

Proposal for Generation Panel for Ethiopic Label

Generation Ruleset for the Root Zone

1. General Information

Ge‘ez (ግዕዝ *Gə‘əz*), (also known as Ethiopic) script is an abugida (syllable alphabet) used in the writing systems for several languages of Ethiopia and Eritrea. It is the most commonly used script in the writing systems of the majority of Ethiopian nations, nationalities. It originated as an abjad (consonant-only alphabet) and was first used to write Ge‘ez, now the liturgical language of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church and the Eritrean Orthodox Tewahedo Church. The earliest known inscriptions in the Ge‘ez script date to the 8th century BC.

In two of the languages spoken in Ethiopia, that is Amharic and Tigrinya, the script is often called fidäl (ፊደል), meaning “script” or “alphabet”. It is the working script for both the Federal Government as well as the majority of the regional states.

The Ge‘ez script has been adapted to write other, mostly Semitic, languages, particularly Amharic in Ethiopia, and Tigrinya in both Eritrea and Ethiopia. It is also used for Sebatbeit, Me‘en, and most other languages of Ethiopia. In Eritrea it is used for Tigre, and it has traditionally been used for Blin, a Cushitic language. Tigre, spoken in western and northern Eritrea, is considered to resemble Ge‘ez more than do the other derivative languages. The Ge‘ez script was also used in the writing systems of Oromifa until 1991 before the region’s government decision to change to Latin-based orthographies.

1.1 Script for which the Panel is to be Established

As described above, the Ethiopic or Ge‘ez script is used in the writing systems of the majority of Ethiopian nations and nationalities.

The Ethiopic or Ge‘ez script is defined in ISO’s 15924 specification is identified by:

ISO 15924 four letter script code: Ethi

ISO 15924 Number: 430

English Name: Ethiopic (Ge‘ez)

The range of Ethiopic (Ge'ez) script defined in Unicode is:

Ethiopic (Ge'ez): 1200–137F

1.2 Principal Languages Using the Script

The Ethiopic (Ge'ez) script was developed as the writing system of the Ge'ez language, a Semitic language spoken in Ethiopia and Eritrea. The script is widely used for writing the Ethiopian and Eritrean Semitic languages such as Tigré, Amharic and Tigrinya. In some languages, the script is called fidäl (ፊደል), which means 'alphabet', and individual letters are referred to as fidel. The script is believed by many to have derived from the epigraphic South Arabian script, of Proto-Sinaitic heritage, although there is some dispute surrounding this assertion; some also believe it to have descended from Egyptian hieroglyphic s. Besides Tigré, Amharic and Tigrinya the writing systems that use this script are many and some of them are listed here: Aari, Afar, Alaba-K'abeena, Anuak, Awngi, Basketo, Bench, Bilin, Boro, Burji, Dawro, Dirasha, Dizin, Gamo, Gedeo, Geez, Gofa, Gumuz, Hadiyya, Hamer-Banna, Harari, Kafa, Kambaata, Kistane, Konso, Koorete, Majang, Male, Me'en, Mursi, Qimant, Saho, Sebat Bet Gurage, Sidamo, Silt'e, Suri, Wolaytta and Xamtanga.

1.3 Geographic territories or Countries with Significant User Communities for the Script

A significant number of Diaspora who use Ethiopic (Ge'ez) script are living in United States and some parts of Europe, and due to historical ties the Ethiopic (Ge'ez) script is also used in Eritrea at large and in Djibouti and Israel to a certain degree. The following table lists the countries where significant users communities who are capable of using the Ethiopic (Ge'ez) script are believed to exist.

Country Names
Eritrea
Djibouti
Egypt
United States
Canada
Israel

2. Proposed Initial Composition of the Panel

2.1 Panel Chair and Members

The panel at this stage of its establishment phase is composed of 5 members, which is likely to expand in size as well as diversity in professional background as the project progresses. The project members have the prerequisite knowledge and are well equipped to live up to the demands of the tasks that lie ahead.

Dessalegn Mequanint Yehuala(Interim Chair):

He is a Lecturer and Researcher at the Computer Science Department of the Addis Ababa University. He has worked as countries Lead Researcher for the annual Global Surveys of Open Data of the World Wide Web for the last three years. He was also involved in the 2014 global survey of the Web Index of the World Wide Web. He has thoroughly investigated the open data practices of about 10 African countries with governments practice on the publication of open data as the principal theme. He received grants twice from ISOC Community Grants Program to conduct researches on digital divides and the factors that stand in the way of the digital inclusions of society. He was a member of the LOG-IN Africa researchers network that had been working on eLocal governance research theme to promote the use of ICT for local governances in African countries. He authored two course module contents in Applied Computer Science for the African Virtual University known for short as AVU. He has publications in both Journal and Conference proceedings. He has a wealth of experience in the field of Information and Communication Technology at various capacities- he has worked as Senior Computer Programmer, Systems Analyst, End-Users Computing Supervisor, Computer Operation Supervisor(well versed in administering both UNIX and WINDOWS based boxes) for various organizations. He is actively participating in some of the IETF working groups – as a four time fellowship recipient of the ISOC to IETF meetings he has attended the IETF71 meeting in Philadelphia, the IETF 78 in California, IETF 85 in Atlanta and IETF89 in London. More recently he was a fellowship recipient of the IEEE 802 plenary meetings held from Nov 8-14, 2015 in Dallas, Texas. He was also a fellowship recipient of the UN Global Pulse Camp 1.0 event on Big Data held in New York in Nov 2010.

Dr. Mulugeta Seyoum Gebeyaw(Secretary)

He is Assistant Professor in Linguistics and Deputy Director of Academy of Ethiopian Languages and Cultures. He is a senior Linguist with proper academic and professional experiences. He has conducted various studies, participated in, and organized a number of international and national conferences in linguistics and related issues. Prior to his current position, he worked in different administrative zones of the country at different capacities, where a lot of languages are spoken and different cultures are reflected. He worked in the South Omo administrative zone as a head of the division of culture as well as language research section of the zone. He worked as a Language research Senior Expert in Fiche zone. He was also worked as a Language Expert in the former Ethiopian Languages Academy.

As an assistant professor in the Addis Ababa University, he is actively engaged in advising, research and teaching both graduate and undergraduate students. He was also the head of the Lexicography, Terminology and Translation Centre until he assumed his current role as Deputy Director of Academy of Ethiopian Languages and Cultures.

Gezahegn Tadesse

He is a Director of Banking Products and Technology Innovation at Awash International Bank. He is a senior Electrical Engineer with a progressive and professional experience of nineteen years in Information Technology and Telecom. His core expertise spans Enterprise Information systems Security, IT Project Managements and Delivery, Infrastructure Solutions mainly for the Banking and Telecom Sector. Gezahegn has been with Commercial Bank of Ethiopia for five years (as a Network Engineer), Zemen Bank (as a Consultant for two years) , as an ICT Project Manager with Bunna Bank for two years and currently with Awash Bank as a Director of Banking Products and Technology Innovation.

His Telecom domain engagement includes the current Ethio –Telecom, Huawei Technologies, AT&T, where he had led infrastructure projects mainly for the Security components of the Project.

He has been involved in the delivery of advanced Technical trainings in Information System Security. He has also been teaching official MS Curriculum that leads to Certification and various college courses for the last 15 years (Information Systems, Security and Network

Security) at various colleges as well as the Postgraduate school of Ethio-Telecom and ITSC. His certifications include CISSP, CCNA, and MCSE.

Balcha Reba

Currently, he is a Director of Communication and IT Standardization and Regulation Directorate at the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology(MCIT). He is heading a directorate which is responsible for the development of Communication and Information Technology services & product Standards, Laws, & Frameworks and ICT Regulatory mechanisms for fostering the Communication and Information Technology development endeavors at the national level. He worked as Director and Acting General Director for the then Ethiopian Telecommunication Agency.

Assefa Kore

He is IT Operation specialist at Ethio-Telecom, the lone telecom service provider in Ethiopia. Previously he has worked as Junior Electrical Engineer, IT architect, ISP and VAS operation expert, and Provisioning Analyst at Ethio-Telecom progressively. He obtained certification from ZTE in ISP management(DNS, webhosting, Email and Data Communication). He has a sound and working knowledge of ISP operations that involve DNS, webhosting, Email and Data communication.

2.2 Panel Diversity

The Ethiopic script Generation Panel is composed of members with various backgrounds and expertise. Each member has experience in one or more of the areas which developing the Ethiopic Label Generation Rules for the Root Zone requires.

The table below is a summary of panel members' role in the generation panel and their background.

No.	Name	Designated Role in the Panel	Organization
1	Dessalegn Mequanint Yehuala	Chair, Contact Person and liaison of the Generation Panel to ICANN and to the Integration Panel. Besides, a resource person for DNS, ICANN and Unicode.	Addis Ababa University, Department of Computer Science
2	Mulugeta Seyoum	Secretary, resource person in Linguistics, local culture, customs and practices.	Addis Ababa University, Academy of Ethiopian Languages and Cultures.
3	Gezahegn Tadesse	A resource person in Telecom services and DNS	Awash International Bank
4	Balcha Reba	A resource person in telecom regulatory and standardization processes	Ministry of Communication and Information Technology
5	Assefa Kore	A resource person in DNS and telecommunication regulations	Ethio-Telecom

3. Work Plan

3.1 Suggested Timeline, Listing of Significant Milestones

Activities of proposing the LRG for Ethiopic script spread over 6 months; the table below describes the various activities along with milestones on each phase of the project. The Panel plans to start working on the LGR for Ethiopic script in January 2016 and we have targeted the submission of the LGR proposal for Ethiopic script to the Integration Panel in July 2016.

The following are list of activities planned to be carried out:

Phase	Task Description	Duration	Milestone
Phase 1: GP Proposal Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing the GP proposal and submitting to ICANN for official announcement. Conducting deeper analyses of documents about procedures to develop and maintain the label generation rules for the 	December 2015	GP's Proposal Submitted to ICANN and mailing list created.

	Root Zone. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Setting up mailing list for the panel 		
Phase 2: Working on Components of LGR	Development of Ethiopic LGR	January – March 2016	Preliminary Ethiopic LGR formulated.
	Conducting Sensitization Campaign locally about the establishment of the Ethiopic GP	February 2016	Sensitization Campaign Conducted.
	Conducting Consultative Workshop to gather feedbacks from relevant stakeholders.	April 2016	
	Incorporating feedbacks obtained from stakeholders	May 2016	Feedbacks Collected.
	Submitting a draft Ethiopic LGR report to ICANN (or IP)	June 2016	Draft LGR report Submitted.
	Submitting final Ethiopic LGR report to IP.	July 2016	Final Report Submitted.

3.2 Proposed Schedule of Meeting and Teleconferences

All the group members are based at the same city, Addis Ababa, and conducting face to face meetings once in two weeks time or as appropriate has been agreed.

3.3 Anticipated Need for Logistic Support- Such as Mailing List?

- We can create a Google group mailing list for the GP or ICANN can set up one.
- For conducting the consultative workshop with stakeholders we need ICANN's support for covering expenses related to conference hall rent and refreshment beverages.

3.4 Does the Panel Expect to Call On ICANN Provided Advisors?

The Panel may have to call on ICANN for advisory support as and when situations demands.

References Consulted:

1. About Codes for the representation of names of scripts,
<http://unicode.org/iso15924/iso15924-codes.html>, Date Accessed- November 2015
2. Script Source,
http://scriptsource.org/cms/scripts/page.php?item_id=script_detail&key=Ethi, Date Accessed- November 2015.
3. Root Zone LGR Project,
<https://community.icann.org/display/croscomlgrprocedure/Root+Zone+LGR+Project>,
Date Accessed- November 2015.
4. Procedure to Develop and Maintain the Label Generation Rules for the Root Zone in Respect of IDNA Labels, <https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/lgr-procedure-20mar13-en.pdf>.