

Draft FY26-30 Africa Regional Plan

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1. Background Information

1.1 Introduction

This document presents ICANN's Africa Regional Plan for Fiscal Years 2026-2030, in an effort to align the regional strategy with ICANN's Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2026-2030. The document was prepared by the community, taking into consideration feedback from diverse stakeholder groups in a bottom-up manner. It presents community solutions to some of the current challenges, and an action plan to be executed by ICANN organization and the community. The regional plan follows the four objectives identified in the [ICANN Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2026-2030](#), but approaches them from a regional perspective. Each strategic objective has specific goals and subgoals. Each regional subgoal has targeted outcomes, action steps, and strategic risks.

1.1.1 Background

ICANN org's first Africa strategy was drafted in 2012 by the Africa Strategy Working Group (ASWG) and adopted by the community in 2013 during the Multistakeholder Internet Governance and the Domain Name System (DNS) Industry in Africa event in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Over the past years, guided by the successive ICANN Africa strategic and implementation plans, tremendous progress has been made through initiatives focused on reviving the regional Domain Name System (DNS) industry, fostering capacity development and promoting active regional participation in wider Internet governance.

The regional plans encompassed ICANN's overall activities in Africa, which focused on capacity development in DNS business and country code top-level domains (ccTLDs), support for the security of the African DNS, and engagement with all regional stakeholders including governments, the private sector, academia, and civil society.

1.1.2 The African Region

Africa is a diverse continent, and the second most populated continent. Despite its high population, it has the lowest Internet penetration rate in the world, and unique challenges when it comes to Internet access and usage.

This regional plan is cognizant of the many challenges Africa faces, including lack of DNS industry awareness, capacities, skills, and limited local and regional resources. It emphasizes capacity development to empower African governments and Internet stakeholders, especially the business sector, to address these challenges by leveraging ICANN's technical expertise and resources, with the support of the African community.

The [Coalition for Digital Africa](#) is an initiative that brings together governments, regional organizations, and the private sector to expand Internet access and strengthen digital infrastructure across the continent. ICANN supports the Coalition by contributing technical expertise and leading projects that promote a secure, inclusive, and multilingual Internet in Africa.. Projects under the Coalition have contributed to objectives in the Regional Plan since December 2022.

2. Methodology

After the launch of ICANN's Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2026-2030, an open call was made to ICANN community leadership in the Supporting Organizations and Advisory Committees (SOs/ACs) for volunteers interested in joining the new African Regional Plan Working Group (ARPWG 2025). A team of 13 community members from diverse countries and stakeholder groups was formed in December 2024 (see Annex A). Their goal was to develop the draft Africa Regional Plan for Fiscal Years 2026-2030 and align it with ICANN's Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2026-2030.

Upon selection of team members, a preliminary meeting was held, during which the following were agreed upon:

- The ARPWG 2025 will convene on a weekly basis to discuss content for the strategic plans in focus, until the deadline of the draft submission.
- Selection of Chair, Vice-Chair, and Rapporteur of the ARPWG 2025.
- All ARPWG 2025 members will study the current Strategic Plan, shared by the Global Stakeholder Engagement (GSE) Africa team.
- A drafting team to work on consolidating output from deliberations during weekly meetings and ICANN82 work sessions into one draft document.
- First draft of the document to be shared with the entire ARPWG 2025 for review and feedback, before submission to ICANN org for Public Comments.

The following timelines were also agreed upon:

- Final draft of the document to be presented to the GSE Africa team by 7 April 2025.
- Final Draft of the Africa Regional Plan for FY 2026-2030 to be shared for Public Comments by the end of April 2025.
- Final Regional Plan shared by the end of June 2025.

3. Africa Regional Strategic Objectives for FY 2026-2030

Taking into account the evolving nature of the global Internet and DNS, the ARPWG 2025 agreed that all four strategic objectives listed in ICANN's Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2026-2030 are relevant to Africa, and will serve as regional goals for FY26-30.

- **Strategic Objective 1:** Evolve and Promote ICANN's Multistakeholder Model to Sustain Its Inclusive Approach to Internet Governance
- **Strategic Objective 2:** Enhance Organizational Excellence
- **Strategic Objective 3:** Collaborate with Relevant Stakeholders to Evolve the Internet's Unique Identifier Systems
- **Strategic Objective 4:** Strengthen the Stability and Security of the Internet's Unique Identifier Systems

Under each ICANN strategic objectives area, the following key points were identified:

- Subgoals
- Proposed outcomes
- Proposed activities
- Metrics
- Risks

3.1 Strategic Objective: Evolve and Promote ICANN's Multistakeholder Model to Sustain Its Inclusive Approach to Internet Governance

Africa, as a key ICANN region, is committed to supporting the stable operation of the Internet's unique identifier system. As the digital landscape continues to evolve, it is imperative that ICANN's multistakeholder model adapts and grows to meet new challenges and opportunities. This strategic objective in relation to the region focuses on evolving and promoting ICANN's inclusive approach to Internet governance in Africa.

The multistakeholder model is essential to ICANN's mission in Africa, as it ensures that diverse voices contribute to shaping Internet policy. ICANN must uphold a transparent, accountable, and resilient governance model by fostering collaboration among

stakeholders from various sectors, including governments, private sector, civil society, and the technical community. Sustained multistakeholder engagement is vital to maintaining trust and supporting the continued growth of the African and global Internet ecosystem.

3.1.1. Strategic Goal I: Ensure Inclusive Stakeholder Representation and Integrated Collaboration

3.1.1.1 Subgoal I: Integrate new stakeholders into ICANN community groups as needed.

One of the primary objectives of this subgoal is to integrate new stakeholders into the ICANN community to ensure broader and more inclusive representation. By engaging new stakeholders, the subgoal aims to foster a greater understanding of ICANN's role and responsibilities in the African region.

The process will not only enhance participation in ICANN's activities but also ensure that decision making reflects a wider array of interests, promoting global collaboration. The outreach efforts will focus on engaging local communities through existing global organizations and strengthening ties with key stakeholders. Successful integration will be measured by greater diversity and the active participation of new members from Africa in ICANN community groups.

Proposed Outcomes

- Increased interest, knowledge, and understanding of ICANN.
- Increased number of participants in ICANN activities.
- Greater representation and diversity of new stakeholders in ICANN community groups.
- Expanded outreach to local communities through global organizations.
- Strengthened collaboration with key stakeholders in the African Internet ecosystem.

Proposed Activities

- Support School of Internet Governance initiatives.
- Develop a comprehensive framework for Internet governance in Africa.
- Establish new partnerships and maintain existing ones with key African stakeholders, such as telecommunications companies, civil society groups, and government entities.

Metrics

- Number of new stakeholders integrated.
- Diversity index of community groups.
- Participation rates in ICANN activities.

Risks

- Resistance to change from existing stakeholders.
- Limited resources for outreach and integration efforts.

3.1.1.2 Subgoal II: Enhance collaboration among community groups.

Strengthening collaboration among ICANN's community groups, including SOs/ACs, is vital for achieving more coherent and impactful policy outcomes. This subgoal emphasizes the need to create stronger synergies between regional stakeholders, particularly from Africa, to ensure that regional issues are represented effectively within the global ICANN framework. By fostering relationships and shared initiatives, community groups can leverage their collective knowledge and resources to address challenges more efficiently.

Additionally, encouraging ICANN Fellows from Africa to stay engaged in the process will help to sustain momentum and continuity in collaborative efforts. Ensuring a smooth integration of new and existing NextGen participants and Fellows will also play a significant role in enhancing the collaborative atmosphere within ICANN.

Proposed Outcomes

- Improved collaboration among community groups and (SOs/ACs, leading to stronger policy outcomes.
- Enhanced synergy between African Internet governance stakeholders.
- Better integration of NextGen participants, Fellows, and newcomers through mentorship, encouraged local engagement, and activities in their respective local and regional spheres.

Proposed Activities

- Organize sessions with African Fellows during the pre-meeting mentorship phase.

Metrics

- Number of collaborative initiatives undertaken.
- Feedback from community groups on collaboration effectiveness.
- Number of new Fellowship/NextGen alumni from the region becoming active in ICANN work regionally and/or globally

Risks

- Communication/language barriers.

3.1.1.3 Sub-goal III: Foster an appealing environment for the next generation.

To ensure the long-term sustainability and relevance of ICANN's work, it is essential to create an environment that attracts and nurtures the next generation of Internet governance leaders. This subgoal aims to increase the participation of newcomers, Fellows, and NextGen members from Africa.

Engaging younger participants will foster a dynamic and innovative approach to policymaking that reflects the evolving needs and priorities of future Internet users. The success of this initiative will be measured by the number of youth participants and the impact of their contributions to ICANN and the broader Internet governance space.

Proposed Outcomes

- Increased participation of Fellows and NextGen members in ICANN activities at the local and regional level.
- Greater youth engagement in ICANN, fostering a vibrant and innovative new generation of participants in policy processes, and building a pipeline of future ICANN leaders in the region.

Proposed Activities

- Enhance regional diversity by increasing the number of ICANN Fellows under the ICANN Fellowship and NextGen programs from the African region.

Metrics

- Number of participants in the Fellowship and NextGen programs.
- Success stories of youth engagement.

Risks

- Insufficient funding for the ICANN Fellowship program.
- Lack of interest from the younger generation.

3.1.1.4 Subgoal IV: Develop a new generation of leaders.

Developing a new generation of leaders who are well-equipped to contribute to ICANN's decision-making processes is crucial for ensuring the organization's relevance and effectiveness in the future. This subgoal focuses on creating a pipeline of capable leaders from the African continent who can bring diverse perspectives to the table.

Defining a clear framework for leadership development, including a robust sponsorship program for fellowships, enables ICANN Africa to build a pool of leaders who will drive impactful change within the organization. This will require investment in training programs, mentorship, and capacity-building efforts that are tailored to the unique needs of the African region. A successful leadership development strategy will be

reflected in the number of trained leaders and the leadership positions they hold within ICANN and other global forums.

Proposed Outcomes

- A diverse, well-qualified, and capable pool of leaders from the region who contribute to ICANN's policy development process (PDP) through discussions and statement submissions.

Proposed Activities

- Support and facilitate regional Internet governance events.

Metrics

- Number of community leadership training programs conducted in the region by ICANN.
- Leadership positions held by individuals from the region.

Risks

- Limited access to leadership training resources.
- High turnover of trained leaders.

3.1.1.5 Subgoal V: Increase and broaden participation, particularly from underrepresented communities.

Broadening participation, especially from underrepresented communities, is critical for ensuring that ICANN remains inclusive and representative of all global stakeholders. This subgoal focuses on increasing African engagement in ICANN's programs, including the New gTLD Program: Next Round and the Applicant Support Program. Targeted outreach, including campaigns to subsidize application fees for African applicants will promote the creation of culturally relevant top-level domains (TLDs) that resonate with local communities.

In addition, supporting initiatives that promote digital identity, Internet decolonization, and local content creation will help drive greater participation from underserved populations. Partnering with local tech hubs and governments enables ICANN to facilitate the creation of community-driven TLDs that meet the unique needs of the region.

Proposed Outcomes

- Promotion of the New gTLD Program: Next Round and the Applicant Support Program.
- Launch of a targeted campaign for the Next Round (post-2025), offering subsidized application fees via ICANN's Applicant Support Program for African entities to create culturally relevant TLDs (e.g., .africa expansions, .swahili,

.yoruba). Partner with local tech hubs and governments to identify community-driven TLDs.

Proposed Activities

- Enhance digital identity, support Internet decolonization, and drive local content creation.
- Increase ccTLD uptake.

Metrics

- Number of new generic top-level domain (gTLD) applications from African entities.
- Uptake rates of ccTLDs in the region.

Risks

- Regulatory challenges.
- Limited awareness of the gTLD program.

3.1.2. Strategic Goal II: Enhance the Agility and Effectiveness of Policy and Advice Development

3.1.2.1 Subgoal I: Reduce complexity and create incentives to encourage active participation.

To improve engagement and foster more active participation in ICANN's processes, it is essential to reduce the complexity of its resources and create incentives for stakeholders to become involved. Simplifying the content and making it more accessible will encourage a broader audience to engage in ICANN's activities.

This subgoal focuses on making ICANN's learning and participation tools more user-friendly, ensuring that potential participants from diverse backgrounds are not deterred by overly complex language or inaccessible materials. The development of interactive and plain language resources through platforms like ICANN Learn will play a crucial role in this effort. As a result, we expect increased participation rates and a better understanding of ICANN's mission.

Proposed Outcomes

- Increased interest, knowledge, and understanding of ICANN.
- Increased number of regional participants in ICANN activities.
- Greater representation and active participation of new regional stakeholders in ICANN community groups.
- Expanded outreach to new local communities.

Proposed Activities

- Promote the ICANN Learn platform in all engagement activities

Metrics

- User engagement metrics on the ICANN Learn platform.
- Number of new participants in ICANN activities.

Risks

- Complexity of materials deterring participation.
- Limited reach of promotional efforts.

3.1.2.2 Subgoal: Establish a proactive framework to ensure early involvement and avoid unexpected outcomes.

A key aspect of effective policy and advice development is ensuring that stakeholders are engaged early and consistently in the process. This subgoal seeks to establish a framework that encourages early involvement and proactive action from community participants.

Providing interactive training and opportunities will enable ICANN to empower stakeholders in Africa to take timely action on policy issues. Integrating these perspectives at critical junctures ensures policy outcomes are more effective and beneficial for the region.

Proposed Outcomes

- Development of seasoned and experienced regional community participants who take timely action on issues and get involved in policy development.
- Early and consistent engagement of stakeholders in ICANN policy development, resulting in more predictable and beneficial outcomes.

Proposed Activities

- Support policy awareness and training programs initiated by regional organizations.
- Conduct interactive sessions to gather input at key decision-making stages.

Metrics

- Number of training programs conducted.
- Stakeholder engagement levels.

Risks

- Delays in stakeholder engagement.
- Inadequate training resources.

3.1.2.3 Subgoal: Proactively engage with governments, regulators, intergovernmental organizations, and other public policy stakeholders.

Proactive engagement with governments, regulators, and intergovernmental organizations is critical for fostering a supportive and collaborative DNS ecosystem. This subgoal strengthens ICANN's relationship with public policy stakeholders in Africa to ensure alignment in policy and regulatory approaches.

By strengthening government awareness and their capacity to support the DNS ecosystem, ICANN can promote active participation and prevent unintended policy or legislative consequences. Targeted training programs and feedback tools like surveys will support ongoing dialogue with key stakeholders in the African region.

Proposed Outcomes

- Increased awareness and capacity of governments to support the DNS ecosystem and participate more actively in ICANN.
- Stronger collaboration with stakeholders to promote aligned policies and prevent unintended outcomes.

Proposed Activities

- Create policy awareness and training programs tailored for governments, regulators, and intergovernmental organizations.
- Use feedback mechanisms such as surveys to gather input for aligned outcomes.

Metrics

- Number of government, regulators, and intergovernmental organizations that participate in ICANN's work and activities.
- Feedback from policy stakeholders.

Risks

- Political and regulatory changes.
- Limited engagement from government entities.

3.1.2.4 Subgoal: Increase and broaden participation, particularly from underrepresented communities

Expanding the participation of underrepresented communities is essential for ensuring that ICANN's policy development process is truly inclusive of the African stakeholders and their inputs. This subgoal focuses on improving the tracking and management of the Policy Development Process (PDP) by leveraging project management approaches, allowing SO/AC leadership to monitor progress and ensure timely, summarized results.

Conducting targeted outreach programs and hosting regional roundtables enables ICANN to engage underrepresented communities in Africa, ensuring their voices are heard throughout the policy-making process. This engagement will not only foster a

more diverse set of perspectives but also accelerate the development of policies that reflect the needs of all stakeholders in the region.

Proposed outcomes

- Improved tracking of the Policy Development Process (PDP) by SO/AC leaderships using a project management approach.

Proposed activities

- Identify underrepresented communities and conduct targeted outreach programs.
- Host regional roundtables to ensure engagement from underrepresented communities

Metrics

- Number of outreach programs conducted.
- New audiences from underrepresented communities and countries become aware of ICANN and its mission.

Risks

- Difficulty in identifying and reaching underrepresented communities.
- Limited resources for outreach programs.

3.1.3 Expand Strategic Alliances to Advocate for the Multistakeholder Model of Internet Governance

3.1.3.1 Subgoal: Demonstrate that ICANN's multistakeholder model of governance remains the right model for delivering ICANN's mission.

To sustain and enhance ICANN's legitimacy and effectiveness, it is critical to reaffirm the value of its multistakeholder model in achieving its mission. This subgoal focuses on increasing the awareness and understanding of ICANN's governance approach, particularly within the Africa region. Through targeted outreach, educational initiatives, and active engagement strategies, ICANN Africa must cultivate deeper participation and demonstrate the real-world impact and adaptability of the multistakeholder model. The ultimate objective is to ensure that regional stakeholders recognize the relevance and effectiveness of this model in shaping Internet governance that is inclusive, transparent, and resilient.

Proposed Outcomes

- Increased active participation from the Africa region (e.g., number of Public Comments).
- Better understanding of ICANN's mission, vision, objectives, and the multistakeholder model of Internet governance within Africa and allied constituencies.
- Clear understanding of ICANN's working model.
- Showcase the real value in the ICANN multistakeholder model and update the perception of multistakeholder model in the region

Proposed Activities

- Conduct skills development and awareness-raising initiatives about ICANN's mission and the multistakeholder model.
- Organize regular regional webinars to discuss Policy Development Processes (PDPs) at ICANN.
- Create a social media campaign to highlight the effectiveness of the multistakeholder approach.
- Support and participate in forums advocating the multistakeholder model at the national and regional levels.

Metrics

- Number of webinars conducted.
- Engagement metrics from social media campaigns.
- More regional stakeholders understand ICANN's multistakeholder model of governance, as well as potential participation in ICANN's work and activities.

Risks

- Misalignment of stakeholder expectations.
- Limited reach of awareness campaigns.

3.1.3.2 Subgoal: Strengthen collaborative efforts to promote the multistakeholder model.

To effectively champion the multistakeholder model of Internet governance, ICANN must build and maintain strong collaborative networks across its global community. This subgoal seeks to enhance partnerships, particularly in Africa , by reinforcing the engagement of At-Large Structures (ALSs) and ensuring that they are well-informed, active, and supported in their outreach efforts. By leveraging tools like the Community Regional Outreach Program (CROP), this initiative will foster broader understanding and promotion of the multistakeholder model.

Proposed Outcomes

- Establishment and reinforcement of a robust and effective multistakeholder model of governance across all ICANN constituencies, fostering vibrant multistakeholder Internet communities in Africa.
- Eligible ICANN groups will benefit from CROP support to conduct outreach activities and contribute to the promotion of the multistakeholder model of Internet governance.

Proposed Activities

- Reach out to ALSs in Africa to update their information.
- Gather input and feedback from ALSs in Africa through surveys.
- Promote and raise awareness about the CROP program and its utilization.

Metrics

- Number of ALSs updated.
- Survey response rates and feedback quality.
- Utilization rate of the CROP program.

Risks

- Incomplete or outdated information from ALSs.
- Low engagement in surveys.
- Limited awareness or understanding of the CROP program.

3.2. Strategic Objective II: Enhance Organizational Excellence

ICANN's commitment to organizational excellence is fundamental to its mission of ensuring a secure, stable, and unified global Internet. This strategic objective aims to enhance ICANN's operational capabilities, governance structure, and overall performance in the African region. By fostering a culture of continuous improvement, ICANN will ensure optimization of its processes, strengthen its adaptability and accountability, and enhance its regional presence and impact in Africa. This involves investing in staff development, refining decision-making frameworks, and leveraging innovative technologies to better improve institutional agility and preserve its financial sustainability.

3.2.1 Pursue a Sustainable Future

3.2.1.1 Subgoal: Improve institutional agility and adaptability.

In a rapidly evolving digital landscape, ICANN must remain agile and adaptable to effectively respond to emerging challenges and opportunities. This subgoal focuses on enhancing ICANN's ability to conceptualize and implement projects in Africa with greater flexibility.

Embedding agile project management practices and conducting continuous process and implementation reviews, ICANN will better serve its African stakeholders and ensure that its operations remain efficient, responsive, and future-ready.

Proposed Outcomes

- Enhanced agility and adaptability in the conceptualization, implementation, and rollout of projects and programs.
- Improved outcomes for African stakeholders through more adaptive implementation of projects and processes.

Proposed Activities

- Develop and implement agile project management frameworks.
- Conduct regular reviews and updates of processes to ensure adaptability.

Metrics

- Project completion times.
- Stakeholder satisfaction rates.

Risks

- Resistance to change in established processes.
- Limited resources for continuous improvement initiatives.

3.2.1.2 Subgoal: Preserve ICANN's financial sustainability

Financial sustainability is a cornerstone of ICANN's ability to fulfill its mission over the long term. This subgoal emphasizes prudent fiscal management, strategic resource allocation, and community partnerships to ensure that ICANN's Africa region can continue operating effectively while meeting its regional obligation. Identifying cost-saving opportunities and optimizing the budget will help strengthen ICANN's financial sustainability in the African region while maintaining the quality and scope of its services.

Proposed Outcomes

- Ensured long-term financial stability and sustainability of ICANN.

Proposed Activities

- Implement cost-saving measures and optimize resource allocation.
- Reduce project cost by partnering with sponsors and other community stakeholders.

Metrics

- Financial performance indicators.
- Budget adherence rates.

Risks

- Limited access to regional offices for some community members.

3.2.2 Enhance ICANN's Global Presence and Impact

3.2.2.1 Subgoal: Evolve the hybrid workforce model and optimize regional office utilization.

As ICANN adapts to new work paradigms, evolving the hybrid workforce model in the African region is crucial to supporting both internal collaboration and external engagement.

Proposed Outcomes

- Better utilization of ICANN's regional office (Istanbul) and the engagement center (Nairobi) for team collaboration as well as community engagement.

Proposed Activities

- Use Engagement Center in Nairobi, Kenya when possible, for community meetings

Metrics

- Number of community meetings held at the regional office.

Risks

- Cost of hosting meetings and staff availability.

3.3. Strategic Objective III: Collaborate with Relevant Stakeholders to Evolve the Internet's Unique Identifier Systems

The evolution of the Internet's unique identifier systems is central to ensuring a secure, stable, and inclusive digital environment. This strategic objective underscores ICANN's commitment to working collaboratively with a diverse range of stakeholders – from technical experts and governments to academia and the private sector – to adapt and innovate in response to emerging technologies and changing user needs.

For Africa, this objective offers a vital opportunity to play a more active role in shaping the future of the Internet by advancing digital inclusion through Universal Acceptance (UA) and Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs), fostering regional innovation, and contributing to global technical dialogues. Through capacity building, strategic partnerships, and proactive engagement, these actions will create a more robust and equitable Internet ecosystem that reflects the needs of all users, regardless of geography or language.

3.3.1 Facilitate Digital Inclusion

3.3.1.1 Subgoal I: Promote the advancement of Universal Acceptance and Internationalized Domain Names by empowering stakeholders.

To foster a truly inclusive digital space, UA and IDNs must be embraced across linguistic and regional boundaries. Africa, as a key ICANN region, is committed to advancing this goal by equipping stakeholders with the knowledge and tools needed to adopt these technologies. Through training, community engagement, and awareness campaigns, this subgoal seeks to bridge the digital divide, enabling users to access the Internet in their native scripts and languages while enhancing overall usability and reach.

Proposed Outcomes

- Increased and sustained engagement from regional community members.
- Increased readiness and adoption of UA and IDNs among stakeholders.

Proposed Activities

- Conduct training and awareness programs on UA and IDNs.
- Collaborate with local communities to promote the benefits of UA and IDNs.

Metrics

- Number of training programs conducted.
- Adoption rates of UA and IDNs.

Risks

- Limited awareness of UA and IDNs.
- Resistance to adopting new technologies.

3.3.1.2 Subgoal II: Proactively collaborate with relevant and diverse external stakeholders to promote Universal Acceptance.

Driving the widespread adoption of UA requires strategic partnerships and grassroots collaboration. This subgoal emphasizes working with educational institutions, industry leaders, and government entities to build an ecosystem that supports UA implementation. Establishing DNS hubs, promoting local ccTLDs, and sharing success stories will help to inspire local innovation and reduce dependence on foreign digital infrastructure, while ensuring Africa plays a central role in shaping a more accessible and representative Internet.

Proposed outcomes

- More stakeholders understand UA and its objectives.
- Increased UA and Email Address Internationalization adoption.
- Registries and registrars understand the importance of UA adoption, and explore making their relevant systems UA-ready.
- Regional entities organize UA Day events.
- More regional academic institutions have UA as part of their educational curriculum.
- Governments have a better understanding of the importance of UA and encourage adoption at the local level.
- Documented impact stories showcasing UA success.

Proposed Activities

- Document success stories on Universal Acceptance in the region.
- Ensure UA activities are multidisciplinary.
- Define the roles of government and industry in promoting UA.
- Promote adoption of local ccTLDs and IDNs in Engagement activities

Metrics

- Increased DNS literacy and usage.
- Reduced reliance on foreign domains.

Risks

- Limited engagement from stakeholders.
- Challenges in documenting and sharing impact stories.

3.3.1.3 Subgoal III: Cultivate consumer choice, competition, inclusivity, and innovation.

Empowering digital consumers and entrepreneurs starts with expanding access and awareness around domain name opportunities. This subgoal focuses on stimulating interest in the next round of domain name applications for the New gTLD Program: Next Round, especially among underrepresented groups in Africa. Continuing outreach and educational efforts will encourage greater participation, foster innovation, and promote competition in the domain name space, thereby ensuring a more inclusive Internet environment across the African continent.

Proposed Outcomes

- Increased awareness and interest in applications for the New gTLD Program: Next Round.

Proposed Activities

- Continue awareness programs and outreach efforts.
- Engage with applicants to the New gTLD Program: Next Round.

Metrics

- Increased awareness and communication around the New gTLD Program: Next Round.
- Number of new domain name applications.

Risks

- Limited interest from potential applicants.
- Challenges in reaching diverse communities.

3.3.2 Evolve the Assessment of, and Responsiveness to, Technological Developments

3.3.2.1 Subgoal I: Evolve ICANN's understanding of the identifier system landscape, and adapt as needed.

In a rapidly advancing technological environment, ICANN must continuously evolve its understanding of the Internet's unique identifier systems. This subgoal centers on proactive research and knowledge-sharing to assess the impact of emerging technologies on domain names, IP addressing, and the broader DNS ecosystem.

For Africa, this represents an opportunity to contribute regional perspectives and solutions, ensuring the unique identifier system remains responsive, resilient, and globally relevant.

Proposed Outcomes

- Enhanced understanding of new technologies and their impact on the identifier system landscape.

Proposed Activities

- Conduct research and knowledge exchange on emerging technologies.
- Promote and utilize technical publications authored by the Office of the Chief Technology Officer, the Security and Stability Advisory Committee, and the Root Server System Advisory Committee.

Metrics

- More regional community members are exposed to ICANN's technical research and publications.
- Number of research initiatives undertaken.
- Stakeholder engagement in knowledge exchange activities.

Risks

- Rapid pace of technological change.
- Limited resources for research initiatives.

3.3.2.2 Subgoal II: Collaborate with technical community entities, such as the Internet Engineering Task Force, Regional Internet Registries, and root server operators, to understand new technologies.

Strong partnerships with technical community entities are essential for ICANN to stay ahead of technological shifts and maintain the stability of the Internet's infrastructure.

This subgoal highlights the importance of collaboration with organizations like the Internet Engineering Task Force, Regional Internet Registries (RIRs), and root server operators. Organizing joint workshops and technical exchanges will help to enhance collective understanding, align on best practices, and ensure that Africa is both contributing to and benefiting from global advancements in Internet technology.

Proposed Outcomes

- Increased knowledge and awareness of ICANN's mission and technical work.

Proposed Activities

- Foster collaboration with technical community entities.
- Organize joint workshops and seminars.

Metrics

- Number of collaborative initiatives.
- Feedback from technical community entities.

Risks

- Coordination challenges.
- Limited engagement from technical community entities.

3.3.3 Deliver and Enhance the IANA Functions to Meet Evolving Community Needs

3.3.3.1 Subgoal I: Continue to reliably deliver the IANA functions.

Reliability in the delivery of the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) functions is essential to maintaining trust in the global Internet's infrastructure. This subgoal focuses on sustaining ICANN's commitment to high-quality, consistent performance of its core responsibilities – including the coordination of IP addresses, protocol parameters, and DNS root zone management.

Supporting operators (registries (RIRs, local Internet registries, national Internet registries), TLD Registries, etc.) to ensure IANA resiliency and ensure continuity of service for the IANA functions.

Supporting regional initiatives that align with ICANN's mission will ensure that stakeholders in Africa and beyond continue to benefit from stable and predictable Internet operations.

Supporting regional initiatives that align with ICANN's global mission will ensure that stakeholders in Africa and beyond continue to benefit from stable and predictable Internet operations. Specifically for Africa, ensuring AFRINIC's sustainability and service availability and continuity, to ensure that critical IANA functions are delivered to Africans without interruption.

Proposed Outcomes

- More awareness and better understanding of the role of IANA and its functions

Proposed Activities

- Support regional initiatives that support high standards of service delivery for IANA functions.
- Support the RIRs (particularly AFRINIC) with technical expertise and support to guarantee IANA function service continuity at the regional level.

Metrics

- Service delivery performance indicators.
- IANA Service delivery continuity indicators.
- IANA service availability indicators.

3.4 Strategic Objective IV: Strengthen the Stability and Security of the Internet's Unique Identifier Systems

A secure and stable Internet is essential for the digital growth and resilience of societies worldwide. This strategic objective emphasizes ICANN Africa's commitment to reinforcing the security, stability, and resilience of the Internet's unique identifier systems, including the DNS, IP addressing, and root server operations. As cyber threats evolve and Internet infrastructure expands, this objective calls for proactive collaboration with stakeholders in Africa to identify vulnerabilities, adopt best practices, and improve operational readiness. Africa, as a growing digital hub, plays a critical role in this mission by contributing to regional capacity building, participating in trusted forums, and advancing DNS security through local initiatives

3.4.1 Strengthen Partnerships with Relevant Stakeholders to Reinforce the Shared Responsibility of Ensuring Secure and Stable Internet's Unique Identifier Systems

3.4.1.1 Subgoal I: Continue to provide and participate in trusted forums that convene relevant stakeholders.

Trust and collaboration are foundational to ensuring the security and stability of the Internet's unique identifier systems. This subgoal emphasizes the importance of ICANN's continued participation in, and support for, forums that bring together diverse stakeholders. Creating inclusive spaces for dialogue and decision-making – particularly in the African context – will strengthen community trust, reinforce shared responsibility, and enhance the resilience of the multistakeholder model.

Proposed Outcomes

- Increased community trust in the ICANN multistakeholder model of governance.

Proposed Activities

- Support and organize forums for stakeholder engagement and DNS.

Metrics

- Number of forums participated in.
- Stakeholder trust levels.
- Increased and sustained engagement from regional community members in the various forums.

Risks

- Limited participation from stakeholders.
- Challenges in organizing forums.

3.4.1.2 Subgoal II: Identify and mitigate security threats to the Internet's identifier systems.

As cyber threats grow in complexity and scale, ICANN is committed to proactive risk mitigation strategies that protect the Internet's identifier systems. This subgoal aims to strengthen Africa's DNS ecosystem through the creation of a regional DNS Security Task Force, broader Domain Name System Security Extensions (DNSSEC) adoption, and targeted training to combat phishing and malware. These efforts will help establish a trusted and secure Internet environment across the continent while integrating modern standards like UA readiness.

Proposed Outcomes

- Mitigation of DNS Abuse and establishment of a trusted Internet environment.

Proposed Activities

- Establish an Africa DNS Security Task Force under ADEP, in collaboration with ICANN's Domain Name Security Threat Information Collection and Reporting (DNSTICR) program.
- Roll out DNSSEC adoption campaigns for ccTLDs.
- Train local IT teams to combat phishing and malware.
- Integrate Universal Acceptance (UA) readiness to patch vulnerabilities in outdated systems.

Metrics

- Number of DNSSEC adoption campaigns conducted.
- Number of IT teams trained.
- Reduction in phishing and malware incidents.

Risks

- Insufficient resources for training and campaigns.
- Resistance to adopting new security measures.

3.4.1.3 Subgoal III: Increase ICANN's coordination and collaboration with the numbers community for secure, stable, and resilient numbering and routing systems.

Collaboration with the numbers community is essential for maintaining a stable and secure Internet infrastructure. This subgoal focuses on fostering closer ties between ICANN and network operators across Africa to promote the adoption of security best practices in Internet Protocol (IP) addressing and routing.

Enhancing awareness and encouraging implementation of these standards will build a more resilient and secure digital environment throughout the region.

Proposed Outcomes

- Enhanced security, stability, and resilience of numbering and routing systems through increased collaboration.

Proposed Activities

- Promote the adoption of DNS operations and security best practices among network operators in Africa.

Metrics

- Adoption rates of best practices.
- Improvement in network security metrics.

Risks

- Limited engagement from network operators.
- Challenges in implementing best practices.

3.4.2 Strengthen DNS Root Server Operations Governance

3.4.2.1 Subgoal I: Continue to enhance the governance and technical evolution of DNS root server operations and services.

Effective governance and continuous technical advancement are key to ensuring the reliability of DNS root server operations. This subgoal outlines ICANN's ongoing efforts to improve both governance frameworks and operational capabilities, with a focus on increasing trust in the multistakeholder model. For Africa, this presents a chance to shape root server governance and support the continent's growing role in the global DNS ecosystem.

Proposed Outcomes

- Increased community trust in the ICANN multistakeholder model of governance.

Proposed Activities

- Enhance governance frameworks and technical capabilities of DNS root server operations.

Metrics

- Governance framework updates.
- Technical performance indicators.

Risks

- Governance challenges.
- Technical implementation issues.

3.4.2.2 Subgoal II: Increase the robustness of the root zone generation, distribution services, and processes.

A robust and regionally distributed DNS infrastructure is vital for improving Internet performance and resilience. This subgoal targets the deployment of additional L-Root server clusters in key African countries. Expanding local root server capacity and partnering with regional stakeholders like the African Network Information Centre (AFRINIC) and local Internet service providers (ISPs) will help reduce latency, boost access, and strengthen Africa's Internet backbone.

Proposed Outcomes

- Enhanced resilience of Africa's DNS infrastructure.

Proposed Activities

- Deploy additional L-Root server clusters beyond the existing ones
- Collaborate with AfriNIC and local ISPs to manage and maintain these systems, building regional capacity.

Metrics

- Faster, more reliable DNS resolution.
- Increased Internet usage.
- Reduced dependence on external root servers.

Risks

- Technical challenges in deploying L-Root clusters.
- Coordination issues with local ISPs.

3.4.2.3 Subgoal III: Support coordinated plans to address DNS Root Server System attacks.

Preparedness is essential in mitigating the risks of DNS Root Server System attacks. This subgoal focuses on developing and implementing coordinated response plans that enhance the Internet's resilience to security threats. Through collaborative strategies and clearly defined protocols, ICANN can strengthen its regional response capabilities, ensuring that Africa as a region can respond swiftly and effectively to any disruptions to the root server system.

Proposed Outcomes

- Improved preparedness and response to DNS Root Server System attacks.

Proposed Activities

- Develop and implement coordinated response plans for DNS Root Server

System attacks.

Metrics

- Response times to attacks.
- Effectiveness of mitigation measures.

Risks

- Complexity of coordinating response plans.
- Limited resources for attack mitigation.

4. Conclusions

The ICANN Africa Regional Plan for Fiscal Years 2026-2030 document represents a comprehensive roadmap for advancing Internet governance and fostering digital growth across the continent. Through strategic collaboration with diverse stakeholders, ICANN's Africa region aims to achieve its goals while underscoring the importance of inclusivity, innovation, and regional engagement in addressing the unique challenges and opportunities within Africa's digital landscape.

A steadfast commitment to organizational excellence and multistakeholder collaboration will be pivotal in achieving these goals. Continuously evolving our approaches and leveraging the collective expertise of governments, private sector entities, civil society, and the technical community will ensure that ICANN's work in Africa enables the Internet to remain a powerful tool for economic development, social empowerment, and global connectivity for all.

ICANN remains dedicated to this mission of building a more robust and inclusive Internet ecosystem in Africa that serves the needs of all Africans and contributes to the broader global Internet governance framework. However, the success of this strategy relies on the active participation and support of all stakeholders.

The work and commitment by all members of the ARPWG 2025 and the community are deeply appreciated. The community anticipates the cooperation of all relevant stakeholders to realize the vision outlined in this strategy.

5. Annex A – Members of the Africa Regional Plan Working Group (ARPWG)

Name	Nationality	SO/AC	Position
Tomslin Samme-Nlar (Chair)	Cameroon	Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) Council	GNSO Council Vice-Chair
Nodumo Dhlamin (Vice-Chair)	Zimbabwe	African Research and Education Network (AFREN)	AFREN Representative
Hadia Elminiawi (Rapporteur)	Egypt	African Regional At-Large Organization (AFRALO)	AFRALO Chair
Bolutife Adisa	Nigeria	Not-for-Profit Organizations Constituency (NPOC)	NPOC Secretary
Eyitayo Iyortimi	Nigeria	Africa Top Level Domains Organization (AfTLD)	AfTLD Chair of Executive Committee
Biyi Oladipo	Nigeria	Country Code Names Supporting Organization (ccNSO) Council	ccNSO Council Vice-Chair
Wisdom Donkor	Ghana	Noncommercial Users Constituency (NCUC)	NCUC Chair
Christine Arida	Egypt	Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC)	GAC Vice-chair

Raihanath Gbadamassi	Benin	At-Large Advisory Committee (ALAC)	African ALAC member
Lawrence Olawale-Roberts	Nigeria	Business Constituency (BC)	African BC Executive member
Eric Akumiah	Ghana	African Network Operators Group (AfNOG)	AFNOG representative
Mouhamet Diop	Senegal	AfREGISTRAR	AfREGISTRAR Chair
Dorcas Muthoni	Kenyan	AFCHIX	Founder, AFCHIX