

# 'Start local, think global': Samiran Gupta urges Bangladesh to shape the internet's future

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MOHAMMAD KAWSAR UDDIN

The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) is critical to maintaining the stable and secure operation of the global internet. In an exclusive interview, Samiran Gupta, Vice President of Stakeholder Engagement and Managing Director for Asia Pacific at ICANN, discusses the state of internet infrastructure in Bangladesh, local domain adoption, universal acceptance, and the importance of inclusive participation in internet governance.

**How would you assess the state of internet infrastructure and the operational community in Bangladesh?**

We've been working with the technical community in Bangladesh for a long time, focusing on capacity-building and training—particularly around the country code top-level domains (ccTLDs) .bd and .bangla. This includes collaboration with key organisations such as BDNOC, ISPAB, BASIS, and BDIX. We've also supported BTCL in improving operational practices.

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planned and responsive, depending on what the local community needs.

We've also been actively promoting Universal Acceptance (UA) and Internationalised Domain Names (IDNs) in Bangladesh by sponsoring events and raising awareness. Adopting global best practices is crucial for ensuring the resilience and security of the Domain Name System (DNS), which remains central to ICANN's mission.

**What is your view on the current adoption of .bd and .bangla domains? How can this be improved?**

Adoption of local domains is largely market-driven and varies from

country to country. In Bangladesh, a stronger local marketing effort is likely needed. The community should explore the barriers to adoption and identify actionable steps to increase use. ICANN is ready to provide any necessary support, but the initiative must come from within the local internet ecosystem.

**Is there a need to raise awareness about Universal Acceptance (UA) in Bangladesh?**

Definitely. UA is a technical challenge but also a user experience issue. We've developed a 12-module academic course for integration into

university curricula, which includes programming and implementation best practices. Increasing awareness, particularly among the local technical community, would support broader internet inclusion, especially for Bangla-speaking users.

**ICANN holds three global conferences each year. Could Bangladesh host one in the future?**

We're open to proposals from all regions. Host city selection depends on several factors—connectivity, accommodation, venue quality, IT infrastructure, and security. Detailed criteria are available on the ICANN website. If any organisation in Bangladesh is interested, we'd be happy to discuss the requirements.

**What role can non-technical participants—such as policymakers, journalists, and civil society—play in ICANN's work?**

ICANN's multi-stakeholder model is built to be inclusive. Non-technical actors are encouraged to join and contribute. We recommend starting with the ICANN for Beginners page, which offers a guided entry point. The Asia-Pacific Regional At-Large Organisation (APRALO) is particularly active, and my team is always ready to assist newcomers.

**How can ICANN foster greater involvement from journalists?**

Our meetings are open to everyone who registers. While journalists don't have a dedicated track, they're encouraged to attend and engage with topics that interest them—be it policy, technology, or civil society. My team is always open to facilitating conversations with media professionals.

**What's the best way for individuals to actively participate in ICANN's work?**

Start locally. Attend regional or community events to build connections and understand the context. When you attend a global ICANN meeting, you'll be much better prepared. We also encourage joining working groups, which are open to anyone with the time and interest. ICANN's policy process is bottom-up, so every voice matters.

**Are ICANN resources available in languages other than English? Will there be materials in Bangla?**

Traditionally, ICANN provides content in the six UN languages. But we're now piloting an AI-based translation service to support additional languages, including Bangla, especially for the upcoming round of new gTLD applications. These translations may not be perfect initially, so we're keen to work with local communities to improve them.

“Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.”  
**MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.**

**THE BOSSMAN**  
BY E. RAZA RONNY

TO INCREASE MORALE, I WILL NOW GIVE AN INSPIRING MOTIVATIONAL SPEECH!

\* AHEM \*  
**WORK HARDER!**

HONESTLY, THAT'S THE MOST HONEST SPEECH WE'VE HEARD.  
YEAH, REFRESHING.

## Bridging Bangladesh's skills gap

ZARIF FAIAZ

Bangladesh's vocational training sector has expanded rapidly in recent years, particularly in information and communications technology (ICT). Thousands of private training centres now operate across the country, offering similar types of courses in areas such as web development, hardware maintenance, and digital marketing. However, the absence of a standardised system of curriculum design, delivery and assessment has contributed to wide disparities in the quality of training offered.

To address these challenges, the Government established the National Skills Development Authority (NSDA). NSDA's role includes coordinating training institutions, creating Competency Standards, and (CS) approving curricula for a wide range of trades. Standardised training not only allows trainees to undergo uniform assessments and receive government-recognised certification, but also facilitates better connections between training institutions and employers.

**Addressing evolving market demands**

Unfortunately the skills development domain faces some persistent challenges of keeping up with the continuously evolving industries changing skills demand. New trades and occupations continue to emerge in both the ICT and agro-processing sectors, as industries adopt new technologies and expand production. As a result, continuously updating existing curriculums or development of new curriculums for new trades has become essential.

In response, NSDA and partner organisations have begun developing and validating curricula for emerging roles. One such partner is Swisscontact's Building Youth Employment Through Skills (BYETS) programme, which is working to fill gaps in both ICT and agro-processing training.

BYETS has been working closely with seven large-scale local manufacturers in the food industry to strengthen the compliance-related knowledge and skills of their workers. As these companies are already exporting to international markets and are keen to expand further, ensuring that their workforce is well-versed in global compliance standards is not just beneficial—it is essential. In the food industry, compliance with international standards is critical, as failure to meet these requirements can restrict access to global markets and limit business growth.

To address this need, the BYETS project introduced work-based training directly at the factory level, helping workers gain practical knowledge on maintaining international compliance standards. However, during implementation, it became clear that standardizing this training could deliver even greater

value to both the industry and its workforce.

To respond to this gap, BYETS collaborated with the NSDA and the Agro Food Industry Skills Council (AFISC) to develop a CS titled "Production Supervisor for the Food Industry." This CS is designed to support the development of a more skilled supervisory workforce—capable of managing production processes while ensuring adherence to global compliance requirements. The CS has already been approved by NSDA and is now publicly available for any training facility to adopt.

Moreover, BYETS is actively encouraging manufacturers to register as NSDA-approved training providers. This would allow companies to deliver in-house training using the new CS, certify their employees at their own convenience, and significantly reduce training costs. Most importantly, it will enhance their readiness to meet international export standards—making their businesses more competitive and sustainable in the global market.



**Modernising ICT training**

In the ICT sector, training remains popular but uneven. While the number of programmes has grown, many are based on outdated content and fail to reflect current industry needs. Most courses focus on a few saturated trades, leaving other high-demand areas underserved.

BYETS began its work in the ICT sector by offering training in widely recognized trades such as digital marketing, graphic design, and web development. However, early field experience revealed a significant gap: while many development programs continue to focus on these common trades, there is a growing demand for niche ICT skills that are highly valued in today's job market. One such trade is Software Quality Assurance (SQA)—a critical function in the software development lifecycle that ensures the quality and reliability of digital products.

Recognizing this opportunity, the BYETS project, in collaboration with private sector partners, initiated a training program in SQA. However, the team quickly discovered that no national Competency Standard (CS) existed for this trade, making it difficult to offer structured, certifiable training.

To address this challenge, BYETS partnered with the ICT Industry Skills Council (ISC) and

jointly worked to develop a formal Competency Standard for SQA. By doing so, the project not only filled a key policy and operational gap but also paved the way for standardized training delivery. This development now enables the training to be aligned with NSDA certification, allowing learners to gain nationally recognized qualifications in a high-demand ICT trade.

**Potential benefits and broader impacts**

One feature of the NSDA framework is that once a curriculum is approved, it is treated as a public asset—available for use by any Registered Training Organisation. This model can reduce the cost and administrative burden on smaller institutions, who would otherwise need to develop their own materials from scratch. It also opens the door to greater collaboration across institutions and industries.

Certification under the NSDA framework is also intended to enhance the employability of trainees, both domestically

and internationally. Additional employment opportunities may also arise through the training system itself. As more training institutions seek registration and alignment with NSDA standards, there will be demand for assessors and trainers accredited under the national framework.

**Implementation and next steps**

New trades are constantly emerging in the ICT and Agro-processing sectors to meet the growing demands of niche markets and innovative products and services introduced by the industry. To keep up with these rapidly evolving sectors, it is essential that we act swiftly to update our regulatory frameworks—particularly in areas like certification processes and competency standards. Without timely reforms, our youth will remain unprepared to meet the skill requirements of the global market, limiting their employability and competitiveness.

With Bangladesh expecting to add millions more workers to its labour force over the next decade, ensuring the consistency and quality of skills training will remain a central concern for policymakers and educators alike.

**The BYETS project is funded by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and implemented by Swisscontact.**

## JOBS SPOTLIGHT

**Marico Bangladesh Ltd.**

Assistant Manager, Operations

Deadline: N/A

Eligibility:

• BSc in Electrical Engineering with prior experience in manufacturing, production/maintenance.

Minimum experience: 4-5 years



**HSBC**

Client Relationship Support Associate, Corporate & Institutional Banking

Deadline: May 21

Eligibility:

• Bachelor's degree from a public/private university with prior experience in banking operations, particularly in corporate and institutional banking, credit or risk.

Minimum experience: N/A



**Social Marketing Company (SMC)**

Program Officer, Field Operation

Deadline: May 24

Eligibility:

• Graduation/Master's degree in any discipline.

Minimum experience: 1 year



**Danish Refugee Council (DRC)**

Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning (MEAL) Officer

Deadline: May 21

Eligibility:

• Bachelor's/Master's degree in Social Sciences, Statistics, Economics, Public Administration, Development studies, or relevant work experience.

Minimum experience: 3 years



**FOR MORE DETAILS AND THE APPLICATION LINKS, SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW.**



**University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh**



Director, Center for Sustainable Development  
Deadline: May 24

Eligibility: Ph.D. in Environmental Science, Sustainability Studies, Geography, Anthropology, Sociology, Development Studies, or related field from a reputed international university.

Minimum Experience: 8 years