

Enhancing the Effectiveness of ICANN's Multistakeholder Model – Next Steps

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
I. OVERVIEW	3
Background	3
Summary of Findings	3
Next Steps	4
Seeking Community Input	5
II. WORK PLAN	7
Prioritization of Work and Efficient Use of Resources	8
Precision in Scoping the Work	13
Consensus, Representation, and Inclusivity	17
III. REMAINING WORK AREAS	20
Complexity of (A) the Tools to Access Information and Data and (B) Content	21
Culture, Trust, and Silos	22
Roles and Responsibilities of ICANN Board, Org, and Community	23
IV. CONCLUSION	24
V. REFERENCES	25

Introduction

This paper identifies a path forward following community comments received on the draft Evolving ICANN's Multistakeholder Model Work Plan, which was included as Appendix C to ICANN's [Draft FY21-25 Operating & Financial Plan and Draft FY21 Operating Plan & Budget](#). The objective of this paper is to build upon existing work taking place across the ICANN community that may holistically address community-identified priority topics and enhance the effective and efficient functioning of ICANN's multistakeholder model. This paper describes the current work underway, identifies gaps in those efforts that would also benefit from inclusion in this effort, and suggests a path toward addressing each of those gaps, including proposed work processes or mechanisms, how they may be applied, and which groups may be best positioned to lead those efforts.

I. Overview

Background

One of the five objectives of ICANN's [Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2021-2025](#) is to improve the effectiveness of our multistakeholder model of governance – a model that grew to fit our needs. As ICANN continues to evolve, and as our environment becomes more complex, our governance must also evolve without compromising our deeply valued bottom-up decision-making process. This project is not a stand-alone initiative, but instead is one piece of a holistic approach to evolving the multistakeholder model by encompassing existing work efforts with the needs for future improvement.

The [Enhancing the Effectiveness of ICANN's Multistakeholder Model](#) project was initiated in early 2019. The ICANN Board solicited input from the ICANN community regarding this topic in discussions about the Draft ICANN Operating and Financial Plan for FY 2021-2025. To better facilitate these community discussions, the Board asked a neutral facilitator with knowledge of ICANN and its processes to lead the data collection phase of the project. Brian Cute, former Chair of the first and second Accountability and Transparency Review Team, filled this role. The community, Board, and org engaged in [facilitated dialogue](#) over a nine-month period, which included six webinars, cross-community sessions at three ICANN meetings ([ICANN64](#), [65](#), and [66](#)), and three public comment proceedings.

Summary of Findings

The facilitation resulted in six priority topics which the community identified as hampering the effective and efficient functioning of ICANN's multistakeholder model. Those topics and community feedback were used to construct a draft "Evolving ICANN's Multistakeholder Model Work Plan" (the Draft Work Plan), which was included as an annex to ICANN's FY21-25 Operating & Financial Plan and published for public comment in December 2019. Public comments received regarding the Draft Work Plan showed that the community agrees the multistakeholder model needs to evolve and that there is a substantial amount of work, already underway, which targets this project's goal- to improve the effectiveness of our multistakeholder model of governance. Examples of existing work efforts that map to this project include, but are

not limited to: the GNSO's [Policy Development Process 3.0](#) (PDP 3.0), [Streamlining of Reviews](#), the [Third Accountability and Transparency Review](#) (ATR3), Cross-Community Working Group on Enhancing ICANN Accountability, Working Stream 2 (WS2) implementation, and the org's operational planning process, among many others.

Additionally, the community was asked to rank six topics in order of priority, with one having the highest priority and six having the least priority. The six topics are listed below in the order suggested by the community.¹

1. Prioritization of the work and efficient use of resources
2. Precision in scoping the work
3. Consensus, representation, and inclusivity
4. Complexity
5. Culture, trust, and silos
6. Roles and responsibilities

Next Steps

As part of a broader effort to enhance ICANN's multistakeholder model, this paper lays out a path forward that encompasses existing work efforts and maps a course to facilitate continuous improvement of ICANN's multistakeholder model. In line with comments from the community, a holistic approach to evolving the multistakeholder model must not duplicate work underway, but rather harmonize with existing efforts.

The ICANN community, Board, and org all recognize that there is only so much bandwidth and resources available at any given time, particularly during the challenges faced as the globe confronts the COVID-19 pandemic. As much of the world faces an uncertain future as a result of this pandemic, it is even more essential for the community to commit efforts to ensuring ICANN's multistakeholder model is effective for all. Further, it is critical not to burden the community, given existing efforts and the already heavy day-to-day workload. Neither the community, Board, nor org can take on all the proposed priorities as outlined in the Draft Work Plan while balancing against ICANN's priorities and workload.

At the same time, investing in the future is key to ensuring we are able to address the current and future issues using the bottom-up multistakeholder process. With these considerations in mind, this paper seeks a balance between some extra effort now and increased effectiveness in the future, and proposes to focus this effort on the topics the community chose as the top three priorities in the public comments:

1. Prioritization of the work and efficient use of resources: Proper prioritization is critical to ensure the efficient use of resources and can have the most significant positive impact. Community input indicated the need to more efficiently prioritize the work in concert with ICANN org in order to use ICANN's resources efficiently.

¹ The Business Constituency, in its public comments regarding the work plan, suggested a seventh topic - Recruitment and Demographics. As there was no other support for the inclusion of this topic, it has not been fully explored as part of this project.

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2. Precision in scoping the work: Community comment noted that scoping has been too wide in the past, and that the community does not follow a disciplined approach in deciding on the types of work it takes on, how that work is scoped, and how it gets executed. A common, disciplined approach to scoping work can lead to a more efficient use of resources, improved decision-making, and avoids volunteer burnout.
 3. Consensus, representation, and inclusivity: Community input indicated that the ICANN community has difficulty reaching consensus in policymaking and other work processes for a variety of reasons, primarily among which is a lack of incentives for stakeholders to compromise. Representation and inclusivity in ICANN's multistakeholder model are also essential to ensure that ICANN's policies are developed after consideration of all stakeholders' points of view. Public comments noted that representation and inclusivity have affected the ability to reach consensus, make decisions, and deliver work on time.

These three high-priority topics present opportunities to build on existing work, and, with some added effort and greater coordination, to add value to the evolution of ICANN's multistakeholder model. The remaining three topics – the complexity of (A) tools to access information and data and (B) content; culture, trust and silos; and roles and responsibilities -- also represent important areas of community concern. However, with limited time and resources, the Board proposes that the community revisits these topics later in the Operating and Financial Plan's five-year time frame. Further, the remaining three topics may be more representative of symptoms of the three high-priority topics, and may not immediately lend themselves to tangible or practical solutions. In comparison, the three priority work areas speak to issues which may lend themselves to clearer and more implementable solutions.

The Work Plan outlined in Section II is anticipated to stretch over the course of FY21-25 -- the time period for both ICANN's Strategic Plan and the five-year Operating & Financial Plan. To ensure progress is made in each of the three priority work areas, the Board thinks it is critical to evaluate this work in a holistic fashion, considering both the elements of the projects and functions underway (noted below), as well as the actions outlined to address gaps. In addition, the Board recognizes that addressing the three priority work areas may be more a matter of achieving incremental and continuing improvements rather than creating a comprehensive solution in a single step.

The Board proposes an ongoing evaluation method, which may be connected to the evaluation of the strategic plan which is under discussion. The Board is also open to suggestions for other approaches that may help us better understand if the project is achieving its goals. For example, should progress be evaluated based on meeting objectives within a particular time frame or budget? Or should more subjective metrics be used, such as: Is there a sense that consensus is better defined and thus more achievable? Would partial progress on these goals be sufficient to declare the effort a success?

Seeking Community Input

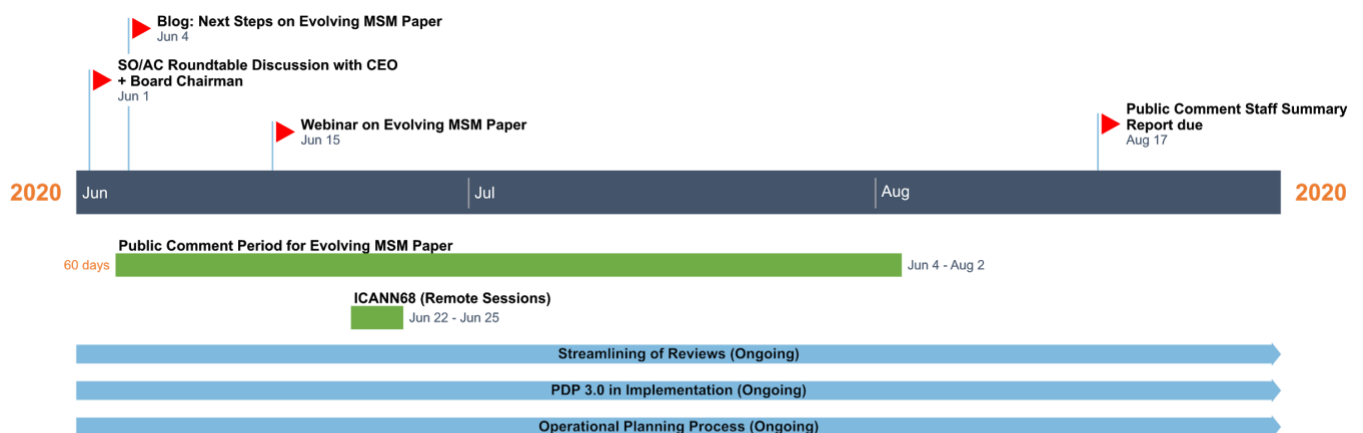
This paper compares existing work efforts against the three high-priority topics to identify where potential gaps may exist.² In addition, this paper also seeks input on how existing mechanisms

² See II. Work Plan for more details on work underway and identified gaps for each of the six community-identified priorities.

can be used or modified to evaluate progress made on the three priority work areas, possibly in the context of the strategic plan. The ICANN Board of Directors believes it is important to assess progress on the strategic objective of improving the effectiveness of our multistakeholder model of governance, which is outlined in the FY21-25 ICANN Strategic Plan. Progress could be measured against the targeted outcomes laid out in the plan. The Board is seeking the community's input on the following:

- ⦿ **The Work Plan:** Several work processes, mechanisms, and actions for each work area of the Section II Work Plan are identified in the table(s) that follow the Addressing the Gap(s) section of each of the priority work areas below. Are they sufficient to address the identified gaps? Similarly, are there other gaps and related actions that may address those gaps that should also be included in the Work Plan?
- ⦿ **Remaining Work Areas:** As discussed in Section IV below, the three remaining work areas will also benefit from the identified work that is already underway and the output of the Section II Work Plan. Community input on the draft Work Plan made it clear that there are groups willing and able to address some of the remaining work areas discussed in Section III of this paper. While the Board has focused this updated Work Plan on the top three priority areas, it also wants to make clear that any additional actions community participants would like to initiate to help address these work areas are welcomed. Are there any actions that your community group would like to initiate or coordinate? Additionally, are there any community efforts missing from this list?
- ⦿ **Evaluation:** Do you support the idea of using existing mechanisms to evaluate progress on the three high-priority work areas, including the actions already underway and those proposed, to address the identified gaps? This evaluation may be conducted in the context of the strategic plan or another, more suitable mechanism identified by the community.

Below is a proposed timeline of suggested progress on this document and related milestones:



II. Work Plan

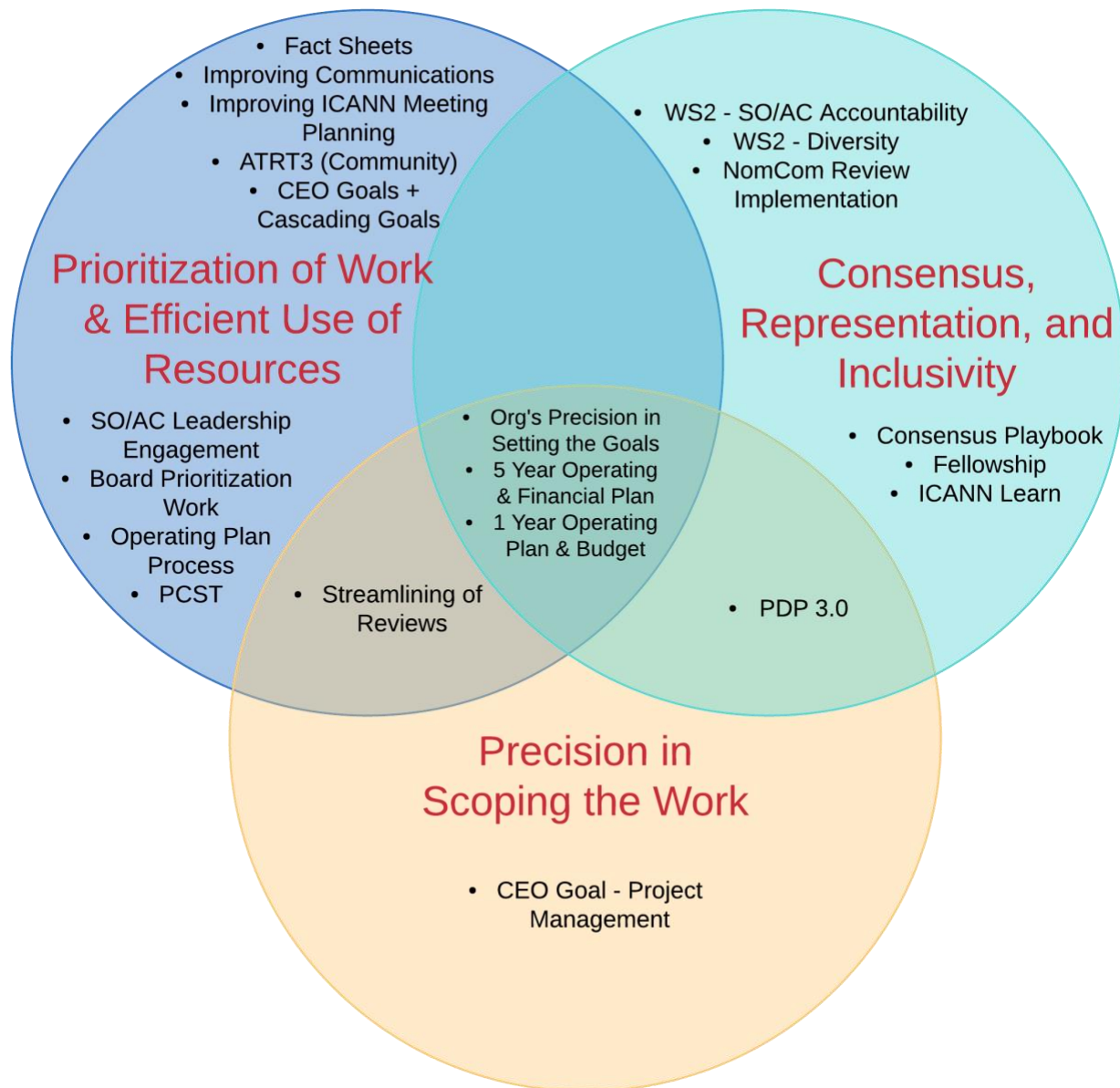
The following work plan describes, for each of the three priority work areas, projects and operational activities already underway that address each to an extent, including relevant milestones, as well as gaps that might be addressed. The previous iteration of the Work Plan identified owners for each of the work areas and asked for community input on the proposed owners. The Board heard the community's public comments and recognizes the existing workload already undertaken by these groups. The Board also wants to strike a balance between overburdening stakeholders and achieving ICANN's strategic objective to improve the effectiveness of our multistakeholder model of governance. Consequently, the approach to this Work Plan has been modified.

This Work Plan assumes that the relevant parties will continue to engage in their current work efforts, which holistically lend themselves to addressing each of the priorities. To that end, each work area includes:

- ⦿ A description of the issue
- ⦿ Projects and operational activities already underway
- ⦿ A description of the gaps in this work
 - A table under each identified gap describes proposed work processes or mechanisms that could address it, a description of that process or mechanism, how it may be utilized in a specific action, and who may be involved in that action.

By limiting the current effort to addressing the gaps in the three priority work areas, the Board believes we can achieve a necessary balance that will result in incremental enhancements to the multistakeholder model and improved efficiencies, which will benefit everyone's future work. More importantly, much of the work already underway addresses the community-identified work areas. The Board believes that by fine-tuning the processes or mechanisms that support existing work streams, the identified gaps can be plugged. In this Work Plan, the Board is proposing modest actions; some are already planned, or anticipated, activities and others are new suggestions. The proposed actions would not unduly burden the community and could have a materially positive impact on evolving the multistakeholder model. The Board welcomes the community's feedback on the proposed work processes and mechanisms to address the gaps in the three priority areas.

The figure below represents overlapping areas of existing work that address the three work areas.



Prioritization of Work and Efficient Use of Resources

Description of Work Areas:

Insufficient prioritization impacts the entire ICANN ecosystem and affects ICANN's ability to produce policies and complete other work in an efficient and timely manner. It also reinforces a silo mentality where stakeholders may not share the same priorities or a sense of common purpose about the overall work of ICANN. Proper prioritization of work is at the heart of using resources efficiently. While insufficient prioritization of work is not the cause of all observed inefficiencies, if properly managed, prioritization can have the most significant positive impact on the efficient use of resources to address the issues identified by the ICANN community. Based on community input, the need to more efficiently prioritize the work and efficiently use ICANN's resources is a pressing matter.

While the [ICANN Planning Process](#) does provide structure through the Strategic Plan, the Five-Year Operating and Financial Plan, and the annual planning and budget cycles, the community has said that sufficient prioritization is lacking. When a question arises about initiating new work or deciding whether an existing workstream should be retired, there needs to be a process that more effectively engages the volunteer community and gives them the tools to effectively prioritize work and make trade-offs where necessary. Community comments observed that sometimes even determining what is not a priority can be difficult and requires a thorough understanding of the issues. Without improved prioritization, ICANN org and the ICANN community will continue to try to do everything all at once, each valued with the same sense of urgency. This is not sustainable. There is clear agreement across the community that prioritization is vitally important, and discussions continue as to how this can be accomplished both within each group as well as collectively. The Enhancing the Effectiveness of ICANN's Multistakeholder Model project can help to provide consistency and structure to these discussions to enable better prioritization of the work and efficient use of resources.

Work Currently Underway:

- ④ **Streamlining Reviews** (Org, Board, and Community)
Estimated Completion Date - TBD based on Board priorities and the opportunity to engage with the community.
The streamlining of reviews, initiated by the Board and supported by the community, is a top focus, specifically the prioritization and budgeting of community-issued recommendations, the cadence and timing of reviews, and all other streamlining efforts. A [Draft Paper](#) was published in October 2019 detailing those efforts. ATRT3 included this topic in its work (see the ATRT3 section below), and the Board provided input on streamlining reviews as part of its [Public Comment on ATRT3 Draft Report](#). The Board intends to work in alignment with the ATRT3 recommendation to streamline reviews.

- ④ **ATRT3** (Community)
Estimated Completion Date - [May 2020](#)
The ATRT3 has issued its [Draft Report for public comment](#). The report proposes two options on how to streamline the review processes for both organizational and specific reviews, and what each of those options could look like. The Draft Report also identifies considerations regarding the prioritization of ICANN work, specifically focusing on the implementation of community generated recommendations (pp. 103-106). Following the closure of the public comment (see [Report of Public Comments](#)), the review team has been working toward its final report that will likely include recommendations on streamlining reviews and prioritizing community-issued recommendations. The Board has been observing ATRT3's progress, and will continue to engage with the review team as appropriate to ensure coordination of work and to avoid duplicated efforts. The review team will deliver its final report to the Board in May 2020, and the Board will have up to six months to act on the recommendations.

- ④ **Operational Planning Process** (Org)
Estimated Completion Date - Ongoing
ICANN org seeks to continuously improve its planning process. ICANN org's Draft FY21-25 Operating Plan includes descriptions of the major work ICANN org will undertake to achieve its strategic plan, operate the organization, and implement its mission. The plan includes operating initiatives and functional activities for the upcoming five-year period. Operating initiatives are major initiatives ICANN org will undertake to achieve the objectives and goals set out in the Strategic Plan. Functional activities are the day-to-day

activities supporting the organization's mission. ICANN org updates its Five-Year Operating Plan annually to include the latest activities that ICANN org is responsible for implementing. These planning efforts help facilitate prioritization and provide a useful roadmap for the organization, the community, and all stakeholders who seek to hold ICANN accountable to its mission.

One of the 15 operating initiatives in the FY21-25 Operating & Financial Plan, Planning at ICANN, will particularly strive to improve the quantification of resources, evaluation of needs, prioritization, flexibility, and transparency of the management of ICANN's resources and activities over the FY21–25 period.

⦿ **SO/AC Leadership Engagement (Community)**

Estimated Completion Date - Ongoing

For the past few years, the ICANN President and CEO and the Senior Vice President (SVP) for Policy Development Support have held regular meetings with all Chairs of the various ICANN Supporting Organizations (SOs) and Advisory Committees (ACs). These include an in-person roundtable session prior to the commencement of each ICANN Public Meeting and a one-to-one call between the CEO and SVP with each SO, AC, Stakeholder Group, and Constituency Chair in between ICANN Public Meetings. One purpose of these meetings and calls is to encourage exchanging information on current workloads, high-priority issues, upcoming work, and other concerns between the community and ICANN org, as well as to encourage regular information sharing and collaboration among the community Chairs. In January 2020, the SO and AC Chairs held a face-to-face meeting outside the ICANN meeting environment for the first time, where prioritization, collective governance, and other topics of mutual interest were discussed, including with Board leadership and senior ICANN executives.

⦿ **Board Prioritization Work (Board)**

Estimated Completion Date - Ongoing

Since FY18, the Board has been committed to setting Operational Priorities explicitly on an ongoing basis, which allows the Board to focus its planning and enhances the transparency of the Board's work. Board Operational Priorities are operational tasks, under the control of the Board, that help improve effectiveness and efficiency in fulfilling the five blocks of activities and operational priorities as determined by the Board each year. In addition to the Board Operational Priorities, the Board is also actively engaged in a number of activities that are not driven by the Board, but by the community and/or ICANN org. Board Operational Priorities are reviewed by the Board each fiscal year, and are presented prior to the Annual General Meeting of that year.

⦿ **CEO Goals and Cascading Goals (Org)**

Estimated Completion Date - Ongoing

Each fiscal year, the ICANN CEO works with the ICANN Board to set CEO goals for the next fiscal year. CEO goals include looking at challenges and new proposals with fresh eyes, as well as executing on existing projects. Together with the ICANN org Executive Team, the CEO prioritizes the steps toward these goals and measures progress, with goals cascading through the entire organization. The objective is for the entire ICANN org to be aligned, allowing all org employees to work together towards common priorities.

⦿ **Project Cost Support Team (Org)**

Estimated Completion Date - Ongoing

A Project Cost Support Team (PCST) is a cost controlling mechanism which empowers community leaders to manage the costs of cross-community projects by providing a support team to efficiently track, monitor, and control costs of an initiative during its lifecycle. The objective of a PCST is to gain clarity on past and future expenditures of a community-led initiative, provide better control on costs through its duration, and develop more reliable estimates for future similar activities. A PCST was set up on a pilot basis in March 2016, in agreement with the leaders of the SO/AC chartering organizations and the Co-Chairs of the IANA stewardship transition working groups, to develop reliable estimates of the cost of the IANA Stewardship Transition and Accountability work and to gain clarity on past and future expenditures. Since then, similar mechanisms have been used to manage the costs of major community-led initiatives such as the Expedited Policy Development Process on the Temporary Specification for gTLD Registration Data and the Second Review Team on Security, Stability and Resiliency.

⦿ **Fact Sheets (Org)**

Estimated Completion Date - Ongoing

Review team fact sheets ensure transparency for the community on the progress and resources related to specific reviews. They capture the attendance of review team members, costs associated with professional services and travel to attend face-to-face meetings, and milestones. Fact sheets are updated and posted on their respective wiki pages on a quarterly basis. See [ART3](#), [CCT](#), [RDS-WHOIS2](#), and [SSR2](#).

⦿ **Improving Communications Between ICANN Org and the Community (Org)**

Estimated Completion Date - Ongoing

ICANN org has implemented several efforts to streamline and enhance communications between the organization and the community, such as: (1) a twice-weekly Community Leadership Digest that contains current requests and information sharing from ICANN org and the Board, including upcoming deadlines and open Public Comment Proceedings; and (2) improvements to the format and staff guidelines for conducting Public Comment Proceedings.

⦿ **Improving ICANN Public Meeting Planning to Enhance the Effectiveness and Efficiency of Community Work (Org and Community)**

Estimated Completion Date - Ongoing

Based on consultations with the ICANN Public Meeting Community Planning Group, ICANN org has implemented incremental improvements to the meeting planning process. These include: (1) an ICANN Prep Week, held prior to each ICANN Public Meeting, which relieves pressure on meeting session scheduling through ICANN org, review teams, and other groups by providing informational updates in advance of the meeting week; (2) the publication of a Pre- and Post-Meeting Policy Briefing to summarize hot topics and important milestones for community policy work; (3) streamlining the submission and approval process for plenary sessions; and (4) continuing discussions with the community planning group on additional improvements to Public Meeting objectives.

Addressing the Gap(s):

Gap in Community-Developed Processes for Prioritization and Retiring Work - As outlined above, several concurrent streams of Board, community, and org work may address many of the concerns regarding this work area. However, some gaps remain and may require new or different approaches to address them. Individual community structures are currently discussing prioritization of their own work. It will be important for these community structures and groups to reach cross-community agreement on how to prioritize those projects and programs that affect multiple groups. The progress on such cross-community agreement will determine the degree to which this issue and gap are addressed. Relatedly, not all community groups have clear processes for retiring completed work. More broadly, the community may wish to consider how to extrapolate and apply principles and processes for prioritization that can be found in specific community groups or individual reviews, such as the GNSO’s PDP 3.0 initiative and the ATRT3 recommendation regarding prioritization of review recommendations.

Work Process or Mechanism	Description	Action	Involved Participants
Regularly scheduled meetings amongst the SO/AC Chairs and meetings, as needed, with ICANN org and Board leadership	A predictable cadence of discussions to collaboratively prioritize, de-prioritize, and retire work that will produce a community-wide work prioritization catalogue	<p>Each community structure creates a yearly priority list and work plan, to share across all community groups.</p> <p>Schedule periodic touchpoints for SO/AC/SG/Constituency Chairs, ICANN org and Board, and collectively decide what topics should be prioritized, deprioritized, or retired, including working within the available budget and with a view toward building these touchpoints into the annual planning and budgeting process.</p> <p>These are existing actions with proposed enhancements. Examples of existing actions include the SO/AC Chair Roundtables held between ICANN Public Meetings, and the regular 1:1 CEO calls held with each SO/AC, Regional At-Large Organization, Stakeholder Group, and Constituency chairs.</p>	<p>Community, SO/AC Chairs</p> <p>SO/AC/SG/Constituency Chairs, ICANN org, ICANN Board</p>

Gap in Community Alignment on Cost Management and Budget Allocations -

In addition, while many community groups and members regularly submit public comments on ICANN’s draft annual budgets, it is not clear if there is agreement and alignment across the community on what the priority projects and programs are and how the substantial resources for

those projects and programs should be allocated. It may be helpful for the community to look at ways to improve engagement within the community and with ICANN org early in the budget and planning process to facilitate a common understanding of needs and priorities.

Work Process or Mechanism	Description	Action	Involved Community Participants
Regularly scheduled meetings between SO/AC/SG/Constituency leaders and with ICANN executives	A predictable cadence of discussions about ICANN's annual planning and budget process	<p>Develop a community agreed upon engagement mechanism or process that will facilitate early involvement of SO/AC/SG/Constituency Chairs to collaboratively prioritize the community's work within the constraints of the available budget.</p> <p>Begin SO/AC/SG/Constituency Chair and ICANN org discussions regarding the ICANN budget and planning process earlier to allow more time for collaboration and agreement.</p> <p>These are existing actions with proposed enhancements. This may require additional formalization in the form of agreeing on meeting cadence, documentation and follow-up, to integrate outcomes into ICANN org's strategic planning and budgeting cycles.</p>	<p>SO/AC/SG/Constituency Chairs, ICANN org</p> <p>SO/AC/SG/Constituency Chairs</p>

Precision in Scoping the Work

Description of the Work Area:

Precision in scoping work is a critical step in the work process that supports the efficient use of resources, proper planning, timely decision-making, and the delivery of policies and other work products on time. Failure to properly scope work has led to delays in delivery, duplication, and implementation issues that arise after the fact.

Community comments noted that scoping has been too wide in the past, leading to endless discussions. It was also observed that the community does not follow a disciplined approach in deciding the types of work it takes on, how that work is scoped, and how it gets executed. Volunteers are tempted to put everything into one project in order to not have to revisit the work again in the future. In the ICANN ecosystem, there is no current common, disciplined approach to scoping work. This contributes to the inefficient use of resources, delayed decision-making, and volunteer burnout. The Enhancing the Effectiveness of ICANN's Multistakeholder Model project can facilitate the creation of a consistent process for scoping by building on the work already underway and considering its impact with the actions suggested to address gaps.

Work Currently Underway:

⦿ **PDP 3.0**

Estimated Completion Date - In implementation

As part of the [GNSO's PDP 3.0](#) project, the GNSO Council approved several recommendations that were aimed at improving the Council's effectiveness in managing future GNSO PDPs, such as: (1) requiring regular resource reporting; and (2) implementing and reviewing specific project management tools such as project plans, change requests, and Gantt charts to demonstrate timelines and progress. Coupled with existing flexibilities in the GNSO PDP rules, such as the use of charter drafting teams at the outset to clearly scope the work, the addition of these tools should facilitate greater precision, oversight, and course correction when needed. These improvements are currently being integrated into existing PDPs and will be deployed in future PDPs.

⦿ **Streamlining Reviews** (Org, Board, and Community)

Estimated Completion Date - TBD based on Board priorities and opportunity to engage with the community following the conclusion of ATRT3.

The Board has observed that several specific review teams have been challenged in setting a precise scope and keeping to it during their work. The Bylaws-stated review scope is broad and open to interpretation; this often leads to debates within the review team and difficulty in developing a focused scope of work. Currently, there is no incentive to limit the scope to pressing issues, leading to repercussions for workload, number of recommendations issued, and the need to prioritize the sizable inventory of implementation work. Additionally, the community leadership responsible for the appointment of review team members does not have the benefit of knowing which specific skills would be needed to perform the work defined during scope-setting -- the assembled review team sets its own scope after it has been appointed.

ATRT3 recommendations on streamlining reviews are expected to address some of these issues, for example setting time limits on the duration of community-led review work and requiring that terms of reference and work plans are established at the start of community's work. While the ATRT3 is not expected to recommend that the scope be set prior to assembling the review team, the existing Operating Standards include guidance on supplementing review team skills during the review, should the review team find a skills gap as it conducts its work.

The Board, through the Organizational Effectiveness Committee (OEC), has held discussions on how to improve the precision of scope setting within specific reviews while ensuring that the review team has sufficient skills to perform the analysis defined by the scope of work. The Board notes that the Operating Standards for Specific Reviews provide a useful road map for conducting reviews and include guidance on setting the scope along with other relevant processes. Since the adoption of these Operating Standards in June 2019, there has not been an opportunity to test the guidance on scope-setting for the specific reviews currently underway.

Regardless of when the scope is determined, there is an opportunity for community-led review teams to exercise stronger discipline in managing the scope of their work in line with the Bylaws and the guidance in the Operating Standards by considering the significance and potential impact relative to available time and resources. For example,

project management best practices can offer valuable tools and solutions for review teams, provided the team is committed to using them. Additionally, the Bylaws-mandated scope for organizational reviews is broadly framed and may contribute to confusion and inconsistency in how these reviews are conducted. While the ATRT3 may include recommendations regarding the scoping of reviews in its final report (it did not include any in its draft report), the Board, through the OEC, has indicated that the scoping of reviews should be included in the streamlining process and discussed as part of the work to enhance the effectiveness of ICANN’s Multistakeholder Model.

🕒 **CEO Goal: Project Management (Org)**

Estimated Completion Date – Ongoing

Enhanced project management tools and processes can lead to more focused discussions about resources and needs, resulting in more precisely scoped projects. One of the President and CEO’s cascading goals for Fiscal Year 2020 is to improve project management at ICANN org. The goal is to set up a network of project managers within ICANN org to write a project management handbook, identify the tools ICANN should use for project management across the org, and develop a framework for the project management process. This work began in late 2019.

Addressing the Gap(s):

Gap in Maintaining Appropriate Scope of Work: Community work is guided by the scope of the effort, derived from the group’s mandate or purpose. However, ensuring appropriate resources (community time, ICANN org support, and funding) are available can be challenging if the scope of the work itself is not managed by everyone involved. Project management best practices, including a disciplined approach to managing scope of work based on available time and resources, is critical to ensure the effective use of resources and accountable outcomes. A well-managed scope of work translates to eventual recommendations anchored in the group’s mandate and provides a clear path toward addressing significant issues. The Board plans to streamline the way reviews will be conducted in the future, in alignment with the recommendations from the ATRT3 and community input, and guided by the existing Operating Standards for Specific Reviews. This is expected to include a process for collaborative prioritization of community recommendations.

While the exact process of streamlining reviews is not yet determined, the eventual outcome, especially on scoping, will likely inform more precise and disciplined scoping for other cross-community efforts.

Work Process or Mechanism	Description	Action	Involved Participants
Streamlining of Reviews	A community-wide project with a goal of improving the timing and cadence of all ICANN Bylaws-mandated Reviews and	Fully leverage and implement the Bylaws-mandated, Board-approved Operating Standards that require terms of reference, timelines, work plans, and scope to be established at the outset of the review. This includes establishing regular reporting cycles to update	ICANN org, Review teams

	<p>operating more efficiently and effectively, while considering the availability of the community and ICANN's resources.</p>	<p>SO/ACs and the Board on progress, including milestones and resource utilization actuals compared to budgeted amounts.</p> <p>Develop a standard process to enable the SO/ACs to monitor the progress of the review team, as required in 3.7 of the Operating Procedures. This would also provide an opportunity for the SO/ACs to ask questions and/or provide input on the work as it develops, rather than later in the process.</p> <p>Review teams to categorize recommendations by high, medium, or low priority, as encouraged in 4.1 of the Operating Standards.</p> <p>The ICANN org Multistakeholder Strategy and Strategic Initiatives Team will include a briefing on the Operating Standards for the review team as part of its project management support and facilitation duties at the start of the review.</p> <p>These are existing actions with proposed enhancements.</p>	<p>ICANN org, Review teams, SO/ACs</p> <p>Review team members</p> <p>ICANN org</p>
<p>Operating Standards for Specific Reviews</p>	<p>A set of ICANN Bylaws-mandated and Board-adopted standards that ensure reviews are conducted in a transparent, consistent, efficient, and predictable manner, while supporting the community's work to derive the expected benefit and value from review processes.</p>	<p>Formally document acknowledgement that review team members are in receipt of, understand, and agree to be held accountable to the Bylaws-mandated Operating Standards.</p> <p>Create a standard process for documenting and acknowledging when the review team has shared its defined scope of work, or any amendments to it, with the SO/AC leadership that appointed them.</p> <p>These are existing actions with proposed enhancements.</p>	<p>ICANN org, Review team members</p> <p>ICANN org, Review team members, SO/ACs</p>

Consensus, Representation, and Inclusivity

Description of Work Areas:

Consensus is a process for group decision-making and a work method by which people can come to agreement. Achieving consensus is a critical step in ICANN's multistakeholder model to produce policies and other work in an effective, efficient, and timely manner. Community input indicated that the ICANN community has difficulty reaching consensus in policymaking and other work processes for a variety of reasons. Primary among them is a lack of incentives for stakeholders to compromise. Other factors include participants not having authorization to compromise, a lack of understanding of consensus, the skills of working group Chairs, and their ability to address capture tactics, as well as a zero-sum game approach to policymaking and other work. Winning by delay or maintaining the status quo are also noted in community comment as obstacles to achieving consensus, which may also be hampered by a lack of sufficient tools to effectively facilitate compromise.

Representation and inclusivity in ICANN's multistakeholder model are also essential to ensure that ICANN's policies are taken after consideration of all stakeholders' points of view. Inclusivity may face even greater challenges as the ICANN community tries to engage at a time of curtailed travel and face-to-face meetings due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Further, many who want to participate may also be challenged by competing priorities in their homes, families, and workplaces.

More broadly, community comment reflects differing views about how to appropriately apply these concepts in policymaking and other work streams. Public comments noted that representation and inclusivity have affected the ability to reach consensus, make decisions, and deliver work on time. The community has struggled with the concept of representation and inclusiveness, and in allowing all voices to be heard in a process while advancing the work in a timely manner.

Both the representation model and the open and inclusive model have support amongst the community as an effective mechanism to ensure that all voices are heard in consensus-based decision making. The development of an approach or solution to clarify how representation and inclusivity can be effectively applied and how consensus can be more effectively facilitated is critical to improving the effectiveness and efficiency of ICANN's multistakeholder model. The Enhancing the Effectiveness of ICANN's Multistakeholder Model project should help to facilitate and address many of the concerns regarding consensus, representation, and inclusivity.

Work Currently Underway:

⦿ **WS2 - SO/AC Accountability** (Community)

Estimated Completion Date - TBD based on community bandwidth

The [final report](#) of Workstream 2 of the Cross-Community Working Group on Enhancing ICANN Accountability (CCWG-Accountability WS2) includes a set of good practices for SO/AC/Groups to implement, to the extent that these practices are applicable and an improvement over present practices. These practices include, for example, documenting decision-making methods, outlining rules of eligibility and other criteria for membership, considering term limits for officers, organizing outreach efforts, including a strategy for outreach to parts of their targeted community that may be underrepresented, and ensuring overall diversity. Implementation of these recommendations shall contribute to improving the decision-making processes and participation, and to foster inclusivity.

These recommendations were [approved by the Board](#) in November 2019, and ICANN org is currently developing an implementation plan, though implementation of the SO/AC facing recommendations such as this will require SO/AC effort and is left to the discretion of each SO/AC/Group (see [WS2 Implementation Assessment Report](#)).

⦿ **WS2 - Diversity** (Community/Org)

Estimated Completion Date - TBD based on community bandwidth and guided by the budgeting and planning process.

The final report of the CCWG-Accountability WS2 proposes a number of recommendations by which ICANN may define, measure, report, support, and promote diversity. The CCWG-Accountability WS2 specifies that “diversity within ICANN refers to: the creation/existence of an inclusive environment in various aspects of stakeholder representation and engagement throughout all levels of the staff, community, and Board.” As such, improvements to ICANN’s diversity shall contribute to addressing the issue of representation and inclusivity identified above. These recommendations have been approved by the Board. ICANN org is responsible for some portions of implementation, though implementation of the SO/AC facing recommendations will require SO/AC effort (see [WS2 Implementation Assessment Report](#)).

⦿ **PDP 3.0** (Community)

Estimated Completion Date - In implementation

In 2018, the GNSO Council [adopted a number of recommendations](#) to improve the effectiveness of its policy development processes (PDPs). The GNSO is currently integrating some recommendations into its existing PDPs and intends to deploy the recommendations in future PDPs. Specific recommendations that may be relevant to issues identified during the community’s discussions on the evolution of the multistakeholder model include: (1) the development of a skills guide for working group members; (2) greater clarity over the role of working group Chairs; (3) exploration of alternative participation models in addition to the traditional open model; and (4) more robust project status reports and change management requirements. In particular, the GNSO acknowledged that there are challenges with building consensus when open participation in PDPs results in a large number of members with disparate skill sets, subject matter expertise, and knowledge of the applicable process rules.

⦿ **Consensus Playbook** (Community)

Estimated Completion Date - Completed in April 2020

Through the FY20 Additional Budget Request (ABR) process, the GNSO Council requested funding for professional assistance to develop a Capture vs. Consensus Playbook. Funding was approved for a Playbook that can be applicable to the entirety of the ICANN community and not limited to the GNSO PDP. The Consensus Building Institute (CBI), which has experience facilitating a GNSO PDP, completed the [Playbook](#) in April 2020. The Playbook is premised on the assumption that consensus building is a process that does not just take place at the end of a group’s deliberations. It includes practical tools and best practices for building consensus, bridging differences, and breaking deadlocks within ICANN processes beyond GNSO working groups. In developing the Playbook, CBI interviewed 14 ICANN community leaders across ICANN’s SOs and ACs and developed 15 recommended “plays” that can be applied to different phases of a group’s work.

⦿ **NomCom Review Implementation** (Community)

Estimated Completion Date - November 2021

The independent examiner conducting the NomCom Review produced a [final report](#), submitted in June 2018. Based on its detailed review of the independent examiner's findings and recommendations, the NomCom Implementation Planning Team prepared a Feasibility Assessment, adopted with full consensus on 14 December 2018. Then, the NomCom Review Implementation Working Group was created in March 2019 and submitted a [Detailed Implementation Plan](#) in September, which was subsequently adopted by the Board. The implementation of all 27 recommendations will affect the entire community, especially those bodies that receive NomCom appointees, including the ICANN Board and the PTI Board, as well as those groups that appoint members to the NomCom itself. The implementation is expected to advance the NomCom's, and by extension, ICANN's, accountability, transparency, and effectiveness.

⦿ **Fellowship Program** (Org)

Estimated Completion Time - Ongoing

Following a community consultation, ICANN org implemented updates to its [Fellowship Program](#), effective as of ICANN65 (June 2019). Although the objectives of the program remain unchanged (for example, facilitating participation from underdeveloped and underserved regions in ICANN policy and technical activities), the selection criteria were updated and the community's role in selection and mentoring was increased. In addition, the diversity metrics recommended by the CCWG-Accountability WS2 are now being used as part of the selection process.

⦿ **ICANN Learn** (Org)

Estimated Completion Date - Ongoing

ICANN org's online learning platform, [ICANN Learn](#), is undergoing a formatting update, as well as offering new courses. In FY20, two new courses aimed at newcomers to the ICANN community and policy processes were launched: DNS Fundamentals and Policy Fundamentals. The aim is to encourage all newcomers to take these two basic courses initially, followed by more specific coursework depending on the policy area and/or community groups they will join. In that regard, ICANN org is developing updated materials for a number of course modules as well as working on new courses to supplement the existing curriculum.

Addressing the Gap(s):

Gap in Resolving Areas of Impasse - While each of the work streams identified above represent an opportunity to enhance consensus, representation, and inclusivity in ICANN's work, it remains unclear how the community can collaborate to resolve impasses or unforeseen challenges in these existing processes. Addressing this gap would help the work progress more efficiently, leading to improved morale among volunteers and creating space for additional work to be addressed.

The three work processes outlined below have either been recently developed by the community or were already in existence. However, each may be used in new ways or taken together as a unified toolkit, which may help address the gap.

Work Process or Mechanism	Description	Action	Involved Participants
Consensus Playbook	A document, requested by the GNSO and prepared by a professional facilitator for broad community use	<p>Introductory webinar by the GNSO Council to explain the objective and utility of the Playbook, followed by community discussions facilitated by ICANN org, to determine whether aspects of the Playbook can be usefully deployed elsewhere in the community.</p> <p>This is a suggested new action, building on work done recently by the GNSO.</p>	GNSO Council, ICANN org
PDP 3.0	An initiative by the GNSO Council to improve the effectiveness of the policy development process in specific, identified areas	<p>Community-led webinars by the GNSO Council and facilitated by ICANN org to familiarize the broader community with the various improvements with a view toward determining if the improvements can be applied to their internal processes.</p> <p>Examples of improvements that may be useful to other community participation norms, and project management.</p> <p>This is a suggested new action, building on work done recently by the GNSO.</p>	GNSO Council, ICANN org
ICANN Learn, ICANN org Communications	A free online learning platform for the ICANN community	<p>Increase awareness of the platform and course content, including awareness campaigns, widespread publication of updated course catalogs, and suggested learning plans.</p> <p>This is an existing action with proposed enhancements.</p>	ICANN org

III. Remaining Work Areas

The draft Work Plan included three additional work areas for community input. Given the priority assigned to the three work areas included in Section II of the Work Plan, the remaining three issues are included here to note previous community input and to ensure progress is captured as part of a larger effort to ensure the evolution of the multistakeholder model. Progress on the three priority areas may deliver benefits to the three areas outlined below, and they may be revisited in the future as a result of that progress. For example, community efforts to address prioritization may have an impact on culture, trust, and silos. Finally, some community groups

expressed an interest in leading efforts on these remaining work areas. The Board welcomes that work, should those groups wish to engage on those topics.

Complexity of (A) the Tools to Access Information and Data and (B) Content

In the facilitated conversation on this issue, community comments described certain complexities that challenge the more effective and efficient functioning of ICANN's multistakeholder model. These focused predominantly on the internal ICANN work environment in two particular areas: the accessibility and ease of use of information and data, and the complexity of ICANN's Bylaws, processes, and procedures.

Work Currently Underway:

- ⦿ **ICANN Learn (Org)** - ICANN org's online learning platform, ICANN Learn, is being updated in terms of format as well as additional course offerings. In FY20, two new courses aimed at newcomers to the ICANN community and policy processes were launched: DNS Fundamentals and Policy Fundamentals. Both may help newcomers and other community members better understand complex topics.
- ⦿ **Information Transparency Platform (ITP) (Org)** - ITP is focused on improving access to and findability of ICANN's published information through the implementation of a document management system (DMS) and the enforcement of content governance.
- ⦿ **Open Data Platform (ODP) (Org)** - This platform offers machine readable data sets for people and organizations to consume and manipulate as needed.
- ⦿ **Process Documentation Initiative 2.0 (Org)** - As a result of this initiative, flowcharts and corresponding handbooks were developed that now serve as easy to follow introductions to the key processes conducted across ICANN's multistakeholder model. The documented processes include: reviews, advice and correspondence, Supporting Organizations, Advisory Committees, and Empowered Community powers.
- ⦿ **Streamlining of Reports (Org)** - The Report@ICANN project was initiated in 2017 with the objective of deriving opportunities to improve resources and cost management and reducing the complexity of content while still maintaining ICANN's core values of accountability and transparency. As a result, ICANN org eliminated multiple reports, reduced reporting frequencies, and eliminated unnecessary translations where feasible.
- ⦿ **Implementation of WS2: Diversity (Org)** - The diversity recommendations from WS2 acknowledged both the importance of language diversity as well as the need to improve the balance in usage of the six official United Nations languages. One recommendation suggested measuring and documenting the availability and usage of translation and interpretation services.
- ⦿ **Improving Public Comment Proceedings and Other Staff Publications (Org)** - In 2019, ICANN org adopted internal staff guidelines for conducting Public Comment proceedings that aimed to clarify when and how staff should request community input on policy proposals, operational initiatives, and other consultations. In 2018, the Board adopted the GAC's and ALAC's joint statement on "Enabling Inclusive, Informed, and

Meaningful Participation at ICANN” and indicated its intent to encourage ICANN org to produce materials toward this goal while balancing available resources. The ATRT3 Draft Report also includes discussions of improvements to public comments, and any recommendations delivered in the Final Report and adopted by the Board will be coordinated with other ongoing work.

Culture, Trust, and Silos

Community sentiment gathered during the facilitated discussion about this issue indicated that the varying cultures across the ICANN community, when paired with a silo mentality, have at times challenged ICANN’s ability to work more cohesively and deliver policy and other work in a timely fashion. Similarly, a lack of trust or perceived lack of trust sometimes challenges the community to work past preconceptions, hampering effective, efficient discussions and decision-making.

Work Currently Underway:

- ⦿ **NomCom Review Implementation** - See description under “Consensus, Representation, and Inclusivity” above.
- ⦿ **SO/AC Leadership Engagement** (Community) - As noted under Prioritization of the Work and Efficient Use of Resources work area (above), efforts have been made to increase opportunities for interaction and collaboration between SO and AC leaders. For example, there are dedicated mailing lists that the current set of leaders use regularly to communicate. In January 2020, the SO/AC Chairs met in person (for the first time outside an ICANN Public Meeting) to discuss prioritization and greater engagement opportunities and to meet with members of the ICANN Board and Executive Team.
- ⦿ **Action Request Register and Correspondence** (Org) - ICANN org is examining how to further integrate work trackers, such as the Action Request Register and correspondence, to improve reporting, planning, and internal work coordination.
- ⦿ **Complaints Office** (Org) - The [Complaints Office](#) is a function within ICANN org that: provides a centralized location to submit complaints regarding the ICANN org; receives complaints, researches them, collects facts, reviews, analyzes, and resolves issues as openly as possible; helps the ICANN org build on its effectiveness, and contributes to increased transparency from the org; and aggregates the data from complaints to identify and solve for operational trends that should be improved.
- ⦿ **Ombudsman** (Org) - [The ICANN Ombudsman](#) is independent, impartial, and neutral. The Ombudsman's function is to act as an informal dispute resolution office for the ICANN community, who may wish to lodge a complaint about the ICANN staff, Board, or problems in Supporting Organizations. The purpose of the office is to ensure that members of the ICANN community are treated fairly.
- ⦿ **WS2: Accountability and Transparency** - CCWG-Accountability WS2 recommendations were developed to improve ICANN’s overall accountability and transparency practices. Their implementation should result in improved accountability and transparency, ultimately contributing to raising trust levels. The WS2

recommendations have been adopted by the Board and work is underway to plan implementation.

- ⦿ **ATRT3** - The ATRT3 Review Team published its [Draft Report](#) on 16 December 2019 for [public comment](#). The areas of culture, trust, and silos were not specifically mentioned in the report. However, the review team did propose a number of improvements with regard to the GAC and its interaction. The review team’s final report may include additional issues that fall into this category. See the broader description under “Prioritization of the Work and Efficient Use of Resources” above.
- ⦿ **Expected Standards of Behavior** – ICANN has [expected standards of behavior](#) that apply to all who participate in the ICANN processes, whether ICANN Board, org, or community. These expected standards of behavior are an essential anchor to addressing this issue.
- ⦿ **ICANN Community Anti-Harassment Policy** – The [ICANN Community Anti-Harassment Policy](#) was developed after consideration of public comments received on the expected standards of behavior referenced above. The Community Anti-Harassment Policy was developed in consultation with the ICANN community and gives participants recourse if they identify or are victims of inappropriate behavior or harassment.

Roles and Responsibilities of ICANN Board, Org, and Community

The facilitated community conversation indicated that there remains a need for a clear, shared understanding of the distinct roles and responsibilities of the ICANN community, ICANN org, and Board in order to evolve ICANN’s multistakeholder model. For example, there are a range of views in the community about whether the Board should be more proactive in facilitating policymaking. With divergent views about these roles, it will be a challenge to ensure common goals are achieved as the multistakeholder model grows and evolves.

Work Currently Underway:

- ⦿ **SO/AC Leadership Engagement** (Community) - See description under “Prioritization of the Work and Efficient Use of Resources” above.
- ⦿ **Process Documentation Initiative 2.0** (Org) - See description under “Complexity of (A) the Tools to Access Information and Data and (B) Content” above.
- ⦿ **CEO Report** (Org) - Ahead of each Board workshop, the ICANN org Executive Team compiles a brief report for the Board summarizing each function’s highlights, milestones, and provides an overview of recent activity. These reports are then shared with the community to increase transparency.
- ⦿ **Delegation of Authority Guidelines** (ICANN Board resolution and document) - In November 2016, the Board adopted the “ICANN Delegation of Authority Guidelines” to provide clear guidance and clarification of roles between the ICANN Board and the ICANN CEO/management. This document identifies the respective key roles of the Board, the CEO, and the delegation of authority from the Board to the CEO and key staff. It also identifies the key interdependencies in those relationships.

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- ⦿ **WS2: Staff Accountability** (Org) - The final report of the CCWG-Accountability WS2 includes a description of the roles and responsibilities of ICANN's Board, staff, community members, and the links between them. It also recommended posting the descriptions on icann.org. The CCWG-Accountability WS2 recommendations were adopted by the Board and implementation planning is underway.
 - ⦿ **Operating Standards** (Org) - The ICANN Board [adopted](#) the [Operating Standards for Specific Reviews](#) on 23 May 2019; see also the relevant [blog post](#). Section 3.1.9 details the roles and responsibilities of review team members, review team leadership, SO/ACs, SO/AC Chairs, ICANN Board, and ICANN org for the conduct of specific reviews.
 - ⦿ **Complaints Office** (Org) - See description under culture, trust, and silos above.
 - ⦿ **Ombudsman** (Org) - See description under culture, trust, and silos above.

IV. Conclusion

The ICANN Board recognizes the broad range of work already underway in the community that will impact the efficient and effective functioning of ICANN's multistakeholder model. With the modest addition of some new actions, as outlined in the "Addressing the Gap(s)" section under each area of the work plan, the ICANN Board believes the community's added work can make a tangible difference in how our model effectively serves our community. Recognizing that the community already has much work to do -- and with a sensitivity for overloading overtaxed community groups with new, complex projects -- the Board looks forward to hearing community input on the steps outlined in this document.

V. References

ALAC-GAC [Joint Statement on Inclusive, Informed & Meaningful Participation](#) and [Board response](#)

Cross-Community Working Group on Accountability Workstream 2 [Final Report](#)

Evolving ICANN's Multistakeholder Model, see [Appendix C of the Draft FY21-25 Operating & Financial Plan](#)

[Enhancing the Effectiveness of ICANN's Multistakeholder Model](#)

[Feasibility Assessment](#) and Initial Implementation Plan (FAIIP) by the NomCom2 Review Implementation Planning Team (IPT)

GNSO Policy Development Process 3.0: [How to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the GNSO Policy Development Process](#)

ICANN Board Resolution: [ICANN's Delegation of Authority Guidelines](#) (adopted 8 November 2016)

[ICANN Community Leadership Digest](#) archived publications

ICANN [Fellowship Program](#)

[ICANN Learn](#)

ICANN's [Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2021-2025](#)

[ICANN President & CEO Goals for Fiscal Year 2020](#)

ICANN's [Process Documentation Initiative](#)

Independent Review of the ICANN Nominating Committee: [Final Report](#)

NomCom Review [Detailed Implementation Plan](#)

[Public Comment Guidelines](#) for the ICANN Organization

[Public Comment Proceeding for ICANN's Draft FY21-25 Operating & Financial Plan](#)

Resourcing and Prioritization of Community Recommendation: [Draft Proposal for Community Discussion](#)

Role of the Board, ICANN Board's [five blocks of responsibilities](#) (as of October 2019)



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