
YESIM SAGLAM:

Good morning, good afternoon and good evening to everyone. Welcome to the AFARLO universal acceptance day 2024 session one, taking place on Wednesday 24th of April 2024 at 17:00 UTC. We will not be doing a roll call for the sake of time, but all attendees both on the Zoom room and on the phone bridge will be recorded after the call. I would like to remind all participants to please mute your lines when not speaking and also to state your names when taking the floor, not only for transcription, but also for interpretation purposes as well please. We have English and French interpretation. Thank you all for joining and now I would like to leave the floor over to Hadia Elminiawi, AFRALO chair. Over to you Hadia, thank you very much.

HADIA ELMINIAWI:

Thank you so much Yesim, this is Hadia Elminiawi for the record. I'm really happy that we are all together today for AFRALO universal acceptance day. This is the first session out of two. Today we will start with a training provided by Simon Mayoye and then from ICANN Org, he's the regional technical engagement specialist and then we will go through the AFRALO UA adoption strategy. This strategy is meant to guide AFRALO members, whether they are ALSes or individual members, on how to promote and help in the adoption of universal acceptance throughout the continent. Without further ado, I welcome you all again and hand the floor to Simon Mayoye in order to begin with the training and then we will start the actual adoption strategy discussion. Thank you.

Note: The following is the output resulting from transcribing an audio file into a word/text document. Although the transcription is largely accurate, in some cases may be incomplete or inaccurate due to inaudible passages and grammatical corrections. It is posted as an aid to the original audio file, but should not be treated as an authoritative record.

SIMON MAYOYE:

Thank you so much, Hadia. I think I will pick it up from here. Good morning, everybody, afternoon and evening, wherever you are. My name is Simon Mayoye, as mentioned, from ICANN, technical engagement specialist. It is a great pleasure to be gathered here. I see many people I see many people have joined and what an excellent time for us just to be able to discuss and have what we are calling not a universal acceptance awareness but universal acceptance adoption. And the reason why we are calling it that is I think we have put in as a community so much energy over time to be able to bring awareness to the government organizations and the rest of the users of the internet, a couple of billion. And now it is about time that we say let the tire hit the ground, let us get into the adoption. So next slide, please.

Yeah, so what we thought of we are calling the what, the who, and the how. And this is in terms of achieving what we are calling the universal acceptance in the sense of how do we now adopt after we have done so much of awareness. Next slide, please.

Yeah, so we are moving away from a focus on UA awareness to UA adoption. Again, so that we do not—like we can be able to evaluate ourselves and see where we are coming and where we are going. Next slide, please.

So when we talk about universal acceptance, we cannot be able to like untangle between the domain names and the email address. And the goal, of course, we know that we want to make sure that all software applications are able to support all the domains and email addresses. And of course, the impact is more of consumer centric so that consumers have choice. We can be able to improve competition so that

every business person has access to all kinds of borders. And that's what we're saying, like provide border access to end users. Next slide, please.

Yeah, so and we are looking at what like drove this and looking at the evolution of DNS, we see the expansion. We are back in what we can say pre-2009, where we had just a handful of gTLDs. You could be able to name them quickly and then complete them. But come 2009 onwards, then when we got like IDN ccTLDs. And from 2012 onwards, we are coming to get like new gTLDs whereby now you have like domains with which have like technology, photography, and then eventually IDN gTLDs with local scripts, which are customized to local languages, whereby everybody can really feel that they have presence and they are included in what we are calling inclusivity on the internet.

And so because of the coming of these, now it calls for something else because we know that we have previous systems which were in operation before the coming in of the new gTLDs and IDN ccTLDs and the like, whereby now these systems need to be able to support all these localized languages and emails. And at the same time, the new systems that are coming into place, they come into place with a mind of supporting both the old and the new in terms of domains and email addresses. Next slide, please.

Yeah, so now what we are calling the bad. And I've deliberately put there to be updated. I call this the bad and to be updated because this particular survey was done like in 2020. There hasn't been so much difference. Yes, there have been some improvements, but looking at what was, we see that there was a UA readiness at a glance whereby if we can look at the email servers, sorry, email servers that are

potentially configured to support email addresses in local languages and scripts, we realize that the percentage is very low.

Then when we come to like sampling where the survey sample like around a thousand websites globally that support email addresses in now specific language, which we can narrow down in Arabic and Chinese, the percentage was so low that was 11%. Now, then we see that 98.3% of the... And this is the previous survey of the top 1,000 websites globally support email addresses with the short top level domains. So basically this is now what I could call the bad because we need to have these numbers to go high because if we don't, that means we have some people who have been excluded from enjoying what we are enjoying on the internet. Next slide, please.

Yeah. And so we have challenges whereby if we can look at this particular survey again, with the source at the footer, we see that we have a challenge for acceptance by websites. Could you just go to the previous slide, please? Okay. Yeah. Next now. Thanks. Yeah. So we have email address internationalization addressed in rest in form of fields on 2,000 websites. We can see what the statistics are, which we are saying that we could do better, whereby we need to have more access to the statistics are, which we are saying that we could do better whereby we need to have more acceptance. Next slide, please, which is closely related to that. We can see also a challenge for support across email servers. So different email servers, the support and the percentages are built on the surveys. And we also can be able to get this particular information from the source, which is on the domain that is at the bottom of the footer, whereby it shows also a gradual increment, but

we need to do better. That's what we are trying to claim. Next slide, please.

Thank you. Yeah. So looking at these and all the awareness that we've been putting, these dates, we're just capturing from some of the awareness that you're wondering, how can we do better? Have we done better? Are there things that we can be able to do? So looking at the who and how, who are these people that can be able to collaborate with us to be able to make sure that this adoption is accelerated in a manner that we expect to have so many people, so that we have so many people included to have that inclusivity.

So basically, those stats have been the ones that have been depicted are more on the global level. But with time, we should be able to get some time in the near future to get some stats specifically for Africa. So who and how we are looking at businesses. So the question that is posing, we are posing here to ourselves is, are most businesses aware that being you already will be best positioned to reaching growing global audiences and maximize revenue potential from the current internet population? And the question is, how much business are you missing if you're not UA ready? Whereby somebody on a different script sent you an email, but your system says it's invalid. And at that point, you're losing business. And so the question is, can we motivate this by being able to present this case to the businesses?

The second person to engage is the government. What can we do to encourage governments to update their procurement policies, to have the system applications to support UA and we engage more. Do we have some governments that have already complied that we can use as

success stories for other governments to be able to abide to it? And I was just looking at some of the use cases, we look at India, with several languages, people having different local languages, yet a government comes up to say, we know the problem of our people, and then they come up with an incentive whereby they incentivize people getting online by giving them free emails. That cannot be the only strategy, but every market has its own strategies. And governments are key, because we know that governments depend on procurements. Is there anything we can be able to work on that to help us to be able to achieve this milestone?

The academia. Further, can we further engage learning institutions and update the curriculum to include teaching and learning of UA and software internationalization-related concepts? Because the guys who are coming from the universities are the guys who are going to move this technology to the next level. Can we follow up on the developed resources, best practices and guidelines for implementing universal acceptance to have them implemented? Because this particular reason is, if we can have guidelines, clear guidelines, somebody will want to say, can I use this to implement that? If it works, then you will be able to go. Because what I know about operators, system engineers, admins, and all that is, if a system is running, they don't want to interfere, because they feel it will break. So unless there are guidelines which assure that the results will be predictable, then they'll not be able to implement. Next slide, please.

Then we have the DNS industry. This is the broad one, where we have the service providers, we have the technical community, including the top-level domain registrars, ISPs, and all that. Can we include, influence

domain registries and registrars to offer services that facilitate universal acceptance? And every ccTLD, they are in their own country, and there's a way they understand the market. There is a way they can be able to influence the market to have universal acceptance being highlighted more. Can we come up with deliverables after carrying out training and educational activities? Because continuing to give an awareness without evaluating the progress is not that helpful. Can we test and address universal acceptance related issues in our own products and services, so that any products that I come up with, if I am a software developer, can I cross-check that is it UA compliant or not? If it's not, why?

Then the last one, can we be able to report bugs? Because reporting bugs brings the community around the table to be able to fix, because it's a problem that we want to be able to solve to be able to move forward with this technology. Next slide, please.

So approaches, some of the approaches, there are so many that we have always discussed. I'm just capturing some of them and trying to customize them. What we can say is, for example, the first one, domain names and email addresses standardization. What we are clear of is that we have defined standards like IETF, we have ICANN, and other bodies which have established standards. So there is the need for us to ensure that domain names and email addresses are there to such established standards.

Okay. Then we go to the next one, is more of internationalization. Can we accommodate linguistic diversity and enable users to express their identities in their native languages? We need to support the use of non-Latin characters, that's Unicode in domain names and email addresses,

and this encourages now the participation of people especially. Somebody will feel so good when they feel that they are able now to communicate from their village. They don't have separate lines whereby the life they live in the community in the village is the same life that they express themselves when it comes online. If somebody speaks Tamil, then they can be able to express themselves in Tamil, web, and all that. If it's Arabic, then so that somebody does not have two lives whereby they have to know, now I'm communicating in this particular forum, and the other one.

Then technical improvements and validation mechanism. There is need to have that domain names and email addresses recognized and supported by all software applications, operating system, and internet-based enabled devices. Then the implementation of validation mechanisms to verify the syntax and integrity of domain names and email addresses. Just going back to that internationalization, an idea just came back to me, and there's a time as part of a different what we call capacity building team, what we are calling operator groups. We went to Tanzania and we taught technologies that was more of network technologies, and we taught technologies in the local language, Swahili. You could feel connecting with the engineers because they now feel even their local language can be able to even operate, like even the technologies. That is where inclusion now comes. Make somebody feel this is our technology and not just for the other people across the term. Next slide, please.

Yeah, awareness and education. This is more of conducting awareness campaign, education to users, developers, and organizations on the importance of UA, providing guidelines on best practices for

implementing UA because we do not want to be able to advocate for something without laying down the best practices, one plus one. If we can be able to guide one, two, three, four, then it can be easily taken by the users.

Then collaboration among stakeholders, including government, industry organizations, standard bodies, and technology companies to address challenges because challenges will come. We need to face them and see how to maneuver around them. And then promote universal acceptance across different platforms and systems.

Policy advocacy, very key because we need to advocate for policies and regulations that promote UA and address barriers to adoption, such as restrictions on domain name registration or limitations on email addresses, address formats, where somebody is writing Arabic, and because Arabic, they write, they are writing, they come from right to left, and then somebody is filling in a form. And then before submitting, the event organizer says your email format is wrong. And if I am Arabic, I feel, why am I not recognized? So basically, having those advocacies. Then compliance, development of tools and resources for testing and verifying UA compliance in software applications and systems, enabling developers to identify and address issues effectively. What we are talking about is more of, we do not want, like policies, we do not want to start moving forward and then we realize, oh, we have not covered this. Like we have been seeing data protection policies, AI, things coming in and say, let us start working on policies when we are already there. We need to be able to pre-test ahead of that. All right, move again next, please.

I think we are on the last slide. So way forward, here we say the open mic so that you can be able to see. With all these that we are talking about and we have always brought them as awareness, is there a way that we can be able to customize that in the context of Africa so that everybody, somebody in Egypt, in Kenya, whatever it is, you can be able to customize. I will give an example like in Kenya, where I live, where the government came up with a portal and said, for you to be able to get any service, it does not matter you are in what village, you must be able to log in into this portal. For you to log into that portal, that means you need an email address. For you to have just a national ID. So that becomes like, it is like a language or it is a currency that the government is encouraging in this particular market. We have different markets that can be customizable to be able to fit in such a manner that UA can be customized per country to be promoted to have everybody included, regardless of the community where they come from. Thank you so much. Hadia, I see you have your hand raised, please.

HADIA ELMINIAWI:

Thank you so much, Simon. If we can go to your previous slide, I just wanted you to highlight the barriers, so address barriers to adoptions, and you did mention restrictions on domain registrations or limitations on email address format. So could you elaborate a little bit on that so that we can actually, it could help in the development of the strategy itself. It could help us be more specific. If we can like, identify the barriers.

SIMON MAYOYE:

Okay. Yeah, I hear you. Yeah, so I think the easiest example is, so the fact that most of the systems are not UA compliant. Everybody, most of the systems understand that you can only be able to have an email address, which is Latin based, which is made of A to Z and the numbers, the ones that have always been defined from what I had mentioned the pre-2009. But now, because of that, most of the systems that somebody puts up, like a registration form for people to be able to register, you realize that when you are registering, put an email, my email is `simon.mayoye@icann.org`. It will accept. But there are several specific emails, which will not be, actually the system will say invalid. Okay. So for example, if you put there like Chinese, most of them Japanese, those forms will say invalid. If you put there, especially Arabic and whereby even the format is writing from right to left, instead of an email, which was from left to right, the form said invalid. So this would be more of a call towards the system admin, software developer, so that they can be able to have an inclusion support for all the localized languages.

Unfortunately, it's only that in this, this is not the particular forum that you can be able to go through on the implementation. I think that is more now we can be able to take during capacity building now with the system developers and system admins on what they need to change on their systems or updates or the ones who are developing new systems so that they can be able to come up from ground up with the support of all the localized languages. So basically that was what I meant, because unless we fix such things, then we have, we get now those barriers. Participation in some forums, not everybody will be able to participate or somebody will have to be forced to go and look at creating an email,

a Yahoo or a Gmail, so that they can be able to have a proper format that can be able to be accepted by that particular domain or website.

HADIA ELMINIAWI:

Okay, thank you so much for elaborating. I do see a hand from Chokri, so maybe you can take the queue. Chokri, go ahead.

CHOKRI BEN ROMDHANE:

Thank you very much. Thank you, Simon, for this intervention and the presentation. I probably, I definitely think that universal access is really crucial for the involvement of the DNS, not only in our region, but in several regions in the world. But I have another conviction that probably, maybe we are using the wrong technical tools in order to solve an issue, which initially adopted and developed based on ASCII and specifically coding language. So, I personally think that we could not solve those variants of language using the current code or any of those tools that we have using now. So, the main idea is that we have to evolve with our technology. We have to look for other new technologies that could help us in order to solve this technical issue principally, because the issue is purely technical. And when we are going to solve this technical issue, we could address this solution that we have provided and we have developed to the other states. If we are not going to solve this technical issue, and we are continuing to use the same tools that are basically using some encoding that is not suitable for other language [inaudible], which is the ASCII code, I'm really afraid that all the strategies that we are going to do or to implement, whether it's in some regional [inaudible] or some reflection, will go to the same

result that we have today, that we have a lot of issues with email address, with IDN, and a lot of languages are not taken into account. So, mainly, we have to solve this technical issue using other tools that could be more efficient than those that we are using. Probably, the new technology like artificial intelligence or blockchain will be another solution for us. Thank you very much.

SIMON MAYOYE:

Yeah, thanks so much, Chokri, for the contribution. Really grateful for your input. Yeah, so we are moving into the era of AI. We can say we know what is happening and we also don't know all about the AI where we are heading to. But yes, there are many problems that you're going eventually to be able to resolve them as the future unfolds, and these are some of the ways we are looking at on how we're going to resolve. But basically, I believe, however, whatever form it is, even if it is using AI, it is actually a technical problem which is being resolved technologically. And so, it is more of empowering the system developers to be able, firstly, okay, we can say let us start with the new systems which are coming in place. Can they be developed with a UA in mind, the ones which are coming?

The old system, what happens? If we can go back into history, realize that there is a time where there was, was it DOS? We had Windows which evolved. We evolved into Windows 95. There was a time where there was Windows XP and all that. What happens is when something else came, that's why we used to have like an update. When you update the system, it adds a functionality. So, we have to do in this way, in all

ways, if we have to say that it is blockchain which will be able to help us, these are some of the development stages that we head towards.

Having said that, if we can look at the statistics which are expected to have had by now, I have the ones that I had shown earlier on the second slide which is from 2020, but there is quite some improvement in the way that these systems are being built. And one of the ways we can say is, for example, government. When governments are plotting a procurement process, if they say, for you to be able to participate in this, you have to be a compliant.

You realize that this is a technical problem which is being now worked out by government to make sure that it is compliant. What will happen, most of these people will have to be able to upgrade the system. There are some systems which maybe they're too old, they have to be phased out, which is agreeable. And one of the examples which is probably off-topic is a case of what technologists call IP addressing. We have IPv4 and IPv6. We have systems which can never communicate, they can never talk IPv6. Those are said to be phased out if somebody has to move to IPv4. And we can be able to say in this particular line as well, if we are talking about UA compliance, the systems, their approaches to be able to update them, if the system is too old, then we have to see how we can be able to stop it. But yes, I agree. We also have to look at other ways are we able to do so that we have to fast track the move. Because these new technologies, AI, blockchain, and all that, they've not just come to be there. These are the technologies that are coming to be able to help us solve problems faster. So I really appreciate, yeah, on your approach. And you are also welcome to be able to participate. And that is why we have like this strategy forum, so that we brainstorm

and be able to come up with solutions that can be able to function to help us to function better and faster. Yes, Hadia, your hand is up.

HADIA ELMINIAWI:

Thank you so much, Simon. So I have two questions. The first is in relation to statistics. So do we have statistics specific to Africa? And are those statistics specific to Africa that you showed us? That's my first question. And then my second question, are there certain applications or tools that are specifically used by Africans, or commonly used by Africans, where we could actually look at those applications and see that—are widely used, I mean, by Africans, where we can look at those applications and see if they are UA ready?

SIMON MAYOYE:

Okay, yeah, thanks. So firstly, I'll say the statistics that I shared earlier, they were more of, they were the global statistics. Unfortunately, I did not manage to get the Africa-specific stats, but our team will be looking at how soon possibility for our teams to be able to come up with statistics, so that we can be able to see narrowing down into Africa, how are we doing, which markets are doing better, and which ones are still lagging, so that we can be able to to move together.

The second question, applications, this one brings me to one of the questions that, let me just, I'm trying to figure out how to be able to respond. Yeah, so we are looking at different markets have different like areas of emphasis. So we have some regions whereby an application like Google has been blocked, doesn't work, probably like China or wherever it is, they have their own system. So every community could be having

their own system, which they work so much. Coming from a market, what we call Kenya, Kenya has something that they call M-Pesa. Well, M-Pesa probably is not popular in Ghana, but a Kenyan will not live without, will not like operate properly in a day or a week without that. So that is specific to them. But we have other applications which are standard, like email application, we talked about like Outlook, like Thunderbird and all that. So those ones we can say, I can say application is more centered around what do I do on a day-to-day basis. So if I'm more of an email person, then what email application do I use, does it support, and then if I am a software developer, what kind of softwares do I use and are they supporting this? If it's a locally developed one, then it has to meet a certain standard. That's why I mentioned about IETF. When developing a software, an application and everything, there is that need whereby I do not develop a platform because I come from Tanzania and so this Tanzania. No, that is not supposed to be accepted because it's supposed to meet some technological standards like the IETF standard. Now, once they meet that, then that means anybody else can be able even to contribute into it. So it is a broad topic that we can be able to recommend that standardization will be the best approach so that any application that is used or developed has to meet a certain minimum criteria. And talking in terms of the IETF now, we are saying let something like UA readiness, let it be part of like a requirement for a developer when they are trying to develop a software or an application. And as I speak, I see I have [inaudible] we have a couple of things, a couple of people also in this particular forum. I see Matogoro and all that. If you feel there's any approach that you want to be able to input as the questions come in, just feel free to be able to raise your hand that you can be able to contribute. Okay, Bwire, over to you.

BWIRE BITURO:

Yes, my name is Bwire. I'm a master's student in University of Dodoma and my mentor is Dr. Matogoro. During the 28th March 2024 in UA event adoption, we're trying to check out our system, Tanzania High Learning Institution Admission System. And we saw that our system would deny the input field of an email. And through that event, we implement it in one of the college which is Tanzania Community Network Portable College through the online admission system. We implemented that universal acceptance as a developer to implement IETF standards in online admission system and we made it.

So for the previous questions, I'd like to share for others, there is a need in development to adopt the UA readiness in our system in order to block a barrier of communication between each other. It is only that but I perform better in a database. You need to know how database, it will accept non-Latin characters and how it is stored. And also, you can perform the UA readiness in your framework, a developed framework which you are using to develop that system. It is only that.

SIMON MAYOYE:

Thanks so much, Bwire. And interesting. Actually, I was trying to point out on your mentor, Dr. Matogoro. And here you are, you mentioned that. And excellent. I saw that email whereby Dr. Matogoro was just sharing on the achievement that you guys had. And that becomes like an encouragement in Africa. And knowing how Tanzania is, I know how the rollout is. I think we just need the government to be able to support and just give like a heads up and incentive. Then we will see that rolling.

And for me, I think talking on a personal opinion, I really believe like universities can be able to give like a very good direction because the interactions, they have so much contact, so many people pass through the university. And so, the influence and be able to support for a better and easier rollout. So, thanks so much for that particular participation and the contribution as a case study, which we now expect to have it very soon to be published among the case studies that we have in ICANN. Yes, Fatimata?

FATIMATA SEYE SYLLA:

Yes. Hello, everyone. This is Fatimata from Senegal. And again, thank you, Simon, I just wrote it in the chat for your excellent presentation. And I asked also in the chat a question about, I mean, if you could just explain more how governments can promote EA adoption. I think you started talking about already about how they can do within their procedures, et cetera, et cetera. I mean, I would like to have more information about that, more explanation about that. And also, if you can have some success stories about governments who made it happen. And in Africa. Thank you. Okay.

SIMON MAYOYE:

Thanks so much, Fatimata. Yeah, I'm pasting a link in Zoom. Yeah, so this one is more of the case studies that we have. And while I might not have at hand an African case study, but okay, before I say that, let me give first of all Mutegeki to be able to say something, and then I can be able to come back to you, Fatimata. Mutegeki, please. Go ahead. And

then Dr. Matogoro can be able to follow up. Okay, let's jump. We can go to Dr. Matogoro, and then back to Mutegeki. Dr. Matogoro, go ahead.

JABHERA MATOGORO:

Yes, thank you so much, Simon. This is Dr. Jabhera Matogoro from the University of Dodoma from Tanzania. And I'm impressed with the work that Mr. Bwiri is doing. Actually, Mr. Bwiri is my master's student, and I'm guiding him on how he can contribute on the universal acceptance. Maybe on the question that Fatimata has asked about the government role. Actually, for example, the government of Tanzania is pushing more on the tourism as a way of getting more tourists visiting Tanzania. And most of them, they must be asking visa on arrival or maybe doing an online visa application. Imagine you have a guest or a tourist coming from China or from India who have the Chinese valid email. Then if our systems are not universal acceptance ready, then we will be missing out that tourist from Chinese or from Indian with a valid maybe Hindu email address. So it's quite important for the government to make sure first their systems, applications, devices are supporting the universal acceptance, but also putting an enabling environment where universal acceptance could be maybe could be used as an agenda within the government's discussion. I think that could be the best supporting that could be offered by the government to the ecosystem. As I'm reading the universal acceptance in Tanzania, we will always be happy to share our experience to anyone interested to come to make the system in about acceptance. Thank you so much. And I'm sorry for the background that is coming out with me. Thank you.

SIMON MAYOYE:

Thank you so much, Dr. Jabhera. Mutegeki, are you ready to unmute? But thanks so much, Dr. Jabhera. I think that is a very good approach. And I like Tanzania whereby the government sometimes nobody needs it. I'm just saying we want in response to Fatimata's question, when a government buys into an idea, then you have sold it. That's what I say. So I think one of the things that as people in technology, we miss is convincing, probably styles or rather techniques to convince the government. But if we can be able to participate in the government policy, we'll be able to give those services, whether at a cost or giving back to the community. During those sessions, we are able to bring that idea to the government on the need to implement this. Because in Africa, yes, most of the technologists realize that we are still behind. And so we need to push this through government.

Now, if we say, for example, like something that I've just repeated several times, governments normally, no work for the government can be performed, most of the government without going through a procurement process. If you can be able to get a buy in the government, and the government see the technology people coming in to be able to be supportive on the development of the technology in the country. And then you slip in an idea to be able to include like mandatory for UA readiness of assisting before contributing, even through the laws and policies just to be able to be included. Once you are able to pass through the government for implementation or making it mandatory for some systems to have UA readiness through different ministries, it can be like a Ministry of Information Technology and the like, you realize that is the easiest way to be able to go through.

And I give an example, like in Kenya, whereby you can't say that I'm too old, over 80 years, and I need to replace a national ID, but I don't have an email address. So the government is like locks you out. If you have children, let them help you to be able to create an email, then open to this system, be able to create an account, then only then apply for national ID, only then apply for a driving license, only then can you be able to file your return for tax, only then. So you realize that all these conditions, the government is helping to be able to move towards this, but for the government to be able to accept that, you must come up with enough motivation to be able to convince the government why you really feel that this has to go.

And Dr. Matogoro has just given us like a very good example whereby tourists coming, getting into Tanzania, some of them have to be let, if the system is not ready, they have to be let and sent back, not to come into the country, yet they're bringing revenue for tourism, just because the system is not UA ready. But if it's UA ready, that means it gathers a lot. You can imagine if in East Africa, where you have like three to five countries, if Tanzania only has a system for visa application for tourists, that is UA ready, and somebody is coming from Japan, from Dubai, who knows only Arabic, and tries and sees that it's only in Tanzania where he can be able to see, to visit. That is a good motivation for the government to move very fast to be able to say the tourism system has to be compliant. And then after that, he moved to the next procurement system. Next, he moved to maybe passport system for citizens.

So basically, it's all about how are we able to motivate that. So that is, at least for me, how I understand where we can be able to have success in

the government. All right, so I'll give another last call to Mutegeki, and then we can see if there's any other question, any other contribution, any comment, before I can be able to pass back to Hadia.

YESIM SAGLAM:

Simon, if I may, we actually have a question from the French channel. If we can please take that one. If we can please listen to the interpreters, I'm sure the question will be read aloud. Just checking if Ghania is able to ask her a question on the French channel. Okay, seems like no one is talking at the moment. So back over to you, Simon.

SIMON MAYOYE:

All right, Dr. Jabhera, you have something to add before I answer this one question. Yes, go ahead.

JABHERA MATOGORO:

Yes, maybe I saw the question from [inaudible], what ICANN can do. And I think the best question could be what can we do to make our system and application universal acceptance ready. And even for us, when we started pushing for the universal acceptance, it never became easy. But finally, when we went for the re-adoption, it's where we started working together with the technical team. And finally, we managed to do it. So I think the best question that could serve, rather than directing it to ICANN, it could be what can we do as Africans to make our system universal acceptance rate. And the answer is quite easy. So we only need also to be ready to accept and make our universal acceptance ready. Thank you so much.

SIMON MAYOYE:

Thanks, Dr. Jabhera. Actually, as we are looking at that question, it was the next question to mention. Yeah, and as you mentioned, Dr. Jabhera, yes, ICANN is more community-centric. We have our problems, we solve them. It is not an ICANN problem. It is our problem. And so we need to come together and be able to bring heads together and see how we can be able to help. At the same time, ICANN also does capacity building, whereby in the event that we have, we need some levels of training and all that, we have a technical engagement segment where we can be able to support that. If you can go to the ICANN website, you can be able to get that, then you can be able to contribute.

But now this particular arrangement, AFRALO, it would be good if all of us be able to participate in this so that we see success stories. Because ICANN might not be very keen on how to help a user in Uganda, but being a participant of this and seeing the achievement by the University of Dodoma in Tanzania, it would be more helpful. So ICANN is a facilitator and they'll bring that case study so that you can be able to access it. And then we also have forums like AFRALO, whereby we can be able to exchange ideas and development of this. All right. So I see the French channel, I think is ready. I'll mute myself. Yes, I think we can go ahead.

PASTOR PETERS:

Pastor Peters, please. I have a question. Pastor Peters. Pastor Peters. Hello.

YESIM SAGLAM: Sorry, please. We do have a queue. If you can please hold, Pastor Peters. We're listening to the French channel. Thank you.

GANIATH BELLO: Yes, thank you very much. This is the first time I participate in such a meeting and I'm very honored by it regarding universal acceptance. In West Africa, when I'm looking at Benin, for instance, it's mostly at the technical level or a scientist. If you're not a web developer, if you are not part of a particular network, you're not aware of it. How can we do to make sure that what is a very important topic for the Internet to belong to everyone? How can we explain universal acceptance without being too technical? How can we explain it to everyone so that everyone can understand how important the universal acceptance is? So this is my main question. Thank you. My name is Genghis Bero. I am from IFG Benin.

SIMON MAYOYE: Thank you so much. I think here we have a couple of approaches that we can be able to mention that. If somebody has an input, you're welcome to do that. When we were talking about this slide, I think, Yesim, can you be able to go up some slides where I mentioned about the who? Yeah, there. No, no. You just passed it. There. So we are talking about businesses, government. We have academia. And then just go down again. The next slide. Yeah. So basically, yeah. So we were talking about next slide again. Okay. So basically, there's a place. Next slide. Sorry. One more. No, no, no. Yeah, that one.

SIMON MAYOYE:

So if you can see, I'm saying awareness and education. Conducting awareness campaigns and education to users, developers, organizations. You see users come first. And this is actually the real desire for UA because we know the people with localized language of their own, they are not able to participate in it. So how do we do? And we don't have to tell people that we're coming to tell you about universal acceptance. And that's why there's a point and empathy. We are saying that we need to have somebody who lives in the village and the lifestyle he lives in the village, he can be able to extend it to the internet whereby they can have an email address in their own language, a domain in their own language without having to strain that knowing Latin-based or English-based, whatever it is language, is a must for you to go to the internet. So making them understand internet is a thing. When they start using in that particular language, then they are part of it. But now this now incorporates, now the developers will be able to bring up that particular system to be able to support that.

So when we go about markets, we have different people, every country, every continent have problems that they are better off to sort. And I shared a link there for case studies whereby we have a couple of case studies of which countries have dealt with this particular issue. And one of the countries that really normally comes to me as an encouragement is India because India has so many languages and it has a big, it's like a continent, it has a big population, 1.2 billion or so. But the government from the particular case study, it says the government of the state of, I think it is Rajasthan in India.

So they had provided, they decided to provide all its citizens with a free email address in either Hindi or English. So it's like, I'm giving you a free

email. Somebody starts using an email which is in Hindi and that is US because they are already inside the system without knowing because they do not have to study English, but they're using Hindi to be able to participate. And then we have somebody else in the background who is the system developer who works on the system that can be able to support now the Hindi as a language or the Tamil or whatever language it is because I think up to 12 languages with big population.

And so that is how we can be able to onboard without necessarily making that technical. However, the technicality part, we cannot be able to avoid, but now that is built on a high level whereby now the developers now work on systems to see how to be able to accommodate that. So we have different approaches for different markets. And I believe because of time, I think Hadia, we are running out of time. So we can be able to say, we can continue discussing. I really appreciate if we can be able to join some of this mailing list. I think we'll be able to share on the particular group so that people can be able to join. Let us continue discussing. I see somebody, Mgozoi. Mgozoi, you have something to say before I take the session back to Yesim.

MGOLOZI PERESI:

Okay. My name is Mgozoi Peresi. I'm from Tanzania. And I would be happy to mention the name Dr. Matogoro. Also, he is a part of my mentor. And also during the events of universal acceptance adoptions, I was the one of the development team to support to support the event. My question was that based on all of these initiatives that have been being discussed here, could you also be able to share some maybe how

India or other countries like India, who have different languages in their countries, and they are able to support the universal acceptance in their countries? What could be key strategies or initiatives that we think are crucial into advancing this important cause into the countries like here in Tanzania? That was my some questions or some inputs to it.

SIMON MAYOYE:

Okay, thanks so much. I'll paste a link there for case studies, which can be there are so many case studies, including India and a couple of countries. India, it involves both the government goodwill, and also one of the providers that joined hands with the government to be able to make it happen. So I'm just pasting there the link. And then as we go to Pastor Peters to be able to mention something. Yesim, I think maybe you can also go to the last slide so that people can be seeing the contact how they can be able to reach us. Yeah, yeah. So whereby you can be able to visit ICANN on X, we have Facebook, we have YouTube channel, click our LinkedIn. And then I also have my email, which is simon.mayo@icann.org. I think you can leave that slide thing there, while Pastor Peters can be able to tell us maybe a question or comment that he has.

PASTOR PETERS:

Thank you very much. Thank you, Simon, for the presentation. My comment is more like a follow up to some of the comments that have been made. And then I'll ask my question. The universal acceptance is a good initiative, which by definition will allow the inclusivity of everyone in the continent to be to have access to the internet. Fatimata did

mention, did ask how the government can be involved. And there was a response. My follow up to that question is, as important as this project now—

SIMON MAYOYE:

I hope it's not just me who lost Pastor Peters. Anybody here hearing him?

PASTOR PETERS:

I had a network issue. I'm back. Sorry about that. Okay. Yeah, let me— quick one. Because I'm in Africa. The question that my comment is this. This project is a good initiative. Yes, the government should buy in. My question is how, or what is ICANN doing officially? I repeat, what is ICANN doing officially to engage the governments of all the countries, especially in the developing countries? Because when you gave us statistics earlier, the statistics as far as this part of the world is concerned is very low. So what is ICANN doing to engage the government officially so as to promote this project? That is one question I want to ask. And apart from Tanzania, now, how did the government of Tanzania got to buy into this initiative? Was it through the efforts of Dr. Matogoro and his activities in the country? Or it was through the official communication channel? So if there is nothing in place for that, I would want to say, I think that's something we should also look into. Because if the government is interested in it, that will go along with promoting this. Especially in Africa, where you have multilingual, multicultural settings with thousands of languages. And so that is my question and comment. Thank you very much.

SIMON MAYOYE: Yeah, thanks so much, Pastor, for that. Yeah, so what I'll say is probably, so ICANN, yes, ICANN has different functions. There's an arm called GAC, which engages such initiatives. And I would say probably not the best forum to be able to go into all that ICANN does. But yes, it does involve government. It engages government. Then it also participates in the policy development. Now, what we're also saying is that initiatives like this one, yes, ICANN is facilitating, but we are saying ICANN is community centric. So when you say like, Dr. Jabhera, him being like supporting that as like an ICANN ambassador, somebody who is part of the ICANN community, and then running with this particular initiative, partnering with ICANN to see how ICANN can be able to support him also to be able to support the outreach into the government and the environment where he is. These are some of the things that we've come to learn, especially when we come to see the arms and the functions of ICANN. So I see even somebody mentioned to you, we have the ICANN via GAC, where it can be able to support that. So we have the ease of where ICANN participates into these initiatives.

PASTOR PETERS: Now, can I quickly come in? I'm not saying I'm not aware of the various arms of ICANN. I'm saying initiatives like this, if we're leaving it for the various ALSes, as much as we are in Africa, we are just a little drop of ocean in trying to influence government in policy formulation. Yes, we can carry out activities to promote whatever we are doing with our activities. And so as a result, what I'm saying is that if we have GAC, I would expect that, okay, fine, I was going to hear that, okay, fine. Of

course, ICANN is involved with the government through GAC. And then if ICANN has not taken this up officially through that arm in trying to promote this initiative, I think this will be a good opportunity for ICANN to do just that. So it's not that one lacks the knowledge of what ICANN community or ICANN various arms, I'm saying that if we leave it just to the various individuals, I am in Nigeria, Nigeria has more than 500 different languages, other African countries. So if I come up, of course, I can promote UAE with the few ALSes that are here, but then if I can take this up officially to the Ministry of Communication and Information and all that, and they are able to see the importance of this, of course, it will not trickle down from top bottom, sort of bottom up. That is really where I'm going to. Thank you.

SIMON MAYOYE:

Yeah, thanks, Pastor. Yeah, and we appreciate your contribution. And yes, ICANN is really involved. I see even some input whereby we have policy. Dr. Jabhera mentioned government will create policy if there is a demand from the ALS. So basically, governments respond to like initiatives whereby they have been funded. But yes, yeah, we have ICANN still, we do have government engagement, stakeholders and the like. So we have all these particular initiatives, but we can be able to pick up and also access more contributions that you can proposals, especially build on the markets where like you come from and other people so that we see how best to be able to engage. All right, so because of time, I think, Yeshim, anything I can, I think I need to bring it back to you so that I'm not into the time for the next session. Otherwise, it was a pleasure. And thanks so much for the audience for the participation. And we are looking forward that one day we'll be

looking back and see the look at the journey of universal acceptance.
Back to you, Yeshim.

HADIA ELMINIAWI:

Thank you. Okay, this is Hadia for the record. Thank you so much, Simon. This was a great presentation and a great discussion. So thank you. Thank you for this great discussion. If we can now go to the strategy. And the strategy I see we have two pen holders, Dr. Jabhera— and if we if we can scroll down in order to see the strategy, I think it's page six. And the two pen holders, Dr. Matogoro and Mutegeki Cliff. And I have also put some points together. Those are just some draft points in order to start and drive the discussion. Like by no means do I intend this to be the strategy.

So if I can start, so I have put an introduction, a vision and objectives. And the objectives actually align with some of what Simon has. So this is where I actually got the stuff from the material that exists on the universal acceptance team group website. And most of the stuff in there was more or less addressed previously by Simon. I must say that Simon and I did not coordinate this. It's just that I looked at existing material. So maybe I can go through this quickly and then leave the floor to Dr. Jabhera and Mutegeki Cliff.

And we can start with the vision. So the introduction says creating a strategy to adopt universal acceptance in Africa for the benefit of end users involves creating a framework that ensures it basically says what universal acceptance is or defines what universal acceptance is. And the reason I put this in an introduction so that like people who are not really

aware of what universal acceptance means could put through the introduction and understand what this is about. Again, you know, please feel free to like edit this as much as you want. Those are just like guidelines or initial thoughts.

And then I think during our prep call, we did discuss who this strategy is designed for. And we agreed that it is for AFRALO members. So this is why I put in the introduction also that this strategy is designed for the members of AFRALO. It is meant to provide steps through which AFRALO members can help in universal acceptance adoption in Africa. As we are developing a strategy for ourselves, we are not expected to be developing strategies for others. Again, feel free to edit as much as you want. Those are just initial thoughts.

The vision, we can change the vision as much as we want. But what I have put is actually stemming also from what Simon was saying, to overcome the technical and social barriers to universal acceptance of domain names in Africa, leading to a more inclusive and accessible internet across the continent. And then the objectives, which are broken down into goals, basically concentrate on awareness and education, collaboration and partnerships, technical support and resources, policy advocacy, and monitoring and evaluation.

And then under each of the objectives, I put a goal, which could be seen as like, and those goals could be further, of course, broken into very specific activities. So those broader objectives, I did break them into smaller goals. And then those smaller goals could be also broken into smaller activities that could be implemented.

So stakeholder identification, identify key stakeholders in Africa. Again, the strategy, as we agreed, has to be specific to previously, has to be specific to Africa. And then workshops and seminars, organize workshops and seminars to raise awareness about the benefits and technical requirements of universal acceptance. So members of AFRALO are expected to do this. They are expected also to, if they are going, of course, to work on implementing this strategy. Identify key stakeholders in Africa. And case studies gather success.

And during this call, actually, we heard success stories coming from Africa. So it is good to start gathering success stories specifically from Africa and disseminating those success stories also across Africa. So when we are specific, I think we encourage others from the region to take the same path. And also, then we have collaboration and partnership. And collaboration and partnership here would include also sharing information. So in one, for example, identify key stakeholders in Africa. So ALSes through AFRALO, I think we could all share those identified stakeholders through partnering. So here I put partner with stakeholders from the region, and I have put international collaboration. But I think also we can add to this, sharing collaboration among, we can add to this collaboration among AFRALO ALSes, among AFRALO members.

So that basically would include, if in one, for example, we identified some stakeholders, then the ALSes could share the identified stakeholders. So collaboration as much as possible among AFRALO members would also be key, not only when we talk about outreach and engagement, but also when we talk about technical support, when we talk about capacity building, collaboration, and so on. And also when we

talk about collaboration, I think it is very important that we share the identified stakeholders. So collaboration as much as possible among AFRALO members would also be key, not only collaboration. We are a big community with more than 72 ALSes. If we work together, for sure we can move ahead more efficiently and faster.

So I have put here also the international collaboration, identify organization with whom you partner, and leverage their expertise and resources. And so far, of course, ICANN, the International Society, I have put them down, but if you want to put them down again, maybe also the IETF, if we are talking about standards, as Simon was speaking. Also, again, those are just initial thoughts.

Technical support and dissemination, technical guidelines, develop and disseminate technical guidelines for UA implementation tailored to the African context. And I stop here, and I'm not sure, is there a particular African context? And maybe Simon or any of the [inaudible] participants could answer this part or maybe could elaborate on this.

Also, UA-ready tools, so promote the development and use of UA-ready software and libraries. And I have also put, I've asked Simon if there are specific tools in Africa or applications in Africa, and I understood Simon's reply as, of course, there are some applications specific to countries and specific to regions, and maybe we could also, so each of us could identify those widely used applications in their country or region, and reach out to those responsible for those applications in order to make them UA-ready. I see a hand from Pastor Peters. So I'm not sure, do we need to go through the strategy, or you can reach out and we can take questions and discussions. Which way do you want to go?

PASTOR PETERS: Let me add to the strategies. Yeah, propose or make suggestions towards the strategy, is that okay?

HADIA ELMINIAWI: [inaudible]

PASTOR PETERS: I mean, where I am, I'm just listening to what you're saying, so I'm not actually being able to go to the document properly, but from what you said, I could just make my input, which would also fit into any area within this document for the strategic approach. Is that okay?

HADIA ELMINIAWI: Can you repeat again? I'm sorry.

PASTOR PETERS: Yeah, okay, my comment, my proposal or suggestion is this. Yeah, your thoughts that you put out, they are quite good and yes, is what actually developing and working on. Talking about partnership, talking about technical support, talking about financing, talking about reaching out to stakeholders within Africa. I think we have a lot in Africa that we can reach out to. I want to quickly say that like in my country, there is hardly any home that do not have a mobile phone. That is, every house, I mean, up to a child of about 10 years old, they have their own mobile

phone, whereby they access the internet and they make telephone calls.

Now, the various telecommunication providers in Africa, MTN, Airtel and others, they are making a huge amount of profit from Africa. I can speak for Nigeria. So, these are major stakeholders that we can also begin to look at approaching for partnership and support and also for technical know-how in terms of how we can develop tools, how we can actually reach out to the community. So, if we begin to look into all these areas, that will also give us a lot to seeing how we could achieve our aims with this project. So, that is just my thoughts as you were speaking. I was just thinking how we could also engage these telecommunication providers in Africa.

HADIA ELMINIAWI:

Thank you so much, Pastor Peters, for this contribution. I guess we open the floor for discussion now. Let us all take some time to look at the draft strategy or the initial parts. Let us all try to flesh them out, change them if we want and have the discussion on our next call.

So, today, of course, you all have the link to the document. It is on the agenda. So, take a look at the document, change it, edit it, flesh it out so that we can discuss it in detail on our next call, which will be in May. As I mentioned at the beginning of this call that AFRALO UA Day will take place in two parts. The first is happening today and the next part will be in May.

So, we are exactly at the top of the hour. So, unless anyone wants to add anything, I would like to thank you so much for today's discussion,

your contribution, your attendance. Please access the document and put your thoughts in there. I thank our penholders and invite them to flesh out the strategy. I thank also Fatimata because she is one of the contributors, Malick also. And with that, I hand it back to staff to close the call.

YESIM SAGLAM: Thanks so much, Hadia. I was wondering if you would like to have a group photo before we end the call?

HADIA ELMINIAWI: Sure, I think it's a great idea.

YESIM SAGLAM: Give me one second, please. I will need to arrange the screen. I'm sorry. Apparently, Zoom had an update and I'm not able to have the gallery view. Oh, I think I found it. Just give me one second, please. Okay. Yes, finally. Sorry. Let me close the windows. Waiting for people to actually turn on their videos. Give me one second, please. I'm trying to rearrange my window. Okay. I'm going to count. One, two, three. One more, please. One, two, three. Okay. I have it. So, thank you all very much for joining today's session. This session is now adjourned and have a great rest of the day. Bye-bye. Thank you very much.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]