

ICANN's NEW gTLD PROGRAM: Could Africa Have Participated More?

By

Katim S. Touray (kstouray@gmail.com)

International Development Consultant, and
former ICANN Board Member

Presented at the AfriNIC 17 Meeting
Khartoum, Sudan, November 24-29, 2012

OUTLINE

- Introduction
- ICANN's New gTLD program
 - **Brief History**
 - **Implementation**
 - **Application results**
- African Participation
- Lessons Learned
- Conclusions
- Recommendations

INTRODUCTION (1)

- Africa has almost 1 billion people (15.3% of the 2012 global population)
- Africa has:
 - 167 million Internet users
 - 15.6% penetration rate (compared to 27.5% for Asia)
 - 7% of world Internet users
- Internet penetration is variable (1.1% in Ethiopia to 51% in Morocco)

Source: <http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm>

INTRODUCTION (2)

- Domain names (DN) industry is an important, and growing sector
- DN industry estimated at \$2 billion in 2008
- African participation in DN industry is minimal:
 - African ccTLDs have capacity problems, and few domains
 - None of the 22 registries in Africa
 - 5 of 1,019 (0.5%) of ICANN-accredited registrars are African
- New gTLD program was an important opportunity

AFRICAN AND ICANN

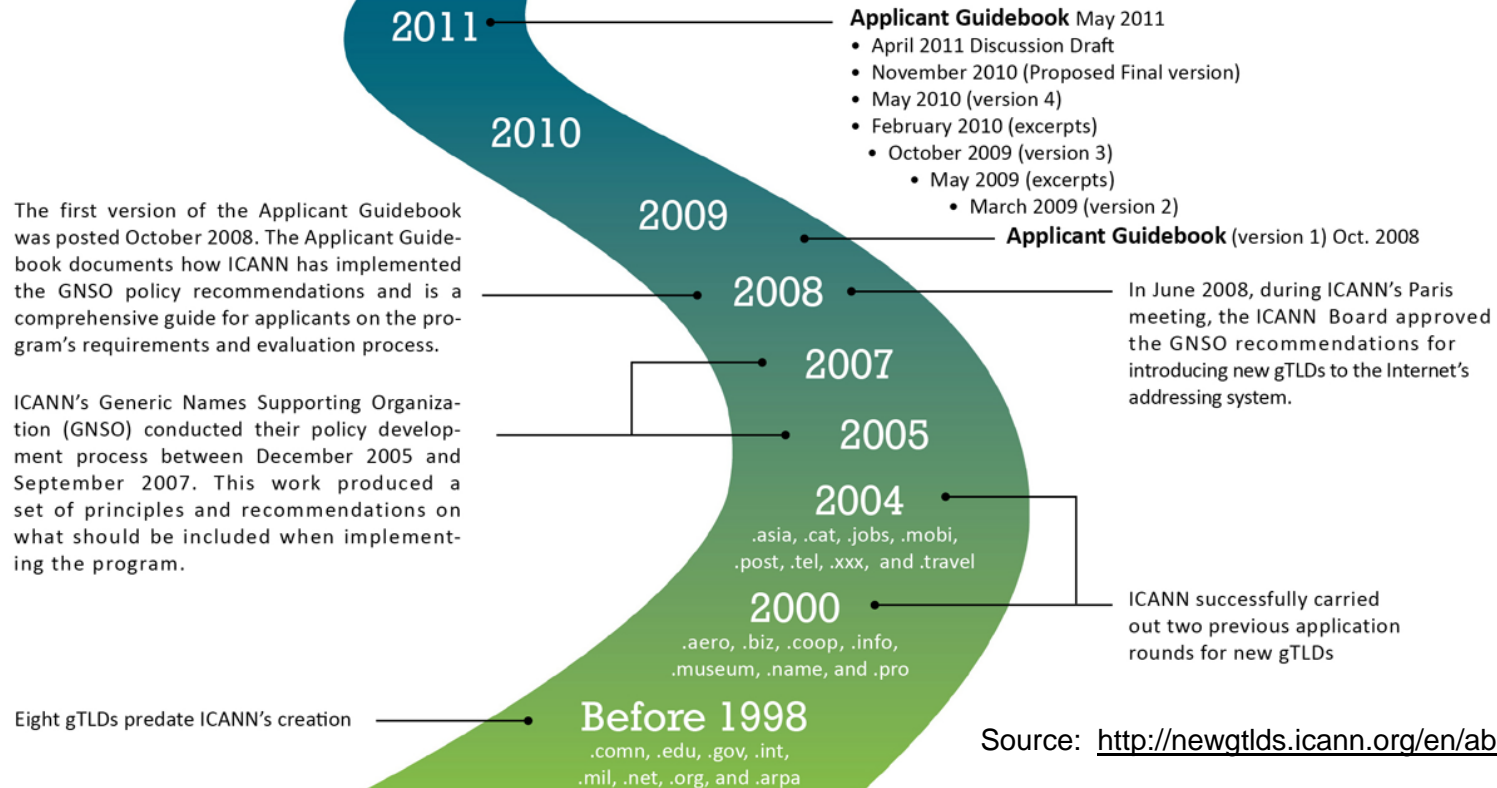
- Participation in SOs and ACs
 - Can be stronger
 - Need for more impact of participation
- ccTLDs
 - 56 African ccTLDs
 - Continue to have low registrations
- AfriNIC
- Registrars and Registries
 - No gTLD Registries
 - Only 5 registrars

ICANN'S NEW gTLD PROGRAM

History of the new gTLD Program



The Applicant Guidebook has gone through several iterations in draft form and is the result of years of careful implementation of GNSO policy recommendations and thoughtful review and feedback from the ICANN stakeholder community. Each version of the Applicant Guidebook was posted for public comment. More than one thousand public comments have been reviewed and considered, making the program what it is today.

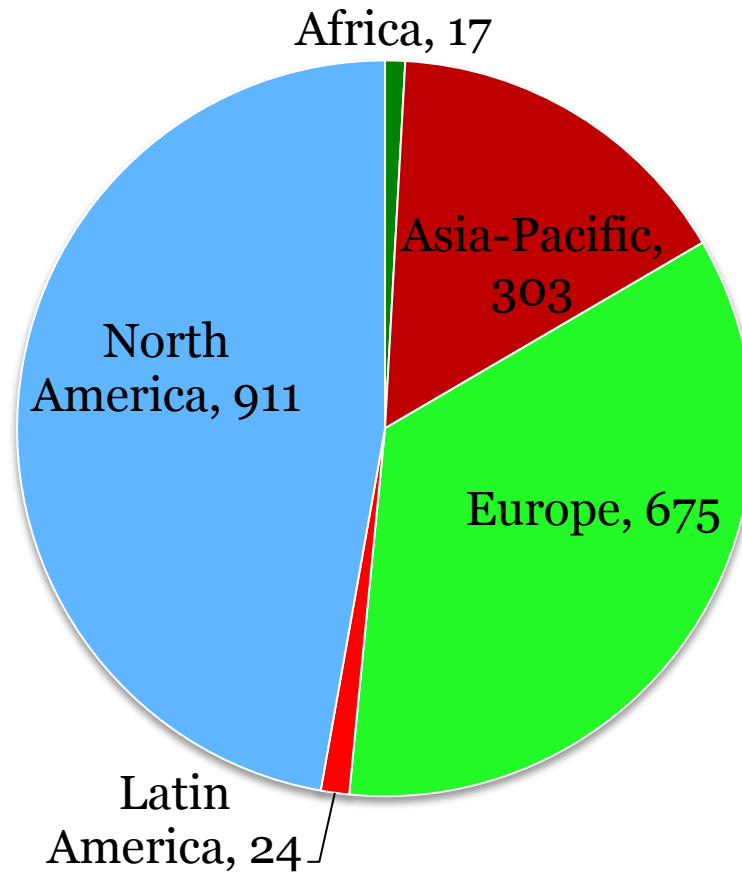


Source: <http://newgtlds.icann.org/en/about/program>

Implementation of gTLD Program

- Applicant Guidebook developed
- Applicant Support program developed
- Communication and outreach conducted
- Application window:
 - **Launched: Jan. 2012**
 - **Interrupted: April 12 – May 21, 2012**
 - **Closed: May 30, 2012**
- Evaluation of applications in progress

Application Results



AFRICAN PARTICIPATION IN THE NEW gTLD PROGRAM

AFRICAN PARTICIPATION (1)

- 4 countries
 - Egypt (League of Arab States)
 - Gambia
 - Mauritius
 - South Africa
- 9 applicants
 - South Africa – 6
 - Egypt – 1
 - Gambia and Mauritius – 1 each
- 1 application for support (out of 3 applications)

AFRICAN PARTICIPATION (2)

CATEGORY	COUNTRY	No. OF APPLICATIONS
Brand	South Africa	9
City	South Africa	3
Community	Mauritius	1
Generic	Egypt, Gambia	3
Geographic	South Africa	4

LESSONS LEARNED

1. African participation is very low
2. We could have done better
3. Outreach and marketing could have been improved and increased
4. African private sector could have been more involved
5. A lot of energy and resources were spent on the .africa issue

CONCLUSIONS

- New gTLD program was an eye-opener for Africa
- There is need to increase outreach and awareness about ICANN and the DN industry
- Africa should participate more in ICANN and the DN industry
- The new ICANN Africa Strategy is encouraging, but not a magic bullet
- We can do more – and better!

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ICANN should:
 - Increase outreach efforts in Africa
 - Implement its Africa Strategy
 - Establish a Regional Office in Africa
- Africa should:
 - Participate more in ICANN and the DN industry
 - Encourage private sector involvement in the DN industry
 - Participate in the implementation of the new gTLD program
 - Build capacity for participation in future gTLD programs

THE END

THANK YOU!!