
ICANN72 | Prep Week – Planning and Prioritization Update
Wednesday, October 13, 2021 – 09:00 to 10:30 PDT

VICTORIA YANG: Good morning, good afternoon, good evening, everyone. Welcome to ICANN 72 prep week. This session is about ICANN's planning prioritization framework.

My name is Victoria Yang, I'm the senior program manager of planning. Along with my colleague, Margaret Benavides, we will be the remote participation manager for this session.

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I also want to emphasize that this session will last for 90 minutes. The presentation material is published on the ICANN 72 meeting website for your convenience. Questions will be taken during and at the end of the presentation. To ask a question, you can either raise your hand, unmute yourself when it's your turn to speak, or you can type your question in the chat.

In order to ensure we have sufficient time to cover all agenda, the team will take some questions after each topic and then will proceed with the presentation. Any asked question not answered during the presentation will either be answered via chat or at the end of the presentation.

With that, can we please look at the agenda for today? Thank you. First, the team will provide a background and overview of the planning prioritization framework project. The main objective of this session is to consult the community about the framework element which will help to provide guidelines of what to prioritize, who will do the prioritization, when and how to do it, etc. These elements are listed here as the scope, participants, frequency, techniques and so on.

For each element, the team will present and explain the rationale of the element, the most relevant options for each element. Then we'll pause. All attendees of this session are encouraged to provide feedback, input, ask questions or have discussions. So please, participate, and we encourage an interactive session from all community members.

Finally, we will wrap up the session with information about next steps and the timeline before we open up again for Q&A. So very much look forward to everyone's participation during this session. With that, I will now give the floor to our senior VP of planning and CFO, Xavier Calvez. The floor is yours, sir.

XAVIER CALVEZ:

Thank you, Victoria. Hello everyone. Welcome to this session of prep week before ICANN 72. It's nice to virtually see everyone here. Prioritizing is a very fundamental part of planning. Choosing what you do or what you will do and why you are choosing this work to be done is very important for any planning activities, and planning is very important for any delivery activity, any implementation activity.

Those of you who have looked at Board decisions over the past few years will notice that many of these decisions specify that the implementation work of the decision made by the Board is subject to prioritization. But how is this prioritization going to happen?

This session is going to give you an overview of the mechanism that is being developed at the moment to try to enable that prioritization as a community. How do all of us get together to be able to look at the work

that there is on our collective plate and choose what we think we should all be doing first and then next? This is what this prioritization framework is about.

This is not going to be easy. Prioritizing in the context of the multi-stakeholder model is challenging. Why? Because everyone's voice is important. So, how do we say what is more important or urgent within the work of implementation that there is?

Of course, the prioritization exercise happens in the context of also limited resources. But even without that limitation, you still need to make decisions as to what you are going to do first and next and how and why.

As an ecosystem, this prioritization framework is intended to be inserted into our annual planning cycle to enable that choices are being made prior to the development of our plans so that these priorities are informing the plan, and the benefit of doing it in this planning process is that it is transparent, it is open, there are many engagement opportunities that allow them the priorities defined as a result of applying this framework to be understood, transparent, and of course, fully integrated with the work of the organization and, of course, leveraging the benefit that the community has engagement opportunities throughout this process, but also the ability to reject at the end of the planning process—as it has had every year since 2016, the ability to reject the plans if they're not consistent with comments that have been provided by the community.

So the team will present to you this framework, the status of the work and your input, your thoughts, your comments, your questions are all participating to developing together this framework in our critical component of the chances of success of this framework. It has to work for all of us if it will work at all. We welcome your input. Thank you for your participation, and looking forward to the next few minutes with all of you on this topic. Thank you. Becky, please take it away.

BECKY NASH:

Thank you very much, Xavier. Hello everyone, this is Becky Nash from the Org planning team, and I am going to first present a project introduction and overview. Just as Xavier had indicated in his opening remarks, just as background for the project called planning prioritization framework, prioritization continues to be critical in supporting the needs and demands of ICANN’s global community.

As we know, there is a large volume, and also the complexity of implementation work resulting from policy and review works contributes to the needs for ICANN as an ecosystem to prioritize.

By working together to improve the way ICANN plans its activities, the community, Board and Org can determine what work needs to be prioritized and how ICANN uses its resources effectively. The planning prioritization framework project will address the overarching problem of the community, Org and Board trying to do everything at once and this will be by using a decision making framework to prioritize activities to be included in the annual planning process.

This next slide just recaps the context for this project. So planning at ICANN is one of the 15 operating initiatives that is included in ICANN's five-year operating plan. A component of this operating initiative is to deliver a draft prioritization framework as an improvement of ICANN's overall planning process. The accountability for this project is ICANN's planning department is leading this operating initiative and the delivery of the draft prioritization framework, but in collaboration with the community, Board and Org.

So again, the project's deliverable is a draft prioritization framework to be used during the annual planning process. We've included a couple of questions as it relates to clarification of this project, and this is just to help us all put the project's work in context.

So, will Org propose a draft framework to start from during the engagement? And when we talk about engagements, we're talking about the consultation process such as today when we're looking to receive input. So no, org is proposing a list of components or what we call design elements that need to be decided in collaboration with the community. So we've been collecting broad input through consultation sessions, and today is a public session that is very important for such a consultation.

And then once we review all of the feedback received from the consultation, including this webinar today, we will draft a framework based on the input received. We will then share the draft consultation results and a framework with the community for further engagement, leading to further inputs and edits and iterations. And what we're

stressing here is there'll be many opportunities to collaborate together to arrive at a framework that works best for the annual planning process.

So, is the prioritization framework being implemented for FY23 planning? Just as a reminder, we are currently in the fiscal year for FY22 that started on the 1st of July and runs through June 30th 2022. We are currently planning for the following fiscal year, which is FY23, and we will have a draft operating plan and budget ready for public consultation in early December. So this prioritization framework is not going to be implemented for FY23 because we are working together through these consultations to arrive at a framework to be used for decision making and prioritizing.

So the draft framework is going to be developed in FY23. We are suggesting to publish this proposed framework as a resource document as part of our public comment for the draft FY23 plans, but further refinement of the process will take place during calendar year 2022 and the implementation of the agreed upon planning process is expected for the FY24 planning process.

The new planning prioritization step is listed on this slide as a step within the overall ICANN planning process. So this is a calendar view of ICANN's planning process which includes strategic plan, operating and financial planning and also includes public comments and then also the Board adoption and then the very important empowered community process that Xavier mentioned in opening remarks.

At a glance, we can see that the planning process at ICANN is over 18 months of steps. It's a complex planning process but also includes a significant time period for public comment. And then again, after the response to public comment, we do have adoption steps and then the empowered community.

So, as part of the planning prioritization framework project, we are suggesting that there is a new step in the planning process that takes place before the draft operating plans are developed. So this new step is suggested to be in the May and June timeframe within the context of the annual planning cycle.

This will then permit the community, Board and Org to arrive at proposed prioritization and then that prioritization would be received by Org as contemplating then how to draft the operating plans which then go out for public comment in the December timeframe.

We're going to cover a little bit more about how we're suggesting to develop this step, and that is part of this consultation. But before going into that, this is just an overview of the project plan. So this gives a view on the planning prioritization project which did launch in April 2021 with the first public webinar to launch the project.

We then had a public webinar on planning at ICANN 71 prep week mentioning the roadmap for this project, and the next step was beginning the consultation process. The consultations have been running from late June all the way through today and we have approximately three more consultations that are on our schedule. This

has been a great opportunity to share about the project and to seek input from the community in order to arrive at a proposed framework.

We are also highlighting that after this public webinar, we will be sharing back a version of a paper that will be posted as a resource document as part of the public comment for the draft FY23 operating plan and budget, and then a key step that is discussed in this presentation is that we are planning for a hands-on pilot, and that will be run in the January and February 2022 timeframe. And we have slides on the pilot and we will discuss that during this presentation.

After the pilot, we are suggesting to revise and have iterations or versions of the framework. Then we will propose a launch in the May and June 2022 timeframe as part of the kickoff for the FY24 planning process.

And one key item that we will keep pressing throughout this presentation is that we want to make sure that this process incorporates all of the community, Org and Board's feedback to make it a very efficient and evolving process that is expected by all for improved decision making.

On this slide, we are just summarizing the objective of the consultations and listing several groups that we have either consulted with or have some plans to consult with. The key is to collect diverse stakeholder input to inform the iterations of the draft prioritization framework.

We've been holding consultations such as we're doing today that are informal and interactive. So again, as my colleagues have indicated, we

would like you to raise your hand and provide feedback throughout this consultation, and we will pause after each section just to seek input on what we're calling the design elements of the process.

But just to highlight, we want to thank all the SO and AC groups that have consulted with us and will continue to consult with us. We're very excited to have public webinars and seek broad and diverse stakeholder input, and we have had many brainstorming sessions discussing this topic within the Org executive team and within the teams that develop the draft plans which are the planning liaisons. And we do also want to thank all of the ICANN Board committees that either sponsor this work and/or provide oversight.

We are now going to go into the consultation process. So the objective here is to cover suggested design elements, and Org has suggested that these are the key areas to review in preparing a process overview and to prepare for a hands-on validation step or a pilot.

So again, we have suggested these design elements. However, we also want to suggest, if anyone thinks there's another element we haven't contemplated, please provide us that feedback as well. This is, again, a consultation or brainstorming that we are happy to have with all of you today.

The first area that we have suggested to develop in this design of a process is to identify what are the activities that should be contemplated for prioritization within a planning process. So we've highlighted implementation projects, meaning the cross-community working group recommendations such as Work Stream 2

recommendations, which actually have been prioritized as part of the FY22 operating and financial plan, we're suggesting review recommendations and we've listed some examples here, review recommendations that have not yet been implemented such as CCT, SSR2, ATRT3.

These are Board approved recommendations, and that's something that we're identifying as a scope for the planning prioritization process. Policy development implementation, so that would be EPDP phase two, SSAD, and then there's advice, the RSS governance working group as well. Again, we're suggesting Board-approved implementation projects should be activities that we prioritize together.

Other, non-policy projects would be evolution of the multi-stakeholder model workplan, and then we've also listed Org projects that are for improved systems or efficiencies such as ITI, the NSp projects and compliance system projects.

We're highlighting that this set of activities, again, would be the subject of a dedicated prioritization process within the planning cycle but that we would not be including ongoing Org operations which are either for compliance or to support other aspects of ICANN's mission, and if there are other projects that we are listing as smaller or that are within the functional projects. So we're not suggesting that all of ICANN's activities be the subject of this step of prioritization but that it would be these key aspects of ICANN's collective work.

So we are now asking for feedback. Are there any community members that would like to raise their hand and/or ask a question just regarding this scope? I will ask Jonathan then. I see your hand.

JONATHAN ZUCK:

Thanks, Becky. Thanks for the presentation and for your work on this prioritization project. It's obviously critical given the deluge of recommendations that the organization is facing. I'm pleasantly surprised to see projects like ITI listed among this prioritization, and I'm wondering what the actual practical effect of including them would be, given that somehow that particular project didn't go through this process at the outset and is currently in development. And I wonder if it would benefit the organization and the transparency to subject ITI to the same kind of rigor that's expected of the community with community-driven projects in terms of budget, projected timelines and things like that. ITI seems to be an omnipresent project that has no specific timelines associated with it, at least that have been made public, and it seems like it would be a great candidate to be inserted into this framework and for the community to have a real understanding of the investment that's being made there, both of time and money and what the projected time frames are associated with it. Thanks.

BECKY NASH:

Thank you very much, Jonathan, for your question. I would just like to highlight that this slide is providing examples of the types of projects that we would expect, we would come together in a step of

prioritization within the planning process and prioritize together. I understand that specifically, you have some questions regarding the current project for ITI, which I know we have had many milestones such as the new public comment process on the ITI project.

But I did want to highlight that this is an example of what type of work should we incorporate into a prioritization planning step. And one aspect of this slide is that at this point, we're suggesting this new step in the annual planning process. We do feel that for a decision making framework, should this be something that works effectively and is fully implemented, that it could also expand to other aspects of ICANN's ecosystem's work where we could begin to forecast or plan ahead of time for work that is not yet either started or is underway and not yet Board approved. So there are opportunities further along in this process once it's fully implemented.

XAVIER CALVEZ:

Becky, can I add a little bit to your answer, please?

BECKY NASH:

Please go ahead.

XAVIER CALVEZ:

Thank you. And thank you, Jonathan, for the question. A couple comments quickly. You're absolutely right about the fact that applying for the first time and then on an ongoing basis a prioritization framework to a scope of activities, some of which have already been

started in the past and were not resulting from a prioritization decision under this framework because it didn't exist at the time, is a challenge that we're going to need to address and organize in the application of this for the first time of this prioritization framework. And there's many other topics like ITI in this example that will need to be dealt with in us applying the framework for the first time, not just ITI, many others. This is a very important point from a logistical standpoint to address at the first instance.

More specifically about ITI, for those of you who know a bit more about this project, there's been the development of a platform and then the program also includes in future steps the onboarding of a number of different websites onto that platform that has been built, and that set of individual websites' integration into the platform could be the subject of prioritization work in this framework while the original initiation of the project and the platform has been built was not the subject of a prioritization framework because that framework didn't exist then, to your point.

But there could be an application to the individual integration projects of one website at a time that could be looked at from that perspective. There's also Jeff's question. Jeff, you wanted to be able to speak about it. We have an answer for you, but please go ahead with your question and we'll try to address it right away.

JEFFREY NEUMAN:

Thanks. And I actually wanted to make it a little broader than just the question I asked, because that was pretty specific. I guess my first

question is—and it’s sort of addressed by the point at the bottom of the slide, which says that there are certain things that will not be prioritized during the annual planning process. So I was wondering if we could get a list of what you all would consider outside the scope of the planning process. That’s one.

And then two is once a program is started, does that continually show up on the planning process, or does it become, look, we’ve started it, we have to complete it now? What I want to try to avoid, as you can imagine, is you make a decision to start a program in one year and then all of a sudden, the next year, people go, ”You know what? I don’t think it’s as important as this other thing” and so we have a bunch of half-finished projects.

So if you could talk a little bit beyond, okay, once the decision is prioritized, is there no way out, is there a way out, should there be a way out, or should we complete it? Thanks.

XAVIER CALVEZ:

Thank you, Jeff. Really important point to address as part of this framework as well. And the definition of scope, which is one of the elements that we’re looking at here, needs to include clarity on that point. Personal opinion, I think that going forward, when a decision is being made to prioritize work, it should be with the expectation and understanding that that work is prioritized because of its importance, because of its urgency, because of its necessity, and therefore there’s a presumption that it should be finished and not halted or delayed.

Having said that, establishing a very strict rule about this may impair our ability to also be flexible. My point being, take something that happened to all of us in the past, when the transition came about, it preempted a lot of our times and efforts being spent on other things. And we should enable ourselves to be able to redirect resources if we think this is necessary considering new circumstances. We shouldn't be blind to new circumstances in using this framework.

However, it feels to me that it should be a relatively high bar of requirement to have to stop a project that's been prioritized earlier. So hopefully, that answer helps your understanding, but your input and your question is pointing to how important it is to determine as a guidance if not as a rule how we deal with project that have been started and in next instances of prioritization, can a project that's already been started be part of the prioritization process to be potentially determining that it would be stopped or delayed? I think it's a very important question to address.

Relative to the new gTLD program which was the subject of your question in the chat, it's not listed but nonetheless an illustration or an example of policy development implementation projects which consume obviously time and resources of the entire ecosystem, including the Org, and that therefore would be expected to be prioritized, meaning, to be evaluate for determining its priority.

And certainly, when a large project like this one is considered for prioritization, it has much impact on the organization, on the bandwidth for everyone, and therefore on the roadmap of projects,

including potentially some that have been started in the past. I hope that was helpful. Thank you.

BECKY NASH:

Thank you, Xavier. Thank you, Jeff, for your question as well. And I believe the next person in the queue is Judith. Please unmute yourself and go ahead. Thank you.

JUDITH HELLERSTEIN:

Yes. Thanks so much, Jonathan and Xavier, for your comments. And I really do like the ITI being listed here. But I also agree that it would be very helpful to have some more information on the timing of the different parts of the ITI. We get that when we ask about where things are and they say, “Well, this is longer in the time frame, this is not now,” specifically the further one of those of when ITI is going to look at the Wikis and other parts of that, because some of that information, we've been asking for as community projects for several years and we've been bringing it up in different reports along the way.

So I'm really glad to see that listed here, but I also was a little confused about, are we saying that it's at the same level as the name services portal and compliance system projects and all three are going to be together, or is it that you didn't want to put another bullet down on the other projects and there's not really any connection between those three projects? Thanks.

BECKY NASH:

Thank you, Judith. Just as a point of clarification, these are sample or examples of the type of work that we would come together to prioritize in an implemented project, meaning a process within the annual planning cycle.

I did take note of some of your questions just as it relates to a project like ITI. And just for the sake of this consultation, we're going to just continue to take note of that and we're going to respond just related to the design elements at this time. But we will provide a follow-up on that.

So I will ask now Donna for her comments. Donna Austin, please go ahead.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Thanks, Becky. Just a point of clarification. It seems to me that it makes sense that the scope of this is related to prioritizing community work efforts and the corresponding recommendations and implementation thereof. It's just a question of whether you intend —because with the ITI, although I take Judith's point that this is something the community has been asking for for some time, are we having a discussion here about whether to separate from the scope of this project those things that naturally sit within ICANN Org to prioritize? So updating the website and just the ongoing day-to-day things I wouldn't think falls within the scope of this project, but I wanted to understand whether that's a conversation we're having to define the scope. Thanks, Becky.

BECKY NASH:

Thank you very much, Donna, for your question. Exactly as you just indicated, the day-to-day or the ongoing Org operations is not suggested as a component of what we would prioritize during this step in the planning process.

Again, if we think back to the slide on this new step in the annual planning process, it's up front before Org has taken input and developed draft plans. So it's really a conversation about community-led work and other major projects that have resource implications when the plans are detailed out.

So again, we're suggesting that ongoing Org operations which within our operating plan and budget are listed under functional activities, and that functional activity could be the planning department, it could be human resources, it could be finance, and those are not—the discussion points during this upfront planning prioritization step.

And then we've also just highlighted that there could be other ongoing functional or other projects that really are not as large that need this kind of consultation or decision making process up front. So I hope that clarifies a little bit about the scope, but these are all the questions we want to hear as input to arrive at a proposal for having a hands-on validation of this process.

Okay, I do not see any other hands raised. With that, I'm going to move forward. We do have several slides. This next area or suggested design element is the participants or participation. This is a very important step to design together about what are the roles and responsibilities of participation in this process.

Org again has suggested some roles and responsibilities which are part of our standardized planning process. So again, as part of this project, we are suggesting that the ICANN Org facilitate prioritization workshops with participants during the May and June timeframe within the cycle of annual planning. And again, the suggestion is to have an upfront conversation about what work we should prioritize together so that Org can receive that as input into their contemplation of developing the draft operating plan and budget which then after the development goes out for public comment.

So we're also suggesting that participants use the tools and techniques that are being determined and discussed as part of this framework to provide recommendations of what the priorities should be. So again, we're talking about making decisions and as a result of making decisions, there are choices that need to be made. And a lot of the discussion that we had about scope was very important about how work gets approved to be prioritized and how we design work and then how we implement it. And a part of this consultation also includes a communication and report out as well.

So participants using tools and techniques together as part of a decision making process, and then the ICANN planning team or Org will share the results from the prioritization consultation with the community and encourage additional dialogue and input. And again, at one point, it'll be provided to Org within the annual planning cycle as input into the development of the draft operating and financial plans.

Another key aspect of this is the structure of participation. We've suggested, as part of this consultation, three methods of participation here, and this is what we want to consult upon. The first one is, on a May and June timeframe within the annual planning cycle, there will be consultations with the SOs and ACs followed by community public webinars. That is to hold the decision making process and to arrive at a prioritization.

Within step number one, after the consultation, again, Org, Board and community will review the output and then that would be received as input into the development of the draft operating plans.

Another suggestion is a participation in a formalized structure that is agreed upon, developed, such as a community group or committee. That is a formalized structure as compared to number one which would be consultations.

And then number three in participation is, should there be a separate public comment process on prioritization of activities prior to the development of the draft operating plans? Again, Org would just like to highlight that the overall planning process is more than 18 months of steps until a plan goes into effect. However, would a separate public comment process be something that the community or participants think should happen?

We have received several inputs in our consultations that another public comment process and staff report within the planning for the operating and financial planning may lengthen the process a lot longer. So I would just pause here. Again, our slide here is to ask, do you agree

with these roles and responsibilities suggested? How should we structure the participants? And we ask for hands and that you provide input.

I do see that Donna Austin, your hand is up. Please go ahead.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Thanks, Becky. Just looking at the chat, one of the challenges of this exercise is going to be around, as Jeff said, SSAC has different ideas about what should be a priority to ALAC and other SGs are going to have different ideas about that. So I wondered whether there would be ... We tend to do things by the ICANN construct. So when you have your consultations, you'll do it by SO/ACs. I wonder if it makes more sense to do those consultations as more like a focus group. We've got six or seven SOs and ACs. What if you take representation from across those SOs and ACs and have six representative groups that you can have the consultation with and then see how it falls out? Because that might be a more interesting conversation than just having it by the silos of the SOs, ACs, SGs, Cs. So do it more as like focus groups that are representative of the SOs and ACs and see where that gets us. Otherwise, I can see ICANN Org is going to be in that position of picking—you'll do it by votes or whatever, and it may not be the best way to do the prioritization exercise. Thanks.

BECKY NASH:

Thank you, Donna, for your input there. So that is an input on the structure of participation and we've made note of that input of using maybe cross-community or focus groups.

One item that we have had some consultation on is just regarding what is the role or formal role of an SO and AC chair and membership as well. So that is just some other questions that have come up in our consultations. Jeff, please go ahead.

JEFFREY NEUMAN:

Yes, and Donna said some of what I was going to say. I 100% support what Donna said. It's very important that a group is set up that can hear what the other SOs and ACs have as priorities, and maybe you can get agreement. It does no good for ICANN Org to have everyone in their own siloes presenting their own interests without a meaningful way to hear before it's put in an operating plan what other groups may consider the priorities or not. It needs to be cross-community.

And I've found over the last couple of years, ICANN has separated everything into SOs and ACs which has actually, in my opinion—and maybe different than others—resulted in a number of decisions that could have been better, had these been cross-community, had people been able to listen to everybody else as opposed to putting ICANN Org in a position of drafting a report and then saying, well, this party felt this way and this party felt that way.

I just think it's led to some bad decisions even on things such as—I'm just creating an analogy here, it's not the same thing, but even on

having plenaries at ICANN meetings. You get separate inputs in the siloes and then they do some vote, and by the time the planning team gets together, from my understanding, ICANN Org has already kind of assembled what each SO and AC thinks and picked the winner, if you will. That's a horrible way to do things and has resulted in a lot of people being very disappointed. So country code groups are extremely important.

The second thing is—and Becky, you've sort of hinted at it too—I do not agree that the chair of SOs and ACs or that even the leadership of the individual constituencies of the groups—the input by those persons should never be imputed to the input of everyone else in those SOs and ACs. And that's another kind of mistake I think ICANN has been making in the last few years, is to basically say, well, I'm doing my consultations because I'm having meetings with the “leadership team,” and then the leadership team reports back, usually after the meeting occurs when it's almost too late to get the input of those groups.

So I want to 100% support Donna's notion of cross-community-type focus groups and I want the SOs and ACs to be able to select those persons that would participate instead of the assumption that it's going to be the leadership. Thanks.

BECKY NASH:

Thank you, Jeff, for your comments there and input. Xavier, did you want to jump in?

XAVIER CALVEZ:

Yes. And apologies to Susan. Just to try to make sure I don't lose sight of what Jeff proposed. I'll try to be quick. Two points. I think that Donna's input and Jeff's confirmation are illustrating the notion of ensuring that whichever group is put together—if any—for this purpose, it is representing the entire community in its participation. I think that makes complete sense. That's, to be honest, the direction in which we thought this should go as well. And I'd just want to call on your clear input here in the next few weeks and months because if we go down this route of cross-community representation, which I think is the right thing to do, this is why I was saying at the very introduction of this that it will not be easy.

Imagine the cross-community representation of a few people agreeing together on what's most important. Let's put on the table the next round, SSAD, ITI, whichever else topic and agree on what is most important. That will be difficult.

The difficulty will not be to determine what is important, the difficulty will be to determine what is less important, what is deprioritized under something else. I just want to point out that this is the difficult part of the exercise ahead of us, but this is also the right part of the exercise. This is where we can as a community come together to be more efficient, but it will take compromise, it will take acceptance that an interest of ours may not be prioritized over the interest of somebody else. Are we going to feel we're losing if we're community A and our preferred project is not the one prioritized? That's really tough too. So that's ahead of us. But fully agree that one way or the other,

representation of the entire community needs to be involved in the decision making.

I also want to point out to the topic of accountability that has been laid out in the chat by several of you. It is very clear that it is important for everyone to understand how the input is set and provided. I think Jeff was pointing out in the chat that the community cannot be held accountable for the priorities being determined. It's for the Board and the Org to do that. And the structure we suggest for this prioritization framework is that the prioritization phase that we're talking about today leads to basically a prioritized list of projects. The output of that exercise is to say these two or three projects are more important, next come these two or three projects, etc. That becomes an input for the Org to take into account to plan.

And it becomes the Org's responsibility to determine how much of those projects are incorporated in the plan, which ones, and that will be reflected then in the draft plan that is subject to public comment where the community can say we don't like what you did. We told you we wanted these three project, you only took two of those and you took that was further down the list. Why did you do that, or we don't like it, or ... So that's the process that we want to enable to ensure that the accountability of the Org and the Board through an adoption of the plans, is offered to the community and then of course the community has the possibility to reject the plans that reflect the choices that the Org will have made out of the community input. So this prioritization framework is currently suggested to be designed in a fashion where the

community provides input on the priorities but does not take a responsibility on what those priorities are.

And of course, the cross-community understanding of those priorities is really important, and therefore that participation is important. How, is what we need now to think about. Sorry, Susan. I hope I was not overly long. Welcome to put yourself back in the queue if you would like. Thank you.

SUSAN PAYNE: It's fine. I put my hand down. I'm happy to pass.

XAVIER CALVEZ: Thank you, and apologies.

BECKY NASH: Thank you very much. I do see Roelof. Please go ahead.

ROELOF MEIJER: Thank you, Becky. Not implying that I have the solution and acknowledging what Becky and Jeff said, I'm wondering if we all agree that different constituencies have different priorities, I'm not convinced that if we mixed them together in a joint working group or in a joint group, if that's going to solve the problem that the different constituencies have different priorities.

My suggestion is that you also look at if this particular project is in the interest of the whole community. Then I think a joint group will work

best. If it is a project that is in the interest of only part of the community, and if there are several, I would ask that part of the community to set the priorities of that project first and if there are projects that are only in the interest of a single constituency, I would ask them first to set the priorities of those projects that are in their interest only, because I think it's very obvious that if there's a project that is only in the interest of the ccNSO for instance, then the rest of the community will give that a very low priority because it's not in their interest. And I don't think you solve that by mixing all constituencies into a single group.

I'm afraid at the end, the Board will have to take a decision there as some kind of a representation of the interest or at least the structure being able to kind of weigh the interest of the whole community. But I think we should start there where there's a quick win and that is—so group the projects into projects that are in the interest of the subgroup, and ask them to prioritize those first.

BECKY NASH:

Thank you very much for your input, Roelof, and describing what I would say is a tiered process or some sort of triage—it's not necessarily the right word, but sub-selection of projects. So your proposal is noted, and again, this is why we want to have this consultation, is to hear lots of different points of view on what we consider a pretty complicated process. So thank you.

I now see in the queue I think Sébastien Bachollet's hand was up first. Please go ahead, Sébastien.

SÉBASTIEN BACHOLLET: Thank you very much. First to answer or to try to give some inputs to Roelof's point of view, I am not so sure about that. let's take his example about ccNSO. I would say if it's a project to concern CCs, why you can't have support from the ACs? I can understand that Gs and IP addresses don't care about, but At-Large, government, Security and Stability Advisory Committee and others can support it. It's not just ... we are not focused just on something who can be important just for one part of ICANN.

And my second observation is I think that ATRT3 made a recommendation which was accepted by the Board regarding prioritization, and we spent some time discussing a proposal about that. And I have the impression that for part of the discussion, we are coming back and not taking into account this input as, I would say, a priority input as it's coming from an ATRT review. Thank you.

BECKY NASH: Thank you very much, Sébastien, for your comments there and input. We will move to Susan. Thank you again for your patience. Please go ahead.

SUSAN PAYNE: Thank you. I think I'm going to be controversial here. It seems to me that many of us are saying or thinking that it would be difficult—Xavier is saying difficult, I think some of us might think it would be impossible for us to agree on priorities as a cross-community effort.

But we could spend a significant amount of time doing multiple consultations on how to create this framework. It's a project in itself and that's before we start trying to apply this framework to the prioritization of the backlog of recommendations that we already have.

Then we'll put together a pilot and then there'll be changes and so on and so forth, but ultimately, we'll try to get these groups together to do this actual prioritization exercise struggling to reach agreement, having different perspectives on what's a priority and what isn't.

And then I was hearing Xavier say that then Org will take that as input and come up with a plan for what they actually will prioritize. So obviously, it'll be input that'll be given weight, but the community effort, it's not as though you're then planning to take that community effort and go forth with it.

And if that's the case, then why don't we just cut out all of this and ask each of the groups now or over the next three months to prioritize what they think should be dealt with in the list of backlog and then Org can make a decision and give its explanation of why it's gone forward in the particular way that it has and what it's prioritized over each other.

Because ultimately, that's what we're going to get to, but after a huge exercise of creating this framework and putting this group together. And I honestly can't see that we'll end up with a different outcome.

BECKY NASH:

Thank you very much, Susan, for your comments there. Xavier, did you want to respond? Thank you.

XAVIER CALVEZ:

Thank you, Becky, and thank you, Susan, for your point which is absolutely relevant and important to take into account. You pointed out to the risk of the amount of work that gets put into this—and by the way, consultations have been going on for the past six or eight months and a lot of that has already happened, but yes, it’s a lot of time.

And you're pointing out in your comment—and I'll take the positive side of the [rest] that you offered, is that the prioritization exercise in the future on an ongoing basis, if we move forward with this, needs to be sufficiently light so that it’s not an overly burdensome exercise for the community organizations and those participants. If it is, it is obviously something that needs to be corrected and avoided, because none of us can afford to spend too much time on this exercise while you have a lot of other things going on.

The question however is, should we not invest any time in prioritizing? And in any organization, there is “an investment in time” that needs to be made in order to decide what we do. If we would not proceed with this step, we could, to your point, ask every group, what do you think the priorities should be?

And that could become an input into the Org or several inputs into the Org. So we would have, let’s say, seven lists of prioritized projects and then Org to make the choice, select among that input.

I'm not sure, by the way, that the time spent by each group individually to produce their own list would be less than the time spent by the few participants that would participate to a cross-community group.

And I think therefore, there would be time consumed there as well within each community to come up with that priority list. Maybe less, not sure. But obviously, this would be going so much less further than the potential opportunity to develop a common priority list. And I don't want to be misunderstood in what I said about the priorities list will become an input to the Org. Of course, that is the input that the Org is needing to be able to say, what do we need to work on? So the input from the community shouldn't be taken overly a significant amount of time so that it is overly burdensome, but it is a very important input for us as an ecosystem to be able to work on what is considered important.

If we don't do that, we can continue to do what we've been doing, which is Org chooses the priorities. Not a problem, we can do that. But that doesn't make sense, does it? At some point, we need to evolve as an ecosystem and take back control of our future. If we don't work together to define priorities, we're going to continue working on a little bit of everything at the same time, and with limited abilities or less abilities to get things done and completed.

So I fully agree with you, it is a challenge to be able to get everyone to agree. And maybe we won't get everyone to agree, but at least there is an opportunity, a potential forum for the community organizations to have their input reflected as to what they think is most important. It's better than what we have today, which is none of that.

So I think that there is an ambitious, bold statement made with this exercise, but I think that there's really an opportunity for us to evolve as an ecosystem to be able to actually improve our delivery by being able to prioritize together.

And again, very difficult for sure. It will not be easy. But even if this cross-community representation of the communities does not manage to establish a very clear list, I absolutely expect that there would be input and transparency brought across the community as to what's important for whom. And I think Jeff said that in the chat somewhere further up. And I think therefore it's really important to give a shot at it and try to benefit from that collaboration across the community that we should try to enable. It happens today already in a maybe less formal fashion and certainly, this is innovative. And anything innovative is bold, ambitious and not guaranteed success out of it. But we definitely think it's worth trying. Thank you. I see Donna and J-P's hand up.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Thanks. I think some of what we're dealing with here is frustration about the fact that there are a number of projects that are sitting in a kind of holding pattern at the moment or where there was an expectation that implementation will be done in accordance with what we understand as the usual GNSO processes or review team processes, and we have a lot of backlog of work and we don't understand why that work isn't being implemented or completed because we don't have ... from my personal perspective, it seems that there's a backlog within

the Board, the funnel to the Board to be able to consider these things is jammed because of the number of projects that completed around the same time.

So I think some of this is frustration that ... I'm one of the community representatives that spent five years on the SubPro working group. And I know Jeff and Cheryl chaired that group for that period of time. So there's a frustration that the Council passed that on six months ago and now we're looking at another 16-month delay.

So I think, Xavier and Becky, what you're hearing here is frustration about the current situation and how is this process going to enhance moving those projects on or giving some legs to get that work done.

One of the things that we're not good at doing as a community is just saying "Stop, we're not going to take on any more work until we can get a handle on the work we have in front of us and manage that accordingly, because we are a community that sees the next shiny object and we run to taste that. And then things become less of a priority.

So look, I think there's value in what you're trying to do here, Xavier, but I think the frustration is the backlog of recommendations that are sitting out there, and we hear about this a lot, and the fact that they haven't been done despite the fact that in some cases, those review teams finished their work over two years ago. So I think that's some of the frustration that you might be hearing here.

And it's really hard—I'm struggling to conceptualize how this process that you're talking about is going to solve the current problems that we have. I can see value in getting ahead of this in the future because we know that we are going to have a similar situation as three review teams kick off work at the same time. But I think that's part of the frustration, is that there's a backlog of work there that we would like to see progress on, and you're talking about prioritization into the future. I think the question for me is, how do we deal with what we've got on the table now? And what you're proposing doesn't seem to address that. Thanks.

BECKY NASH:

Thank you for your comment, Donna. And just to note, the process to actually prioritize and then add the prioritized projects into the development of the draft operating plan after detailed consideration of planning for them is the purpose of this project. So from a point of view from the planning department, we do feel that this will address first of all the current backlog in a structured process that we can all agree upon, and then I do think there are benefits in the future as well for an efficient process to make sure that we begin to plan at a more detailed level in advance. Again, through a very collaborative process.

And again, thank you very much for your comments and everyone else's. I'm going to move to J-P Voillequé. Please go ahead.

J-P VOILLEQUÉ:

Thank you. I am an ICANN 72 fellow and I'm also an editor at ICANN Wiki. And in that role, I have spent pretty much the past year

cataloging the inputs, recommendations, policy proposals and everything else that's been going on within the community and in the interrelationship of community, Board and Org for the last ... there's never not been overlapping reviews. There's never not been multiple pulls on the Board's and the Org's attention and time.

And my comment was initially going to be specific to the source of this project, but I think it's important to acknowledge that at least from my perspective of ICANN's history, the Board has been overwhelmed with work on very serious issues for an extended period of time. So any effort to establish a stronger methodology around prioritizing what to bring to the attention of the—and resources to is good.

But then also to the original notion that I was going to address is that this project comes from the community. This project was a result of an ATRT3 recommendation. ATRT3 provides sweeping changes if all of them are implemented to a lot of processes within the organization, and all of them, it seems to me, are in the spirit of process improvement. So taking this in isolation as the one thing that we're working on now or as an interstitial let's waste more time moment is, I think, incorrect. I think it's important to take the big picture and make sense of the whole proposal and where this particular puzzle piece fits in.

And it does make sense to do it first, because then all of the rest of ATRT3 can be thrown into the cauldron with every other recommendation, proposal and input, and then you can work from there to sift and sort. Thank you.

BECKY NASH: Thank you very much, J-P, for your feedback and input here. Xavier, did you want to go next? We do have three additional people in the queue after this.

XAVIER CALVEZ: And more slides. Sorry, I do want to come back to what Donna said because I think it requires a bit of additional information and factual information. And Donna pointed out—which is absolutely true—the backlog of work that is the subject of requiring prioritization. And Donna, if you're thinking you're hearing from this conversation that there is a backlog of work to be prioritized, you've probably have heard this from Becky and I, because everyone—us included—is saying that there is a backlog of work.

What you may not see—and I don't know if you got a chance to participate, for example, to the session on reviews and cross-community work yesterday, but there's a lot of work going on that has been going on. I wouldn't want anyone—you, Donna, included—to think that because we're looking at prioritization at the moment, nothing else is being worked on, because that's not true.

There's work on CCT reviews, on RDS, on WS2, on ATRT3 as well. And if you just take the illustration of those review and cross-community projects, there is work going on “just as normal.” The prioritization project that we are talking about here today of course has taken some time. You, Donna, and others on this call have participated to a few sessions in the recent months on this topic to provide contribution. But

I want to be very clear that there's not implementation work sitting that's not being worked on.

What is very important to understand is that from a community standpoint, there may not be visibility on progress, notably because a lot of the work of implementation is in the design phase at the moment. And if I take this illustration to make the point, it's like building a house. When you work on putting the plan together with the architect, getting permits, designing the sequence of steps on what you're going to build first and what you're going to build next, finding the vendors that will be participating to the construction of the house, this is a lot of work. It's planning work. While all that is happening, you've seen nothing being built up in the house. You don't see work.

But then suddenly, once that work of planning is finished, then the foundation work is starting and then the building of the walls is starting, and then the roof happens and then the inside of the house. So my point is we are, on many projects of implementation, notably relative to reviews and CCWGs, in the phase of planning or design or at the end of it—take WS2 for example—and the work of implementation, the actual work of putting in place what has now been designed, can start and then becomes more visible.

Take WS2 for example. We have just finished within the Org all the design of all the implementation of the recommendations that the Org is in charge of. Not the recommendations the community is in charge of.

That design work now can be translated into implementation work. But that design work is probably 30, 40% of progress already against those recommendations that have not been started.

So there is work going on. Nothing stopped. Yes, there is absolutely a backlog of recommendations, and you pointed to it and all of your colleagues know about it, that there's about 250 recommendations of reviews or CCWGs that require implementing. To your point, the big work of the community of the past, let's say, five to six years where many reviews happened in parallel has now resulted over the past two years in many recommendations coming in. Which, by the way, we've all been talking about for a while. And therefore, prioritizing that work is necessary, important, and that's what this process is about. And I just want to repeat what Becky was saying earlier, that this process is there to help prioritize that work. Not the future work, that work that we have on our plates today. Thank you.

BECKY NASH:

Thank you very much, Xavier. I am going to move to the next two participants, but I'm going to highlight that 25 minutes past the hour, we will close the queue and just give a brief overview of the next steps and how to continue a consultation.

With that, the next participant that was in the queue is Martin. Please go ahead. Or did you put your hand down?

MARGARET BENAVIDES: And if Martin doesn't want to speak, then it was Jeff Neuman followed by Alan Greenberg. Thank you.

JEFFREY NEUMAN: Thanks. I see Martin says he's got his hand down. I think part of the frustration here is because of when the planning process actually starts. Right now, there seems to be an assumption that planning and prioritizing won't start until after the Board approves something, which really, to much of the community, is the source of frustration. So take something for—and I think Jonathan would agree with me—CCT review team recommendations went through their whole process, they came up with recommendations, community comment, the Board did a public comment period. It took years for, let's say, the Board to actually agree, and then and only then does the planning process and prioritization process start. So now you're talking even more years.

With SubPro, you're talking about a five-year PDP process during which planning in theory could have started, followed by it goes to the Board, six months, seven months, and only now are we starting the planning process. And according to ICANN's rules, you can't start implementation until the Board actually approves a policy. So, does that mean it's 16 months when the ODP is done and it goes to the Board, and let's say the Board approves it, does that mean that that's when it enters the prioritization funnel? Because now you're talking about even more years of delay.

Planning needs to be much earlier. It needs to be concurrent with actual activities that are going on. And yes, I know there's going to be some

uncertainties, but to prioritize and plan well after processes have taken place and to wait until after the Board actually does something is going to be dangerous for getting anything done.

So I really think that's a lot of why our frustration is—and whether it's mine or Jonathan with respect to the CCT review team recommendations, which he led that effort, it all kind of comes from the same place. We're hoping that this planning does not wait in the future until things are already past the point of all the work being done and then you have to wait a year for the Board to approve it.

And I disagree with Jonathan's comment there, that you can't begin planning a lot of things before Board approval. You can't necessarily implement them, but absolutely, you can do planning activities.

BECKY NASH:

Jeff, thank you very much for your comments, and everyone else who has provided input. We're going to go to Alan, because then we're approaching the end of the session. And again, we will have lots of opportunities to consult. Alan, please go ahead.

ALAN GREENBERG:

Thank you very much. I'm going to try to go up to 10,000 or 30,000 feet and make an overall comment, an observation. We seem to be better at and more interested in spending time building, organizing, carrying out meta projects instead of actually doing the work that ICANN is here for.

I have some level of concern that although we're trying to do everything well, we spend all of our time talking about ourselves, navel gazing. And WS2, ATRT3 and the specific reviews are often in that category as well. Rather, the organizational reviews.

So at some point, we are going to be doing everything perfectly and well organized and according to a beautiful master plan, but I question whether we actually get any work done and advance the work that ICANN is supposed to be here for as opposed to building a better organization to do that work or not do that work.

Just an observation. Thank you.

BECKY NASH:

Alan, thank you very much for your comments. So we are close to the end of the session today, and we really want to thank everyone for their input both in the comments in the chat and those that raised their hands and provided input. This has been a very good consultation and discussion, and what we're highlighting here today is that we have suggested six different elements of this proposed planning prioritization framework project and today, we spent our time on the first two which are very important, meaning the identification of the scope of activities to be prioritized and then the participants and the participation in this process and the roles and responsibility.

We have additional topics within this presentation which is frequency, and from our introduction, we suggest that this be an annual process up front in the operating planning process. So that is the Org's

suggestion. If there's anyone that wants to provide us input on that, that would be great. Then the next area is actually decision making techniques or models. That section is a little bit more complicated because there's an evaluation of processes that can help groups make decisions, and we've been consulting on that in order to then prepare for a pilot.

Another design element is the systems and tools, which really is about how do we exchange information. Some feedback that we've received thus far is not to have it be overly complicated or high resource requirements. And that's not our intent. It's actually, how often do we exchange this list, what are our tools to manage the process such as the techniques?

And then a very key step is a pilot. So the benefit of a pilot is to get hands on experience in order to validate the process. And we've seen several comments in the chat just about that today, and that is something that Org is preparing for.

As of right now, we do have our next steps. We just wanted to highlight there is a session at the ICANN meeting that the ICANN planning team has been invited to. It's been hosted by the ccNSO SOPC, and we have information on that session in this presentation which is available.

So at this point, I will just pause and see if there are any additional closing remarks at all. And as my colleagues have indicated in the chat, for any questions or follow-up, please e-mail the planning team at planning@icann.org. And we do have information about additional resources and we do look forward to setting up another consultation.

So thank you very much for participating, and we can close this session now. We appreciate all the input that we've received today.

XAVIER CALVEZ: Thank you, everyone.

VICTORIA YANG: Thank you, everyone. Have a great day.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]