

The roadmap: ccNSO & Universal Acceptance

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Introduction

About this paper

In this paper, the Ad Hoc Council Group ccNSO & UA will present the proposed role of the ccNSO with respect to Universal Acceptance (UA) . First, the role and actions of the Ad Hoc Group will be described. This will be followed by details regarding the proposed Roadmap for activities related to the role of the ccNSO with respect to UA. Finally, it includes a summary of the process that led to the development of this Roadmap.

About UA and the ccNSO role

Universal Acceptance is cornerstone to a digitally inclusive and multilingual Internet, ensuring all domain names and email addresses – in any language, script, or using any new or long TLD – are accepted equally by all Internet-enabled applications, devices, and systems. The Country Code Names Supporting Organization (ccNSO) explored its potential role in Universal Acceptance. To that end, it organized a session during ICANN75 where both ccTLDs and other stakeholders suggested activities the ccNSO could undertake to complement existing work by the Internet community. In December 2022 and January 2023, ccTLD representatives participated in two workshops to further explore their expectations regarding potential ccNSO action and how to organize next efforts. After the conclusion of the workshops, the ccNSO Council developed a plan which will be presented during ICANN76.

About the Ad Hoc Group

Following the request from the various stakeholders to the ccNSO , the Council suggested to start the discussion on the role of the ccNSO and convened an Ad Hoc group of Councilors to oversee the process to define such a role, propose the next steps, and prepare the decision-making process. The Ad Hoc group consists of the following Councillors: Biyi Oladipo, Ai-chin Lu, Jiankang Yao, Jenifer Lopez, Pablo Rodriguez.

Events

Under the auspices of the Ad Hoc Group, the following events were organized:

1. The ICANN75 ccNSO & UA session ([See here](#))

The ccNSO has organized a session on Universal Acceptance during the ICANN75 ICANN Public Meeting. Country code top-level domain (ccTLD) managers and others explored the potential role of the ccNSO itself. Both ccTLDs and other stakeholders suggested activities the ccNSO could undertake to complement existing work being done by the community.

At ICANN75, the presenters made 15 suggestions for a potential role of the ccNSO. Although the audience made a preliminary assessment of the suggestions (See Annex A), due to low level of participation the results were considered of limited value. The December '22 and January '23 workshops provided an additional opportunity for ccTLDs to give input.

2. Two workshops, further exploring the role of the ccNSO ([See here](#))

The Ad Hoc group organised two workshops (December 2022 and January 2023) to further explore the suggestions from ICANN75. Specifically the participants (Councillors and others) were asked to share their view on the value of suggestions for ccTLD and other stakeholders, the ccNSO and what it would take - in their view - to execute the suggestion. The results of the Workshops are included in Annex B of this paper.

Introducing the proposed roadmap

At the February 2023 Council meeting, the ad hoc team will present the results of the two workshops, its analysis and first iteration of the roadmap to solidify the envisioned role of the ccNSO in UA.

The roadmap will provide the path through the various actions and proposals from the Council and community, as well as their sequence. The roadmap includes a list of suggested actions and activities for the ccNSO to accomplish a role that is of value for the ccTLD and broader community that is within the remit of the ccNSO and sustainable. In defining this role overlap with already existing initiatives will be avoided. The Ad Hoc group will look at various methods to understand the potential impact of its various components. This will include an impact effort analysis to understand the priority of actions and where additional research or consultation is needed.

At ICANN76, the Roadmap will be introduced to the community to seek their feed-back, comments, and - when feasible - their support. The goal is to seek community buy-in to implement the roadmap. Assuming the broader ccTLD community supports the proposals, the Council will be requested to adopt the roadmap, including the proposed actions, at their ICANN76 meeting. Once the Council has adopted the roadmap the work of the Ad Hoc group is concluded.

Outcome ICANN75

The 15 suggestions from ICANN75 were grouped into six clusters, also referred to as concepts:

- 1. Information sharing**
The ccNSO should organize sessions on UA readiness and practices for and by ccTLDs, e.g. at Tech Day or during ccNSO Members Meetings
- 2. ccNSO Working Group or Committee**
The ccNSO should create a dedicated working group, to:
 - Assist ccTLDs with Universal Acceptance (UA) and Email Address Internationalisation (EAI)
 - Promote and advance IDN compliance and UA readiness
 - Liaise with other relevant ICANN groups (e.g. UASG, GAC IDN WG, Board IDN/UA WG)
- 3. ccNSO relation with ICANN org / UASG**
The ccNSO should activate the dedicated liaison for UASG activities
- 4. Outreach: Technology**
The ccNSO should encourage ccTLDs to:
 - reach out to developers, social media sites and platforms, to ensure support URLs and emails in local languages
 - join the ICANN UA Roadmap Study
 - publish reports on EAI adoption in ccTLD zones
- 5. Outreach: Marking**
The ccNSO should encourage ccTLDs to:
 - raise awareness about the importance and need for UA readiness, and the benefits of IDN ccTLD delegation
 - assist registrars by offering promotions for IDNs
 - cooperate with local authorities on creating demand for IDN domain names and the use of local languages/scripts
- 6. Outreach: Case studies**
The ccNSO should coordinate with ccTLDs to develop IDN/UA readiness case studies and share working models, to highlight and share knowledge on current practices in IDN support and UA readiness

The 6 clusters were then further explored during two sets of Workshops (A summary is provided later in this paper, and under Annex B):

- December: cluster 1, 2, 3
- January: cluster 4, 5, 6

Proposed Roadmap

Following the impact/effort analysis, the proposed areas of activities identified by the ad hoc team - and their sequence - are:

Step 1 - activate UASG liaison

The ccNSO has appointed a liaison to the UASG. This liaison was invited to regularly inform the ccNSO through its Council what is happening in the UASG and vice-versa.

Step 2 - create ccNSO UA committee

The ccNSO should create a dedicated committee, to:

- Assist in organizing sessions on UA readiness and practices, e.g. at Tech Day or during ccNSO Members Meetings sessions by for instance IGLC or DASC.
- Liaise with other relevant ICANN groups (e.g. UASG, GAC IDN WG, Board IDN/UA WG), incorporating the role of the ccNSO appointed UASG liaison. For example, this group would in future be a point of contact to assist ICANN org with respect to its interaction with ccTLDs.
- Coordinate with interested ccTLDs to share IDN/UA readiness case studies and working models, to highlight and share knowledge on current practices in IDN support and UA readiness
- Provide a report repository on EAI adoption in ccTLD zones

Although this initiative does require a leading role of the volunteers, the ad-hoc group believes it provides an avenue for the community to interact at a global level and with other groups under the ICANN umbrella. Currently, this type of interaction is lacking. The initiative should not overlap with other related efforts. It is the assumption of the ad-hoc group that ccTLD representatives with an interest in Universal Acceptance and IDN's will be willing to participate actively in such a group.

Step 3 - explore further actions

Once the committee is established and the activities are well-established, the next step would be to explore whether the proposed activities under item 2, 4 and 5 above which are not addressed under step 2 (for example cooperate with local authorities on creating demand for IDN domain names and the use of local languages/scripts) would add value to the community and - if so - how best to organise them. This should include a community consultation. To further explore the suggested actions the committee should at a minimum address whether the benefits of the proposed activities outweigh the efforts needed to implement and maintain such an activity and whether the ccNSO is the best positioned group to do so, taking into account the strategic framework of the ccNSO (Annex 1 in:

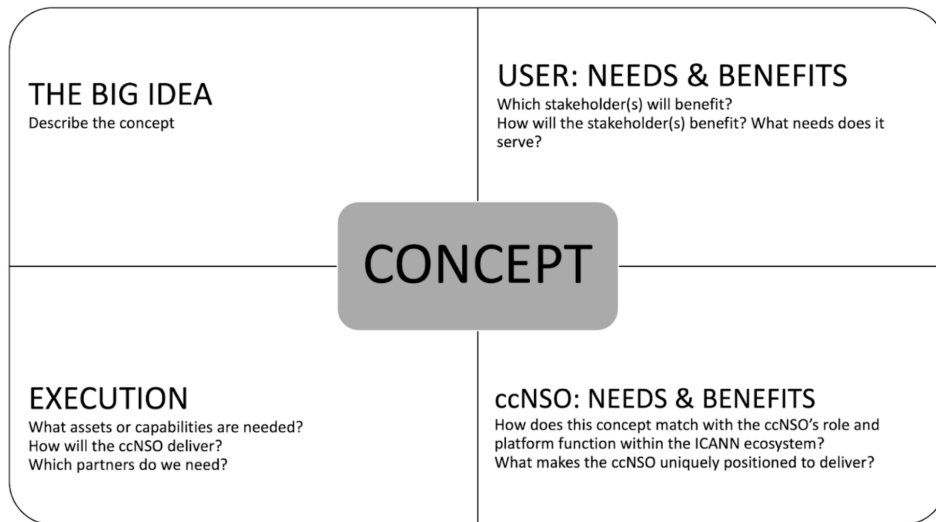
<https://ccnso.icann.org/about/adopted-work-prioritisation-approach-07jul22-en.pdf>)

If the Committee undertakes news activities that are not originally included in its Terms of Reference, they will need to be updated accordingly.

Summary workshops

Methodology

During the workshops, Councillors and ccTLD representatives participated in a Napkin Pitch exercise. The napkin pitch uses a four-quadrant framework for communicating a concise summary of an idea or concept. See example below.



Workshop participants were split into three breakout sessions. Each breakout room originally foresaw participating in two rounds. The idea was that in total, each group would explore two concepts. Seeing the depth and quality of the discussions, it was decided during the December workshop to defer the second round to a January workshop instead. The groups were randomly assigned in Zoom. Each group appointed a spokesperson, who reported back on findings and discussions to the other working group participants.

Summary of the discussions, per cluster

For screenshots of the jamboards used for each cluster, go to Annex B

1) Information sharing

- **The big idea**

The ccNSO should organize sessions on UA readiness and practices for and by ccTLDs, e.g. at Tech Day or during ccNSO Members Meetings

- **User: needs and benefits**

- have a better understanding of how many ccTLD managers deal with UA, or plan to do so
- make a distinction between IDN ccTLD managers and ccTLD managers who offer IDNs at second level
- identify what ccTLD managers and registrars needs to know to offer better IDN-related services
- address big industry players, possibly with the help of others (e.g. European Commission)

- **ccNSO: needs and benefits**

- ccTLDs collaborate and seek solutions to common issues

- **Execution**

- ccTLD managers should share experiences through ccNSO
- UASG to do outreach to ccTLD managers, via ccNSO
- ccNSO partners with UASG, big platforms and vendors, the tech community (including browser platforms)

2) ccNSO Working group or committee

- **The big idea**

The ccNSO should create a dedicated working group, to:

- Assist ccTLDs with Universal Acceptance (UA) and Email Address Internationalisation (EAI)
- Promote and advance IDN compliance and UA readiness
- Liaise with other relevant ICANN groups (e.g. UASG, GAC IDN WG, Board IDN/UA WG)

- **User: needs and benefits**

Advantages of having a UA-friendly online environment:

- facilitate online use of local languages, thus helping end-users
- ensure more equal access to the Internet
- increase domain name registrations
- increase business revenues
- benefit IDN-related services (e.g. mail)

Advantages of having a ccNSO UA working group:

- avoid repetition of work between ccTLDs and gTLDs
- develop guidelines or policies for technicians

- **ccNSO: needs and benefits**

Advantages of having a ccNSO UA working group:

- act as a link between ccTLDs and developers
- help ccTLDs to have better outreach to end-users
- act as a liaison between various UA and IDN-related efforts within ICANN and ccTLDs

- ccTLDs can combine efforts, and are thus stronger together
- **Execution**
 - the ccNSO UA WG should partner with UASG, the ICANN Board, GNSO
 - the ccNSO UA WG should measure UA readiness among ccTLDs and otherwise explore the ccTLD landscape

3) ccNSO relation with ICANN org / UASG

- **The big idea**
The ccNSO should activate the dedicated liaison for UASG activities
- **User: needs and benefits**
 - ccNSO members and ccTLDs in general, but also registrars, end-users, ISPs and email providers would benefit from increased information sharing between ccTLDs and UASG
- **ccNSO: needs and benefits**
 - the latest information - on for instance technology - is shared with ccTLDs
 - the ccNSO has a global platform function
- **Execution**
Through UASG, ccTLDs would:
 - collaborate with various SO/ACs on UA
 - address the need of working together with developers and major industry players
 - share and be informed about best practices and standards, such as IDNA2008 and EAI

4) Outreach: Technology

- **The big idea**
The ccNSO should encourage ccTLDs to:
 - reach out to developers, social media sites and platforms, to ensure support URLs and emails in local languages
 - join the ICANN UA Roadmap Study
 - publish reports on EAI adoption in ccTLD zones
- **User: needs and benefits**
 - enhancing inclusion online, in increasing stakeholder participation
 - having commercial advantages
- **ccNSO: needs and benefits**
 - UA matches with the scope of the ccNSO, as a platform for ccTLDs globally
 - avoid duplication of efforts
- **Execution**
 - best practice sharing through workshops, webinars, sessions during the ccNSO members meeting
 - partner with regional organisations
 - partner with other stakeholders at ICANN

5) Outreach: Marketing

- **The big idea**

The ccNSO should encourage ccTLDs to:

- raise awareness about the importance and need for UA readiness, and the benefits of IDN ccTLD delegation
- assist registrars by offering promotions for IDNs
- cooperate with local authorities on creating demand for IDN domain names and the use of local languages/scripts

- **User: needs and benefits**

- digital inclusion for all by enabling for instance government or health care services in a UA-friendly environment, in local languages
- ccTLDs benefit from information sharing regarding marketing and IDNs
- ccTLDs should be digitally inclusive in their services (IDNs, UA compliance)
- ccTLDs to share their knowledge and information with registrars
- ccTLDs help to reflect cultural and linguistic diversity online

- **ccNSO: needs and benefits**

- ccTLDs, through the ccNSO, should be involved in and aware of ICANN-wide discussions related to UA (e.g. UASG, Board-level, GNSO etc)
- ccTLDs can meet with peers and other stakeholders in the ICANN ecosystem, via the ccNSO

- **Execution**

- ccTLD managers and governments to promote IDNs together
- ccNSO to share information with ccTLDs, for instance on IDN compatibility challenges for ccTLD managers
-

6) Outreach: Case studies

- **The big idea**

The ccNSO should coordinate with ccTLDs to develop IDN/UA readiness case studies and share working models, to highlight and share knowledge on current practices in IDN support and UA readiness

- **User: needs and benefits**

- a UA-friendly environment would benefit end-users
note: UA is important for all ccTLDs, not only IDN ccTLD managers

- **ccNSO: needs and benefits**

- ccNSO is a neutral platform for ccTLDs globally
- ccNSO has the power to reach out to ccTLDs, including those not yet aware or active in the UA area
- ccTLDs, through ccNSO collaboration, work together for the good of the Internet
- ccNSO can facilitate interaction with other stakeholders, SO/ACs within ICANN

- **Execution**

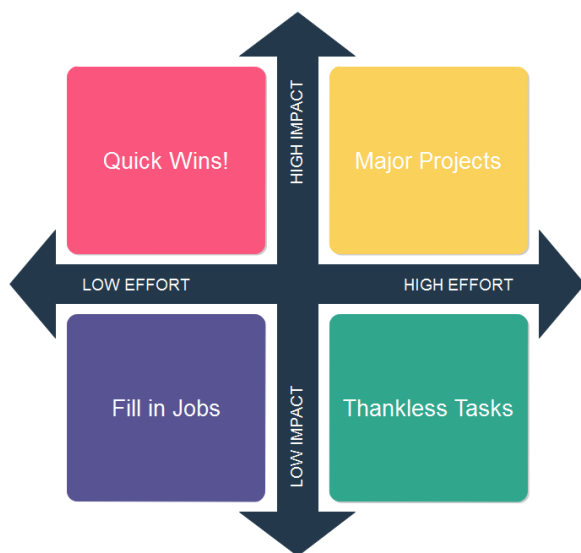
- partnering with Regional Organisations
- creating a working group, organise sessions
note: this requires volunteer effort

Work items identified from the ICANN75 session and subsequent workshops

Building on the results of the ICANN75 session on ccNSO & UA and the two ccTLD consultation workshops, the Ad Hoc team further met on Monday, 30 January, and further explored the benefit of the various actions proposed during the ICANN75 ccNSO & DNS Abuse session compared to the effort needed to achieve the envisioned result. The team also reflected on whether the proposed actions from the discussion at ICANN75 are within the purpose and value of the ccNSO. To that end, the ad hoc team reviewed the summaries of the jamboards for each of the clusters, and then ranked the 6 clusters according to the following criteria:

- IMPACT: What is the envisioned benefit for ccTLDs? What is the level of impact? (H, L)
- EFFORT: What is needed to achieve the result? What is the level of effort required? (H, L)

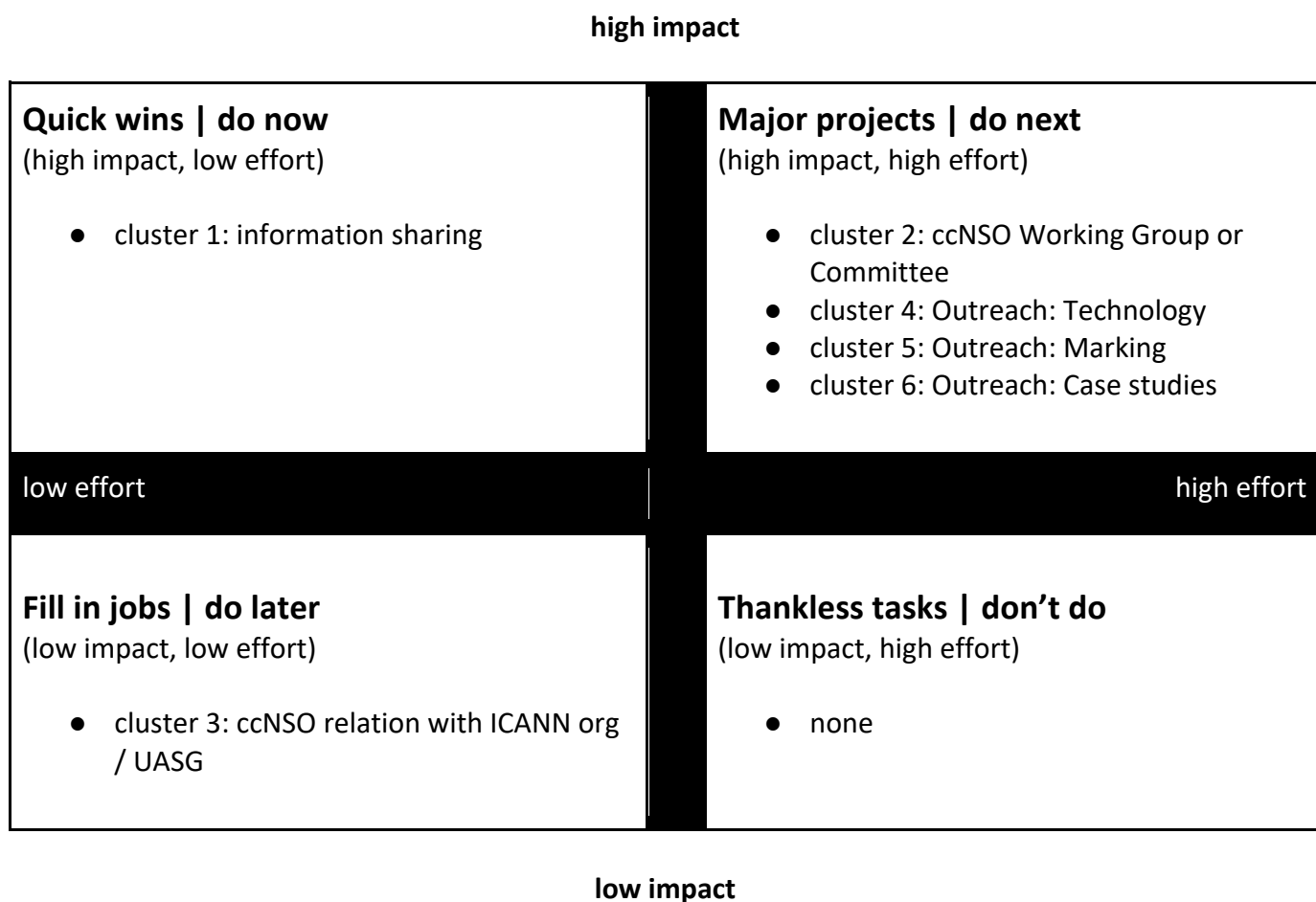
See example of the impact/effort matrix below.



- Quick wins | do now (high impact, low effort)
- Fill in jobs | do later (low impact, low effort)
- Major projects | do next (high impact, high effort)
- Thankless tasks | don't do (low impact, high effort)

Note that the value or benefit could also be rated negative (the benefit or added value for the ccNSO and ccTLD community is considered detrimental i.e as being a "high risk") to the goal of the ccNSO with respect to UA. The four matrix quadrants:

Areas of activities identified by the ad hoc team, and their sequence:



DO NOW. The ccNSO should organize sessions on UA readiness and practices for and by ccTLDs, e.g. at Tech Day or during ccNSO Members Meetings. This is an action item which is considered to be of low effort, with a high impact, since existing structures can be used for that purpose. For instance: organise a themed ccTLD News Session or add UA-related matters to the Tech Day agenda.

DO NEXT. The following clusters require further investigation, as the ad hoc team rated them as having a high impact, but at the same time also require a high level of effort. The ad hoc team is conscious about the volunteer effort for the ccTLD community and points to the risk of duplicating efforts that are done elsewhere. A potential ccNSO UA WG should provide extra focus on ccTLDs and their UA-related needs in terms of awareness raising, information sharing and liaising with other stakeholders.

- *cluster 2: ccNSO Working Group or Committee*

The big idea behind this cluster mentioned that the ccNSO should create a dedicated working group, to:

- Assist ccTLDs with Universal Acceptance (UA) and Email Address Internationalisation (EAI)
- Promote and advance IDN compliance and UA readiness
- Liaise with other relevant ICANN groups (e.g. UASG, GAC IDN WG, Board IDN/UA WG)

- *cluster 4: Outreach: Technology*

The ccNSO should encourage ccTLDs to:

- reach out to developers, social media sites and platforms, to ensure support URLs and emails in local languages
- join the ICANN UA Roadmap Study
- publish reports on EAI adoption in ccTLD zones

- *cluster 5: Outreach: Marking*

The ccNSO should encourage ccTLDs to:

- raise awareness about the importance and need for UA readiness, and the benefits of IDN ccTLD delegation
- assist registrars by offering promotions for IDNs
- cooperate with local authorities on creating demand for IDN domain names and the use of local languages/scripts

- *cluster 6: Outreach: Case studies*

The ccNSO should coordinate with ccTLDs to develop IDN/UA readiness case studies and share working models, to highlight and share knowledge on current practices in IDN support and UA readiness

DO LATER. Cluster 3 was rated as having a low level of impact, with a high level of effort.

- *cluster 3: ccNSO relation with ICANN org / UASG*

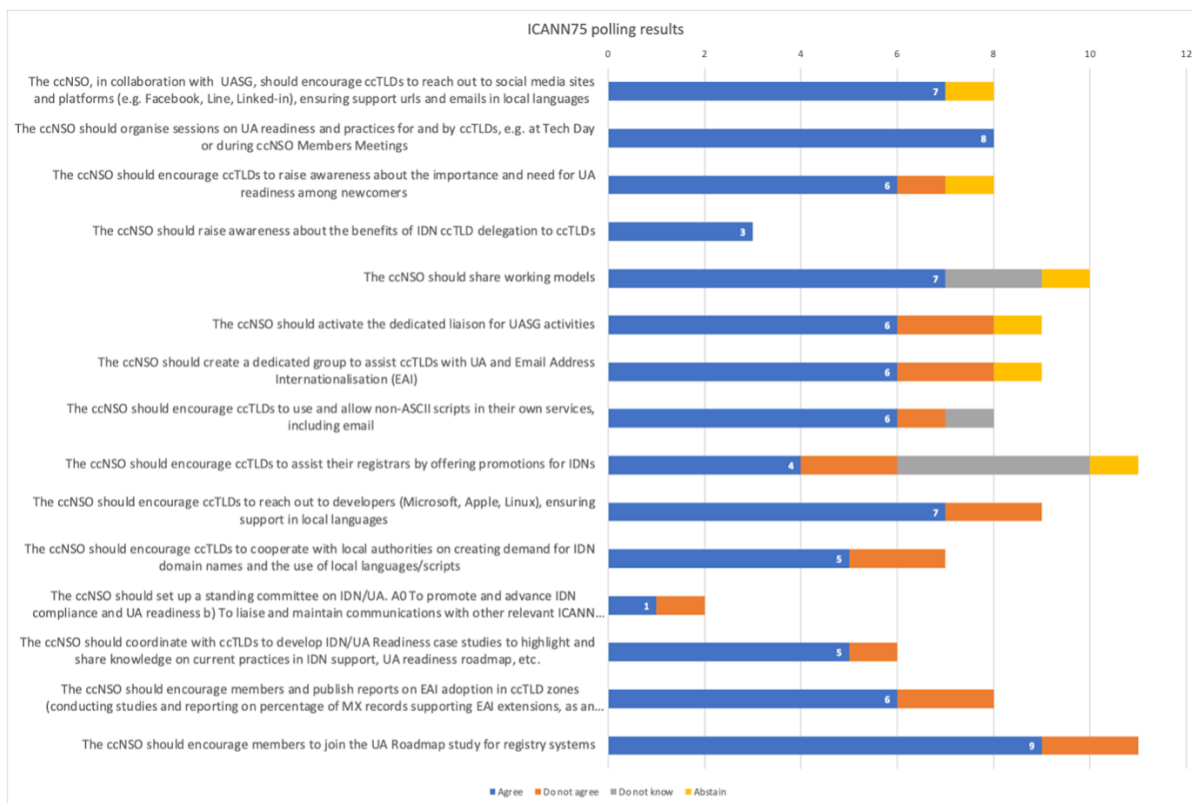
The ccNSO should activate the dedicated liaison for UASG activities

ANNEX A

ICANN75 suggestions

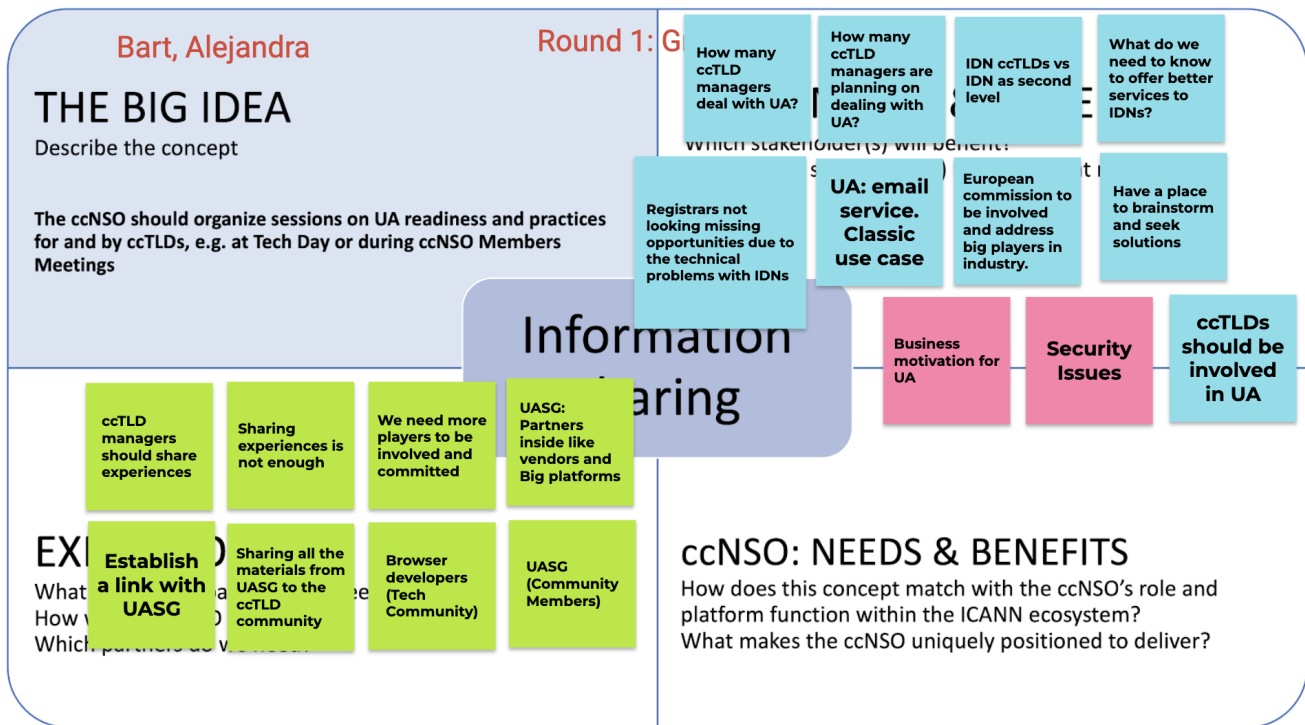
1. The ccNSO, in collaboration with UASG, should encourage ccTLDs to reach out to social media sites and platforms (e.g. Facebook, Line, Linked-in), ensuring support URLs and emails in local languages
2. The ccNSO should organise sessions on UA readiness and practices for and by ccTLDs, e.g., at Tech Day or during ccNSO Members Meetings
3. The ccNSO should encourage ccTLDs to raise awareness about the importance and need for UA readiness among newcomers
4. The ccNSO should raise awareness about the benefits of IDN ccTLD delegation to ccTLDs
5. The ccNSO should share working models
6. The ccNSO should activate the dedicated liaison for UASG activities
7. The ccNSO should create a dedicated group to assist ccTLDs with UA and Email Address Internationalisation (EAI)
8. The ccNSO should encourage ccTLDs to use and allow non-ASCII scripts in their own services, including email
9. The ccNSO should encourage ccTLDs to assist their registrars by offering promotions for IDNs
10. The ccNSO should encourage ccTLDs to reach out to developers (Microsoft, Apple, Linux), ensuring support in local languages
11. The ccNSO should encourage ccTLDs to cooperate with local authorities on creating demand for IDN domain names and the use of local languages/scripts
12. The ccNSO should set up a standing committee on IDN/UA
 - a. To promote and advance IDN compliance and UA readiness
 - b. To liaise and maintain communications with other relevant ICANN groups (e.g. UASG, GAC IDN WG, Board IDN/UA WG)
13. The ccNSO should coordinate with ccTLDs to develop IDN/UA Readiness case studies to highlight and share knowledge on current practices in IDN support, UA readiness roadmap, etc.
14. The ccNSO should encourage members and publish reports on EAI adoption in ccTLD zones (conducting studies and reporting on percentage of MX records supporting EAI extensions, as an indication of IDN/UA advancement)
15. The ccNSO should encourage members to join the UA Roadmap study for registry systems

ICANN75 polling results

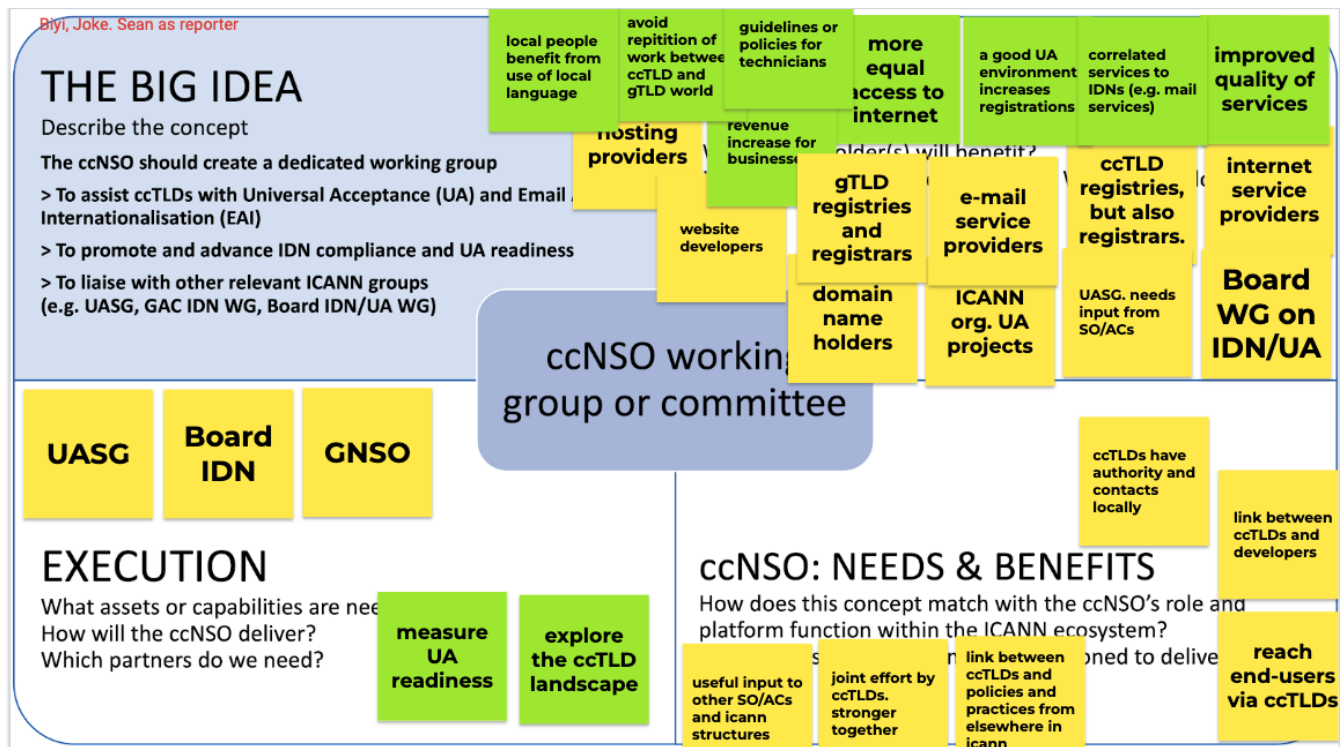


ANNEX B

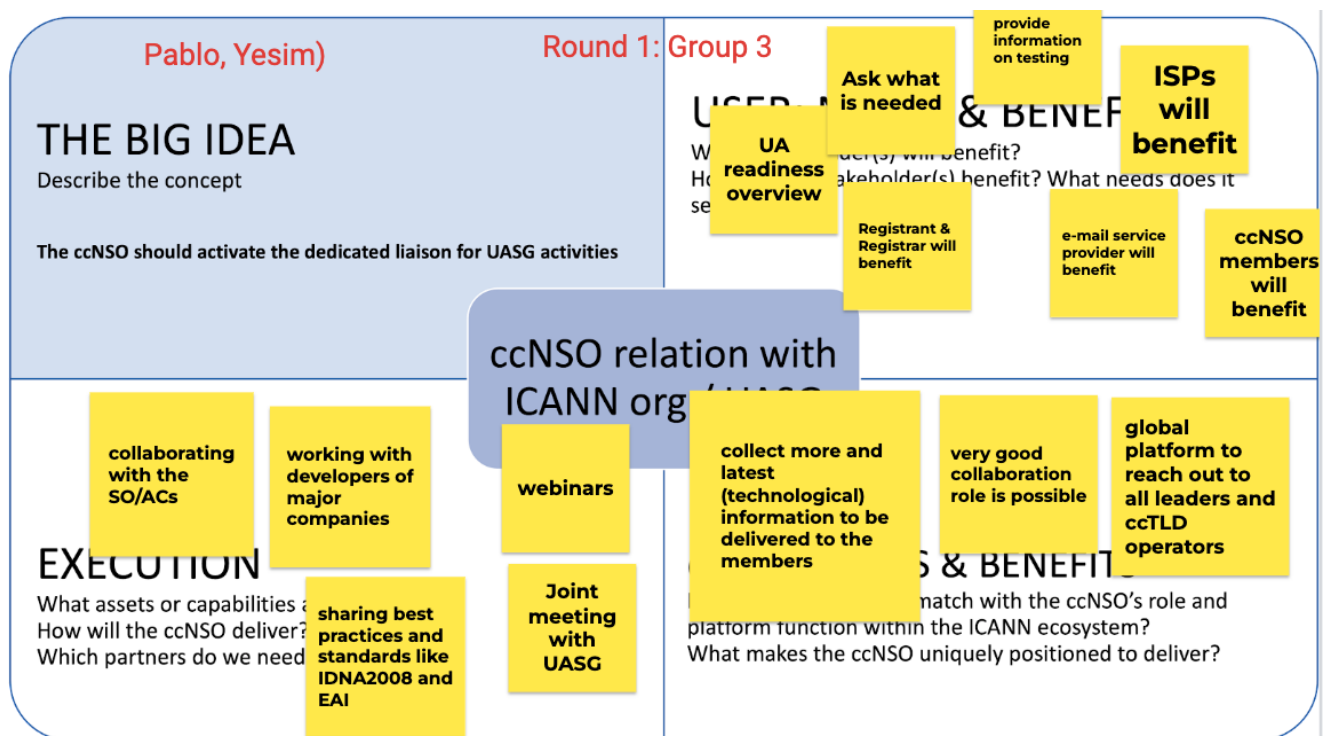
December Workshop - jamboard cluster 1



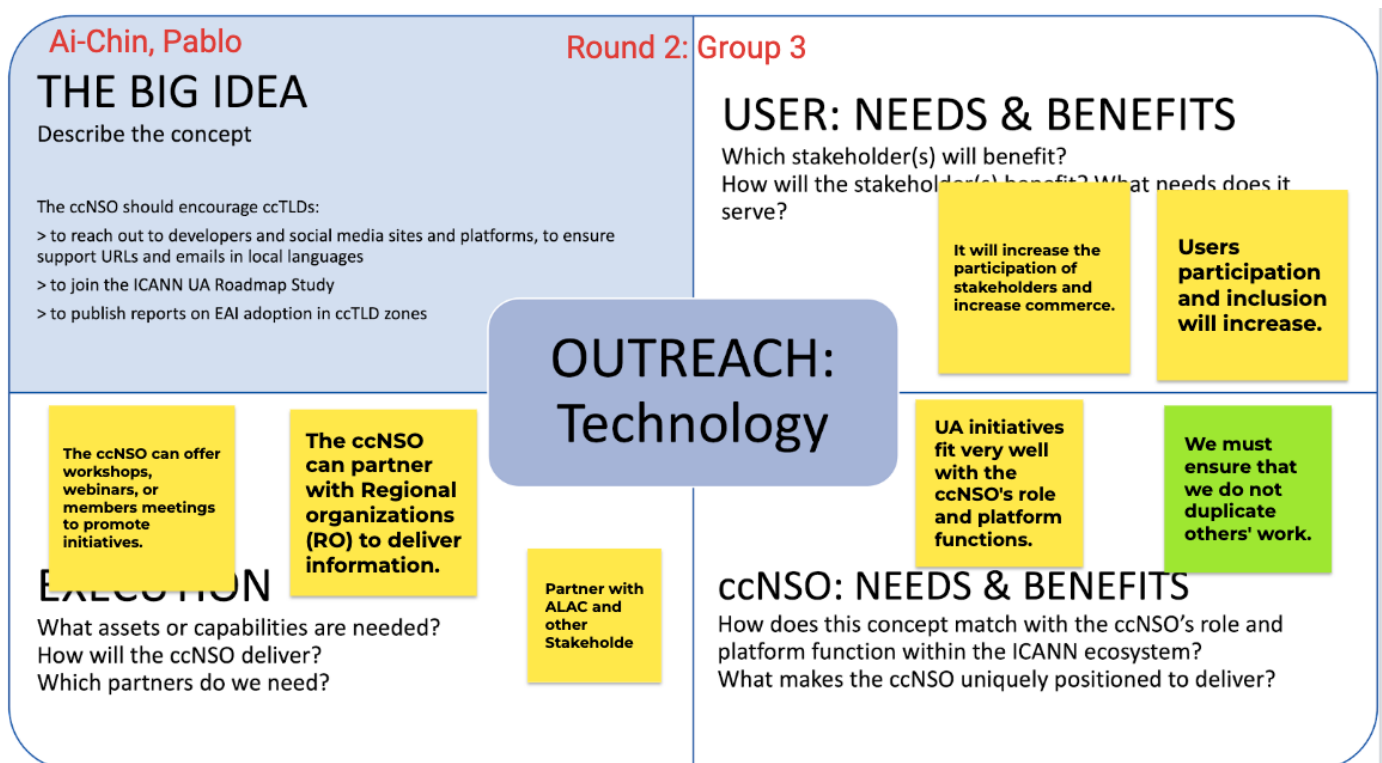
December Workshop - jamboard cluster 2



December Workshop - jamboard cluster 3



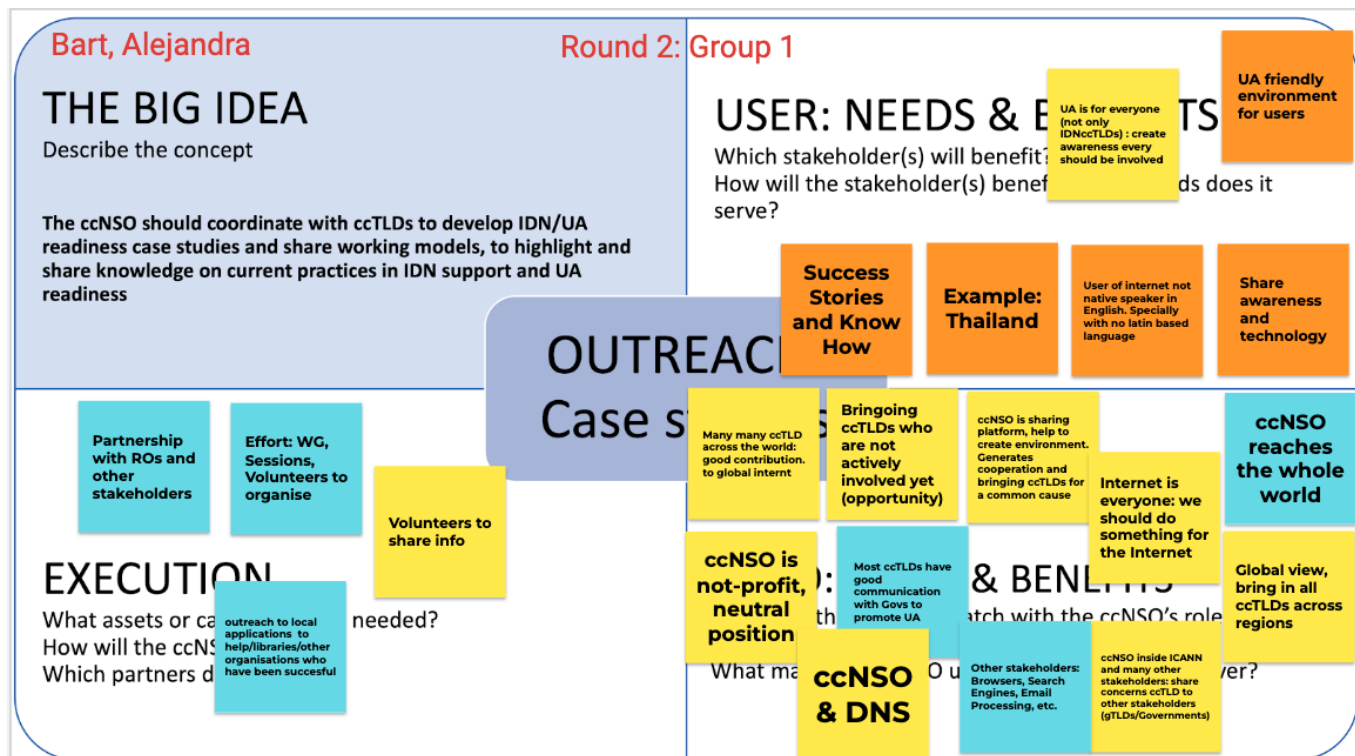
January Workshop - jamboard cluster 4



January Workshop - jamboard cluster 5



January Workshop - jamboard cluster 6



Impact-effort analysis

Graphical overview of the 30 January discussions:

cluster	description	do now (high impact, low effort)	do later (low effort, low impact)	do next (further analysis) (high effort, high impact)	don't (low impact, high effort)
1	information sharing	X			

cluster	description	do now (high impact, low effort)	do later (low effort, low impact)	do next (further analysis) (high effort, high impact)	don't (low impact, high effort)
2	ccNSO Working Group or Committee			X	

cluster	description	do now (high impact, low effort)	do later (low effort, low impact)	do next (further analysis) (high effort, high impact)	don't (low impact, high effort)
3	ccNSO relation with ICANN org / UASG		X		

cluster	description	do now (high impact, low effort)	do later (low effort, low impact)	do next (further analysis) (high effort, high impact)	don't (low impact, high effort)
4	Outreach: technology			X	

cluster	description	do now (high impact, low effort)	do later (low effort, low impact)	do next (further analysis) (high effort, high impact)	don't (low impact, high effort)
5	Outreach: marketing			X	

cluster	description	do now (high impact, low effort)	do later (low effort, low impact)	do next (further analysis) (high effort, high impact)	don't (low impact, high effort)
6	case studies			X	