

ccNSO priorities – What the ccNSO is expected to deliver during FY26 - FY27

Adopted by ccNSO Council: July 2025

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0. Executive Summary

The ccNSO believes that its activities need to add value to ccTLDs in at least one of the following areas:

- Policy development
- Sharing of Information and practices
- ICANN related work
- ccNSO Foundational work

In the FY26-27 workplan the work items with a minimum duration of two months and that are already underway or known to be pending have been identified. Most work items are related to sharing information and practices on specific themes (such as Internet Governance, DNS Abuse, Universal Acceptance, Tech Day). Within these themes, a topical approach by the committee or working groups drives the (work) agenda and activities of these groups which are mostly geared around and towards sessions at ICANN meetings. Activities to deliver on these work items or topics are handled at committee level, including their prioritization.

The number of current work items under the ccNSO policy related work is limited. Two ongoing work items have been identified: Advise and monitoring of the Review mechanism policy, and similarly work in near future with respect to ccPDP4. In addition 6 Study Groups have been listed of which 2 need to be launched in the near future and 4 have to be chartered.

The ccNSO also involves itself in activities which are directly or indirectly ICANN bylaw mandated. They will be undertaken, with or without participation of the ccNSO. Deferring or non-participation will result in limited or no influence in the (outcome) of these efforts. This includes amongst others, the “review of reviews”.

Foundational work of the ccNSO is primarily related to the governance, management and administration of the ccNSO.

Due to resourcing constraints, the ccNSO is not able to take on all of (pending) work items and deliver on them. Some pending items will need to be deferred or delivery on current items will need to be postponed and/or will be delayed by the groups themselves.

Considering the limited availability of volunteers and staff, the Council is recommended to launch the disaster recovery Study group first, after the bulk of the work of the ccPAIG review mechanism is concluded. The council is advised to start this group after ICANN84, preferably early January 2026. Disaster recovery has overlap and hence is of interest to people involved in the Operational Stability and Security theme and will most likely attract people who are not

engaged in policy work nor in “review of reviews”. After gaining experience with that Study group, then the IANA data accuracy Study Group could be launched around ICANN85.

1. Purpose and Goals of the ccNSO

The ccNSO believes that its activities need to add value to ccTLDs in at least one of the following areas:

1. **Policy development and policy related work** – Policy development and related work, clarification and exploration of policies and policy related themes. Work items are mostly organized as individual projects and hence on a working group by working group basis.
2. **Information & practices sharing** – The ccNSO as platform to share information and practices among the ccTLD and broader community on specific themes. The activities of the ccNSO in this area are organized thematically (such as Internet Governance, DNS Abuse, Universal Acceptance, Tech Day). Within each of these themes a topical approach drives the (work) agenda of a working group or committee, mostly geared around and towards sessions at ICANN meetings.
3. **ICANN related activities** - Interact and represent where the ccNSO is mandated to do so, with ICANN and other entities in ICANN ecosystem (SO’s, AC’s other SG etc.). Activities in this area are: review and commenting on ICANN’s planning (SOPC), Reviews (IFR, CSC Effectiveness, Specific Reviews), CSC.
4. **Foundational Activities** - work that needs to be done to maintain the ccNSO and its activities (Governance, Continuous Improvement, Elections & Appointments, ccNSO workplan, Onboarding and Mentoring)

2. Projects and themes FY26-27

At the start of the planning cycle FY26-FY27, the list of **current** individual projects and topics is extensive (see work plan overview Annex A to this document. Note that only items are included that are expected to take more than two (2) months. Initiatives with a shorter duration will in general not be recorded in the workplan. An example is the former ad-hoc policy gap analysis Council group that was not chartered and established to explore how to best handle work.

When the anticipated ccNSO FY26-27 activities are grouped along the lines of the ccNSO purpose and goals they can be summarized as follows:

Policy related work

- ccPDP3 RM (ccPAIG RM) Study Groups, initially data accuracy and compliance and IANA’s role re disaster recovery (Study groups to be established)

Information & practices sharing

- Internet Governance (IGLC)
- DNS Abuse (DASC)
- Universal Acceptance (UAC)
- TLD Operational stability and security (TLD-Ops)
- Tech Day (Tech WG)
- Planning of ccNSO meetings @ ICANN (MPC)

ICANN related

- Strategic and operational Planning review (SOPC)
- IANA Function Review
- Root server related work
- ccTLD contribution to ICANN (2nd Finance WG)
- Customer Standing Committee (CSC)

Foundational

- ccNSO Governance & continuous Improvement (GRC)
- Administration of the ccNSO (ccNSO Council)
 - o Maintenance of Work plan (Triage Committee)
 - o Travel funding (Travel Fund committee)
- Onboarding and mentoring (OMC)

3. Pending work items

In addition to the current work items, the following (main items) have been identified that have been included, but starting date is pending.

Policy related work

- Implementation assistance IDNccPDP (ccPAIG4)
- Study Groups: initially IANA Data Accuracy and Disaster Recovery

Information & practices sharing

To date no new themes have been identified. That said, each committee explores topics and how they need to be addressed at committee level. This way or working results in an ongoing effort in the area of the theme for as long as the ccNSO considers the theme of relevance.

ICANN related activities

- “Review of reviews”. The work under that is being designed to review purpose, need, and methods of specific and other reviews.
- 3rd CSC Effectiveness Review (deferred by ccNSO and GNSO until August 2025)

Foundational work

Various ccNSO Governance related work items, to be addressed at GRC level.

Due to resourcing constraints the ccNSO is not in a position to take on all of these pending work items and deliver on them and/or current items would need to be postponed and/or will be delayed.

3. Capacity constraints

The capacity of the ccNSO is a function of its resourcing and working methods. With respect to resourcing, there are two major categories of people doing the work:

1. Staff
2. Volunteers

Although the ccNSO working methods are important to manage and deliver work in a timely way, and may help improve effectively and efficiently of the ccNSO, they do not address the major imbalance between work and resourcing.

Staff

Currently the ccNSO secretariat comprises 3 members of staff, at times assisted by other policy support (supporting specific groups or at ICANN meetings). The secretariat supports currently:

- The ccNSO Council and 2 Council committees
- 10 ccNSO Working groups / Committees, with varying support needs
- ICANN staff work on ccPDPs (ccPDP4 and ccPDP3 RM)
- ICANN internal work
- Reporting, Newsletters, webinars etc.

Part of the work around Council and working groups is organizing, and managing the processes related to ICANN meetings.

Currently staff is at capacity. This implies that no new major projects or themes can be supported, until work on ccPDP3 RM is completed. Although an incremental increase in staff capacity can be made through changes in working methods, such an increase will not allow full support of additional themes or major projects.

Volunteers

In preparation of the discussion on the value of the ccNSO for ccTLDs, the 2nd Finance WG looked at current level and distribution of participation:

Note that highest level of participation is in ongoing activities that matter to ccTLDs and is of interest to individuals participating: Internet Governance, DNS Abuse, ICANN's Strategic and Operational Planning. Although closed before this overview was produced, a policy related working group like the PGA, would not be in the top 3 of number of participants.

The 2nd Finance WG also looked at the level of active participation of employees of ccTLDs in ccNSO and ICANN related matters:

In addition, the working group looked at the average time ccTLD staff spend on ICANN and ccNSO related matters:

The Fin2 WG noted that responses to their survey were biased towards ccTLDs who are already involved in ICANN and the ccNSO, pay a financial voluntary contribution, and are aware of the financial contribution and other discussions.

Although the ccNSO is working to increase the number of participants (through on-boarding, mentoring and outreach to lower the threshold to participate), the expectation is that at best the number of participants and level of participation will only slightly increase. Based on the responses to the Finance WG survey and reviewing the new appointments to the WG and Committees, the increases in participation in the work of the ccNSO are most likely to occur in the themed activities (Internet Governance, DNS Abuse, Universal Acceptance and ICANN planning).

4. Priority and resourcing of pending activities

To maintain levels of participation and hence the relevancy of the ccNSO for the ccTLD community, working on the themed activities mentioned is paramount. If a choice has to be made between deferring platform themed activities in favor of non-urgent, but important policy (related) work, the priority should be with the themes. The relevancy of the ccNSO for ccTLDs and their involvement in the ccNSO is maintained through information and practices sharing. Additional volunteers to do (intense) policy work will only be found if people and hence ccTLDs remain interested in the ccNSO.

Further, the ICANN related work although important is mostly ICANN Bylaw driven, implying that it will continue whether or not the ccNSO participates in the effort..

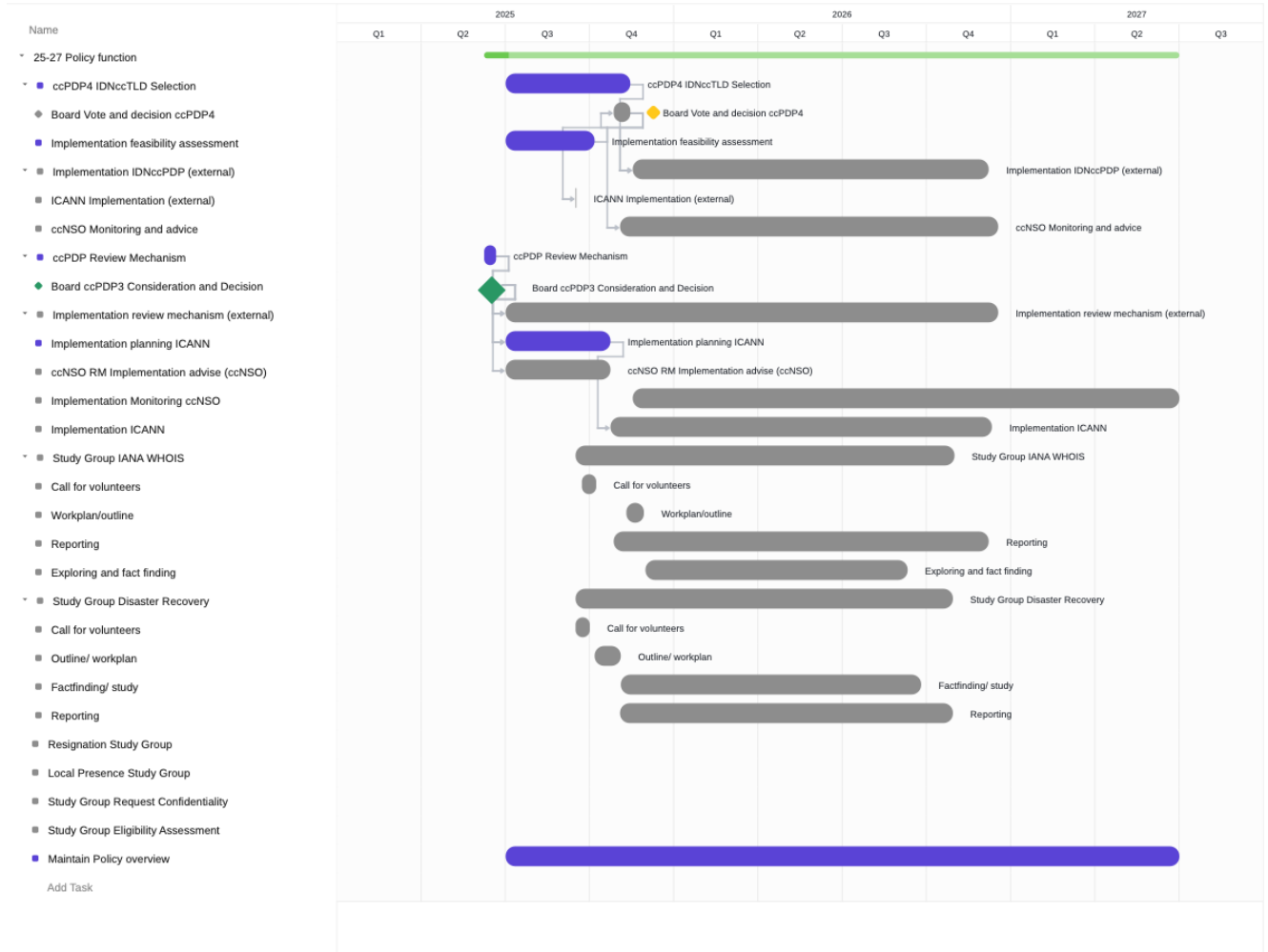
The “review of review” is expected to start its work by the end-of July / early August. Although initially it will only directly involve a limited number of volunteers, it will be intense for them, and potentially for a group of people acting as a sounding board. The ccNSO leadership is deeply invested to make this “review” work. This may have an impact on availability of ccNSO volunteers (comparable with the “How we meet” work arrangement) and hence on leadership.

All of the above lead to the recommendation that the Council:

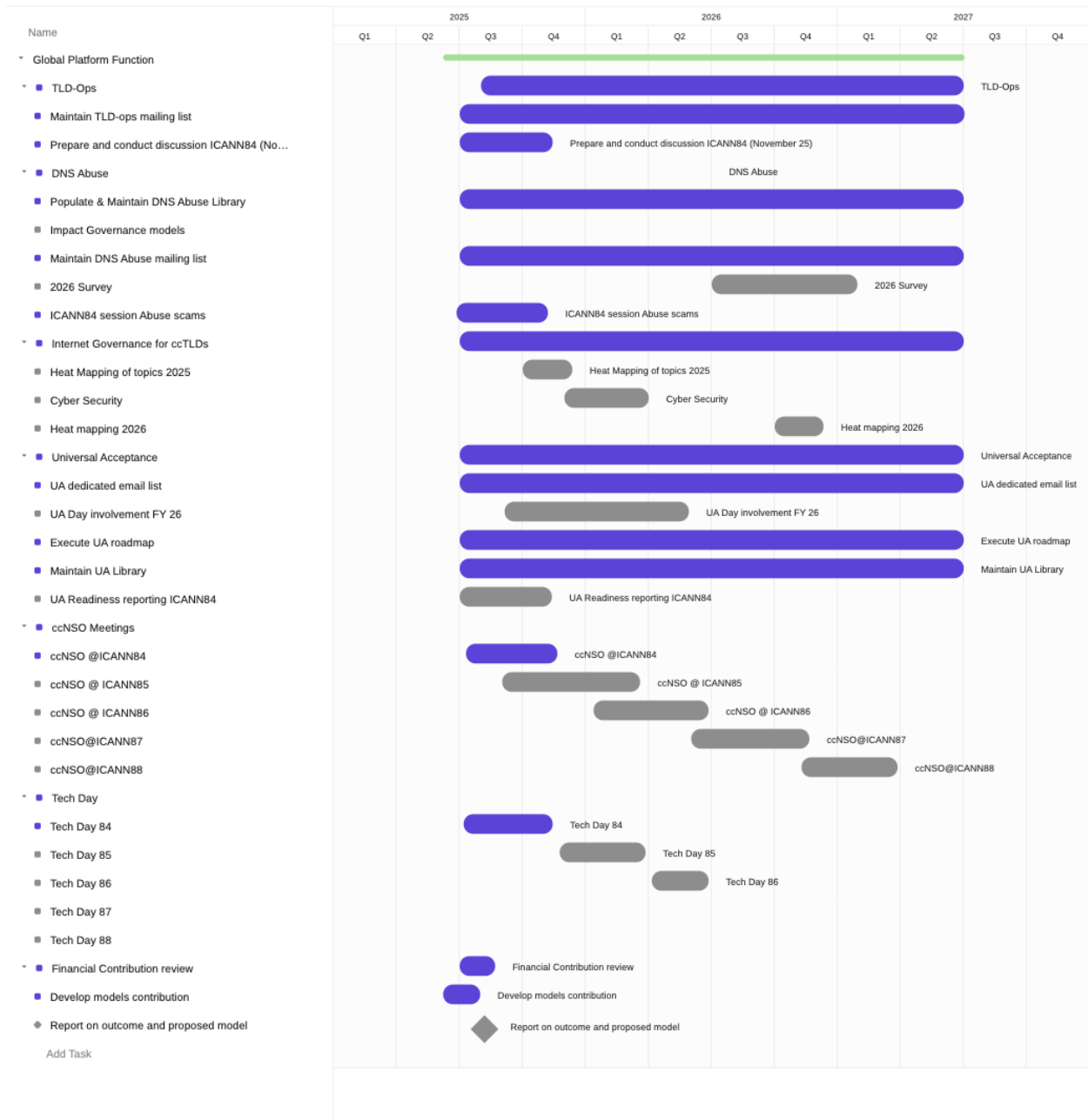
- a. Launch the disaster recovery Study group after the bulk of the work of the ccPAIG review mechanism is concluded. The council is advised to start this group after ICANN84, preferably early January 2026.
- b. Launch the IANA data accuracy study group at a later date.

Annex A: Overview of work items

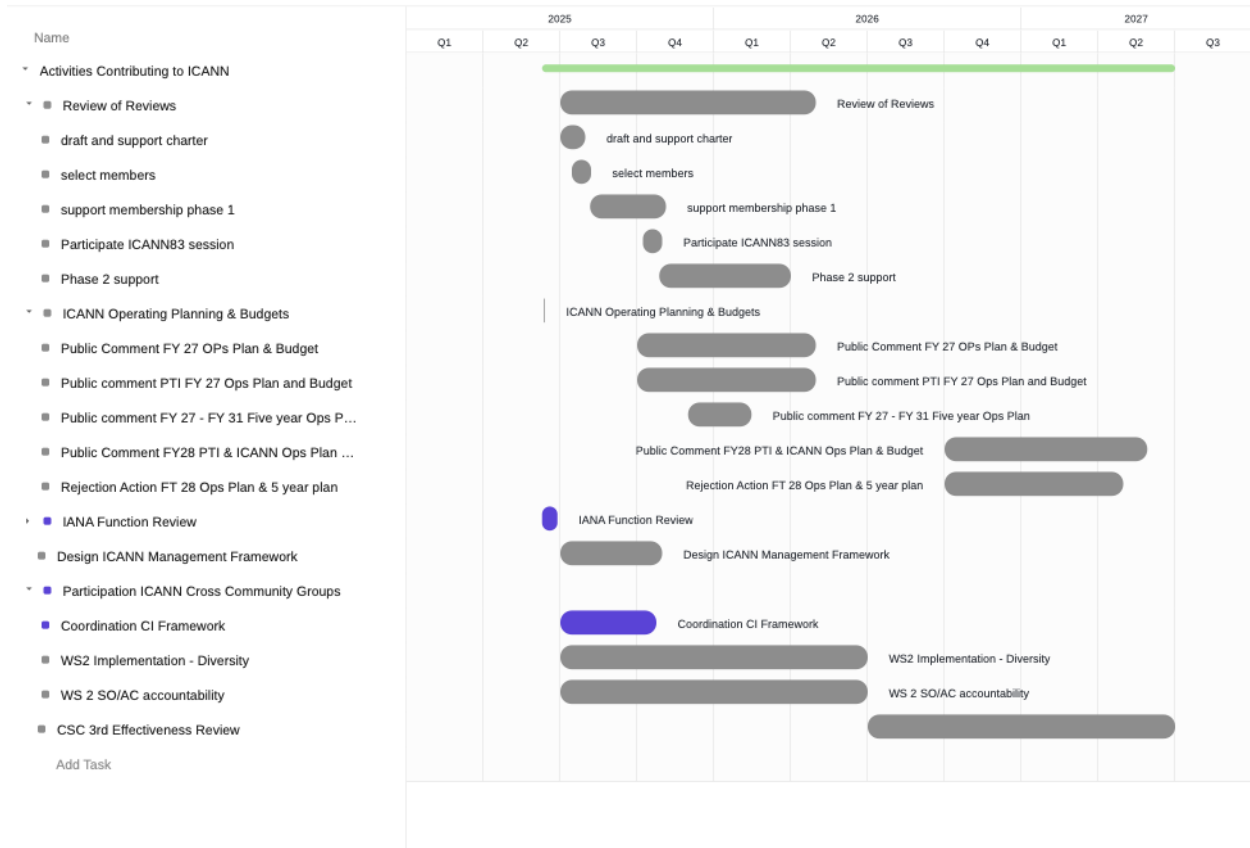
Goal 1 ccNSO Portfolio 26-27



Goal 2 ccNSO Portfolio 26-27



goal 3 ccNSO portfolio 26-27



foundational activities Portfolio 26-27

