

21 January 2022

RE: Middle East Space Statement on Open Data

Tijani Ben Jemma, Middle East Space Co-Chair

Dear Tijani,

On behalf of the ICANN organization (org), thank you for your thoughtful feedback and recommendations, and for arranging the ICANN72 Middle East Space focused on ICANN Open Data. Your session was attended by ICANN Board Chair Maarten Botterman, ICANN President and CEO Göran Marby, ICANN Senior Vice President and Chief Information Officer Ashwin Rangan, and me. We valued the opportunity to answer your questions and learn more about your experience with the platform.

As you know, the goal of ICANN Open Data is to increase the transparency and accessibility of data managed by the org. Throughout the development stages of ICANN Open Data, the ICANN community had the opportunity to steer the requirements and prioritization of data releases. ICANN Open Data is the result of this collaborative work between the community and the org.

The org launched the [Open Data platform](#) in [March 2020](#) with a limited number of datasets. As with all new platforms and launches, our development team discovered issues with the platform and the format and configuration of some datasets. Our development team is in the process of documenting those issues and evaluating the resources and the level of effort required to resolve the issues.

In your letter, you posed some questions and offered recommendations about ICANN Open Data. Our responses are outlined below.

Is there a plan to add the remaining Identifier Technologies Health Indicators (ITHI) metrics?

- ⦿ Yes, we do have plans to add the remaining ITHI metrics. The timing is dependent on addressing the above-mentioned issues with the platform, and with the format and configuration of some of the existing datasets.

Will Registry Function Activity Reports be added for reports pre-2013?

- ⦿ Pre-2013 Registry Function **Activity** Reports do not exist. These reports were introduced in 2013 and coincided with the new gTLD program. There are only pre-2013 operator and transaction reports.

For Pre-Registrar Transaction Reports, the choice to aggregate each year's transactions in a dataset will provide more visibility for the data per year but it will become complicated to combine global data and to have a summary view.

- ⦿ Aggregating all the data into a single dataset is not possible with our Open Data platform license because it is limited to 15 million records per dataset, and each Pre-Registrar Report dataset per year includes more than 1 million records. We are exploring if it is possible to obtain a license from Open Data Soft for unlimited datasets.

Advanced search is useful for experienced users but for a new user, it likely appears complicated. We suggest that the simple research be provided in the start page, where it is most accessible, rather than the advanced search.

The search engine did not provide advanced search functionality such as search within full text, which could be particularly significant for academic users.

- ⦿ The persona of an average ICANN Open Data user is an advanced user, rather than a new user who is unfamiliar with using and accessing datasets on open data platforms. If we receive further feedback from inexperienced users regarding your recommendation, we will make the appropriate changes to address this user group.
- ⦿ The ICANN Open Data platform is not intended to provide functionality for text search within files or datasets. The search is focused on the metadata of the files and datasets, rather than the text within the files and datasets. The goal of the ICANN Open Data platform is to give users greater access to raw numerical data.

The APIs are not documented for external users and the secure access protocol is not defined. Additionally, there is no information provided about v.2 of the API.

- ⦿ The API is not an ICANN-specific API, rather it is an Open Data Soft (the platform) API and not specific to an individual dataset. Open Data Soft provides documentation on how to setup and access their API, and individual users would need to customize their API to the specific dataset they are interested in. On our platform, we provide examples of how to use the API via the primary navigation on the menu item labeled *API*.
- ⦿ ICANN Open Data is secured via API key. You can generate a key by navigating to your account (you will see *Your Name* if you are logged in). Click on *Your Name* and you will be taken to a screen that reads *Your Account*. Under the title, *Your Account*, you will see a tab for *API Keys*. Click on *API Keys* and you will be able to click *Generate New Key* from this tab.
- ⦿ The documentation for v.2 of the API is available via the *V2* tab under the *API* primary navigation.

The platform and the search engine are only available in English. To ensure good progress towards enhancing the community's ability to understand and utilize the data published, we recommend enabling the multilingual capacity of the platform and the search engine.

- ⦿ External sources provide data and reports to the org in English only (as with Registry Reports) and the org does not alter data and reports provided by external sources. Before the launch of ICANN Open Data, the data and reports now available on ICANN Open Data were available on <https://icann.org> and other ICANN-managed sites, in English only. The goal of the ICANN Open Data platform is to provide the raw data in its original form. Translation of the ICANN Open Data platform interface is not on our near-term roadmap, but the org will commit to evaluating the level of effort for a translated experience for the interface and metadata, knowing that the reports themselves would remain in English.

Recommend adding ccTLD Activity Reports to track DNS market activities, ICANN financial reports, and community member activities.

- ⦿ ICANN Open Data has some datasets related to ccTLD activities, including the compound annual growth rate of IDN second-level domains, net change in IDN second-level domains, and number of domains by ICANN region. These can be accessed by logging into ICANN Open Data and navigating to the Domain Name Marketplace Indicators card. A comprehensive listing of all ccTLD indicators currently being published as part of this initiative is available via a detailed [taxonomy guide](#). If you are interested in other ccTLD marketplace indicators, please provide specific examples; however, please know that the org is limited by the data provided by third parties.
- ⦿ As part of ICANN's accountability and transparency commitments, the org Policy Development Support team tracks stakeholder representation and participation in policy development and advice work within Supporting Organizations and Advisory Committees (SO/AC) through attendance. These data and membership lists are published in accordance with each SO's and AC's processes and requirements. The org's Annual Regional Reports also contain some information, including about community leadership positions that are appointed on a regional basis. At present, data is not tracked or reported by country or region as this type of data is generally self-reported by community members and the org cannot verify its accuracy.
- ⦿ ICANN financial reports are currently on the roadmap to add to ICANN Open Data. We would need more information about which specific financial data would be most useful to you, for example, balance sheets, income statements, or other financial information.

Recommend that an initiative be started with the community to develop a Software Development Kit using programming languages (Python, Java) for community members to start coding using ICANN Open Data API.

- ⦿ This is a great idea, and the development team has added this to their roadmap to tackle when resources allow. We can also offer a tutorial on how to access the API Data, using Python or other programming languages and this can be coordinated with Open Data Soft to support us.

Propose the following topics for potential outreach and capacity-building activities to inform the community about the valuable services of the platform: Domain Name Marketplace Indicators datasets, using ICANN Open data search engine, and using ICANN Open API vs Export Data.

- ⦿ This is also a great idea and once the development team can address the issues with the platform and the datasets, we will endeavor on greater outreach and capacity-building activities.

It will be beneficial to include data about domains, IPs, and protocols in one place for easy use.

- ⦿ Is there specific data that you are interested in about domains, IPs, and protocols?

We want to thank you again for your keen interest in ICANN Open Data and for taking the time and effort to document your helpful recommendations, highlight issues with the platform, and arrange the session focused on ICANN Open Data. ICANN's multistakeholder model works because of the commitment and knowledge of community members like you who are dedicated to ensuring the org is providing the services the community needs.

Sincerely,

Sally Newell Cohen,
Senior Vice President, Global Communications