
ICANN80 | PF – ccNSO: ccTLD News

Tuesday, June 11, 2024 – 10:45 to 12:15 KGL

CLAUDIA RUIZ:

... Claudia Ruiz, and I am joined with my colleagues Bart Boswinkel and Joke Braeken, and together we are the remote participation managers for this session. Please note that this session is being recorded and is governed by the ICANN expected standards of behavior.

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With that, I will now hand the floor over to Joel, the moderator for this session. Thank you.

JOEL KARUBIU:

Thank you very much, Claudia. Good morning, good afternoon, good evening from wherever you're joining us. We're happy to be here in Kigali today, and we're going to have a very interesting four, five presentations around what ccTLDs are doing out there in the different markets. And just to echo what [Everton and Alejandra] said in the morning, we usually use this session just to inform our community of what the different countries are doing, the different steps that they're taking to ensure that they are collaborative, they're getting into partnerships, and they're doing great things, and you'll hear some of the things in this presentation.

So without further ado, I'd like to invite our first speaker, who's Plantina from ZADNA. She's joining us remote.

PLANTINA MOKONE:

Good afternoon, good morning, good evening to everyone from all parts of the world. My name is Plantina Mokone. I am the Internet governance coordinator for the ZA Domain name authority, and I will be sharing with the committee or the audience at large on the work that dot-ZADNA is doing as a ccTLD in South Africa.

So, just to give you a brief background of what dot-ZADNA is, we are the ZA domain name authority regulating South Africa's dot-ZA domain name platforms. We are responsible for the management and the administration of South Africa's dot-ZA name platforms.

I don't know if you can just skip to the second slide after this. Okay. Yeah. So after Covid in the year 2020, ZADNA identified a problem in South Africa's digital education space. Understanding that most children in South Africa's quintile one, two or three schools were unable to meet their education needs, ZADNA then decided to launch a project called the ZA Schools Digitisation Project. So what the ZA School Digitisation Project does is that it tries to address goal number four of the South Africa's development (not South Africa, but sustainable development goals), which is to ensure inclusive and equitable education and promote lifelong learning for all, as well as to address some of the stipulations in the South African constitution which guarantee the right to basic education, including digital resources for all.

Having identified these gaps, and the persistence of these gaps that eventually then affect schools in rural and disadvantaged communities, particularly quintile one, two and three schools, then ZADNA conceptualized the ZA Schools Digitisation Project. So what the ZA Schools Digitisation Project aims to do is that it aims to address three separate challenges, one being the access to learning infrastructure for schools and for learners and educators, as well as to provide training for communities, parents and learners within the space (digital training to be precise) and employment opportunities for community members

within the community being provided a digital learning platform is from.

So let me break it down. The solution being the ZA School Digitisation Project aims to deploy 22,982 schools dot-za domain names over a period of three years. It also seeks to provide websites to all schools, which is being the 22,982 schools, as well as to provide over 12 million email addresses to learners and over 400,000 email addresses to educators. It also seeks to provide ICT, internships and learnership programs to between 250 to 500 unemployed youth nationwide.

So how do we intend to achieve that? With each school that schools that a dot-ZA domain name is being provided, we will train some of its unemployed youth to take care of the school's domain (that would be obviously unemployed youth in majority), as well as to provide digital literacy for the community members.

I see that the person helping me present the slides is slightly behind me, so I'll try and speak more slowly.

So that's the solution that ZADNA has proposed and is implementing starting from the year 2022.

Next slide, please. So where are we with that solution? What are the administrative milestones that we have achieved so far? The biggest milestone that we have achieved is that the Department of Communication has endorsed the project. So anything that is ... So this speaks to our strategic partnerships. Anything endorsed by the Department of Communications can be taken on a nationwide scale, which means it can grow.

So, to start off, we've projected that we'll provide only 22,000 plus domain names, but if this project should succeed, we could do more. ZADNA is also the custodian of this project to ensure its implementation. So that's also something.

So one of the things that we've done is that ... Maybe it's pretty [material] for me to say this, but—

[CLAUDIA RUIZ]:

Apologies for interrupting you. Could you please slow down a little bit? The interpreters have a hard time following. And also, if we need to move to the next slides, please let us know. Thank you.

PLANTINA MOKONE:

Okay. So, as some of the administrative milestones, for one, as indicated, the Department of Communications has endorsed this project, which is a big milestone, which is a big achievement for us, because this simply means that the success of this project could be extended to a nationwide project.

The second biggest administrative milestone that we have achieved is that we are collaborating with Google to provide these learning platforms for students. These includes the email addresses and the online classrooms that we've identified as a solution to the problem at hand.

We've also, over the past year, signed an MOU with USAASA to fund the project with 11 million rand. So the project is quite big. 11 million rand is a drop in the ocean, but it is a big start considering where we were

and where we want to go. Overall, the project budget is something close to 200-something million, 11 million rand. Those are a drop in the ocean, but it takes us further than what we had anticipated.

Another big milestone, which I congratulate my colleagues from ZADNA in achieving, is that we have signed MOUs with a provincial department of education, this being the provincial department of education in the Free State and the Northern Cape. These are one of two of our provinces within the nine provinces that we have in South Africa. We are collaborating very closely with the provincial governments in those two provinces to ensure that the students or the learners and the teachers in quintile one, two and three schools within those provinces have their digital educational needs well provided for in this regard.

We've also partnered with SOEs like the National Electronic Media Institute of South Africa (NEMISA) to provide digital literacy and cybersecurity safety targeted again at these learners and educators and parents. So this is particularly important because cybersecurity is, especially with the addition of AI, a growing threat. So the more our learners, our parents, and our educators are acquainted with cybersecurity skills and are able to protect themselves online, the better they can be in safeguarding their learning environment.

So this is just some of the partners that we have partnered with to administratively help us achieve the goal of providing 22,000-plus, learning platforms.

Next slide, please. So, the technical milestones. Again, we are not as far as we'd like to be. However, we've achieved quite a lot in the short

space of time that we've had. So currently we've deployed 6.4 school ZA domain names in six months. That's a lot considering the fact that we've given ourselves a three-year scope. But the objective is to achieve 22% of the school ZA domain names over the three years that we've [inaudible]. So in this financial year, being 2024 and 2025, we hope to achieve the 22% and we are right on track on that.

We've only deployed three websites for three schools, and I'll get into the problems with that as we go on. But so far that's what we've deployed. We've provided 10% of email addresses to learners. Again, we are halfway there as far as providing the 22%, and we have provided 10.2% email addresses to educators. A big pat on the back for my colleagues working on that. 6.4 educators, parents and learners are provided with digital skills.

So annually, during the Child Protection week, as well as with ZADNA's annual engagement, we try to address these objectives to ensure that our learners, our parents and our educators are equipped with digital literacy skills and online cybersecurity skills so that they can preserve these domains, they can preserve themselves online. So, so far, we've only achieved 6% of that target. Again, this is within a space of six months of initiating this project.

However, we have provided zero training opportunities to nationwide use. Again, I'll address that as the challenge with that as we go on. However, currently ZADNA is in the process, through its DNS training programs, to equip unemployed youth with the necessary skills of how to manage ZA domains, the school's domains, and how to be able to service the schools that have these learning platforms.

Next slide, please. The next slide after that. So, analysis of the progress. What are our challenges and what is the impact of our challenges? And I'll try to speak a little on what are the proposed solutions that we have in place. Currently, our biggest challenge is limited resources—limited resources financial and human resources. I think in the previous slide I would have mentioned that we've only deployed three websites across the 6.4% schools that we've given these platforms to. We have literally one person creating all of this for us, and he has to register the domain names, he has to create the website. So, as far as our limited resources are concerned, we are confined to what ZADNA itself as an organization can provide. The more service providers can come on board and help us to achieve this, the better we would achieve. However, this is the biggest challenge both financially and in terms of our human resources manpower, as indicated. So the impact of that is that we are very slow in our progress in achieving what we set out to achieve.

Then there are technical issues, particularly in remote and underdeveloped areas. The biggest issue with addressing quintile one, two and three schools is the area where they are found. They struggle with issues such as connectivity. They struggle with issues such as infrastructure. So we have to then, before we even provide learning platforms and school ZA learning platform, before we even provide address ... In most instances, some of them have data issues. You know, they don't have access to Internet like people in urban areas. [inaudible].

Our educators and our teachers and our students, or our communities rather, are reluctant to jump on board onto this. Some of them argue

that they've been promised, or some of them use their status, economic status, to say, "We don't even have basic needs provided for. So what is the purpose of this?" So then, in those instances, we then have to try and sort of, to some extent, not even meet the needs, but, like, speak to some of the needs that they have and talk about our mandate. But we struggle with a resistance from communities in particular, though we have the department, the provincial departments, buying into the project,

Another challenge is our buy-in from our stakeholder engagement. While we were able to secure partnership with two provincial government departments, there are nine provinces in South Africa, and we should be having the buy-in of all nine provincial departments of education. However, that's not yet the case. So with that, that presents a challenge as far as collaborating and effectively implementing the project within specific provinces. So we are able to implement the project in the Free State and the Northern Cape because of the buy-in. However, we are unable to implement the project in provinces like Mpumalanga because we don't yet have provincial government buy-in in that regard.

What are the solutions that we propose? I think as far as resource is concerned, we will knock on doors to find strategic partners, to find finances that will help us execute this project over a long period of time. And then after the [inaudible] to address.

So those are some of our proposed solutions. Capacity-building. I think as far as capacity-building is concerned, we are just delayed. You know, we are just delayed. The delay is also linked with human resources, but

with every quarter, with every month, there is an outreach that seeks to address this target.

Once we address this capacity-building target, we will then be more likely to address the economic targets of ensuring that schools are then able to provide learnerships and internships to the unemployed youth within the community that will then be able to service the platform on behalf of the schools.

Stakeholders. The point is to never stop trying to engage as many stakeholders as possible to ensure that we have the buy-in that we need to be able to implement the project in those specific provinces.

Next slide, please. So our biggest achievements thus far, again, within this period that we have, which is six to twelve months, is that we've launched the project. We've launched the project in the two provinces that we have the provincial buy-ins from, those being the Free State and the Northern Cape. So we've launched the project in those two provinces.

And then we have secured 11 million rand that will enable us to take care of some of the monetary needs that are delaying our efficient and effective implementation of the project. Obviously, like I said, 11 million is a drop in the ocean, but it has taken us a long way from where we were. So we will continue to seek funding and sponsorship, even if the sponsorship is so to take care of a specific need that we cannot take care of as an organization.

The other initial success factor that I can point us to is just the partnerships that we have in place to effectively help us achieve this project.

So the next slide then speaks to how we intend to measure the progress of our, of our, of our projects. There's one that I haven't put into the presentation, but adherence to timelines is one way of measuring the progress of our project. We are slightly delayed,. However, we are on a catch-up basis. The usage of digital, of learning resources and of the learning ... The more schools that are able to use the learning platform and that are able to use the emails and engage with learner student engagement on the platform, the better. So we need to monitor that to ensure the success. The more frequently it is used, the more it is used throughout the country, we know that we are being successful in our objective. The objective—

JOEL KARUBIU:

Sorry, I'll just give you a time check, please.

PLANTINA MOKONE:

Okay, this is the last slide. Just give me two more minutes. But let me just quickly wrap up. So the infrastructure and deployment.. The more students and learners and communities that use the platforms, the better. Teacher engagement. The more frequently it is used by teachers, because it is meant for teachers and learners, the better once again. That's how we going to monitor the success of the project. Again, student/teacher satisfaction coupled with parent involvement. So we do not want to limit this platform to teacher and learner. We want our

communities, our parents, to get involved, to be well-acquainted parents for the purpose of checking homework, assignment marks, progress reports, etcetera. They need to get involved into the program. They need to be familiar with the platform. And then there's just the operational efficiency of the overall project.

But this is it. This is the project currently. It's been in place. We're currently administering or executing it. We've successfully executed in two provinces and we're looking to grow the scope into all nine provinces with the help of our government.

Next slide is just a thank you slide, and I'm open to questions and answer with my email address for any more information on the project. Thank you.

JOEL KARUBIU:

Thank you very much, Plantina, for that. Very passionate presentation. Maybe I'll look in the room if there's any question in the room. There's Bart at the back and then two questions and then we can move on.

BART BOSWINKEL:

So I have two questions online or three effectively. One is from Marius from Madagascar. And the question is, did your initiative start with the request expressed by the world of education or was it an offer from you, knowing the situation in the country? What about your participation in financing the project. So that's the first question.

PLANTINA MOKONE: Can I respond to that or do I take—

BART BOSWINKEL: Go ahead.

PLANTINA MOKONE: So the initiative is ours. However, it does draw from mandates that are given to South Africa, including our constitution. The provision of education is a fundamental humans right globally. So when there is a gap in the provision of education due to certain access to technological challenges, then it becomes the objective firstly of the state to address those issues. However, in this case, because of the service that ZADNA provides, which is in the domain namespace, we then conceptualized it in response to that.

So it's not a-top down instruction or approach in terms of resolving an issue, but however, it is an initiative that ZADNA, through our CEO, then decided to commence so that we address a need before the issue becomes a global national crisis. I don't know if that answers it.

And then as far as our finances are concerned, we as an organization aren't funded by the state. We do rely on partnerships. We do rely on sponsors. But let me just then rely on the word “partnership.” So we do try and collaborate a lot with service providers to be able to, if not provide financial resources, provide some kind of service that will help us execute what we had then set up to execute as far as this project is concerned.

Let me give an example. We can't provide data for any of the communities that we are trying to service, particularly those in remote areas, remote disadvantaged areas. We can't provide data and we don't have the capacity to provide technical infrastructure. So what we do in line with what we can provide or in line with the relationships that we have under the Department of Communications, is we get into memorandums of understandings with various entities to be able to serve as certain financial and technical needs, which then reduces our financial burden.

So we are still, obviously currently in the process of partnering with various kind of entities—the [CTAs], the various kind of entities under the Department of Communications—to be able to address these needs that we as an entity cannot address. Thank you.

BART BOSWINKEL: May I suggest that you look at the chat to respond to the other questions? Because we're running out of time. Yeah, go ahead, Joel.

JOEL KARUBIU: Yeah, I suggest that Plantina just look at the questions and you can also be able to respond on them online.

PLANTINA MOKONE: Oh, so as I respond online, I just respond to the chat? So I can just say it because I—

JOEL KARUBIU: You can respond online on the chat because we need to move ahead.

PLANTINA MOKONE: All right, thank you very much.

JOEL KARUBIU: I know there are two hands that are up. Please bear with me in the interest of time. We shall come back to them after the other presentations.

So I'll move to the next presenter, dot-rs. Welcome.

DEJAN DUKIC: Thank you. Hello everyone, I'm Dan Dukic, CEO of the Serbian registry. For those who don't know, Serbia is small country from southeastern part of Europe.

We are the registry for ... Next slide please. We are the register for dot-rs and dot-SRB domains. Under dot-rs., we have over 139,000 domain names registered and within the IDN Cyrillic SRB we have more than 3000. We have a small team doing great job relying on automatization processes, relevant technologies and top professionals that perform in line of best practices. We have a team of 15 employees, and our registry according to local law is infrastructure of special importance. We are based as a foundation, not for profit, and we are a non-governmental organization.

Next slide please. Our priorities in general are stability, which is one of the first things we are trying to offer: as-best-as-possible services to our users and to our registrars. Also we are improving security. We're

offering three types of domain name protections. Besides that we have DNSSEC. Efficiency is one of our priorities. Our procedures are based on best practices. We have general terms and conditions based on best practices in Europe. Also we have policies according to privacy regulation. Besides that we have arbitration for domain name disputes. Besides the registry business, we are doing a lot with community cooperation and I will speak more about it in this presentation.

Next slide. As a small registry, we are very active in cooperation with the local and international community. Within the local level, we can easily say that we are one of the most active NGOs related to Internet. So we are doing a lot of events, a lot of education and trying to do our best, giving back to community to learn and exchange and also help others to exchange experience, which is one of our strategic priorities.

Next slide, please. We are doing our best to put Belgrade on a map in a tech community and domain name industry. In the past couple of years, we were active in hosting a couple of international events. We were active before with the smaller workshops and we are trying to do our best effort to put on the map our registry and Serbia.

Next slide. With the big events we started in 2022, we were co-hosts with the local exchange service, the Serbian Open eXchange, organization. We were co-host of RIPE 85. Days before we had a DNSOARC and CENTR tech meeting for the CENTR community. In that period, Belgrade was tech corner of Europe and beyond as the RIPE community gathered for this meeting in Belgrade.

Next slide. Last year we had the CENTR Jamboree in Belgrade in 2023. CENTR is particularly relevant organization to us as being a European ccTLD, and experiences and practices and exchange with European registry are more than valuable for us. It was for us major and very important project to host people from the CENTR community and to share experience with our colleagues and to offer them Serbian hospitality. There were more than 200 people in this event and it was a very successful jamboree with good presentations and discussion.

Next slide. This year we had also one important, very important, international event. Since we are very active within UA initiatives and USG, we are put a lot of effort on our side to promote IDNs since we have since we are also IDN ccTLD and we are trying to advocate UA as much as possible. We were happy to host this global event and it was an annual global event in Serbia. We managed to draw local stakeholders attention for this particular topic, which wasn't that easy because we are trying to communicate IDNs as much as possible, but it's hard to explain what it's all about and why that is important for users. So we had at that event people from government, the tech community, and a lot of media, trying to emphasize UA and IDNs as a very important and relevant topic.

Next slide please. Besides domain-name-related activities, we also are very active in local dialogue related to IGF, and a couple of years ago we started with other partners and with government a local IGF forum. Mostly all relevant organizations from Serbia were involved in that initiative, and this year we had third event in September.

Next slide please. Also we are supporting the southeastern dialogue and also EuroDIG. We were virtual co-host for 2021 for EuroDIG. We are very much involved in regional and European IGF initiatives, supported work of SEEDIG and EuroDIG. We supported EuroDIG during COVID times and as I mentioned we were co-hosts for the virtual event. We are glad to participate in those events [inaudible] and providing as much as possible financial support and enabling our experts to share experience in those events.

Next slide. One more. Also, we are very active at a local community level, so we are supporting local projects. Recently we had events in ... The previous one is fine. Sorry. Yeah, we invest a lot in a local community relations' gathering place for professionals. So we had a couple of initiatives relating to donations and sponsorships recently. This is slightly related to that. We recently developed a project with other partners in Serbia to print some casual t-shirts with very small signs of domains but with some, let's say, popular design. And at first, we developed and had some t-shirts for sharing and giving us a presence on company events. But since those t-shirts were becoming very popular, we decided to develop a project on that. So now we have t-shirts with a couple of designs and we are partners with someone who is a very famous local t-shirt producer, selling those t-shirts. And part of the profits we are donating for talents in Serbia. And every six months, we are changing organizations to whom we are donating. Now it's the [Met] school in Serbia. Before that it was Centre for Talents. And with our donation in the previous six months, that Centre for Talents brings a couple of prizes in an international competition. So it's a very good initiative at a local level.

Next slide please. Since cybersecurity is one of our strategic points, besides services that we are offering, we are doing a lot on awareness, and with a couple of local organization, we are supporting events like Cyber Hero. This is a picture of a competition of young talents from ICT schools in Serbia. There they were competitors under that conference, Cyber Hero.

Next slide please. It's probably the last. Yeah, I mentioned that, besides domain name industry conferences and events, we also are supporting other related events like RSN OG. We have our annual conference, DIDS, which is now maybe one of the biggest conference in Serbia. On that conference, we are sharing different experiences and topics related to Internet infrastructure, presence on the Internet, and also marketing. And it is a yearly conference with relevant speakers from from Serbia also abroad.

Next slide. And we can continue for one more, since there's not much time. Thank you for your attention. As you can see from my presentation, we have a lot of activities and a relatively small team. Sometimes it's very challenging, but we are doing our best. Thank you.

JOEL KARUBIU:

Thank you very much for that. Any questions for that presentation?

CLAUDIA RUIZ:

Okay, so we have a question online, it says, have you any future plans related to hosting of international events?

DEJAN DUKIC: Yeah, also we have plans, but it's not only up to us. It sometimes depends on partners. So we discuss with our partners. So usually we are very open to international conferences in Serbia.

JOEL KARUBIU: That's an open invite to go to Serbia next for the ICANN team. So please take note.

I think we'll move on to the next presentation if there's no other question in the room. Dot-ng, welcome.

BUSAYO BALOGUN: Thank you so much. Good morning, everyone. Good afternoon. Welcome. My name is Busayo Balogun. I work with Nigeria Internet Registration association.

Next slide please. NIRA is a not for profit, self-regulatory, non-governmental body that manages the do-ng ccTLD. And what is our mission? Our mission is to administer the dot-ng in a value-driven manner for the benefits of all our stakeholders. We run the three model operation, which is the registry, the registrar and the registrant. What this means is that we have accredited registrars that carry out the registrations on behalf of the registry. And as of today we have over 100 registrars, Nigeria and all over the world.

Next slide, please. So today I'll be sharing some of the initiatives that we have ongoing at the dot-ng ccTLD. I'll be speaking about the dot-ng registry dashboard. I'll be speaking about how dot-ng is promoting the

digital literacy using its SPVs. I'll also be speaking about our dot-ng awards and the registrar's forum.

Next slide, please. Okay, so this is what the dot-ng registry dashboard looks like, but I must put a disclaimer here as at the time we prepared the slides, the number was the reason. So we have over 220,000 dot-ng registered domains. So it's definitely more than this. And what is the dashboard? The dashboard is just a centralized platform to monitor the dot-ng domain name registrations and it offers real time insights into the registration. It gives a snapshot of all registrations at registry. This is very good, very innovative, because it's also a tool for making strategic decision both for the registry and for the registrars.

Next slide, please. So when you log on to the dashboard, which can be assessed at dashboard.registar.ng, this is what you see. It gives a breakdown of all the dot-ng domain name registrations in the various SLDs. As you can see, we have the.com dot-ng, the.net.ng and you have the various numbers. I also need to state here that the registrars are also able to assess the registrations that they carry out. And this is also good for them because they're able to monitor their performance either on a weekly basis, quarterly, monthly, so they know how they're doing and they can take strategic decisions for their business.

Next slide, please. This is also a view of the dot-ng dashboard. Thank you.

Next slide. So we'll be talking about the digital literacy. The dot-ng ccTLD is very involved, very passionate, about this and we do this via special proposed vehicles, which is the Dot Ng Academy and the

Ndukwe Kalu Foundation. The Dot Ng Academy was founded sometime in 2014 to bridge the gap in the DNS industry. And today they've partnered with a lot of stakeholders. They've carried out trainings for law enforcement agencies, they've partnered with MDAs, they've provided awareness talks. They've also partnered with [higher] institutions and the Resellers' Entrepreneurship Program. They also do that just to create the markets for the registrars and the registry.

The Ndukwe Kalu Foundation is also one of our SPVs, and one of its core objectives is to promote child online protection and to protect the young Internet users. And one of the ways we achieves this is via his COSPRA Summit. On this COSPRA Summit, the last time we held it was in November last year, and the summit was able to bring the various multistakeholders [involved]. The topics that were discussed revolved around digital literacy on how to promote and ensure online protection for both children and for young Internet users. And they've also created and partnered with other stakeholders. They've partnered with ISOC, they've partnered with the African Internet Governance Forum, the Paradigm Initiative.

And I'm pleased to announce that both SPVs are open for collaboration. So please, if this is something you're interested in, you can also reach out to me after this training. Thank you.

Next slide. So, I'll also be talking about the Dot-Ng Awards. Why is it Dot-Ng Awards? It's just an award ceremony where we recognize individuals, institutions, and businesses that are using the dot-ng platform to do and to achieve significant milestones in the dot-ng domain space.

And in addition to recognizing them, I also need to state that this is also a way of promoting awareness of the dot-ng brand. And statistics will show that in 2022 we had close to like 247 nominations, but last year we had close to 300. So in addition to also celebrating this unique and significant achievement, it is also a way of promoting awareness for the dot-ng brand. And it's also done in a transparent manner. So this is open to the public, the nominations are there, and the voting is open to the public just to ensure that it is transparent. And at the last awards, we had a total of 35 awardees, five public institutions, 19 private entities and eleven individuals. Thank you.

Next slide. So one of the other initiatives that we do at the dot-ng ccTLD is the Registrars Forum. This is a gathering, quarterly engagements, that we have with our registrars. We understand that the registrars are key important stakeholders in the business. So this forum is just a way for us to get their feedback, not only to communicate important updates from the registry, but also for us to hear them. Let's hear their challenges. They need to feel like they are heard and that we can solve whatever challenges they have in carrying out the business.

So in addition to this forum, we also have a WhatsApp platform where we can interact with the registrars. They can send us messages, you know, whatever challenges, just so they can feel closer to the registry. And then the last forum we had was just last week. It was well attended. We're able to listen to them. We're able to communicate important updates, know what we're doing at the registry so that they are well-informed. We also have a registrar relationship manager because we understand that it's very important to strengthen this relationship

because the success of the registrars is also the success of the registry and also impacted our numbers.

I think next slide. Oh, okay. So thank you so much, but I'd just like to thank you for listening. If you have any question, I'm here to answer you. Thank you so much.

JOEL KARUBIU:

Thank you very much for your presentation. When you mentioned that the numbers have changed in the dashboard, I could see the Nigerian contingent nodding very quickly because there's a competition between ZADNA, [inaudible], and NIRA on who has the most domains in Africa. So the numbers matter to everyone.

BUSAYO BALOGUN:

Oh yeah.

JOEL KARUBIU:

As we wait, any questions? As we ask if ... Okay, the lady was supposed to ask a question earlier, so I'll start with that, then the gentleman at the front.

OLGA CAVALLI:

Thank you. Thank you very much. My name is Olga Cavalli from Argentina. I'm a ccNSO councilor. You mentioned the Registrar Forum, which I think is very interesting. And it's, as far as I understand, difficult for developing countries to build accredited registrars at the national level. I wanted to ask you, how many registrars do you have in Nigeria? And thank you for your presentation.

BUSAYO BALOGUN: Thank you so much. That's a very nice question. So as of today we have close to 120 registrars. And I must say that these registrars span across Nigeria, Africa and other parts of the world. So we have registrars in Europe, we have registrars in South Africa, and in Kenya too. So yes, we have 20 registers as of today.

JOEL KARUBIU: Thank you. There's a question at the front.

SEUN KEHINDE: Yeah, thank you. Thank you, Busayo, for such an informative presentation. And we can see NiRA is doing a lot to push the domain names. So I just want to say big welcome to the NiRA team. You know, you guys are doing good.

BUSAYO BALOGUN: Thank you so much.

JOEL KARUBIU: Once your boss endorses you like that, there's nothing else you can say. There was one more question. Yes, please.

YAZID AKANHO: Yes, please. Hi everyone. Thanks for the presentation. I just wanted to throw a stone in the pond. So, quick question and maybe comments. In terms of trades, how do you deal with trade related to registrations

under dot-ng? I also noticed, unless my eyes have betrayed me, dot-I-dot-ng. Is that correct? What was the rationale behind that? And what is the appetite on the market on registration under this ccTLD? And the last one is that I'm jealous because I know in these recent years, ICANN, especially the technical engagement, has been doing quite a lot of activities with, with NiRA, but I did not notice that in the presentation. That was just my last comment. Thank you.

BUSAYO BALOGUN: I'm so sorry about that, but yes, we are. You want me to answer the first question ...

YAZID AKANHO: The trades.

BUSAYO BALOGUN: Oh, yes, the domain name abuse. Yes, we do. From time to time, we do get emails complaining about that. So usually what we do is we would forward those questions, threats, emails to the registrar on record, because recall, we operate the [three-hour] model, so we do not deal with the registrants directly. The registrars do that. So most times we escalate the complaints to the registrar involved of the domain name. And I'm proud to say that most times we have this issues resolved because the registrar will take it up. We also encourage them to have their in-house domain name abuse complaint process. So they usually would utilize that to address those complaints and give a feedback to the registry, which is us, because we usually would demand feedback

so we assure that that complaint has been properly handled. So we also follow up in that regard. Dot-i-dot-ng is also one of our SLDs in trying to grow the numbers. These are things we thought we could do to increase the numbers.

So yes, the take-up can be better. It's encouraging, but it's not like what we have on the top level. But we're hoping that people would come around and see the value that dot-ng has to offer and we'll [take off] that domain string.

YAZID AKANHO:

Who was the targeted audience?

BUSAYO BALOGUN:

Just general. It wasn't targeted to anyone in particular. So it was just ... Because we heard some names that we thought would sell, like singing-dot-ing, so we just thought that string would appeal to a lot of people. Like, I want to register singing-dot-ing, dancing ing. So I think that was the idea behind the string.

And then you also mentioned the ICANN partnership that I failed to recognize. Okay. But at least now you've mentioned it. So I think everyone is aware. It's no longer a secret. And I think at the right time, maybe at the next presentation when we have something more solid, I would present that and share with you all. I hope that's fine.

YAZID AKANHO:

Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Hi, Joel. Can I shed a little more light on the dot-i-ng? [inaudible]

JOEL KARUBIU: You [can].

[B]: Okay. Yazid asked a question about the rationale behind the i-ng. So I'll just give a little historical background on it. First thing is we discovered that (well, not discovered by design) the dot-ng ... Every English "doing" word ends with ng. So we looked for ways to try and see how we can be creative with helping people to get their unique names. So doing, singing, marketing, dancing. Anybody can help me. So if you have an "I" in front of it, you can get creative with any name that you want. So it gives you all of those possibilities. That's why we came up with that with that. Thank you.

JOEL KARUBIU: [inaudible]for you guys to discuss more about Nigeria. So thank you very much, dot-ng, for your presentation.

I'd like to invite CIRA to go ahead.

CHARLES NOIR: Thank you. Good morning, everyone. My name is Charles Noir. I'm Vice-President of Community Investment Policy and Advocacy at the Canadian Internet Registration Authority. Most of you know us as CIRA,

and I'm going to talk about CIRA's Internet performance test today, and we'll call it IPT for short. In particular, we're interested in sharing with you how it's helped communities in Canada address connectivity gaps. And by the end of the presentation, I hope to provide you with a sense of what the project has accomplished, where we're headed as an organization, and how ccTLDs are uniquely positioned to improve the quality of Internet in their own home countries.

Next slide, please. So, CIRA is best known for managing the dot-ca. However, we also provide a suite of cybersecurity, DNS and registry services. A key part of our mandate is to give back to the Canadian Internet ecosystem through our Net Good program. And there are a number of efforts and programs and products and services that are involved, including our annual grants, which is an annual granting program. It celebrated its ten-year anniversary, most recently. We've been doing it for ten years. And over that time period, we have funded about 217 community-based initiatives and invested a total of \$11.7 million across the country.

We also offer a free protected DNS resolver, which we call Canadian Shield, to all Canadians to help individuals and families improve their privacy and defend against cyber threats.

We are also strong supporters and advocate for IXPs in Canada, and particularly advocating for increasing peer peering connections at local IXs.

And then there's the Internet performance test, which I'm here to talk to you about today. Since 2015, CIRA has operated its IPT platform at

performance.CIRA.ca, and it allows anyone with an Internet connection in Canada to measure their broadband performance under real-world conditions. Since its launch, CIRA has collected over 1.5 million tests in a crowdsourced database. The data helps researchers, policymakers and community leaders identify where connectivity is strong, what gaps exist, and where upgrades are needed most.

Next slide please. So, as I said, the test can be initiated by anyone with an Internet connection in Canada. In just a few clicks, the user receives feedback on their up- and download speeds and metrics like packet loss, latency and jitter. And there are actually about 60 different measures that can be gleaned from the test, if you are more technical. CIRA captures anonymized results which are aggregated into Canada-wide datasets. The test uses network diagnostic test number seven by M-Labs, and test servers are located in six IXs in tier-one cities across the country. It's an off-net test which depicts real-world Internet connectivity performance and the test interface allows users to track their performance history, automate tests, and verify their current and correct locations. Aggregated data depicts differences in broadband performances over time and between geographical areas in the country.

So we're focused on mainly two user groups. One is individuals and communities—individuals that want to run tests who are interested in their performance, and communities that use the data that IPT produces to advocate for improvement improved connectivities in their own communities. And for individuals, the IPT provides a quality of service verification which empowers them to be able to verify that they

are receiving the connectivity speeds and performance that they're actually paying for. It's also an opportunity to raise education and awareness amongst casual users who are sometimes unaware of what impacts their Internet performance and connectivity. It's also been used as a tool to troubleshoot for individuals as their IPT test history can be used for discussions with their ISP or to understand what they can do themselves to improve speed and performance.

CIRA also forms partnerships with communities to leverage the data that the IPT to address service gaps. The data format is easy to use in digital mapping. The mapping improves transparency and supports community advocacy efforts, which usually translate into concrete actions where community members can better inform decision makers, either in their community or outside. And so communities are empowered through the IPT to chart their progress by creating snapshots of service and levels over time, which is crucial to measuring the impact of broadband expansion projects.

Next slide, please. Just to share some trends over time with you, the first test was initiated in May of 2015. One year later, the government of Canada set a universal service objective of 50 megabits down and ten megabits up, the speed at which every Canadian, no matter where they live in the country, should have access to. So 50/10. With the IPT data set that CIRA has collected, it can track the nation's progress towards achieving those objectives. In the first two years, 2015 and '16, the national median download was twelve megabits down and 2.7 up, while in the most recent two years, the national media has risen to 70 megabits up and 15 megabits down. At the end of 2021, the national

median achieved the USO of 50/10 for the very first time. Despite this positive trend, the data from the IPT is granular enough to show that there are regional discrepancies and disparities. Rural data shows improvements, but rural medians remain ... Can we ... Sorry, are we on the right ... Sorry, wrong slide, folks.

Next slide, please. Are we able ...? There we go. This probably makes more sense. Apologies, I forgot that. So we're talking about where we've been and where we're going and the measurements that CIRA has been able to take over these ten years. You can see that there's been a significant improvement across both urban, rural and overall within the country. But despite positive trend, the data from IPT is granular enough to show that there are regional discrepancies. That's where I was leaving off. And rural data shows improvements, as you can see. But rural medians remain well below counterparts. They're historically three to four times lower. It also shows the slow deployment of broadband upgrades in low density rural areas.

Just to talk a little bit about community and how data is used, CIRA partners with various organizations and communities to generate test data at a local level. Wellington county in Ontario is in central Canada. It's a great example. It has a mix of urban and rural environments. IPT data helped them to support their applications too and receive public funds dedicated to improving broadband connectivity in their community. In 2020, the county used their funding to lay over 200 kilometers of fiber to the home and improve capacity of fixed wireless towers. Almost 3000 properties were positively impacted in that particular effort. Projects have recently concluded, and trend lines for

both median and upload download speeds are showing sharp improvement.

Next slide, please. So the platform needs to evolve with the Internet and it needs to evolve with the needs of our communities in Canada. So CIRA continues to invest in the platform. And here are some of our most recent upgrades in our that we've made. Our IPT servers have been upgraded to ten gigabits per second to accommodate tests from higher bandwidth connections happening concurrently. We've upgraded the user interface to improve the overall look and feel. It's much better on touchscreens and phones. So when we first started out, this test was used fairly heavily on desktops and laptops. Obviously, moving to touchscreens and phones is very important. So we've released that new UI. It's an MVP at the moment. We released that last month to beta users who are testing it for us. We've added a number of new navigation features and we're really moving to showing a lot more of the data that we collected through the use of dashboards and data analytics so we can start making sense of some of what we've collected and so that Canadians can also access that data. We're also enabling folks to embed the test on their websites. So if you're in a municipality and you're drawing folks to that website, to your homepage, you'll be able to embed the test right there so that folks can not have to navigate to our site to run a test. And then we collect the data for that and share it back with the community.

In terms of looking to the future, we continue to be very committed to modernizing and keeping the platform up to date and current. We're very interested in growing the community of users, and we're looking

for opportunities to not only generate more tests, but to really dig into the data and understand where we can provide that to communities and Canadians so that they could better advocate for themselves and their communities in reaching broadband connectivity speeds and performance that they should all have.

Next slide. So that's the end of the presentation, folks, and thank you for having me and happy to answer any questions.

JOEL KARUBIU: Thank you very much. Any questions? Yes?

BART BOSWINKEL: There is a question online from Peterking Quaye. "I would like to ask if these well-organized domain regulators can or have a program to support or help other countries who don't have a structure in place to grow and share best practices."

CHARLES NOIR: So the Net Good program that I just described is focused on improving the Internet in Canada. However, CIRA is certainly open to and is more than willing to share any of the learnings, understandings, that we've gained along the way, any knowledge that we could possibly what might be useful to folks. So I would recommend that whoever is interested in doing so should reach out, connect with me, and then we can put you in touch with members of my team that run the program. And we'd be quite happy to do that.

In terms of an actual formalized program to share this out, that's not something that we have at the moment, but like I said, I'm happy to do

so on an individual basis. Or if there are more than one, you can do that as a workshop or a number of different methods of sharing.

JOEL KARUBIU: Okay, the other panelist has a question.

KRISTIAN ORMEN: Hello, I'm Kristian from the Swedish Internet foundation. Have you considered using your platform to also test other things than speed—for example, DNS features, or booting the patterns to all your different measurement servers and stuff like that?

CHARLES NOIR: So like I said, if you ... When I'm finished here, we can take a look and I'll show you the. There are about 60 different measurements that you can derive from this test, not just the top-level ones that we're all familiar with. So if you are deeper in the weeds, technically, you can certainly glean a lot. Not to open the barn door on another project that we have, but we are doing a trace root database as well, which we'll get into how packets are moving throughout the network in Canada and globally.

JOEL KARUBIU: I'll take one question from the audience, then we can move on.

BYRON HOLLAND: More comment than a question. Because there was many data points in that slide, I just wanted to remind folks that we use the M-Labs test. That is a test that is public. The basic technology that we use is public and open to anybody. We have built numerous layers on top of that core technology, but just recognize that that is an open technology that anybody can use.

JOEL KARUBIU: Thank you very much. We'll move on to the next presentation from Sweden.

KRISTIAN ORMEN: Thank you. My name is Kristian Ormen. I'm from the Swedish Internet Foundation, a nonprofit that works for that everyone can and will and dares to use the Internet.

Next slide, please. So today I'm here to talk about new registrar requirements and also a renewal rate registration discount for dot-se and dot-nu.

Next slide, please. So at dot-se and dot-nu, we have historically focused quite a lot of volume of domains. We have had a lot of campaigns very aggressively focused on price. That led our registration numbers to be quite high, but it also led to a lot of abuse and bad registration. To compare that, dot-se was 400,000 more domains a couple of years ago, and dot-nu was more than double the zone a couple of years ago. But I would say that today the quality of the registrations is much better.

Two years ago we started with a question that was, what do the great registrars do today that is not a requirement in our contract and that we should maybe consider to add in the contract? We started with a long list and we added some of these requirements to our contract last year. And this year we are continuing to raise the bar and adding more requirements to make sure that all quality of the registry increases, but also that the registrant experience will be better.

So I'm going to talk about these two requirements today. The first one is based on that we want to have registrars that have activity that sells domains to end users and they know what they are doing by actually doing it quite regularly. And the next requirement is more based on correct registration data.

Next slide please. So what we have seen is that some of our registrars have very low activity. One example is the registrar I looked at yesterday. Hasn't registered one new domain since January last year. So we want registrars that have activities. We have decided to add a requirement that registrars need to have at least 50 unique customers. And when I say "unique," I'm not talking about domains. We collect organization number and personal number, and this is what counts when we count the customers. So it doesn't matter if a registrar has a thousand domains, if they only have ten customers, for example, because we don't want registrars that only have domains for themselves. We want registrars that sell domains to end users.

This also applies to new registrars. They, because of this, have to be resellers of dot-se or dot-nu before becoming accredited registrars. This way we can see that they are active. We can see that they are compliant

with our contract. We can check the documentation for verification of domain holders and everything before they become accredited. This will of course be a lot more work when we have new accreditations, but we really believe that it increases the quality and why they are resellers in that process. They learn a lot about how to handle dot-se and dot-nu domains, and we believe that will increase the registrar and experience.

Next slide please. So current registrars with less than 50 unique customers today we have invited to submit a reasonable plan for how they think they will come up to 50 unique customers. We have about 17 today out of 105. Of the 17, five of them are very near the 50 customers. Two have already expressed that they are planning to terminate their contract and then we have ten left that really need to work to get to these 50 customers.

For those of those that either don't want to or don't believe they can reach 50 customers, we are going to help them as much as we can to move to a reseller-based registrar. It is free to transfer domains in dot-se and dot-nu, so it is in that way easy to do bulk transfers. We can help them with auth IDs for all the domains so they can easily move to a registrar that provides reseller services.

Next slide please. So I'm going to go over to the next requirement which is on incorrect registrant data. It is already a requirement in our contract to verify registrants at the time of registration and also to send yearly reminders to keep registration data updated. It is clear that the verification of new domains is being carried out in very different ways and also over time that quality decreases by companies going bankrupt, people moving and so on. We have historically in our

agreement have strong text that we can deactivate domains or delete domains if the registrant data is incorrect. But the text hasn't been as strong for registrars. And most registrars of course don't want to deactivate a domain of a paying customer but are following our contract to the fullest with yearly reminders and so on.

We have also registrars that would want to deactivate domains but they were unsure if they were allowed to. They were also scared to lose too many customers because if they are more strict than other registrars, the customers would most likely move.

Next slide please so we now have added a new requirement only, I think, two weeks ago. We require that if a registrar becomes aware of incorrect data, they must contact the registrant, and if the registrant does not correct it, the registrar must deactivate the domain. We also allow the registrars, if this is the case, that they don't have to provide registration services, and in our contract, registration services includes changes of name servers providing auth IDs. So if there is a dispute about the registered info, this is the only case where the registrar is allowed to not give out auth ID and require the registrar to correct the data before giving out auth ID.

And then of course the big question that we also have gotten from registrars and most people that hear about this is, what is awareness? Next slide please. So we of course needed some documentation for the registrars, and we were trying to explain to the registrars what do we consider awareness of incorrect data. And the way we are going to work with incorrect data when we see it ourselves will change a bit. When it's only a couple of domains, we use our old procedure where we verify and

deactivate ourselves, but if we see a registrar that has a large amount of domains with incorrect data, we're going to produce a list of these domains and send it to the registrars. That means that the registrars are now aware of all these in incorrect data and they have to handle them.

As an example, since we did this with some registrars already we had one registrar with more than 10,000 domains, and they had 3000 domains on the list with incorrect data. Of course, many of these domains are good domains that just have small issues in the data or where the organization number is wrong. So that's also why we come back to this within a reasonable time because the registrars can choose to give the registrants a longer time if they need to.

Another example of awareness of incorrect data is if a third party contacts the registrar. It could for example an abuse investigator that has seen that the owner information on the domain is wrong, and instead of contacting the registry, they can now contact the registrar directly, and the registrar would have to act on it. We also recently had a meeting with some of our regulators where we informed them of this, and we believe that they are going to start contacting the registrars directly also.

Then of course there's the last, which would be hard for us to audit: if is the registrar itself finds incorrect data. For example, if they have a customer support case where it's clear they see that the data is incorrect, they must act on it. But this is a case where it would be very difficult for us to audit that.

Next slide please. So first I plan to just talk about registrar requirements but I decided to add this one extra slide about a new discount that we are adding. I said before that we don't really want to do big, aggressive discounts, but we have added discounts that are more quality focused. We wanted to reward registrars that do great and have less abuse, and those registrars usually have a high renewal rate. So we have decided to give a discount to registrars that have more than an 82% renewal rate. This way, if a registrar decides to do a crazy campaign where the renewal rate would drop, they would lose this discount. But also if a registrar has a lot of abusive registrations, they would also end up having lower renewal rate and they would lose this discount. The discount is calculated on at the time of the registration of a new domain, and it's based on the last year stats for that registrar.

Next slide please. And since I talk too much with a weird accent, I would recommend you to just go to registry.se. All our agreements are available for public download, including our different prices and registration discounts.

JOEL KARUBIU:

Thank you very much, Kristian. I know there are two questions in the chat, but we'll start with this one as we get on.

EBERHARD LISSE:

Sorry, I'm unable to log on to the Zoom at the moment. That's why I'm waiting. I have a question. You mentioned dot-nu. That gives me the opening to ask. Recently you succeeded on appeal in a court case

brought by the government of Niue. Do you know where this judgment is available in English? And if so, can I come to you to ask how to get it?

KRISTIAN ORMEN: I'm not aware if it's available in English and I'm not in a personal capacity to comment too much on the case myself.

EBERHARD LISSE: I didn't want to comment. I just want ... Since I have somebody here, I'll give you my card. You can email, but there are some people in the audio who are interested in reading the judgment. So I would like to see if it's available.

KRISTIAN ORMEN: I can say that it is publicly available in Swedish. I'm pretty sure not in English.

JOEL KARUBIU: Okay, we'll read from the chat room.

BART BOSWINKEL: The question is online. One is from Francis Alaneme from NiRA. "How do you determine unique customers? What are the parameters you use to measure this?"

KRISTIAN ORMEN: Well, when you register a dot-se or dot-nu domain, we have a requirement that you have to supply your organization number if you're a company, or a personal number if you are individual. So we use that unique number to look at how many unique customers you have.

BART BOSWINKEL: The second question for you is, “How do you”—yeah, I can't read this—“do registrant data validation?”

KRISTIAN ORMEN: Well, it is a requirement in our contract that the registrars do verification. When we look at our list ourselves, we look at a lot of different factors that are more easy to spot—for example, organization number being in wrong format, [cities] that doesn't exist, and so on. For the organization number, we also often check the government databases to see if the data match with the other data. For personal registration in Sweden, we can do the same. We can check if the personal number matches the name. But of course in many countries it's more difficult.

JOEL KARUBIU: Okay. I had Jordan who put his hand up and then we'll have [Sara] and [Hilda]. Then we can close.

JORDAN CARTER: Thanks. Hi Christian, it's Jordan here from dot-au. In your presentation you said that if the registrar becomes aware of wrong data and doesn't

get it corrected, they have to deactivate the domain name. Does that mean that they have to cancel the registration or does it mean that it gets suspended and they have to remove it from the zone? File or what exactly does it mean?

KRISTIAN ORMEN:

It's important to include that they have to contact the registrant. And if the registrant doesn't correct it, they have to deactivate it. They would do that by setting a client hold so the domain would go out of the zone and then that wouldn't happen anything more. So it wouldn't be deleted or anything. So the registrant would have. ... as long as the domain is still registered to correct the data and it can be reinstated in the zone.

JORDAN CARTER:

Okay, thank you.

JOEL KARUBIU:

[Sara?]

[SARA MOHAMED]:

Thank you Kristian, for your presentation. I'm just curious about your registration discount. Does it only apply to domain name renewals? Does it apply to new registrations? And if not, why not?

KRISTIAN ORMENL

No, that's actually why the name got so long—renewal rate. registration discount—because the discount is only on new domains. So it's only on registrations. But it's calculated based on registrars that have a high renewal rate on their full portfolio.

JOEL KARUBIU:

Hilda?

[HILDA]:

Okay, thank you for the great presentation. One question has already been asked. How do you carry out the verification process? You have mentioned that you use the government data, that they have to verify the correctness of the WHOIS data. I'm just curious, is it a partnership you have with the government that you have access to the database or what sort of arrangement do you have with the government? That's the first question.

KRISTIAN ORMEN:

So when we check registration data, it depends on the country. For Sweden we have to buy access to the data even though it's government databases. We also look at registration data for other countries. And it's interesting that, for example, in Denmark, where we also have many registrations, we have free access to the company database and all the data. And the same in Norway. So for the countries where we have many registration, if we can get the data and match those numbers to the data, we do that. T

JOEL KARUBIU: Thank you. One more. Last one please.

[HILDA]L I'll be fast. You have mentioned that you only give this discount to those registrars that have a renewal rate of 82%. And it's only on registrations. I'm just curious, what is the renewal rate for the organization?

KRISTIAN ORMEN: So we have a target renewal rate for 85%. Last I checked we were 84-something. So we originally wanted to set this discount at 85% because that was our average. The registrar association was asking if we could lower it to 80, and then we decided to end somewhere in between that. So the 82 is a bit lower than our overall renewal rate.

JOEL KARUBIU: Thank you very much, Kristian. I'm conscious of time. So I'll ask for the next slide, please, which is feedback on this session. So if you had not scanned the QR code earlier, please do that so that we can give feedback. As you see, this is session that allows us to discuss what everyone is doing, the interesting things that people are doing, and I think the panelists are here the whole week, so please catch up with them and ask them all those hard questions that you are asking.

So please, I would ask the audience to give the panelists a clap and thank them for giving their time. The presentations will be online and the recording will be online. So you could actually catch up on that and see some of the conversations. And these conversations will continue.

Some of the questions that were in the chat room will be answered by the panelists at a later date.

So thank you, everyone, and I think I'll hand it over back to lunch. And fun times in the afternoon. Thank you very much.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]