The ICANN GNSO "Business Constituency"

Comment on Draft Financial Assumptions & Projections and Operating Initiatives for FY 2021-25 Operating & Financial Plan

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Business Constituency Submission

GNSO//CSG//BC

Background

This document is the response of the ICANN Business Constituency (BC), from the perspective of business users and registrants, as defined in our Charter:

> The mission of the Business Constituency is to ensure that ICANN policy positions are consistent with the development of an Internet that:
> 1. promotes end-user confidence because it is a safe place to conduct business
> 2. is competitive in the supply of registry and registrar and related services
> 3. is technically stable, secure and reliable.

This ICANN public comment seeks feedback on two elements of the FY 2021–25 Operating & Financial Plan (FY21–25 O&FP)[1]:

1. Financial assumptions and high-level projection of the "base-case," "high," and "low" funding scenarios for Fiscal Year 2021 through Fiscal Year 2025.

2. 16 major operating initiatives that ICANN org should prioritize to successfully achieve the objectives set out in the FY21–25 Draft Strategic Plan.

1. BC comment on Draft Financial Assumptions & Projections

The BC notes that important global predictive instruments have been engaged to arrive at the estimates covering diverse financial indicators of ICANN funding. Of note is the reference to the relevant parametric data of preceding 5-year operations, thereby producing what we also agree to be realistic low, base, and high projection scenarios.

The BC considers it prudent for ICANN not to factor in funding from the possible new gTLD rounds during the next 5-year period, since issues with the last gTLD expansion are still being tackled, including Universal Acceptance and the settlement of domain delegation issues.

It is the expectation of the BC that these projections will be updated yearly going forward.

Overall, the BC is pleased with the financial projections.

2. BC comment on Operating Initiatives for FY 2021-25 Operating & Financial Plan

The BC notes as consistent with expectation the draft Operating Initiatives for the Development of FY2021–FY2025 Operating & Financial Plan.

However, the BC provides the following comment in the area of language and initiative improvement:

1. Considering that there is no absolute "best practices", we propose a language change to "good practices" in the text reproduced below:

> **Strategic Objective 2: Improve the effectiveness of ICANN's multistakeholder model of governance.**

Operating Initiative: Review and evaluate current meeting strategy. ICANN meetings are central to ICANN's multistakeholder model as a vehicle for progressing policy work, conducting outreach, exchanging **best practices**, conducting business deals, fostering interaction among members of the ICANN Community, Board and Org, and learning about ICANN. ICANN meetings continue to be increasingly complex events, with external and internal factors impacting the approach.

2. In tandem with the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and to demonstrate ICANN's alignment with these goals, the term "capacity building" may be replaced with "capacity development" as in the text below:

> **Strategic Objective 4: Address geopolitical issues impacting ICANN's mission to ensure a single, globally interoperable Internet.**
>
> Operating Initiative: Evaluate, align and facilitate improved engagement in the Internet ecosystem
>
> During FY21–25, ICANN org will assess the expectations of participants in the GAC, and create targeted material, **capacity-building** resources and online training courses to better equip government stakeholders around the world to become active participants in the GAC's advisory role to the ICANN Board on public policy issues.

3. The BC appreciates the call for more proactive participation of GAC to effectively address geopolitical issues that may impact ICANN's Mission in the statement contained below:

> **Strategic Objective 4: Address geopolitical issues impacting ICANN's mission to ensure a single, globally interoperable Internet.**
>
> Operating Initiative: Evaluate, align and facilitate improved engagement in the Internet ecosystem
>
> This constituency has steadily grown in membership and participation, while also having frequent turnover. As a result, some GAC representatives are less familiar with ICANN's processes and issues, making it difficult for them to effectively engage with ICANN. **It is important, where possible, that governments participate in ICANN rather than addressing potential issues through external legislative or regulatory activity.**

4. Finally, the BC recommends (while the advisory above is considered by GAC) that ICANN Org provide analytical information on global legislative trends (e.g. description and purpose of the legislative instrument) that could impact ICANN's Mission, instead of meta data that it currently provides.

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This comment was drafted by Jimson Olufuye.

It was approved in accord with the BC charter.