
ICANN73 | Virtual Community Forum – Africa Space
Wednesday, March 9, 2022 – 09:00 to 10:00 AST

MAGALI JEAN:

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With that, I will hand the floor over to Yaovi. Thank you.

YAOVI ATOHOUN:

Thank you, Magali. My name is Yaovi Atohoun, I'm part of the Global Stakeholder Engagement team for Africa. As you can see from the agenda on the screen, we have only 60 minutes for the session. So I'll hand over to Pierre Dandjinou to make introduction. Thank you.

PIERRE DANDJINOU:

Thank you, Yaovi, and thank you very much, Magali, for starting this call or this meeting. I'm Pierre Dandjinou and I'm the VP in charge of Africa, VP for stakeholder engagement. Thank you very much, all, for coming, and I would like to really say that we appreciate your ongoing support for our community in Africa.

But also, I would like to thank our invitees who joined us today, Baher from our hub in Istanbul, Mandla Msimang, thank you very much. Thought you have continued in French, but you'll be coming later on, I hope. So as the ICANN Board director, thank you very much for joining us and to provide your remarks on Africa and African participation to ICANN. And of course, Sally Costerton that you all know. Sally is a senior advisor to president and senior VP in Global Stakeholder Engagement. She's also leader for our group. So thanks very much, Sally, for coming to share your remarks.

By way of introduction, the Africa Space is what we should be calling the African home at ICANN. Of course, we do have this sort of [inaudible] during ICANN meetings that we currently—Africa started this session really from the beginning.

Now we are thinking that the more we are providing details on what you are doing in Africa, the more we need to hear from others happening in Africa so that we do have a kind of parallel knowledge, information also exchange across the board when it comes to ICANN.

We do have other sessions, for instance the AfrICANN and AFRALO gathering where we do have some specific to deliver in terms of

declaration and things like that. The Africa Space is going to be much more holistic and be dealing with quite diverse things.

Of course, the core of it is the Africa strategy. What is the Africa strategy? For those who do not know yet, it started seven to eight years ago when ICANN tasked an Africa working group to come and develop a strategy that really says what Africa will be expecting from ICANN. And of course, that sort of two-pronged approach came which exactly about African participation to ICANN, but also, how do we build capacity in Africa so that people could understand about ICANN, what ICANN does and how to engage with ICANN, and other aspects of the DNS, DNS business, DNS industry to make sure that it also thrives in Africa.

So these are the reasons, and that strategy has been developed into a workplan and then into projects, programs that we are actually working on within Africa.

That strategy, let me remind you also, that was crafted by the African community, was reviewed two or three times, I believe. Now, we do have a new version and I hope my colleagues are going to talk extensively about that one.

This space is about information sharing, knowledge sharing, about hearing our stakeholders, be that from governments, for instance in terms of legislations that have been taken that are concerning the digital economy, but also [inaudible] on what ICANN does in Africa, it's quite important, if it's about IP address management, our registries, registrars in Africa, all of those interested, they're welcome in this Africa space.

Today, we do have a specific to tell you about, the review that we started a year ago which was about our engagement in Africa. We are now going to report on that, tell you exactly how we felt about our engagement and also, what are your views about how do we do it a bit better to provide you better services.

So all that is what we are here to do. It's going to be one hour time. We are going of course to listen to our invitees, [inaudible] welcome remarks, and then my colleague Yaovi Atohou who you certainly know as the director and also Bob Ochieng who is around is our senior advisor, [inaudible] manager is also going to continue with the reporting and questions and answers.

So that's where we are, and then we'll have a few announcements to you, last step, I will be concluding this. So thanks very much for your attention and let me open it up to our invitees for their welcome remarks. Baher Esmat, the floor is yours.

BAHER ESMAT:

Thank you, Pierre. Good morning, good afternoon, good evening, everyone. Thank you for joining us today. My name is Baher Esmat, I'm part of the Global Stakeholder Engagement team at ICANN. I lead the engagement efforts in the Middle East and I also head the ICANN regional office for Middle East and Africa in Istanbul. So I'm very pleased to be with you today, just to give you a quick overview about the regional office and what it does for the Africa region.

As some of you know, the Istanbul office was established as part of ICANN's internationalization strategy to ensure the organization operates more effectively to serve the needs of the communities around the world.

The office provides a range of engagement and support services across both Middle East and Africa. We have a team of 24 people working for pretty much every function within ICANN. And this team is mostly based in Turkey, 16 staff members are based in Turkey, and the rest, eight staff members between Middle East and Africa. In fact, seven are in Africa between myself in Egypt, I'm still working out of Cairo, Egypt and the GSE Africa team, also we have technical engagement team based in Africa and we also have staff member part of the security operations based out of South Africa.

Our work in the Middle East and Africa region actually informed by the objectives outlined in the ICANN strategic plan, and our priorities for this fiscal year revolve around three main areas, one of which is ICANN's technical role. We spend a lot of time and effort through our engagement to ensure that the [broader] stakeholders understand what ICANN is and what it does, and we do this through a variety of activities from capacity development to webinars, meetings, speaking in events, organizing events and so on.

The stakeholders we talk about here include every individual or organization that has interest in what ICANN does, be it a government organization or civil society or a member of an academic institute and so forth. Of course, our engagement is focused on the key ICANN

projects and initiatives that used to be our familiar with DNS security, IDNs, next round and so on.

The second area is about participation in ICANN's multi-stakeholder process, and our focus here is to make sure that our community is informed about the work that ICANN does and to encourage participation. Again, we do this through a variety of activities and engagement efforts, including organizing regional events. Like in Africa for example, there is the DNS forum in Africa among other several events that the Africa team does.

But also, participation in ICANN involves the policy development process of ICANN, and here we work closely with the stakeholders from contracted parties, from ccTLDs, from civil society, from the governments again to inform them about the work that is taking place and to encourage participation in the different processes.

The third area is about building and maintaining relationships with stakeholders. And not only the stakeholders that work closely within the ICANN ecosystem, the community, the ICANN community, but also, we are keen to reach out to new members and audience as we call them to expand our outreach to include newcomers and to ensure that we reach out to organizations and groups that may not be interested in attending ICANN meetings for example but they are still interested in what ICANN does.

For example, in our engagement around universal acceptance, we do reach out to stakeholders from the software development community, so these groups do not come to ICANN meetings and they want to know

about this topic to be able to take the necessary steps to become ready for universal acceptance and so on.

And of course, the engagement efforts in Africa are led by the GSE Africa team led by Pierre, and they coordinate between the different departments to ensure that the needs of the Africa community are being served. So thank you again for inviting me today, and with that, I'm going to turn it back to Pierre.

PIERRE DANDJINO: Thank you very much, Baher, for your remarks and your details on what the Middle East hub could bring to Africa. Now we are going to move normally to Mandla, but I think Sally has to leave within ten minutes, so if you'd like me to just leave it to Sally for her remarks and then Mandla, sorry—

SALLY COSTERTON: No, Pierre, it's fine, please have Mandla go first.

PIERRE DANDJINO: All right. Thank you very much, Sally. So Mandla, you can start. Sorry.

MANDLA MSIMANG: No problem, Pierre, and thanks, Sally. Pierre challenged me at the beginning to try in French, so I think I will. I might give up in the middle, but we'll see. So if the translators can be ready, and I hope they understand me. Thank you, Pierre, and the team for having invited me

to this meeting. Thank you for this opportunity in order to speak to all of you. My French is not perfect, but I'm going to try.

I hope to be able to stay during the whole meeting, but there is a session in GAC taking place at the same time and I thought it would be important to share with my partners or my colleagues during that session.

For two years now, all of our engagements in Africa have in fact on the efficiency, we have the jetlag to count on as an impact. Even though the jetlag, a lot of Africans have participated in the work of the group and worked on all these challenges. So there are advantages, of course, and conveniences.

You know the challenge as well as I do, maybe better than I do. You know your personal engagement in order to bring forward the voice of Africa. Therefore, I wait with impatience to hear the results of the questionnaire that was sent, the results, play a great role in the reinforcement of our capacity in the region.

Back to English. [inaudible] What the outcomes of the research ICANN Org has done on Africa engagement, what the survey has brought out, because despite the challenges that we had, I think it's important that as a continent, as a region, we participate fully to make this multi-stakeholder model truly inclusive and work for the benefit of the broader multi-stakeholder community [inaudible] Africa in specific.

Thank you, and I'm looking forward to the engagements. I'll stay as long as I can.

PIERRE DANDJINOU: Thank you very much, Mandla. You raised your hand and then you spoke in French. It's wonderful. Well, now let me hand over to Sally. Please, Sally, for your welcome remarks.

SALLY COSTERTON. Thank you, Pierre. Welcome, everybody. I cannot thank you enough for being with us today. And specifically, I wanted to thank—to follow from what Mandla said—the attendance and participation of our Africa community during this long period of virtual engagement has been extraordinary. And in many cases, you have challenges. Specifically, you are working from home, you may have bandwidth issues, time zones are not always favorable, but we have seen remarkable resilience and participation from this community during this time. It has made a huge difference. And please, I want to acknowledge that and encourage you to continue. And we are here to do everything we can to facilitate that.

During today, the team will take you through the results of the survey, as Mandla says, and I hope this will be a good opportunity for a discussion as to what priorities come out of that that you think we should be focused on as we move forward.

And I wanted to take this opportunity today to share an important announcement with you which many of you will be aware of, which is as part of our engagement. Our engagement in Africa is going up several gears from now for the foreseeable future. And we have announced, as

you will know, a new project, a large IMRS root server cluster installation, the first of which is in Kenya which was announced at the end of—or the beginning, rather, of the Mobile World Congress conference in Barcelona last week by Göran Marby and in a partnership with the ITU-D.

Now, this is the first initiative of a bigger project which we have called internally Project [Baobab] and this is a much larger, more ambitious project to expand the ICANN community's partnerships across the whole of the Africa region with organizations that can help us to extend and expand Internet infrastructure in Africa where we each play our different roles, all of whom are designed to bring more Africans online, ideally in our own language and our own scripts so that more Africans can benefit from the extraordinary opportunities that Internet access brings.

This is a very exciting project. It's probably the largest project we've done in Africa in the ten years that I've been at ICANN, and I cannot wait for the second announcement which will be, I hope, fairly soon.

And again, I thank you. I do hope you are enjoying ICANN 73 and you will continue to do so, and if there is anything that I and the team can do to support you and help you, I trust that you will maintain your excellent dialog with us. Thank you very much.

PIERRE DANDJINOU:

Thank you very much, Sally, and thanks for the good news and sharing your welcome remarks. Now let's go for the reporting, and I'll just leave

it to my colleague, Bob and Yaovi, to present the report and then we are going to have also our questions and answers.

YAOVI ATOHOUN:

Thank you so much, Pierre. This session is more about the result of the survey. Pierre talked about the Africa strategy approach, so I'll be very brief, and we have also the presentation on the meeting website.

So what I want to mention briefly before we go back to Bob is that Pierre mentioned that the strategy started in 2012 and we revised it in 2020 to align the Africa regional plan to ICANN global strategy. This work is a joint effort with the community and a call for volunteers was posted and then we heard about 25 people for a small group, and then after the work of this group, [with that also, comment from the community] to now have a final document that you can still see online.

Again, you have some community members that were volunteer for the various groups, and in addition, I mention we have many community members not on this screen but who contributed to this document.

Briefly, for the African region, the community and the staff, we agreed that we can contribute to the five key areas of the ICANN global strategy.

So for each area, there were specific objectives, goals, outcomes, action steps and risk. So because we just have a few minutes, 30 minutes now, what I want to highlight is that this document aligned the regional needs and priorities for Africa. That is the key in this document.

And then also, the document presents [inaudible] the region. So for the period, what do we want to achieve in the region? That is part of this document. Again, I want to not be too long because we have already this document available online as I mentioned, and the focus of today's meeting is more on the survey, because after this document was adopted, we started implementing, so sharing the result, and having your input, feedback today will help the team to see if any alignment needs to be done during the implementation.

With this, I want to hand over to my colleague Bob Ochieng who will take us through the results. Then we'll have an interaction with you because I can see some questions already in the Q&A pod and also, I want to remind us that we can also have French available during the session. So Bob, over to you for the presentation. Thank you.

BOB OCHIENG:

Thank you, Yaovi. Good morning, good afternoon, good evening, everyone, and once more, thank you for joining us today. I'll just follow up from where Yaovi has left and go straight into the outcomes of the survey that was conducted targeting the period of June, July 2016 and end of June 2021, so roughly five-year period of time.

In the next ten minutes, I'll try to run through the report and the feedback to really share with you what has been the response from the community to answer what our engagement or ICANN's work in Africa in general has been.

As has been mentioned, we cover five or so areas in this part. What were the survey objectives? Then we look at the responses that were connected, and especially, [inaudible] two parts on our engagement, but also on suggestions for improvement.

The last part was about having respondents either indicate whether they have subscribed to our newsletter, and including AfrICANN, which is largely the mailing address to use in Africa to use information.

So what was the purpose of this survey? As you can see, this was a five-year kind of focused feedback period. A long time, so potentially you could have people maybe not able to remember so much, maybe five years ago, but wanted to at least get a very good sense of our progress at least over a longer period of time, so we chose five years. And the main objective was to capture the satisfaction level of our community in regards to our engagement.

I do understand that satisfaction is a very subjective and contextual matter, but this was really in reference to, to what extent has our engagement impacted the community, and what feedback does our community have to us for improvement or for new initiatives or for new ideas? The survey was run between 10th of November and 10th of December last year.

So from a participation perspective, we had respondents from 14 countries participating in this survey. You will see that the numbers were not very high. That was a bit surprising, because we only had 36 full respondents, because others, they didn't finish the survey. So 14 countries were represented. The highest percentage was Nigeria at 21.9

thereabout, and we had Mali and Burundi at 3.1 representation each. Next slide, please.

One of the things we wanted to know is the various affiliations of the respondents, were they from the DNS industry, were they from civil society or from private sector? It is also possible that a respondent could be affiliated to a number of constituency groups. But from the feedback we got, civil society had a larger representation compared to the rest of the respondents. Next slide, please.

Now, in terms of participating or having participated in previous ICANN forums over the five years and looking at that from four thematic areas, having experience as a leader or an observer, a participant, or has the respondent or the community member responding been an active participant in the various forums?

You can see that a large percentage, 24%, has been an observer, and an equal number, 24% again, have been participating as participants. No, sorry, a large number has been active participants, at least from the ones that responded, and the least percentage was those who have been participating as leaders. And of course, this would be logical because in a typical meeting, leaders would be fewer compared to the rest of the participants. So most respondents were either active participants or observer participants, and fewer percentage was on leaders. Next slide, please.

So over the five years, a number of initiatives have been either executed by ICANN or participation largely in forums either led by ICANN or ICANN participating in platforms that are led by other organizations, be

they Africa DNS forum, ICANN public meetings, Internet Governance Forums.

So [inaudible] in terms of engagement and participation in these various platforms over the last five years, where is our community participating? And interestingly, I think this does not come as a surprise, you notice that we recorded or the least number of participants have been following or participated actively or as members of the IDN or universal acceptance-related sort of forums. [inaudible] feedback to us on areas of focus. So taskforce on Arabic IDN scripts, and also remote access has recorded lower participation compared to the rest of the forums. Next slide, please.

In terms of effectiveness of engagement, this was another critical area we wanted to at least get an understanding around, what is the feedback in terms of this effectiveness? Noting that it's also a very contextual or subjective kind of question. But we got four key areas of feedback.

First, there was an indication that [inaudible] proper follow-up after the engagement. It was also indicated that because of the pandemic-related restrictions which restricted face-to-face meetings, face-to-face meetings or lack of those kind of meetings hindered progress in some areas.

As I mentioned earlier, lack of or high cost of Internet continues to be a hindrance, and some [non-technical communities] still consider ICANN a technical organization, so hence engagement thereof is considered technical or they don't feel they'd follow. Next slide, please.

In terms of level of satisfaction [inaudible] efforts, a number of respondents [inaudible] especially on the second bar from up on your left, some respondents pointed out that more resources need to be allocated to capacity building, especially for the DNS market. It was difficult to get people to engage with ICANN in some regions because there's no publicity, that's one of their concerns. And a few respondents found it difficult to keep up with engagement with ICANN.

This could indicate, in terms of number of probably working groups or hours in terms of engagement or actually events or e-mails that come to you and you're subscribed to a mailing list. Next slide, please.

We also wanted to seek the suggestion from the community on what would be the other means for example to better the virtual engagement if we are to continue engaging remotely. The suggestions here were not very clear exactly in terms of solutions. For example, the third column, there are recommendations for an easy to follow [push] channels where people can also give suggestions or like active engagement platforms, chat platforms, for example, Slack, there should be a facility to allow reactions through [side] platforms.

Also, the question would be how to actualize that where you potentially have a group with hundreds of subscribers and each is trying to make a comment and you react and take actions. So this was made very clear, but we had this set of recommendations in terms of enriching the virtual engagement platform. Next slide, please.

We also wanted to get a view of what is the language preference across Africa. As you note, Africa is rather diverse linguistically. While largely,

including this meeting, largely accommodated French and English, we do know that there is Portuguese, Arabic, other languages on the continent, so could it be that there's a set of or parts of the continent that are feeling left out because of language?

So we had actually [biases] only for English and French. We probably don't have a lot of respondents from these other languages because [inaudible] also in French and English. Next slide, please.

So this next set of slides is just really actual recommendations as was captured by different people. For example, in terms of engagement in general, ICANN Org should do more, and doing more here could mean a lot of things. Some people find that the civil society organizations, especially members of NPOC in Africa, have not been sufficiently involved in ICANN African strategy compared for example to technical private sector and academic communities. So that is the feeling from one of the respondents or some of the respondents.

Some people noted that without local meetings [inaudible] by the pandemic, there was a sense that nothing much was happening across Africa, and then governments regularly attacking Internet rights, some respondents felt that ICANN needs to remain vigilant and engage in Africa potentially as a way that could deter such governmental interference.

We also noted that the people that felt some good work was happening, and the team to continue that good work. Next slide, please.

In summary, I'll highlight two points here. There is a need here to engage more with academia, increase learning opportunities as a recommendation, but if you look at the last bullet on my right, this was interesting, because this was speaking to some of the support, I would say, that sometimes comes from ICANN, be it financial or otherwise, and it was felt that while the amount sometimes involved in this kind of support are compared to transacting the same amount, and the amount of volunteer work that has been expected of the supported community members was not very balanced. So probably, an indication that this needs to be looked at, looking at the cost of transaction in Africa.

It was felt that for a community member to volunteer time and effort, if such community members were supported for whatever reason, then that support probably needs to be better thought about as opposed to probably how it has been administered currently. Next slide, please.

I wanted to look at subscriptions, as I indicated, on two main areas, either to AfrICANN and to our EMEA monthly newsletter. You'll see that subscriptions and those who are interested in subscribing were quite high, and very few indicated they're not interested. So this shows that for those who are not interested, they would actually want to be interested and part of the process was to click that [inaudible] so that they get subscribed. So that is already done. Next slide, please.

This gives you a combined analysis of the subscriptions in terms of interest, those who are interested vis-à-vis those who want to be subscribed as well as the language preference. So you still have from a

language perspective higher percentage, around 68%, preferring English as opposed to French. Equally, a number of participants are bilingual. The right means interest in subscribing to Africa and Africa-wide mailing list.

So with this, I want to give it back to Yaovi and I welcome your questions. Thank you very much.

YAOVI ATOHOUN:

Thank you very much, Bob. We want to remind everyone that if you want your questions to be read, please put it in the Q&A for the question. So we have 15 minutes to the end of this session and we have one hand raised from Olévié. We'll let Olévié ask his question and then my colleuage, Magali, will also read the questions in the Q&A, and then we'll have Pierre respond to them before we take other questions. So Olévié, you have the floor.

OLÉVIÉ KOUAMI:

Hello everyone, hello from Senegal. I just wanted to say a few things regarding the presentation from Bob. He raised a few points after the survey, and it was very subjective, he said. I'd like to know more about that. Why did you use subjective questions in that survey? Because it's not very useful to know what the situation is in Africa. So that was my first remark.

And about the involvement of stakeholders in Africa in the last few years, we have a strategy but we do not see much, we do not see NPOC

being invited or coming to those activities and events. So this is an issue for us. We need more NPOC participation.

Regarding universities, we need to work more with universities and with NPOC to open some countries for more knowledge sharing and more training and for ICANN to be better known. Thank you very much.

YAOVI ATOHOUN:

Thank you, Olévié. Maybe we can have Pierre respond. Pierre, if you want to react to that, and Bob also. Thank you.

PIERRE DANDJINOU:

Thank you, Yaovi, and thank you, Olévié. Speaking of the subjective questions that were worded in the report, I won't go into detail, but even though we would have loved to go into more details to have a precise idea of what the community thinks of us, well, when it comes to the other aspect to your question or comment, we took note, we will have to include better and better the different structures or who are in Africa.

We'll take account of what you said and we will do the necessary, especially for NPOC. We are here to work on all these issues. So your message has been received. [inaudible] to respond to the question by Olévié, please.

BOB ICHIENG:

I'm happy to respond to Olévié. And I think probably it's a misunderstanding, the way it translated or the way it's received. So the

survey sought to gain the community’s satisfaction with our work in Africa or ICANN Org’s work in Africa for the last five years.

What I was describing as subjective is the word “satisfaction,” because what I would view—an individual might view or when you do an activity, the level at which everyone participating in that particular activity would be satisfied in terms of its impact would be different.

So I described what we sought to achieve was really quite subjective and contextual, because we are looking at every participant’s feedback from what we have been doing. And this was very intentional so that we actually get [inaudible] personal feedbacks, because we believe they’d be different. Not everyone will see the same thing from the same perspective. So to what extent is the community satisfied?

So what we received is actually what we expected, contextual subjective feedback from a very individual participant that would then help us to craft how we move forward next better. So I was describing the objective [inaudible] various objectives so that we get individual feedback from how each respondent has received or viewed our work in Africa. I hope that helps.

YAOVI ATOHOUN:

Thank you very much, Bob, and we have Mary Uduma who wants to speak. Mary, over to you.

MARY UDUMA:

Hello. Good afternoon. Thank you for the presentation. I want to ask Bob if you can put up again your first graph, the number of countries the respondents came from? Because when I look at the selection of language and English being so high, you find that most of the people, you can see for instance 1% from Nigeria, 12% from Kenya, 12% from— and by the time you add all that together, you find out that the English speaking respondents are higher in number. So it is not difficult to have the result of English being preferred.

So I want to ask, what would be the strategy of our strategy of the Africa region to be able to reach those that are not reached? Because [inaudible] even in attendance, ICANN attendance, we see this play out, those that can speak English and those that can speak both languages, they come to ICANN. But the percentage of the non-English speaking that do not understand English, they are not there at all. So I don't know the strategy we want to deploy to reach this, and we can see it in everything we do, whether it is in IGF or in ICANN processes. So we should also look at—when we are doing this survey, are we just sending it to the usual suspects or we send beyond the usual suspects to be able to get their views and get their feedback to ICANN engagement in Africa?

So that's my comment for now, and I hope you'll be able to respond to that.

YAOVI ATOHOUN:

Thank you very much, Mary. We have your question and then two questions from the chat. Pierre, over to you.

PIERRE DANDJINOU:

Thank you very much, Mary, hope you are doing well, and thank you for this interesting question you are putting, a question of strategy for our outreach to our community and especially in the language that we might be using.

Of course, the fact today in Africa is about [inaudible] languages that have become administrative languages in most of the countries. Of course, ideally, [inaudible] about one, two or three African languages for instance for our outreach and engagement, but you have to work on that.

We were talking about universal acceptance that would make sure that some of the African languages could be generating their own script so that they're able to share information in the native languages, which is not the case now.

We do follow of course the UN list of languages, six or seven of them. We also make sure that ICANN has really provided support and still doing this in terms of interpretation, in terms of dissemination of documentation in different languages. So that one will have come a very long way for that and you'll recognize it.

But certainly, your question now is going to be about what strategy we have in mind so that we could broaden the scope of what we're engaging with. I think it's a good question. We will think about it and see, of course, with our community, how best to respond to this issue [inaudible] in Africa. So thank you again for raising this, Mary.

YAOVI ATOHOUN: Thank you very much, Pierre. My colleague, Magali, will read through questions. One from Sander, the other one from Lawrence. We'll give the microphone to Abdulkarim, then Pierre will answer all these questions or comments, and then we'll bring the session to an end. So Magali, can you read the two questions from the Q&A pod? Thank you.

MAGALI JEAN: Sure. So the first question is, "Why are the chair of the AFRINIC Board and/or the CEO of AFRINIC not on the agenda?" The second one is "I noticed no newcomers were recorded across participation. Not sure how true this is, but what does the GSE team plan on doing in collaboration with the community to attract new volunteers from the region? And the last question is from Olévié, [inaudible]."

YAOVI ATOHOUN: Thank you, Magali. Pierre, apologies, we'll let Abdulkarim ask the question and then you'll provide all the answers and then moving to the end of this session. So Abdulkarim, you have the floor. Thank you.

ABDULKARIM OLOYEDE: Thank you very much, Yaovi. I just wanted to do a quick follow up to Mary's comment to say that one of the good strategies, I think, the fact now we're not promoting the fact that most of these meetings are being translated into a lot of the languages. Even when they are translated, a lot of us are not aware that they're translated and that we can actually

Speak in French so that it'll be translated, or everybody feels it's an English community.

So I think we need to promote this better and this would always allow for more inclusivity. Thank you.

YAOVI ATOHOUN:

Thank you, Abdulkarim. We have only three minutes left. We are displaying the contact of the team if you want to continue the discussion. The address is queries.nairobiec@icann.org

So with that, I will let our VP, Pierre Dandjinou, answer the questions, then make some announcement and bring the session to an end. Pierre, over to you.

PIERRE DANDJINOU:

Thank you, Yaovi, and thank you for your questions. Quickly, we do have a question about non participation from AFRINIC. Yes, that's our colleague, Sander Steffann, why the CEO or the chair of the Board are not—well, let me say from the beginning that this was not by invitation in terms of participation to this Africa space. We used to do that in the past, and this time there was no invitation for participation. It was your choice to really select the Africa space this time. We just make sure that we do have [inaudible] from ICANN. So you'll notice that we'll have these sort of, say for instance—can you hear me?

YAOVI ATOHOUN:

Yes, we can hear you.

PIERRE DANDJINOU:

Thank you very much. So maybe if you have invited, normally, we do invite, you know, ISPs, African registrars, registries, all of them, but there was no invitation this time. So that's the response to your question. By the way, I know that CEO of AFRINIC is now heading to [West Africa] to meet one of the stakeholders of theirs.

In terms of question about how do we attract new volunteers, good question as well. From time to time, of course, one might talk about volunteer fatigue. And that's why we're also going to have our engagement forum sometime in May. We'll come to that later on.

The idea is to really think about how we motivate voluntarism and attract new ones, what are the strategies to really attract new ones as you know. ICANN's work—how should I say? Not depends, but it's heavily impacted by the volunteers that we need to [thank here.] So we take note on that one. We need to work on it, how to get new volunteers.

On the language issue, Olévié, again, good idea, but of course, it's not about ICANN to say let any language for Africa. Swahili and whatever language is going to be coming from Africans themselves. ICANN provides the means for you to generate your scripts. Then become the kind of strategic or whatever choice for Africa eventually. So yes, definitely, it's a good question as well.

With all this, let me thank you very much for attending this call, and then especially for your comments. The strategy and the report which you heard, the engagement strategy, it's to know more about you, more

about your expectation so that we jointly make sure that we craft the appropriate means for engaging with you, and that is what some of the recommendations are made for and we are going to work on them and prepare you for the next engagement forum that we are planning for end of 24th to 25th, I think, May.

It's going to be kind of face-to-face—hybrid meeting, that's what we asked for. We hope to get some positive feedback on that. You'll be informed on that. So that's what I should share before we close this call.

Thank you very much again. [inaudible] So thank you again, and keep safe. Bye for now.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]