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Xavier Calvez
Chief Financial Officer
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Re: Public Comment for the First Consultation on a 2-Year Planning Process

Dear Xavier,

Firstly thanks you for this opportunity to have input into these important deliberations regarding the review of ICANNs planning process, these very brief comments and observations are made in a purely personal capacity.

Questions/Comments:

Q1 - Does the community agree that the yearly planning cycle does not provide sufficient time for community extensive input and interaction on the operating plan and budget?

From my perspective, and I have been actively involved in several iterations of ICANN planning and budget cycle processes, the 1 year certainly does not provide sufficient time, especially for timely and effective community engagement and input. A more important matter in todays ICANN, than perhaps ever before, with the responsibilities of the Empowered Community. Care however, within an extended cycle of 2 years, will need to be taken on the specific timing of milestones such as opportunity for Community input well in advance of Draft Budget formulation etc., but that I suspect is the matter for future consultations.

Q2 - Does the community believe that more time for planning provides more transparency?

In my view, the existence of more time for a planning process does not in and of itself provide for more transparency, but if the key activities and engagement points within the extended time period are well positioned in a timely manner, then that would, as a consequence of implementation specifics provide the opportunity for greater transparency. As would careful and publically available tracking and data capture relating to the processes that occur within any given cycle. (Track changes in docs, annotated records of input received (from who, when) etc.,

Q3 – How and who should set ICANN’s priorities?

From my perspective, prioritisation is essential, particularly as we are always likely to have competing interests across the different parts of the ICANN Community. Yet as ICANN operates in a sometimes volatile but almost always agile environment, built in flexibility also needs to be designed into the 'Prioritisation Process/Model' that in itself needs regular (annual perhaps) review within any adopted 5 year Strategic Plan. The 'How and Who' for me is a cross community effort inclusive of course of the Board and ICANN.org, or failing that at least one that has transparency and accountability considered inputs and opinions ICANN wide. And Again timeliness and the assurity that the community engaged in the process clearly understands the purpose and scope of the process is essential.

Q4 – Should policy development and implementation activities be integral to the planning cycle? For the purpose of better using the limited availability of the community stakeholders, already stretched, and to appropriately allocate ICANN's support resources, policy development needs and activities could be considered during the planning process:

Absolutely YES, this is essential in my view, it should also be noted that there has been a desire and call from at least parts of the ICANN COmmunity for more planning and predictability on the PDP processes and activities including timings of calls for Public Comments since before ATRT1 was convened.

There is probably a need for both planning that occurs with all the SO/ACs that would also include proposed or required Cross Community activities (CCWGs etc.,) as well as within, but transparent of the full ICANN Community Support Organisations specific planning on at least an annual basis with an 18 month to 2 year forecasting.

Q5 - What activities, other than policy development, should be planned and by whom? Examples:

Matters such as outreach and engagement events and opportunities, key meetings within the Internet Ecosystem and ICANNs engagement in these should be primarily planned and shared in a single calendar resource, by the most closely related part of ICANN.org or ICANN Community. Here I am more interested in transparency of such activities and that they are well planned for, more than the who plans them.

Q6 - Should the planning process include a formalized dedicated phase to plan for SO/AC activities? If so, how many years should be planned for?

YES, absolutely! Formalization of a dedicated phase is essential to the success of this sort of model, along with the recognition that the desire for predictability and management of expectations, there is always the possibility or likelihood that an 'unknown issue' will present itself as most urgent, and will need to be accommodated in planning reviews. So flexibility is also a key. How many years? As this is not a 'tabula rasa' exercise but rather a transition from ad hoc in some cases and formal in others, SO/AC strategic planning work, I would aim for any period of 18-24 months as desirable for forecasting, within existing overarching ICANN.org 5 year planning.



Regards,