
ICANN80 | PF – At-Large Collaboration in the New gTLD Program Outreach and Engagement Plan

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

YESIM SAGLAM:

Hello and welcome to At-Large Collaboration in the New gTLD program Outreach and Engagement plan. My name is Yesim Salam, and I'm the Remote Participation Manager for this session. Please note that this session is being recorded and is governed by the ICANN Expected Standards of Behavior. During this session, questions or comments will only be read aloud if submitted within the Q&A pod.

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JONATHAN ZUCK:

Thanks, Yesim, and welcome everybody to this session on how the At-Large community will collaborate with the new gTLD program for outreach and engagement around the new gTLD round that's coming up. As many of you know, this is starting with trying to seek out people that are potential applicants for support, and this community in particular has the ability to reach out to your ALSs and others within

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the community to identify who some of these potential applicants might be.

Those who are likely to benefit from creating a new high top-level domain in their region, in their area, and in their aspect of their business. So that's part of what we'll be doing, and so what we have here today is a recently released communications plan for the outreach and engagement around the new gTLD program, which begins with the ASP program. So I think, without further ado, I want to hand the microphone to Sally, to...

SALLY NEWELL-COHEN: Bob's gonna start.

JONATHAN ZUCK: Oh, Bob. To Bob to give us a presentation on the outreach engagement plan as it currently stands. Thank you.

BOB OCHIENG: Thank you very much, Jonathan. My name is Bob Ochieng, I lead the engagement and outreach piece of the next round. And I really just want to first of all, thank you for this invitation to be able to share with you what we have planned around this. And we didn't have the invite because it is how to collaborate with the outreach group. Obviously, this has been a very collaborative effort so far, especially within the Org. As you know, that we do have communications department, we have a GSE team, and we've been working very closely with them as

we put together this outreach plan. And that is the reason why today I'm joined by Sally here, our SVP for comms as comms is playing a critical role in supporting us in our content engagement plan.

JONATHAN ZUCK:

More directly into the microphone.

BOB OCHIENG:

Thank you. So next slide please. So, in the final report of subsequent procedures, so the GNSO underscores the importance of really creating a very broad awareness around the world to really ensure that all potential applicants really get the right message on time to be able to participate in the next round. That is a spirit of recommendation 13.2. And therefore, the plan that we put together try to recognize this especially from a capacity building perspective, from an awareness perspective. And it'll try to ensure as far as possible and as far as our resources can accommodate that we drive inclusivity as we go about this exercise.

So we anticipate very diverse participation in the process and really looking forward to different kinds of partnerships, as you will see outlined in the plan. And therefore, with that, we'll take you through the outline that we put together. Of course, in the process, we'll seek your input as well, which we shall then consolidate with the other inputs that we've received so far, different stakeholder groups, including the GAC and the IRT, to really refine our plan going forward.

So with this, I want to invite Sally to take the next few slides really to give an outline especially from a comms perspective, how this going to pan out. Sally.

SALLY NEWELL-COHEN:

Thank you, Bob. Next slide, please. What we've developed from a communications and outreach perspective is a campaign that spans quite a long period of time. As you know, we'll be opening the window for applications in April of 2026. So we've tried to phase it in a way that we can start to bring information out. What we began with in March of 2023 is our first phase of the campaign that we called Early Awareness.

This was a campaign that we conducted that really focused on the importance of universal acceptance and IDNs with also reference to the next round. And what we did with this campaign is it was a combination of work that we did with a PR firm called Teneo, our internal comms team, and our Global Stakeholder Engagement team. And we had a series of mini-campaigns and we're just wrapping them up in the next month. The intention was to have and hold these campaigns in countries where we knew that there would be interest, not just in the next round, but in the Applicant Support Program.

So I thought I would share with you what those countries were that we targeted. And we began with Trinidad and Tobago, then we went to South Africa, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Brazil, India, we had an extended campaign in India, China, we also had extended campaigns there, and we're just finalizing with Morocco, Egypt, Mexico, and Thailand. Those

are the ones that we targeted for this phase of the campaign. It doesn't mean that it will be the exact same countries going into the next steps of it, but that was what we did for the early awareness campaign beginning in March, 2023, ending in July of 2024.

The next phase is community-level awareness, and this is what we call a more grassroots campaign. And what we mean by that is it's really having our GSE team, and it's a great opportunity to partner with ALAC in this phase as well, where we'll focus on the ASP particularly and creating awareness about the ASP in relationship as well to the next round, but really focusing here. So it's within the community and industry participants.

The third phase is strategic engagement. And this will really be a continuation, but a more formalized program where we actually bring in media relations to this and public relations along with the local outreach. And that's when we're going to focus really heavily on the next run itself, and be creating awareness outside of the community itself and focusing on one of the benefits to potential applicants. This is when we start to talk about what are the requirements for you if you want to have a registry, what it's gonna take to do that. And that will roll us into the next phase, which is phase four of readiness. And there we will focus on how do people prepare? What are the steps that they need to go through to prepare to be ready to submit their applications for the next round?

And then of course, we have the final phase, which is where we're gonna evaluate the overall campaign of communications and

outreach achieve the objectives that we've set out to, because this is only the first phase and we'll continue to have more rounds, so then we'll know what worked and what didn't work. So those are our phases. If we could go to the next slide, please.

Key to this outreach and engagement is partnering with the community. And thinking a different way and probably a much more robust way than we did with the 2012 round, because as Jonathan, you said really early on in introducing us, I think that collaboration and sharing materials and sharing efforts will just make this a more impactful approach and making sure that we're getting to the people that want to be applicants that may not know today what it means to have a gTLD, but also to help them prepare and certainly get them in a place where they understand it and are able to apply for the Applicant Support Program. Okay. If we could go to the next slide, please.

One of the things that we'll be focused on that will be helpful for At-Large particularly is the materials that we're gonna be creating and the resources that we'll be using from ICANN Org, but also that you'll be able to use as well. So we'll have a program website where we'll be constantly updating it. We're creating case studies and use cases in a variety of different types of uses that you'll be able to take and share.

We'll be creating webinars and training modules, and we'll be providing other engagement materials. They will be translated into the ICANN languages. And then I know that ICANN Org will also be providing support during the application process, and this means the

Applicant Support Program as well as the actual new gTLD applications. Next slide please. Bob, I'm gonna hand it back to you.

BOB OCHIENG:

So thank you, Sally. The final report or in the final report, the program identifies a number of goals, and you could say there are three prongs. So to foster diversity, to encourage competition, and utility of the DNS. And I think one would ask, what does this really mean? How do you translate this on the ground to really get interest for potential applicants?

And therefore, our engagement seeks to support this by implementing a number of things. First of all, promote inclusive participation, but also to really go out in facilitating engagement. There are a number of ways you can interpret this. If you take collaboration, for example, which is the fourth item there, why would that be important? How do you demonstrate that in your engagement?

If I am a potential applicant, say, for .bob and operating technical platforms is not my core business, how do I know where to get a backend service provider, for example? How do I know who else is in the value chain? And therefore, while applicants will come as independent entities, but it is important to demonstrate and highlight to them what the value chain looks like, so that if I need an RSP, I know where to get it. Who else is a player in the ecosystem?

And therefore, part of this encouragement, I mean, part of this engagement will be to identify engagement possibilities for people

that want to apply, be it ASP, be it RSP applicant, be it typical just applicant, independent applicant. Who else can you work with? And we want to highlight that during our engagement because this is important for people to understand how the market and the value chain looks like.

And therefore, we have, from an engagement perspective, specific goals that we want to achieve to support the overall three-prong program level objectives, which is fostering diversity, competition, and utility of the DNS. Next slide please.

So Sally has already mentioned about how we approach to go about this. Of course, you definitely have to look into phases. As you know, the overall program opens for applications in Q2 of 2026 or April of 2026, but before that you have elements of the program. So Applicant Support Program, Rigid Service Providers Evaluation Program, which are opening much earlier. And therefore, our engagements are also modeled to address raising specific information and engagement for these specific elements that are coming much earlier of the program.

So starting in May, grassroots sort of campaign, but as we transitioned towards October, then we want to actually now transition into a broader next round for cost engagement. The program intends or target a six-month early engagement., but you can see that we want to target an 18-month actually prior start of engagement so that not only are we doing it much earlier, but we intend to give enough time for anyone who would want to make a decision to participate actually to

make that decision, prepare themselves so that they'll be able to participate effectively. Next slide, please.

Now, this may not be very clear but I guess most of us here do understand the timelines and milestones that we're working with. We know when ASP, for example, Applicant Support Program is intended to open, which is Q4 of this year, and you know that that program will run for 12 months.

Of course, within that period, applications will be received in a rolling basis and evaluated. At the same time, registry service providers evaluation program opens as well. So this specific milestones inform what we are focusing on in our engagements as they open and close, and the overall target is then to achieve total engagement towards the final opening of the round, which is Q2 of 2026.

And so this is just the milestones that are guiding what are we focusing on, which areas, which countries, and important to highlight here that this engagement is actually very regional. For example, what Africa wants to focus on and the countries that Africa feels are priority might not be the same as what Middle East or what North America or what the APAC region is looking like. And therefore, as you know, we have a global network of GSE colleagues that are on the ground that also help to inform which are the potential target areas to prioritize even as we try as much as we can to be in all the relevant forums to provide this information as needed. Next slide, please.

In terms of who do we want to talk to, which has been an important discussion going in the last few months, and I think it's an important

discussion today and question. First of all, you want to look at this as you know, very regional. As I've said, you have registrars, civil society, business entrepreneurs, all these are potential groups of applicants for the various parts of the program, BH, ASP, RSP, and the ultimate application in 2026. But for every region, the potential registrars will differ, and we are depending and working with the GSE group to really detail out in each region who are the registrars that you'd really want us to talk. Who are your registrars?

From a civil society perspective, who do you think we should actually engage? And what information do they need, entrepreneurs and brands in your respective regions? So we are consolidating this information which we'll seek your help as well with, and we'll publish this so that you can see who we are talking to and where we are talking to them.

In fact, part of the milestones that we want to, or part of the responsibilities that this program will be providing is a quarterly report that shows you where and who we have talked to as we go along. And as we go along, you can ask and point out where the gaps are depending on that report. And so you will be regularly informed so that you're able to tell to what extent the Org is engaging and if that is actually meeting the expectations of the report. So this will be a very proactive, actually, kind of exercise. Next slide, please. And then Sally wants to make an emphasis on our messaging.

SALLY NEWELL-COHEN:

Thanks, Bob. Along with identifying the audiences, is creating that specific messaging that will be tailored to them so that it will resonate obviously, and have some continuity. Some of the primary messaging though that we'll be communicating, our focus is on why does it matter to a potential applicant.

And so we'll focus on the importance of having a gTLD and promoting digital inclusivity and the potential in preserving cultural diversity. So these are the messages that we think are gonna resonate, particularly with people that have never considered having a gTLD and might be interested in the Applicant Support Program.

So we'll also be trying to create awareness around how operating a dot brand TLD can enhance and extend a brand's identity. We'll also emphasize the importance of having control of your presence online and how having a dot brand TLD, oops, looking at the wrong place-- how it can be used as brand defense and protection, and also to mitigate against cyber threats.

And then finally, we want to also highlight some of the safeguards in being able to protect your intellectual property rights in the DNS. So those are some of the key messages. It's why does it matter to you? How would you benefit from it? So that's really where we're focused from a messaging perspective. Of course, there's gonna be nuance depending on the audience itself and depending on the region itself. And that's a place where we think we can also partner with ALAC in this, because you'll also have some great insights into how we can

tighten and customize the messaging. If we could go to the next slide, please.

And if you remember when we were talking about the different phases of the campaign, and I had mentioned that phase five was when we were gonna analyze the effectiveness of the campaign, we've begun to establish some of the KPIs, and so it's key performance indicators.

For communication, I'm only gonna address the communications aspect, and Bob will talk more about the engagement factors, but from a communications perspective, we're gonna look at some of those key measurements in terms of what was our media reach in terms of the media relations campaign that we conduct to try to get coverage.

So what was that reach also for social media, what was the engagement? What were the pickups? What were the shares? What were the likes? We'll also be looking at the geographic distribution. Also, another area for us is speaking opportunities, because that's a real opportunity for us to get outside of the community, to be able to go to different events that are localized and targeted. So we'll want to also take from that how many events were we able to participate in from a speaking perspective, not just an attendance perspective, and what was the lift from that, if you will.

And then finally, we'll start to look at campaigns where we're measuring our success in terms of if we did a specific activity or went to a specific event, what was the result of that? So we'll better capture what were the click-throughs? What were the inquiries that came

through from it? Did we get registrations for more information? Things like that. So that's what we'll be measuring to identify the communications efforts and how successful they were. And Bob, you're gonna talk about engagement.

BOB OCHIENG:

So from an engagement perspective, and that's on the next slide, we wanted to make a few highlights on this. First of all, you want to view this as very important data points, and I think important to underscore the fact that there will be other rounds after this. And some of this information is meant to feedback into how potentially we will craft future engagements for other rounds, should we have them.

For example, number of ASP applications received. And I think here, you see we talk about applications received not successful applications because we might not really be in control of how many of those applications actually end up being successful. But it tells a story depending on what numbers you receive.

Now, whether that is successful or not, it tells a story, and that is an important data point that we want to underscore and inform how we potentially engage in future. And therefore, some of these indicators are not entirely within our control, whether they will mean success or not. But I guess you and me can confirm that these are important data points, especially the terms of applications that are potentially received which we cannot control.

But what can we control? Number of engagements for ASP target audiences, for RSP target audiences? This we want to track, and this is the basis of the quarterly reports that we shall be publishing for you so that ultimately when we do a final consolidated report, we can say that yes, we manage to do this number of engagements, and part of this will be those engagements that you are supporting us in doing in your respective grounds.

Diversity of these applications is another important indicator, which actually is also out of our hands, but depending on how that turns out, I believe it is an important data point that will inform how we engage and focus in the next round or future round for example.

Pro bono service providers is another indicator, and I guess this is an important part of the Applicant Support Program. And therefore, how many of these do come forward to sign up, and what is the diversity of them? Which regions are having service providers, you know, raising their hands to be pro bono service providers.

And so we have the set of indicators, some of it obviously out of our hands, but obviously very important and critical feedback that will tell a story on how we performed in our overall comms and engagement for the next round. So this is what we had in terms of summary of the plan, and I guess now we can take a few questions. Thank you.

JONATHAN ZUCK:

We have a question online. Go ahead.

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- YESIM SAGLAM: Thank you, Jonathan. This is Yesim Saglam from ICANN Org. We have an online question from CTU, Rodney Taylor. The question is, "Are there plans to do any regional initiatives targeting groups of countries as opposed to individual? For example, working through regional orgs like SITA, CTU, ATU, or any such bodies?" Thank you.
- SALLY NEWELL-COHEN: Thank you for that question. We are planning to look at it from a regional perspective as well as an audience perspective, and that will include the organizations that you were naming. Yes, that's part of the strategy. What the GSE team is doing right now is actually finalizing their target list, if you will, that is country based, region based, audience based, and then managing and starting to develop that list of what are those organizations that they're trying to reach. So very much so that's part of the plan. Thank you,
- JONATHAN ZUCK: Bukola.
- BUKOLA ORONTI: Thank you. My name is Bukola Oronti for the record. My question is actually related to the last statement made by Bob talking about not considering the success of the applications, more interested in just sending an application. And to me, I think if we have better objective in that area, it can help because if the KPI is just focused on applications, then anybody can send in an application that we know is going nowhere and it defeats the purpose of the outreach.
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But if the KPI is actually focused on the success, then quality applications can come in, even though of course we know we don't have control on the success. So I think we can reward that because having the impression of just sending in application, people can send in a thousand application, and of course we know that it can go beyond the first round off. So that's just my opinion that we can review that to actually focus on successful application, even though we can't control it being successful or not. Thank you.

BOB OCHIENG:

So probably I could override to that. So remember, this is an engagement lens of trying to gauge how successful was this outreach. Now, after applications are received, of course, you have a sense of how many have been received, and of course, ultimately after all evaluations are done, you will also have a number on how many were successful. At that time, of course, you could interpret that differently.

But from an engagement perspective, of course, what we are highlighting is that we might not really be in control of how many of those applications eventually are successful, even though we shall be able to tell by the time the evaluations are concluded, how many are eventually successful, which of course would also be a story by itself.

Of course, if we receive a thousand and only 200 are successful, probably it means we did a terrible job on engagements. So I agree, but on the same time, it is something that is not fully within our control to guarantee how many of applications received eventually become successful.

Now, we have taken lessons learned from the 2012 round and studies, especially from the CCT study, which highlighted some of the gaps that we did have last time, especially on the completeness of the information we are providing. For example, that study highlight the fact that, well, we gave the information around application fees, for example, but up applications or after application people realize there are other fees or there are other business related costs for operating a names business. And therefore, this time around we want to bridge that gap and ensure that the information we provide, of course, in all the languages, the seven languages, are as complete as possible.

So it'll not just be this is the application fee, but this is actually what it takes to operate a DNS business. And probably this is the operational fees after you have successfully been evaluated, and hopefully with the better complete information, probably the people that do make up the mind to apply will go in knowing everything that it takes to actually be successful.

JONATHAN ZUCK:

Okay, Cheryl's next.

CHERYL LANGDON-OR:

Thank you very much, Cheryl Langdon-Or for the record. I'm limiting my comments to the Applicant Support Program aspects of what you've presented today, and thank you both for doing all of the KPIs and the reporting aspects. And I certainly appreciate what you just said, Sally, which was in terms of what the GSE are doing in

preparation of their targeting. But the Applicant Support Program starts at the end of this year and runs for 12 months, and there is a clear opportunity, at least in this room that you're sitting in, that the on the ground people we have working with the GSE are going to be a huge part of the success or otherwise.

Now, for us lot in all our various countries, particularly the underserved and underdeveloped ones, which just like the Government Advisory Committee, we want to see focused. Now that means of course, that you're not going to have a robust DNS, you may not have any DNS industry where we need to target. So there's got to be an early gap analysis associated with that. Our people may also be useful in getting that gap analysis done, but my question is, and you may not have the answer, but eventually you will, when do we get that information? Because it is June and September's not far off and 12 months is not long for an Applicant Support Program to run. We want them to do it as early as possible.

There has been some fabulous work with Lars and the team. I mean, his staff has just been extraordinary with the applicant's support part of what the IRT have done, and that is a robust handbook. And so we should be able to get ahead of the game and actually be really pre-prepared. I appreciate the quarterly reporting and the course correction opportunities, and I'm sorry that's all gonna be too late, even the first one. Thanks.

SALLY NEWELL-COHEN: I'll take a start at that, but thank you. I think I appreciate the comments because I think you're right. The team is finalizing their list of the underserved targets now, and we will be able to share that soon. And I say soon, I know that feels like a hedge and I don't mean it to be but I believe we're gonna have it and have it available in the next two to three weeks to be able to share.

And I agree with you, I think there's an opportunity for us to collaborate on those gaps. And if you remember on the IRT call, we talked about exactly that and having a subset to do that. I think At-Large is a bit different in that we also want to have that relationship with this group so that we're having those conversations, but it will help to inform the gap because you've got the on the ground.

I know that GSE is really eager to work with the RALOs also and to start that, and then we'll bring the ALS as well. But your point is well taken and we're moving forward as quickly as we can. Yes. Bob, is there anything you wanted to add to that? Okay, thank you.

REMMY NWEKE: Thank you, Jonathan. Remmy Nweke for the records. I want to thank Bob and Sally for coming to share their vision on engagement with us. For me, I'll make a comment and then ask a question. One is looking at ALAC, many of the RALOs now have outreach and engagement that is viable.

Some have newsletters and some have social media handles that they manage. And I was thinking that it'll be nice if in the plan you

accommodate engaging them directly by scaling down the progress on the plan so that they will do a kind of buy-in into that and see how that could be accommodated in the newsletters and probably communicate that often to their communities at RALO levels.

So now, if that's not in the plan yet, I want to ask, will you be happy to add that in your plan because that will definitely pay off at the end of the day, especially in Africa, where we need to communicate more with our various RALO communities. Thank you.

BOB OCHIENG:

So, Remmy, I think probably that's really why we were very keen on joining this session because obviously, we need a much wider reach and as many channels as we can, especially from the existing ICANN community. We are very ready, available. Of course, our plan overall includes including working with the RALOs, but I also want to invite you to feel free to invite us in your weekly or monthly calls to give you updates about the program.

Talk to our SMEs, whether it's on ASP, whether it's on RSP, we are happy to plan well in advance and provide these regular updates across the RALO meetings. This is part of the reason why we are here. Your newsletters, we are very happy to carry news items on those, and I think this is part of the comms part that Sally is also very keen on. So please, by all means we want to make it as all-encompassing as far as possible. So that's a very welcome invite that we are happy to take.

JONATHAN ZUCK: All right, we're gonna close the queue at this point. Paulo is next.

PAULO MILLIET ROQUE: Thank you. Okay. My name is Paulo Milliet Roque, I'm the President of the Brazilian Software Association. It's an association with 1600 companies in Brazil, software companies, that last year revenues about \$20 billion. We have all the big ones and a lot of small ones, 80% are small company. My question is, 12 years ago, it was charged at \$185,000 for the applicant. I have two questions, really. And how much is going to be charged in this new round?

And second question is the ASP, they are going to have a discount between 50 to 85%. How much money is allocated for absorbing this discount? Like \$1 million, \$10 million, because this number, if it's too small, won't fit a lot of candidates. If it's too big, maybe ICANN can't afford to support that. Thank you.

BOB OCHIENG: Great. So thank you for that question, and we really look forward to application from Brazil, definitely. In terms of fees, yesterday there was a first presentation about what the fees will look like. Currently working the range of between 200 and 290, thereabout. Specifics have been detailed out in the IRT presentation which is still continuing tomorrow as well. This is \$280,000 - \$290,000.

Now, as you rightly say, the applicant support is targeted to between 75 to 85% discounting. And of course, my colleague that leads ASPs in the room. But at the moment, the amounts that they're working with

in terms of allocation for that kind of support, that is yet to be finalized, is between 10 to 16 million. If that helps. Thank you.

JONATHAN ZUCK: Justine Chew, please.

JUSTINE CHEW: Thanks. This is Justine. Sorry, my camera refuses to work this time. My question. Thanks Sally and Bob for joining us. I had a question, maybe a couple of questions. First one is, could you possibly elaborate a little bit on why those 10 countries that you mentioned at the top of the session were chosen? Maybe the factors which led to them being chosen, whether those factors are going to be impactful on the next phase of the communications plan where you're going to do more outreach. Is there relevant to the factors for which you chose the 10 countries to the next phase of this outreach plan?

And the second question is, you mentioned that we are hopeful of getting the RALOs, the At-Large community to work with the GSE counterparts. Are we able to actually comment on the GSE plans or are we expected to just implement them together with GSE? Thank you.

SALLY NEWELL-COHEN: Thank you, Justine. Great questions as always. Let's start with the first one was, how were the countries chosen? So it was a combination of qualitative and quantitative. So we looked at GDP in

all of the countries. We started with a list of about 45 countries, and we used GDP, internet penetration, the infrastructure technologically, the literacy, and we looked at what types of content were already available. So that was how we started.

And then that was the kind of quantitative piece of it. And the qualitative was do we think it's realistic? Is this a country where there's an actual opportunity because there are countries where there an opportunity yet that would be meaningful enough for us to have conducted these campaigns. So that's how we arrived at the list.

What we have learned is, yes, there is relevance to the next phase. There's a couple of things we learned in that some of the countries that we did have the campaigns in, there wasn't really a response, a strong enough response or a strong enough interest. And so we're looking at, well, will that be something that we still want to continue? So the list that I gave you and I read through fairly quickly isn't necessarily the list that we're going to use for the next round. I think there's going to be a lot of similarity to it, but there may be some nuances and some additions to it.

So that's the most likely. In terms of the work that GSE is doing, and I'm sure Bob will want to add to this, and the matrix that they're creating, I think that, we'll want your feedback certainly on the regions, the countries, and some of the specifics about the audience type. Will we put it out for public comment? No, because I think that would take too long and it's just not realistic. But we would be glad to share it with this group, and whatever configuration, Jonathan, you

think is right for us to do that. But at least to share that those pieces of it for your feedback. And Bob, is there anything you would like to add to that?

BOB OCHIENG:

Probably maybe just to put a rider that while this list are what we call priority, but they're not the only places that we will be participating, in fact, that is really the basis of the reporting that we want to start publishing quarterly. Even now, between January to date, we could actually demonstrate how much work has gone from an engagement perspective, all the meetings and events that our GSE colleagues, some of it of course had that on the ground where they have been, who they've been talking to.

So this has really been an ongoing process. So while these countries are supposed to be or will be actually focused or priority areas because of the potential as evaluated, they're not the only countries and we will going forward be able to demonstrate that as we continually report and demonstrate who and where we are engaging.

JUSTINE CHEW:

Oops. Thank you for the reply.

SALLY NEWELL-COHEN:

Oh, sorry. Oh, just go ahead.

JUSTINE CHEW: Go ahead. No, no, go ahead. Go ahead.

SALLY NEWELL-COHEN: The only thing I was going to add is that we are working with a subset of the IRT as well to look at some of these plans and getting their feedback as well. I just wanted to add that.

JUSTINE CHEW: Okay. That's useful information because I'm on the IRT, so I'd certainly looking out for that opportunity. But thank you for the answers, and you know very well that the At-Large is here to help with hoping to make the ASP a success for the next round. So I would welcome your sharing the information that you mentioned earlier, especially about the GSE plans and we will certainly be helping to plug in the gaps. Thank you very much.

JONATHAN ZUCK: Yeah, definitely, the sooner the better in order to provide valuable regional input and things like that into the plans that are getting created. Yesim, you've got someone online.

YESIM SAGLAM: Yes. Thank you, Jonathan. This Yesim Saglam from ICANN Org. We have a remote question from Fatimata Seye Sylla. The question is, "Are there plans to support a pilot in a developing country to showcase new gTLD. This could be done through collaboration

between government decision-makers, private sector companies, academia, civil society organizations, et cetera." Thank you.

SALLY NEWELL-COHEN: Could you repeat the beginning? I'm not quite sure if there was a reference to pilots. I don't know what that was. Could you just read that again, please?

YESIM SAGLAM: Sure. The question is, "Are there plans to support a pilot in a developing country to showcase new gTLD? This could be done through collaboration between government decision makers, private sector companies, academia, civil society organizations, et cetera."

BOB OCHIENG: Well, yeah, I guess probably we need to understand maybe what that means specifically. I guess what we are putting in place is really a curated list of case studies and showcases to really demonstrate how TLDs have been used differently, be they geo names, be they brands, be they different types of names, and how current players have used this.

And therefore, use this to showcase as we engage different stakeholders to give ideas on how they can actually do the same with different names. And so we'll be working to curate a list which is first of all looking at the different TLDs from IDN to geo names to brands, but also looking at the geographical spread, for example in different

regions, how site names have been used. The feedback we've received is that this is also something that the community is looking forward to, to help show how names can be used innovatively or are being used currently. But yeah, I think probably we need to get an offline, maybe elaboration on what the suggestion is as well.

JONATHAN ZUCK: Okay. Aziz, you're next.

AZIZ HILALI: I will be speaking French. Well, thank you Sally and Bob, for all your efforts and for your presentation. I would like to say something along the same lines as other people. We all know the results of the first round of new gTLDs, there were very, very few applications in Africa, in Latin America, and in certain parts of Asia, and I have no doubt that you are deploying many efforts. But my question is what is the decision that you made to have new applicants for the new gTLDs and specifically for the ASP project? I will give you an example. We had a forum on DNS, and we had many applicants.

And normally, they should be very aware, the most aware of this program. However, very few were aware of it, and as Fatimata said, how can we entice our governments to be more aware in the new gTLD? So in Morocco, they only react when they are impacted by a problem with ccTLDs. For mayors of cities that have a very sacred name, that there is the religious aspect, there are very sensible issues in certain countries and certain regions.

So have you not thought of an initiative where you would be doing an assessment, an investigation just like for universal acceptance so that funding would be available to find out how much awareness there is so that the people could be motivated for applying because governments, civil society, and different actors should be more informed. And in Africa, I'm wondering, will we have more efforts? And I would like to know what is your vision about this? Thank you.

SALLY NEWELL-COHEN:

Thank you for those questions. All a part of what we've been considering, I agree. So your question specifically about governments, we have been starting to develop what that campaign looks like because the messaging to governments is I think awareness and what the value is. So that's a part of, as they're developing the target list, if you will, of who we're approaching, there's specific messaging and activities that will be focused in each of those areas. I can't tell you exactly what that is because we haven't fully built out the messaging to it, but you're exactly right.

And I think that's where the combination of our government engagement team, our Global Stakeholder Engagement team, certainly working with the GAC, and again, I think that's through the IRT is where we start this conversation as well, is how do we get to the right people at the ministries in the governments?

And that's why we've been talking about what is this list of regions and countries, because we've got to be strategic, we've got to be surgical and go to the right people in the right places where there's

opportunity. You had asked also will we continue the efforts in Africa? Yes.

So we've done a lot of activity in Africa, particularly recently because of the grant program because of the Coalition for Digital Africa. And that's a place where I think we have the most momentum, if you will. And so we'll have to start to create that in the other areas as well. Not to say we're gonna have a coalition for in lots of other countries. But I think I'm answering your question that it will be targeted specifically to those governments and the ministries. So is there anything you'd like to add, Bob?

BOB OCHIENG:

Yeah, I mean, just on top of that, I think, and thanks Aziz, I happened to be in the last DNS forum in Rabat. And I think you're right in noticing that sometimes, the audience that the meeting attracts potentially falls short of what you expected where have the actual potential applicants, and therefore there's work to do there.

Now, part the effort has been to really identify and demonstrate that there is a market in some of our regions. Five years ago or six years ago, if you were asked by a potential entrepreneur, you're talking about DNS or namespace or this as a business, there's no documentation. Can you show me where that market is? What is the size of that market?

And you've seen over the last five years, ICANN has commissioned two studies, especially for Africa. The DNS market study, and the current

one has just been published in the radar to this meeting. Actually, we'll be officially launched tomorrow.

So some of these documentation and research work is important to demonstrate to different stakeholder groups, including governments. What is the value of this particular element of the digital economy and what potential does it have? How is it faring on elsewhere? Because I think without empirical evidence, sometimes it's very hard to really convince anyone that this is something that is worth your time to look at. So these studies have been helpful, and I think especially for the Africa region. Now we've had a follow up study and you can probably operatively speak about that kind of a market so that if someone makes a decision, it's out of very well-informed basis.

So I think in terms of special focus, you'd say these are some of the investment that ICANN has already done around that area. But of course, as Sally has mentioned, we work very closely with our regional VPs who understands this region very well and of course with the RALOs who are working also very closely with the regional VPs. So thank you for that.

SALLY NEWELL-COHEN:

I just thought of something to add. Just quickly, one thing to add that what's different between the 2012 round and now is we also didn't have GSE in a broad way, so that we have far more intelligence about all of the areas than we did then. So I think that's gonna make a big difference. And it is an opportunity, we would love to see governments and academia all partnering to do this, but I just wanted

to add that element that we do have more feet on the ground and intel.

JONATHAN ZUCK: Okay. Dr. Matogoro?

JABHERA MATOGORO: Yes. Thank you so much. This is Dr. Matogoro. From the discussion and from the perspective of the AFRALO, we appreciate Bob, and sorry for joining us here. But from the conversation we see a special attention is required, especially for the African region. And maybe we can borrow some of the experience we understand. For example, some of the African government took initiative to subsidize the connectivity, for example, by using the universal funding.

So maybe I resonate with Fatimata that ICANN could think of having a special way to handle these kind of applications rather than I can imagine Bob and Sally, 105,000 USD, it's not that much possible for most of the African organization, frankly speaking. So I think rather than just making for the sake of just creating awareness, ICANN needs to make a bold step to come up with a way to bring more engagement of the African and maybe some of the developed countries.

That's my personal observation, but also resonate with the comment that has been given out. But the second observation maybe on 2012, the application guidebook had around 300 and that eight pages, you can imagine.

So in terms of budget, Bob has mentioned that maybe it's going to go around 200,000 to 295 in term of applications. Maybe the number of pages is also going to be increased beyond 338, or is something going to be read? I think we need to make an ease entry if we are to make an inclusive application. Thank you.

JONATHAN ZUCK:

Thanks. I think a lot of the making it easier is gonna come in the function of the pro bono support and things like that, that we're trying to organize. And even in the last round that became very necessary for a lot of applicants, even businesses in developed world made heavy use of consultants and others to try. And so if we can get some of those consultants available to, and that's what the pro bono program is for, available to then then that sort of bridges the distance between the sort of legal requirements of the application and the ease of entry for folks that are just coming to it new. I think Tijani is next in the queue.

TIJANI BEN JEMAA:

Thank you very much, Jonathan, and thank you, Bob and Sally for this presentation. You know that the Applicant Support Program will open in a few months, and to be successful, the communication campaign should be undertaken prior to the opening of the program so that people will know about the program so that people prepare themselves, apply, et cetera. The problem is that the campaign cannot start with these unknown elements such as the application

fees. We will likely know it soon, but also the fund allocated to the Applicant Support Program.

If you tell people we have 1 million for the program, I don't think that people will lose their time and their money to make an application knowing that they will not be supported, there is not enough money for it. So these are key elements for the communication campaign, and we have to have them very, very soon. We are already a little bit late for the campaign, for the Applicant Support Program, so if we can have this element, it'll really help. Now, especially for the grassroots phase of the campaign, you're right, the ALSs and the individual members of At-Large are very well placed to help to undertake this communication.

My suggestion is that this collaboration with, the ALS and individual members should be done according to the clear process and a clear framework of the work. I don't think that anyone can say, I will make this this campaign here, so I have the information and they give any information, things should be very well defined from the staff and from the ALSs and the individual members so that they do a very clear work and according to a clear process. Thank you very much.

JONATHAN ZUCK:

Thanks, Tijani, I think those are great observations. What I'd really love to do, and it's just a subtle change, I want to move the conversation away from critiquing ICANN's outreach program to us brainstorming about what we might do as a community to coexist with this program.

Because that will help, I think, through specific examples to bring to the surface things that might be minor improvements instead of being sort of abstract conversations that we're sort of having now about the program. Because I think all of us here have ideas about communities we might reach out to how we might reach out. So let's start that conversation, just that brainstorming conversation.

So I want to reopen the queue on that topic and, and get your input and ideas about that and who we should be trying to reach out to, how we might do it, when we might do it, and what we really need from this program in order to do it. They mentioned a bunch of materials and things like that. I don't know if any of that stuff exists yet, the case studies and things like that. So whatever we can do to kind of prioritize our demand, if you will, I think would be useful to Org as well. So I'll go ahead and start with Amrita.

AMRITA CHOUDHURY:

Thank you, Jonathan. Amrita for the record. And I think that's what we are interested in more. I think we have a few questions also where we would need clarity because when you are talking about a campaign, there are various levels.

You may have initial information going in, there would be more detailed information going into the target audience. Like for example one question which I would have to ICANN Org is, you've done a lot of research studies, even for the Applicant Support Program, you would have some kind of target audience some kind of if even if you're looking at civil society organizations or entities who have not been

reached, what is the kind of financial bracket, et cetera, they should fall in because it's just not the support which has been given to the applicant to apply, but they would have to be able to manage their system in the future.

So some rough ideas on those which you have worked on, which could be, I'm not saying a ballpark thing, but what kind of entities would that be would also help us to communicate with our ALSs and UI more to kind of think of it a bit more. Another thing is, you know, piecemeal information.

JONATHAN ZUCK:

Maybe do one at a time or something like that because they're not gonna keep track of all the things you're saying, I think so.

AMRITA CHOUDHURT:

No, no, I'm saying you know about campaigns, we would need more teasers information first, which we can, because we would need to educate our ALSs as well as ourselves about it. So more capacity building with our community first so that they can go. Obviously, handholding would be there. That would help. Thank you.

JONATHAN ZUCK:

Okay. Pastor Peters, go ahead.

PASTOR PETERS OSAWARU: Thank you very much. Pastor Peters for the record. Just to reinforce the comment by Dr. Jabhera, my perspective is that of the internet end user, and I want to believe what this project or program is all about is about campaign, about engaging irrelevant stakeholders, both in governor, both in government, and in the in public space.

Now, yesterday I did propose or ask if icann.org as a lobbying group that could be used to reach out to various stakeholders, especially the government in Africa. Now, if we, if we restrict our activities to the various structures within ICANN, and expect buy-in from the African government, we'll be wasting our time. But if we begin to have direct engagement with this government, all these projects and programs are very lofty using this lobbying group in the more official way, letting them know the importance and the advantages, that will go along to also help.

Then the other issue, I feel very concerned about is the fees that was mentioned, which is being proposed \$200,000 to \$290,000. If you convert that to Rwanda francs at about 1700 Rwanda francs, you know how many billions that will go to. So that's also gonna be a major problem that could confront the African buy in.

So lastly is the fact that this engagement still has to stand down more to the grassroots. And let me quickly say, if you look at the statistics, you discover that the literacy level in Africa cannot be compared to the literacy level in Europe or in America. It's very, very easy for people in the western world to quickly buy into these programs because of the

knowledge and because of the availability of information resources compared to where we come from.

So there's still a lot that we still need to actually put into consideration, which is why ICANN would need to pay more attention to the African region and the developing countries if we must succeed with this project. Thank you.

JONATHAN ZUCK:

Thanks. And just to clarify, what we're trying to do here is not talk about what more they should be doing, but what can we do? What are the audiences we think we can reach? What are the conferences we think would be good for us to attend? Think in terms of what our activities should be so that how it blends with this program, there's gonna be lots of more opportunity to continue to enhance the program they're doing. But let's talk about ourselves for a minute here and what it is that we can bring to the table. Okay. Is that Claire next?

CLAIRE CRAIG:

Hi, I am Claire Craig for the record. And I would just like to support what Rodney Taylor was saying in the beginning. And as Jonathan just said, what can we do? There are many regional organizations in the Caribbean that may not be aligned to our ALS and may not be aligned to the governments and the persons who may be interested in participating in these new rounds of gTLDs.

And so I would like to suggest that we, ICANN, continues to collaborate with some of these organizations. ICANN already does that, I know with the CTU, with CaribNog, with CARICHAM, and there are a number of other organizations that we can probably work with ICANN to help them to reach a lot of the persons who we would want to attract to this kind of initiative. And so we are willing to work with you to get the message out there because it's really important for us to have applications in this room that's coming up. Thank you.

BOB OCHIENG:

Yeah, probably just to really very quickly speak to, you know, Dr. Jabhera and Pastor Peters, before I started on leading this part of the assignment for the next round, I was actually in the GSE team for Africa. So you can imagine I probably really have a better idea on exactly what you are coming from having really worked with the region for, for quite a while.

And I really think that we have an assignment to demonstrate what is the value of our domain name and what does it mean to operate it. Yes, there are fees but I also believe that we probably need to demonstrate what is the value of the domain names to this important stakeholder groupings, including countries. And sometimes someone can tell you that fees are actually relative depending on how you look at it.

But at the same time, let's remember that this is precisely why the ASP program is in place and targeted at the underserved region and the underdeveloped regions, which we're actually going to do a priority

engagement around. So not only has it recognize that fact and it has gone ahead to really prioritize engaging these regions, and therefore we'd be working closely with you to ensure that that opportunity within the ASP is actually exploited as far as possible across the regions that we really deem are underserved, and I believe Africa falls squarely there.

So we rely on you as well to also help us open doors; that'd be you, ALAC, and At-Large, and RALOs, but also GAC members because we also don't have open access to some of these stakeholders that you're talking about governments and the rest. And so your help is definitely needed.

JONATHAN ZUCK:

Thanks. I mean, one of the findings of the CCT review that Sally referred to is there was a study on cohorts, which was this idea of here's the types of companies and organizations that applied in the previous round. And it was a very small study and very small sample, but it attempted to go out to similar types of organizations and companies in underdeveloped regions and ask the question, why didn't you apply since you, you should have the same motivations.

And it was two things. One was lack of knowledge about it that existed in at all in the first place, and the other was about business cases and actually understanding what the business model is that would lead to success in the new gTLD program that was different than the application fee or anything like that. Because even in the developing world, money can be found to apply for it. The question is, is it worth

spending, right? That's the fundamental question is, am I gonna just wash this money down the drain, which Google can afford to do, right? I mean, you know, we applied for a bunch of them and half of them we decided changed our mind about even using, right?

And so it's a different mentality. It doesn't mean the money isn't there, but it's more precious. So if we're gonna spend this money, is there a way for us to make it back? And I think that those business cases has gotta be something that we are armed with as we try to open doors for you to talk to some of these other organizations. Sorry for jumping the queue. And Natalia, you're next.

NATALIA FILINA:

Thank you very much. My name is Natalia Filina, I'm Secretary of EURALO, and I'm very involved in any outreach and engagement work within our community. And I would love to thank you, Bob, Sally, for your presentation and for including us in this stream of work. And I hope you know that we do a lot for focusing on ICANN topics when we do outreach and it's the right time to discuss it and to bring this topic to our outreach strategic plan for future financial year, and we do it for sure.

My question is we understand that we are not only one channel for spreading right information and focusing on this topic. Can we maybe see the picture of our ICANN community efforts maybe in six months, for example? Because I think in outreach work, it's very important to see a dynamic and to have an opportunity to learn from lessons, not from mistakes, but from lessons. Maybe it might be some meeting

course, something like this in December or so, we will understand what we may do more. Thank you.

JONATHAN ZUCK:

Thanks, Natalia. Rodney's next.

RODNEY TAYLOR:

Thank you very much. Rodney Taylor, CTU. I wanted to just reiterate in terms of the strategy for certainly the lot there. We have 20 member states that are members of the CTU and I note that some work was done in Trinidad and Tobago, and I'm actually keen on seeing the report reached out to Albert Daniels, who's the stakeholder engagement manager for the Caribbean, to get some insights in that report and see how that could help us in engaging with some of the other Caribbean countries. But because of the small size of them, I would reiterate that it would be more effective to work at the regional level. I also wanted to note that there are a number of ALSs listed for the Caribbean that are actually not very active at the moment.

And I think it's important for us to have a full appreciation for those that are in fact active and those that we can reach out to. We have an upcoming Caribbean Internet Governance forum in Guyana in August. I'd be more than happy for that to be an opportunity to raise awareness within the Caribbean about this opportunity working with the likes of the Caribbean Chamber of Commerce because it is a business opportunity.

And lastly, I would say in terms of the business case, there would obviously be organizations, nonprofits, and so on that there would be a value in having a domain maybe to raise awareness about a particular issue, whether it is children or women's rights and so on, and therefore, it is not necessarily all commercial. And I think it is very important for us to also keep that in mind. Thank you.

JONATHAN ZUCK: Thanks, Rodney. Amrita, go ahead.

AMRITA CHOUDHURY: Thank you. In terms of organizations or events, it's very difficult to actually nail which, but something which comes in minds, depending upon the countries, smaller countries, there could be a coalition between the GSE, the GAC members, because many times governments are involved, getting the industry associations, the ALS or UMs can help in mobilizing it and getting more people to come up with even events like it happened in the last round in some places where we were also involved, that's one way.

Obviously speaking at industry events, association events, et cetera, where many of the people from the ALSs may be involved getting the GSE to come and speak. So there are strategic ways in which can be worked, and it may have to happen in coalition because many times, multiple voices from different stakeholders reiterating the same point, helps to reinforce to people. So collaboration, I think is essence and

different places, different countries would have different ways in which things may work out. But we'll want more details definitely.

JONATHAN ZUCK: Thanks, Amrita. Satish.

SATISH BABU: Thanks. Satish for the record. I'm from ALAC from Asia Pacific. I think my first reservation comment would be that it's 12 years after the last round. This is a substantial period of time, the market would've changed. There would be new markets, there'd be new applicants. Some of the companies that are potential maybe did not even exist in the last round. So we have to first understand the market, we have to segment it.

There are new things that we are putting out, for example, IDN variants and so on. So even before the comms plan is specialized, I think we have to look at the market and see what has changed and where we should be targeting. That's my first point. Secondly, in my mind, I see a kind of funnel wherein we start with awareness as has been pointed out, then we kind of say, what is the value of a domain name, as Bob has pointed out.

Then we look at who are the potential in the new market matrix for what category? And that has gotta be done, I think with a little bit of effort. Then looking at where application support comes in, and then finally maybe connecting potential applicants to service providers, incubators, and so on. So I think that strategic funnel is very

important because at different points, they could do different things, use different mechanisms. For example, social media probably was never used in the last round, but maybe this time we had to use social media also. Thank you.

JONATHAN ZUCK:

All right, thank you. That's a good start to the conversation. I think that we are gonna continue to have this conversation amongst ourselves and trying to figure out what our strategy is in coordination with GOC. And so, we're gonna need to figure out what they're doing and try to be invited to the things they're doing, but also do things ourselves either at the RALO or ALS level, and try to get help and support in the form of materials and things like that to execute on those ideas. So we'll continue to have that conversation internally, and this is a good start, good way to start thinking about it.

But I think the materials are gonna make a big difference. So I don't know if you have it in your timeline there, that was very small on the screen. If there was something whereby this would become less abstracted, more concrete in terms of case studies. And as you keep mentioning Bob, and I think you and I were saying similar thing, how do you demonstrate what the value of a GTLD is to a potential applicant if it's a community or something else? The kinds of folks that we're gonna be trying to reach out to are not the typical applicants.

SALLY NEWELL-COLEN: The one the one question you had about materials, we are in the process of finalizing the first, oh, sorry, we're in the process of finalizing that first set, the initial set of materials that you can use. The case studies are in development now, it's always a little bit challenging to get people to talk about business models, and we're trying to dig that information out. So I think there'll be rolling content for you, but we had hoped to have it done by this meeting, but we're running slow or a little bit behind, but I would think by the end of the month, we'll be able to start sharing materials.

CLAIRE CRAIG: Thanks for that, Sally. Claire Craig again for the record. I just want to say that this next period where you talk about community awareness now seems to be a critical period where we really need to reach out and get involved with our communities. And we at ALAC and At-Large are willing to work closely with you because it's important for us to have a success at this next round. So any way that we can help, and I know Justine has said it a lot, and Jonathan has said that, just feel free. We work with our RALOs to make this happen as best as we can. Thank you.

JONATHAN ZUCK: Yeah, I think looking at this as a capacity building exercise instead of an awareness exercise may be a different way to think about it. In other words, how do we train up this group of people we have to be able to speak articulately about the value proposition, about the ASPs, et cetera. And think of it that way, I think there's people hungry to be

participate in that type of a capacity building exercise. All right. Do you want to have any final things that you'd like to-

BOB OCHIENG:

Yeah, so I guess what we probably agreeing on here is that this will-- so if I go back to these KPIs, probably we are on the same page that this is not entirely an Org's responsibility, definitely. So depending on what we come back with it'll be a joint report for how the Org and the community has fared to really ensure that this message reaches the right audiences and at the right time so that they're able to make an informed decision.

So it's a partnership right from the onset, and we'll do our part to provide the materials and leverage your networks. Of course, we'll publish of course, as much as possible on the dedicated new gTLD website which is now live, whether it's on ASP, whether it's on RSP, whether it's the overall round. So please help us spread this word, integrate this engagement in your regional plans, and we are at your disposal to build your capacity at RALO level as we go along and as new information comes up and let's work together to really deliver this component of the program. So thank you very much.

JONATHAN ZUCK:

Thanks a lot. And Aris mentioned in the chat, the model that a lot of us are chasing right now actually came out of the Universal Acceptance Steering Group in terms of this idea of really packaging something up in a way that makes it easier to execute on. Here's a presentation,

here's a recording of the presentation being delivered, here's a what we used to call a rude Q&A, a document of the kinds of questions that get asked so that somebody can just spin up and be ready to deliver it. And I think there's real value to that.

All right. So this conversation is just the beginning, we're gonna continue to have these conversations internally as well, but we're really glad that you two were able to join us and talk about your plans, and we really look forward to some of this becoming less abstract and more concrete. And we look forward to working with you and we've got a great group here with a deep bench. And I think we can do a lot to be helpful, particularly in the area of ASP, probably more so than RSPs because that's just the communities and things that we're trying to reach out to. Thank you so much for your time.

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