



LACPD Experiences

Series 2





Esteban Lescano

ASO Council Member

How did you first get involved in ICANN?

I first got involved and started participating in ICANN through CABASE, the Argentine Internet Chamber. I began my ICANN journey by participating in the Internet Service Providers and Connectivity Providers (ISPCP) Constituency group, which is the interest group composed of Internet Service Providers (ISPs). These companies provide connectivity and technical infrastructure for the delivery of telecommunications and Internet services.

In the beginning, I started following the work of Tony Harris, who has been CABASE's representative at ICANN since the beginning. He guided me and gave me advice about getting involved at ICANN. One of the things that helped me the most when I started participating in ICANN was the Fellowship Program. I was incredibly lucky to join the program for ICANN50 in London, England. This allowed me to understand the vision and goals of the community's different actors, groups, and functions within ICANN's ecosystem. In the following years, I participated in ICANN as a fellow and as a coach for some of the program's newcomers while simultaneously serving as a member of the ISPCP.

How do you participate in ICANN today?

This is a very interesting question, because at ICANN we're always talking about the multistakeholder journey. In my case, I started getting involved in something very specific – the ISPSP – but then my role evolved. Now, I'm representing the Executive Board of the Latin American and Caribbean Internet Addresses Registry (LACNIC) in the Address Supporting Organization (ASO).

I've recently joined the ASO as an Address Councilmember, with my term starting on 1 January 2019. The ASO, which is made up of members from the five Regional Internet Registries (RIRs), is one of the Supporting Organizations and Advisory Committees (SO/ACs) that support the work done within ICANN's ecosystem. As you can see, ICANN has lots of different options for participation that a community member can opt-in for.

“My time within the ICANN community has been a spectacular journey that has contributed to my professional growth”

What are the biggest challenges and opportunities for participation at ICANN? Why is it important to have diverse participation in ICANN processes?

In the case of Phase 1 of the Expedited Policy Development Process (EPDP) on the Temporary Specification for gTLD Registration Data, I was the only person from Latin America and the Caribbean participating in the group. Although the process was very interesting, being the only participant from our region made it more challenging because of the nature of the topics that were being addressed in the EPDP. While topics such as the adaptation of ICANN contracts with registries and registrars to comply with the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) were very interesting, they were also very demanding. We had to be prepared for each call and understand the documents in order to contribute meaningfully to the discussion.

I think the overall message that I would give my fellow Latin Americans and Caribbean members is that it is possible to have meaningful participation in processes like the EPDP and we should encourage and help each other succeed. There are a lot of people that are willing to help you. At the same time, you don't have to be a specialist or know everything to participate in a meaningful way.

I highly recommend participating in these processes, which can be quite captivating and exciting. Even though there are always tensions and competing interests, the spirit of collaboration and cooperation is alive and well. Everyone comes to the table with an open mind, a positive attitude, and a willingness to build consensus.

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How have these experiences transformed your work and growth in the ICANN Community?

I would use the word “journey” to describe my experience. My time within the ICANN community has been a spectacular journey that has contributed to my professional growth. It is a journey that started with the Fellowship Program, which allowed me to grow into a position with more responsibility as a member of the LACNIC Board.

It is important to keep in mind that the Internet is the result of collaborative efforts. Its governance is a result of the success of the multistakeholder model. We all have a place to participate and be a part of that process. We can all find our place in the ecosystem. Even if your professional work changes, the system is flexible enough to allow for changes and internal mobility.

Wanda Pérez

ICANN Community Member

How did you first get involved in ICANN?

I was invited to participate in ICANN by my colleague from the Dominican Telecommunications Institute (INDOTEL). She had previously participated in ICANN through the Fellowship Program. It made sense for me to join the larger ICANN community since I had been participating for years in the Latin American and Caribbean Internet Addresses Registry (LACNIC) community.

I felt encouraged to work in ICANN's processes when I saw the open call to apply for the ICANN Fellowship Program and I learned about how the multistakeholder model works. It is not the government or private enterprise setting the agenda. Instead, it is set by the community's various stakeholders, who come from a wide range of different backgrounds. Their voices are all considered fairly and equally. Everyone has a voice, and no one has more power than others. It is truly a consensus-building model. I believe in this system because it ensures that everyone has the right to provide their opinion and shape future Internet policies.

How do you participate in ICANN today?

When I first became a fellow, I was very excited. As a telematic engineer, I felt that the Internet Service Providers and Connectivity Providers (ISPCP) Constituency was a natural fit for me. I contacted Janice Douma-Lange, who used to run the Fellowship Program, and she introduced me to Tony Harris, our region's representative in the ISPCP, at ICANN50, which was my first ICANN Public Meeting. I informed Tony that I wanted to start inviting the ISPs in my country, the Dominican Republic. As soon as I returned home to my country, I started reaching out and setup a meeting, sponsored by INDOTEL, with all the ISPs from our country.

With the help of INDOTEL, we conducted several meetings to motivate Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to join ICANN. Tony Harris also visited my country and provided a number of lectures about ICANN and the ISPCP.



“For me, participating in ICANN has everything to do with my career”

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Why is it important to have a more diverse participation at ICANN processes?

ICANN has a vital role in the Internet ecosystem because the Domain Name System (DNS) is critical for the Internet’s interoperability. It is no secret that the Internet contributes to the development of communities in the world. Dominicans need to get involved in any effort that enables the Internet’s development.

What are the biggest challenges and opportunities for community members to have a more active participation at ICANN?

First of all, I want to highlight the lack of knowledge and awareness of ICANN’s role and functions, and that it’s important that outreach efforts are doubled in the region. However, I know the ICANN organization is already making a considerable effort to increase regional awareness. Albert Daniels has invited many regional stakeholders to participate, with a heavy focus on increasing participation from the Caribbean. Many of us participate in outreach initiatives through him, so it is very important that these efforts continue.

For me, participating in ICANN has everything to do with my career. As a telematic engineer, I needed to join the regional and global community. I’ve worked at an ISP for my whole life, so ICANN was an opportunity for me to network with professionals in my area and to see, at a higher level, the source of the Internet’s inner workings that allow an ISP to function within the ecosystem. I could meet the fathers of the Internet and the authors of protocols that I was selling or working with in my day-to-day job. I met Radia Perlman at an ICANN event, for example. That, for me, was an invaluable moment because I could understand the big picture and how everything works at the root. When you learn the big global picture at a high-level, your job becomes easier.

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Ricardo Patara

ASO Council Member

How did you first get involved in ICANN?

I worked for LACNIC from 2002 to 2010. Since then, I've been participating in ICANN through the Latin American and Caribbean Internet Addresses Registry (LACNIC) at meetings like the one in Argentina and Brazil. I used to attend those meetings as a spectator, and I wanted to know the process and network with people. I was also auditing the meetings of the Address Supporting Organization (ASO). Every Regional Internet Registry (RIR) has a delegate that participates in these sessions, to listen and provide necessary information about a specific RIR

Every RIR has three delegates in the ASO, two of which are selected by the community and one who is selected by the RIR's board. After I left LACNIC in 2010, I started working for NIC.br. During this time, I got nominated and selected to be a regional representative for LACNIC in the ASO. I am currently on my third term as a regional representative for the ASO.

Did you receive guidance from anyone at ICANN that helped you getting involved in the Policy Development Processes?

Hartmut Glaser helped me a lot. He is also from NIC.br and has been an ICANN community member for a long time. He has participated in different community groups like the ASO and the Nominating Committee (NomCom), among others. We used to travel together quite frequently, which facilitated my interaction with him and my comprehension of ICANN topics.

How do you participate in ICANN today? Who else collaborates with you?

Currently, Jorge Villa (Cuba), Esteban Lescano (Argentina), and I represent the Latin American and Caribbean region in the ASO. Esteban Lescano was appointed by LACNIC's Executive Board. He is now a member of this board. My work today is still related to this area.

My work in ICANN's processes was more related to numbers because of my background, so in the past I only followed processes related to this area. Later on in my time as a community member I became interested in the development of new generic top-level domains (new gTLDs), as it affected NIC.br's core business area, but I was not actively engaging with the policy development process (PDP).

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What are the biggest challenges for ICANN community members to participate in a PDP?

Time is a constraint. A lot of the policy development processes (PDPs) are very dynamic and demanding, which take up a lot of your time.

Why do you think it is important to have a more diverse participation in ICANN processes?

ICANN is a critical area of Internet governance. There is a lot of work done at ICANN that has a direct effect on the Internet and people. It is important to participate at ICANN, not only for the sake of participating or developing policy, but also to invite others to participate and provide them with information that might interest them. When new people arrive to the RIRs, it is good to tell them which mechanisms of participation are available to them so they can make their own decisions about their participation based on their unique interests.



Vanda Scartezini

ICANN Community Member

How did you get involved at ICANN?

I have been participating in telecommunications and Internet processes since 1976. During this time, I was working in a research center where we started looking for information on the development of connectivity between universities. We were involved in the development of networks since the beginning, with the goal of fostering connectivity between universities, research centers, and other actors. At the end of the 1980s, networks were set in place in all universities and the first connections were made by sharing data between the universities and research centers.

When I was appointed as Brazil's National Secretary for Technology at the end of the 1990s, we were more organized, networks were available, and we were able to share data through email enabled by the Brazilian Telecommunications Company (EMBRATEL). By that time .br was already established and Demi Getschko, who received the assignment of .br from Jon Postel, implemented .br for the research centers' email addresses. We did not have a commercial structure yet, but it would expand soon after.

When I was appointed as National Secretary for Technology and Information for the second time in 1999, Brazil started to participate at ICANN. The National Secretariat for Technology and Information was Brazil's official representative before ICANN's Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC), and this is how I started participating in ICANN. In 2002, I was elected as Vice Chair of the GAC.

With the change in Brazil's government, I retired from working in the federal government, but the new government asked me to stay as the GAC Vice Chair because the government wanted to keep the seat before the new cycle started. I remained as Vice Chair until 2004. Later, I was selected by the community to be an ICANN Board member, which I served on until 2007.

After this, I joined the At-Large Advisory Council (ALAC) and worked with some colleagues on transforming At-Large. I returned as the ALAC's liaison to the ICANN Board from 2009 until 2010. I also joined the Latin America and the Caribbean Regional At-Large Organization (LACRALO), the first Regional At-Large Organization to be constituted during ICANN27 in Sao Paulo. I am still a member of LACRALO.

I joined the Security and Stability Advisory Committee (SSAC) for three years. Later, in 2012, I was Chair of the Nominating Committee (NomCom). I then returned to the NomCom as ALAC's representative and years later as the SSAC's representative. I also spent a lot of time participating in the NomCom as a community member.

“The number of Latin American and Caribbean women working in ICANN processes was very small. We have seen this number growing every year”

I have participated in policy development processes (PDPs) and ICANN reviews. First, I participated in the Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) in 2007. Later, I participated in cross-community working groups and Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) Stewardship Transition working groups. These PDPs and reviews are very important vehicles of consensus that allow you to understand other points of view. These groups provide you with a clear vision about the importance of policies generated at ICANN. It is very different when you have not been engaged or have been too partial in the groups, because sometimes you end up questioning why you're participating.

In 2008, there were few women working in ICANN processes, so a group of five women, one from each continent, started meeting in-between ICANN Public Meetings. We met with the objective of increasing women's participation in ICANN processes. That is how in 2008 we created DNS Women. Initially, we hosted breakfasts sponsored by different groups of registrars, registries, or other constituencies from the community. Later, we started bringing ICANN Board members to speak with women who were new to ICANN. These talks were aimed at encouraging new participants to nominate themselves for leadership positions or to make them feel more comfortable participating in ICANN. This group grew into a registered organization with more than 400 members and four chapters in the world.

Following the creation of DNS Women, we developed capacity-building projects tailored to women who wanted to join the discussions and businesses related to the Internet. The interest in these projects grew, and many women were interested in replicating this effort in their own countries.

“For our region, these challenges are not small, and we are still trying to fill the gaps in participation”

How would you describe your experience working in PDPs? Which challenges did you face during your participation?

The group of women working at ICANN was small. A higher number of American and European women were present at ICANN processes because they were already involved in areas related to business tied to the Internet. The number of Latin American and Caribbean women working in ICANN processes was very small. We have seen this number growing every year. Some notable Latin American and Caribbean women that were involved in these processes from the beginning were: Margarita Valdés (Chile), Olga Cavalli (Argentina), Jaqueline Morris (Trinidad and Tobago) and Fatima Cambroner (Argentina). Now we have more representation from other countries such as Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Peru, Paraguay, and others.

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Language continues to be one of the biggest barriers to effective participation from ICANN's LAC community. After many years of participating in ICANN, I thought that not having a high-level of proficiency in English did not pose a challenge anymore. However, I realized recently that there are many knowledgeable people who know a lot about the relevant topics at ICANN but do not speak the language to comprehend or have meaningful discussions in the groups.

I have suggested to ICANN to improve interpretation in the different sessions. There are nuances from each language that are important to the discussions but that are impossible to follow because of the nature of the discussions (e.g. technical discussions). For example, many community members from LACRALO or the Intellectual Property Constituency, who are lawyers, find it difficult to participate or maintain parallel conversations during the sessions. Parallel discussions are essential to PDPs. However, they lack language diversity.

Another challenge is the cross-community spaces for members who are very technical or that are members of LACRALO or Latin American and Caribbean Internet Addresses Registry (LACNIC). These groups are usually very niche and do not grasp all ICANN general aspects. For example, in many occasions there is only one member of LACRALO participating at the same time in processes like the Cross-Community Working Group on of new generic top-level domains (New gTLD) Auction Proceeds, New gTLDs Subsequent Procedures PDP, or reviews. Another example is NomCom. Only a few from the region really participate in it because the discussions are only in English. Discussions in cross-community spaces are ample, making it difficult for members to voice an opinion about their own group or possible consequences for others' groups.

What are the opportunities to increase participation from the Latin American and the Caribbean region in ICANN processes?

The first opportunity I see is to incentivize English proficiency among members. This is not meant to exclude members but to create meaningful participation. Members who do not speak English at ICANN go through the challenge of participating in cross-community working groups who have sessions in English and without interpretation.

In our region, it is important to increase awareness about ICANN's work. We are doing it in LACRALO by asking community members who participate in cross-community working groups to repeat and translate discussions to members willing to learn about a topic or follow the developments from these groups. In these spaces, members of LACRALO can ask questions and build their knowledge. This brings opportunities for participation, increase visibility, and later, possible selection to leadership positions.

For our region, these challenges are not small, and we are still trying to fill the gaps in participation. In the case of LACRALO, we incentivize the audit of the groups so members can understand their dynamics.

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Why do you think it is important to have a more diverse participation at ICANN processes?

ICANN processes, in one way or another, are going to impact your life and the lives of those around you. So, participating and voicing your opinions, reduces the negative impact of decisions for your region. The more diverse the contribution to the decision-making process, the better outcome it will have on the consequences that will impact your region.