Access Now appreciates this opportunity to provide brief input on the Initial Report of the New generic Top Level Domain (gTLD) Auction Proceeds Cross-Community Working Group (CCWG).

Regardless of which mechanism is chosen, civil society must play a key role in all steps of the design and implementation process of disbursing funds. Access Now promotes an inclusive and multi-stakeholder approach to developing public policy for the internet. We therefore believe that the new mechanism should support broad and open participation in internet policymaking fora and convenings, consistent with ICANN’s mission.

Whilst it is premature to think about the recipients of the Fund, we think it is important to ensure that the framework is attuned to the needs of global society who are working to to “help ensure a stable, secure and unified global Internet.”

We have deep experience in bringing together diverse stakeholders through our RightsCon Summit Series: our previous event, [RightsCon Toronto](https://www.rightscon.org/past-events/), hosted 2,520 registered participants from 118 countries and more than 700 organizations from civil society, the private sector, and the public sector, while our upcoming event, [RightsCon Tunis](http://rightscon.org), is poised to bring together as many as 2,000 technologists, engineers, civil society activists, human rights defenders, business leaders, general counsels, entrepreneurs, policy makers, government decision makers, and more. We would be pleased to facilitate a mechanism that incorporates or engages with RightsCon and our global community of stakeholders that is essential to ICANN’s work.

We would also like to use this time to encourage ICANN to use the funds generated to support privacy and security capacity-building efforts. As an organization that works to extend and defend human rights online, and to protect the digital security of at risk communities through our [24/7 Digital Security Helpline](https://www.accessnow.org/help/), we have first-hand experience with the ways in which digital security attacks can dramatically impact the privacy, safety, security, and rights of users at risk around the world, and can lead to harassment, surveillance, censorship, violence, detainment, torture, and even death. The Helpline has received more than 4,000 unique requests for support from civil society activists, organizations, human rights defenders, and independent journalists in 133 distinct countries. The Helpline has further observed that digital security threats and attacks are growing more sophisticated, pervasive, and dangerous. Additional resources from ICANN to support privacy and digital security capacity-building efforts within civil society are timely, impactful, and absolutely vital to the sustainability, safety, and security of civil society at large.

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