**Middle East Space**

**ICANN 66 in Montreal, Canada**

Draft Statement

About the Next Steps to Improve the Effectiveness of ICANN’s MSM

We, the Middle East (ME) community members participating in the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers ICANN 66 [Public Meetings](https://meetings.icann.org/en/montreal66) in Montreal, Canada, and attending the Middle East Space session on November 2019, ~~commented~~ discussed ~~on~~ the document put forward by ICANN ~~in relation to~~ about the “Next Steps to improve the effectiveness of ICANN’s Multi-Stakeholder Model (MSM)” to develop a work plan to tackle the issues previously identified by the ICANN community as hindering the effective functionality of the model ~~for evolving ICANN’s MSM~~. The ME community ~~and in consultation with the wider ME community~~ supports the work undertaken by the MSM evolvement team to develop a work plan to tackle the issues previously identified by the ICANN community as hindering the effective functionality of the model and ~~we~~ take takes this opportunity to contribute to these efforts with the comments found herein. In developing our comments we considered the identified issues, the stakeholder groups that could be responsible for solving the issue and whenever possible the timing and resources required to address the issue.

1. **Prioritization of Work**

ICANN’s planning process addresses the prioritization of work in terms of “go/no go” based on the needs of the five years strategic plan and the associated goals that ICANN is looking forward to achieve. A more detailed prioritization, that breaks down the initial priorities and deals with the tasks and activities carried out by the community to achieve the identified goals is required. Prioritizing ICANN's community activities, as an example whether they go in parallel or subsequently and elaborating on the benefits of each will allow for a better allocation of resources and budgeting and could help address the issue of volunteers’ burnout. A committee representing all stakeholder groups with balanced regional and sub regional representation could be seen responsible for this task, as one group may point out a necessity and priority not seen by others, in addition ICANN org contribution to this could be of benefit and we see it as part of the MSM work plan.

1. **Precision in Scoping Work**

In relation to ICANN’s precision in scoping work, input from regional community strategy working groups like the MEAC SWG is essential and we note that the strategy working groups align their work with ICANN’s five-year strategic plan.  Having a process that ensures that the needs of the community are taken into consideration is essential. ~~However, we see this carried by ICANN global stakeholder engagement team and therefore not necessary part of the MSM work plan~~ The ICANN GSE team only help the community to better scope the work, so I believe it is part of the MSM work plan. In relation to the precision in scoping the work of the different working groups a guideline to all stakeholders encouraging them to be as specific as possible when writing the scope of their work and putting guidance in relation to change requests could be helpful specifically in avoiding scope creep. The PDP 3.0 presented as possible solution can’t be considered since it’s is not yet adopted. We believe that this issue should be part of the MSM work plan

1. **Efficient Use of Resources and Costs**

~~While we regard this item as being potentially addressed by the mentioned solutions~~ most of the mentioned solutions are processes underway, so how can we confirm that they will address this issue properly?, we note that proper prioritization of the work and precision in its scoping are ~~is a~~ crucial elements to the efficient use of the resources, especially in relation to the volunteers. ~~The number of volunteers from the ME is currently limited and therefore we note as well the importance of the financial resources allocated to the region, which is necessary to capacity building and raising awareness required for more active and capable participants from the region.~~  What is meant here?

1. **Roles and Responsibilities and a Holistic view of ICANN**

There is a need to review how the three basic elements of ICANN’s MSM, the board, the organization and the community work together within their defined roles and responsibilities to achieve ICANN goals effectively and efficiently. We do not see this element currently addressed through the proposed solutions and therefore we regard it as an essential element of the MSM work plan.

1. **Representation, Inclusivity, Recruitment and Demographics**

~~The existing solutions address the issue~~ What are the existing solutions that address the issues of representation, inclusiveness, term of individuals in leading position, and diversity?????. Even if there is term limit, a few people continue to lead their stakeholders by jumping from a position to another, chairing several things at the same time. They are dominating their community. There should be clear and sharp term limit for all positions at ICANN (2 times 2 years for example) after which the person should not take any leading or representation role for at least 2 years to permit to the new management to exercise their role without any influence or domination. This may be added to the ICANN bylaws and applied to all without exception. However, due to the importance of the issue as it addresses one of the main three elements of the MSM which is the community we would suggest that after the proposed work is complete, an evaluation is done that measures the aggregate effect of all the ongoing efforts in this regard.

1. **Culture + Trust + Silos**

The ME community recognizes trust as an issue that could hinder cooperation and working together culture. There is a trend to undermine parts of the community such as end users, some regions from the global south, etc. Defining the MSM as a multi equal stakeholders and regions helps a lot in building trust. ~~Trust-building is a dynamic process and the proposed existing solutions like global stakeholder engagement, ICANN fellowship, ICANN fellowship mentor, next gen and next gen ambassadors all contribute in this regard.~~ However, Individual experiences and ~~actions~~ behaviors can at any point serve as a turning point in developing trust affecting one of ICANN’s MSM core elements. We therefore see that developing-trust should be on the MSM work plan.

1. **Complexity**

Addressing the issue of complexity is crucial to the development of work within the ICANN community, ensuring diversity and inclusivity. Though existing activities like MEAC-SIG and ME GNSO training contribute to the solution. More planned workshops and capacity building is essential for wide informed participation. To that end we believe the issue of complexity should be part of the MSM work plan in order to be addressed at the strategic level.

1. **Consensus**

~~The work developed by GNSO PDP 3.0 implementation plan could successfully tackle this issue. However, we cannot comment on a final solution we haven’t seen yet.~~ We note that activities like the ME DNS forums provide a good platform for the community to interact, exchange information and agree on many of the discussed issues. This last sentence is not addressing the issue of consensus in my opinion

Consensus needs to be well defined. A common understanding of the MSM about whether the stakeholders are equal or not is a must. All stakeholders don’t have the same opportunity to participate continuously and on a regular basis: Those for whom the outcome of the policy development impact their incomes attend all the meetings or calls. They pay their staff members to participate to defend their opinion. The same happens for government delegates who are paid to defend their government position when the outcome of the policy affects the political aspects they care about. Only end-user representatives are really volunteers and don’t have other interests than the Public Interest. They can’t be always on the sessions because they have their day job and can’t always pay to go to a meeting. This makes the way we apply the consensus rule (consensus among the participants in the meeting) unfair. Going from the consensus among the participants to the consensus among the stakeholders makes it more credible. Moreover, the decision making process is too long causing a burnout of the volunteers. Only stakeholders for whom the final decision impact their incomes will remain and decide.

The community should form an ad hoc and well balanced committee to give a common definition of the consensus rules in the ICANN MSM. Consensus should be part of the MSM work plan.

We further believe that the ICANN MSM shouldn’t be moderated as some seems to propose, but should be clearly defined with clear working methods and processes to make it at the service of the community as a whole and for the global public interest.