

Date: 10 December 2020

Seun Ojedeji, AFRALO Chair

Subject: Status, Impact and Recommendations for Universal Acceptance (UA) in Africa

Dear Mr. Ojedeji,

ICANN org thanks the AFRALO-AfrICANN community for sharing the Universal Acceptance Project Statement from the Joint AFRALO-AfrICANN Meeting during the ICANN69 Virtual Annual General Meeting, dated 14 October 2020. The statement has been published at <https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/correspondence/ojedeji-to-icann-board-14oct20-en.pdf>.

Universal Acceptance (UA) means that all domain names and email addresses are working in all software applications. Due to its significance in fostering competition, consumer choice, and innovation in the Internet space, the promotion and adoption of UA has been included as part of the [ICANN Strategic Plan for 2021-2025](#), which was [adopted](#) by the ICANN Board.

Increasing UA readiness requires a considered global effort. Therefore, ICANN organization has set up an internal UA Program to plan and undertake UA-related work. This includes supporting the community-based Universal Acceptance Steering Group (UASG).

ICANN org continues to provide outreach and education to the community, including stakeholders in the African region on the importance of UA and how to achieve it. This is being achieved using multiple channels, which include outreach through communications and participation at ICANN meetings and regional events. In addition, ICANN org is also supporting UASG's efforts for outreach through its UA Communication Working Group, UA Ambassadors and the UA Local Initiatives.

Importantly, the UASG has already appointed three UA ambassadors from Africa to further increase awareness of UA in Africa, and support Internet use in the continent's numerous indigenous languages. The UASG is also actively engaging with community members to start [local initiatives](#) in Africa, and we invite you to help with this effort.

With regard to the specific items in the statement addressed to Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) members, ICANN org will communicate these suggestions to GAC's IDN and UA Working Group to determine the most appropriate mechanisms to address them.

ICANN org is also publishing UA-related training materials in collaboration with UASG and also planning additional related materials at ICANN Learn. We are making these available in multiple languages. In addition, UASG actively continues to publish [technical reports](#), [training materials](#), [case studies](#), and [other materials](#) on UA online for use by the community.

On behalf of ICANN org, I thank the AFRALO-AfrICANN community for the guidance provided in its statement. We invite the African community to follow the conversation around Universal Acceptance (#Internet4All) on social media including [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#) and visit the website [UASG.tech](#) for updates. Please feel free to contact us by emailing to UAProgram@icann.org for any queries related to UA. We are pleased to continue to work with the African community to address the UA challenges.

Sincerely,



Theresa Swinehart
SVP, Global Domains & Strategy