**Celebrating African Women in the DNS (WinDNS Africa) with the AfTLD**

***Tagline/Slogan:*** *Now, Women are Champions in DNS!*

*Proposed Date: 1 April 202, 9am -12am CAT*

**Preamble**

The internet is undoubtedly a pivotal resource for a digital economy which the world is moving towards and demonstrates the power of technology to change the world. The Domain Name System is the backbone of the internet which enables communications on the internet by acting as a directory that matches domain names to corresponding IP numbers and vice versa through a resolution process. Over the years, the internet and its usage in Africa has grown tremendously and the domain name business, respectively. Today Africa stands at x number of domains registered and behind the scenes the DNS is run by many engineers in their different capacities and organizations and women are not an exception in this field.

However, several survey reports on gender equality have revealed that not many women are in ICT industry in general, and this includes Africa. Although there have been efforts to bridge the digital gender divide in ICT through initiatives such as EQUALS, Africa Girls Cn Code and AfriChix, this initiative seeks to celebrate women who have particularly been and are actively involved in the evolvement and development of the DNS ecosystem, from the technical, legal & policy making, marketing, capacity building and several other fields to make the Africa DNS a success story.

At the ICANN, the endeavor to increase women participation in the DNS Ecosystem long began in *2009* when **Domain Name System Women or DNS Women**  was established at [ICANN](https://icannwiki.org/ICANN) in Mexico with the mission to "provide encouragement, inspiration and active support to women in the DNS Industry." The organization aims to advance women’s global Internet leadership through networking, information, and resource sharing, with focus on increasing the participation of women leaders in the DNS Industry. \**sourced from ICANNWiki.*

**Objectives of WinDNS Africa**

1. Identify women in Africa who are in the DNS business to **share their stories** to inspire and encourage others in the similar industry.
2. Form a **network** of women in DNS space, for easy identification and mentoring opportunities.
3. Create a **safe space for the development** of upcoming women in DNS to easily seek assistance, best practices, and peer counselling from the already established Women.
4. **Increase the participation** of Women in DNS activities in and beyond Africa.

**Program Outline**

**Moderator: Angela Matlapeng**

1. Opening Remarks – **Katrina Sataki – ICANN Board**
2. Now women are Champions in DNS – Success Stories

Speaker 1: ccTLD – **Grace Ingabire – RICTA (.rw)**

Speaker 2: gTLD – **Sarah Mhamilawa – Lexsynergy**

Speaker 3: geographic TLD - **Simla Budhu - dotAfrica**

Speaker 4: **Dorcus Muthoni - Afchix**

1. The Dreaded “F” word: Threats and Barriers faced by Women in DNS – **Wafa Dahmani Zafoori .tn**
2. Mind the Gender Gap: The Role of the DNS ecosystem in Bridging the gender divide – **Edith Udeagu - .ng**
3. The Balancing Act - Opportunities and Policies to take up and retain women in DNS – **Hadia Elminiawi –** DNS–Entrepreneurship Center **(DNS-EC) .eg**
4. The Future of AfTLD WinDNS – **Barrack Otieno - AfTLD Secretariat**
5. Closing Remarks – **Ali Hadji Mmadi - AfTLD President**