LAUREEN KAPIN: Good morning, good afternoon. I don't know that we have any good evenings, but thanks, everyone for joining today.

The theme for this call, I think, is going to be how we roll up our sleeves and figure out the best way to move forward with our discussion papers. My sense is that people are struggling a bit, so I want to be able to use this phone call to explore what people are struggling with and how we can clarify things, break things down, come up with a step-by-step approach for people to move forward.

I also want to take the time to make sure people are aware of all the resources that are already available on our wiki, particularly because I know that our fabulous staff to a certain extent has already organized based on our own recommendations what resources map to what topics, and I want to make sure that people are aware of that.

With that said, we can start talking about the discussion papers. I will note that there has not been much progress made on the discussion papers, at least based on what I've seen on the Google documents. And also many of our leads, unfortunately, are absent on this call. So what I thought would be productive is to look at the discussion paper format and look at that to make sure that a) folks are comfortable with the format and b) make sure we don't have any questions about the format.

What I thought would be good is to look, Alice, at a blank discussion paper format and start with that, and then we can move on. I sent out a message about this already. Basically, the leads are going to have to meet with their sub-teams to figure out how to move forward because otherwise there's no other way we're going to make progress on these topics.

But let's start with a blank discussion paper. Can we get that up on the screen?

ALICE JANSEN: Yes, of course. I'll get that up.

LAUREEN KAPIN: Thanks, Alice.

ALICE JANSEN: It's taking a while. Sorry.

LAUREEN KAPIN: That's okay.

ALICE JANSEN: Carlos has his hand up.

LAUREEN KAPIN: Oh, I'm sorry, Carlos. I wasn't even noticing that. Yes, Carlos?

CARLOS RAÚL GUTIERREZ: Thank you. Before Alice changes the sheet please, I would like to note this Number 2 that is on the plan because I think it's very important. I started looking at this question of the data sources, and I went back to the CCT metrics, both the ones reported by ICANN and the original list. Sorry, that's what I did. I spoiled it.

I really have been wondering about data, hard data. So I went back to the IAG – I'm sorry, I always misspell it – to the paper on the metrics that the community brought with the 66 metrics. I went to the Appendix 2 and took the official list that the working group organized together with staff. To my surprise, 44 out of the 66 metrics are dedicated to trust.

Do you hear me? There is some background noise.

LAUREEN KAPIN: I hear you fine, Carlos. Are you getting background noise?

CARLOS RAÚL GUTIERREZ: No, I just hear some. Okay, so looking at the data again, Laureen, we have 66 metrics recommended by the [inaudible]; 44 out of these 66 metrics are related to trust, which is basically two-thirds of the metrics. I organized the metrics in the seven chapters that the [Annex 2] recommends and then tried to look where all these metrics belong to the different discussion paper topics.

Since last week, they allow me to go and spoil the papers. I reorganized the paper here based on the metrics that we should have or that we have and tried to create kind of a matrix, what data should we have or do we have for each of the topics.

Of course, the problem we have is that ICANN so far is not reporting on all the metrics because they are complex and some of them have to be collected outside. There is a group of metrics which is the most important one for trust, which is the Compliance Group. The Compliance Group is the one you see here below Rights Protection Mechanism below [number 4]. Here you can see that we have seven metrics of the eight that ICANN is trying to report are very closely related to the compliance issues. Then there is an additional exercise which is, of course, the Consumer Trust survey, which is let's say the biggest bunch of data we have.

So I took out of this eight reported areas, of course, [I'm] a member of your group on trust on the question, "Do consumers trust [inaudible] TLDs?" and started working on the template of that document and trying to focus on –

LAUREEN KAPIN: Right, I saw that.

CARLOS RAÚL GUTIERREZ: By doing that, when I look at the template, I do find that some of the questions down the paper – it's not that the questions are repetitive, but we might end up repeating some stuff that we have before and so on. So I think the questions are pretty granular, but preparing for our call of our sub-sub-sub-team on that paper that you proposed for tomorrow or Thursday – I don't remember – I think we have a very good starting point, which is, "How are we going to present these results of the Nielsen survey without just repeating what the Nielsen survey says?"

So I think for the first time, I worked around a template. I have looked at the data. We have data for that template. Of course, the data is basically the Nielsen survey, and we can jump right into it. Though the questions, as you said, we might have to streamline a little bit the questions of the template.

But, yes, I'm ready for that one. I see problem in questions where we don't have data, like the ones on abuse. But on that one, we know that Drew is preparing this request for proposals and so on. So I think if we just put a few more hours into that, we'll be fine as planned for Vienna.

It was funny. I was working on my paper and Carlton at the same time was working on his paper, Rights Protection Mechanism. I haven't looked into that. But we just have to get more interactive as a group, and I think we can produce something. So I look forward for the call with Gao and you on that paper so we can make progress.

That was my approach over the weekend. I still have a big question mark, and that's: what happens when we don't have data? Because I believe – yes, thank you. I [thank you].

LAUREEN KAPIN: Thank you, Carlos. First of all, thank you for doing the mapping on the discussion paper topics ownership document. I think that is helpful. I think that's very helpful. And I do think the question of what happens when we don't have data is an important one but not as important I think as working with the data we have. I think just in terms of our prioritization, there is a big pot of data that we currently do have.

The Nielsen Consumer Trust survey is a perfect example relating to the issues of consumer trust, but that's not the only thing we have on consumer trust. There's another article that was identified in the consumer trust bucket that we can also be looking at.

But you raised a good question about what we have data on and what we don't. What I wanted to make sure is that folks are aware at a threshold level of the mapping that the staff has already done on these issues. I'm wondering, Alice, can we go to the Safeguards and Trust wiki to just show people where things actually have been divided into the resources based on some of our big discussion topics? Am I expressing what I'm wanting to you clearly, Alice?

ALICE JANSEN: Sure. Let me just project my screen.

LAUREEN KAPIN: Yeah, because I just want to make sure people know these things are there. Those are based on the literature review that we've already been going through and our own identification of what articles are useful regarding what topics.

If we go to Safeguards and Trust and then [inaudible] DNS Abuse, there's a whole list of articles that folks have found to be useful on the topic of DNS abuse and those are listed here. Those would be the first things for folks who were dealing with the DNS abuse issues to look at.

Can you go to the Consumer End User Behavior? There we go. There we see we have the Nielsen study. We have the research report, trust in the Internet survey. Those are the first things we would be looking at for that topic. I just wanted to make sure that people are aware that there's a certain amount of mapping and culling that has already been done.

Can you go to Impact of Safeguards and PICs? There's some there, although I just want to make a request for staff for the communiqués. Those are only two communiqués, but actually every communiqué since Beijing should really be listed there, not just ICANN 53 and 54. I'm just going to mark that as a to-do because it should be all of the communiqués.

Regarding the Impact of Safeguards and PICs, we also do have Brian Aitchison's chart that we were working with in Los Angeles, which is our brainstorming thought exercises on how we might get at – that was it – how we might get at some of the safeguards issues.

A lot of this, and I think this goes to Carlos' question – for many of these things, we don't have data, but for some of the things we do. For example, the wildcarding [inaudible] review, SSAC, and other reports. So that's also something to look at.

I just wanted to make sure that people are aware of the resources we already have. There are going to come points in time where we are trying to grapple with issues we don't have data for, and in that case our recommendation may be that this is something that data should be acquired for. We may have time to do it ourselves, or it may be a recommendation for a future group.

But really I think the task at hand is for us to be grappling with the data we do have or will have in the near future because we've asked for it. If there's very specific types of data that we can get in the short term that we need, then that's something we should be asking for as soon as possible. But I don't want us to get hung up on the things we don't have because there are a lot of things we do have, and that's really what we need to focus on.

I don't know if that's quite as satisfying if that's quite as satisfying an answer, Carlos, as you were hoping for, but I'm really trying to be pragmatic and practical in our approach here because we can't start spinning our wheels about all the things we don't have when there's so much information on our plates already for us to use in our analysis and recommendations.

CARLOS RAÚL GUTIERREZ: Yes, Laureen, I have a problem. For me data is hard data and the data that the community establish as metrics. Soft papers and discussions, for one, they are easier for us, but I don't know how interesting they are for the report as such. So I agree, we have to filter the papers.

But the first thing I would like to see in the report is the community established 66 metrics, there is a schedule for these metrics that should have been finished by 2016, and out of the schedule we have 8 ongoing out of the 66. Okay? This is for me factual information. Out of the 44 for trust, we have 8. Okay? This is where we start.

So the first recommendation is let's review the schedule for data for trust and let's make a new projection of the schedule for trust and let's discuss which are very important because we have no clue or we have no other source. Okay, six or nine of them we will cover with [Drew's] paper. Okay, this is for me the numbers, the hard facts, and we should establish them as soon as possible for all papers so we know that we are missing some data in one or two years it will be available in the ICANN page. Okay?

This is the first thing we can put in each of the templates. Of course, we can analyze. We are expecting this data. We've got to have it in one or two or only three years. It's not complete, but there was that clear expectation of the community to have metrics, and we are halfway through or one-third through. This discussion of the data points that we don't have, and there we go. We have started with the templates.

Next we can look at other anecdotal or papers or academic stuff or recommendation of SSAC that is interesting but they don't have numbers. We know they won't bring data points.

Then we can develop the recommendations. Does it look possible to get data here or no? We will stay at the discussion level between now and the next report. That's for me very important, and I think I have right now for the first template and I will work on that for the next two or three where I'm participating. This is the baseline. The baseline is metrics. Pure metrics.

Thank you.

LAUREEN KAPIN: I think that's a very useful action to take so that we're clear on what information we have. So I think that that's going to be useful. I think we want to give some thought to what we want as an introduction, as a starting point, tone issues, but I certainly think that that's very important information to get out there that this is the universe of data that we're working with and this is the universe of data which we don't have and hope, according to the community's wishes, that will be in existence at some point. So I think that's a useful observation.

Jonathan, I see your hand is up.

JONATHAN ZUCK: Thanks, Laureen. I guess I just wanted to unpack a couple of things. First I want to support the notion that any assertions that we make in our paper are evidence-driven and as quantitative as possible, but since as I say it might be survey driven and things like that where there's not statistical significance and we'll note that, and so it may feel more anecdotal in that sense, but certainly evidence driven as opposed to the feelings of the Review Team. So I want to support Carlos 100% on that point.

The issue of these metrics that [outreaches] for just some clarity is that the only Board mandate related to the metrics was that the GNSO and ALAC recommend some metrics and three year targets for those metrics that the staff could begin to start collecting the data for so that the Review Team would have them available when the Review Team [about].

There wasn't any requirement for the Review Team to use those metrics. There wasn't a requirement for the organization to base its operations on those metrics. So we just need to make sure and keep them in context. So when you talk about only eight being available, Carlos, I think that there's also a distinction between what's been published and in what form. But the staff have collected the data for nearly all the metrics that they could and were doing surveys for the rest of them.

So there isn't deficiency of data for the underlying metrics that were recommended by the IAG. The things that have become part of the health index or that have been published by ICANN may not be all of them because it was difficult to represent them, but we have it for our purposes which is what the data was collected for to use at our leisure in terms of whether or not we thought that they were appropriate once we had a chance to discuss them.

There's no world in which the IAG's recommendations overrule the desire of the Review Team in terms of what metrics they found most useful for the reviews. So I think it makes sense to use as many of them as we can because they do have the value of being numbers that we can look at over time. So wherever appropriate we should use them. But we have most of them.

I see Eleeza has her hand up. She put the document in the chat, but I don't know that the publication of the metrics was ever anything anybody was promised and we shouldn't, unless we're explicit about it, operate under the assumption that they had any innate importance to the organization or the community until they're given that significance by our report. I hope that's helpful.

LAUREEN KAPIN: That's very helpful background, Jonathan.

CARLOS RAUL GUTIERREZ: I didn't mean to sound negative on that. It's just a fact that the [Annex] had a schedule when the metrics should be available, and if they're not published then no problem with that. I don't want to sound negative. So sorry if I gave that impression, but the schedule that is [explicitly] the final document said that it should be available by now. It's just a fact.

LAUREEN KAPIN: Okay. Eleeza, I see your hand up.

ELEEZA AGOPIAN: Thanks, Laureen. I just wanted to add a couple of points on the metrics. My team has been collecting these for close to the last two years and I put the link in there to where the available metrics are. Those that are actually being collected, if you go back and refer to the IAG CCT Report from I think it was late 2014, there were several for which the IAG couldn't agree on a source for or indicated that it would probably require better financial resources to purchase that data or some other type of outside resources, and they decided to leave that decision to the ultimate Review Team.

So Carlos, you're right in that not every single one that was in the original group of actually 70 metrics is included, but we have included all those that were available. And in most of these instances if you look at the actual metrics, we have the spreadsheets available for you to download so you can manipulate the data and play with the data as you'd like. So that's one thing I would point to.

The other thing I'd like to point out is a spreadsheet that I started working on before your D.C. meeting – I'm trying to find the link from the wiki here – that was trying to map all of the different data sources that have been recommended to each of the high-level research questions that were posed by each sub-team which I hope will be useful to you in looking at what's available to answer each of the questions. So It's sort of a similar chart as to what Carlos has shared, what we have shared here in the Adobe Connect room mapping each data source back to the research questions. I'll find the link for that and share that with you all in the chat.

Thank you.

LAUREEN KAPIN: Thank you, Eleeza. That actually sounds like it would be very helpful because I think – I'm speculating – but my sense is one of the things people are struggling with is trying to make sure they know exactly what sources they can look at for data regarding all the research questions since there is so many things to pull through. So I think that's something actually that would be very helpful. So I look forward.

Okay, link to the spreadsheet Eleeza is referring to in the wiki. Okay, so this is background material. I'm just looking at that now so it's contracting future rounds, Rights Protection Mechanisms. Okay. So that is a good resource. For everyone's information, that can be found in the background materials tab of our CCT wiki so people know where that lives. And maybe Alice, after the phone call we can include the links to the CCT metrics and Eleeza's spreadsheet in an e-mail to everyone just so folks have it in multiple places. And if you send it to me I can include it in a recap e-mail to the group.

ALICE JANSEN: Okay, sounds great.

LAUREEN KAPIN: Okay. Let's move on then to a blank discussion paper topic – a blank one, one that hasn't been filled out. And then I want to move on, Carlos, to your paper also. But I want to start with a blank one.

Oh, good I'm glad Fabro has been able to join us. So welcome, Fabro. You get your very own welcome.

So if we can get a blank hypothesis worksheet on the screen, I think that would be helpful.

Jonathan and Eleeza, noting that I'm still seeing hands up for both of you. I'm assuming those are old hands, although I still see Jonathan's up. Jonathan, did you have something you wanted to add? Okay, I'm assuming that's an old hand and Jonathan may be engaged in the other phone call that he's trying to follow.

So let's move on to the hypothesis worksheet.

ALICE JANSEN: Sorry, Laureen, the [inaudible]. There's an error converting in the file for some reason.

LAUREEN KAPIN: Here we go. Okay.

I am going to ignore the Rights Protection Mechanisms heading here, and instead think about the consumer trust issues and use this as an example. So if we are thinking about as a hypothesis on consumer trust issues – and I just want to work through this as an example because I want to make sure people have a concrete way to think about this. A hypothesis basically is just our question that relates to the general topic. The hypothesis should be informed by folks' reading of the data sources. So it just shouldn't be something random. But after you have reviewed the data sources, there likely will be a hypothesis you come up with.

For example, on the consumer trust issues, a hypothesis might be – and Alice, maybe we can just type along here just so people have an example and you can just label this as a sample document on the Consumer Trust sub-topic, that would be Consumer End User Behavior. So this would just be a sample.

So a hypothesis then might be – and I'm flipping back and forth between screens here so forgive me if anyone's hand is up – a hypothesis here might be "Consumers trust new gTLDs but not as much as legacy gTLDs." That might be the hypothesis.

Alice, I'm going to ask you to ping Jonathan because I want to make sure that he is joining us for this discussion in case he has any refinements or comments.

If we have that as the hypothesis, then the high-level questions are really a way of breaking down that hypothesis. What sub-questions might you want to answer in order to either prove or disprove that hypothesis? So a high-level question, for example, might be, "Is the public visiting and using new gTLDs and how does that compare to legacy gTLDs?" Or it might be, "Do consumers report that they trust new gTLDs, and how does that compare to the level of trust for legacy gTLDs?" Because we know that's information that's in the survey.

Another high-level question might be, "Do consumers feel comfortable providing sensitive financial information to new gTLDs, and how does that compare to legacy gTLDs?" So these might be some examples of questions that go to that hypothesis.

For the findings, the findings are going to be embedded within the data sources we have. So the data source, for example, for the Nielsen survey they have data that goes to that specific question. The Consumer Trust study also has data that goes to that specific question.

Causes might be something that needs to be inferred. For example, the Nielsen survey doesn't really discuss causes. We would need to infer or discuss potential causes based on the data in that study and perhaps based on other data. But that might be something that is more logic-based or inferred. It might not necessarily be in the data.

And then the recommendations and review, those might be topics that actually we want to discuss as a group, but if we have specific recommendations based on the data then that's the place to put them. A recommendation that flows out of the Nielsen survey might flow from the issue of how familiar or aware of new gTLDs that the public is. And if the finding is that they're not as aware of them compared to legacy gTLDs, then a recommendation might have to do with finding ways to increase consumer awareness of new gTLDs, that that's something that needs to be explored.

I wanted to go through this by way of an example and take a pause now for questions or comments.

Jonathan, were you able to join us for this part of the discussion? I wasn't sure. Okay. It doesn't sound like he was.

So for the folks on the phone, I want to make sure that there's a common understanding of how this format is supposed to work. Do folks have questions or comments on this format?

Okay, Carlos, I see you with your hand up. And I want to go to your paper next, but I wanted to take a pause before that. Go ahead, Carlos.

CARLOS RAUL GUTIERREZ: I think it's very important that we work [them] in the small groups and I don't want to sound biased but I think we should have some idea of the recommendations. In some areas maybe the causes are the findings overlap or are not so clear, but the most important thing is I think that the drafters of the concept papers or the templates should be aware of is that we should have some idea where our recommendations should be heading to or have some discussion what recommendations should be like because the most important part of the output is what we say. It's not what is available, what's not available, but what the recommendations are.

Thank you.

LAUREEN KAPIN: Yeah. I agree 500%, Carlos. That is ultimately what we are driving towards. So I absolutely agree with that. I'm thinking that the recommendations are going to be the most challenging part of our task here and that that part may benefit not just from discussion within the small group, but for discussion within the larger groups. But I agree with you that that is probably the most important part of our review process.

Other questions or comments?

So what I wanted to move to then – Carlos, you had helpfully put your worksheet up on the Google Drive – was just to take a look at that together. Is that something we can get up on the screen?

So this is all… Go ahead.

CARLOS RAUL GUTIERREZ: I was just brainstorming with myself and two points, I can resume it very fast. I mean, one is that this question, the question of trust and for me, probably I wasn't there in the discussions, I mean, in the mid-2000s and so one is probably a perception that a fast increase in the number of gTLDs will create [inaudible] from multiple perspectives. I mean consumer consumption, [fusion], stability, whatever. So I think that the objective of trust is very important, very overarching and if I would rearrange the sequence of the topic papers, I mean, that should be one of the first ones from our group.

The second comment to this concept paper is, of course, as you already mentioned, that we have tons of information from the point of view of the consumer which is, I think, great, which is the Nielsen report which is very rich. And how can we filter it in a way that we don't repeat what Nielsen has confirmed and how we put it toward some kind of sensible recommendations beyond that the news report should be repeated every two years or so which I think everybody will support. I mean the odds of using all these huge amounts of information is quite a challenge. Thank you.

And then I got a little bit stuck, the difference between findings and causes and so on and so on. And then it was 10 p.m. and Carlton had already made progress, Rights Protection Mechanisms, so I did work through the recommendation. So it's only a small exercise, but I feel confident. I think the template is great. And now I think I can work more and more within the small groups.

Thank you. Laureen?

LAUREEN KAPIN: Thanks, Carlos. And I appreciate that you documented the brainstorming document. And the reason I wanted to put it up here is because I also wanted to make sure that we have a common understanding of what all these things are in terms of the discussion papers.

So for example, I think under hypothesis here, Carlos, what you have is your brainstorming on sort of the context for new gTLDs and some concerns. And so while this might eventually have a home in whatever final product we produce – because I think it's useful in terms of context – it probably isn't a hypothesis which is more a simple question. And I just want to make sure again that we have a common understanding when we're trying to plow through this that we're all on the same page as to what the hypothesis is. The hypothesis really should be a simple question that can ultimately be answered with a yes or no answer. So I want to [inaudible] it that way.

CARLOS RAUL GUTIERREZ: Yes. I'm very bad at trying to draft from zero, but if you allow me now to repeat this. The question would be did the expansion of the DNS space create [capital] or something like that. That's the hypothesis. Why do we worry so much about trust because it didn't create [inaudible]? But somebody can draft it much better and I'm not a native speaker. No problem with that. As I said, it was just my internal brainstorming in front of the screen. I have no personal problem if we scrap it and put it in another [one].

LAUREEN KAPIN: That's fine. So I appreciate that and I appreciate you putting it out there because I think it's helpful for us to be looking at it.

So for the high-level question, this, again, we want to break it down into small questions and I see this document as more of a brainstorming document than really a per se filling out of this information sheet. So what I'm going to do is I'm probably going to create at least a sample document for us that we can put up there and label as a sample on the consumer trust issues just so people can use it as a reference going forward.

Okay, Jonathan, I see you're back. Thank you. We have gone through a discussion of hypothesis and high-level questions. And we are now moving on to discuss Carlos's brainstorming documents which was more in the nature of brainstorming rather than filling out, really in the nature of brainstorming and giving us context rather than filling out the document per se. But as Fabro points out, it's also helpful for us to look at what Carlos did and I think that's true which is why I put it up on the screen because I think Carlos's document is particularly good at giving us some context and background. And those are going to be very important things when we knit together the final paper.

JONATHAN ZUCK: Thanks, Laureen. Is it worth me spending two minutes just sort of sharing some vision for what I had in mind for the worksheet?

LAUREEN KAPIN: Yeah.

JONATHAN ZUCK: You were touching on some of those points.

LAUREEN KAPIN: Yes, I think it is. We talked a little bit about it before we put Carlos's up and talked about a hypothesis and high-level questions, for example, for the issues of consumer trust. That isn't on the screen. We talked about that a little by way of example, but definitely I think it would be helpful for you to speak to that also.

JONATHAN ZUCK: Okay, great. The hypothesis just at its very basic form is like an assertion and those of you that have participated in the ICANN work groups and public forums, etc. know that the community is very good at making assertions, that this is the case. This is the case because X, etc. and so all a hypothesis is, is taking that assertion.

So one of those assertions might be the outreach program failed to reach potential applicants in the developing world. So that's the example that's in the worksheet of what a hypothesis looks like. And so it could be criticized as being leading or as a straw man or something like that. But it's really meant to be an assertion, that somebody is heard, an argument that somebody is heard made and we're trying to prove or disprove that assertion with [inaudible].

And so ideally, a hypothesis has a yes or no answer to it and that's kind of how you know whether or not the hypothesis is kind of granular enough is if you cut inside, answer it yes or no or mostly or something like that as opposed to needing to break it up.

So in other words, a hypothesis that says that the safeguards were not effectively implemented is probably not a granular enough hypothesis because the answer will be different for different safeguards. Or the safeguards were not the appropriate ones to choose for the industries that were affected by them. And again, that answer would be affected by different for each of the safeguards so it would make more sense to have the hypothesis be a little bit more granular so that you could, in fact, answer it yes or no.

And then the idea behind this hypothesis worksheet is that the theories of a hypothesis will roll up to represent the answer to a high-level question. So the high-level questions are, in fact, the questions that we asked ourselves in Los Angeles, our first face-to-face. And the hypotheses are the assertions that were made as possible answers and portions of answers to that high-level question.

So some of this may be confusing because of the order I put it into but the high-level question is meant to be higher level than the hypothesis. It's that highest level question that we ask, that big level question.

And so when we draft the paper, we'll organize the paper around these high-level questions and then [inaudible] to high-level questions look at the assertions or hypotheses that came up and how our analysis of the data turned out for each of those hypotheses which will help us to build some pros in terms of an answer for the larger, high-level question.

So that's just kind of the organizational construct that I was hoping for, for the paper as a whole. And one of the things that I'll be trying to do here in the next couple of weeks is create with Alice a framework for the overall report that will hopefully make that more clear. But hopefully that helps a little bit on what we're trying to do in terms of with this hypothesis worksheet which is boiled down to sub-questions, if you will, under the big questions to a granular enough level that they are yes or no questions and then provide evidence one way or the other for those questions and roll them back up into high-level questions for the report. I hope that that's helpful.

LAUREEN KAPIN: That is helpful. Jamie, I know your hand is up but I do want to emphasize something because I found it confusing and I'm wondering if there's a possible fix for it. Also, I'm hearing an echo from someone else's line. Okay, good.

I think it would be helpful then to reorder these worksheets and start with high-level questions. Because of the order that you mentioned, Jonathan, I found that confusing. What I heard, what I understood for the first time in what you were saying is that the high-level questions basically are mapping to our big questions.

For example, one of our big questions may be do consumers trust new gTLDs and then there might be a series of hypotheses that feed into that. Because of the order, I had actually thought of it the opposite way. So one thing I'm going to suggest is that we have these high-level questions go first and that they should be pre-populated in these worksheets to map the big questions and then we can come up with a series of hypotheses that we want to deal with for the discussion papers. But the order actually confused me and I misunderstood it because of the way it was ordered. So I'm going to make that request.

JONATHAN ZUCK: Well, I apologize.

LAUREEN KAPIN: No apologies necessary. I just want to make sure we're all on the common understanding.

JONATHAN ZUCK: Right. And the purpose of the hypothesis is to ask a finite question with data associated with it and the purpose of mentioning the high-level question is to make sure that the hypothesis that we're addressing actually applies to one of the high-level questions because if it doesn't, we shouldn't be discussing it. It's about time to define our scope, really. And so that's kind of why it's there. So if changing the order will help people, then that's fine. But it's really meant to be a little bit of a check and balance that says, "Okay, here's an interesting hypothesis but does it actually feed into one of the high-level questions that we all agreed were the priorities for the Review Team?"

LAUREEN KAPIN: Right. That makes sense. Jamie?

JAMIE HEDLUND: Thanks. Sorry, I had a little trouble getting off mute.

So I guess my question goes to the formatting or the structuring, rather, of the hypothesis. And I guess I'm a little confused. Jonathan, I agree with you. People in the community make assertions and it's always helpful to look at those based on the data. And I understand the hypothesis is an affirmative statement that you attest one way or another.

But I guess I wonder why we start with taking a position like the Outreach program to the developing world failed rather than just asking, did the Outreach program succeed, and then you go through what its goals were and then you look at the data and did it succeed or not.

Because I imagine for a lot of these hypotheses that we'll come up with that there are competing views even among the community so then the question becomes why is the Review Team taking one or the other or what's their criteria for taking one position or the other as opposed to taking a neutral stance, which I agree is not necessarily always a hypothesis, but starting off with a neutral stance like did the TMCH succeed in providing initial protection or whatever the question may be.

JONATHAN ZUCK: Thanks, Jamie. That's a good question. Laureen and I had this discussion yesterday. So what you're bringing up is kind of like the emotional/political implications of structuring this around hypotheses and that may be perfectly legitimate. I think the reason, just taking a step back from that, that hypotheses are structured the way they are is so that you know whether or not you have something that can be definitively answered in terms of structurally, I mean, so that it's a yes or no question.

So if we replaced hypotheses with another concept, let's call it a sub-question, like you said, the key is to make sure that the question we're asking isn't too open-ended and then begs other questions but instead is a yes or no question, yes, no or maybe or whatever we want that to be, so that we know we've gotten down to a granular enough level. That's why hypotheses are done the way they are. It's not actually meant to represent bias or a particular supposition or something like that, but instead, it's meant to be sufficiently granular.

So again, I'm perfectly happy with changing from using a hypothesis to using a sub-question as long as we know that we need the sub-questions to be sufficiently granular that they're structured in a binary way, if that makes sense. That's how we know we've gotten down enough levels. That's all.

JAMIE HEDLUND: Right. I get that. But I guess I start with the view for us to be a neutral Review Team. Right? We're supposed to look at the data, digest the data and then reflect what we think the data says. Right? So looking at a specific example like the Outreach program. I think you can get to the granularity of the question or conclusion by saying, "Did the program succeed? Did the Outreach program succeed?" That's a yes or no, right? Rather than, "The program failed. Yes or no?"

JONATHAN ZUCK: No, I'm trying to agree. I agree we can get there. It's that the questions don't always lend themselves to that and we need to make sure we do. That's all. And hypotheses aren't non-neutral. It's just a technique. But I'm trying to take on board the notion that it might be perceived as a lack of neutrality and we can address that by changing this worksheet to say sub-question and then have some description that says sub-questions need to be granular enough that the answer is yes or no or something like that. That's all.

I wasn't really trying to argue. I just don't regard hypotheses as innately non-neutral. That's all.

LAUREEN KAPIN: I think this actually is a very helpful discussion because I absolutely appreciate Jamie's point about the fact that everything we do, our website is open to the public, our discussions are recorded and open to the public, and I think we want to avoid misimpressions based on what we're perceiving as starting points for exercises. So I like the idea actually of changing the terminology a little bit so that we're looking at things in an objective and neutral manner, which we are anyway, but that our words reflect that.

So I think if we started with high-level questions, had those mapped to our high-level questions, had that as the first part and I would just change it to worksheet rather than hypothesis worksheet, CCRT, I would just say issue worksheet. Start with the high-level question and then move on to sub-questions with a note that these need to be sub-questions that are the building blocks that lead to the answer to the ultimate question and they need to be specific and granular enough to lead to a yes or no answer. These are basically the building blocks that get us to the high-level question answer. But I think to the extent we're thinking about these in as neutral and objective way as possible, I think that's a constructive useful direction for us to go in unless there's a reason for us not to do that.

Okay, so now I have three hands up as my own screen has just gone blank. Let me see if I can get back to this. Sorry, folks, technical difficulties. Okay. So I've been logged off [inaudible] so whoever has questions should jump in [inaudible] and log me back on.

JONATHAN ZUCK: Carlos has his hand up. Carlos, why don't you go ahead?

CARLOS RAUL GUTIERREZ: Thank you, Jonathan. I wanted to comment on this very good discussion Jonathan and Jamie just had that I see the public comment period as a possibility of some sub-questions or hypotheses being thrown out. I mean, some [inaudible] you are absolutely crazy. I don't see the argument with [inaudible].

I think the most dangerous part is to have a weak hypothesis and no data. So if we have a strong hypothesis even without data, we can recommend somebody revise it in the future. But we should really avoid weak hypotheses before publishing a draft particularly if we have no data. Whatever you call them, hypotheses or sub-questions, it's just the strength of the argument and the possibility of getting good data, what should [inaudible], if we present it at all for public comments or not.

Thank you.

LAUREEN KAPIN: Okay, I think I'm –

JONATHAN ZUCK: That's a good point, Carlos. Are you back on, Laureen?

LAUREEN KAPIN: Yeah. Go ahead though, Jonathan.

JONATHAN ZUCK: Oh, I was just going to say Brian was next in the queue if you couldn't see it. That's all.

LAUREEN KAPIN: Okay. And now I can see it, so go ahead Brian.

BRIAN AITCHISON: Hi, everyone. Thanks. I just wanted to chime in on the sort of hypothesis discussion. A hypothesis is an absolutely essential foundation for conducting research and I don't think we need to be scared of putting them out there. But a way to work around the kind of fear of being kind of normative or biased in our questions or assertions that we're making is to use much more neutral language such as talking in terms of general effects and not ascribing any positive or negative or increase or decrease in how we construct the hypothesis statement.

So the sort of high-level example would be, as I put in the chat, the New gTLD Program has had an effect on consumer trust. And that's it. And then you can go to test that. It's a testable assertion. And you can say, okay, once you look at the data, whatever its form may be, you can say the effect was positive, negative or neutral.

And so just moving down each level, you can construct questions in terms of general effects rather than positive, negative, increase or decrease effects. I think that would help us get around some of the fear of being sort of biased from the get-go.

So that's my two cents. Thanks.

LAUREEN KAPIN: Thanks, Brian. I appreciate that hypotheses are useful for research and, indeed, critical for research. But we're not doing research. We are looking at research and using them to formulate our conclusions. So what I'm hearing from Jamie is a concern about objectivity. What I'm sensing from the group is a struggle with this terminology of hypothesis.

So my suggestion for a way forward is to reconfigure our terminology so that it is both more neutral and also perhaps more user friendly, admitting that perhaps my focus is not as sophisticated as others. But at this point, I'm really focused on making these papers as user-friendly as possible. And I'm hearing a struggle with hypothesis and I'm hearing a concern about objectivity.

So even though I appreciate that with enough time and effort, you can make a hypothesis very neutral, normally they're not neutral. Normally, they express a position. But a question with, I think, much less effort can be expressed objectively and can be neutral so I still, at least from my perspective, would suggest we reframe this into high-level questions and sub-questions in a neutral manner. If the group disagrees and thinks this isn't the best way forward, I'm happy to take the will of the group but that would be my suggestion.

Brian, I see your hand up. Old hand. Okay. And Jonathan, I see you're typing. Jonathan, I'm reading your comment and I'm not sure what your reference to structure is.

JONATHAN ZUCK: Sorry, I'll speak. I think that your approach is fine, as I said, as long as the questions are sufficiently granular because the whole purpose of having this worksheet was to create a uniform way that we documented our review [essence] that we were asking so that when we go to draft the report as a whole, it doesn't look like there were 17 different authors. So ideally, if we can have some structural consistency, that'll make the paper read better and I think that your proposal will still allow for that. And so that's all. I was just chiming in to say that as long as our sub-questions are granular enough, we'll get to the same end product. That's what matters.

LAUREEN KAPIN: Okay. So questions, comments, concerns about the worksheet and ways to move forward?

Okay, I'm not seeing any hands up. Someone isn't on mute because I'm hearing this echo. Okay, thank you.

So I think the key thing moving forward then is that the leads, and I'm talking besides myself, I often do talk but this time I'm also talking to Fabro and Drew in absentia and Carlton and David in absentia. And I'll be sending e-mails also.

It's really going to be crucial for the sub-teams to actually get on the phone together and figure out what sub-questions each person is going to handle and dive into this. And that's why we have as a next step on August 11th, which is just on Thursday, two days from now, a call with the leads and then a call with the leads the following week to discuss progress and really make progress on these discussion papers.

And it isn't just the leads. It's the sub-team members too. So that's really everyone on the phone whether you are leading a sub-team or on a sub-team, I am exhorting you to connect with your colleagues so that progress can be made on these discussion papers.

If you haven't heard from your lead yet, get in touch with your lead yourself and come up with something that you are going to take ownership of. Everyone is familiar enough with these topics through the work we've already done and the discussions we've already had to take ownership over certain sub-questions that you think are important that lead to your high-level question.

So this really needs to take place so that we have actual draft papers to discuss in Vienna. I think the highest and best use of the time we can make in Vienna is to actually have come to Vienna looking at draft discussion papers and then talk about refinements or recommendations. It will be a real loss of the most effective use of our time if that doesn't happen before we come to Vienna.

So I'm really asking people to dig in and communicate and put pen to paper because our discussions are fine, we're all smart people, we all have great ideas, but at the end of the day, we're not going to be coming up with discussions. We're going to be coming up with a paper for people to read that's based on data, that's based on analysis and that has recommendations. And they're not going to be listening to our tapes going forward. They're going to be looking at what we put in writing. So we really need to dig in. So that's my lecture part of the call.

The next steps are in our agenda, we're going to be having two calls with the lead on August 11th and August 16th. August 22nd, and that is a mere two weeks from now, a little less than that, we're going to have first drafts due and we're going to have a call to discuss those drafts. So I really want folks to meet that deadline.

If there's a problem with you meeting that deadline or you're having some obstacles, call me, e-mail me and we'll set up a call and we'll try and figure out a way to move forward.

The staff are fabulous. ICANN staff is here to help. But you have to actually ask for the help. You have to actually make a request. But once you do, we all know that they will pitch in and provide assistance. So please dig in. If you need help, ask for it.

Questions or comments? I realize the [inaudible].

CARLOS RAUL GUTIERREZ: I have a question, Laureen.

LAUREEN KAPIN: Yes. Go ahead, Carlos.

CARLOS RAUL GUTIERREZ: I mean, it's off the agenda.

LAUREEN KAPIN: Go ahead.

CARLOS RAUL GUTIERREZ: If you'll allow me. Okay. There has been a lot of discussion in the e-mails about late [inaudible] on [ex-post] competition. There have been some discussions about the [inaudible] results of .web and people discussing about concentration after the fact. I think this is not in the agenda of this Review Team, but I wonder if we want to do the position of the FTC at some point here or in Vienna.

That was my comment. Thank you.

LAUREEN KAPIN: I mean, I wouldn't be able to speak for the FTC as a whole. Only the commissioners can do that. But if there's something specific that you want to chat about with me as a staff person, Carlos, connect with me offline and I'm happy to have a chat with you.

CARLOS RAUL GUTIERREZ: Yeah, I suggest we keep some free time in Vienna for these non-topics because it's becoming really a discussion issue and at least, we will have to delimit our work that we are not involved in these reasons, merger situations or disputes of [inaudible] auction results. In any case, we'll find time for that.

Thank you.

LAUREEN KAPIN: Other questions or comments? I realize at the start of the call, I didn't call for any updates and Statements of Interest so I do that now near the end of the call. Does anyone have updates to their Statements of Interest?

Okay, I don't hear any.

Does anyone have Any Other Business?

Okay. So not hearing any more questions or comments, I think we can end the call and I will send an e-mail with a brief recap and some useful links for folks. And it also looks like we'll have a little bit of refinement to the template and the terminology.

Okay. So thanks, everyone, for their participation today and for grappling with some complicated issues. And again, I renew my invitation if folks want to reach out to me one-on-one for any issues that they're facing. Please feel free to do so.

CARLOS RAUL GUTIERREZ: Thank you, Laureen. Very good call.

LAUREEN KAPIN: Thank you, Carlos, for your useful input and also for putting your paper out there. I think you might have been one of the few people who did so I appreciate that.

So we will be talking with the leads on Thursday and we'll be having rough drafts due on the 22nd. So thanks, everyone.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Thank you, Laureen.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]