



ICANN77 Governmental Advisory Committee Capacity Development Workshop (GAC CDW)

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ICANN77 GAC Capacity Development Workshop¹

Venue: Washington, D.C., United States

Date: Sunday 11 June 2023

I. Executive Summary

During ICANN77, the Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) held a productive and informational Capacity Development Workshop (“CDW”) on a selection of topics of interest to the GAC, such as:

- An introduction to the ICANN Public Comment process and
- A priority policy topic for governments on Domain Name System (DNS) abuse,

These topics provided an opportunity for GAC participants to learn the basics or increase their knowledge on aspects of the ICANN multistakeholder model and operations of the different functions within it. It was also an opportunity for GAC attendees to learn about the background and perspectives of a priority policy topic of interest to current government members at ICANN, and to share experiences and best practices to enhance GAC internal collaboration on ICANN matters.

These two topics interfaced with the public comment proceeding [Amendments to the Base gTLD RA and RAA to Modify DNS Abuse Contract Obligations](#). The presenters and experienced members of the GAC discussed how the GAC can take advantage of the multistakeholder model of ICANN to make their opinions heard, both collective and individual, while learning about a topic of interest to participants and their constituents. This topic has an opportunity to put into practice what they have learned during the CDW in the near and long term.

For future CDW activities leading up to the ICANN78 Annual General Meeting, GAC members will work on collecting materials and having discussions on emerging technologies and other issues that affect governments in the ICANN sphere.

All the ICANN77 GAC Capacity Development Workshop session materials can be found on the [GAC ICANN77 Meeting Agenda](#).

¹ *The intent of this report is to provide an overview summary of the Capacity Development Workshop (“CDW”) event. This report does not make reference to all resources used and information shared during all the event sessions. Unless otherwise indicated, representations in this document are intended to reflect summaries of presenter remarks and should not be construed as formal GAC positions or views. References to all the CDW recordings, transcripts and materials can be found on the GAC website.*

II. Background

The GAC Underserved Regions Working Group (USRWG), in collaboration with the United States Government held a Capacity Development Workshop (CDW) on DNS Abuse for GAC Members to understand and contribute to the public comment proceeding [Amendments to the Base gTLD Registry Agreement and Registrar Accreditation Agreement to Modify DNS Abuse Contract Obligations](#).

III. Objectives

The workshop had the following primary objectives:

- Introduce the GAC to the ICANN Public Comment process
- Discuss priority policy topics for governments such as Domain Name System (DNS) abuse
- Lower barriers to information and participation in the work of ICANN

IV. Workshop process

The workshop was designed to provide high-level overviews of the GAC within ICANN and its operations, and various topics of interest to governments in light of the ICANN77 Meeting agenda. The workshop was divided into three (3) sessions, taking place on the Sunday before the official start of ICANN77. Several speakers from across the community and ICANN org expertly discussed their topics. Each session provided opportunities for GAC attendees to ask questions, share experiences and better understand how the issues may impact the regions in which the members are located and which aspects should be taken into account for the future.

A post-workshop survey was conducted to determine the effectiveness and efficacy of the Capacity Development Workshop. The results of that survey (see the Appendix to this report [here](#)) offer insights on potential future capacity development efforts by the GAC.

V. Summaries of GAC Capacity Development Workshop Sessions

Session 1: Introduction and Preliminary Public Comment Discussion

Moderators: Karel Douglas (USRWG co-chair), Tracy Hackshaw (USRWG Member)

Presenters: Nicolas Caballero (GAC Chair), Blaise Azitemina Fundji (DRC), Manal Ismail (Egypt), Benedetta Rossi (ICANN GAC Support), Laureen Kapin (GAC PSWG co-chair), Nigel Hickson (United Kingdom)

Session Link:

<https://gac.icann.org/sessions/icann77-gac-capacity-development-workshop-on-dns-abuse-1-3>

Nicolas Caballero, GAC Chair, welcomed remote and in-person GAC members and observers. Mr. Caballero introduced the workshop and panelists to the audience, with the main ideas for

this session including the GAC's role in the ICANN ecosystem and why Public Comment is important to the multistakeholder model of internet governance and the GAC.

Blaise Azitemina Fundji, GAC Member from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and some members of the Capacity Development Workshop (CDW) Planning Group, then discussed the topic for the later sessions of the workshop, DNS Abuse. Blaise provided context on DNS Abuse and Mobile Phishing from the perspective of a representative of an underserved region before handing the session over to former GAC Chair and long standing GAC member Manal Ismail to get started on the first session's primary subject, the Public Comment Process from a GAC Perspective.

As a best practice, public comment should be considered an ongoing activity, and not just a one time process, said Manal. ICANN regularly posts new opportunities to comment on some of the following topics:

- ICANN org or community governance documents such as the ICANN Bylaws, strategic, operating and financial plans; budgets and community charters.
- Policy recommendations including reports of potential, ongoing, and completed policy development processes.
- Recommendations from organizational and specific reviews.
- Implementation plans for approved consensus policy recommendations.
- Cross-community working group recommendations.
- ICANN base agreements with registry operators and registrars.

The importance of certain comments may not be as high as others, but they provide a great opportunity for the GAC to give input outside of the formal policy advice structure.

Tracy Hackshaw, Universal Postal Union (UPU) and member of the GAC Underserved Regions Working Group (USRWG), asked if individual GAC members / governments should submit comments outside of the GAC official response. Manal Ismail responded that while governments can provide comments, it would be beneficial for members to coordinate with each other if possible.

Thiago Dal-Toe, GAC Member from Colombia, followed up on Tracy's question and asked Manal and Benedetta Rossi (ICANN GAC Support), to discuss the process for drafting GAC comment. Thiago brought up the 40 day period of comment and asked how meetings are conducted and how penholders are determined.

Jason Merrit, GAC Member from Canada, asked "What are, if any, the obligation or procedural processes to acknowledge or address any comments that are submitted from an organization's perspective?".

Benedetta Rossi replied that the answers to those questions depend on the subject matter of the comment. In general comments from different GAC members will make it into the GAC comment and then into the ICANN org Public Comment Team comment summary report.

Rudy Nolde, GAC Member from Germany, asked “How Public Comments are taken into account and do they really influence ICANN's work or is it advisable to engage in these processes at an earlier stage?”. Benedetta Rossi replied that the public comment takes place before decision making and it is very influential to policy development and other organizational considerations.

Gemma Carolillo from the European Commission asked if the GAC has ever accompanied public comment with formal advice on certain matters, and Manal Ismail replied that this is a complicated pairing, but in general public comment is a way to influence the community without providing formal advice.

Benedetta Rossi then provided a rough timeline and workflow for public comment opportunities, using past examples for context.

Jonas Roule, GAC Member from France, asked if the GAC needs consensus to submit a public comment, which is the case for the pen holders submitting the comment. Zeina Bou Harb, GAC Member from Lebanon, then asked if public comments should be of the opinion of the GAC representative or of National opinion. Manal Ismail responded that these opinions should represent those of the countries that are represented.

Manal Ismail then presented on the process of penholder identification for public comment. The process, as described, was that the GAC looks for volunteers, and if no volunteers come forward then ICANN support staff will draft a document that is then submitted to the committee for review. Based on the due date of the submission, the GAC will work backwards to determine the schedule. Through the review of the document, comments and additional input will be appended to the document. These comments and potential revisions will be worked through by the penholders or the ICANN support staff before being finalized for submission. This process and the collective voices behind the submission carry significant weight due to the GAC's standing in the ICANN community.

Finally, Laureen Kapin, PSWG Co-Chair and Nigel Hickson, GAC Member from the United Kingdom took over to share past experiences of public comment proceedings. Tracy Hackshaw then asked Laureen to summarize the process of a past public comment. Laureen discussed the past Phase 1 of the EPDP on Registration Data Policy for all gTLDs. Regarding that EPDP, “The GAC had several concerns but one was very important among others, and that was how long it takes to respond to urgent requests. And the title tells you all that you need to know. They're urgent requests, meaning there is life or critical infrastructure in play, and that is why typically the law enforcement agency deems it an urgent request and the GAC or other members of the community then indicate if they believe the request got it wrong. There was a short period of time to respond and GAC indicated that it needed to be reconsidered and a report looking at submitted Public Comments noted a large amount of input concerning the

definition of urgent requests. This actually changed the implementation team's approach to that and decided on a 24 hour notice period.”

Laureen summed up this example by calling on representatives to contribute as many voices will lead to greater responses.

Session 2: Key Priority Topics for Governments - DNS Abuse

Moderator: Susan Chalmers (USA)

Presenters: Chris Lewis-Evans (GAC PSWG), Gabriel Andrews (GAC PSWG), Jeff Bedser (SSAC), Russ Weinstein (ICANN org),

Session Link:

<https://gac.icann.org/sessions/icann77-gac-capacity-development-workshop-on-dns-abuse-2-3>

Chris Lewis-Evans, PSWG co-chair, began the session by providing a high-level overview introduction about DNS abuse and the United Kingdom perspective on it in their country. There are 800,000 reports of fraud and approximately 2.35 billion GBP losses per year. There are major implications of DNS Abuse in the UK and around the world. One example provided was an individual using 11 phones to commit smishing / fraud.

Tracy Hackshaw, Universal Postal Union, asked about the difference between Phishing and Smishing and how both relate to DNS Abuse.

Chris Lewis-Evans relayed that Smishing is Phishing committed via SMS and mentioned that per the Registrar Accreditation Agreement (RAA), Registry Agreement (RA), and draft advisories, DNS abuse includes: Phishing, Malware, Botnets, Pharming, and Spam, when the spam serves as a delivery mechanism for the other forms of DNS abuse listed above. All of these attacks use compromised domains / websites to commit the acts.

Gabriel Andrews, PSWG member, then indicated that the FBI in the United States generally categorizes DNS Abuse as Phishing. There are 2000 reports per day in the US, and Gabriel provided a case study for a recent example, which was a phishing attack mimicking a US Department of Justice login portal.

This case study provided to the participants of the CDW a rough workflow from identifying the attack to a resolution, including discussions with the website host, the registrar, and the NetBeacon / DNS Abuse Institute, and the realization that the website had a domain reseller who was not listed in the WHOIS for the website. Finally the site was deleted by the reseller, but it was a very complex situation. Some interesting routes that could have been taken included getting a court order that, per Gabriel Andrews, would have taken too long to have any real effect, potentially an entire month to go through. Also discussed were the merits of going through the hosting provider vs DNS as ways to take down the site. While going through the hosting provider might be faster, it's possible for the website operator to redirect the site to a new domain, so going through the DNS is preferred.

To tie the earlier discussion from the first session to this subject, the [open public comment period on Amendments to the Base gTLD RA and RAA to Modify DNS Abuse Contract Obligations](#) was presented on from Russ Weinstein of ICANN org.

The proposed amendments would enhance obligations by requiring registrars and registry operators to promptly take reasonable and appropriate action to stop or otherwise disrupt DNS Abuse. The Registrar Accreditation Agreement and Registry Agreement amendments are very similar in their wording, with the Registrar Amendment below:

“When Registrar has actionable evidence that a Registered Name sponsored by Registrar is being used for DNS Abuse, Registrar must promptly take the appropriate mitigation action(s) that are reasonably necessary to stop, or otherwise disrupt, the Registered Name from being used for DNS Abuse. Action(s) may vary depending on the circumstances, taking into account the cause and severity of the harm from the DNS Abuse and the possibility of associated collateral damage.”

Uniquely with this process on DNS abuse, ICANN Contractual Compliance has created a baseline from which the policy development and advice processes could build further. This process is within the Global Amendments Procedure, which was also used for the 2017 Global Amendment to the Base RA and the 2023 Global Amendments to the Base RA and 2013 RAA for Registration Data Access Protocol (RDAP). This method was used to decrease the time spent without a plan to combat DNS Abuse. The Amendments will be put to a vote for ratification with varying minimum thresholds for the amendments to go into effect.

Kavouss Arasteh, GAC member from Iran, asked to what extent the Contractual Amendments will have to combat DNS Abuse. Russ Weinstein answered that adding obligations to the contracts and allowing ICANN org to have a greater role in the process should help with mitigation of DNS abuse.

Nigel Hickson, GAC Member from the United Kingdom, asked Russ Weinstein to define “Reasonably Necessary” as noted in the contractual amendments. The answer to this, as Gabriel Andrews mentioned earlier, can vary but options include discussions with the host or a potentially ‘nuclear’ option of taking down the domain on the registrar / registry side.

Jorge Cancio, GAC Member from Switzerland, asked about the monitoring in place to ensure the ‘correct decisions’ were made on potential DNS Abuse claims. Russ Weinstein replied that ICANN Compliance will gather all information and report on that with regularity. Granular reporting for the community to see what's going on and within which areas they are happening will be available.

Session 3: Key Priority Topics for Governments - DNS Abuse

Moderator: Tracy Hackshw (UPU)

Session Link:

<https://gac.icann.org/sessions/icann77-gac-capacity-development-workshop-on-dns-abuse-3-3>

The third session of the ICANN77 CDW was the most interactive session of the day. Participants split up into five language-based groups: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, and Spanish. The groups brainstormed potential GAC actions on public comments with considerations made after the earlier discussions on the Amendments to the Base gTLD RA and RAA to Modify DNS Abuse Contract Obligations.

Guiding questions for the discussions included:

1. What process will best ensure the inclusion of an Underserved Region participation in the development of GAC Public Comment for this topic?
2. Is there a benefit in having a united GAC submission ONLY or having a GAC submission AS WELL AS individual GAC member submissions?
3. Having discussed (1) and (2), is there an opportunity now to develop a “straw man” proposal by beginning to structure the key themes around which the Public Comment will be built?

After breaking out into groups, with some participants attending remotely and language services provided for the English language group, representatives discussed key takeaways and suggested answers for the above guiding questions.

The Arabic Language group, suggested the use of the GAC mailing lists to better advertise the public comment opportunities in an attempt to recruit volunteers to become penholders. Also suggested, were potentially gauging ahead of time, which subjects GAC members would be interested in being topic leads for, and then assigning accordingly. Also suggested, was that the GAC should support and encourage individual governments to submit their own comments in such public comment proceedings.

The Chinese Language group focused mainly on the guiding question about countries in underserved regions. Their suggestions included having greater engagement with those nations and providing alternative methods to gain public comment from these areas, including pen and paper as an alternative to digital responses, to reach all who may want to voice their opinions. This may require a longer public comment period, but gaining the additional insight could be important. Also of note, was the joining of the Arabic Language group’s opinion that individual countries should be encouraged to submit comments independent of the GAC consensus comment. Finally, having standardized definitions for policy issues, for example DNS Abuse, would allow for better prioritization among GAC members.

The English Language group, on the other hand, suggested that collective GAC input should be held paramount to individual comments, especially for the Amendments to the Base gTLD RA and RAA to Modify DNS Abuse Contract Obligations public comment proceeding.

The French Language group, partially joined with the English Language group and partially with the first two listed above by stating support for a unified GAC comment, but also recognized the sensitivity that individual laws and regulations that countries may have could take precedence over the unified statement. The group also made comments in support of enhancing the service to and for underserved communities. To achieve this, increased collaboration with the ICANN Supporting Organizations and Advisory Committees was recommended, as well as strengthening the relationship between GAC members and the ICANN Government Engagement Team, and the identification of funding and grant opportunities to support research, advocacy and engagement efforts to effectively identify and address priorities for underserved areas.

The Spanish Language group also agreed with the French one on the importance of a unified statement, but with nuance, to allow for individual comments. They also suggested additional time and meetings to discuss public comment and positions on issues, so that pen holders and other interested parties could better understand what they are working on.

Finally, Tracy Hackshaw wrapped up the CDW by asking for volunteers to contribute on public comments, which was met with a great response and volunteers from Chinese Taipei, the United Kingdom, Egypt, Mali, Colombia, and the European Commission.

VI. Achievements/Outcomes

Respondents to the post-workshop survey were either very satisfied (55%) or satisfied (45%) with the event. Based on survey responses, the Capacity Development Workshop achieved the following:

- Increased comprehension of the role of ICANN and the GAC
- Increased knowledge of ICANN's Public Comment process
- Increased awareness of current developments on DNS Abuse

VII. Conclusion/Recommendations from GAC workshop participants

The Capacity Development Workshop (CDW) was recognized by attendees as being valuable and informative. According to the feedback received during ICANN77 and in the post workshop survey responses, further Capacity Development Workshops should be conducted and include topics such as DNS abuse, Registration Data Request Service, the New gTLD Program Next Round, Internet Fragmentation, PICs / RVCs, and Web3 / Emerging Technologies.

VIII. Next Steps for GAC Capacity Development and Onboarding Events

Based on the positive feedback received from the successful ICANN77 CDW, and in light of the comments made by GAC participants, it is envisaged that the next CDW iteration will focus on topics related to Emerging Technologies and overall GAC capabilities.

In the lead up to ICANN78, the GAC Underserved Regions Working Group (USRWG) will collaborate with interested GAC Members to plan for the next Capacity Development and Outreach event as well as organize intersessional webinars on the topic.

IX. Thank You and Acknowledgements

In addition to the organizers, planners, moderators and presenters, the GAC would like to thank the following groups for their collaboration and work on making the ICANN77 GAC CDW a successful event: ICANN GAC Support, Government Engagement (GE), Global Stakeholder Engagement (GSE), Global Domains & Strategy (GDS) , and Policy Development Support Teams.

APPENDIX |

GAC Post ICANN77 CDW Survey Report

Background

The ICANN77 Capacity Development Workshop (“CDW”) provided an opportunity for GAC participants to learn the basics or increase their knowledge on aspects of the ICANN multistakeholder model and operations of the different functions within it. It was also an opportunity for GAC attendees to learn about the background and perspectives of priority policy topics of interest to current government members at ICANN, and to share experiences and best practices to enhance GAC internal collaboration on ICANN matters.

After the CDW, on Friday 23 June 2023, a post-event survey was sent to participants and responses were collected until Monday 3 July 2023. A total of 11 participants responded to the survey.

Analysis

Overall responses regarding the CDW were very positive. This document reflects specific areas of feedback in response to the 13 questions that were part of the survey.

The first four questions in the survey were related to participants’ experience of the CDW. All participants who responded to the survey were either “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with the event. Over ninety percent (91%) of participants found the length of the event “just right”. Thirty-six percent (33%) of the respondents were satisfied and sixty-seven percent (67%) of the respondents were very satisfied with the content and materials presented. Nevertheless, for the following question, all of the respondents indicated that the content and materials improved their knowledge and understanding of the topics.

The fifth question of the survey asked whether the knowledge gained from the CDW will be useful in the participants’ GAC or governmental work, to which all respondents answered yes.

Question six asked participants what was the most effective part of the CDW. All respondents answered the question. Input included the content, the presenters, the format, and informal discussions.

The seventh question asked what improvements can be made to the CDW. Participants made suggestions regarding the content of the workshop, the delivery of the virtual component to the hybrid meeting, the schedule of the CDW, and the format of the presentations, as well. All answers are available in the “Results” section below.

Question eight asked about the frequency of future GAC CDW meetings. The majority of the participants answered that the CDW should happen once per each ICANN Meeting (73%), while a plurality (18%) of the participants answered that CDW should happen twice per year, with one remaining answer of once per year.

Question nine asked participants about each of the three sessions of the CDW. For each part, respondents mostly indicated that they were either very satisfied or satisfied, except for one respondent in Session 1 responding somewhat satisfied, and in Session 3 where two

respondents were somewhat satisfied and another two were not satisfied. This third session, which included breakout groups, was the outlier for satisfaction, and will be reviewed for ICANN78.

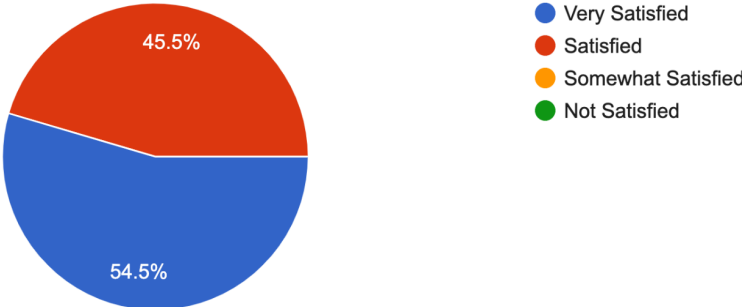
Question ten asked about the topics participants are interested in within the ICANN ecosystem. In a multiple-choice question, respondents favored the topic of “DNS Abuse” the most with 73%, followed by “DNS Security” and “Role of the GAC” with 55%, and “Internet governance” with 45%.

The last three questions were asked to learn more about the respondents’ profiles. Among the eleven (11) responses, eight (8) respondents, 73% have been participating in GAC activities for between one and five years, 27% for five to ten years. It was also asked whether the participants have ever been a member of another Advisory Committee (AC) or a Standing Organization (SO). Only one (1) participant indicated having been a member of the At Large Advisory Committee. Finally, topics of interest were polled for future CDWs with the following topics such as DNS abuse, Registration Data Request Service, the New gTLD Program Next Round, Internet Fragmentation, PICs / RVCs, and Web3 / Emerging Technologies being mentioned.

Results

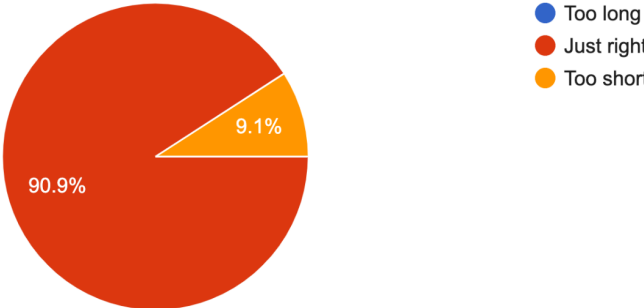
1. Overall, how satisfied were you with the ICANN77 GAC Capacity Development Workshop?

11 responses



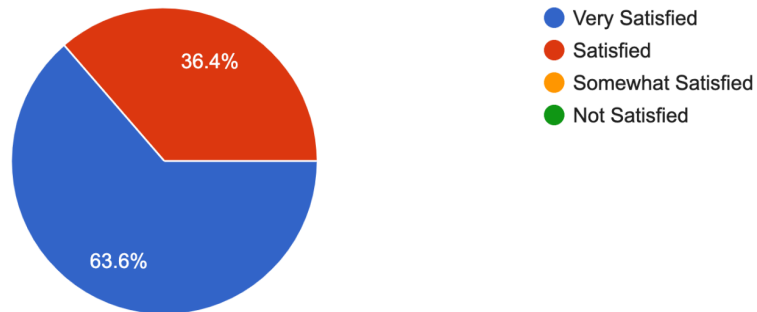
2. The length of the ICANN77 GAC Capacity Development Workshop was:

11 responses



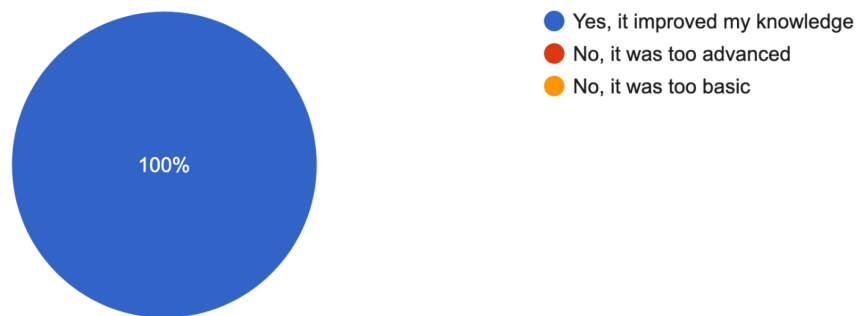
3. Overall, how satisfied were you with the materials and content presented?

11 responses



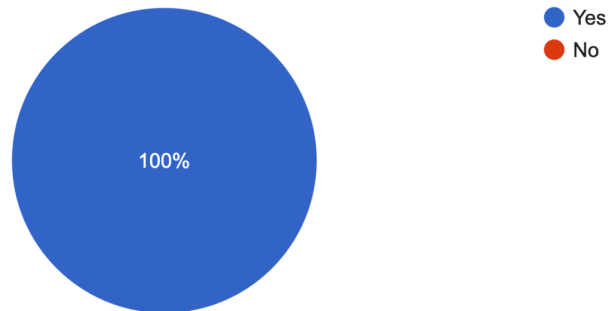
4. Have the presentations improved your knowledge and understanding of the topics?

11 responses



5. Do you believe the knowledge you gained from the ICANN77 GAC Capacity Development Workshop will be useful in your GAC or governmental work?

11 responses



5.a. If "Yes", would you like to provide more details?

5 responses

- CDW are fundamental to GAC members because provides necessary info on how ICANN works (i.e.: Public Comment, Contract Amendments, the agreements between ICANN and Contracted Parties)
- New processes in ICANN's World discovered (here: Public Comment Process)
- I got more and deep clarifications about the domain name registration data mechanisms
- It will enable me to advise my organization better on DNS Abuse related matters and how to develop capacity and awareness on it.
- I will benefit these knowledge for my country practices

6. From your experience, what was the most effective part of the ICANN77 GAC Capacity Development Workshop (speakers, session planning, content, etc.)?

11 responses

- Session planning.
- Topics were very informative for out of the field GAC members discussions with other GAC in an informal setting
- Content and Speakers, but above all how the issues are presented. ICANN77 CDW was perfect, clear and easy to learn/ubderstand content
- The content that was presented was not too voluminous and was easy to follow where the presenters were taking you. I appreciate that kind of simplicity.
- The contents are very informative.

- It's difficult to say, probably the groups forming and discussing subjects. The presentations were great and very informative.
- DNS abuse session
- The speakers were the most effective because they helped in explaining issues.
- Content
- Speakers were knowledgeable and the session was well planned.

7. What do you think can be done to improve the GAC Capacity Development Workshop (speakers, session planning, content, etc.)?

11 responses

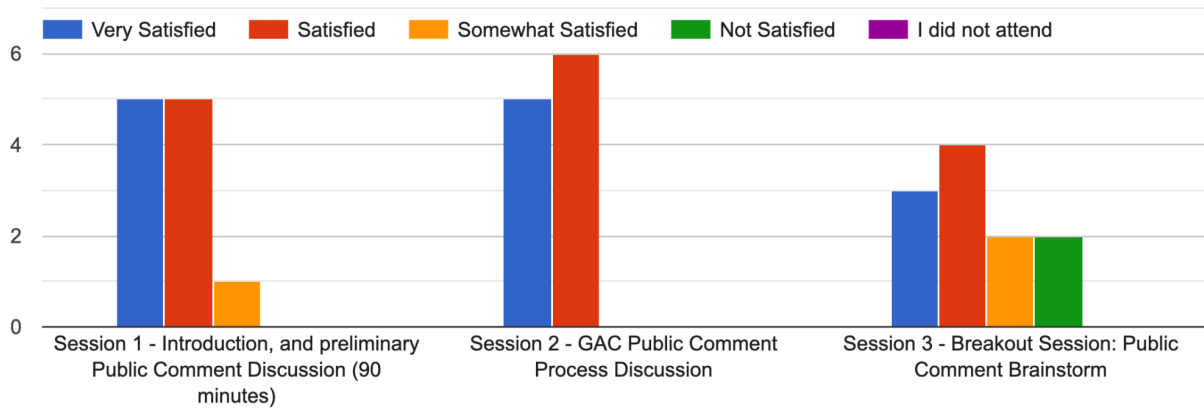
- Games!
- More focus on the key issues and less focus on process
- From my point of view, the last session was just perfect.
- If the sessions could have a repeat or an alternative in case one misses a session.
- Need improvement of the speaker.
- The remote participation when making small groups was uncomfortable (only chat). It was hard to hear the persons speaking. I don't blame that, because it requires a lot of technical infrastructure. Instead, I sincerely hope that ICANN will lift the "health and safety" rules for ICANN78. I'm feeling discriminated.
- deep more the DNS abuse and optimization of the ccTLDS ecosystem use (where it's not used , even provide appropriate training to the national stakeholders)
- Session Planning; the session days could be included as part of the main meeting days(extra number of days). This will help in explaining to employers/organizations the need for the extra travel days.
- I consider it relevant to incorporate institutions which already have expertise in CB, f.i. the South School on Internet Governance
(<https://www.gobernanzainternet.org/ssig2023/en/>)
- Participants participants can briefly describe their country practices

8. How frequently do you think the GAC Capacity Development Workshop should happen?

11 responses

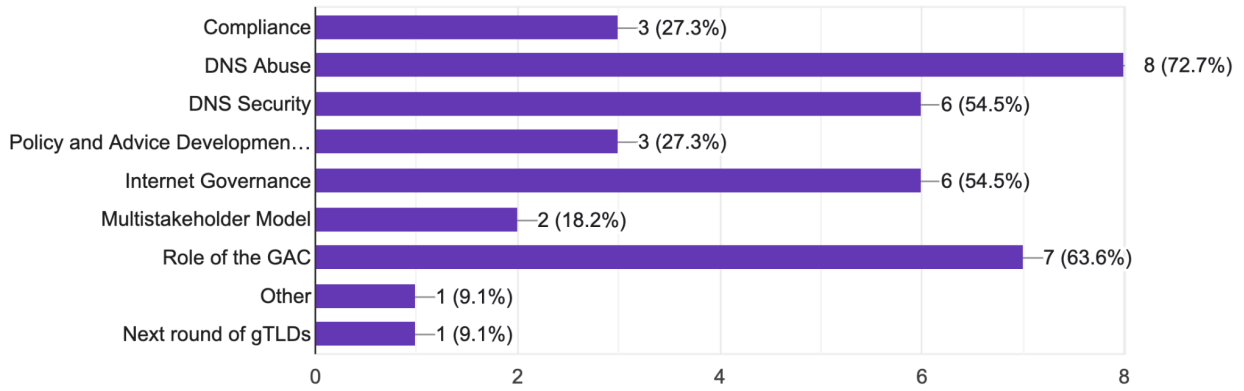


9. Overall, how satisfied were you with each session of the ICANN77 GAC Capacity Development Workshop?



10. Which topics in ICANN's ecosystem interest you the most?

11 responses



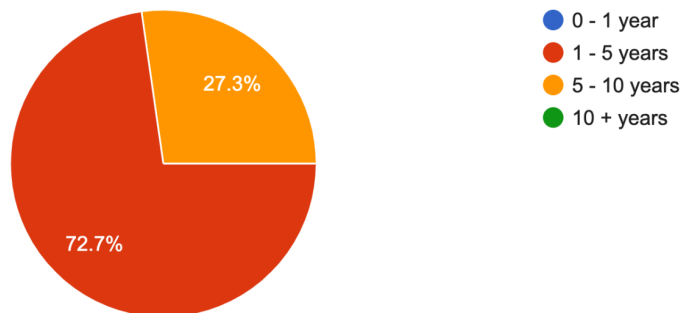
10.a. If "Other", please expand your answer:

1 response

- More knowledge on role of individual governments in the next round of gTLDs

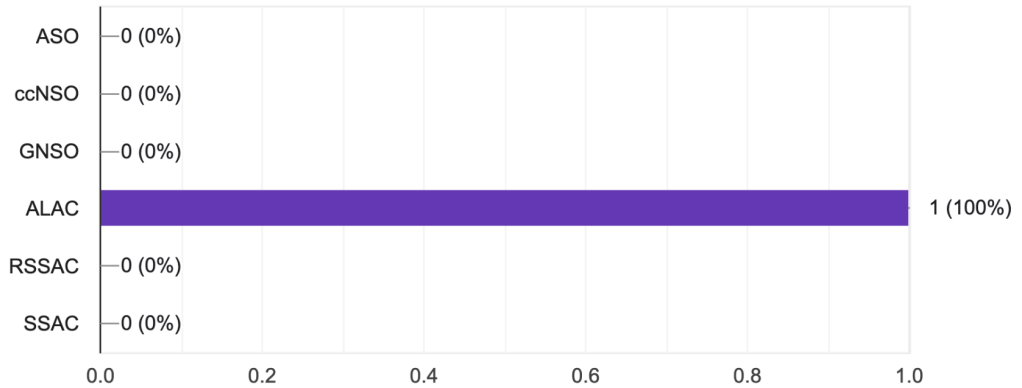
11. How long have you been a GAC Participant?

11 responses



12. Have you ever been a member of another Supporting Organization (SO) or Advisory Committee (AC)?

1 response



13. What topic(s) would you like the GAC Capacity Building Workshop to focus on at a future meeting:

11 responses

- Web3
- DNS Abuse again - the next phase
- PDP, more on SubPro and gTLD auctions what happened in first gTLD release and how mitigate/disincentivate this issue, Internet Fragmentation
- The future of the DNS from an ICANN introspection.
- Abuses take place in mobile financial services all over the world, specially in Africa and Asia Region
- RDRS and Accuracy of data
- DNS abuse
- GAC early warnings and PICs
- GGeo TLDs
- country practices about dns abuse