

Domain Naming Guidelines for Ethiopian Government Websites (.gov.et)

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1 Background

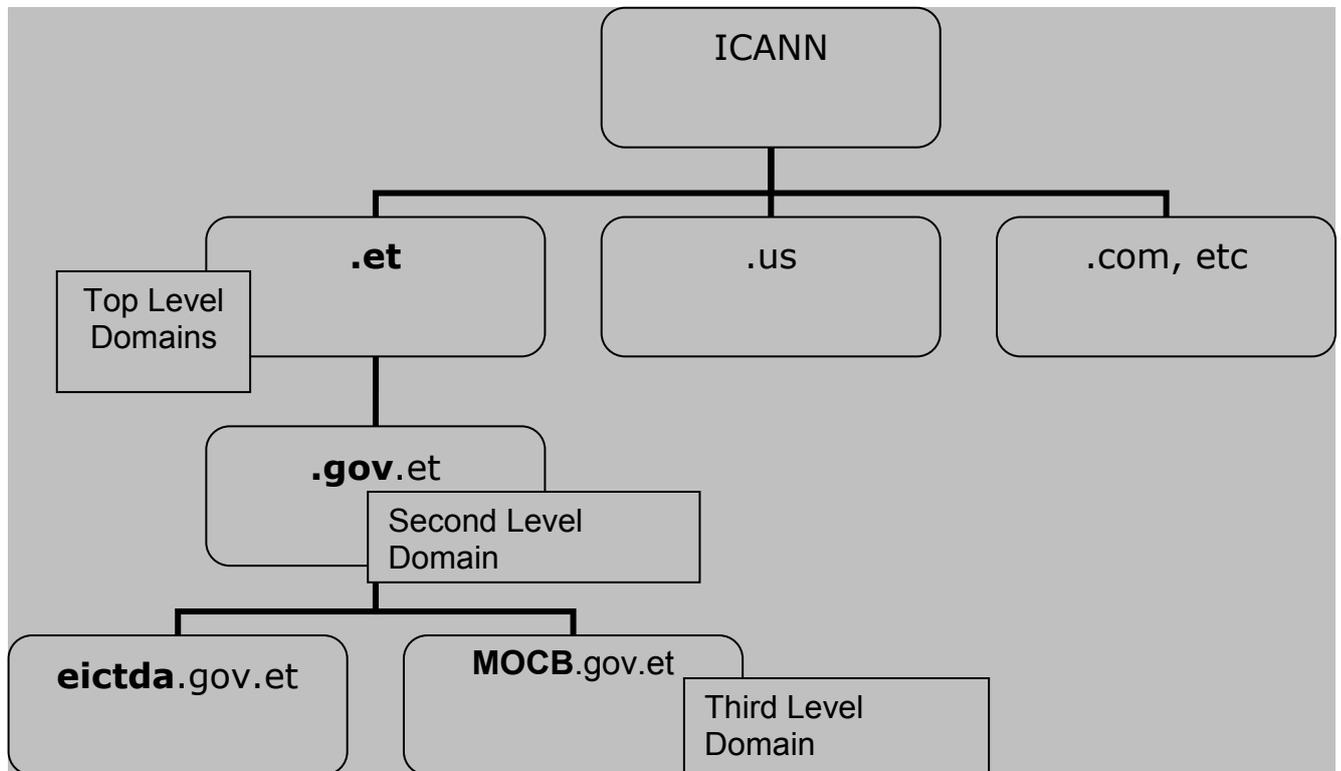
1.1 What is a Domain Name?

A domain name is the user-friendly form of an Internet address. They are commonly used to find websites, for example, <http://www.eictda.gov.et> is used to find the Agency's website. A domain name also forms the basis of other methods or applications on the Internet, for example, email addresses (name@eictda.gov.et), and for file transfer – ftp addresses (ftp.eictda.gov.et).

1.2 The Domain Name System

The Domain Name System (DNS) comes from the early days of the Internet when it was a small network for defence and academic research purposes. The DNS system that we use today was introduced in 1984. The system is essentially a global addressing system. It is the way that domain names are distributed, located and translated into Internet Protocol (IP) addresses and vice versa; a process known as 'resolution'. A domain name is a unique alias for an IP address (a number for example, IP 212.24.85.85), which is an actual physical point on the Internet.

The DNS forms a hierarchy with Top Level Domains (TLDs), Second Level Domains (SLDs), Third Level Domains (3LDs) and so forth. The Top Level Domains (TLDs) are administered internationally by the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) which is also the overall body for providing the Uniform Domain Resolution Policy.



1.3 Administrative bodies

The Top Level Domain names are divided into various types, for example:

- the generic top-level domains (gTLDs) such as

.com

.net

.org

.info

- and the country-code top-level domains (ccTLDs), such as

.et

.cn

.nl

.de

ICANN does not act as the Registry for domain name. Each of these Top Level Domains has its approved Registry that manages the administration and registration formalities for the domain according to published regional or national policies (.et not specifically given to any institution).

1.3.1 Country Code Top Level Domain Names (ccTLDs)

There are over 250 Top Level Domain names organised on a country-by-country basis and based upon ISO 3166-1. For example:

.et	(Ethiopia)	.ca	(Canada)
.de	(Germany)	.cn	(China)

Some countries allow anyone to register a domain name in that country; others require a local connection, or if there is no such connection, that the domain name matches trademark registration within that country.

The design of the naming structure under a country code rests with the country manager (Registry). Some ccTLDs are only available with a second level domain (SLD) attached.

For example, we are more familiar with our domain names divided into three levels

top-level (ccTLD)	--	.et
second-level (SLD)	--	.gov.et
third-level (3rdLD)	--	eictda.gov.et

1.3.2 Registration

This is usually on a 'first come, first served' basis. This has led to problems such as 'cyber squatting'. However, in an attempt to reduce this a given period during which trademark and other rights owners are allowed some priority to register their names will be introduced.

Registration of a domain name does not automatically mean ownership of it forever. Registrations are usually for a fixed period which has to be renewed. Initial periods are usually 10 years for gTLDs and 2 years for ccTLDs.

Risk management – public organisations wishing to maximise a web presence in relation to their name and/or their brands need to think about registration as soon as opportunities arise, and to plan defensive registrations to ward off similar domain names falling into the hands of others.

2 The .gov.et domain rules

2.1 Introduction

This guide sets out the national, that is, Ethiopian wide, rules and principles for registering and managing a .gov.et domain name. These rules are also known as the '*Eligibility Guidelines*'.

Follow the steps:

- Determine if you qualify to register and manage a .gov.et domain name.
- Review the domain naming conventions and ensure that your proposed name complies.
- See section **3 how do you apply for a .gov.et name?** for a list of the information required to successfully apply for a registration.
- Be aware of the full Terms and Conditions that apply to the use of a .gov.et name.

These guidelines apply to all new requests for registration of .gov.et names. Some domain names were registered before these current rules were published. Such names should be regarded as exceptional, and not as setting a precedent.

Domain names are not automatically issued and not on a first come first served basis.

If you have any questions about these rules or specific candidate names direct them to ndc@eictda.gov.et. Applications for registration **must not** be sent to this email address – see section **3 how to apply for a .gov.et name?**

2.1.1 Background to .gov.et

The highest sub-domain underneath .et is called a second-level domain (SLD). .gov.et is such a second level domain. The EICTDA is responsible for the policy governing the .gov.et domain and for managing these rules. A name registered within the .gov.et, for example, *eictda.gov.et* is known as a third-level domain.

2.2 Your eligibility for a .gov.et name

To preserve the integrity of the .gov.et namespace, the registration/ownership of .gov.et names is limited to:

- Ethiopian government and devolved administration departments and agencies,
- executive and advisory non-departmental public bodies and appropriate projects, and
- local and regional government bodies (including properly constituted town).

The following are not eligible for a .gov.et domain:

- individuals;
- associations representing public sector staff;
- charitable, voluntary and privately owned organisations;
- private companies (limited by shares or guarantee), private unlimited companies and public liability companies;
- public, privately owned or charitable organisations *undertaking work or programmes within the public sector*;
- internet management and network related companies, including ISPs and hosting companies;
- when a public sector organisation, with a .gov.et domain name, undergoes a change of status that ordinarily would make it ineligible, for example, moving into the charity, voluntary, limited company or commercial sectors;
- international organisations
- Others may be identified during registration

2.3 Using fourth-level domains (also known as sub-domains)

Departmental, agency, regional and local agencies, departments, branches, services, initiatives, projects, should generally be treated as a sub-domain (fourth-level) of their parent or sponsoring body, for example:

[fourth-level] ***Network.EICTDA.gov.et***

[third-level] ***EICTDA.gov.et***

[Second-level] ***.gov.et***

[top-level] ***.et***

Fourth-level sub-domains enable you to develop a unique and additional website, if necessary within its own demilitarised zone, but are established by your Internet Service Provider and do not have to be registered by EICTDA.

2.4 Use of unapproved names

You must not use a .gov.et domain name on promotional material, printed material or other media until it has been correctly applied for and formal approval given by the .gov.et Domain Naming and Approvals body, the EICTDA.

The EICTDA will not be responsible for any costs incurred by breaching this rule. Failure to secure approval prior to printing or communication errors is **not** a ground for appeal if the name is rejected.

If a typographic error is made on promotional material the use of a temporary domain name may be approved for use until the error is corrected.

3 How to apply for a .gov.et name?

Your application for a domain name **must** be submitted through an approved Internet Service Provider (ISP), which is the ETC, or other ISPs, who will act as your registration agent using the appropriate template (*see Appendix B for the template*).

Accuracy is important – you need to give your ISP sufficient information – applications may be rejected if the applicant has supplied misleading or inadequate information.

- Entries in the 'to represent' field **must** reflect the organisation or project that the requested name will represent and not the domain owner or sponsoring organisation or project if this is different. This should be included in the 'domain owner' field.
- Entries for **Administrator** – must be name/address of the person or contact point designated to receive communications from the EICTDA's Registrar related to the administration of the domain name. This person can be with the ISP or with the proposed domain name owner.
- Entries for **Technical contact** – must be name/address of the person or

contact point designated to handle technical issues associated with the domain name.

3.1 Your application must describe your organisation

If the information requested in a, b and c below is not provided the application will automatically be rejected.

a. To be considered for an Ethiopian government domain name you *must* clearly describe how the status of your organisation (as domain owner) and the purpose of the domain name you are applying for.

Include:

- the status of your organisation (for example, central government, regional government, executive agency, town council);
- the role and objective of your organisation;
- the status of your staff (for example, civil servants, employees)
- to whom your organisation is accountable (for example, Ministry of Capacity Building).

b. **Purpose of the domain name** -- you *must* outline the primary purpose and planned content of your proposed domain name, for example, for:

- an information website
- a transactional website
- a discussion group website
- an educational website, eg, aimed at children/schools
- a redirect page, or a name being used for 'defensive' or 'typosquatting' and being redirect to; you must included the address to which the redirect is going

- for email purposes only.
- c. **Who is the audience for your website?** You *must* identify to us what is seen as your primary audience eg, educationalist, pensioners, general public, tax payers, etc
- d. **Using abbreviations within your application.** Not everyone on the At the EICTDA may know what your abbreviations stand for. Spell them out when you first use them within your application.
- e. The EICTDA reserves the right to check the details you provide and to contact named individuals about any individual application.

3.2 Appealing against rejection of your application

If your application is *rejected* it will be with advice explaining why the EICTDA has taken this decision.

You have the right to appeal against the decision. Your appeal should include new information on why you feel you should have the name you originally requested. Simply repeating your original application is inadequate.

Failure to secure an approved domain name prior to, for example, printing publicity and similar material, is **not** a ground for an appeal (see section 2.4 Use of unapproved names).

Applications will be rejected if inadequate information is supplied. In these cases an appropriate *resubmission* is required *not an appeal*.

3.3 How to cancel your .gov.et name

gov.et registrations may be cancelled by surrendering the Domain Name. An email requesting cancellation of the DNS entry should be sent by the ISP currently hosting the domain name. A confirmatory fax or letter, on headed notepaper, is also required from the name owner, confirming the fact of the cancellation.

Upon receipt of these documents, the EICTDA will cancel the Domain Name and remove its entry from the DNS Server. Both the name owner and the ISP will be advised once all actions are complete. Records of cancellation notification are kept for a period of two years.

4. The conditions of use for a .gov.et name

There are conditions and conventions attached to the .gov.et domain and the following paragraphs are intended to assist you in choosing a name and the conditions attached to the use of that name.

- a. The applications (Web, email, etc) using a .gov.et domain name must comply with current Ethiopian legislation. Legislation includes Copyright, Data Protection. Abuse of use will result in the name being withdrawn.
- b. The acceptance of the name is conditional on that name being used specifically and exclusively for the organisation on whose behalf it is registered. The EICTDA expects that the use of an approved domain name on a web server will lead directly to the home page for that organisation and not to that of its ISP/hosting service or any other agent, ie, a page on a non-public sector domain. Abuse of this principle will result in the name being withdrawn. See **Appendix A**. Code of Practice for withdrawal of a .gov.et name.
- c. Having a .gov.et domain name means you (the Registrant) have exclusive

right to its use. Your organisation does not own the domain name outright, periodical renewals have to be undertaken to retain the right to use it.

- d. If after registration the original status of your organisation or project changes to, for example, charity, voluntary or commercial status, then your eligibility for a .gov.et address ceases. You must inform us at ***ndc@eictda.gov.et*** and negotiate a timescale for termination of the name.
- e. A registration fee is levied on your Internet Service Provider. This covers a period of two years, after which a renewal fee is payable for each subsequent two year period.
- f. Registering a domain name does not mean that it is automatically a trademark.
- g. When your website goes live you must inform the EICTDA directly by email to ***ndc@eictda.gov.et*** confirming
 - a. the .gov.et URL of your home page,
 - b. the date that it went live as a public website, and
- h. It is recommended the managers of individual .gov.et domain names establish and maintain a generic website team email address, for example:

webmaster@****.gov.et or where appropriate

4.1 Withdrawal of a .gov.et name

The following summarises conditions that may result in withdrawal of a .gov.et domain name. See **Appendix A**. Code of Practice for withdrawal of a .gov.et name.

- a. Non-conformance with the principle and practice of the rules and conditions.
- b. Persistent failure to maintain an accessible and functional website. For example, obsolete and de-commissioned domains – where there is persistent delivery of, for example, a code 404 page or a not found during the DNS lookup.
- c. Failure to renew the name.
- d. Change of status of the organisation or project that the domain name represents or change of status of the domain name owner. If you inform us at ndc@eictda.gov.et a suitable timescale for withdrawal can be negotiated.

4.2 Choosing a .gov.et name

Three and four letter abbreviations or acronyms will generally be considered **only** if:

- the domain name owner is a central Department of State (for example MoFA); or
- the domain name owner is a central government body such that it is generally known by that abbreviation within the public sector, and to the wider public (MOFED, MOH, MOCB); or
- it can be shown that there is no reasonable and meaningful alternative;
- local authority bodies should avoid using initials, wherever possible, as these are generally reserved for central government.

The EICTDA will be the final arbiter of what is considered to be an acceptable three and four letter abbreviations or acronyms.

Appendix A :Withdrawal of .gov.et name, code of practice

The following is EICTDA's code of practice on the withdrawal of and right to use a previously approved .gov.et domain name

- **Renewal not confirmed:**

We assume that all .gov.et domain owners will wish to renew. Therefore we restrict the effort we put into chasing an ISP for domain name renewal before using our right to terminate it. We will attempt to obtain confirmation of renewal twice over a 90 day period before withdrawal of the DNS entry.

- **Charges not paid:**

ETC agrees to accept the responsibility to pay its invoices in a timely manner. When registration/modification/renewal charges are not paid within 60 days of the date of the invoice we reserve the right to suspend the DNS entry and within another 30 days withdraw the DNS entry.

Where ETC has indicated that it is not willing to accept responsibility for the renewal payment then within 60 days we will suspend the DNS and take reasonable steps to contact the named domain owner for instructions on a 'way forward'. If this is also unsuccessful then within another 30 days we will withdraw the DNS entry.

- **Decommissioned or faulty website:**

The minimum number of times and period over which we should attempt checking a domain name

- (a) for which we have received public complaints about its accessibility or the number of broken links,

- (b) that consistently appears to be decommissioned and/or
- (c) delivers nothing to the user, for example, a 404 page, 10 times over a 90 day period, then the DNS will be withdrawn.

- **Ineligible organisation**

The period of time that a .gov.et domain name may continue to be used by any organisation or project after undergoing a change of status that makes that organisation or project ineligible for a government domain name should be negotiated with the EICTDA, around 90 days as a **redirect** to their new domain name before the DNS is withdrawn, should be seen as an average.

Definitions:

1. **Suspension** is taken to mean that the name will be switched off but after appropriate action or payment the domain name can be re-instated (re-delegated).
2. **Withdrawn** is taken to mean that the DNS has been removed. To have it restored the registrant has to make a new application that will be subject to the rules and charges current at the time of the new application.

APPENDIX B: Template for Requesting a New Domain Name under gov.et

- 1. Requested name:** [domain name requested]
- 2. To represent:** [the project, initiative or organization for which the domain is being registered]
- 3. Domain owner:** [the name of the proposed domain owner organization]
- 4. Description:** [Status of the organization]
[Role and objective of the organization]
[The status of staff within the organization]
[The source of funding for the organization]
[To whom the organization is accountable]
[Purpose of domain name]
- 5. Administrator:** [Name of the admin contact]
 - 5.1.address:** [full postal address of contact]
 - 5.2 phone:** [telephone number of contact]
 - 5.3 fax-no:** [fax number of contact]
 - 5.4 e-mail:** [e-mail address of contact]
- 6. Technical contact:** [Name of the technical contact]
 - 6.1 address:** [full postal address of contact]
 - 6.2 phone:** [telephone number of contact]
 - 6.3 fax-no:** [fax number of contact]
 - 6.4 e-mail:** [e-mail address of contact]
- 7. Name server name & IP address:** [name and corresponding IP address of primary name server]
- 8. Name server name & IP address:** [name and corresponding IP address of secondary name server]