



ICANN

ICANN Strategic Plan *for fiscal years 2016 - 2020*

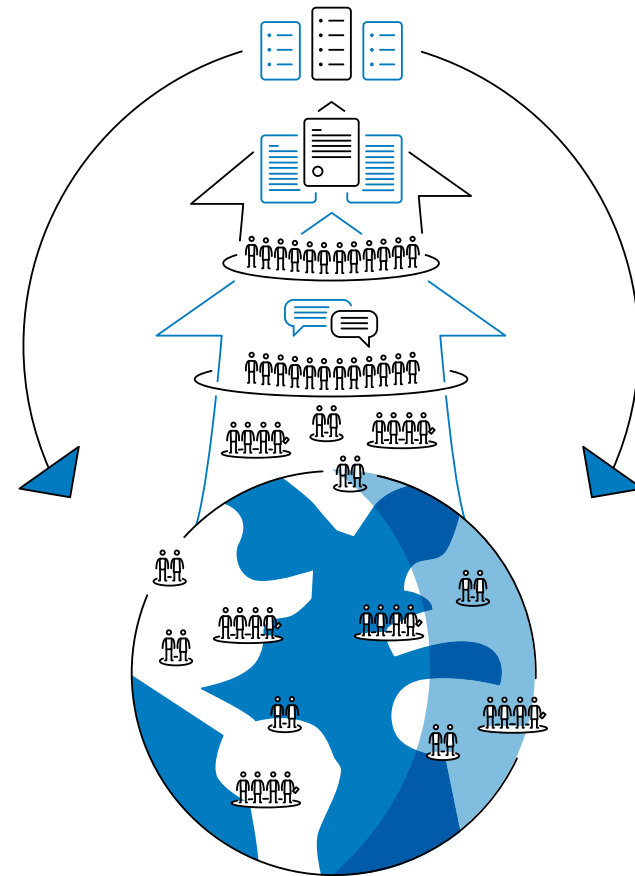
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Introduction

ICANN is committed to its multistakeholder model of governance and believes that global inclusivity, transparency and accountability are critical to being trusted by its stakeholders worldwide to fulfill its Mission. ICANN encompasses ICANN’s stakeholders—including its Supporting Organizations, Advisory Committees, and Nominating Committee—Board of Directors, CEO, and Staff. ICANN’s multistakeholder model, therefore, defines its community. Bottom-up processes are used for its critical activities, such as policy development, strategic planning, and the selection of the ICANN Board of Directors.

ICANN strives to be a proficient, responsive and respected *steward of the public interest* through its commitment to public accountability, openness, and effective cooperation and collaboration. These collective efforts culminate in a common shared goal: *a single, interoperable Internet supported by stable, secure and resilient unique identifier systems.*

The Internet remains a globally shared resource unlike anything the world has ever had. It drives nearly continuous change in everything it touches in society. The impacts of those changes are



Introduction (Continued)

magnified by their ever-increasing rate and reach. ICANN must be ready to not only meet these changes, but to be ahead of them with respect to their impact on the Internet's unique identifier systems. This Five-Year Strategic Plan seeks to enable us to do just that. A key aspect of the strategic planning process, therefore, has included deliberate attention to the major environmental shifts that ICANN should consider in focusing its resources.

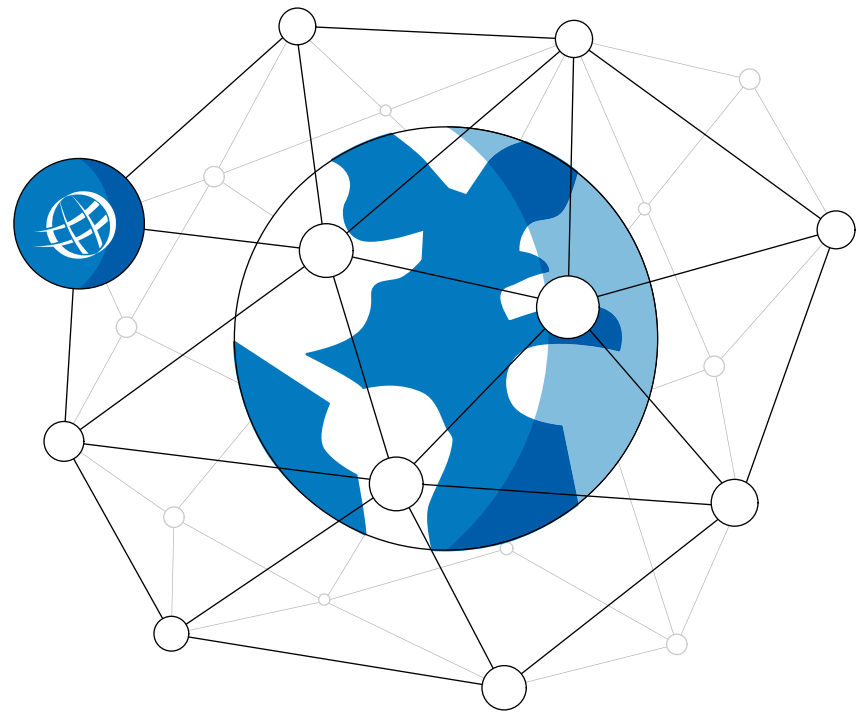
Beginning in April 2013, ICANN sought and incorporated extensive community input in the creation of its Five-Year Strategic Plan. During the ensuing fourteen-month process, related initiatives such as the Affirmation of Commitments Reviews, the Regional Engagement Strategies, and Strategy Panels informed the Plan. The end result is this document. It includes a new **Vision**, ICANN's founding **Mission**, and five **Strategic Objectives**. For each Strategic Objective, the goals, key success factors (outcomes) and key risks are clearly defined¹. The Five-Year Strategic Plan is complemented by a Five-Year

Operating Plan, which details—for each Strategic Goal—portfolios of activities, outcomes, risks, dependencies, and phasing over the next five years through FY2020.

¹ Outcomes and risks do not necessarily connote ICANN responsibility.

Vision

ICANN's vision is that of an independent, global organization trusted worldwide to coordinate the global Internet's systems of unique identifiers to support a single, open globally interoperable Internet. ICANN builds trust through serving the public interest, and incorporating the transparent and effective cooperation among stakeholders worldwide to facilitate its coordination role.

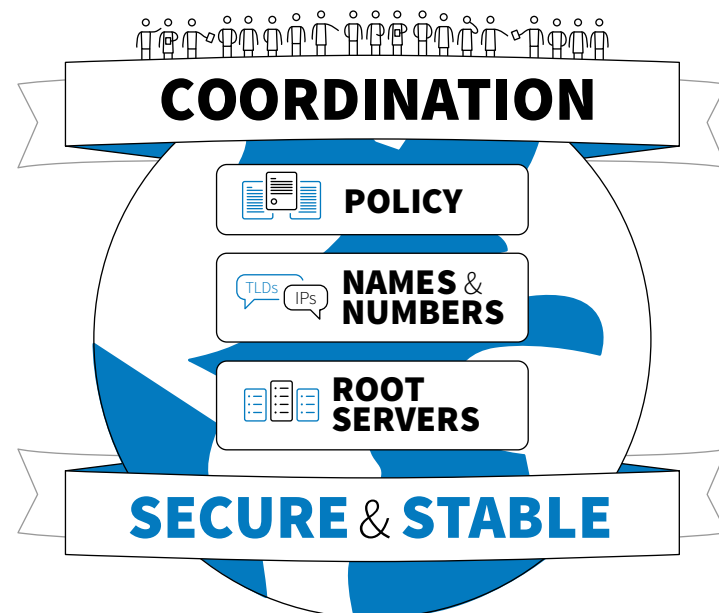


Mission

ICANN's founding mission, as stated in its [Bylaws](#), is to coordinate, at the overall level, the global Internet's systems of unique identifiers, and in particular to ensure the stable and secure operation of these related systems. This includes:

1. Coordinating the allocation and assignment of the following three sets of unique identifiers for the Internet (the IANA function):
 - a. Domain names (used in a system referred to as "DNS");
 - b. Internet protocol ("IP") addresses and autonomous system ("AS") numbers; and
 - c. Protocol port and parameter numbers.
2. Coordinating the operation and evolution of the DNS root name server system.
3. Coordinating the community's policy development reasonably and appropriately related to these technical functions.

In performing its mission, ICANN is guided by core values enumerated in its Bylaws, including diversity, fairness, integrity, creativeness, effectiveness, responsiveness, and transparency. These general principles and values continue to guide the activities of ICANN.

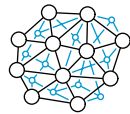


Strategic Objectives

Strategic Objectives for the next five years

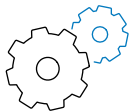
Taking into account the external forces and international growth and evolution of the Internet and the domain name system and the other identifiers ICANN coordinates, ICANN has made success in five Strategic Objectives a priority to continue to fulfill its stated Mission and realize its Vision by 2020. These Strategic Objectives are derived from extensive public input on ICANN's [key challenges and opportunities](#) and on the strategic areas highlighted by ICANN's Board of Directors, as well as input on related initiatives. The five Strategic Objectives are:











In the remainder of this document each Strategic Objective is outlined with Strategic Goals, Key Success Factors (Outcomes), and Strategic Risks.



1 Evolve and further **globalize** ICANN.

In 1998 when ICANN was formed, four percent of the world’s population was online with half of those users in the United States. There were three million websites, only seven gTLDs (generic top-level domains), just three RIRs (Regional Internet Registries) for the entire planet, and no ccNSO (Country Code Names Supporting Organization) to represent 243 ccTLDs.

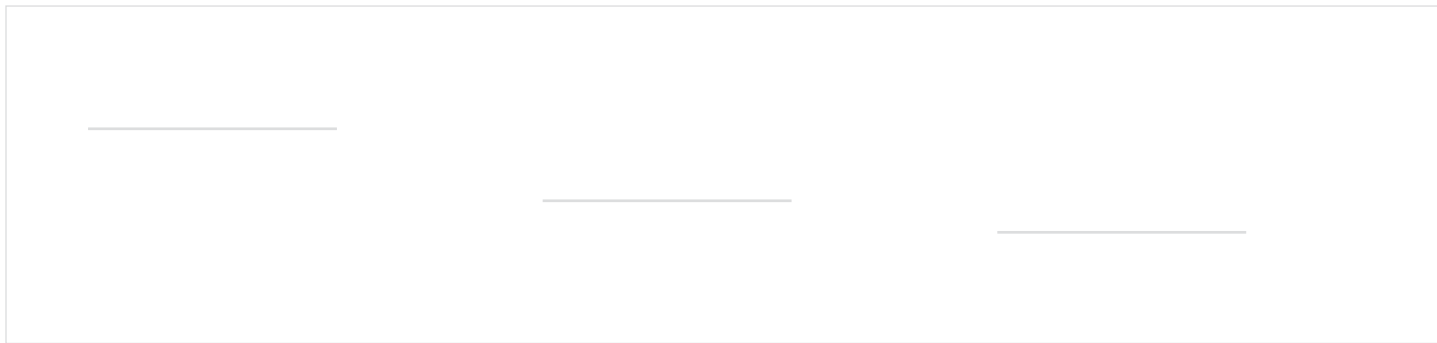
In 2013, 35 percent of the world’s population was online, with almost half in Asia. There are over 635 million websites accessed through more than 200 million domain names. There are now five RIRs with the addition of Africa and Latin America managing their own regions, and 285 ccTLDs (including 36 IDN ccTLDs in non-Latin scripts)—and the ccNSO membership has spread across the globe. While RIRs are regionalized and individual ccTLDs run localized policy development, current gTLD policy development topics are mostly of interest to first world countries, which may contribute to low participation from some other parts of the world.

By the time ICANN’s Five-Year Strategic Plan is complete in FY2020, it is estimated that 63 percent of the world’s population will be online (five billion users), many of whom won’t use Latin keyboards. This growth and development brings more users, expectations and dependencies—from a more international and diverse community of stakeholders.

In order to meet the needs of this changing global landscape, ICANN will continue to evolve its multistakeholder processes and structures—both face-to-face and online—to enable: broad, inclusive, multilingual, engagement; new forms of participatory, consensus-based decision-making; and globalized and regionalized institutional frameworks to support such enhanced functions².



TO ACHIEVE THIS STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE, ICANN SEEKS TO:



² ICANN’s collaboration with members of the global Internet ecosystem also is a critical element for achieving this goal and is addressed in section 4.



1.1 Further **globalize and regionalize** ICANN functions.

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS (OUTCOMES)

- Globalize ICANN's operational functions to support ICANN in being more relevant, inclusive, connected and collaborative worldwide.
- ICANN's communications allow for connection and engagement by the community in major languages/scripts.
- Recognized hubs and engagement mechanisms supporting the regional engagement strategies and local community participation in ICANN.
- Diversification of ICANN functions across hub and engagement mechanisms.

STRATEGIC RISKS

- Cost of globalization is not sustainable with incoming resources to meet community demand.
- Change in global environment prevents globalization, or globalization is not perceived as mission-driven.





1.2 Bring ICANN to the world by creating a balanced and proactive approach to **regional engagement** with stakeholders.

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS (OUTCOMES)

- Broad and effective participation from around the world in ICANN's programs and initiatives demonstrated by an increase in engagement of countries and stakeholder groups worldwide.
- Successful implementation of, and reporting on, regional engagement strategies across all relevant ICANN regions.
- More geographic diversity of accredited Registrars and Registries.

STRATEGIC RISKS

- Governments and/or international organizations reject model of ICANN as a stand-alone global organization, and push for absorption into UN or other governmental system.
- Failure or disruption of existing organizations in the Internet ecosystem.





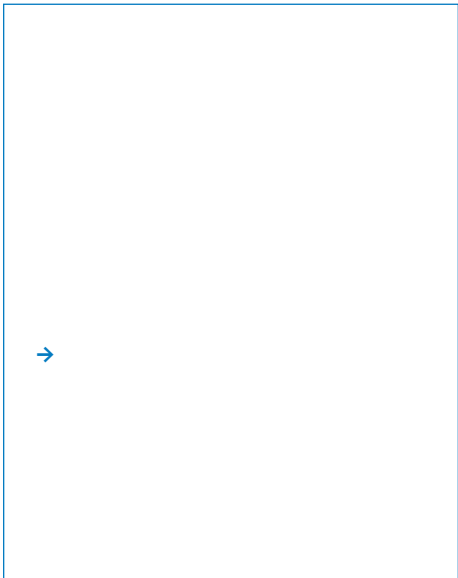
1.3 Evolve policy development and governance processes, structures and meetings to be more accountable, inclusive, efficient, effective and responsive.

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS (OUTCOMES)

- Clear, effective and predictable policy development and decision-making processes (including cross-community collaboration) that allow for greater inclusion by diverse global stakeholders resulting in implementable ICANN policies and advice.
- Wide use of improved tools and mechanisms for global participation and representation, including the use of remote participation to engage stakeholders from emerging regions.
- Meeting and engagement programs supporting the global, multistakeholder model.
- ICANN's SO/AC structures evolved to increase efficiencies and effectiveness and meet the needs of a broad and inclusive global community.
- Decision-making is seen as open, transparent, inclusive and legitimate.

STRATEGIC RISKS

- Fail to reach agreement on framework for evolving structure.
- National laws (e.g. in privacy and cyber security areas) adversely affect ICANN policy development and implementation.





2 Support a healthy, stable, and resilient **unique identifier ecosystem**.

The unique identifier ecosystem of cooperating parties faces immense change while seeking to define itself and evolve. The activity on the Internet reflects the full range of human motivations and conduct. In part, such activity reflects the open nature of the Internet that has made it successful, enabled innovation at its edge, and allowed for the sharing of knowledge, creativity and commerce in a global commons.

By the end of 2013, there were more mobile devices than people on the planet. By the end of 2020, it is estimated there will be as many as one trillion “things” connected to the Internet, many using the DNS and all using IP addresses as a platform for a range of services for the world’s users. This will expand the very nature of the Internet from an on-demand human service to an always on, near continuous use service for sensors and machines.

New use of domain names, including the availability of new TLDs, are driving change and expansion – inspiring new Internet applications, but also creating the possibility of consumer confusion, as well as introducing new challenges in security and stability at all levels of

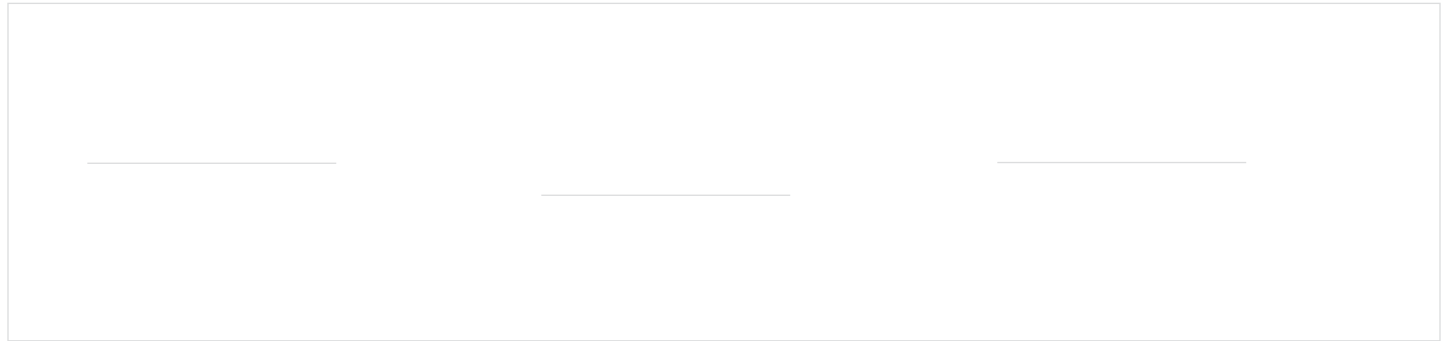
the hierarchical system. A challenge will be to concentrate on the ecosystem’s resilience and ability to maintain its structure and function over time in the face of external stress.

By contrast, the rise of apps for mobile devices (having reached 45 billion downloads in 2013 and expected to reach 350 billion by 2018) is putting the future and even relevance of domain names in question, while heightening the importance of IP addresses in the background as unique identifiers to connect users to their intended destination in a global interoperable Internet. The exhaustion of IPv4, and either the gradual migration to IPv6 or the increased use of address sharing techniques, will result in changes to the addressing ecosystem that will effect how addresses are used and managed.

The growing and evolving unique identifier industry is operating within that changing landscape. ICANN will engage stakeholders to help support and plan for the industry’s evolution and empower a global and responsible industry that fosters growth and innovation.



TO ACHIEVE THIS STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE, ICANN SEEKS TO:





2.1 Foster and coordinate a healthy, secure, **stable, and resilient** identifier ecosystem.

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS (OUTCOMES)

- Increased collaboration with the global community that improves the security, stability and resiliency of the unique identifier ecosystem (including updates of the root zone, Internet numbers registries, and protocol parameter registries, operation of the “L” root server, and other operational infrastructure supporting the identifier ecosystem).
- Ecosystem is able to withstand attacks or other events without loss of confidence in the operation of the unique identifier system.
- Unquestionable, globally recognized legitimacy as coordinator of unique identifiers.
- Reduction of government/industry/other stakeholders’ concerns regarding availability of IP addresses.
- Strengthened arrangements, including commitments, roles and responsibilities, with entities that directly use IANA services.
- Successful transition of the IANA functions stewardship to ICANN as announced by the NTIA.
- Globally accepted, reliable, secure, and trusted services to facilitate access to, and update of, identifier registration data.

STRATEGIC RISKS

- Major attack or event results in failure of the DNS root name server system, TLD(s) of substantial size, routing system, or other significant identifier systems in which ICANN plays a role that causes loss of confidence in the administration of the IANA functions, Internet identifier ecosystem, or internationalization of ICANN.
- Ecosystem members’ resistance to collaboration leads to gaps in DNS or other identifier administration best practices.
- Fragmentation of the Internet as a result of insufficient/incomplete technology transition.
- User confusion or routing system failure due to widespread unauthorized reuse of allocated IPv4 addresses.
- Failure of the identifier registration data services to gain acceptance by, or meet the needs of, the users of the identifier ecosystem.





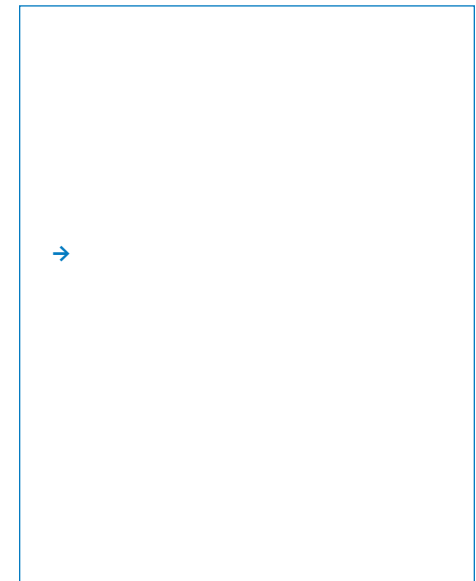
2.2 Proactively plan for changes in the **use of unique identifiers** and develop **technology roadmaps** to help guide ICANN activities.

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS (OUTCOMES)

- The unique identifier system evolves to meet the world’s needs.
- Effective coordination with the IETF and other forums that focus on protocol and technology changes.
- Improved technical acceptance of new TLDs, including Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs), within operating systems, applications, services, etc.
- Unique identifiers are used for the development of new technologies and enhancements to existing technologies.

STRATEGIC RISKS

- Failure to respond to changes occurring outside ICANN’s control.
- Unanticipated threats and attacks using new technologies.
- Insufficient planning leads to lack of unique identifier security, stability, and/or resiliency that retards or constrains growth of new or existing technologies.





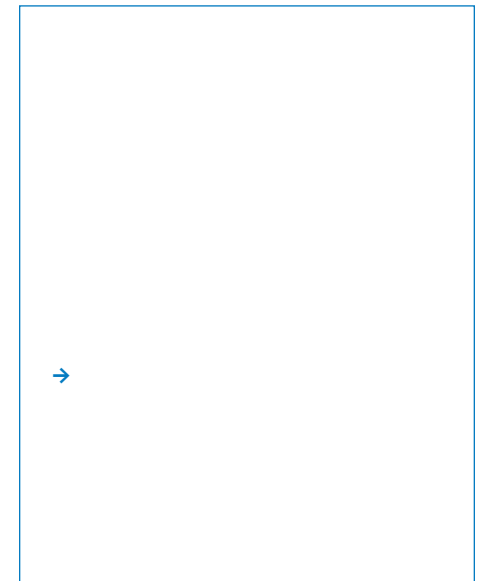
2.3 Support the evolution of domain name marketplace to be **robust, stable and trusted.**

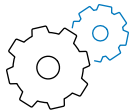
KEY SUCCESS FACTORS (OUTCOMES)

- Credible and respected industry that is compliant with its responsibilities as demonstrated by open, transparent, and accountable systems, policies, and procedures implemented using best practices.
- High confidence in ICANN's coordination of the domain name system.

STRATEGIC RISKS

- Conflicting agendas of key players thwart cooperation and evolution of marketplace to serve the public interest.
- Loss of confidence in ICANN's coordination of the domain name marketplace.



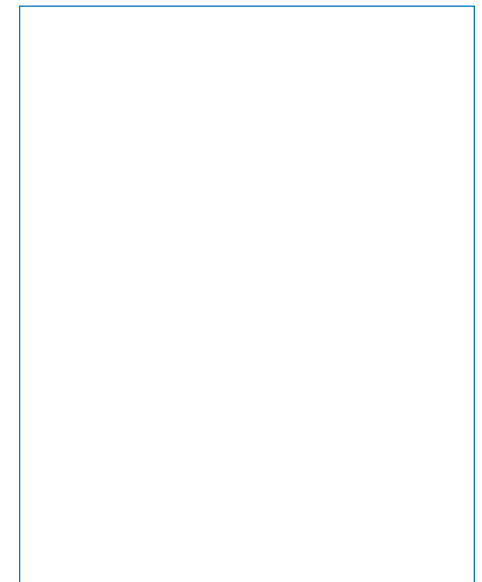


3 Advance **organizational, technological** and **operational excellence**.

As the Internet and world around us changes, so too must ICANN. We will not change *Why* we do what we do. We will not change *What* we do. But to respond to the many and varied external forces and growing demand that our global stakeholders face, we must continue to perfect *How* we do what we do.

ICANN seeks to mature our organization—to improve the skillsets, processes, and technologies through which we operate to deliver services to the ICANN community and the public. We seek to develop a greater ability to meet the speed and scale of innovation happening around us and deliver with excellence in everything we do.

TO ACHIEVE THIS STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE, ICANN SEEKS TO:





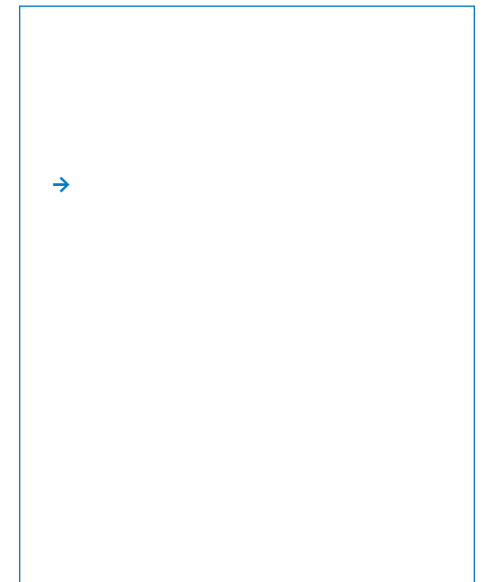
3.1 Ensure ICANN's **long-term financial accountability, stability and sustainability.**

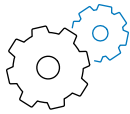
KEY SUCCESS FACTORS (OUTCOMES)

- New initiatives are introduced with the full understanding and consideration of financial and organizational impact involved.
- ICANN has an established planning process with effective community engagement, including a Five-Year Strategic Plan informing operational planning and budgeting.
- ICANN is recognized by the global community as a fiscally responsible organization.

STRATEGIC RISKS

- Lack of commitment to fund organizational and/or financial excellence.
- Market-driven disruption of revenue model.





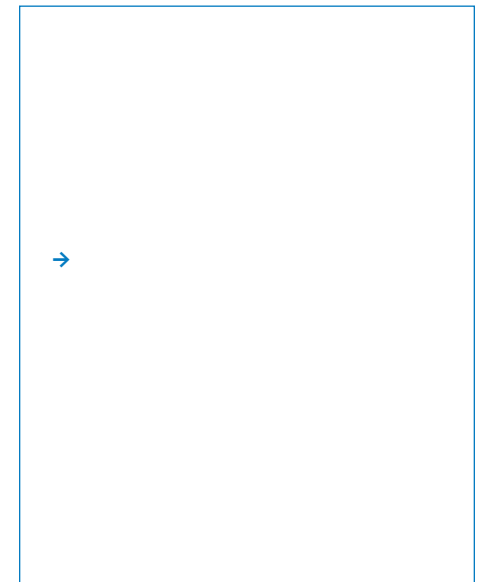
3.2 Ensure structured **coordination of ICANN's technical resources.**

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS (OUTCOMES)

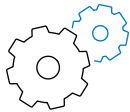
- Top tier global IT infrastructure performing at 99.999% uptime (5 minutes or less of unplanned downtime anywhere in the world, in a year) in FY2020 through effective resource management and best practices.³
- ICANN is recognized by the global community as having technical excellence and thought leadership.

STRATEGIC RISKS

- ICANN suffers significant technical failures.
- Lack of commitment to fund or otherwise ensure technical excellence.



³ This applies to ICANN's IT infrastructure; the operation of the L Root server will continue to target 100% availability.



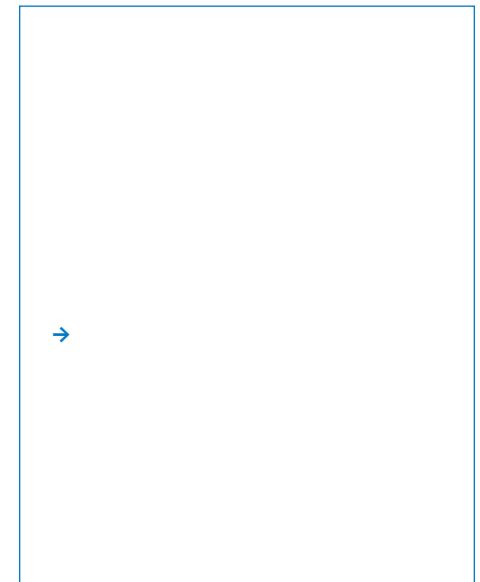
3.3 Develop a globally diverse **culture of knowledge and expertise** available to ICANN's Board, staff and stakeholders.

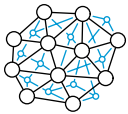
KEY SUCCESS FACTORS (OUTCOMES)

- Organization has established systems to attract and retain the very best talent globally, and to develop and motivate Board, staff and stakeholders to achieve their highest potential and contributions to ICANN.
- ICANN is recognized by the global community as having technical excellence and thought leadership.
- Decisions are informed by the best available operational, technical and legal expertise from within and outside the ICANN community.

STRATEGIC RISKS

- ICANN community grows to become insular and prevents the use of the best available expertise and creates barriers to ICANN participation.
- Lack of commitment to fund or otherwise ensure technical excellence.





4 Promote ICANN’s role and **multistakeholder** approach.

Role clarity is a key challenge for the Internet governance ecosystem, as both the Internet and global geopolitical landscapes are in a near-constant state of change. As a byproduct of this continuous change, organizational overlaps and gaps among the administrative and governing groups emerge. The result can be unhealthy competition, misunderstood intentions, strained relations, or duplication of effort and inefficient use of resources to solve problems. Or worse, the result can mean critical issues facing the Internet go unaddressed or unmanaged, exposing the world to their risks.

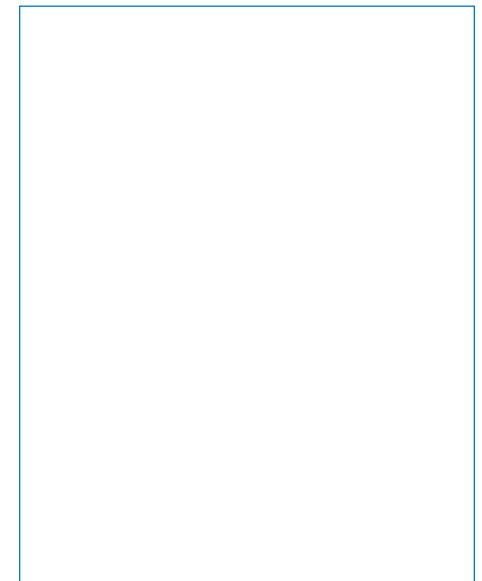
ICANN seeks this role clarity for itself. We strive to clarify the linkages and frameworks that underlie ICANN’s responsibilities in the current Internet ecosystem. We commit to developing ways to maintain and enhance ICANN’s stewardship in an evolving ecosystem. We pledge to cultivate thought leadership on ways in which ICANN can serve a complex set of Internet constituencies. We also commit to

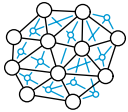
strengthening relationships with members of this evolving ecosystem to achieve our shared goals and serve the public interest.

By extension of this effort, and without seeking to expand its role and mandate, ICANN commits to contributing to creating greater role clarity for the entire Internet governance ecosystem. We see opportunity for the ecosystem to be stronger together through greater cooperation and coordination. In this, we pledge open, transparent communications to foster a single, open, global Internet for worldwide benefit.

TO ACHIEVE THIS STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE, ICANN SEEKS TO:

Placeholder for content related to achieving the strategic objective.





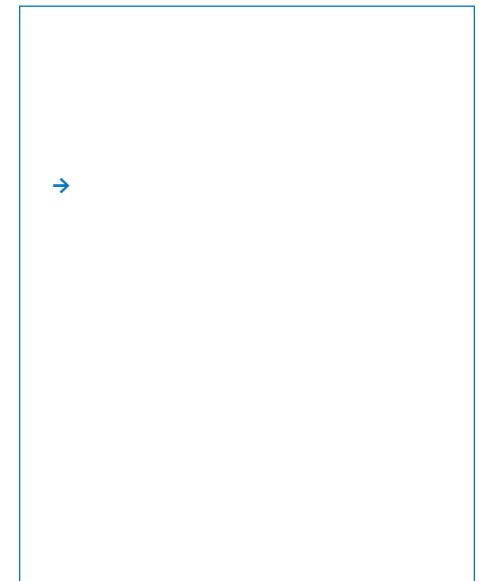
4.1 Encourage engagement with the existing Internet governance ecosystem at national, regional and international levels.

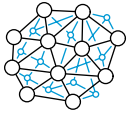
KEY SUCCESS FACTORS (OUTCOMES)

- ICANN's legitimate role and ability to meet the public's needs are unquestioned and fully trusted by relevant Internet organizations, governments, international organizations and stakeholders worldwide.
- Strengthened frameworks for partnership and engagement with Internet organizations, governments and stakeholders to support inclusive, collaborative participation in ICANN.

STRATEGIC RISKS

- Perception that ICANN's engagement is an effort to expand its role and mandate.
- Failure of engagement to forestall forces that seek to have the governance of the unique identifier system transferred to a non-inclusive governance environment.





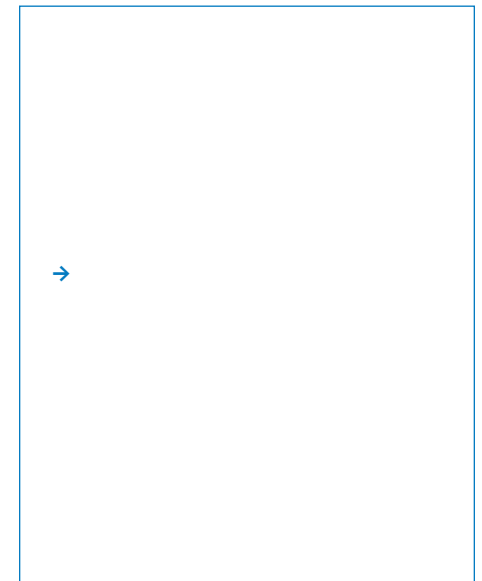
4.2 Clarify the role of governments in ICANN and work with them to strengthen their commitment to supporting the global Internet ecosystem.

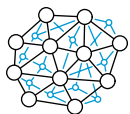
KEY SUCCESS FACTORS (OUTCOMES)

- Governments believe that their participation in ICANN and the broader, multistakeholder Internet governance ecosystem meets the needs of their citizens.
- Frameworks for partnership and engagement with Internet organizations and governments are functioning and supporting more inclusive, collaborative participation in ICANN.

STRATEGIC RISKS

- Environmental and geopolitical change causes governments or other stakeholders to change their involvement and participation in ICANN.
- Perception that particular governments or IGOs are inappropriately influencing ICANN's mandates.
- Fragmentation of the logical/technical layer of the Internet.





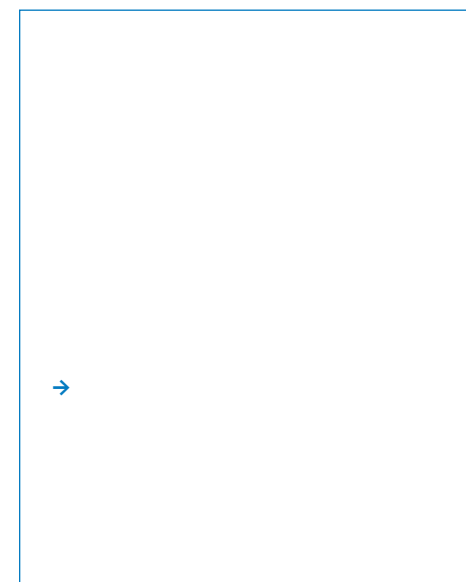
4.3 Participate in the evolution of a global, trusted, inclusive multistakeholder Internet governance ecosystem that addresses Internet issues.

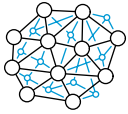
KEY SUCCESS FACTORS (OUTCOMES)

- ICANN is an effective contributor and supporter of a global and reliable Internet governance ecosystem and that addresses technical and non-technical issues for the global community.
- Recognition by decision-makers across stakeholder sectors of the multistakeholder approach to govern the Internet.
- Demonstrate leadership by implementing best practices in multistakeholder mechanisms within the distributed Internet governance ecosystem while encouraging all stakeholders to implement the principles endorsed at NETmundial.
- Proliferation of national and regional multistakeholder Internet governance structures.

STRATEGIC RISKS

- Failure of Internet related organizations that impact the Internet ecosystem and threatens the preservation of one, open, secure global Internet.
- Failure to reach agreements on partnerships and objectives to serve the broader Internet community.
- Pressure on ICANN to expand its remit.





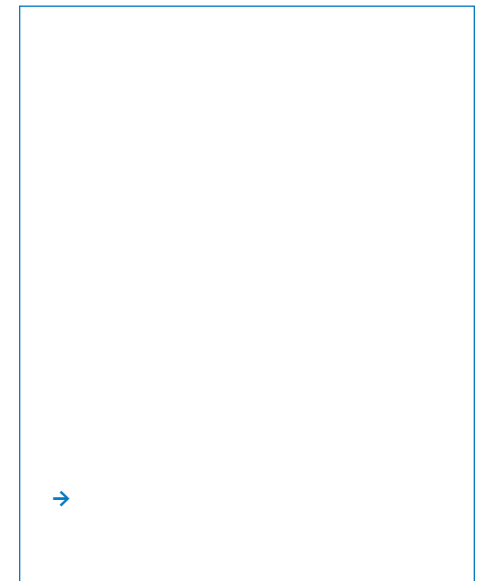
4.4 Promote role clarity and establish mechanisms to **increase trust** within the ecosystem rooted in the public interest.

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS (OUTCOMES)

- Shared understanding by Board, staff and stakeholders of the allocation of responsibilities for design, development and implementation of policy and operational processes.
- Shared understanding of the roles, responsibilities and accountability of the Board, staff and stakeholders.
- Board, staff, and stakeholders use best practices and exercises appropriate behavioral norms.

STRATEGIC RISKS

- Failure to achieve targets for global diversity in ICANN, and for accommodating political and cultural differences in ICANN.
- Failure to align on a common framework for decision-making and allocation of responsibilities.
- As ICANN grows, inability to manage potential conflicts of interest and capture within the Board, stakeholders and staff.





5 Develop and implement a **global public interest** framework bounded by ICANN’s mission.

The Internet is a shared global resource, the greatest platform for knowledge in the history of the world. It drives continuous change in everything it touches: business, education, government, technology, and society.

As the Internet grows worldwide and society increases its dependency on it for all manner of activity, the Internet’s systems of unique identifiers become more important and of global public interest. ICANN seeks to develop a public responsibility framework for promoting the global public interest in the coordination of the Internet’s unique identifier systems and in furtherance of ICANN’s mission.

The framework will clarify ICANN’s roles, objectives and milestones in promoting the public interest through capacity building, and increasing the base of internationally diverse, knowledgeable, and engaged ICANN stakeholders.

TO ACHIEVE THIS STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE, ICANN SEEKS TO:



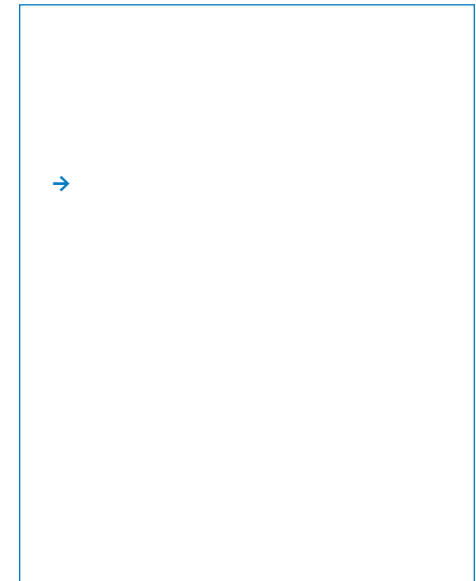
5.1 Act as a steward of the public interest.

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS (OUTCOMES)

- The ICANN community’s decision and policy-making structures and processes are driven by a clear understanding of the public interest, including a healthy unique identifier system and marketplace.
- The ‘L’ root server and related infrastructure is enhanced to continually improve the services provided for the public interest.
- Common use across the ICANN community of best practices that demonstrate commitment to the public interest.
- Streamlined reviews that demonstrate the effectiveness of best practices in support of the public interest.

STRATEGIC RISKS

- Inability to reach consensus on what constitutes “public interest”.
- Privacy concerns impact the ability to improve root services.
- ICANN community does not reach consensus on best practices related to the public interest.
- Perception that ICANN is driven by selected interests rather than the public interest.
- ICANN’s structures evolve in a manner that results in capture or perception of capture by groups of stakeholders.





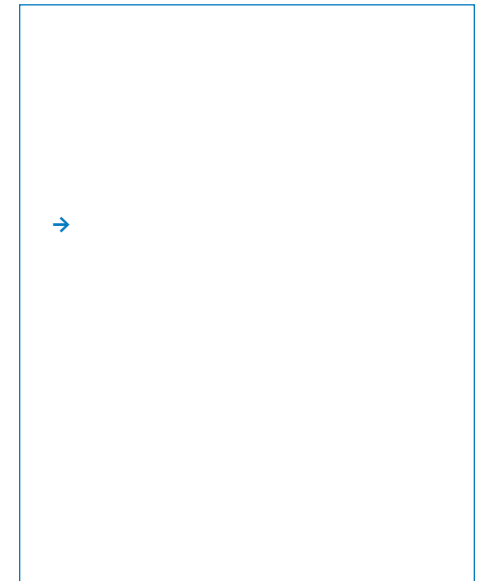
5.2 Promote **ethics, transparency and accountability** across the ICANN community.

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS (OUTCOMES)

- Shared agreement on an accountability framework for the ICANN community.
- Effective accountability mechanisms and transparency procedures supporting enhanced ICANN accountability and governance.
- Effective and clearly defined ethical framework implemented across the ICANN community.
- Demonstrated accountability and legitimacy of ICANN, through the evolution of the Affirmation of Commitments and implementation of review mechanisms.

STRATEGIC RISKS

- Harm to ICANN legitimacy due to failure to comply with accountability and transparency processes.
- Failure to achieve international agreement on the evolution of the accountability and transparency obligations.





5.3 Empower current and new stakeholders to fully participate in ICANN activities.

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS (OUTCOMES)

- Increased accessibility, knowledge and capability of participants in the ICANN community.
- ICANN's public responsibility activities remain within its mission.
- Balanced regional participation of ICANN stakeholders, especially those from under-represented, developing economies and communities.

STRATEGIC RISKS

- Perception that public responsibility activities are designed for ICANN to wield influence.
- Failure to overcome the perception that ICANN is not globally inclusive.

