Participation in the ccNSO

ccNSO participation working group

Research and reporting task force

2 July 2008

Background

This is a summary of a survey on participation (Appendix A) that was sent out 1 February 2008 by the ccNSO secretariat on behalf of the ccNSO participation WG. The survey was sent to the ccNSO members mailing list (ccnso-members@icann.org) and a discussion list for ccTLDs (cctld-discuss@wwtld.org). In addition the contacts for the regional organizations were asked to pass it on to their members, and ICANN's regional officers were asked to give the survey to ccTLDs they were in contact with.

The purpose of the survey was to gain a better understanding of why ccTLDs participate or do not participate in the ccNSO, and how the ccNSO can improve.

Who responded to the survey?

The survey was intended to reach two different groups. One group was the people who already participate in the ccNSO meetings, in the hopes that they could give information on what they found valuable, and what improvements they would suggest. The other group was those who usually do not attend the meetings for various reasons. The main challenge of the survey was to reach this second group.

In order to interpret the answers, one first needs to look at who the respondents to the survey were. There were 56 answers in total, which is roughly 25% of the total number of ccTLDs.

|	# answers	ccTLDs in ICANN region	% who answered the survey	ccNSO members in ICANN region	% of ccNSO members who answered
AF	10	54	19 %	19	16 %
AP	11	73	15 %	21	38 %
EU	18	75	24 %	13	77 %
LAC	16	33	48 %	20	70 %
NA	1	8	13 %	4	25 %
Total	56	243	23 %	77*	47 %

*The membership numbers are from the ccNSO website list of members 20th June 2008

Because the regions are of such different sizes (as defined by the number of ccTLDs) it is always difficult to compare them in a reasonable manner. (For example; how does one compare 50 answers from the APTLD region with 8 answers from the NA region?)

In addition, when looking at the percentage of ccTLDs in each region that answered this specific survey, LAC is the only region to have almost 1 answer for every 2 ccTLDs in the region. The answers can therefore not be said to be representative of the regions, and caution is needed when looking for "regional tendencies" from the survey answers.

How many of the respondents were ccNSO members?

Is your ccTLD registry a member of the ccNSO?					
	ALL n=56	AF n=10	AP n=11	EU n=18	LAC n=16	NA n=1
yes	36	3	8	10	14	1
no	20	7	3	8	2	0

Members 64% (36 answers)
Non-members 36% (20 answ)
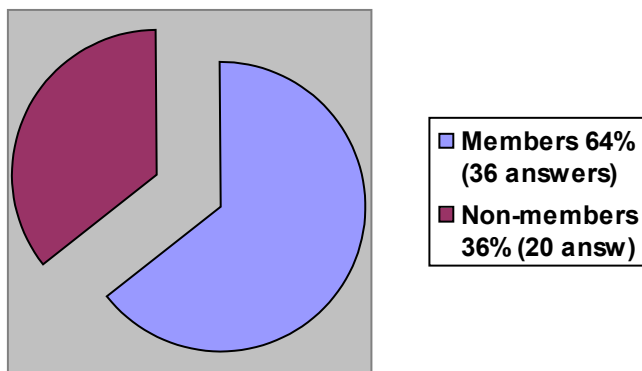
The ccNSO members were more active than the average ccTLD in responding to the survey. Almost 50% of the membership participated in the survey, compared to 25% of all ccTLDs. This was probably caused by a combination of factors:

a) The total group of ccTLDs includes ccTLDs where there is no activity. It is highly improbable that these ccTLDs will answer a survey. The ccNSO members consist solely of ccTLDs that have been in contact with ICANN *at least* once – namely when becoming members, and so by default is a more active group in relation to ICANN than the total of all ccTLDs.

b) The ccNSO members know what the ccNSO is (and probably why the survey was sent out) and so they have a lower threshold for responding.

c) The ccNSO members are easily reachable through a single mailing-list, while a lot of the ccTLDs probably never received the survey because they are not on any of the lists where it was sent.

d) It is reasonable to expect the ccNSO members to have a greater interest in increasing ccNSO participation because they are a part of it.

The EU region and LAC region seems to have had particularly active members, each having answers from 70% or more of their ccNSO members.

How often did the respondents attend meetings?

How often does your ccTLD registry attend ccNSO meetings?						
	ALL n=56	AF n=10	AP n=11	EU n=18	LAC n=16	NA n=1
have never attended	12	5	3	4	0	0
a few (1-3) meetings	12	1	3	1	7	0
semi regularly (at least once a year)	13	3	0	4	6	0
almost every meeting	20	2	5	9	3	1
don't know what a ccNSO meeting is	0	0	0	0	0	0
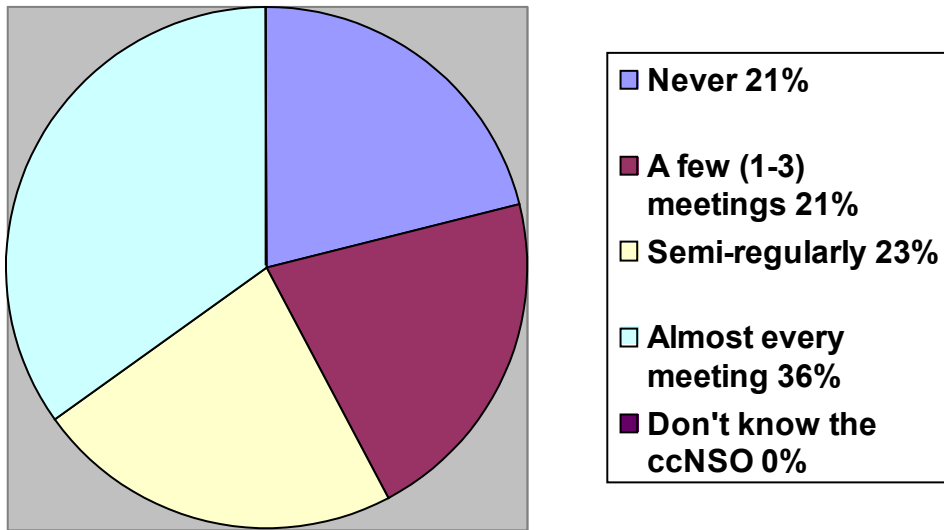
The majority (59%) of the *respondents* attends either semi-regularly or almost every meeting. If we compare the meeting frequency of the respondents with the recorded meeting frequency for ccTLDs the last four meetings (Lisbon, San Juan, Los Angeles and New Delhi) we can see that it is a minority (35%) of the *registries that have participated* in three or more meetings:

Number of meetings that the ccTLD participated in	Number of registries	
1	42	46 %
2	17	19 %
3	13	14 %
4	19	21 %

This probably means that the group of respondents has a disproportionally large portion of the most active ccTLDs. It is not surprising that the more active a ccTLD is in the meetings, the more likely it is to respond to a survey, but it means that the other answers from the survey must be interpreted with that in mind.

Who responded – conclusion

The majority of the respondents are either ccNSO members, or are active in the meetings, or both. They can give us good information on why they attend, so that we can keep on doing the things they like, but they cannot tell us how to attract the ones who do not attend today.

Still, roughly 40% of the respondents are not that active in the meetings, and if we sort answers by meeting frequency, we might learn something about why. We might also consider asking the regional bodies to discuss the survey with their members, in the hopes of gaining more comments and suggestions for improvements.

Value of participating in ccNSO meetings

	ALL n=56	AF n=12	AP n=11	EU n=18	LAC n=16	NA n=1
Do you feel that the meetings are of value to your registry?						
yes	44	5	8	14	16	1
no	5	4	1	0	0	0
don't know	7	1	2	4	0	0

The large majority of the respondents (44 out of 56) feel that the meetings are of value to their registry.

If we sort these results according to the meeting frequency we get the following:
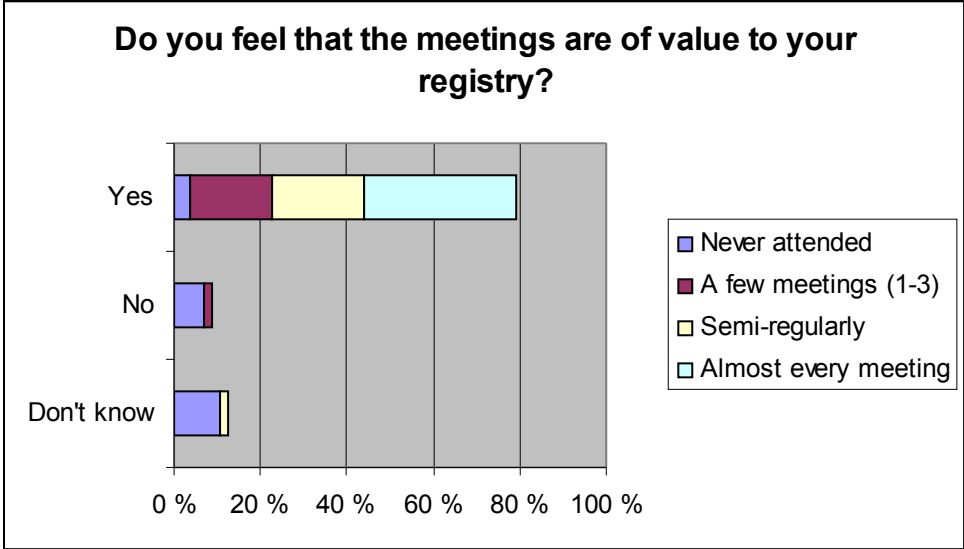
The ones that find the meetings valuable are mostly ccTLDs who have attended, which is encouraging, but not surprising. Especially if a ccTLD keeps attending meetings it is likely that it is because they find something of value in the meetings.

It is interesting to note that among the ccTLDs that do not know whether the ccNSO would be of value to them, are 6 ccTLDs that have never attended a meeting, and one that has attended the meetings semi-regularly and still don't know if they are of value.

It might be worth exploring further how the ccNSO can become better at demonstrating what the value of the organization is to the ccTLD community.

If yes, what in particular is it that you find of value (so we can keep doing it)?						
	ALL n=56	AF n=10	AP n=11	EU n=18	LAC n=16	NA n=1
Exchange of information with other registries through presentations	32	4	7	7	13	1
Exchange of information with other registries through surveys	18	3	6	4	4	1
Influencing ICANN through PDPs and resolutions	22	2	6	9	4	1
Participation in working groups	24	3	7	10	3	1
Informal talks with other registry people (networking)	34	5	7	11	10	1
Other	4	0	2	2	0	0
Networking with others	2		2			
Root server issues	2			2		

It is clear that sharing information and social networking are two very important factors. This tendency remains when sorting the results according to meeting frequency and looking at the registries that have never attended or only attended a few ccNSO meetings. Out of the 13 respondents in this group that feel the meetings are of value, all value information exchange through presentations, and 9 find the social networking important.

Attempts to recruit/attract non-participating ccTLDs may want to emphasize this point and give examples of the actions that the ccNSO takes in this regard. This result should also probably be taken into account when considering how to improve the ccNSO meetings for those that are already participating.

If no, are there things that could be done to make the meetings of value to your registry?
- Put meetings in part of the world where it is reasonable to attend them
- A hammer begging for nails

Since there were very few ccTLDs who answered no on the question (5 out of which 4 of the ccTLDs have the same respondent), this question probably needs more exploration in order to get a representative answer.

Barriers to participation in the ccNSO

## *Barriers to participating in the meetings*

Are there barriers that make it difficult for you to participate in the ccNSO meetings? If so, please mark which barriers present a significant problem to your ccTLD registry in regards to participating:						
	ALL n=56	AF n=10	AP n=11	EU n=18	LAC n=16	NA n=1
Cost of travel	24	5	5	4	10	0
Limited time/limited personnel resources	28	2	5	12	9	0
Language	9	3	2	1	3	0
Lack of information on how to participate	3	0	2	1	0	0
Lack of information about what the issues are at the meetings	12	0	2	9	1	0
Limits on the membership of ccNSO working groups	4	2	1	1	0	0
Legal structure of the ccNSO, please specify	5	1	1	3	0	0
Other barriers, please specify	8	3	5	0	0	0

Legal Structure:
- Need for clarification of ccNSO Scope
- ccNSO is for Accountability Framework Subscribers. Others are "tolerated".

Other:
- Travel not only a cost issue. Some may need several visas to get to where the meeting is.
- Too complex issues, too fast-paced meetings
- Too many meetings, should concentrate on one "main" so that it is worth going
- Irrelevance
- The registry is just an additional activity to normal duties
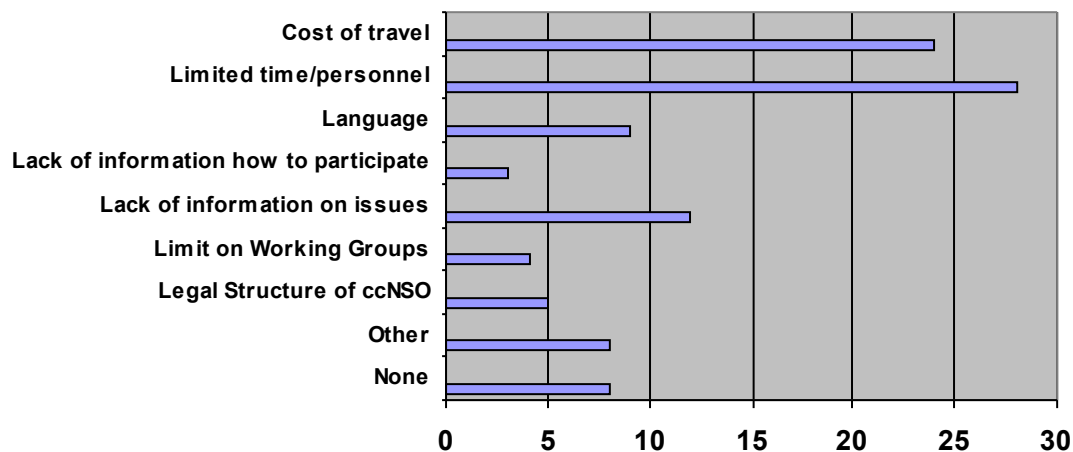
Costs, both financial and in terms of human resources, are the most important barriers to participation. The lack of human capacity could also be a factor in explaining issues about understanding the role/functions/benefits of the ccNSO, because staff at smaller ccTLDs does not have the time to learn about ICANN/ccNSO matters.

Barriers to participating in the ccNSO as members

The respondents were asked if they where members of the ccNSO, and if not, to give some information on why. Care should be taken when interpreting these results. Out of ca 166 ccTLDs who are not members of the ccNSO, 20 of them have answered the survey.

Reasons for not being a member:
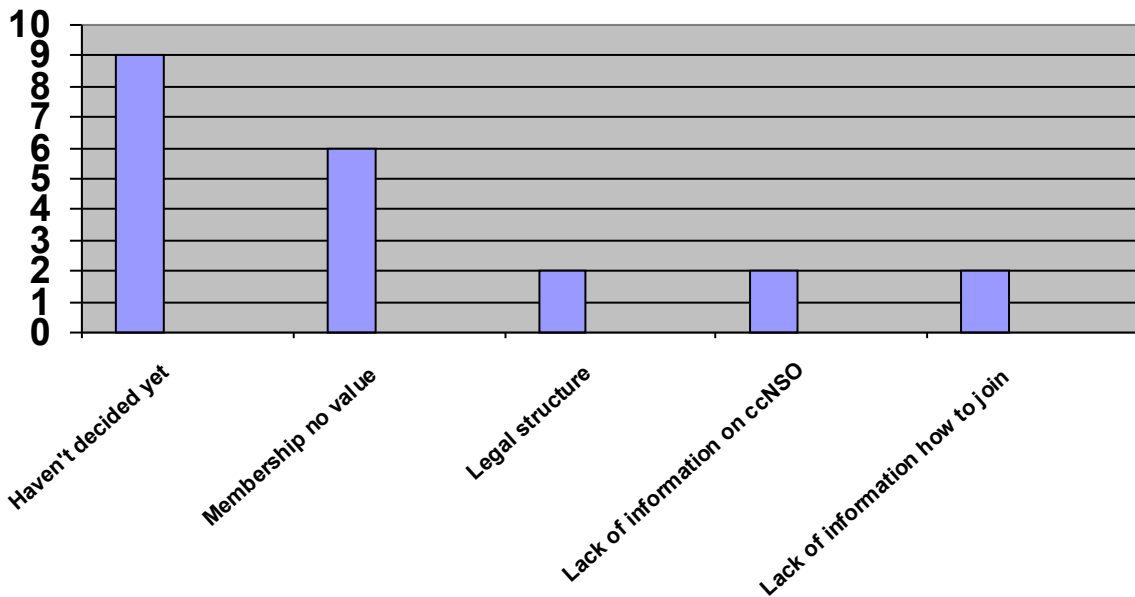
If no on question about being a ccNSO member, is it because						
	ALL n=56	AF n=10	AP n=11	EU n=18	LAC n=16	NA n=1
lack of information about the ccNSO (we don't know what it is/does)	2	2	0	0	0	0
lack of information on how to join	2	2	0	0	0	0
we haven't decided yet	9	1	2	5	1	0
the membership doesn't offer anything of value to my registry	6	3	1	2	0	0
legal structure of the ccNSO	2	1	1	0	0	0

It is clear from the above result that many of the respondents that are not members of the ccNSO are still thinking about it (this might be one of the reasons why they decided to use the time required to respond to the survey). One concern is what the ccNSO can offer, another is the legal structure of the ccNSO or other organizations connected to it.

Breaking the barriers

What can the ccNSO do to make it easier to participate in the meetings?

More information: 16 ccTLDs would like more information about the meetings. This probably reflects the answer that one of the main barriers toward participation is a lack of time and human resources. Registries that have limited time and staff to send to meetings need to know what is going on at the meeting in order to prioritise (they may only have resources to get to one meeting each year) and need easily accessible information in order to help them participate when they are there.

Some concrete suggestions from the respondents are:
- Clearly explain the mechanism and the process of ccNSO for every new member
- Inform in advance of agenda, issues to be discussed, decisions scheduled to be made
- Upload relevant documents (e.g. communiqué) and information onto http://ccnso.icann.org/ in a timely manner so that the registries can catch up with what is going on in real time
- Keep us well-informed; make good arrangements before each meeting, and the venue should be carefully selected so as to facilitate us with travel and hotel reservation
- The ccNSO should arrange ccTLD presentations such that each ICANN region has a ccTLD presenting in each ccNSO meeting.

Travel costs: The other main barrier is travel costs – and difficulties (like visa troubles) to get to the meetings.
- 12 ccTLDs mention that financial assistance with the travels would help. Two of these explicitly mention the fellowship program
- A couple of ccTLDs mention that careful scheduling (e.g. after consulting with the members) to avoid collisions with other meetings would help, along with useful remote participation
- One ccTLD remarks that encouraging other ccTLDs to participate will give more value to the meetings, making it easier for them to justify the investments of going there

Other: Other barriers that are mentioned by the ccTLDs in the previous question are language, legal structure of the ccNSO, limits on the working groups etc. A few ccTLDs have concrete suggestions for improvements to this:
- 3 ccTLDs ask for translations during the meetings
- Open up the working groups for all interested ccTLDs. Start the process to clarify the scope, as was stated in the bylaw ccPDP
- Do away with regional groups, or allow self selection of regional groups
- Generate direct invitation to the top of the NIC organisation

There are also 4 ccTLDs that say that there is nothing more the ccNSO can do about the particular barriers that they face.

Improving the ccNSO further

Do you have any suggestions to how the ccNSO can better serve the ccTLD community?

Focus on the core mission and cooperate with others

8 ccTLDs make the point that the ccNSO should keep focusing on the global information exchange and on the ccTLD issues related to IANA, avoid duplication with for instance, regional organisations and consult with local communities. Some additional concrete suggestions are:

- provide updates on ccNSO topics during regional organizations' meetings
- make ccNSO's ideas and proposals easy to understand for non-English speakers
- make different regional committees to conduct meetings, participate in local IT development processes and outreach to the local community

Assist newcomers in getting involved

- send a list of participants a couple of days before the meeting to assist networking
- begin meeting with a 10min brief of the agenda of the ccNSO meeting with explanations of which presentations will be given, and then another 10min brief of things happening outside the meeting that could be useful or important for ccTLDs to attend

Make it easier to participate without travelling

- Together with the webcast, have something like a chat to participate and debate. Also: transmit the scribe's text in real time!

Assist information sharing

- Mentor program: for an underdeveloped ccTLD get a highly developed ccTLD's help
- Distribution or pointers to registry management software (tracking registered domain names, DNS servers, generation of BIND configurations)
- Publishing comprehensive summary of "current issues which may impact TLDs" with periodically/timely updates may help ccTLDs
- *Improvement of meetings:*
  - Best practices sessions on registries and training sessions at the meetings
  - Tutorials/workshop/training on DNS security, registry automation, IDNs
  - To encourage major exchange of information among TLDs, facilitate interaction (formal and casual), networking and communication though the meetings, not just have us seated in a lecture format
  - Limit the time of the meeting dedicated to discussion on procedures and expand the sessions dedicated to exchange of best practices
- More communication between meetings.
- Conduct ICANN region-specific surveys in collaboration with the regional ccTLD organisations

Assist in influencing ICANN

- (Possibly) a project on developing and constantly updating joint ccTLD positions regarding relationships with national governments and communicating/lobbying them to the GAC
- Make ccTLD registries participate in policy development process
- Enforce our participation to the PDP process as a group
- Do away with regional groups, or allow self selection of regional groups. Do away with the GAC

Other:
- Increase accessibility of the fellowship program (x2)
- Figure out that the term 'Asia-Pacific' includes a place called 'the Pacific', which covers one third of the Earth's surface (travel is expensive) and which has lots and lots of very small island states in it with very limited resources
- Have regional contacts like ICANN has
- Reduce duplication of mail from ccTLD-discuss and ccNSO members list
- Go away (answered by 4 registries)

Appendix A: SURVEY FOR PARTICIPATION IN ICANN ccNSO MEETINGS

This survey is sent out by the ccNSO secretariat on behalf of the ccNSO Participation Working Group. The Working Group's goal is to improve the participation of ccTLD managers in the ccNSO and regional organisations, for the benefit of all ccTLDs and the industry generally. The charter for the working group can be found at
http://ccnso.icann.org/workinggroups/participationwg.htm

The data collected in this survey will be used by the working group in order to gain a better understanding of why people participate or don't participate in the ccNSO, and how the ccNSO can improve. The results of the survey will be published on the ccNSO website, but all data will be anonymised prior to this.

1. What is the ccTLD code your registry administers?

2. How often does your ccTLD registry attend ccNSO meetings?

a. have never attended
b. a few (1-3) meetings
c. semi regularly (at least once a year)
d. almost every meeting
e. don't know what a ccNSO meeting is

3. Do you feel that the meetings are of value to your registry?

a. yes (go to question 4)
b. no (go to question 5)
c. don't know

4. If yes on question 3, what in particular is it that you find of value (so we can keep doing it)?

a. exchange of information with other registries through presentations
b. exchange of information with other registries through surveys
c. influencing ICANN through PDPs and resolutions
d. participation in working groups
e. informal talks with other registry people (networking)
f. other, please specify

5. If no on question 3, are there things that could be done to make the meetings of value to your registry? (please specify)

6. Are there barriers that make it difficult for you to participate in the ccNSO meetings? If so, please mark which barriers present a significant problem to your ccTLD registry in regards to participating:

a. cost of travel
b. limited time/limited personnel resources that can be spared to participate in activities outside the registry
c. language
d. lack of information on how to participate
e. lack of information about what the issues are at the meetings
f. limits on the membership of ccNSO working groups
g. legal structure of the ccNSO, please specify
h. other barriers, please specify

7. What can the ccNSO do to make it easier for your registry to participate in the meetings?

Appendix B: "What can the ccNSO do to make it easier to participate in the meetings?"

Inform better
Keep us well-informed; make good arrangement before each meeting, and the venue should be carefully selected so as to facilitate us with travel and hotel reservation. 2.clearly explain the mechanism and the process of ccNSO for every new member, 3.consult with members before making meeting schedule.
Generate direct invitation to the top of the NIC organisation
To have wide communication of the meetings and provide some kind of financial support to participate.
For a small registry, cost of travel is usually a complication so any aid on making it more possible the travel would be welcome.
Publish agendas
Cover the cost at least for one meeting so that my company officials understand the use of the meeting.
Release the meeting agendas earlier
Inform in advance of agenda, issues to be discussed, decisions scheduled to be made
Inform in advance of agenda, issues to be discussed, decisions scheduled to be made
Inform in advance of agenda, issues to be discussed, decisions scheduled to be made
Inform in advance of agenda, issues to be discussed, decisions scheduled to be made
Inform in advance of agenda, issues to be discussed, decisions scheduled to be made
Inform in advance of agenda, issues to be discussed, decisions scheduled to be made
Nothing more, ccNSO send us a lot of information. We, at the registry, have to find time to read everything.
In reality, I think the ccNSO does a very good job of keeping people informed as to the activities, their calendars, and their outcomes. The problem we face is one of human resource shortage. Although I have tried to schedule, and budget, my participation in one or more of the meetings, several times I´ve had to cancel due to my other activities.
With fellowships
Fund my travel expenses
To upload relevant documents (e.g. communiqué) and information onto http://ccnso.icann.org/ in a timely manner so that the registries can catch up with what is going on in real time.
Inform better
Unless they take place in Europe, nothing. Useful remote participation would help, though.
Sponsorship if possible
Take care of the travel and provide translation of the discussions during the meetings.
Ensure the translation at the meetings and create groups with different languages - Finding sponsors to support the participation of ccTLDs
I am afraid nothing with respect to our limitations stated above
To encourage others ccTLDs participation in order to get more value from the meeting so we can justify this investments.
Do away with regional groups, or allow self selection of regional groups.
Don't schedule the meetings in the same time of our registration meetings.
Open up the working groups for all interested ccTLDs. Start the process to clarify the scope, as was stated in the bylaw ccPDP.
If the cost of travel and accommodation bear by the ccNSO then it will be easier for us to participate in meeting. (Mercantile Communications Pvt. Ltd sponsoring organization for .np Registry , providing free domain registration for the local community since 1995 Due to financial constraint, we are looking for the sponsor for future participations.)
The fellowship Program to enhance global participation in ICANN Meetings is a good initiative because the small ccTLDs doesn't have available budget to confront the trip expenses.
Direct invitations
Concentrate on solving a, b, d and h in 6 above
We plan to employ more people so we will participate in the meetings later
Don't know.
A meeting in Eastern Europe would be appropriate :)
Earlier communication of the meeting agendas.
Financial assistance. Languages translations.
The ccNSO should arrange ccTLD presentations such that each ICANN region has a ccTLD presenting in each ccNSO meeting. That will help ccTLDs from the regions such as Africa to stop "hiding" & let the ccNSO members know what is happening in Africa & how the ccNSO can assist struggling ccTLDs.

Appendix C: Answers to "Do you have any suggestions to how the ccNSO can better serve the ccTLD community?"

Implement as far as possible the results of this survey
Together with the webcast, have something like a chat to participate and debate. Also: transmit the scribe's text in real time!
Listen to the voice from local communities; make ccNSO's ideas and proposals easy to understand for non-English speakers; consult with local communities before make any move.
Mentor program: for under developed ccTLD get a high developed ccTLD
During the ccNSO meetings it seems that many know each other but not all of us know everybody so my suggestion is that previous to the meeting usually most are sure they are going , so a couple of days before we could receive a list of participants which will be helpful for identifying people and improve networking . During the meeting or after it, the list could be updated but my point is to have it before the meeting. At the very beginning of the meeting, I suggest that a 10min brief is dedicated to go over the agenda of the ccNSO meeting with some sort of explanation of what is each presentation to be done, and then another 10min brief of things going on outside the ccNSO meeting that would be useful or important for ccTLD to attend or issues that are of significative importance. This last part could be easy to identify for people that go to all meetings and have more experience but for newcomers or not frequent participant it is very helpful to have a guideline or tips. That helps for a better meeting experience that induces to go to the next and so on.
Distribution or pointers to registry management software (tracking registered domain names, DNS servers, generation of BIND configurations)
Limit the time of the meeting dedicated to discussion on procedures and expand the sessions dedicated to exchange of best practices. It would be also interesting to see new faces of the ccTLD community there.
Focus on its core missions, avoid duplication with, for instance, regional organisations (answ. by 6 registries)
Go away (answered by 4 registries)
One minor thing might be to help reduce the amount of mail flowing from the cctld-discuss and ccNSO-members mail lists. Much is duplicated.
ccNSO should secure the participation of all latinamerican ccTLDs at least in annual meetings organized, in our case, we request a fellowship to India and was denied, for that reason we stopped requesting fellowships, because it seems the fellowships are limited and do not include to [Name withheld]
Publishing comprehensive summary of "current issues which may   impact TLDs" with periodically/timely updates may help ccTLDs.
Helping records has put in place the best management tools of a register by training sessions. Doing best practices sessions on registers at the meetings.
Work closely with regional organizations. Provide updates on ccNSO WG topics during regional Organizations' meetings e.g. APTLD meetings.
To encourage major exchange of information among TLDs, facilitate interaction (formal and casual), networking and communication though the meetings, not just to have us seated in a lecture format (like listening the gospels)
Do away with regional groups, or allow self selection of regional groups. Do away with GAC.
You should have a delegate for latinamerica like ICANN has it.
Keep focusing on the global information exchange and on the ccTLD issues related to IANA.
a) Getting registry information through surveys and make ccTLD registries to participate in policy development process b) Conduct tutorials/workshop/training on DNS security, registry automation / IDNs c) Make different regional committees to conduct meeting, participate in local IT development process and outreach to the local community.
To have their own Fellowship Program for small ccTLDs.
We consider the results as satisfactory.
Figure out that the term 'Asia-Pacific' includes a place called 'the Pacific', which covers 1 third of the Earth's surface (travel is expensive) and which has lots and lots of very small island states in it with very limited resources.
More structured cooperation with the regional organisations like CENTR
Enforce our participation to the PDP process as a group
(Possibly) a project on developing and constantly updating joint ccTLD positions regarding relationships with national governments and communicating/lobbying them to GAC
More communication between meetings.
One way could be for the ccNSO secretariat to conduct ICANN region-specific surveys (e.g. survey the state of African ccTLDs: what are their registration numbers, what are registry systems, do they DRPs in place, etc). It can do this in collaboration with regional ccTLD organisations (Aftld, Aptld, etc)