Five Years of Africa Strategy Implementation

2012-2017

Pierre Dandjinou
Bob Ochieng
Yaovi Atohoun

ICANN

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NOTE FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT IN AFRICA

ICANN's Africa Strategy was first drafted in 2012 by the Africa Strategy Working Group (ASWG). The event ''Multistakeholder Internet Governance and the DNS Industry in Africa (MIGWORKS)'' on 5-8 March 2013 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, marked the official launch of our Africa strategy implementation. The development of this strategy was triggered by the following factors:

- Insufficient participation from the region. With 54 countries and a population of over one billion, Africa has not sufficiently participated in ICANN and its activities. This includes taking part in the 2012 New gTLD Program launch, where only 17 applications were received from Africa, out of a global total of 1930 applications.

- The Africa Ministerial Gathering during ICANN44 in Dakar, Senegal issued a communiqué calling for a stronger presence of ICANN in Africa, and subsequently, more participation by Africans in ICANN.

- At a larger scale, a new era for ICANN was envisaged with the inclusion of all parts of the world in ICANN's policy development processes and the wider Internet governance discussions.

The Africa Strategy aimed to encourage participation in ICANN, and build capacity amongst stakeholders to foster the domain name industry in Africa. In 2013, ICANN assigned three staff members with a dedicated budget to put this in place.

Five years down the road, several flagship programs and projects have been implemented in the region including:

- The DNS roadshow series

- The DNS mentorship and internship Program

- The DNS Exchange Program

- The Africa DNS Forum

- Support for the African Internet and Internet governance related events

- Maintenance of regular channels of communication including the African discussion lists

- Series of topical workshops

- A continuous support for African participants at our global meetings through ICANN's Fellowship and NextGen programs

Our work over the past five years has shown us:

- The African community has become much more active, but still needs to participate more effectively.

- Capacity building in Africa is a long term and resourceful perspective which required strategic partnerships to be developed.

- Though governments now have an understanding of ICANN and its remit, they still expect ICANN to respond to issues pertaining to Internet security, personal data processing and their positioning in Internet governance discussions.

- Issues such as digital economy and the Internet's contribution to national and regional economic development are becoming crucial and the specific role of ICANN is being questioned.

We should also note that ICANN itself has gone through transformations such as the IANA stewardship transition, the new ICANN Bylaws and the new empowered community of ICANN. These changes certainly call for increased challenges but at the same time present wider opportunities for African participation. In the meantime, the domain name industry is moving forward with increasing number of registrars and more capable management of registries. All of these developments indicate a necessity to build upon the five years of implementation of the ICANN Africa strategy to help transform the Africa Domain Name Industry and the Internet ecosystem, by bringing them up to speed with the global Internet ecosystem.

Pierre Dandjinou

Africa, with 55 country top-level domain names, is one of the five ICANN regions. The total number of country top-level domain names is 249, including 73 for Asia/Australia/Pacific, 76 for Europe 37 for Latin America/Caribbean and 8 for North America.

Economic growth in Sub-Saharan Africa is recovering moderately, following a sharp slowdown over the course of the last two years. Estimated to have strengthened from 1.3% in 2016 to 2.4% in 2017, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth in the region is mainly led by the continent's largest economies: Nigeria, South Africa, and Angola. Nigeria and South Africa have exited recession. However, their pace of recovery remains sluggish.[1]

ICANN plays a unique role in the infrastructure of the Internet. Through its contracts with registries and registrars, ICANN helps define how the domain name system functions and expands. ICANN coordinates policy development related to the Internet's system of unique identifiers. These policies start out as recommendations and then are refined by the global ICANN community through its Supporting Organizations and the input from Advisory Committees. Africa is also contributing to the policy development processes and the global economy of domain name business.

ICANN holds public meetings all over the world. To date, it has held 11 public meetings in Africa. The first one took place in Egypt in March 2000. It was followed by Ghana in March 2002, Tunisia in October 2003, South Africa in December 2004, Morocco in 2006, Egypt in November 2008, Kenya in March 2010, Senegal in October 2011, ICANN47 in Durban in 2013, Morocco in March 2016 and lastly South Africa in June 2017. During the Dakar meeting from 19 to 21 October 2011, the African Union and Senegal hosted a round table for African Ministers in charge of Communication and Information. The Ministers issued a communiqué which called for enhanced engagement in Africa.

During the 44th ICANN meeting in Prague, Czech Republic in June 2012, participants from Africa had a special meeting with the ICANN CEO and the ICANN Board Chair. Taking into account the input from the Africa's ICT Ministerial Meeting in Dakar in 2012, this meeting involved discussions on how to make the continent more involved in ICANN. It was concluded that a better understanding of the issues hampering Africa's participation in ICANN was needed. It was also suggested that Africa deserves a unique approach so that its contribution to ICANN becomes at par with other regions. With these necessities in mind, an African working group was set up to deliver what has now become the "Africa Strategy."

In 2013, ICANN Global Stakeholder Engagement (GSE) Department formed a team in Africa to help ICANN better interact with the regional community. GSE is responsible for leading engagement and outreach with stakeholders on ICANN and its mission. The Africa GSE team provides a point of contact in Africa for the ICANN organization and community, raising awareness, providing outreach and understanding of ICANN's role and remits, driving participation in ICANN's policy development and technical matters. The team is at the

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[1] http://www.worldbank.org/en/region/afr/overview

[2] https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/african-union-communique-21oct11-en.pdf

forefront, delivering ICANN org's commitments and core values to ensure broad, informed participation reflecting the functional, geographic and cultural diversity of the Internet.

This report looks at the period from 2013 to 2017, and highlights the accomplishments and lessons learned hitherto.

REACHING OUT TO COUNTRIES STAKEHOLDERS

At the beginning of our engagement efforts, there was a low turnout of participants. This was due to a lack of knowledge about ICANN and ICANN org activities by many stakeholders. To address this, the ICANN GSE team in Africa planned targeted outreach in several countries to meet with government officials, civil society organizations, telecommunication operators, ICT regulatory bodies and academia. Since then, we have managed to reach out to almost all African countries. We also sponsored, supported, and participated in regional events.

	ICANN's participation in activities					Supported member or organization from the country	Stakeholder outreach by category				
	2013	*2014*	*2015*	*2016*	*2017*	*Supported events/program*	*Academia*	*Business*	*Government*	*ccTLD*	*Civil society*
Algeria			X	X		Fellowship					
Angola										X	
Benin	X	X	X	X	X	Topical workshop 2014, Fellowship		X	X	X	
Botswana	X		X		X	AIS, Fellowship, DNSSEC Roadshow		X	X	X	X
Burkina Faso		X	X	X	X	FFGI, DNSSEC Roadshow, Fellowship		X	X	X	X
Burundi			X			Fellowship					
Cameroon	X	X	X	X	X	Symposium TIC, Juristic Workshop, Fellowship	X		X	X	X

Country						Description					
Cape Verde		X				Stakeholder Outreach	X	X	X	X	X
Central Africa Republic		X				Topical Workshop in Cotonou				X	
Chad			X			Survey with OIF, DNSSEC Roadshow, ICANN Fellowship			X	X	X
Comoros					X	DNNSEC Roadshow			X	X	
Congo		X	X	X		Africa IDN workshop, OSIANE 2017, DNSSEC Roadshow		X	X	X	X
Cote d'Ivoire		X	X		X	ATP 2014, ATP 2015, FENUD 2017, DNS Exchange Program, DNSSEC Roadshow		X	X	X	X
Djibouti	X					AIS			X	X	
DRC						Fellowship			X	X	X
Egypt			X			AIGF 2017, AfriSIG2017, Fellowship		X	X	X	X
Equatorial Guinea				X		Central Africa IGF					
Eritrea											
Ethiopia	X		X	X	X	AfriSIG 2015, UbuntuNet Connect 2017, Ethiopic IDN Panel, ICANN Fellows	X				X

Country						Activities					
Gabon				X		DNS Exchange Program		X	X	X	X
Gambia	X	X	X	X	X	AIS, C2C, Fellowship		X	X	X	X
Ghana	X	X	X	X	X	IANA stewardship transition webinar, ICANN Fellowship	X	X	X	X	X
Guinea	X								X	X	
Guinea Bissau											
Kenya		X	X	X	X	ICANN Fellowship, ICANN Meeting, DNSSEC Roadshow, DNS Business workshop, GAC Workshop, Nairobi Office launch	X	X	X	X	X
Lesotho						Outreach Mission		X	X		
Liberia	X	X			X	WATRA workshop		X	X	X	X
Libya											
Madagascar					X	Stakeholder Outreach, DNSSEC Roadshow	X	X	X	X	X
Malawi						Fellowship, Outreach Mission		X	X	X	X
Mali						Fellowship				X	X
Mauritania		X			X	Fellowship	X	X	X		X
Mauritius			X			AFRINIC Meetings		X	X	X	X
Morocco			X			ICANN55, DNSSEC, DNS FORUM	X	X	X	X	X

Country						Activities					
Mozambique			X	X		CTO meeting, ATU meeting	X		X	X	X
Namibia				X		Fellowship, Outreach Mission		X	X	X	
Niger	X			X	X	Academia Outreach, West Africa IGF, ICANN Fellows	X		X	X	X
Nigeria			X		X	Africa IGF, West Africa IGF, AFRINIC 25, DNS Forum, DNSSEC Roadshow	X	X	X	X	X
Rwanda		X	X	X	X	Smart Africa, DNS Business Workshop, Fellowship	X	X	X	X	X
Senegal	X	X	X	X	X	ICANN meetings, DNSSEC Roadshow	X	X	X		X
Seychelles		X				Fellowship, Outreach Mission			X		
Sierra Leone									X		X
Somalia				X					X		
South Africa		X	X	X	X	iWeeks, ICANN meetings, DNS Forum, DNSSEC Roadshow, Africa IGF 2016, AfriSIG 2016	X	X	X	X	X
South Sudan					X				X		
Sudan		X	X	X	X	ICANN Fellowship, AFRINIC					
Swaziland		X				SATA Meeting, CRASA Meeting, Outreach Mission	X	X	X		

Tanzania	X			X		C2C, DNSSEC Roadshow, University Outreach, ICANN Fellow, Africa DNS Forum	X	X	X	X	X
Togo			X	X		DNSSEC Roadshow; University Outreach, ICANN Fellows	X	X	X	X	X
Tunisia			X			AIS	X	X	X	X	X
Uganda	X	X	X		X	ICANN Fellowship, East Africa IGF, UIGF, CTO meeting, Outreach mission	X	X	X	X	X
Zambia			X			DNSSEC Roadshow, ICANN Fellowship			X	X	
Zimbabwe				X		Topical workshop, Outreach Mission, ATU meeting		X	X		X

Acronyms Defined:

- AIS: Africa Internet Summit

- IGF: Internet Governance Forum

- OIF: Organisation International de la Francophonie

- SATA : Southern Africa Telecommunications Association

- CRASA: Communications Regulators' Association of Southern

- Symposium TIC: A regional an annual event organized by CAPDA

- The workshop by @Juristic: Special workshop for lawyers

- OSIANE: Regional event in Central Africa consisting of workshops, exhibition, panels and presentations

- C2C: Connect to Connect is a regional event

- iWeeks: Annual event organized in South Africa

- ATP: Africa Telecom People is a regional IT event organized in Cote d'Ivoire

- WATRA: West African Telecommunication Regulators Assembly

- IAD: Innovation Africa Digital Summit

- FRATEL: Forum of Francophone Telecommunication Regulators

- FFGI: Training of Trainers on Internet Governance

SUPPORTING KEY REGIONAL INITIATIVES

ICANN has been supporting key initiatives in Africa, particularly those with a regional dimension. This support comprises ICANN staff's participation in capacity building events through presentations on specific topics, and financial contribution or travel support to participants. The table below gives a list the main initiatives that ICANN has been supporting since 2013.

FY14		FY15		FY16: 75,000USD		FY17:87,000USD		FY18: 90,000 USD	
Event	*Venue*	*Event*	*Venue*	*Event*	*Venue*	*Event*	*Venue*	*Event*	*Venue*
MiGWORKS	Ethiopia, Addis Ababa	*DNS FORUM 2014*	Abuja, Nigeria	*DNS FORUM 2015*	Nairobi, Kenya	*DNS FORUM 2016*	Marrakech, Morocco	*DNS FORUM 2017*	Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
DNS FORUM 2013	Durban South Africa	*ATP 2015*	Abidjan, Ivory Coast	*AFRINIC 23*	Pointe-Noire	*AFRINIC 25*	Port Louis, Mauritius	*AFRINIC 27*	Lagos, Nigeria
AFRINIC 21	Djibouti			*AFRINIC 24*	Gaborone, Botswana	*AFRINIC-26*	Nairobi, Kenya	*AFRINIC 28*	Dakar, Senegal
AfNOG 2014	Djibouti	*AfNOG 2015*	Tunis, Tunisia	*AfNOG 2016*	Gaborone, Botswana	*AfNOG 2017*	Nairobi, Kenya	*AfNOG 2018*	Dakar, Senegal
ATP 2014	Abidjan, Ivory Coast			*AfriSIG 2015*	Addis Ababa, Ethiopia	*AfriSIG 2016*	Johannesburg, South Africa	*AfriSIG 2017*	Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt
				AFIGF 2015		*AFIGF 2016*	South Africa	*AFIGF 2017*	Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt
				FFGI 2015	Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso	*FFGI 2016*	Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso	*FFGI 2017*	Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso
				SAIGF	Harare, Zimbabwe	*WEST AFRICA IGF*	Niamey, Niger	*WEST AFRICA IGF*	Cotonou, Benin
				UBUNTUNET CONNECT	Maputo, Mozambique	*UBUNTUNET CONNECT*	Malawi, Lilongwe	*UBUNTUNET CONNECT*	Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

	2015		2016		2017	
	ATP 2015	Abidjan, Ivory Coast	*WACREN 2017*	Abidjan, Ivory Coast	*WACREN 2017*	Lomé, Togo
			AAU GENERAL CONFERENCE	Accra, Ghana		
			WATRA WORKSHOP	Monrovia, Liberia	*WATRA WORKSHOP*	
			OSIANE 2017	Brazzaville, Congo	*OSIANE 2018*	Brazzaville, Congo

- ICANN has been supporting the regional Internet Governance Forum since 2015.

- The WATRA Workshop is in line with the strategy of organizing capacity building for regional organizations during their own annual event.

- Participating in the WACREN annual conference and the UbuntuNet alliance meeting contributes to engagement with the academia so that they contribute more to the community work.

ESTABLISHMENT OF ICANN ENGAGEMENT OFFICE IN NAIROBI, KENYA

On 24 May 2016, the ICANN Engagement Office in Nairobi was formally launched by the ICT Minister for Kenya Hon. Joe Mucheru, following the announcement of the office's establishment by ICANN Board Chair during ICANN55 in Morocco.

ICANN org leaders Tarek Kamel and Sally Costerton, as well as ICANN Board Member Mike Silber joined in the opening. This milestone of the ICANN globalization agenda was also attended by notable Internet community members from across Africa including African SO / AC leaders from GAC, AFRALO, NCUC Af* & I*. Distinguished regional Internet pioneers such as Prof. Nii Quaynor, Mouhamet Diop, and Mary Uduma, as well as others, were all present representing the African community.

The Engagement Office primarily serves as a foothold of ICANN org in Africa, deepening the ongoing work of the three GSE staff members based in Africa. The office has been particularly beneficial for institutional engagement with all African stakeholders, public relations and trainings on issues such as Internet governance and DNS management. The office is engaged in outreach with the AF* (African Internet related associations), governments, and intergovernmental organizations across the continent, as well as in the delegation and re-delegation processes.

DNSSEC

Strengthening ccTLD development in Africa is one of the nine objectives of the reviewed ICANN Africa Strategy. The implementation through the DNSSEC roadshow sought to build capacity in DNS technical operations and provide assistance and support as requested.

The DNSSEC roadshow is one of the key projects for capacity building and the development of the DNS economy in Africa. It combines desk reviews, country assessments on DNSSEC adoption and country visits to further promote understanding and implementation of the DNSSEC in African countries.

A pilot phase of the project started in February 2013 with a group of eight countries. A final report on this phase was presented in July 2013 during ICANN47 in Durban, South Africa. The Africa GSE team enrolls new countries in new phases each fiscal year according to available resources and requests from countries.

Today, we have more than 500 people from 19 countries trained on DNSSEC basics. As outlined in the next table, the project helped some TLDs on planning a safe implementation of the DNSSEC protocol. Important to note here is that the 2016 Africa DNS Market Study showed low domain name registration under ccTLDs in Africa. The proper implementation of DNSSEC provided by the project will certainly contribute to the growth of the Africa Domain Names space.

The table shown also gives a picture on the countries covered through the DNSSEC Roadshow. The last column indicates the date when the country completed the process. Those have only generated the DNSKEY have also completed an important part of the process. Please refer to the DNSSEC Africa website for more information.

DNSSEC QUARTERLY CALLS WITH CCTLDS

As we still have countries which have hosted DNSSEC workshops without having DNSSEC implemented, we are trying to help ccTLDs share best practices and find quick solutions to any issues that rise while implementing the DNSSEC protocol. The first call took place on 6 October 2015 with representatives from .CI, .BF, .TZ, .SN, .NG, .ZA, .MG, .CM and .CG. Further calls were made in January 2016, May 2016, September 2016 and February 2017.

These online meetings have helped with the sharing of experiences and best practices. A mailing list was subsequently created to serve as a channel of communication between ccTLDs who have implemented DNSSEC and those who are in the planning phase. A tool to check the deployment at African ccTLD is available here. This website also contains resources to help both technical and non-technical communities interested in DNSSEC basics and/or implementation.

TLD	Roadshow date	Country	Status	DNSKEY	DS Record Date
.km	13-15 September 2017	Comoros	Unsigned		
.td	17-19 January 2017	Chad	Unsigned		
.bj	24-26 August 2016	Benin	Unsigned		
.gh	22-24 March 2016	Ghana	Unsigned		
.ma	29 February - 2 March 2016	Morocco	Signed	2/21/14	2/20/16
.tg	17-19 February 2016	Togo	Unsigned		
.za	8-10 July 2015	South Africa	Signed	12/9/16	12/17/16
.mg	4-6 May 2015	Madagascar	Signed	3/17/16	3/19/16
.cg	11-13 March 2015	Congo	Unsigned		
.ci	25-27 February 2015	Ivory Coast	Unsigned		
.bw	1-3 December 2014	Botswana	Signed	11/22/15	12/4/15
.cm	17-19 September 2014	Cameroon	Unsigned		
.bf	19-21-May 2014	Burkina Faso	Unsigned		
.zm	28-30 April 2014	Zambia	Signed	10/3/15	10/9/15
.sn	19-21 March 2014	Senegal	Signed	9/1/16	10/1/16
.rw	10-12 March 2014	Rwanda	Unsigned		
.tz	18-20 September 2013	Tanzania	Signed	10/13/12	2/9/13
.ng	26-27 June 2013	Nigeria	Unsigned		
.ke	June 11-13, 2013	Kenya	Signed	2/23/14	3/21/14

DNS ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The realigned ICANN Africa Strategy 2016-2020 identifies capacity building as a key objective (Objective 1 and 3) in strengthening ccTLDs and fostering competition in the African Domain Name industry. This project sought an opportunity to contribute to digital entrepreneurship and innovation in Africa. It introduced pilot DNS business training and incubation sessions targeted at African registries and registrars and young entrepreneurs interested in the domain name space, to raise awareness about business ventures in the DNS sector. The project aims to provide participants with the necessary business skills as well as exposure to the domain name industry players. Since the launch of this project in 2015, twelve countries including Rwanda, Tanzania, Kenya, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Ghana, Senegal, Morocco, Congo Brazzaville and Gabon have received training.

Delivery approaches were as follows:

- Two-day national training sessions in partnership with ccTLD managers and registrars in select countries

- Training sessions were structured as workshops, instructor-led tutorials, or panels with case studies

- Enlisting marketing and business modeling experts, mentors, volunteers from incubators or partner organizations including engagement from contributors at established registries. Tech-hubs were also approached to help resource contributors to aid in trainings, especially on entrepreneurship

- Utilizing the marketing track from the ICANN DNS Entrepreneurship Center in Egypt

- Content included Domain Name business marketing presentations and case studies with the objective of equipping the participating startups with the right ideas to enable them better position and sell their services and eventually grow their businesses

As a consequence, an increasing number of ccTLD registries, especially the countries trained so far, are focusing more on developing inhouse business teams and departments to drive business growth and marketing today. There is a lot more focus in making the registries sustainable businesswise in addition to having sound technical platforms. There is a realization that with a technically capable registry in place, the next component needs to be growing the business. This indeed is quite encouraging and points to the positive impact and success of this project.

According to the Africa Union, 65 percent of Africans are below the age of 35. The World Economic Forum states that the ten youngest populations of the world are all in Africa. This reality makes it imperative that we put youth at the center of our regional engagement agenda, as suggested in the Africa strategy.

Africa is diverse with 54 countries and hundreds of higher education institutions, making effective engagement a challenge. In the past five years, our focus was to work with national and regional educational networks (NRENs) and the Association of African Universities (AAU), bringing together administrators, students, and faculty. In addition, we held workshops and public lectures at various universities, whenever our resources allowed.

YOUTH WORKSHOPS

Two years ago, we piloted a dedicated program of youth workshops (YouthCom), an initiative targeted at introducing young people under 30 to ICANN and the Internet ecosystem. This program complemented our global ICANN NextGen and Fellowship programs. The YouthCom program aims to strengthen these existing programs by creating local youth networks that will benefit from ICANN's leadership through trainings in partnership with local Internet stakeholders such as governments, private sector, and civil society. The first workshop of this series took place in April 2016 in Burkina Faso, followed by two others: Kenya in May 2016 and Benin in December 2016. In 2018, four more workshops will be held, one in each of the following countries: Namibia, Lesotho, Madagascar and Comoros.

Goals

- Strengthening youth skills in the Internet governance sphere, preparing Africa's future leaders for the challenges of the digital world in developing countries

- Developing local partnerships for the implementation of the workshops, ensuring its sustainability, in addition to building local ownership for its extension and perpetuation

- Promoting the networking of young people through trainings, and the use of online lessons developed by the ICANN at ICANN Learn platform

Key Topics Covered

Over the two-day long workshop, various speakers and presenters address a wide range of topics including

- Introduction to Internet governance

- ICANN ecosystem

- History of the Internet

- Domain Name Business (gTLDs, ccTLDs)

- Cybersecurity

- ICANN Learn Platform

Target

Young people under 30 are eligible for the YouthCom program. Young members of associations promoting ICT, academia, and local partners of the program are given priority.

Modalities for implementation

The YouthCom workshops last two days within an ICANN-defined program. ICANN designates trainers and ensures the quality of training. The selection of beneficiaries is done locally with the support of ICANN. Cost sharing between ICANN and local partners covers expenses, with ICANN supporting international trainers where necessary. Each workshop attracts an average of 30-35 participants.

Results

The trainees:

- Continue their education and enhance their skills online through the ICANN Learn platform, particularly through the relevant African mailing lists,

- Contribute to the emergence of digital governance based on best practices and positively impact the national digital ecosystem that supports digital innovation,

- Increase local participation in online debates on the future of the Internet, particularly on issues raised inside ICANN, to have the local Internet community's voices heard.

These efforts have yielded encouraging outcomes. A good number of ICANN alumni are now active in their respective communities. They are working regularly with our team to deliver in-class public lectures, put together workshops and set up inaugural national Internet Governance Forums, contributing to an inclusive dialogue on the Internet issues. In addition, multiple institutions of higher learning and universities have expressed their willingness for structured Memoranda with ICANN to better streamline and institutionalize our partnerships.

Through these developments, it is possible to envision a future in which the youth of Africa can fully participate in the Internet ecosystem. And this progress will only happen if we all work together. It is our sincere hope that alumni of the NextGen, Fellowship programs, and YouthCom will actively seek to localize the multistakeholder Internet dialogue at the national level.

DNS EXCHANGE PROGRAM

The DNS Exchange program is implemented in line with the second objective of the Africa Strategy, which seeks to enhance regional and international cooperation with DNS stakeholders and promote the best practices of DNS Operations.

In March 2013, a Domain Names event was organized in Addis Ababa with the participation of registrars from Africa and other regions. Capacity building for DNS was mentioned as one of the key efforts that can contribute to the development of the regional industry. During ICANN47 in Durban, South Africa, key DNS industry leaders offered to contribute to capacity building in Africa, with the support of African registrars and registries in their premises, to provide training on technical and commercial operations. IP MIRROR, AFILIAS and ATI have significantly contributed to this program.

Through an agreement for cooperation, AFRINIC worked closely with ICANN in the development of the program alongside AFILIAs and IP Mirror, contributing through:

- Travel arrangement for beneficiaries selected by ICANN

- Per diem allowances to the program beneficiaries

- Logistical support for the beneficiaries of the program

In turn, ICANN provided the funds needed for the execution of the program.

Exchange with IP MIRROR in Singapore

Michael Musya (Afriregistrar) and Ajao Oluniyi (Web4Africa) traveled to Singapore from 10 to 23 January 2015 for the program with IP Mirror. The program consisted of:

- Six days (12-15, 18 and 23 January) at IP MIRROR

- One day at SGNIC (16 January)

- Three days (20-22 January) at ICANN's office in Singapore

- Program with AFILIAS CANADA

Exchange with AFILIAS in Canada

Slippy Gregory Mensah from Ghana Dot Com and Wayne Diamond of Diamatrix.co.za participated in a similar internship program with AFILIAS in Canada (Toronto and Otawa) from 7 to 17 December 2015.

At AFILIAS, participants learned about experiences on marketing for registrars as well as promotional programs, point of sale discounts, additional rebates based on volume of sales, renewal rates, customer support, marketing materials, campaigns and promotion support. Other organizations visited included Tucows, Ryerson University and CIRA.

The interns of the program highlighted the importance of the following, in their feedback:

- Well trained staff for registrars

- Identification of a unique service by the registrar for branding

- Registrars to have ISO certification

- Expansion of the reseller base

- Participation in industry events

- Full system automation

Additionally, the interns recommended that the program lasts a week instead of two weeks for time efficiency purposes.

Intra exchange with ATI Tunisia

An Intra-African ccTLD exchange program took place from 6 to 12 February 2016 in Tunis, Tunisia. The event was hosted by ATI, the .TN ccTLD Registry and an ICANN-accredited registrar. The participants of this program came from French Speaking countries ccTLDs. In attendance were:

- Burkina Faso: M. Aristide ZOUNGRANA from ARCEP (Autorité de Régulation des Communications Electronique des Postes

- Cameroon: M. Steve TAMO from ANTIC (Agence Nationale des Technologie de l'Information et de l'Communication)

- Côte d'ivoire: Mme Nicole KADJO from ARTCI (Autorité de régulation des télécommunications/Tic de Côte d'Ivoire)

- Gabon: M. Landry Mexent NDOUMBOU LINGOMBE from ANINF (Agence Nationale des Infrastructures Numériques et des Fréquences)

- Madagascar: M. Haja RAMBOASALAMA from .mg registry

Participants learned about topics such as ccTLD management, domain name business marketing, domain name dispute resolution. They also discussed relations between the ccTLD and its accredited registrars. The program was also an opportunity for the participants to share their activities in their respective registries.

Mr. Jawhar El FERJAOUI, the CEO of ATI and his staff did their best to build an enriching program for the participants.

In summary, four ICANN-accredited registrars from Africa and five ccTLD registries took part in this program between 2013 and 2017.

Moving forward, there is a plan to have ccTLDs from English speaking countries undergo the same program upon the request of an Africa based registry.

GOVERNMENT ENGAGEMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING IN AFRICA

Governments provide input and engage with ICANN through the Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC), created under the ICANN Bylaws. The GAC provides public policy advice on ICANN's responsibilities with regard to the Internet's Domain Name System (DNS).

GAC membership consists of national governments and distinct economies recognized in international fora. Multinational governmental and treaty organizations e. g. some African Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and public authorities (including all the UN agencies with a direct interest in global Internet governance such as the ITU, AU, UNESCO and WIPO) are involved mostly in an observer capacity. There are currently 174 GAC members and 35 observers out of which 44 are from Africa.

Over the past five years, the Africa team has been consistent in supporting our programs that target government and governmental entities, both regionally and nationally, with an objective to create and maintain their awareness of ICANN and the overall IG ecosystem. This has been achieved through:

- Direct country to country outreach missions across Africa

- Participation in Governmental Meetings including through ITU and ATU

- Direct engagement with various RECs across Africa

CAPACITY BUILDING FOR GAC MEMBERS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS IN AFRICA

ICANN held the first capacity building workshop for the Africa Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) members on 23-24 January 2017 in Nairobi, Kenya in cooperation with GAC Under-served Regions working group (USRWG). The workshop, themed "Harnessing the Potential of the Africa GAC Members for better Participation in ICANN" was held with the support of the Communication Authority and the Government of Kenya.

This workshop was the first of its kind across the globe, and the first regional workshop organized by Nairobi Engagement Office. Göran Marby, ICANN President and CEO led the ICANN org team including Government Engagement (GE), GSE, Communications as well as the Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO). Thomas Schneider, ICANN GAC Chair at the time, Alice Munyua, Chair of USRWG, and Manal Ismail, present GAC Chair were present.

20 African governments were represented in this meeting along with representatives from various ICANN constituencies including AFRALO, AF* organizations (AFRINIC, AfTLD) as well as local participants from diverse backgrounds led by KENIC (.KE), civil society, academia and technical community. Around 100 participants joined the meeting.

A second similar workshop was held alongside ICANN59 in Johannesburg, South Africa, in June 2017. The workshop was organized by ICANN and the Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) Public Safety Working Group (PSWG), Under-Served Regions Working Group (USRWG), ZA Domain Name Authority (ZADNA), and South African Police (SAP). 50 new delegates, comprising 20 from South Africa, ten from RECs or Southern Africa and the rest from SSAC, RIRs, GAC and the community, participated in the workshop.

MOTIVATION FOR THE GAC CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOPS IN AFRICA

Since the implementation of the Africa Strategy, many African governments have joined the GAC through our engagement efforts. Today more than 35 governments, the African Union as well as the African Telecommunications Union are represented at the GAC.

While this is a positive development, the challenge remains in ensuring that the remaining countries not currently represented are convinced of the need to join their peers at the global policy making table at ICANN. More importantly, we need to ensure that the current African GAC members contribute effectively and meaningfully to policy making at ICANN. The following was pointed out during the GAC workshop:

"Over the years, meaningful and effective participation in GAC policy making processes as well as contributions in working groups by Africa GAC members remains low. This workshop would go a long way in seeking and addressing some of the root causes of this poor participation".

The workshop focuses on raising awareness and building capacity to help in effective participation and contribution to policy making at ICANN. It also introduces critical relevant policy topics to working groups, including relevant cross-community working-groups. These topics require the immediate attention of GAC members along with feedback from the African GAC representatives on how to better collaborate, not only with the ICANN African staff and community, but other relevant institutions as well to build a stronger domain name industry in Africa. Key topics covered in the GAC Workshops were:

- Understanding ICANN and ICANN's Africa Strategy

- Understanding the role of the GAC within ICANN

- GAC Engagement with other AC / SOs within ICANN

- Understanding ccTLD delegation process and requirements

- New gTLDs

- Empowered Community

The revised ICANN Africa Strategy 2016 – 2020 adopted at ICANN52, after its presentation to the community, identified several projects and strategic objectives.

One of the strategic projects (No.15 & 16) identified in the revised strategic plan states:

- Commit and conduct a study on business feasibility of growing DNS industry in Africa,

- Commission an observatory to develop new indices for DNS industry growth in Africa.

The study was the first of its kind in Africa. It sought to implement these key recommendations and projects in the Africa Strategic plan as identified and approved by the ASWG and the Africa community.

ICANN formally tendered the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the study in December 2015. The goal was to identify and define the strengths and weaknesses in the DNS industry ecosystem in Africa, and develop recommendations on how to advance the industry by realizing potential areas of development. In addition, to providing analytical findings to help ICANN and players in Africa DNS Industry develop a roadmap on the scope of needs and priorities for the development and growth of both "ccTLDs and gTLDs" in Africa. The outcomes of the study would feed into setting up an observatory that will continuously monitor the growth, development and emerging needs of DNS market in Africa.

The final report was released on 24 June 2016 in the sidelines of ICANN59 in South Africa.

The findings of the report, which are also guiding our next steps for capacity-building in Africa, are highlighted below:

- As of May 2017, there are some 5.1 million domain names associated with Africa. The total annual value of the African Domain Name market is some $52 million.

- Many countries could usefully remove or reduce barriers to growth of the Internet industry generally and the Domain Name market in particular.

- There is considerable potential of growth in the Domain Name market in Africa for the foreseeable future. Low cost recovery (but not zero) fees for registering a domain.

- Encourage rules and policies which do not require domain registrants to have a legal presence in the country and domain names to match the business or personal names.

- Ensure functioning and easy-to-use registry landing pages including automatic procedures for registration fulfillment and payment, usually using EPP and an online payment gateway amongst other recommendations.

The full report can be accessed here.

WORKSHOPS ON DOMAIN NAMES, TRADEMARKS AND USER RIGHTS PROTECTION IN AFRICA

In the past three years, ICANN has organized two topical workshops on Trademarks and Intellectual Property. The first workshop was held in Cotonou, Benin with over 70 participants from 25 countries. The second was held in Harare, Zimbabwe, hosted by the regulator PORTZA.

Participants included government representatives, ccTLD managers, African registrars, African I* such as AFRINIC, AfTLD, AFRALO, African ICT businesses, Intellectual Property and Trademark experts from Africa and beyond.

These topical workshops were organized within a framework of eight thematic areas, developed within five panels:

1. Strategies for protecting trademarks and domain names

2. Update on the New gTLD Program, trade TMCH, domain name dispute resolution: a user's view

3. Intellectual property rights, global environment, African environment, country case studies

4. Country Dispute Resolution mechanisms

5. Dispute Resolution best practices

The second workshop in Harare saw the scope expanded to include other emerging topics of interest impacting the DNS business in Africa:

- DNSSEC Adoption in Africa, the case for DNSSEC

- ICANN Accreditation, why and how?

- Domain Name Marketing Approaches & Business Models

Key Recommendations from both workshops include:

1. Deepening engagement with trademark and Intellectual Property practitioners in the African continent

2. Training on dispute resolution mechanisms across the African continent

3. Greater collaboration between registries and registrars as well as trademark and Intellectual property rights in tackling domain name related disputes

4. Deeper understanding of Intellectual property rights and trademark laws among the judges in the African continent

5. Need for sufficient trademark and Intellectual Property capacity to be built in Africa and this will take collaboration

Despite the success and clear need for such workshops in Africa, we have not been able to organize a similar event every fiscal year due to financial constraints.

The Africa Domain Name System (AFDNS) Forum, one of the flagship initiatives pioneered by Africa through the Africa strategy, turned five in 2017. For the edition held on 26-28 July 2017 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and hosted by TzNIC, we chose a theme that captured the significance of this five year long journey: "Taking Stock of the Africa DNS Industry and Planning Ahead".

The first ever edition of AFDNS took place on 12-13 July 2013 in Durban, South Africa. The forum was co-organized by ICANN, the Internet Society (ISOC), and Africa Top-level domains (AfTLD) as a pre-workshop to ICANN47, which was also being held at the ICC from 14-18 July 2013.

After Durban, ICANN org, the ICANN community, and our global partners kept the momentum going by making the DNS Forum an annual event with subsequent ones taking place in 2014 (Nigeria, hosted by NIRA), 2015 (Kenya, hosted by KENIC), and 2016 (Morocco, hosted by NTRA).

Over the years, the Forum has lived up to the expectations, identifying key national and cross-border issues that continue to challenge the growth of the industry, such as:

- Registry and registrar strategies (domain name growth, competitive environment)

- Legal issues (dispute resolutions, cross-border domain registrations)

- Registrar accreditation (ICANN accreditation and ccTLD accreditation in a borderless environment)

- Automation (technical capacity and the resiliency of registries, payment gateways, etc.).

- Governments supporting the growth of ccTLDs

The 2017 Forum participants were noticeably more informed and prepared. The deliberations on the issues mentioned above were informed and practical. Delegates

understood the need to bring in more stakeholders, and engage with new audiences that have traditionally been ignored but still impact businesses, either directly or indirectly. We also had a total of 150 diverse local and international delegates while our livestream channel attracted 2160 unique visitors with 392 joining via the Facebook feed. The meeting lasted for two and a half days, involving plenary panels as well as breakout sessions.

Having reached such an important milestone, the Forum continues to provide a rich and effective platform for the exchange of ideas, aimed at supporting the growth of both the DNS and Internet industry in Africa.

The Forum now has a dedicated website at dnsforum.africa.
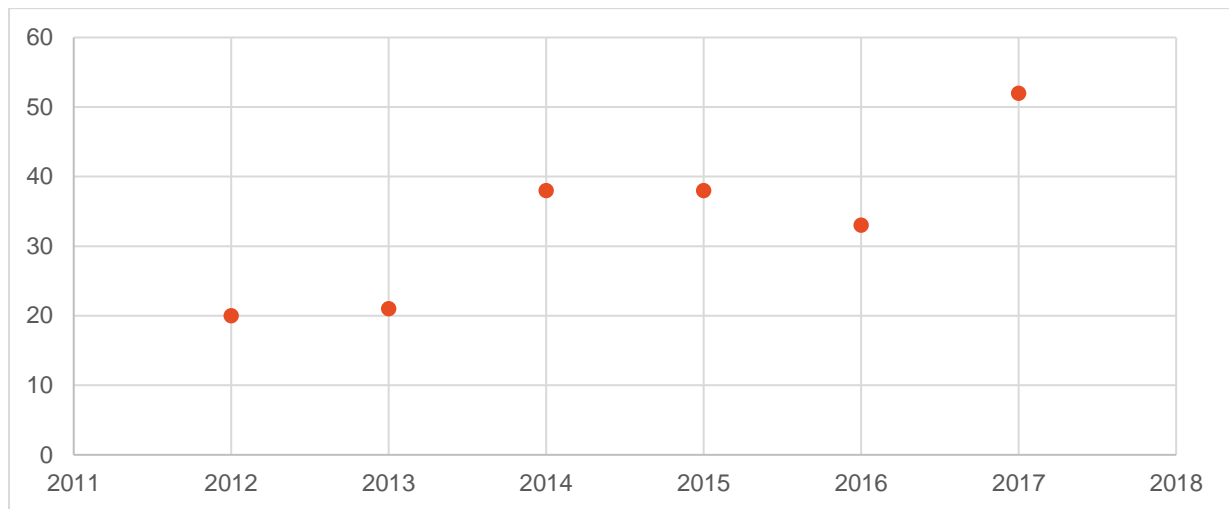
TRENDS IN COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Since 2013, there has been a growing interest of the African community in ICANN Public Meetings. The outreach initiative has significantly contributed to this trend.

ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN ICANN MEETINGS

Meeting	Total Participants	Total Newcomers	Africa-Participants	Africa-Newcomers
ICANN45	Toronto	1778	573	109	23
ICANN46	Beijing	2502	1185	143	46
ICANN47	Durban	1465	428	415	274
ICANN48	Singapore	1967	555	67	19
ICANN49	Durban	1940	531	82	32
ICANN50	London	3114	1159	195	82
ICANN51	Los Angeles	2282	693	45	18
ICANN52	Singapore	1794	416	65	18
ICANN53	Buenos Aires	1736	412	62	10
ICANN54	Dublin	2395	622	98	12
ICANN55	Marrakech	2273	1007	956	754
ICANN56	Helsinki	1436	344	95	13
ICANN57	Hyderabad	3182	2180	94	19
ICANN58	Copenhagen	2089	640	117	24
ICANN59	Johannesburg	1353	448	498	328
ICANN60	Abu Dhabi	1929	659	160	40

*African participation estimated based on participant's self-selected country - does not include those that selected multiple countries.

PARTICIPATING IN SOS/ACS

Africa representation in ICANN Advisory Committees (AC) and Supporting Organizations (SOs) is as follows:

ALAC	GAC	ccNSO Council	GNSO Council	ASO Council
3	44	3	2	3

The GAC is currently chaired by Manal Ismail, a community member from Africa. Others have also occupied leadership positions in the GAC, ALAC and the Board.

CONTRIBUTION TO INTERNATIONALIZED DOMAIN NAMES (IDNS)

With the support of ICANN, the African community has been contributing to a number of panels, particularly the Ethiopic Script Label Generation Rules panel. An initiative from the Ethiopian community members, it is a special contribution to IDNs.

There are also African community members involved in the Arabic IDN Task force and the Latin script Label Generation Rules panel.

CONTRIBUTION TO SPECIAL WORKING GROUPS OR AD-HOC GROUPS

The African community was active during the IANA stewardship transition process, with several members taking leadership positions in working groups. We also have members of the community working actively in the Cross-Community Working Group Work Stream 2.

TRENDS IN DNS BUSINESS (ccTLDs AND gTLDs IN AFRICA)

According to the [Africa DNS Market Report 2016](), the overall use of domain names in Africa is relatively small compared to the rest of the world. Personal domain name registration in Africa is relatively insignificant due to the low Internet uptake and income levels relative to the cost of overseas hosting, which must often be paid for in foreign currency, not readily available for local citizens. Even in countries with a more vibrant local hosting industry, the number of personal domain names is relatively low.

The local business market and consequent demand for DNS registrations is constrained by a wide range of factors ranging from the high cost of setting up a business, to the lack of local hosting infrastructure. These and many other factors can be seen as part of an 'ecosystem' in which each component of the value chain needs to be in place for the market to function efficiently, which in turn creates demand for local domains. In general, it can be observed that there are two different markets for Africa's domain names, each with their own characteristics:

a. Local/African entities

b. Offshore (out of continent) entities

LOCAL ENTITIES

Domain name registration by African entities mainly takes place in countries where the local hosting industry and web development sector have developed sufficiently to create demand for local domains. These are concentrated in a few countries where many competing networks have access to cost effective international and national backbones. This primarily comprises South Africa, Egypt, Mauritius, Nigeria, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Tunisia and Morocco.

In addition, the presence of one or more IXPs in the country makes local hosting more viable, which in turn drives up the demand for domain names. Local domain name business also consists of the relatively high number of registrations by African entities of domains under the legacy gTLDs due to their 'intrinsic default' attraction, as well as effective marketing and cost-effective service provision, and lack of reliable (perceived or real) and affordable local domain registration and hosting options within Africa.

OFFSHORE ENTITIES

Many African ccTLD subdomains are registered by entities located outside of Africa. This happens mostly due to the special characteristics of the domain results in demand from special interest groups, which may be present in other parts of the world. It can also stem from the need for multi-national businesses to register domains under the ccTLDs as a strategy for securing their Intellectual Property interests. In a small number of cases, domains have been registered by the Africans in diaspora. However, the vast majority of off-shore registrations are concentrated in countries with ccTLDs that are amenable to 'domain hacks', often using a ccTLD as part of a word.

Further, Section 1.3 of the report notes that, the African continent top-level DNS address space consists of 54 top-level country code ccTLDs, (of which one is Southern Sudan (SS), yet to be delegated) plus five Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs): Egypt (مصر†), Algeria

(الجزائر†), Tunisia (تونس†), Sudan (سودان†) and Morocco (المغرب†) as well as three city codes (.CAPETOWN, .DURBAN and .JOBURG). ICANN recently delegated the. AFRICA, to ZA Central Registry (ZACR). According to the survey responses in the report, the use of IDNs is reasonably widespread. Analysis of the responses shows that at least 46% of registries and more than a third of registrars (34%) offer non-Latin scripts.

Data from May 2017 indicates that a total of just over 3.5 million domains are active under the African ccTLDs. There are about 1.4 million registrations in the gTLDs by African entities. A look at overall statistics from the study indicate the following information:

- ■ Registries
  - ☐ 51 functioning ccTLDs
- ■ Registrar Market
  - ☐ 26 countries have only one registrar: usually the registry
  - ☐ 13 countries have a fully competitive registrar market
- ■ Registrant Market
  - ☐ Over 5 million African domains (ccTLD & gTLD)
  - ☐ 4.4 domains / 1000 population
  - ☐ Value of $52 million p.a.

KEY FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- Approximately 1% of gTLD domains are registered by Africans.

- For the Registrant Market, this market review identified over 5 million African ccTLD and gTLD domains.

- Registrations by Africans of gTLD domains total approximately 1.4 million, the bulk of which is ~1.2 million .COM domains.

- The research indicates that high access costs, lack of infrastructure, and the fact that African Internet access is primarily via mobile devices results in a lower demand for domain names than elsewhere.

- Other broader issues identified as high barriers by respondents include:
  - ☐ Poor dependability of Internet connections
  - ☐ Unclear or restrictive policy and regulatory environments

- Domain name registration by African entities takes place mainly in countries where the local hosting industry and web development sector has developed sufficiently.

- Domain name registration by African entities takes place mainly in countries where the local hosting industry and web development sector has developed sufficiently.

- Compared to other regions, Africa has a very small number of ICANN-accredited registrars. In total, there are only 12 ICANN-accredited registrars in the region.

Africa is quite diverse and unique in many ways compared to the rest of the world. Its 54 states boast a rich diversity of ethnicities, cultures and languages across a vast geography. With three ICANN staff members in the region, effective engagement equally comes with its share of challenges:

☐ Limited financial resources from ICANN org to cover all the current and proposed projects as per our strategic plan

☐ Low participation from the community in global Internet-related discussions

☐ Language barriers for some community members as ICANN publishes content only in the 7-UN languages

☐ Slow responses from requestors in communication with PTI for ccTLD re-delegation request from some countries

☐ Lack of awareness in the local communities at the national level. This is compounded by the fact that some of the ICANN-knowledgeable community members do not share this information accordingly at the local level

☐ As an underserved region, many African countries suffer from lack of broadband connectivity to enable increased Internet services especially domain names environment. This in turn is characterized by high cost of connectivity compared to other regions, lower literacy level as well as inadequate local content. All this compounds to better awareness and effective participation by Africa not only within ICANN but also the wider IG ecosystem

Despite of the goodwill and commitment of ICANN org and the African community in the implementation of the Africa Strategy, many projects have been slow to turn around and some still remain in formative stages. This is partly due to limited financial resources, reducing our capacity to fully implement some critical projects coupled with long logistical and operational processes within and outside ICANN org.

The Africa Strategy implementation requires substantial capital investment and this can only be achieved through collaboration with our community. ICANN does not have sufficient resources to realize these goals alone, hence there is an urgent need for the African community to get involved. We have an ICANN strategy for Africa and we are motivated to move forward, but Africa needs a strategy for ICANN as well.

- Challenges and accomplishments of the past five years are the driving factors behind our futures plans and actions.

- ccTLD issues have been discussed with stakeholders on a case by case basis and there is better understanding of country codes Top-level domain management in Africa. We will continue our support for the DNSSEC implementation.

- The existence of an engagement center in Africa and the availability of the DNS market study are foundations for better development of ICANN's activities and the development of the DNS market in Africa.

- Capacity building will be considered as a key component of the ICANN engagement in Africa. This will be designed towards all stakeholders, specifically those from governments, academia, private sector, civil society and youth communities.

- While paying attention to specific country requests, attention will be focused on regional initiatives in order to maximize the use of resources available for engagement.

- We will continue working on our key flagship programs such as the DNS Entrepreneurship, the DNSSEC Roadshows.

- We will also strive to leverage and partner more on existing regional and sub-regional events and platforms like the Africa Internet Summit and Africa DNS Forum series to further advance our engagement with the community. We will build on our efforts to reach out to new audiences, including the youth and academia. It is also our hope that our existing online platforms like ICANN Learn as well as topical webinars will deepen our reach to the community and enhance our capacity building initiatives.

- In closing, we want to call for greater participation from Africa's technical community in ICANN moving forward. We would also challenge Africa to keep alive the emerging issues such as GDPR, DNS abuse and law enforcement that could have an impact on delivery of Internet in Africa. Lastly, we call upon Africa's deeper reflection on her contribution in the new, post IANA stewardship transition ICANN.

FEEDBACK FROM AFRICAN MEMBERS OF ICANN COMMUNITY

JUDITH TFEZEU

OAPI (AFRICAN UNION) INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ATTORNEY

" Very involved in Internet domain, its pushes me to attend to many seminars and conferences, in most these events concerning Internet and Domains Names in Africa ICANN is involved, therefore in these ceremonies ICANN has systematically a representative who makes a presentation about the company and its activities. Thanks to that, many people learn more about them and find interest as well.

So, thanks to the ICANN fellowship program, I have attended the policy forum in Johannesburg, South Africa, in June 2017. With the knowledge I had gathered before in Internet and domain names, attend to this policy forum was a great opportunity to get the actuals Internet issues around the world, policy developments and challenges (cyber security and attacks).

It was an opportunity to know the level of the use of Internet as well as the domains names in Africa; to get statistics of the impact of Internet and domain names in the process of economy grow in Africa, and also to know how the successful countries could share their experiences with the others so that they put them in practice in different domains (education, health, economic, etc.).

Meetings with the ICANN staff is the great occasions to get the answers of the efforts which are done, so that the users continue to trust in Internet, as well as to know the latest innovation in Internet domain; to update our knowledge and obviously this has an impact in our daily life and activities whatever our job is, moreover because all this is done in a convivial atmosphere and a sharing spirit colored with lot of humility.

Attending these activities is a great experience, not only to acquire and improve knowledge but also to fulfill human goals. "

CHENAI CHAIR

RESEARCHER, RESEARCH ICT AFRICA (RIA)

" Participation within ICANN usually stems from learning about ICANN through other IG initiatives or engaging the GSE team. This definitely increases the numbers of participants from the African community. The point of focus should be of sustaining participation of individuals and ensuring African participation in different ICANN communities. As African participants are mainly through the general fellowship and NextGen programs, it would be beneficial for the ICANN GSE team to create or foster an Africa community of participants who have previously gone through these programs to buddy up or mentor new participants. As a former fellow and NextGen participant, it was beneficial to connect with the network of African fellows I had previously known to help with my participation in ICANN. The system would also ensure sustained participation and engagement with ICANN by African fellows or NextGen participants and encourage new and sustained participation of African women within ICANN. It also would be beneficial to map the stakeholder groups which participants come from and which they join to see the gaps of Africa's participation in ICANN. The Africa community already in ICANN can definitely be leveraged further to promote awareness and meaningful participation in ICANN. "

MICHEL TCHONANG
COORDINATOR GENERAL AT CAAPDA

" African countries and experts should seek a total integration of the continent to Internet governance and this fact has guided development of the ICANN Africa strategy which is based on capacity building and growth of activities surrounding the DNS.

Thanks to the Africa strategy, African countries have realized the existence of structures such as ICANN which do not need governments' control for effectively achieve their goals, and this has motivated us to seek how equitable procedures, including inclusion, equity, collaboration and transparence could lead to better results which include users in the development of policies that has an impact on them. After many years of intensive efforts, one could now note that African users today account for 6% of global Internet users, which is a sharp increase compared to the numbers in 2012 when the Africa strategy was conceived.

We have noted a few shortage in the implementation of the strategy: the procedures do not facilitate issues comprehension and consensus building among stakeholders.

Our strategy has not succeeded in organizing a great African fora on Internet and also the digital divide and unequal access to services. The following suggestions should help solve the issues raised:

1. Develop a lobbying for multilingualism

2. Design a profile of African initiative on the information highways

3. Promote the set-up of networks of actors.

4. Install proximity strategy within countries

5. Make practices and values visible. *"*

MAMADOU LO
HEAD OF COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION DEPARTMENT OF CREDIT AGRICOLE BANK

" In my humble opinion, many achievements have happened in the last five years and I could cite : the launch of an Africa engagement office, the Fellowship Program and increase of opportunities, and the workshops on the DNS industry in a few countries. However, we believe the weakest points of ICANN in Africa are local communications and integration of the Africa private sector into the DNS industry. These are the challenges of today. If we, as communication specialists could better communicate on the DNS industry, the private sector will follow suite and make sure we increase the number of registrars and registries in Africa. Language is also another factor to consider since almost 50% of African population is Francophone. In order to attract Francophone business sector in this area, we need to communicate better with them and in their language. I also think we should increase headcounts at the Engagement Office in Nairobi if we want to effectively solve the continent's problems with regards participation in ICANN and promotion of the DNS economy.

Good luck! *"*

ALAN BARRETT

CEO OF AFRNIC

" Some of the things that I remember are:

ICANN and AFRALO have participated at all Africa Internet Summit events since their inception in 2013, sometimes organizing an "ICANN day".

AFRINIC and AFRALO signed a MoU in 2013, and renewed it in June 2017.

The GAC Under-Served Regions working group organized a capacity building workshop in Nairobi, Kenya in January 2017, and AFRINIC participated there.*"*

EMMANUEL ADJOVI

PROGRAM SPECIALIST AT THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF THE FRANCOPHONIE (OIF)

" I went through the Africa strategy plan and found it too ambitious; it covers too many varied areas of Internet governance and development of the DNS business and industry in Africa. I believe you will never have enough resources to implement that strategy plan. May I thus suggest that you stop with your options of rolling out the program in the 54 African countries and concentrate efforts on a group of four or five countries which then serve as models. To avoid criticism, you may select one country per each African region, or go through a call for proposals. Secondly, the plan aims at developing ICANN's business in Africa, and you propose innovative partnerships with other players without a clear indication on what these partners gain in the deal. Finally, you have to find a way of creating opportunities for Africa to benefit from ICANN's business. I know there are limitations as to what the Africa Union commission and other regional economic organization could achieve in this area. But you could target individual countries or group of countries.*"*