues in Asia ([via WebEx - see here](#)). Moreover, the core of GEMS implementation is a 3-days hands-on capacity-building training for clients, partners and local staff. While these intensive training-of-trainers workshops are normally delivered in-country, they are held over WebEx during the COVID-19 crisis.

The interactive training covers everything needed for project teams to run the system independently: (a) Data platform creation and administration; (b) digital questionnaire design and deployment; (c) in-field project data collection; (d) geo-mapping and analysis of collected data within the application; (e) data export, spatial/Excel analysis; and (f) creation of a customized data architecture. After joining a training, the attendees are able to create and manage their own, fully customized digital M&E systems.

SERVICES OFFERED

GEMS has developed a methodology to teach the effective use of open-source tool KoBoToolbox (that is free and open for any user around the world) and other simple tools to set up customized and locally owned digital monitoring systems.

The GEMS team provides access to cost-free technology and creates capacity in digital data collection and analysis. Concretely, this can be used for project M&E, portfolio mapping, ESF data platforms, Citizen Engagement/GM, third-party monitoring, Iterative Beneficiary Monitoring. A special focus lies on creating skills among low-capacity clients in FCV countries. Support can be one-off (a 3-day training) or imply longer hand-holding.

The team can support the setup of project M&E systems, portfolio mapping platforms and (under certain circumstances) citizen engagement platforms. This is based on simple tools for digital in-field data collection via handheld devices. Yet, it can also be connected to more advanced remote sensing support, which is provided through partnerships with ITS Project-360, GOST and the European Space Agency (ESA).

The GEMS team offers hands-on in-country training workshops with two main objectives:

- a) Build capacity among government agencies, WB Teams, and partners to use simple ICT tools for digital data collection and analysis, customized to their specific project needs.
- b) Implement the system across country & regional portfolios to allow for real-time supervision & coordination of operations via a centralized platform that registers all projects on interactive maps.

The tools are completely cost-free, including accounts, mobile apps, and server space, and the method can be implemented within short time frames. The sole costs factors of GEMS implementation the training sessions (travel for 2 trainers & staff/STC time), smartphones for data collection (low-cost Android devices - also private devices can be used) and potential field data collection costs on the side of the projects.

By December 2020, GEMS has been implemented in 60+ countries, with over 500 project teams and 2,500 client staff being trained across regions.

PRODUCTS

- General ICT-based monitoring capacity,
- Digital project M&E systems,
- Dashboards/MIS with automated maps, statistical data and rich data (photos, audio, videos, bar code scans, signatures, drawings
- Portfolio mappings at the level of implementation sites (~70,000 sub-projects mapped so far)
- ESF monitoring systems

PARTNERSHIPS

INTERNAL

- All CMUs in FCV countries and all GPs
- Closely work with GOST and offer complementary services
- Cooperation with OPCS-FM on the Smart Supervision app
- Feed portfolio data into the ITS Geospatial Platform
- Close cooperation with the ITS Project-360 platform, with GEMS as ground data collection solution

EXTERNAL

- Harvard Humanitarian Initiative (providing KoBoToolbox)
 - Over 15 UN and bilateral development that participated in trainings
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OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

To know more about GEMS:

- Type gems/ in any WBG intranet browser to access the GEMS website
GEMS intranet site:
<https://worldbankgroup.sharepoint.com/sites/wbsites/GEMSGeoEnablinginitiativeforMonitoringandSupervision/Pages/index.aspx?e=1:878ee2e608e94b8c8986822c25927fc2>
- Interview from August 2018 (partly updated in September 2019)
<https://bit.ly/2uKV5N3>
- Internet Article - Using "Pocket Science" to Monitor and Supervise Operations in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Settings
<https://bit.ly/2IAIqjT>
- Feedback on results achieved through GEMS by TTLs
<https://worldbankgroup.sharepoint.com/sites/wbsites/GEMSGeoEnablinginitiativeforMonitoringandSupervision/Pages/Uses-of-GEMS.aspx?csf=1&cid=7cb0affe-9ca3-4a04-b057-8b3d1248fc72>