One World Trust Report "ICANN Accountability Benchmarks and Metrics" Overview

February 10, 2015

Background

One World Trust (OWT) submitted an independent assessment and measurement recommendations to ICANN on 28 February 2014. OWT was contracted to assist with developing a means to measure ICANN's accountability performance over time, as well as relative to other (broadly) similar organizations. This effort is part of ICANN's commitment to accountability and continuous improvement, and also responds to Accountability and Transparency Review Team advice. These measures also will:

- Illustrate and communicate how ICANN is meeting its global accountability obligations;
- Help ICANN benefit from learning how other international organizations are accountable to their stakeholders; and
- Continue to enhance ICANN's accountability (and transparency, which is viewed as a part of accountability).

The implementation of the accountability framework, metrics and benchmarks is an important step in evolving ICANN's performance measurement discipline. This process is aligned with broader measurements of performance being implemented as part of ICANN's Management System to support continuous improvement.

One World Trust is an independent, UK-based organization that conducts research, develops recommendations and advocates for reform to make policy and decision-making processes in global governance more accountable to the people they affect.

Summary

OWT's "ICANN Accountability and Transparency Metrics and Benchmarks: Consultancy Report" consisted of several elements:

1. Review of the accountability principles promoted by four international accountability standard setting initiatives;
2. Qualitative analysis of ICANN's policies and practices through desk research and interviews with key stakeholders and staff (list available in Appendix C), for insight into ICANN's current accountability strengths and challenges, as well as gathering ideas about how the metrics and benchmarks might work; and
3. Analysis of the accountability policies and practices of three multi-stakeholder, international non-profit organizations, to establish their current level of accountability in comparison with ICANN, and identify useful learning opportunities.

February 10, 2015

OWT provided a framework and practical suggestions for metrics within each of the six dimensions of Accountability, and recommended that ICANN staff determine specific metrics, including appropriate targets.
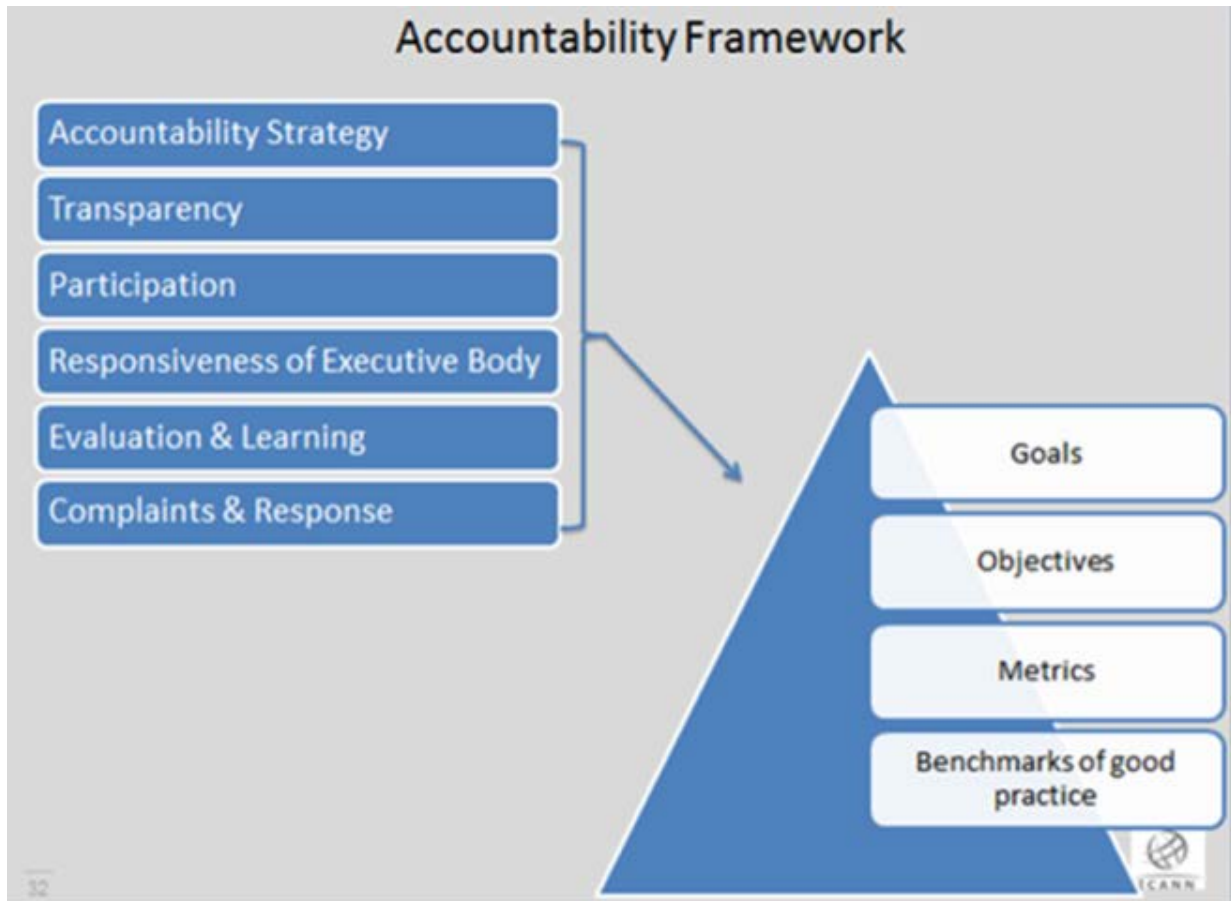
See Announcement on 4 March 2014.

This work will be integrated with the development of organization-wide performance metrics as part of ICANN's Management System, which will include: Key Success Factors and Key Performance Indicators.

ICANN will continue evolving the organization-wide discipline and process of measuring performance relative to goal, including trends over time, with particular focus on collecting data and measuring progress in the areas of accountability and transparency by leveraging metrics and reporting being implemented across ICANN.

February 10, 2015

Recommendations for Improvements in Accountability

OWT found that ICANN has performed well in comparison with other, similar organizations, and they suggested some areas where ICANN accountability could be improved. CCWG may wish to consider some of these recommendations:

i.   Develop a clear definition of what ICANN means by accountability to its stakeholders, and expand to defining the precise principles and standards of accountability that ICANN's stakeholders should expect it to meet.

Staff Note: Strategic Plan adopted by the Board in October 2014 contains goal *4.4 Promote role clarity and establish mechanisms to increase trust within the ecosystem rooted in the public interest*. A KSF[1] associated with this goal is: Shared understanding of the roles, responsibilities and accountability of the Board, staff and stakeholders.

Additionally, goal *5.2 Promote ethics, transparency and accountability across the ICANN community* has the following KSFs associated with it:

- 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.

ii.   Map ICANN's formal and informal stakeholder groups, taking consideration of power dynamics, and which groups are most affected by ICANN's work. On the basis of this, identify those groups which should be prioritised for accountability efforts. Any stakeholder prioritisation should be made public, and rationalized.

ix.   Develop a Stakeholder Participation policy, providing explicit criteria as to when stakeholders will be consulted about Board decisions, the process by which the Board will consider stakeholder recommendations, and a commitment for the Board to respond to recommendations issued by formal ICANN stakeholder bodies.

---

[1] Key Success Factor, or outcome