

# Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Survey Results



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LAC GSE

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# Introduction

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70 Participants



Participants from the Caribbean and Pacific region and from the Atlantic, Indian Ocean and South China Seas (AIS) region



18 Questions



Responses collected between  
24 August – 7 October 7, 2022

# Background

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- Former Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) President and CEO Göran Marby requested that Sally Costerton (Interim CEO), Head of ICANN Global Stakeholder Engagement, work with the Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU) and Caribbean stakeholders to chart a way forward. The goal was to increase substantive participation of not only Caribbean countries and territories but also from small island developing states (SIDS) around the world in the policy development work taking place at ICANN.
- The objective of the survey was to collect data from stakeholders which clearly establishes the challenges and barriers to SIDS participation in ICANN. This would provide an empirical foundation for planning future actions aimed at increasing consistent and substantive participation of SIDS at ICANN.

# Planning

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- Albert Daniels drafted questions based on the objectives of the survey and solicited input from ICANN Vice Presidents (VPs) for the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC), Africa, and Asia Pacific regions
- Solicited a review and input from the Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU) Secretary General, Rodney Taylor
- Survey was created using “Clicktools” (faced technical challenges with the survey link). It was launched at at inaugural SIDS Internet Governance Forum (IGF), which was held in a hybrid format in Trinidad and attended by SIDS worldwide members

# Background

SIDS – United Nations (UN) Members		
Caribbean Region (Albert Daniels)	Oceania Region (Save Vocea)	Africa Region (Pierre Dandjinou)
Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago	Fiji, Kirbati, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu	Cabo Verde, Comoros, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritius, São Tomé and Príncipe, Seychelles

Asia (Jia Rong Low): Maldives, Singapore, Timor-Leste

SIDS - Non-UN Member/Associate Members of the Regional Commissions	
Caribbean Region	Oceania Region
Anguilla, Aruba, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Island, Curacao, Martinique, Montserrat, Puerto Rico, Sint Maarten, Turks and Caicos Islands, US Virgin Islands	American Samoa, Commonwealth of Northern Marianas, Cook Islands, French Polynesia, Guam, New Caledonia, Niue, Tokelau, Wallis and Futuna

# Distribution

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## Survey deployment:

### ● Caribbean

- Contacts in 16 Independent Caribbean territories
- All ICANN Caribbean fellows
- Caribbean government stakeholders
- Caribbean technical and academia communities
- Other SIDS regions besides the Caribbean (through members of the SIDS-IGF organizing committee)

### ● Singapore

- Infocomm Media Development Authority of Singapore
- ICANN accredited registrars: Gname.com.pte.ltd; Vodien Internet Solutions Pte. Ltd.; Dreamscape Networks International Pte Ltd.

### ● Timor-Leste

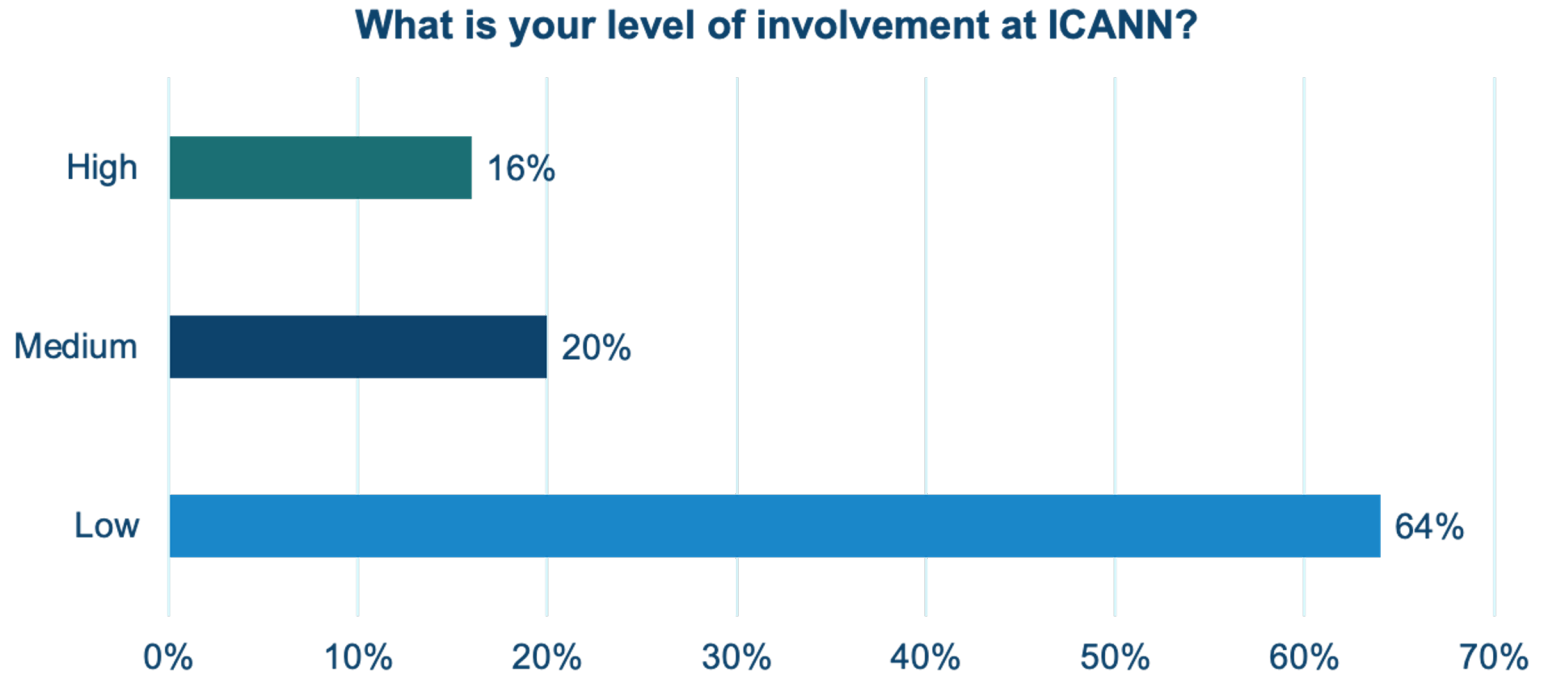
- Ministry of Transport and Communications

### ● Oceania

- Membership of Pacific Islands Chapter of Internet Society

# Participants Profile

The vast majority of participants have low participation/involvement at ICANN.

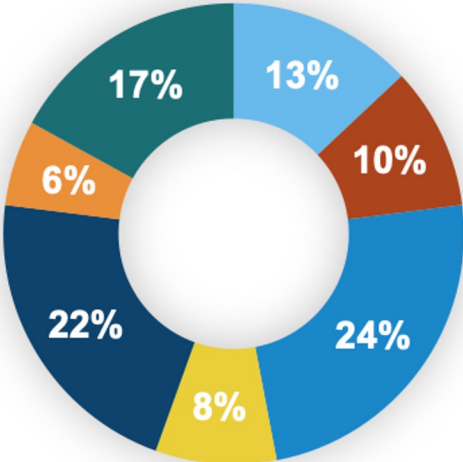


70 answers

# Participants Profile

Most participants belong to the civil society community followed closely by the government and the technical communities.

### Stakeholder Group Identification



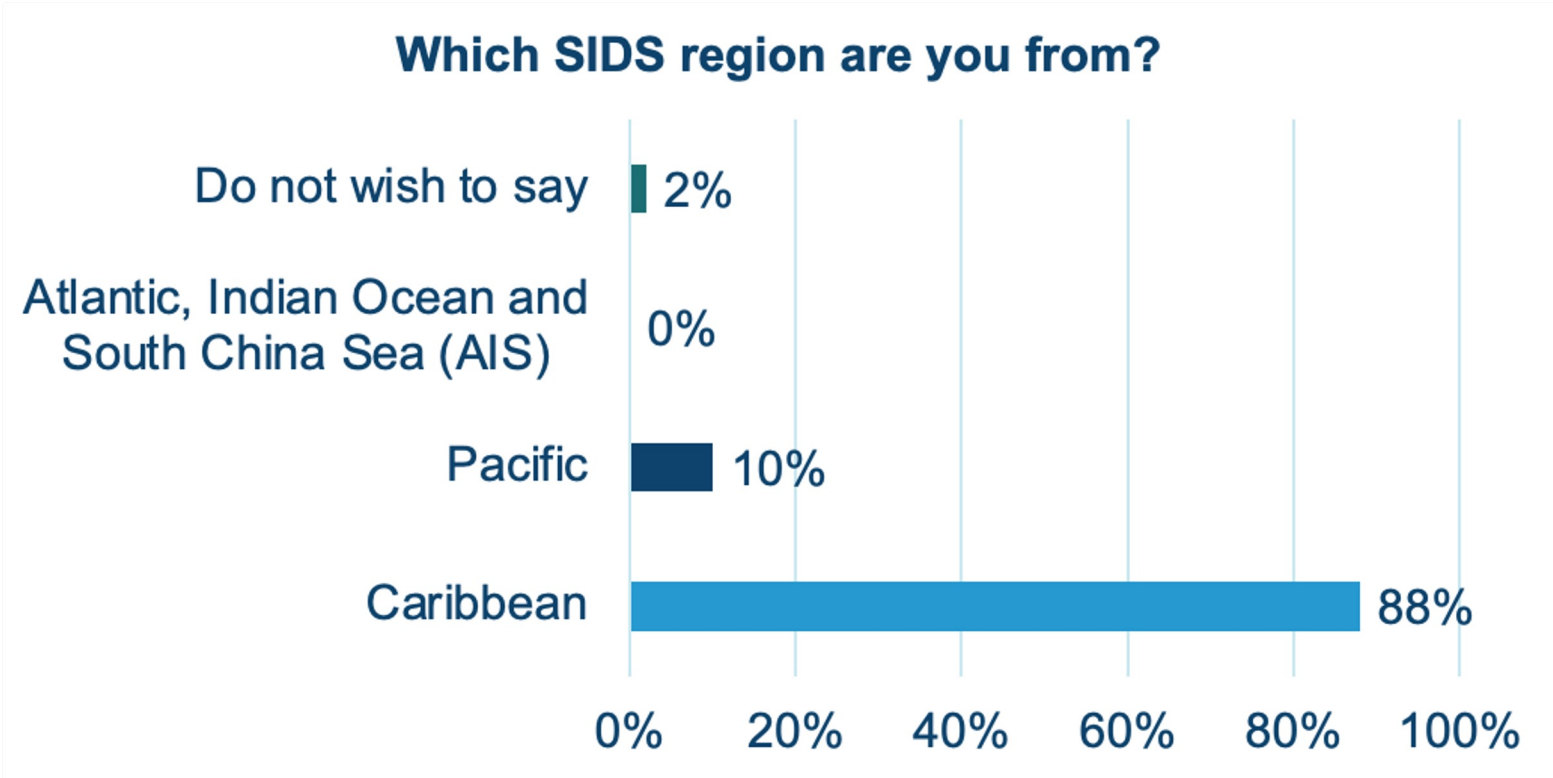
- Academia
- Business
- Civil Society
- DNS Industry
- Government
- Multistakeholder
- Technical

70 answers



# Participants Profile

88% of the participants are from the Caribbean region.



70 answers

# Challenges

## Top challenges to SIDS participation in ICANN



### Resources

Lack of financial resources to attend meetings or to devote time; lack of human resources and competence in the subject matter. (very few people at the national level **are** handling ICT policy issues)



### Engagement

Lack of engagement from members, local organizations, and government bodies driving engagement; lack of understanding within ICANN on how to engage with SIDS; lack of interaction and collaboration in the region



### ICANN

Lack of awareness on how to participate and/or get involved in ICANN; lack of information about ICANN's roles; and lack of awareness about ICANN events



### Internet/Internet Governance

Underdeveloped technological infrastructure, accessibility, connectivity, cybersecurity; and lack of familiarity with how the internet governance policies can impact the end-user



### Education

Lack of incentives, certification, training and capacity building opportunities, poor educational background in the region; lack of integration of policy and regulatory matters within technical curriculums, technical competence in managing country code top-level domains (ccTLDs); lack of understanding and/or training about the next round of new gTLDs



### Location

Lack of inclusion and representation due to the small size of the region; lack of power/voice (ICANN agenda seems dictated by the interest of the north); region's issues are treated with less significance because they do not affect the developed countries

52 answers

# Challenges

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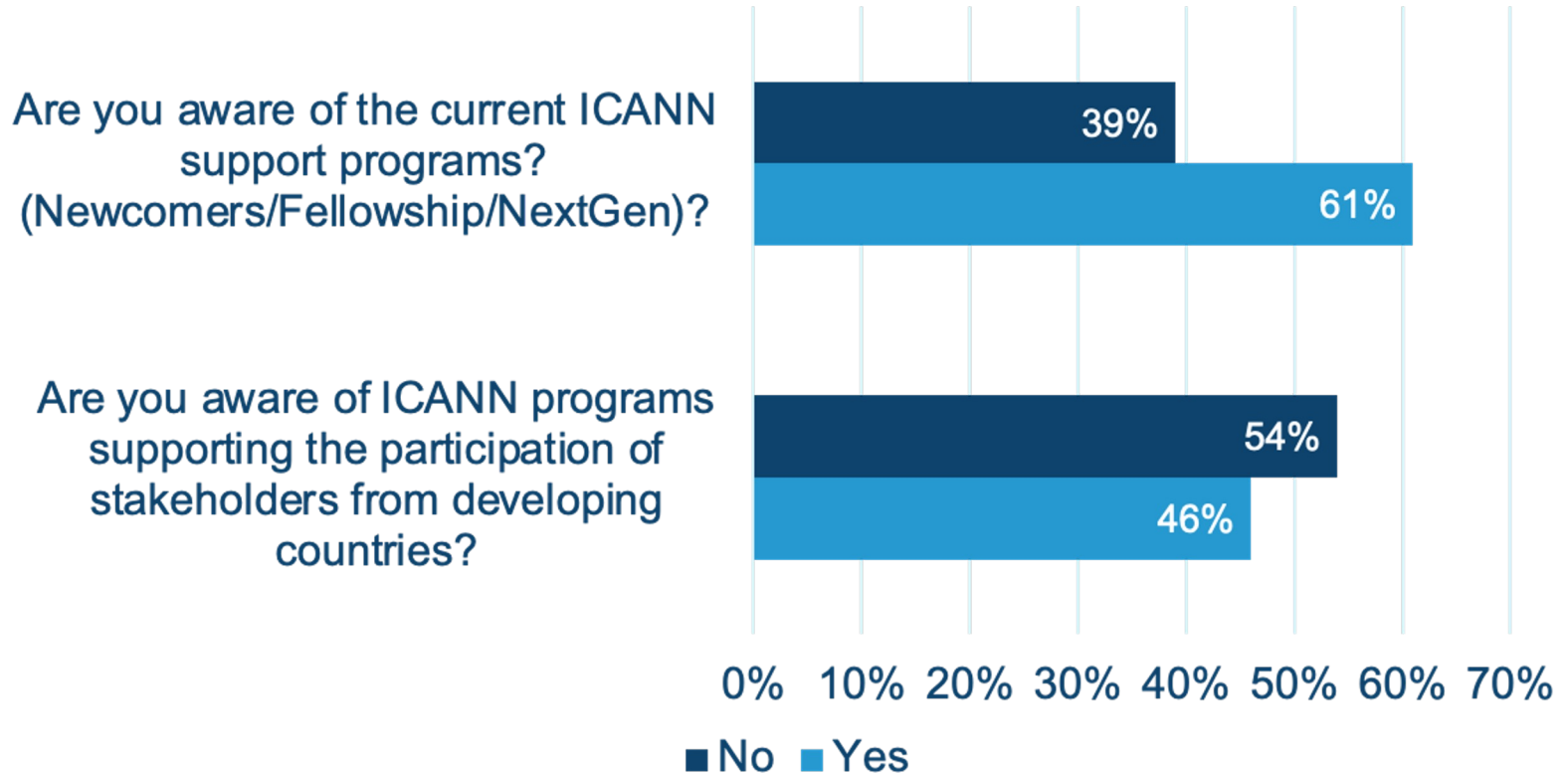
## What makes SIDS engagement different from other developing countries?

- Competing national priorities for the same financial resources
- SIDS have unique challenges to overcome:
  - Small size, population, market, and economy
  - Susceptibility to natural disasters, environmental threats, climate change, and associated threats/vulnerabilities
  - Distance, isolation, and poor connectivity
- Lacking:
  - Knowledge about domains and their importance to internet end-users
  - Financial resources
  - ICANN awareness
  - Support from regional organizations
  - Trained individuals
- SIDS represent a small portion of the global population and do not have much say when it comes to digital decisions
- Residents have little time to engage in activities and funding for travel costs

43 responses

# Awareness

## ICANN Programs



56 answers

## In addition to existing programs and initiatives, what type of resources should ICANN provide to increase SIDS participation?

- There should be greater and more consistent outreach, including more ICANN presence and efforts to raise ICANN awareness
- Expand existing training programs and promote capacity building, online trainings, workshops, and mentorships opportunities targeting the region
- Promote more frequently the upcoming events and provide more opportunities for SIDS to participate in the ICANN activities
- Obtain more support from regional organizations for SIDS to be represented
- Create more collaborations and initiatives with the national government and regional agencies to promote, encourage, and empower residents to actively participate in future ICANN events and activities

# Resources

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- Introduce students to ICANN subject matter and track their long-term improvement in understanding it
- Participants can benefit from local face-to-face interactions with each other. They should have tools to keep their inner? participation rather than just being able to interact during larger/global events
- Encourage regional domain industry structures to reinvest in capturing the community
- Include local information related to their Internet systems in ICANN events, which are held in the Caribbean region

42 answers

**How does the present structure of geographic regions lend itself to SIDS participation, given the diversity of SIDS from a geographic perspective? (Africa, North America, Latin America/Caribbean, Asia/Australia/Pacific and Europe)**

While some participants do not see a problem in the structure of the regions, others think that the SIDS participation should be addressed separately, because they do not have much in common: culture, language, politics, and economy.

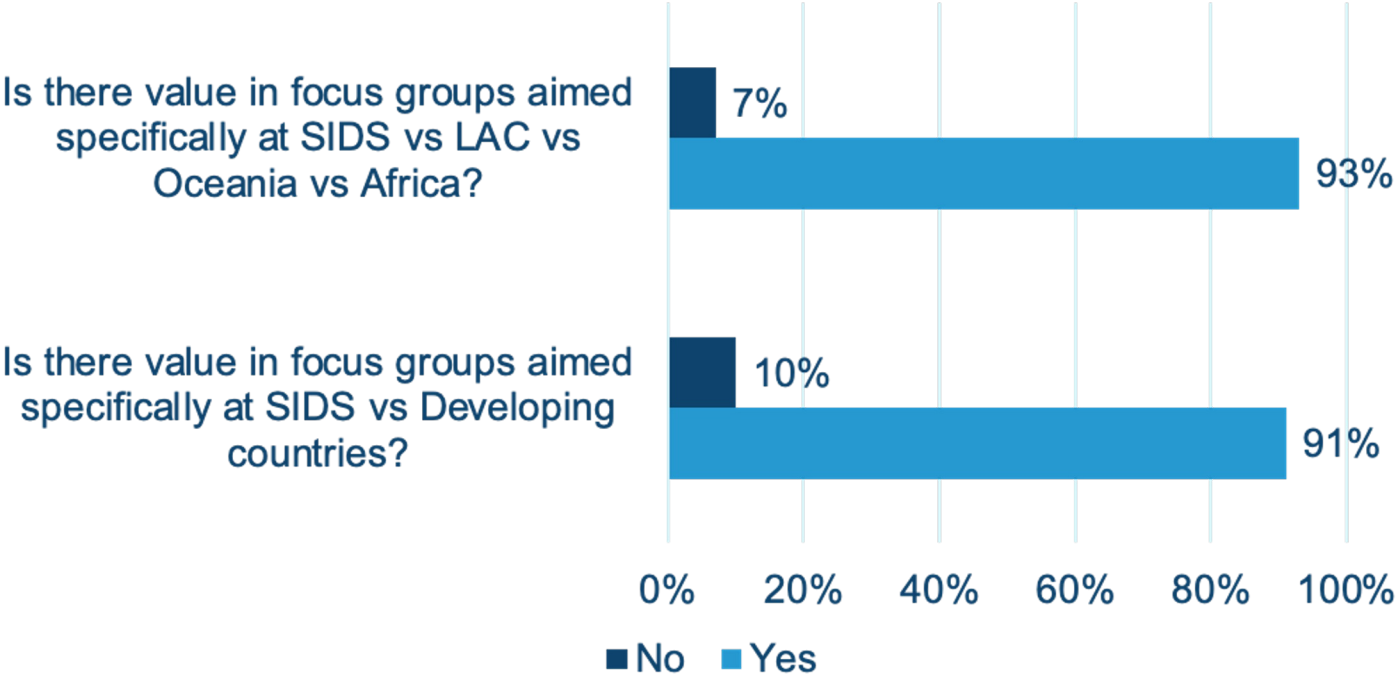
- Latin America and the Caribbean:
  - This grouping, based solely on geographic proximity, might not be ideal: different cultures, languages, needs, and priorities.
  - The Caribbean interests are overshadowed by the Latin American countries.
  - Latin American countries are larger than the Caribbean countries. A sub-grouping within LAC would address SIDS' needs and give voice to the English-speaking countries
  - SIDS do not stand a chance in competing for fellowships with other Latin American countries with much larger populations
  - It may require some restructuring to improve performance

- The Pacific and Caribbean regions are:
  - Likely to be underrepresented in current regional groupings.
  - Facing challenges in holding virtual meetings due to different time zones. (For example, the Pacific-Caribbean IGF started at 9 am in the Caribbean and 10 pm in the Pacific)
- No funding in the region to allow for active participation
- SIDS is the "underserved stakeholder group." The UN acknowledges the peculiarities of SIDS and the International Telecom Union (ITU) has a lot of information regarding special initiatives to increase SIDS participation.
- Regular regional meetings with SIDS representatives in one of the three regions prior to the ICANN Annual General Meeting (AGM) would promote an enhanced model of multistakeholder participation, and a collective view for discussions at ICANN meetings, boosting interest at regional level for GAC and ccTLD members in becoming for informed about issues



# Focus Groups

## Focus Groups



54 answers

# Strategies

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## What strategies should the ICANN organization use to broaden SIDS stakeholder participation?

- Outreach/Engagement:
  - Promote more outreach/engagement and partner with regional and international organizations, civil society, and academia that already focused on the region
  - SIDS issues often get lost in the larger regional groupings. Engagement should begin at sub-regional levels and roll up into the larger region
  - More efforts to engage SIDS members especially from underrepresented SIDS
  
- ICANN:
  - Increase presence and raise awareness. Partner with other ICT/ non-telecommunications organizations to show the importance of its functions
  - Focus on topics that are relevant to SIDS
  - Offer more capacity building and online engagement opportunities for SIDS stakeholders, including dedicated SIDS fellowships
  - Ensure that SIDS are included as a key stakeholder group within individual Regional At-Large Organization (RALO) entity
  - Use more social media to foster engagement with the young population

37 answers

# Topics of Interest

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List the topics discussed in ICANN that interest you most.

- DNS
  - 10 out of 15 answers mentioned Domain Name System (DNS abuse, DNS policies or DNS security) as a topic of interest.
- TLDs
  - New generic top-level domains (gTLD) subsequent procedures, gTLD applicant support were listed as a topic of interest in five answers
- Data Protection
  - Data protection was a topic of interest in three answers
- Other topics of interest
  - Internet security, access, affordability, stability, and infrastructure

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15 answers

# Topics of Interest

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In your opinion what other topics should ICANN discuss?

- Cybersecurity
- Internet governance
- Improving the multistakeholder model
- Capacity building for underserved regions
- Enabling access and use of the DNS
- How to make it easier and affordable for SIDS to participate in the gTLD subsequent procedures
- The real world connection between what ICANN does and how it affects the end-user and the impacts that the end-users have on the issues/subject matter that are within ICANN's remit.

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11 answers

# Key Performance Indicators (KPI)

Thirteen participants provided answers, and all of them would like to see KPIs related to SIDS and underserved regions' participation in ICANN

Participants

100%

13 answers

# Engagement

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**How can regional organizations such as the CTU (or similar organizations in Oceania and Asia and others) be better leveraged for SIDS engagement at ICANN?**

- Conduct ground level research, report on the current situation and carry out follow up actions to boost engagement
- Share information with ICANN, improve knowledge on ICANN's roles and raise ICANN awareness
- Provide all types of resources, especially staff and funding
- Help to shape the discussion agenda for the SIDS focussed sessions

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13 answers

- Support from ICANN:
  - ICANN should consistently participate in the engagements of these organizations as they provide a connection to large groups of SIDS
  - Share outcome of global policy discussions and foster engagements aimed specifically to SIDS
  - ICANN should coordinate all regional organizations to support SIDS initiatives within ICANN rather than just relying on CTU
  - Offer greater financial support for regional initiatives to mobilize and educate stakeholders (government and technical community)
  - Along with other regional and international organizations (IGF, regional ITU organizations, the Internet Society, the network information centers (NICs), and ccTLD and gTLD organizations) can encourage engagement from members both within their regions and ICANN

# Engagement

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## What are some of the other regional Organizations that could assist and how?

- Internet Society (Pacific Islands Chapter): Providing grants for events and personnel for trainings.
- Diplo Foundation: Offering sponsorships to encourage more participants in the IG ecosystem
- CARICOM: Facilitating participation in GAC
- CARIMPACS: Facilitating participation in SSAC
- APNIC, ARIN, CANTO, CTU, CITEL, LACNIC, PIFS, IOC, SPC, ATU, DotAsia
- CarPIF: Peering Forum - emerging protocols and practice for ISP and IXP administrators and managers
- CaribNOG: Targeting technical community/network engineers - awareness of the role and value network security
- Universities

12 answers



# Comments

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Please share any additional comments you may have

● ICANN:

- Lack of awareness – needs to demonstrate more commitment to SIDS and provide support for initiatives to promote awareness and capacity building
- Insufficient knowledge about the importance of issues that ICANN monitors
- Academia should have more participation
- Should foster more outreach and collaborative activities with regional agencies to expand youth engagement in technical/non-technical activities
- Should invest in facilitating greater participation from SIDS in ICANN meetings, processes, and governance structures

● Training/programs:

- NextGen: There has been one successful candidate from the English-speaking Caribbean region and likely not many more applicants

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17 answers

# Comments

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- Offer joint fellowships and graduate training opportunities to help develop interest from fresh graduates in internet governance, policy and regulations and encourage their participation on technical projects benefiting ICANN and the community
- Positive feedback:
  - Respondents were impressed with ICANN business and technology strategies. They would like to have opportunities to participate and work on technical projects that can benefit ICANN/community
  - The survey is a very good initiative to bring the region closer together and to help enforcing Dutch Caribbean involvement
  - ICANN continues to demonstrate its interest in engaging all stakeholders. Efforts should continue and results of this survey should lead to specific actions.
  - ICANN has made some effort to improve participation and representation. This is a credit to your team and organizational efforts!
  - I will be encouraging people who have been involved in this conference to join us and to establish a SIDS group within the At-Large Community.

# Summary

1

The region is underserved and underrepresented

4

Expand outreach, engagement, interactions and collaboration in the region

2

Lack of ICANN awareness, presence, and knowledge of its roles/ functions

5

Insufficient funding for training and travel

3

More attention to issues specific to the region and more events targeting the region

6

More opportunities to participate in ICANN programs

# Observations

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- Survey mostly answered by participants from the Caribbean and with low involvement in ICANN
- Questions with most answers discussed the following topics:
  - Challenges to SIDS participation at ICANN
  - Engagement in SIDS vs. other regions/countries
  - Strategies to broaden SIDS participation
  - Resources to increase participation
  - Structure of geographic regions and diversity of SIDS
- Often mentions of lack of resources, ICANN awareness, SIDS challenges and their underrepresentation throughout the survey.

# Conclusion

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- What will be done with the results:
  - Accept results as views of the respondents
  
- Actions:
  - Conduct internal preliminary discussions within LAC team [Completed]
  - Present internally to ICANN teams (GSE VPs covering SIDS) [Completed]
  - Present to the Interim President and CEO and GSE SVP (Sally Costerton) [Completed]
  - Discuss draft report with CTU Secretary General (Rodney Taylor) and Deputy Secretary General Nigel Cassimire [Completed]
  - Present Results to stakeholders [Completed (ICANN77 Hamburg)]
  - Plan actions in relation to low hanging fruit and longer term internal strategies

# LAC GSE Recommendations 1

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- Find ways to publicize more of the work that ICANN is currently doing
  - e.g. Fellowship Program, GAC Travel Support, Travel Support for SO/AC Leadership, Nextgen@ICANN Program, CROPP, Roadshows, Partner Events, Newsletters
  
- Competences: Encourage stakeholders to take advantage of ICANN Learn Platform, ICANN Capacity Development Webinars, Capacity Development Sessions at ICANN Meetings, ICANN Presentations at Partner events
  - Does the offer and amount of direct capacity development financial support to partners need to be increased e.g. CTU, CaribNOG, CANTO, OECS, CARICOM, ccTLDs, End User Groups, IGFs
  
- Solicit recommendations from SIDS on what they feel are the best ways for ICANN to Engage them
  
- Publicize collaborations with Partners
  - CTU, CANTO, CaribNOG, Caribbean I\* Orgs
  - ccTLDs, GAC Reps, Caribbean Fellows

# LAC GSE Recommendations 2

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- Find out what are the SIDS issues that are not being given adequate airtime at ICANN
- Find out what capacity building programs SIDS would like to see
- Find ways to collaborate more with Private Sector through Chambers of Commerce and Regional domain Industry structures encouraging them to reinvest in stakeholders
- Explain how Fellowship selection process gives SIDS equal opportunity for Participation
- Regular regional meetings with SIDS representatives in one of the three regions prior to the ICANN AGM would promote an enhanced model of multistakeholder participation, and a collective view for discussions at ICANN meetings, boosting interest at regional level for GAC and ccTLD members in becoming more informed about issues: **How do we make this a reality?**

# LAC GSE Recommendations

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- Host a session at each of the ICANN public meetings where representatives from SIDS in each of the SIDS regions can come together to discuss and formulate strategies on matters of interest to SIDS which are within the ICANN remit
- Create a space (mailing list, whats app group), where stakeholders from all the SIDS regions can be engaged as a single group.



# Engage with ICANN



## Thank You and Questions

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