

Transmittal Letter for the Attached Written Report as Requested by the GAC

Next Round: Outreach Engagement and Communications Approach as of 8 October 2024

Dear Nico,

On May 16, 2024, ICANN org (org) published the Next Round Engagement and Outreach Plan ([Plan](#)). The Plan provides an overview of the objectives, approach, targets, anticipated messaging, and expected deliverables of the engagement and communications activities for the New gTLD Program: Next Round. Subsequently, the Government Advisory Committee (GAC), asked ICANN for further details on the “the results and outputs of the Engagement and Outreach Plan” particularly as it pertains to the Applicant Support Program (ASP) - See GAC Advice – ICANN80 Kigali Communiqué, §1.a.iv.

The rationale for the advice contained in §1.a.iv. further requested: “**itemized costs**, detailed **scope** (and) clear **metrics of success** (including specific **targets**). [As well as] ...associated **KPI targets** from (the) May 2024 plan.” As a follow-up, the GAC and org held clarification calls on July 15 and August 28, in which the org outlined the overall approach to executing outreach and engagement, with a focus on the Applicant Support Program (ASP), Interim President and CEO, Sally Costerton led the org side presentation of these topics.

During the calls, the org described the **scope and targets** of the outreach efforts, detailing fourteen (14) initial countries for ASP and a further seven (7) countries targeted for country-level media campaigns, and conveying the approach of direct contacts (“cold calls”) to ASP-eligible entities located exclusively in developing and underserved geographies. The org further conveyed that **metrics of success** would include such indicators as entities contacted and audiences reached. Additional metrics and **KPI targets** from the Plan- such as click-through rates for social media or number of ASP applications by region or entity category - will be available in the coming weeks, after the opening of application windows and the first cycle of targeted media campaigns currently underway. These metrics will be reported on a monthly basis.

The org has also implemented a monthly reporting cadence on Outreach and Engagement to the community via the IRT on an ongoing basis. These monthly reports include various metrics and KPIs as outlined in the May 2024 strategy and GAC members are encouraged to join these updates. Two such interactive reporting sessions have been held to date, on 10 September and 8 October 2024. Information for upcoming monthly sessions (and recordings for past sessions) can be found at <https://community.icann.org/display/SPiR>

As monthly reports continue, the GAC will observe that the number of metrics will expand, as will cumulative measures that will allow for constructive observations from ICANN community participants and “course corrections” or adjustments of approach. In summary, it is the intention of the org that the monthly cadence of increasingly detailed data on outreach, engagement and communications efforts for the Applicant Support Program (ASP) will allow the GAC, org, and other community bodies to continue collaborating, informed by data, in a manner that has already proven valuable to the trajectory of the Next Round: New gTLDs Program.

At the same time, on the matter of **itemized costs**, org clarified to the GAC that funding for engagement and outreach, as well as communications activities, along with other Program

support functions for the New gTLD Program: Next Round, have been included under “Overarching Program Support” in the published [Implementation Plan \[newgtlds.icann.org\]](#) (see page 24). This line item carries a budget of USD 9.9M shared across various program support functions.

Further to these exchanges, on 7 September 2024, the ICANN Board adopted the scorecard [GAC Advice – ICANN80 Kigali Communiqué](#), noting that points included in the ICANN80 GAC **\$1.a.iv** advice item were provided as examples and not themselves specific items of advice.

To close the exchanges on this topic, the GAC chair requested that the org provide a written report, detailing the approach for outreach and engagement for the Next Round, with a focus on ASP, as outlined in presentations made and discussions highlighted above. Accordingly, the org has prepared this report (attached) as requested and now wishes to present the same to the GAC. (The data in the attached report is valid as of 30 September 2024.) The materials provided aim to confirm to the GAC that the overall approach and detail is adequate, dynamic, and responsive per the GAC’s request.

Kind regards,
Chris Mondini and Bob Ochieng