



FY27 Annual Strategy Review Program

Environmental Scan Session - Instruction

Introduction

The Annual Strategy Review program is designed to strengthen ICANN's agility and adaptability by systematically reviewing both our external environment and internal capabilities. This program provides a structured way to assess whether our Strategic Plan remains aligned with current realities. ICANN's Board Strategic Planning Committee oversees this program on behalf of the Board. The program concludes with a BSPC recommendation to the Board on whether updates to the Strategic Plan are needed, to reflect changes in the external environment and ICANN's internal capability.

The "Environmental Scan" is one of the steps of this program. The objective of the environmental scan is to validate, refine, and enrich the environmental scan through inclusive stakeholder engagements. The goal of the session is to surface insights, challenge assumptions, and identify areas that may require deeper discussion and follow up. The environmental scan sessions will be conducted with both internal and external stakeholders.

How to Prepare for the Session

All participants should review the pre-reading report with a focus on how it challenges or reinforces our current Strategic Plan. Come prepared to share observations and questions. All participants are encouraged to come to the session with brief written notes, if feasible.

1. Read the Environmental Scan Pre-Reading Report. As you read the report, **focus less on whether you agree with every point and more on what it signals about our strategic assumptions**. For example:
 - a. If this is broadly true, what does it mean for our strategy?
 - b. What resonates strongly based on your observation, experience and insights?
 - c. What feels understated, overstated, or missing?

2. Reflect on the strategies:

Guiding questions	Your Reflection
Which external trend(s) or internal factor(s) have the greatest impact on our strategy? and where are you personally seeing evidence of this?	
Which current strategic objective, goal, or strategy feels most at risk or hardest to execute?	
What challenges or constraints might ICANN be underestimating?	
What early signals should we be paying more attention to?	
What would surprise us most if this trend / factor accelerated?	
Where might we be systematically optimistic?	
If we were wrong about one thing, what would it most likely be?	

It is important to note that:

- The session's intent is NOT about changing the strategy - it's about sharing what participants are seeing, how these trends / factors / assumptions are in reality, it's about having diversity of perspectives during this process.
- The insights from this session will enable the Board and the Board Strategic Planning Committee to have more structured, data or evidence based, insightful strategic discussion.

What to Expect During the Session

Session Objective:

The environmental scan session is part of the Annual Strategy Review program. The program is designed to review whether our current strategic plan remains relevant and ensure its adoptability given recent external environmental changes and internal capabilities. The goal of the session is to surface insights, challenge assumptions, and identify areas that may require deeper discussion and follow up. The session is not intended to revise the strategy or resolve problems.

Ground Rules:

- Stay at the strategic level, not operational level
- Speak from evidence and experience
- Make space for different perspective
- Focus on strategic implications, not operational fixes

Discussion Format:

For each trend / factor / assumption, the facilitator will briefly recap, then open the floor for discussion. **Reflect on the strategies:**

- Which external trend(s) or internal factor(s) have the greatest impact on our strategy? and where are you personally seeing evidence of this?
- Which current strategic objective, goal, or strategy feels most at risk or hardest to execute?
- What challenges or constraints might ICANN be underestimating?
- What early signals should we be paying more attention to?
- What would surprise us most if this trend / factor accelerated?
- Where might we be systematically optimistic?
- If we were wrong about one thing, what would it most likely be?

To make the best use of all participant time together, we have streamlined the session format. Rather than starting with silent, in-session, self or group reflections using sticky notes (as we've done in the past), we are asking participants to come prepared based on the pre-read materials. This allows us to move directly into verbal reflections and discussion during the session, enabling us to hear insights from more participants within a shorter time frame. The goal is to keep the session focused and efficient while still capturing a broad range of perspectives.

What to Expect After the Session

After the environmental scan sessions, the planning team will review and consolidate all inputs shared by participants. These will be organized into summary materials for the Board Strategic Planning Committee (BSPC), to use in the next stage of this program. The BSPC will prepare recommendations to the Board on whether the Strategic Plan remains relevant as it is, or whether adjustments or changes are needed. There will be ongoing communications and engagements throughout the entire process.



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