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Council Workshop Nairobi
7th March 2010

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Attendees

Bart Boswinkel, ccNSO
Becky Burr, NomCom appointee
Lesley Cowley, .uk
Chris Disspain, .au
Ondrej Filip, .cz
Erick Iriarte, LACTLD
Juhani Juselius, .fi
Young-Eum Lee, .kr
Oscar Robles, .mx
Gabriella Schittek, ccNSO
Dotty Sparks de Blanc, .vi

Apologies

Keith Drazek, .us
Hiro Hotta, .jp
Vika Mpisane, .za
Peter Van Roste, CENTR

Chris explained that the workshop was intended to review where the ccNSO is now, how it works and where the Council wants to take it and that he had asked Lesley to facilitate the meeting.

Evaluation of Activities from Past Council Workshop

Bart Boswinkel reminded the group that the previous Council workshop, which was held in Mexico City, was much focused on IDNs. He then ran through other issues that were brought up in Mexico and how they were dealt with since:

Areas for improvement:

1) Involve members in Newsletter: The Policy Updates have filled this gap.
2) Early Communication of issues: the Secretariat is doing its best to communicate in a timely manner.
3) More involvement from members: The Programme Working Group has started to schedule short open microphone sessions during the meetings in order to get more ccTLDs involved in discussions.
4) Encourage new blood on Council: This has not yet been discussed.
5) More sharing of workload: This has improved.
6) Message board/notice board: This will be part of the new website, which is currently under revision.
7) More consistent communications between meetings: This is seen as a part of point 2 "– Early communication" and should be seen as a subset of a broader improved communication strategy.
8) Better links with Regional Organisations: There was a feeling that this aspect had improved.

9) More best practice for members: No significant work had been done in this respect.

Evaluating Current ccNSO Work

Lesley then invited all workshop participants to sit down in groups and score each area on a scale of 1 – 10, where they consider the ccNSO has been doing well, or which areas still could be improved.

Group 1:

7/10 Meetings: The meetings have improved and are much more interesting. However, too many issues are crammed in.

8/10 Liaison with other SO's and AC's: The ccNSO has been doing well liaising especially with the GAC on IDN work.

5/10: Council responsibilities: The Council must communicate better on what expectations there are of Councillors. An increased diversity and language skills were also felt needed.

Group 2:

7/10: Overall score for the work of the ccNSO.

Areas working well:

- The programme Working Group is doing well
- Membership has grown
- Liaison with the Regional Organisations has improved

Areas for improvement:

- Involvement of members to "real" participation in working groups etc.
- New blood on Council should be encouraged
- Council telephone conferences are hard to follow for non-native English speakers, especially when held in an inconvenient hour. More discussions should be held on mailing lists than during the telephone conferences. Perhaps start using Adobe connect under council calls in order to facilitate for non-native speakers.
- Council should act more proactively and give much more input to the ICANN board.
- Facilities for non-English speakers should be provided during ccNSO meetings.

Group 3:

- Secretariat work: 10/10
- Meetings Agenda: 9/10
- Cooperation between Regional Organisations/ccNSO: 8 ½ /10
- Cooperation with At Large: feedback from At Large: 10. ccNSO response: 6

Areas for improvement:

- Active emailing, as it is hard to give input during Council meetings. Especially on topical issues.
- The ccNSO should be more bottom-up, as much us happening "at the top", the transparency within the ccNSO is muddy.
- Other things should be less transparent, such as whether to publish all recordings. A broad discussion should be held on this issue.

Group 4:

- Overall: 6-7/10
- Participation has improved, also amongst non-ccNSO members
- The general perception is that the ccNSO is valuable and better organised than it used to be.
- Cross-constituency cooperation has worked well.

Areas for improvement:

- Turn passive participation into active participation:
    -Find out whether participation is a language problem, cultural problem
    - Do people only attend meetings to report back, rather than to represent?
    - The meeting format should be tailored so that people will not be scared to contribute to discussions.

Current Division of Workload

The second part of the meeting reviewed how workload is currently divided within the Working Groups, Chairs, Council, Secretariat and members.

Working Groups:

Bart Boswinkel presented an overview of the current ccNSO activities. He noted that issues originating from within the ccNSO or the ccTLD community are addressed systematically whereas external issues, for instance initiated by the ICANN Board or staff, are taken on board in an ad-hoc manner. The Councillors were asked whether there needs to be a structure in place to systematically select and prioritise issues that would need the ccNSO's attention, as too many ongoing issues at the same time can have an effect on the organisation, and important issues may not be addressed at all. He also noted that there is much more work done by the ccNSO than expected.

Bart pointed out that there are currently 12 working groups running and it would be hard to add more. He noted that most working groups are driven by a few individuals, with other members simply observing. As the issues are getting more complex and time consuming, it may be harder to get people to volunteer for the working groups, so more will be expected from a limited number of people. The Councillors therefore need to look into the working group structure and whether a new model is needed.

Chair Role:

Chris Disspain explained that the Chair role involves both "visible" and "invisible" aspects:

"Visible" tasks include chairing ccNSO meetings, workshops, and (participate in) working groups giving presentations, representing at meetings such as the IGF (which, however, is voluntary).

"Invisible" tasks include "off the record" liaison with the other AC/SO chairs, currently once a week. He underlined the benefit of setting up trusted communication channels to key people, such as SO/AC chairs, staff etc. in order to push issues forward.

Other invisible tasks include informal discussions with ccTLD managers, meetings with CEOs, Chairs, breakfast-, lunch- and dinner meetings.

Chris estimated that he spends about 20 hours weekly on his task as a chair. However, he underlined that all issues don't necessarily have to be done by one person; they could be split between several people.

He said that from a succession planning point of view this model is unsustainable and that it should be structured in a way that spreads the workload. He also noted that the chances of finding people that can provide all necessary resources for such a position are slim in his view It was agreed that Chris would draw up a document detailing the current role and his thoughts on options going forward.

Vice-Chair role
Young Eum outlined her thoughts, but as Byron had been unable to attend the workshop, it was agreed to discuss this further in Brussels

Council Member Role

Councillors should attend council and ccNSO meetings, telephone conferences and are also expected to participate in working groups. They should also encourage ccTLDs from their region to get involved in working groups.

However, many of those present commented that they don't exactly know what is expected from them beyond that. It was felt that they should share more of the Chair's workload and that the expectations of what being a Council member means should be clearer to people considering standing

It was agreed that as part of the succession planning process a councillor 'job description' would be produced.

Secretariat Role

The Secretariat reported that the workload had increased a lot during the last years and that it was felt that without the extra staff person, it would not be possible to maintain the level of service of the secretariat.

It was also felt that there was a better division of workload within the Council than in previous years.

ccNSO Members Role

It was agreed that the Council should try to get the members more engaged so that they become more active. One way to get them engaged was to try to introduce as many issues as possible that they feel passionate about. It was also felt that the more people could get engaged with Working Group work, the better.

Next Steps

The meeting then discussed how to move forward. Ideas included:

- Involve "non-participating" members. Get them to participate/start an "engagement committee"
- Look into how to balance transparency versus privacy
- Develop Role descriptions of The Chair, Vice-chairs Councillors, Working Group Chairs and Liaisons.
- Create a clear Chair succession plan (to be followed up with work out on how to make it possible).
- Having a two-hour Members Session, encouraging ccTLDs speak on why they attend ICANN meetings. Goal is to get non-active ccTLDs to participate.
- Define criteria on how/when to start a Working Group and when a PDP is needed. Look into whether Working Groups and PDPs are the only tools the ccNSO can work with and how sustainable they are.
- Create an "issues list", identifying upcoming topics.
- Create a ccNSO Mission Statement and a plan on how to move forward.

It was agreed that the Council would hold a follow-up Council workshop in Brussels to work on these and any other ideas. A session at the members meeting would also be organised to discuss the current model, the sustainability of the workload, roles and responsibilities and improve active participation.