Comments on the ICANN LAC Strategy Plan 2021-2025

by Flávio R. Wagner, on my personal capacity

I congratulate the LAC Strategy Council and the Global Stakeholder Engagement team for Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC GSE) for the LAC Strategy Plan 2021-2025.

I do not have serious concerns about the Plan's Mission, Key Areas of Interest and Objectives. They address the major current trends and needs of the DNS ecosystem in the LAC region.

My concerns go to the way the Plan presents the various Projects under the different Objectives.

The previous LAC Strategy 2018-2020 clearly identified which Projects were new and which were already ongoing. A large number of new Projects were proposed. If we look at the Implementation Plan of the LAC Strategy 2018-2020, we see 14 Projects identified as "ongoing" and 19 Projects identified as "new".

From this long list of Projects, and particularly from the long list of Projects which were "new" in the 2018-2020 LAC strategy cycle, most of them seem to have been removed from the new LAC Strategy 2021-2025. Why? Were some projects implemented but did not prove to be effective? Have some of them simply not been implemented, for various reasons? Or are they absorbed by other projects in the new LAC Strategy? Or are they not necessary anymore?

I would welcome, as an additional background material to this Public Comment, a short report on the status and outcomes of the Projects that were planned for the 2018-2020 cycle. This report could, in a very summarized way, indicate the status of each Project ("to be continued", "did not start because of X", "to be discontinued because of Y", etc.).

Furthermore, the identification of "ongoing" and "new" Projects is unfortunately missing in the LAC Strategy Plan 2021-2025. I propose that the new LAC Strategy 2021-2025 clearly identifies which Projects are "ongoing" and which are "new", with regard to the LAC Strategy 2018-2020. If some of the "ongoing" Projects in fact absorb other Projects from the LAC Strategy 2018-2020, it would be interesting to identify which ones, maybe as "sub-projects".

Together with the short report mentioned above, this identification of "ongoing" and "new" Projects would help the community to identify (1) which are the new ICANN initiatives for the region and (2) which initiatives should be kept because they are still relevant and effective.

By looking at the LAC Strategy Plan 2021-2025, and by comparing it to the LAC Strategy Plan 2018-2020, many Objectives already suppose Projects that presumably represent the continuation of specific actions already in place:

- LAC Roadshow – see Objectives 1.1.1 and 2.1.1 (which mentions, however, a "new version of the LAC Roadshow")
- LACTLD internship program – see Objective 1.2.1
- LAC Space – see Objective 2.2.3
- Readout session – see Objective 2.2.6
- LAC DNS Forum – see Objective 3.2.2

Other Objectives mention Projects that are presumably new, as they are not found in the current Implementation Plan 2018-2020:

- Create social media campaigns to raise awareness on DNS security and threats to reach regional audiences – see Objective 1.1.3
- Create a program to provide face-to-face and online training on DNS security and threats for service providers, vendors, developers, educators, ccTLDs – see Objective 1.2.3
- Organize capacity building webinars every year for the LAC community on PDPs and other ICANN processes or topics – see Objective 2.2.2
- Create a new session at ICANN meetings to provide capacity building to the LAC community on ICANN related topics – see Objective 2.2.4

Some of the "new" Projects in the Implementation Plan of the LAC Strategy 2018-2020 that do not seem to be contemplated in the new LAC Strategy 2021-205 looked interesting and maybe should be preserved, unless there are reasons for their discontinuation. Examples are Project 2.1.1 (Policy Briefings for the LAC Region), Project 1.1.1 (Systematic Mapping of the LAC Community in ICANN's ecosystem) and Project 2.2.1 (Systematic Monitoring of LAC Community Participation in PDPs).

I think the suggestions above, if considered for a revision of the LAC Strategy Plan 2021-2025, would be very helpful to the members of working groups to be formed to follow and support an Implementation Plan deriving from this Strategy Plan, as they would provide some rationale for the evolution of the ICANN strategy for the LAC region.