

17 January 2025

ccNSO - GRC Comments CIP

The ccNSO Council and ccNSO Guideline Review Committee welcome this opportunity to provide feedback and comments on the proposed continuous improvement framework and commends the continuous Improvement Program Community Coordination Group with its work to date.

Prior to addressing the specific questions raised in the call for public comment, we express our support for the proposed definition of continuous improvement:

Continuous improvement is an ongoing process of identifying, analyzing, and making incremental improvements to systems, processes, products, or services. Its purpose is to drive efficiency, improve quality, and value delivery while minimizing waste, variation, and defects. The continuous improvement process is driven by ongoing feedback, collaboration, and data.

This definition aligns with the definition and approach of continuous improvement the ccNSO has adopted in [March 2024](#) and is [currently testing](#)^[1]. We note that according to this definition continuous improvement is an ongoing process, focused on efficiency, quality and value delivery and affecting most - if not all - processes and services of the ccNSO.

It is our understanding that the five Principles were designed to describe the objectives of the Continuous Improvement Program and each SO and AC can finetune these over time to meet its needs. Given this flexible nature of the principles, and the need for a baseline to start replacing the organisational reviews with the continuous improvement program, the ccNSO Council and GRC support these principles in general.

The ccNSO Council and GRC also support the design criteria (Flexibility, Commonality, Efficiency, Building on existing work, and Areas for Improvement) for a general approach or framework that can be applied across and by the various Supporting Organizations, Advisory Committees and the Nominating Committee. In the view of the ccNSO, the proposed approach of principles, Criteria and Indicators meets these design criteria.

This being said, we believe however there is a discrepancy between the core elements of definition (the focus on efficiency, quality improvement and value delivery) and the continuing focus on the goals of the organizational reviews (the continuing purpose of the structure under review, its effectiveness and accountability). We would like to understand to what extent, if at all, the evolution of the content of Organizational Reviews into a Continuous Improvement Program that focuses on the efficiency, quality improvement and value delivery of each of SO/AC/NomCom is realized by the framework. Is the evolution a matter of changing the process - from being led by Independent Examiners to being led by the ICANN community — or will the

goals i.e. the mandate for the Continuous Improvement Program also evolve from effectiveness and accountability to improving efficiency, quality, and delivery of value?

In our view this question directly relates to the question whether the overarching principles or objectives of the CIP can be applied and used across the organizational structures over the next 10-20 years (the organizational reviews were introduced as a result of the 2002-2003 Evolution and Reform of ICANN, well before the introduction of ICANN's accountability and transparency reviews, following the 2009 [Affirmation of Commitments](#)).

Based on experience to date with the ccNSO Framework, which is based on the 4-phased Plan, Do, Check, Act cycle, which is a general continuous improvement methodology that is widely in use across various sectors, the ccNSO Council and GRC support the proposed 3-phase cycle. The proposed cycle is evidence based, incremental, and iterative, allowing for adjustments and monitoring of the improvements. However, we do have comments with respect to the proposed duration of a full cycle.

First, we note that the proposed Framework, including the proposed cycle, is related to the concept of Holistic Reviews i.e. would inform Holistic Reviews. As the time between Holistic Reviews is unknown, we suggest that in the event this relation is maintained, at least two continuous improvement reporting phases (Phase 3 of the continuous improvement cycle) will need to have been completed between two sequential Holistic Reviews. This allows a comparable and harmonized approach to community oversight of the continuous improvement programs.

Secondly we note that based on the ccNSO experience to date, the proposed three (3) year cycle may not be aligned with the realities of continuous improvement projects. Experience has shown that some improvement projects take less, and some may take more than the proposed 3 year cycle. This being said, we suggest that this can be resolved by explicitly distinguishing between analysing and preparing for next cycle on a project by project basis, and a general reporting requirement at a predefined time (for example, after one full cycle), however with the caveat that the third phase (analyzing and/or reporting phase), should be used as input for the next round of improvements.

On behalf of the ccNSO Council,

Alejandra Reynoso, Chair

^[1] The ccNSO Council and GRC note that the overview of ccNSO initiatives and framework are not included in the overview.