Findings From Select Agencies:
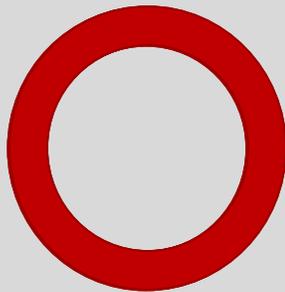# LIBERIA

The Carter Center's
Access to Information Legislation
Implementation Assessment Tool

IAT Implementation Assessment Tool

MAKING ALL VOICES COUNT
A GRAND CHALLENGE FOR DEVELOPMENT

THE CARTER CENTER

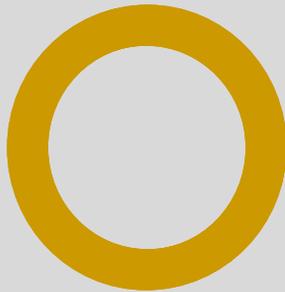# Findings From Select Agencies: Liberia

The Carter Center's Access to Information Legislation Implementation Assessment Tool

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Contents

Acknowledgments

The application of the Carter Center's access to information legislation Implementation Assessment Tool (IAT) would not have been possible without the efforts of many talented and dedicated individuals. Laura Neuman, director of the Carter Center's Global Access to Information Program, with years of experience working in the field of access to information and good governance, identified the need to more closely focus attention and efforts on the state of implementation. Ms. Neuman was responsible for developing the IAT methodology and indicators, benefiting from the advice and encouragement of the world's premier experts on the right of access to information, reviewing the indicators and findings for accuracy and coherence, and drafting/editing this report.

The research team in Liberia was led by our esteemed colleague, Alphonsus Zeon, senior project coordinator for the Carter Center's Global Access to Information Program in Liberia. Mr. Zeon, a well-known expert on freedom of information in Liberia, conducted the entirety of the interviews and input all of the indicators into the Indaba platform. Former Deputy Minister of Information, Culture, and Tourism and leading access to information practitioner Attorney Norris Tweah successfully engaged as the blind-peer reviewer. The knowledge and expertise of the researcher and reviewer, combined with their commitment and passion, helped to assure the reliability and completeness of the IAT findings.

The Carter Center is privileged to have incredibly committed staff who worked to finalize the IAT and assure its successful application in Liberia. Program assistant Elizabeth McGlamry provided the layout for the report and assisted with administrative and logistical aspects, particularly those related to the Indaba online platform. Moreover, we would like to thank the many interns who provided research, report-drafting, and logistical support for the IAT.

We are grateful to the Making All Voices Count consortium for funding the IAT application in Liberia, and for their institutional support as we applied the finalized indicators in Uganda, Nigeria, and Liberia. The Center also thanks the Ministry of Information for their encouragement in the application of the indicators and their ongoing commitment, even when the results were not always laudatory.

Finally, we thank the many public servants who met with the researcher and the civil society leaders who participated in the focal group reviews. Their enthusiasm for a meaningful right of access to information is inspiring. The findings of the IAT serve to demonstrate areas of progress in addition to identifying where implementation has been insufficient or is faltering. We are hopeful that these findings serve to focus efforts and resources to ensure full and effective implementation, thus advancing the ability of the Liberian people to enjoy the myriad benefits of the right of access to information.

Introduction

The right of access to information is a powerful tool in the fight against corruption and in achieving good governance and development. It serves both government and its citizens by increasing citizen confidence as governments become more transparent and accountable. It enables citizens to participate more fully in public life, understand public policies, and help determine public priorities. Citizens also can use the information to exercise their fundamental human rights and to hold their government accountable for responding to their needs and providing high-quality service delivery.

With over 100 countries with statutory legislation, more than 5 billion people around the globe are afforded some legal rights to information; however, many of these countries are failing to fully implement their access to information laws, and there remains a dearth of information about the extent and quality of legislative implementation. Furthermore, there are few evaluative tools by which to measure implementation progress. With an insufficient focus on implementation, the community of practice is failing to adequately identify and analyze the structures and procedures that produce successful transparency regimes; governments lack the necessary diagnostic information to improve their practices in order to meet citizen demands and promote greater transparency and accountability.

Since 1999, The Carter Center has been a leader on the issue of passage, implementation, enforcement, and use of access to information regimes. Over the past 16 years, we have witnessed firsthand the difficulties that governments face in fully and effectively implementing access to information laws and the negative effects of a lack of standardized measures for developing implementation plans and evaluating their efforts. To fill this gap, the Carter Center's Global Access to Information Program developed and piloted the access to information legislation Implementation Assessment Tool.

The IAT is the first diagnostic tool of its kind to assess the specific activities/inputs that the public administration has engaged—or in some cases failed to achieve—in furtherance of a well-implemented law. It is deliberately designed not to focus on the sufficiency of the legal framework, the user side of the equation, or the overall effectiveness of the access to information regime, but rather to look at the internal "plumbing" of the administration's implementation. The IAT does not serve as a comparative index across countries but rather is constructed as an input for each public agency in which it is applied. It provides a more surgical tool for civil society to monitor government's implementation practice and progress.

Beginning in 2009/2010, The Carter Center's Global Access to Information Program developed the IAT methodology, including a set of indicators and a scoring system. Over the course of almost four years, the IAT was tested in three pilot phases in 11 countries (Mexico, South Africa, Bangladesh, Chile, Indonesia, Uganda, Scotland, Jordan, Georgia, Guatemala, and the United States) and 65 agencies. These pilot phases consisted of application and review of more than 8,000 indicators. Each pilot phase concluded with a review meeting of the researchers as well as some of the blind–peer reviewers, government representatives, and access to information experts. The final piloting concluded in April 2014, and the IAT was shared with the community of practice.

Objectives and Considerations

The objectives of the access to information legislation Implementation Assessment Tool are to:

1. Establish a comprehensive set of access to information implementation benchmarks
2. Identify the extent (and in some cases quality) to which a ministry/agency has implemented its law
3. Provide a roadmap for improvements, based on the tool's findings
4. Contribute to scholarship on implementation and to the understanding of implementation successes and challenges

The IAT looks at "the boring bits,"[1] the ingredients necessary to ensure the effectiveness of implementation and the desired outcomes. The findings from the assessment provide key stakeholders the data necessary to easily identify the extent and quality of access to information implementation in each government agency. It also signals places there is a need for additional input or focus, so that the public administration may overcome challenges and positively advance their implementation efforts.

Experience has demonstrated that governments are not monolithic and that not all parts of government are as successful (or unsuccessful) as others. Thus, it is misleading to characterize a government as succeeding or failing in implementation. The IAT targets assessments to individual public administrative bodies rather than to the government as a whole. Moreover, for the IAT to meet its stated goals and be accepted and used by governments—a critical outcome as they are the primary data source and the main target audience—we have chosen not to develop the findings for an index or ranking of countries. Our methodologies were established with this philosophy in mind.

While there have been a number of important studies undertaken to review access to information
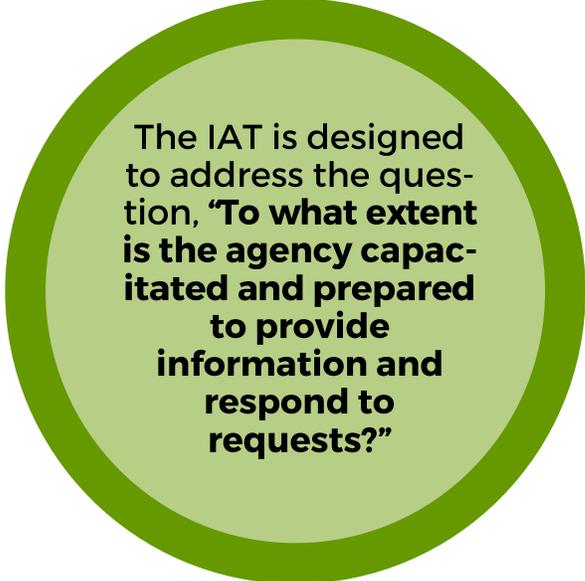
The IAT is designed to address the question, **"To what extent is the agency capacitated and prepared to provide information and respond to requests?"**

laws and to assess government compliance with its law, the focus has been on the outcome of implementation, i.e., whether people are able to receive the information requested consistent with the statutory provisions. The Carter Center's IAT focuses exclusively on the central theme of government's efforts toward implementation—the "plumbing"—providing critical data and knowledge as well as spurring additional areas for research.

Developing the IAT

The Carter Center designed and created the IAT through desk research, consultant support, and periodic peer reviews. As a first step, the Center engaged in considerable research to identify the breadth of national and subnational implementation plans and to evaluate the commonalities. Remarkably, we found very few available national or agency-specific access to information imple-

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[1] Professor Alan Doig coined this term in his paper "Getting the Boring Bits Right First" when discussing capacity building for anti-corruption agencies.

mentation plans. Additionally, we did an extensive literature review related to access to information implementation and public policy and administration; again, there were relatively few articles or studies. Based on the initial research and our experience, we developed a preliminary draft matrix of similarities and unique/innovative approaches to implementation.

Following the research phase, The Carter Center convened a group of renowned experts to consider the value and efficacy of an implementation assessment instrument and to provide input into its basic design. This first meeting considered the key issues in implementation and prospective indicators as well as the means by which to measure them. It was agreed that a major goal of the IAT was to create a tool that would be useful for governments—allowing them to assess the breadth and quality of their implementation efforts—rather than as a more punitive ranking or "hammer." The two days of robust discussion established the importance of the IAT but also highlighted a number of potential problems and risks associated with an implementation assessment. Underlying both days of discussion were the following questions:

1. How do we make the study replicable and portable across varying countries?
2. How do we ensure that the tool also assesses quality of the implementation rather than simply falling into a "check the box" exercise showing that an input/activity occurred but not demonstrating whether it was done well?

From these discussions and considerations emerged the tool's framing question: "**To what extent is the agency capacitated and prepared to provide information and respond to requests?**"

Perhaps the most challenging aspect in developing the IAT was the lack of clearly agreed-upon universal best practices for access to information legislation implementation. This absence of consensus signaled the need for an increased emphasis on vetting determinations on good practice with expert colleagues from government, civil society, and academia. We also were aware that the tool should work equally well when used in a mature system (where the law has existed for years) as well as in a country with a newly passed access to information law. This mandate forced us to verify that each indicator is valid in a variety of disperse contexts.

With the initial design of the IAT completed, The Carter Center convened a broader based group of ATI and transparency experts to peer review the first draft indicators, application methodology, and sampling (country and ministry/agency) determinations. After long discussions and considerations, the Center decided to retain the initial design to focus on administrative inputs ("the plumbing"), rather than assessing the quality of the outputs, i.e., compliance with the law/user satisfaction. We also made the decision to include internal reconsideration but not go further to include indicators related to judicial or quasi-judicial enforcement in the assessment.

Over the course of the next months, the design of the IAT was modified to allow for assessment on both the x- and y-axis, and a series of indicators was developed. Finally, to validate the defined indicators and measurements/scaling, The Carter Center again undertook an extensive analysis of existing implementation plans and practice.

Piloting the IAT

To assure the efficacy and value of the IAT, the Center decided to apply the tool in a phased approach in more than 10 countries. Pilot phase I assessed three countries, pilot phase II assessed four countries, and pilot phase III assessed an additional four countries. While the initial intent was to assess each country once, we decided to include the initial countries in the subsequent pilot phases in light of the significant modifications of the indicators following each pilot phase. Thus, in pilot phase III, we applied the revised indicators in all 11 countries.

Selection of Countries/Agencies

In preparation for selecting the pilot countries to test the IAT, The Carter Center created a list of criteria and variables. For the pilot selection, we considered the following conditions:

- Regional diversity
- Variety in length of time that the ATI law/regulation has been in effect
- Distinct legal system/framework (common law versus civil)
- Types of civil service (professionalize versus more partisan)
- Contrasting development status/income level
- Availability of social scientists/civil society leaders to undertake the study
- Existing data sets or studies related to access to information
- Political will/interest
- Divergent participation in the Open Government Partnership

The IAT was applied in seven ministries and/or agencies in each country. For uniformity, we decided to engage the same ministries/agencies in each of the countries. Criteria used in determining the specific ministries/agencies included:

- Those agencies that held information critical for fundamental human and socioeconomic rights
- Ministries and agencies that play a role in poverty reduction and in fulfillment of the Millennium Development Goals
- Ministries and agencies that are key in the overseeing or promoting the overall ATI regime
- A mix of ministries and agencies, in particular public agencies of varying size and resources

Pilot Phases

In 2011, The Carter Center completed pilot phase I of the tool in three countries—Bangladesh, Mexico, and South Africa, followed by an expert review and extensive modifications to the methodology and indicators. Pilot phase II was completed in the spring of 2013 and included application of the indicators in the original three countries as well as in Chile, Indonesia, Scotland, and Uganda. Once again, The Carter Center conducted a review meeting to refine the tool and methodology. In the fall of 2013, pilot phase III commenced and included four new countries: Georgia, Jordan, Guatemala, and the United States. The researchers in these countries applied all revised IAT indicators and were joined by the researchers from pilot phases I and II who applied all new or modified indicators in their respective countries.

Pilot Phase I

Pilot phase I included 72 indicators. During this phase, we were still considering whether we could identify universally applicable best practices.

However, during the review discussion, it became clear that this would be too prescriptive and not capture the nuances of each country context. Moreover, it would not reflect the terminology utilized by leading oversight practitioners, who use the term "good practice." The participants recommended, and we concurred, that the implementation assessment tool should serve to develop and measure "good practice" and in this way more meaningfully reflect the reality that there may be multiple good practices, depending on country circumstances and administrative dynamics. Methodological changes were made following this phase, including adding a blind–peer review, assessing a smaller, less-resourced agency, and using the Indaba platform for data collection.

Pilot Phase II

With the revisions and refinements based on the pilot phase I review, the IAT now included 75 indicators to test in pilot phase I and II countries: Chile, Indonesia, Scotland, and Uganda joined South Africa, Bangladesh, and Mexico. The local researchers tested the tool in the original six ministries as well as in the seventh smaller agency, and in this phase we engaged the Indaba platform. During the two-day review meeting following data collection, analysis, findings, and validations, the experts actively revised the indicators, removing any indicator deemed repetitive and making necessary language changes to accommodate a variety of government contexts. One of the main modifications made for pilot phase II was to include indicators that looked more specifically at implementation in practice, which was accomplished through the use of four "wild cards." We also reduced the indicators to a more manageable 65 and strengthened the indicators related to records management.

Pilot Phase III

Pilot phase III was the final testing of the indicators. For this phase, we retained the same methodology and workflow, including the blind–peer

reviewer and the focal groups. As with the other phases, Carter Center staff reviewed each finding, submitted questions to both the researchers and the blind-peer reviewers, and assured the quality and consistency of each finding. At the conclusion of pilot phase III, we held the final expert review to make any necessary, last adjustments to the indicators and presented the IAT to the community of practice.

Overall, during the three phases of piloting, the IAT had been applied in six to seven agencies in eleven countries, with many of the countries assessed more than once, resulting in the review of over 8,000 individual indicators.

For a more comprehensive explanation of the IAT methodology and piloting, please see:

http://www.carter center.org/ peace/ati/IAT/ index.html

Methodology

The IAT is intended to assess the specific activities/inputs that the public administration has engaged in furtherance of a well-implemented access to information regime. A series of indicators is used to assess the extent to which the agency is capacitated and prepared to provide information and respond to requests, proactively disclose information, and assure quality records management.

The tool is deliberately designed not to focus on the sufficiency of the legal framework, the user side of the equation, or the overall effectiveness of the access to information regime. Because the IAT is not designed to measure outputs/compliance, its methodology does not include the systematic filling of requests for information.

Moreover, the IAT is constructed as an "open instrument," carried out with the collaboration of public authorities. Its success does not depend on the level of confidentiality held during its application. On the contrary, it is crucial for governments to welcome the tool's application, as gathering many of the key data points requires access to documents and information in the ministries'/agencies' possession.

The Architecture

The IAT is designed as a matrix, with indicators related to government functions/responsibilities on the x-axis and baskets of components/elements on the y-axis. Regardless of the type of information an agency possesses, there are universal components that allow public officials to fulfill their functions of man aging information properly, handling requests for information adequately, and making information available to the public efficiently. These functions and elements were identified and serve as the framework for the IAT.

Functions

All access to information regimes rely on the public agencies' capacity to fulfill three main functions: 1) receiving and responding to requests, 2) automatically publishing certain information, and 3) managing records. There are a number of initiatives/efforts specific to these functions, while others apply to more than one of the functions. For those initiatives/efforts that apply more broadly—for example, the designation of a responsible officer or the agency's strategic plan—we have created the category "fundamental functions."

Components

In order to successfully implement an access to information law, public agencies need a number of verifiable components. These components are assessed by a set of indicators that can be observed through different data points or sources of information. The components are the bone and marrow of access to information implementation, and include leadership, rules, procedures, resources, and monitoring.

Key Elements

The key elements are those actions that have been identified as necessary for supporting successful implementation, and each element is accompanied by an indicator. When properly combined, these elements provide government with the capacity to successfully perform all access to information duties and obligations. The elements that comprise the assessment, among others, include whether the agency has established, reviewed, and revised access to information policies and guidelines; the issuance of plans/instructions for the implementation and institutionalization of the
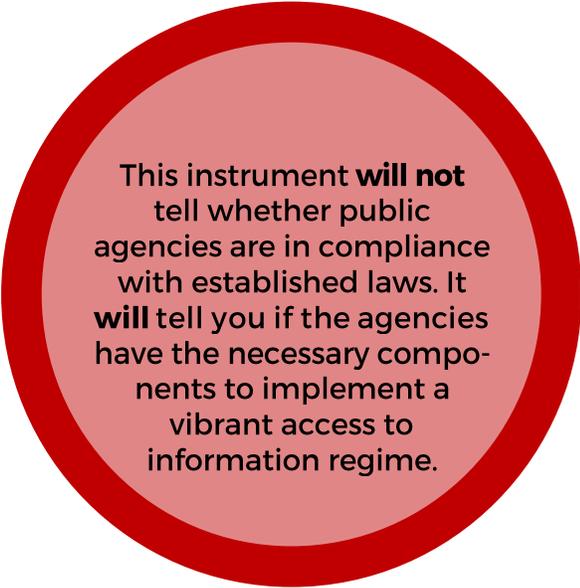
This instrument **will not** tell whether public agencies are in compliance with established laws. It **will** tell you if the agencies have the necessary components to implement a vibrant access to information regime.

access to information regime; the identification of responsible officers for overseeing the application of the law; sufficient training and capacity-building; determination of necessary financial resources; infrastructure; and awareness-raising within the agency and for the public.

Assessment Results and Output

The IAT indicators engage both quantitative and qualitative assessments of the comprehensiveness and quality of a ministries'/agencies' access to information implementation. The indicators are scored on a "stoplight method," with a scale that includes green, yellow, red, and black and white stripes (for those rare cases in which the indicator will not apply). In using the stoplight method, we easily display the extent and quality of implementation while dissuading the potential for indexing/ranking countries. The stoplight colors signify the following:

- **Green**: The administration has done well and has met the defined good practice.
- **Yellow**: There has been some activity/ engagement, but the administration does not meet the defined good practice.

- **Red**: The administration has either not engaged or done very little to advance on this part of its implementation.
- **Black and white stripes**: The indicator is not applicable.

Data are acquired through both desk research and interviews and then input into Indaba, an online software platform that allows The Carter Center to manage the researchers and data and review the inputs. The data is then reviewed by a blind-peer reviewer and, subsequently, the preliminary findings are validated through focal group review. In addition to quantitative data, we include a narrative that provides supplementary qualitative information and accompanying explanations for the measurements.

Types of Indicators

The IAT utilizes two types of indicators: 1) self-reporting indicators that are addressed through an interview (questionnaire) with the head of the agency/ministry, general director, public officials tasked to oversee ATI functions and duties, or other relevant public officers;[2] and 2) document-based indicators that require desk research or on-site verification of different documents and/or sources of information. While we tried to limit the number of questions that relied solely on interviews, as they have the greatest potential for bias, in practice the researchers often used interviews (sometimes coupled with secondary data) as their primary data source.

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[2] As these indicators have the greatest potential for bias, we have limited their use in the IAT, and they will rarely serve as the preferred data point.

Country Context[3]

Since 2003, when warring parties signed the Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement to end the armed conflict in the country, Liberia has made substantial progress toward sustaining the peace, reconciling its people, and rebuilding governance and infrastructure. Liberians have had the opportunity to vote in two democratic elections in which they made history by electing Africa's first female head of state. The upcoming election in 2017 will see Liberia make the first peaceful transition from one administration to another and without the significant support from the United Nations Mission in Liberia that they previously enjoyed. Liberia has been on more than a decades-long path of rebuilding, demonstrated by the first Poverty Reduction Strategy and Agenda for Transformation's commitments to break from the past of entrenched marginalization of ordinary people in the governance of the country, deep-seated corruption, and centralization of power and resources. In these guiding documents and the subsequent county development plans, emphasis has been placed on greater government accountability and more meaningful voice for its citizens.

The Liberian Constitution unequivocally guarantees access to information and the protection of freedom of speech and the press. The breadth and language of the various constitutional provisions in respect of access to information clearly indicate substantial fundamental guarantees for citizens' right to access and use of information for whatever lawful means. The scope of the constitutional provisions evidences a clear intent to link access to information to the guarantee of fundamental and general human rights and to further other objectives of good, accountable and transparent governance. Yet, Liberia's Freedom of Information law traversed a rough road to passage.

Initially, advocacy for the Freedom of Information law began as part of reforming the country's moribund media laws. With the support of the Partnership for Media and Conflict Prevention in West Africa, Liberian journalists in 2008 partnered with a number of civil society groups to draft the freedom of information law with two other bills, the Broadcast Regulatory Commission and the Public Broadcaster bills to transform the state radio. But the process to push the bills through legislature stalled, demonstrating lawmakers' antipathy to the media. In an effort to advance the Freedom of Information bill, civil society advocates, with support from The Carter Center, delinked that draft from the media bill and focused on highlighting the value of information for all people rather than merely a benefit for the media. With support from the Ministry of Information, there was renewed advocacy for the Freedom of Information bill leading to public hearings by the House and Senate committees on Information and Broadcasting, reports to the full plenary of the legislature, and the law's ultimate passage and signature by President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf on Sept. 16, 2010.

Liberia's Freedom of Information Act represents progressive legislation that guarantees a system of openness and transparency as provided for in the country's constitution. The law applies to all public entities, including the executive, legislative and judicial, private entities funded by government, and private entities that offer public services. Its exemptions are limited to include just six main areas: national security, foreign relations, ongoing criminal investigation, trade secrets, personal information, and privileged communications when disclosure of the information will cause or is likely to cause injury or substantial harm to the interest protected by one of the exempt areas and that the harm outweighs the

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[3] The country context was largely drawn from the narrative drafted by researcher Alphonsus Zeon.

public interest in disclosure. In other words, even though the law provides exemptions in relation to these areas, the agency must demonstrate that release of the information would cause a substantial harm and that the harm outweighs the public interest in knowing the information. Importantly, the Liberian Freedom of Information law provides for an information commission that oversees enforcement and compliance, builds institutional capacity, and raises public awareness of the right to information. The commission is headed by one commissioner with a secretariat. The commission has quasi-judicial authority, like many other administrative agencies, and all appeals from its decisions lie with the civil law court. There are sanctions of fines from LD$500 to LD$10,000 and suspension, dismissal, and imprisonment for public officials who willfully refuse to provide information or destroy records.

While the omnibus Freedom of Information law allows for only limited exemptions from the duty to disclose, statutory agencies of wide-ranging powers (with specific, enabling legislation and other more subject-focused laws or regulations) increasingly are having a crippling effect on access to information. For example, the tax code governs general issues of taxation in Liberia, providing rules and penalties in the application of the country's tax collection process. The tax code is administered by the Ministry of Finance, and while there is a provision for public disclosure through annual publication, it also contains restrictive clauses forbidding disclosure of information. This conflict of laws has yet to be litigated, and until there is greater clarity, statutory constructs such as the National Security Agency and the National Bureau of Investigation may continue to follow their enabling legislation—complete with untold access to information limitations.

The implementation of the Freedom of Information law continues to be characterized by challenges of limited resources, awareness, and capacity. To date, 41 information officers have been appointed; yet they lack a budget of their own to run their offices and perform their duties. Many of them have dedicated offices, but few have the necessary equipment to work, including internet, paper for copying, and ink. Though information officers are meant to the bridge between requesters and public agencies, most lack capacity to effectively serve in this role and have not established the processes mandated by law, such as acknowledging receipt of requests for information. The vast majority, if not all, of the agencies still have failed to establish an internal review panel that will hear appeals when an information officer denies a request for information. Many state agencies also have not submitted annual reports on how they have implemented the Freedom of Information law. Worse still is the lack of a records management system across agencies of government. Delayed responses or mute denials are not always out of bad faith but, in large part, because the information officers simply cannot find the requested information. However, despite the challenges of limited resources, awareness, and capacity, public agencies are providing more information to citizens, particularly through increases in proactive disclosure.

It is difficult to pinpoint the level of awareness of the access to information law nationally, but even in light of tremendous civil society efforts to raise awareness of the Freedom of Information law, there apparently remains a low level of understanding. With poor tracking of requests by public agencies, failure to submit annual reports, and only the beginning of a civil society effort to track and monitor compliance, there are no definitive statistics related to the number of Freedom of Information requests made each year. Nevertheless, there have been some important requests for and disclosure of information, such as infrastructure construction, recruiting practices for public service jobs, and the publication of information on the use of the county social and development funds. For the first time, citizens

were able to access information on the projects the county was undertaking, the costs, contract details, and the names of the contractors and the locations of the projects.

Unfortunately, remnants of the historically closed society remain. In a small survey of 20 requesters conducted in 2013, 30 percent said they felt threatened when they made a request for information, 10 percent said the act of making a request was "very difficult," and 25 percent said that the response rate to requests was too slow.

Enforcement of Liberia's Freedom of Information law is overseen by the country's independent Information Commission with the power to receive, hear, and decide all complaints as well as mediate disputes arising under the act. The commission may compel witnesses and evidence for the purpose of deciding an appeal and can order the agency to release information. The Information Commission was established in 2012, when Bedor Wla Freeman, independent Information Commissioner councilor, received his first freedom of information complaint in a garage. Since, there have been a total of 15 appeals, many of which are still awaiting a hearing. Deciding the rest of the cases pending on the appeal docket represents a challenge for the commission, as too often the government agency fails to appear or the defending party has taken an appeal to the circuit court, thus holding up the case indefinitely. For example, in one of three cases now before the court, the Center for Media Studies and Peace Building filed an appeal against the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission for government officials' asset declaration forms. The Information Commission ruled in favor of the civil society group, and the Anti-Corruption Commission appealed. The appeal has remained pending in the civil law court since 2013.

The case of Liberia demonstrates that a strong Freedom of Information law often is insufficient for reaching the ideals of transparency and a free flow of information. While poor implementation, lack of awareness and demand, and insufficient legal safeguards have stunted the positive impact of the right of access to information, there are important success stories to encourage continued efforts to effectively implement and inspire increased use of the law.

Findings for Liberia

Aggregated Findings by Indicator

Table 1. Key for Findings

Key:	
color	significance:
■	Green: administration has done well and has met the defined good practice
■	Yellow: there has been some activity/engagement, but does not meet the defined good practice
■	Red: administration has either not engaged or done very little to advance on this part of its implementation
▨	Black and white stripes: indicator is not applicable (n/a) in this agency

Table 2. Liberia Findings

Fundamental Functions: Leadership

#	Indicator question:	Liberia MICAT		Liberia CNDRA		Liberia MOE		Liberia MGCSP		Liberia MIA		Liberia LNP	
1	Does the agency's strategic plan incorporate ATI, such as by including specific mention of access to information and/or principles of openness and transparency?	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B
2	How often does an agency official with authority over policy participate in meetings with public officials responsible for ATI activities?	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: GREEN	A

#	Indicator question:	Liberia MICAT		Liberia CNDRA		Liberia MOE		Liberia MGCSP		Liberia MIA		Liberia LNP	
Fundamental Functions: Rules													
3	Has the agency created or adopted specific guidelines on ATI?	Finding: RED	B	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B
4	How often are ATI guidelines reviewed by an agency official with authority over policy?	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C
5	How often are ATI guidelines revised by an agency official with authority over policy?	Finding: N/A	C	Finding: N/A		Finding: N/A	C	Finding: N/A	C	Finding: N/A	C	Finding: RED	B
6	Does the agency make all guidelines available for reference?	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C
7	Does the agency have a document(s) that establishes instructions for ATI implementation and/or operation?	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B
8	8. Does the document(s) detailing instructions for ATI implementation and/or operation currently reflect the agency's ATI policy?	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B
9	Has the agency internally disseminated the document(s) detailing instructions for ATI implementation and/or operation?	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C
Fundamental Functions: Procedures													
10	Does the agency's public outreach specifically include a component regarding ATI?	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: GREEN	A
11	Does the agency specifically provide information on how to make a request and to find proactively published information?	Finding: RED	B	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: GREEN	A
Fundamental Functions: Resources													
12	Has one or more public official been made responsible for ATI functions and duties?	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: GREEN	A
13	Has the name of the public official(s) appointed/tasked responsible for ATI functions and duties been made known to the public?	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: RED	B	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: GREEN	A
14	Does the public official(s) appointed/tasked responsible for ATI functions and duties have the authority needed to comply with ATI mandate?	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: GREEN	A
15	Does the public official(s) appointed/tasked responsible for ATI functions and duties have the time and staff needed to fulfill his/her ATI responsibilities?	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: YELLOW	B
16	Does the public official(s) appointed/tasked responsible for ATI functions and duties and his/her staff receive specialized training on ATI?	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: YELLOW	B
17	Are all public officials made aware of basic ATI principles?	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: YELLOW	C	Finding: YELLOW	C	Finding: RED	D	Finding: RED	D	Finding: RED	D
18	Are training materials related to ATI created and maintained for future reference by public officials?	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: YELLOW	B
19	Does the public official(s) responsible for ATI functions and duties have regular access to necessary equipment?	Finding: RED	C	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C
20	Has the agency created a space, physical or virtual, to make requests, review documents, and share proactively published information?	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: YELLOW	B
21	Does the agency specifically allocate the financial resources necessary for fulfilling its ATI functions and duties?	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B

Fundamental Functions: Monitoring

#	Indicator question:	Liberia MICAT		Liberia CNDRA		Liberia MOE		Liberia MGCSP		Liberia MIA		Liberia LNP	
22	Does the agency monitor its ATI functions and duties?	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C
23	Does the agency's internal oversight body/auditing mechanism take into account ATI functions and duties?	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B
24	Does the agency's performance review of persons appointed/tasked with ATI functions and duties take these responsibilities into account in their review?	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B

Fundamental Functions: Wildcard

#	Indicator question:	Liberia MICAT		Liberia CNDRA		Liberia MOE		Liberia MGCSP		Liberia MIA		Liberia LNP	
25	In your expert opinion, in practice does the agency effectively fulfill its fundamental functions related to access to information?	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: YELLOW	B

Receive and Respond to Requests: Rules

#	Indicator question:	Liberia MICAT		Liberia CNDRA		Liberia MOE		Liberia MGCSP		Liberia MIA		Liberia LNP	
26	Does the agency have written guidelines for receiving requests?	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: RED	C	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: RED	C
27	Does the agency have written guidelines for processing requests?	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C
28	Does the agency have written guidelines for responding (release or deny) to requests?	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C
29	Does the agency have written guidelines for internal review?	Finding: RED	C	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C

Receive and Respond to Requests: Procedures

#	Indicator question:	Liberia MICAT		Liberia CNDRA		Liberia MOE		Liberia MGCSP		Liberia MIA		Liberia LNP	
30	Does the agency have a procedure for logging and tracking requests and responses?	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C
31	Does the agency have a procedure for processing a request?	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C
32	Does the agency have a procedure for transferring requests to other agencies?	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: RED	C	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C
33	Does the agency have a procedure for issuing and serving responses?	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C

Receive and Respond to Requests: Monitoring

#	Indicator question:	Liberia MICAT		Liberia CNDRA		Liberia MOE		Liberia MGCSP		Liberia MIA		Liberia LNP	
34	Does the agency regularly capture statistics related to receiving and responding to requests?	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: YELLOW	B

Receive and Respond to Requests: Wildcard

#	Indicator question:	Liberia MICAT		Liberia CNDRA		Liberia MOE		Liberia MGCSP		Liberia MIA		Liberia LNP	
35	In your expert opinion, in practice does the agency effectively fulfill its function related to receiving and responding to requests?	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: RED	C	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: YELLOW	B
36	Does the agency have written guidelines for proactive disclosure?	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C

#	Indicator question:	Liberia MICAT		Liberia CNDRA		Liberia MOE		Liberia MGCSP		Liberia MIA		Liberia LNP	
Proactive Disclosure: Procedures														
37	Does the agency have a procedure for proactive disclosure?	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C
Proactive Disclosure: Resources														
38	Has one or more public official been appointed responsible for proactive disclosure functions and duties?	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: RED	C	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: YELLOW	B
39	Does the public official(s) responsible for proactive disclosure have the time and staff necessary to effectively fulfill his/her functions and duties?	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: RED	D	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: GREEN	A
40	Is the public official(s) responsible for proactive disclosure trained to comply with their duties?	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C
Proactive Disclosure: Monitoring														
41	Does the agency capture statistics related to proactive disclosure on an annual basis?	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B
42	Does the agency regularly monitor its proactive disclosure?	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C
Proactive Disclosure: Wildcard														
43	In your expert opinion, in practice does the agency effectively fulfill its function related to proactive disclosure?	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: YELLOW	B
Records Management: Leadership														
44	How often does an agency official with authority over policy participate in meetings with public officials responsible for records management?	Finding: RED	C	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: RED	C	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: GREEN	A
45	Has the agency created or adopted a records management policy for managing paper-based and digital information?	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B
Records Management: Rules														
46	Does the agency have written guidelines for records management, regardless of format (including digital records, maps etc.)?	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C
47	Does the agency have written guidelines for security classification of documents?	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C
48	Does the agency have a document(s) that establishes instructions/guidelines for implementation and/or operations for records management?	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B	Finding: RED	B

#	Indicator question:	Liberia MICAT		Liberia CNDRA		Liberia MOE		Liberia MGCSP		Liberia MIA		Liberia LNP	
Records Management: Procedures													
49	Does the agency have a procedure for security classification of documents?	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C
50	Does the agency have a procedure to manage its paper records?	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C
51	Does the agency have a procedure to manage its digital records?	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C
52	Does the agency have a procedure to retrieve and access paper records?	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C
53	Does the agency have a procedure to retrieve and access digital records?	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C
Records Management: Resources													
54	Has one or more public official been appointed responsible for records management?	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: GREEN	A
55	Does the public official(s) appointed/tasked responsible for records management functions and duties have the time and staff needed to fulfill his/her responsibilities?	Finding: RED	D	Finding: RED	D	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: GREEN	A
56	Does the public official(s) appointed/tasked responsible for records management and his/her staff receive specialized training on records management?	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C
57	Are all public officials made aware of basic records management procedures?	Finding: RED	D	Finding: RED	D	Finding: RED	D	Finding: RED	D	Finding: RED	D	Finding: RED	D
58	Has the agency created space and facilities for storing paper and digital records?	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: YELLOW	B	Finding: GREEN	A	Finding: RED	C
Records Management: Monitoring													
59	Does the agency regularly monitor its records management functions and duties?	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C
Records Management: Wildcard													
60	In your expert opinion, in practice does the agency effectively fulfill its function related to records management?	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: RED	C	Finding: YELLOW /RED	B/C

Ministry/Agency Summary of Findings

Table 3. Ministry of Information, Cultural Affairs, and Tourism

	Fundamental Functions	Receive and Respond to Requests	Proactive Disclosure	Records Management
Leadership (directs)	Engagement 🟢 Strategic Planning ⚫			Engagement 🔴 Policy 🔴
Rules (guide)	Guidelines 🔴🟡◍🟡 Instructions/plans 🔴🔴🔴	Guidelines for receiving/processing 🟡🟡 Guidelines for responding 🟡 Guidelines for internal review 🔴	Guidelines 🔴	Guidelines 🔴🔴 Instructions/plans 🔴
Procedures (order)	Public awareness raising 🟢🔴	Procedures for receiving/ processing 🟡🟡 Procedures for transfer/ responding 🟡🟡	Procedures for proactive disclosure 🔴	Classification 🔴 Manage Records 🔴🔴 Retrieve Records 🔴🔴
Resources (enable)	Staffing 🟢🟢🟢🟡 Training 🟢🟢🟡 Infrastructure 🔴🟢 Budget 🔴		Staffing 🟢🟡 Training 🟢	Staffing 🔴🔴 Training 🔴🔴 Infrastructure 🟡
Monitoring (adjust)	Internal oversight 🟡🟢 Performance monitoring 🟢	Capturing of statistics 🟡	Capturing of statistics 🔴 Reporting 🔴	Reporting 🔴
Wildcard	Researcher 🟡 Blind Peer Reviewer 🟡	Researcher 🟡 Blind Peer Reviewer 🟡	Researcher 🟡 Blind Peer Reviewer 🟡	Researcher 🔴 Blind Peer Reviewer 🔴

Table 4. Center for National Documents and Records Agency

	Fundamental Functions	Receive and Respond to Requests	Proactive Disclosure	Records Management
Leadership (directs)	Engagement (green) Strategic Planning (red)			Engagement (green) Policy (red)
Rules (guide)	Guidelines (green, red, striped, red) Instructions/plans (red, red, red)	Guidelines for receiving/processing (yellow, yellow) Guidelines for responding (yellow) Guidelines for internal review (yellow)	Guidelines (red)	Guidelines (red, red) Instructions/plans (red)
Procedures (order)	Public awareness raising (green, green)	Procedures for receiving/ processing (yellow, yellow) Procedures for transfer/ responding (red, green)	Procedures for proactive disclosure (red)	Classification (red) Manage Records (red, red) Retrieve Records (red, red)
Resources (enable)	Staffing (green, green, green, yellow) Training (yellow, yellow, yellow) Infrastructure (yellow, green) Budget (red)		Staffing (yellow, yellow) Training (yellow)	Staffing (red, red) Training (red, red) Infrastructure (yellow)
Monitoring (adjust)	Internal oversight (green, red) Performance monitoring (red)	Capturing of statistics (yellow)	Capturing of statistics (red) Reporting (red)	Reporting (red)
Wildcard	Researcher (yellow) Blind Peer Reviewer (yellow)	Researcher (yellow) Blind Peer Reviewer (yellow)	Researcher (yellow) Blind Peer Reviewer (yellow)	Researcher (red) Blind Peer Reviewer (red)

Table 5. Ministry of Education

	Fundamental Functions	Receive and Respond to Requests	Proactive Disclosure	Records Management
Leadership (directs)	Engagement 🟡 Strategic Planning 🔴			Engagement 🟢 Policy 🔴
Rules (guide)	Guidelines 🔴🔴◍🔴 Instructions/plans 🔴🔴🔴	Guidelines for receiving/processing 🟡🟡 Guidelines for responding 🟡 Guidelines for internal review 🟡	Guidelines 🔴	Guidelines 🔴🔴 Instructions/plans 🔴
Procedures (order)	Public awareness raising 🟢🔴	Procedures for receiving/ processing 🟡🟢 Procedures for transfer/ responding 🟡🔴	Procedures for proactive disclosure 🔴	Classification 🔴 Manage Records 🔴🔴 Retrieve Records 🔴🔴
Resources (enable)	Staffing 🟢🟢🟢🟡 Training 🟡🟡🟡 Infrastructure 🟡🟢 Budget 🔴		Staffing 🟢🟡 Training 🟡	Staffing 🟢🟡 Training 🟡🔴 Infrastructure 🟢
Monitoring (adjust)	Internal oversight 🟢🔴 Performance monitoring 🔴	Capturing of statistics 🟡	Capturing of statistics 🔴 Reporting 🔴	Reporting 🔴
Wildcard	Researcher 🟡 Blind Peer Reviewer 🔴	Researcher 🟡 Blind Peer Reviewer 🟡	Researcher 🟡 Blind Peer Reviewer 🟡	Researcher 🔴 Blind Peer Reviewer 🔴

Table 6. Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection

	Fundamental Functions	Receive and Respond to Requests	Proactive Disclosure	Records Management
Leadership (directs)	Engagement 🟢 Strategic Planning 🔴			Engagement 🔴 Policy 🔴
Rules (guide)	Guidelines 🔴🔴⬛🔴 Instructions/plans 🔴🔴🔴	Guidelines for receiving/processing 🔴🔴 Guidelines for responding 🔴 Guidelines for internal review 🔴	Guidelines 🔴	Guidelines 🔴🔴 Instructions/plans 🔴
Procedures (order)	Public awareness raising 🔴🔴	Procedures for receiving/ processing 🔴🔴 Procedures for transfer/ responding 🔴🔴	Procedures for proactive disclosure 🔴	Classification 🔴 Manage Records 🔴🔴 Retrieve Records 🔴🔴
Resources (enable)	Staffing 🟢🔴🟢🟢 Training 🔴🔴🔴 Infrastructure 🔴🟢 Budget 🔴		Staffing 🔴🔴 Training 🔴	Staffing 🟢🟡 Training 🔴🔴 Infrastructure 🟡
Monitoring (adjust)	Internal oversight 🔴🔴 Performance monitoring 🔴	Capturing of statistics 🔴	Capturing of statistics 🔴 Reporting 🔴	Reporting 🔴
Wildcard	Researcher 🔴 Blind Peer Reviewer 🔴	Researcher 🔴 Blind Peer Reviewer 🔴	Researcher 🔴 Blind Peer Reviewer 🔴	Researcher 🔴 Blind Peer Reviewer 🔴

Table 7. Ministry of Internal Affairs

	Fundamental Functions	Receive and Respond to Requests	Proactive Disclosure	Records Management
Leadership (directs)	Engagement 🟢 Strategic Planning 🔴			Engagement 🟡 Policy 🔴
Rules (guide)	Guidelines 🔴🔴◍🔴 Instructions/plans 🔴🔴🔴	Guidelines for receiving/processing 🟡🔴 Guidelines for responding 🔴 Guidelines for internal review 🔴	Guidelines 🔴	Guidelines 🔴🔴 Instructions/plans 🔴
Procedures (order)	Public awareness raising 🔴🔴	Procedures for receiving/ processing 🔴🔴 Procedures for transfer/ responding 🔴🔴	Procedures for proactive disclosure 🔴	Classification Manage Records 🔴🔴 Retrieve Records 🔴🔴
Resources (enable)	Staffing 🟢🟢🟢🟢 Training 🔴🔴🔴 Infrastructure 🔴🟢 Budget 🔴		Staffing 🟢🟢 Training 🔴	Staffing 🟢🟢 Training 🔴🔴 Infrastructure 🟢
Monitoring (adjust)	Internal oversight 🔴🔴 Performance monitoring 🔴	Capturing of statistics 🔴	Capturing of statistics 🔴 Reporting 🔴	Reporting 🔴
Wildcard	Researcher 🔴 Blind Peer Reviewer 🔴	Researcher 🟡 Blind Peer Reviewer 🟡	Researcher 🔴 Blind Peer Reviewer 🔴	Researcher 🔴 Blind Peer Reviewer 🔴

Table 8. Liberia National Police

	Fundamental Functions	Receive and Respond to Requests	Proactive Disclosure	Records Management
Leadership (directs)	Engagement 🟢 Strategic Planning 🔴			Engagement 🟢 Policy 🔴
Rules (guide)	Guidelines 🔴🔴🔴🔴 Instructions/plans 🔴🔴🔴	Guidelines for receiving/processing 🔴🔴 Guidelines for responding 🔴 Guidelines for internal review 🔴	Guidelines 🔴	Guidelines 🔴🔴 Instructions/plans 🔴
Procedures (order)	Public awareness raising 🟢🔴	Procedures for receiving/ processing 🔴🔴 Procedures for transfer/ responding 🔴🔴	Procedures for proactive disclosure 🔴	Classification 🔴 Manage Records 🔴🔴 Retrieve Records 🔴🔴
Resources (enable)	Staffing 🟢🟢🟢🟡 Training 🟡🔴🟡 Infrastructure 🔴🟡 Budget 🔴		Staffing 🟡🟢 Training 🔴	Staffing 🟢🟢 Training 🔴🔴 Infrastructure 🔴
Monitoring (adjust)	Internal oversight 🔴🔴 Performance monitoring 🔴	Capturing of statistics 🟡	Capturing of statistics 🔴 Reporting 🔴	Reporting 🔴
Wildcard	Researcher 🟡 Blind Peer Reviewer 🟡	Researcher 🟡 Blind Peer Reviewer 🟡	Researcher 🟡 Blind Peer Reviewer 🟡	Researcher 🟡 Blind Peer Reviewer 🔴

Focal Group Narrative[4]

A focal group was convened in Monrovia, Liberia, comprised of seven key civil society activists with long experience working in the field of access to information, to consider the IAT findings and reflect on whether these results are consistent with their realities as requesters and freedom of information advocates. The participants included nongovernmental organization representatives that have led projects in assessing key government projects by making requests for information, hosted national monitoring projects on the use of the Freedom of Information law, worked to increase use of the right by marginalized populations, and have experience in requesting and following up on requests within public institutions and supporting other civil society and community-based organizations to file requests and follow up with public agencies. The Bong and Grand Bassa freedom of information network coordinators also participated in the focal group discussion to share their experience regarding Freedom of Information implementation by public agencies outside of Monrovia.

Overall, the focal group participants confirmed the findings that in general public agencies are not incorporating access to information issues in their policy documents, information officers are being named without the required financial support to make them effective, there is insufficient organizational capacity, and a lack of adherence to many of the processes in the receipt and response to information requests. There was consensus that public agencies are limited in their reporting on the implementation of the freedom of information and that this was due to their failure to capture statistics and document steps in implementation.

However, in reviewing the specific indicators, a number of participants questioned the findings that ministries lacked strategic plans that incorporate access to information. They named the Open Government Partnership (OGP) National Action Plan as an example of a strategic plan that incorporates access to information. Participants reasoned that the failure of information officers to note the National Action Plan may reflect a lack of capacity on the part of the information officers to link OGP to access to information, a lack of coordination between the national OGP steering committee and the other parts of the executive branch, or perhaps a failure of the agencies to embody the OGP as a guiding strategy. As with other aspects of the freedom of information regime in Liberia, focal group participants mentioned the ongoing difficulties of limited coordination and internal awareness about government programs by government agencies themselves.

Examination of the Findings

In considering some of the main components assessed by the IAT, the focal group participants agreed that across the various agencies there was insufficient government leadership related to freedom of information implementation and that procedures and guidelines have not been institutionalized. Moreover, even where rules exist, the freedom of information advocates felt that they are not being followed. In some cases, the civil society advocates experienced agency leadership intentionally hindering the information officer from properly responding to requests. One participant recounted an example where there was the perception that a high-level official intentionally created additional bureaucracy in order to discourage requesters and

[4]The focal group narrative was largely drawn from the narrative drafted by researcher Alphonsus Zeon.

another story of a request being refused when the official's name was misspelled.

Capacity remains a challenge for the ministries and agencies. The focal group participants provided examples of public information officers being trained, only to then be reassigned to different posts thus necessitating additional training of new people. The group suggested that the public information officers should conduct more training for their staff and on-site mentoring, so that not all of the institutional capacity is lost when reassignments occur.

In relation to receipt of and response to information requests, the participants confirmed that public information officers often do not follow the statutory requirements. In many instances, the public agencies do not respond to information requests within the statutory time period and only rarely do they provide acknowledgement to information requests. Additionally, there were a few experiences recounted where agencies were seeking exorbitant fees for photocopying, including one agency that was not part of the IAT assessment but for which the requester was asked to pay USD $27,000. Finally, related to receiving and responding to requests, the focal group participants confirmed the findings that agencies lack tracking systems to properly follow freedom of information requests and to provide responses.

With regard to the other key agency responsibilities, the focal group participants questioned the poor showing of the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism regarding proactive disclosure and the lack of implementation of records management identified in the Center for National Documents and Records Agency. For example, initially the ministry`s daily press briefing was cited as a key proactive disclosure mechanism, but the resulting argument was quite educative. Civil society activists noted that the press briefings were not
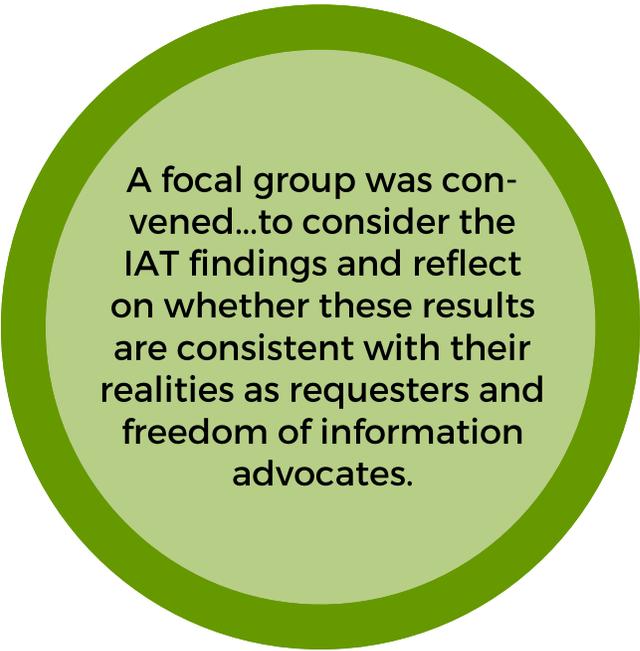
> A focal group was convened...to consider the IAT findings and reflect on whether these results are consistent with their realities as requesters and freedom of information advocates.

the same as a systematic proactive disclosure policy or procedure, as the ministry did not disclose documents, records, or information; rather, it was an opportunity to provide government messaging. Similarly, focal group participants were surprised to learn that the records agency itself does not have a records management policy, which brought into question its effectiveness as the agency responsible for supporting all government records management.

Discussion of Underlying Issues and Recommendations

Participants said the attitude of the legislature about passing laws without considering the source of funding is a major problem, not just for the freedom of information implementation, but for many other initiatives. The absence of financial consideration is identified as hampering effective implementation. There also is the failure of the government to implement policies uniformly across all the

ministries and agencies, coupled with or due to limited coordination and poor internal awareness on the part of all public officials. Liberia`s historically entrenched culture of secrecy dictates that any divergent policy, such as the Freedom of Information law that seeks greater openness and transparency, will need an aggressive and continuing awareness campaign to help change attitudes.

At the conclusion of the focal group, four key recommendations were suggested for advancing implementation in Liberia's agencies and ministries: 1) The government of Liberia should undertake an aggressive internal awareness-raising program on the implementation of the Freedom of Information Act; 2) The government should increase focus on assuring the appointment of public information officers in each agency to support uniform implementation of the Freedom of Information law; 3) Continued specialized training for the information officers and their staff is needed to make them effective in receiving and responding to requests for information, proactive disclosure, and records-management; and 4) The government of Liberia should highlight the importance of records management, including training for public service employees who create or manage records as well as the passage of a records management law that binds all public agencies and ministries in the preservation and maintenance of records.

Summary of Findings[5]

On Sept. 16, 2016, Liberia will celebrate its fifth anniversary of the freedom of information law. Yet its implementation continues to face serious challenges. Demands for resources for freedom of information law implementation are competing with demands for resources to build roads and revamp power, the remaining "binding constraints" for salvaging the post conflict country. As in many contexts, there is a tension between investing in reforming governance structures and systems, which will have a critical long-term impact, versus rebuilding expensive and visible infrastructure. Exacerbating the sluggish implementation efforts is the perceived low demand for information. Liberia has long been a society of deep rooted secrecy and while many ordinary citizens praise the Freedom of Information law, they harbor suspicions that public agencies will not respond to requests for information or fear retribution for making requests. Requesters are often accused of trying to undermine officials by seeking information that they will later use against the officials.

Nevertheless, there has been some implementation progress in Liberia. One key positive result found by the research is that all assessed agencies have named their information officers and located a dedicated space where requests for information can be received and responded to, records reviewed, and proactive disclosure take place. While ATI personnel need more capacity, the assessment has identified that the basics exist to begin and advance implementation. Additionally, authorities responsible for policy in the agencies and ministries continue to meet with the personnel responsible for ATI functions and information officers continue to be given the opportunity to raise awareness at senior staff meetings. Of critical note is that all the information officers were found to have the authority needed to comply with their ATI mandates.

Across all six ministries and agencies assessed, there remains more to be done to assure effective implementation of the freedom of information law. While all have named information officers, these officers lack the resources and equipment to do their work. None has a budget allocation for his/her office, nor have they been sufficiently trained to fulfill their duties, and there are no mechanisms for internal awareness raising about the law and records management. Four of the ministries have adopted guidelines for receiving and responding to requests, but still struggle to follow them consistently. For example, the initial step of acknowledging a request for information is not done in many instances; there are no systems in place for the receipt, processing, and release of information, and these ministries have not established effective tracking of requests from receipt through disclosure. None of the agencies assessed have monitoring systems nor have they issued reports on their freedom of information responsibilities, including the failure to submit mandatory annual report.

Overall, there are two main areas in which the agencies have not progressed: proactive disclosure and records management. All the agencies assessed lack guidelines and procedures for proactive disclosure and records management. No mechanisms exist to make all public officials aware of records-management processes, and no monitoring of proactive disclosure or records management is taking place.

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[5]The summary of findings section was largely drawn from the narrative drafted by researcher Alphonsus Zeon.

Summary of Agencies

Center for National Documents and Records Agency

The Center for National Documents and Records Agency is the national repository of documents and records. The agency collects records and documents from public agencies for storing, determines retention periods, and disposes of records. The agency is led by a director general who is the primary supervisor of the public information officer. The officer, who leads on access to information implementation, has no other staff. He combines proactive disclosure functions with his key role to receive and respond to request for information.

The agency appears to have made its greatest progress in receiving and responding to request for information. It has adopted the procedures and guidelines to fulfill this fundamental function and has been able to capture basic statistics through some tracking and monitoring. There is good leadership engagement in the agency to review the work of the information officer, who is largely considered part of senior management. Moreover, the agency has engaged in more intentional public awareness raising.

Perhaps the most concerning findings related to the agency is its poor progress on records management functions, particularly as this is the agency's primary statutory function. The agency scored poorly in the policy development, systems-building, and resources under records management.

Liberia National Police

The Liberia National Police is one of several para military institutions of the government of Liberia, mandated to protect lives and properties. A national police public information officer is supervised by the police spokesman, and the two report to the deputy police director for administration. The records manager and her staff sit outside the office of the public information officer and the spokesman. National police leadership have demonstrated consistent engagement with the public information officer and his team, and there is a sizable staff working together to perform access to information related functions, including public awareness-raising.

As with other agencies, the national police have few systems in place for receiving and responding to requests for information. There are no written guidelines or procedures. Although the police do respond to requests for information, they are not consistent in their approach and do not observe all the steps, such as there is no acknowledgement for request, no tracking numbers assigned to each request and no record from receipt to response. The national police also may consider additional focus on proactive disclosure. During the interview, it appeared that the national police consider proactive disclosure to be the granting of press interviews and giving out information relative to specific incidents, rather than a systematic means of publishing and making automatically available information on its policies, budget, contracts, expenditures, procedures etc. Positively, the records management system at the Liberia National Police is quite organized, but the reference room is not for public use. There are sufficient staff, but they need specialized training. There is also is no monitoring of the records management functions or freedom of information performance of the Liberia National Police.

Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection

The Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection is responsible for monitoring, advocating, and addressing issues affecting women and children in Liberia. Comparatively, the ministry named its information officer quite recently. The public information officer reports to the deputy minister for administration relating to his freedom of infor-

mation responsibilities, while the director of research and statistics is responsible for records management functions and is in charge of the resource center at the ministry where documents and reference materials are placed on display.

The ministry of gender is seriously challenged in almost all the categories: fundamental functions, receiving and responding to requests for information, proactive disclosure, and records management. Some of this is attributable to the delay in appointing the information officer. Positively, there is strong leadership engagement to advance freedom of information implementation, staffing with time and authority, and some infrastructure for receiving and responding to requests and records management. In all other indicators, the ministry will need to increase its efforts in order to advance.

Ministry of Internal Affairs

The Ministry of Internal Affairs is responsible for the formulation and implementation of policies related to defense, security, and law and order. Moreover, the ministry is specifically tasked with the oversight of the county supervisors/local governance and the Liberian government's plans for decentralization. Under the proposed plans, the ministry will facilitate the creation of local agencies for improved delivery of social services. The ministry's information officer reports the deputy minister for administration. The public information officer has a small staff that helps him run the office. The records manager, called the central filing manager is outside the office of the information office, and similar to the other agencies, there appears to be little coordination.

As with a number of the other ministries, the ministry's strengths lie in their leadership engagement, staffing, and some of their infrastructure. And although they did not score well on receiving and responding to requests due to a lack of guidelines and procedures, both the researcher and the
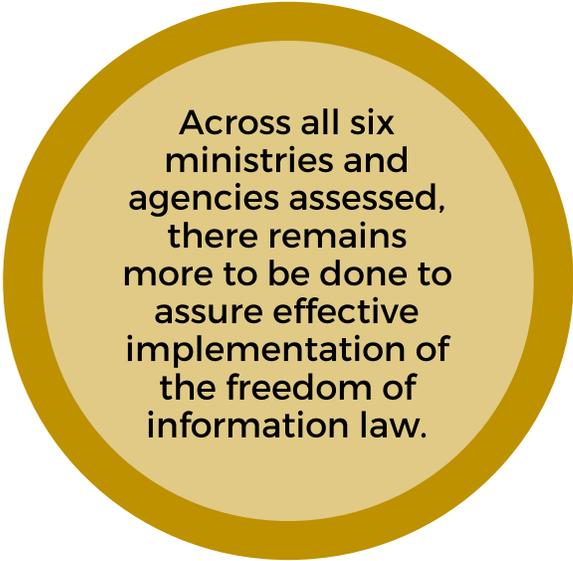
Across all six ministries and agencies assessed, there remains more to be done to assure effective implementation of the freedom of information law.

blind–peer reviewer believed that, in practice, they have made some progress.

While the ministry at the national level has evolved some in the implementation process, there remains even more work needed at the county level. For example, only a few of the county superintendent's offices have appointed public information offices and there has been minimal training, scant public outreach, or awareness. This will be a challenge for the ministry's future advancement in fully and effectively implementing the freedom of information law.

Ministry of Information, Culture Affairs, and Tourism

The Ministry of Information is the lead ministry on the implementation of the access to information law as well as for Liberia's Open Government Partnership commitments, which include access to information deliverables. The ministry's information officer reports to the deputy minister for administration, who is the government focal point for access to information and OGP. The information officer doubles as the person responsible for freedom of information, including receiving and responding to requests, proactive disclosure, and

records management. The ministry public information officer has a deputy and two staff members and enjoys an office space with a reading room.

The ministry's leadership remains engaged both with the agency public information officer and with overseeing the implementation efforts across government agencies. The deputy minister convenes regular meetings of public information officers and related access to information personnel from government agencies, and the ministry was instrumental in developing standard guidelines and procedures for receiving, processing, transferring, and responding to requests. For the most part, the ministry has adopted most of the elements of the guidelines and procedures.

However, in the area of proactive disclosure practices, there remains little progress. While the ministry has a website, required information such as material contracts, accounts, and budgets are missing. And even though the ministry calls a daily press briefing, the disclosures made are more of messaging than provision of documents or classes of information as mandated by the law. The ministry's records management practices are another area in need of attention, with the agency lacking policy, guidelines, procedures, trained staff, or monitoring.

Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education is responsible for determining the policies and direction of the education system in Liberia. Its overall goal is to provide relevant and quality information to all citizens. The ministry has an information officer, who reports to the deputy for administration, with a staff and a dedicated office. In addition to serving as the public information officer, he is also the director of public relations for the ministry. This sometimes confuses the role of sharing information that highlights the work of the ministry with the proactive disclosure responsibilities of his public information officer post. The director of central filing is responsible for

records management and is separate and distinct from the public information officer.

The Ministry of Education leadership engages with the information officer and the central filing office. In both cases, the public information officer and the director of central filing have staff, offices, and the basic training to perform their functions and fulfill their responsibilities. Positively, the ministry has adopted the majority of the guidelines for receiving, processing, and responding to requests for information, but for most of these indicators has not fully met good practice and still lacks a process for transferring requests. However, there does not appear to be sufficient oversight/monitoring, and records management is less well developed than their other functions.

Conclusions

The application of the Implementation Assessment Tool clearly shows the extent and quality of implementation by the ministries assessed and may perhaps serve as a representation of that government as a whole. It highlights weaknesses and areas of improvements, and identifies where the ministries should place additional focus for improvement.

Contributing to the uneven implementation of the freedom of information law is the lack of organization and standardization. Agencies have neither developed implementation plans nor outlined steps necessary for effectively advancing the institutionalization of the law. Leadership at the highest level of government and budgetary support may be first steps, followed by proper training of public information officers and their staff, adopting guidelines and procedures, and increased attention on proactive disclosure and records management. Increased performance monitoring should be considered so that Liberian agencies to progress in implementation and its citizens may more fully benefit from the right of access to information.

Implementation Assessment Tool Indicators

1. Does the agency's strategic plan incorporate ATI, such as by including specific mention of access to information and/or principles of openness and transparency?
   a. Yes
   b. No
2. How often does an agency official with authority over policy participate in meetings with public officials responsible for ATI activities?
   a. Twice a year
   b. Once a year
   c. Rarely or never
3. Has the agency created or adopted specific guidelines on ATI?
   a. Yes
   b. No
4. How often are ATI guidelines reviewed by an agency official with authority over policy?
   a. ATI guidelines are reviewed at least every two years
   b. ATI guidelines are reviewed periodically
   c. ATI guidelines have not been reviewed
   d. Not applicable, the guidelines are less than two years old
5. How often are ATI guidelines revised by an agency official with authority over policy?
   a. ATI guidelines are revised following a change in policy
   b. ATI guidelines have not been revised following a change in policy
   c. Not applicable, the policy has not been changed or agency does not have authority to revise
6. Does the agency make all guidelines available for reference?
   a. The guidelines are kept online or in an easily accessible reference center for consultation by civil servants and the public
   b. The guidelines are kept online or in an easily accessible reference center but are only available to civil servants
   c. The guidelines are not easily available for reference or do not exist
7. Does the agency have a document(s) that establishes instructions for ATI implementation and/or operation?
   a. Yes
   b. No
8. Does the document(s) detailing instructions for ATI implementation and/or operation currently reflect the agency's ATI policy?
   a. Yes
   b. No
9. Has the agency internally disseminated the document(s) detailing instructions for ATI implementation and/or operation?
   a. The document(s) has been disseminated electronically and/or in print to all public officials who handle and manage information
   b. The document(s) has only been disseminated to some public officials
   c. The document(s) has only been referenced and not disseminated or there is no document(s)

10. Does the agency's public outreach specifically include a component regarding ATI?
    a. Yes
    b. No
11. Does the agency specifically provide information on how to make a request and to find proactively published information?
    a. Yes
    b. No
12. Has one or more public official been made responsible for ATI functions and duties?
    a. One or more public official(s) has been formally appointed with ATI functions and duties
    b. One or more public official(s) has been informally tasked with ATI functions and duties
    c. There is no specific appointment/tasking of ATI functions and duties
13. Has the name of the public official(s) appointed/tasked responsible for ATI functions and duties been made known to the public?
    a. Yes
    b. No
14. Does the public official(s) appointed/tasked responsible for ATI functions and duties have the authority needed to comply with ATI mandate?
    a. Yes
    b. No
15. Does the public official(s) appointed/tasked responsible for ATI functions and duties have the time and staff needed to fulfill his/her ATI responsibilities?
    a. The public official(s) appointed/tasked responsible for ATI functions and duties has both the time and staff needed to fulfill his/her ATI responsibilities
    b. The public official(s) appointed/tasked responsible for ATI functions and duties has the time but not the staff needed to fulfill his/her ATI responsibilities
    c. The public official(s) appointed/tasked responsible for ATI functions and duties does not have the time but does have the staff needed to fulfill his/her ATI responsibilities
    d. The public official(s) appointed/tasked responsible for ATI functions and duties does not have the time or the staff needed to fulfill his/her ATI responsibilities
16. Does the public official(s) appointed/tasked responsible for ATI functions and duties and his/her staff receive **specialized** training on ATI?
    a. The public official(s) appointed/tasked responsible for ATI functions and duties and his/her staff receive specialized training on ATI in order to effectively do their job
    b. The public official(s) appointed/tasked responsible for ATI functions and duties and his/her staff receive specialized training on ATI but not sufficient in order to effectively do their job

c. The public official(s) appointed/tasked responsible for ATI functions and duties and his/her staff do not receive specialized training on ATI

17. Are all public officials made aware of basic ATI principles?
a. All public officials periodically receive formal communication regarding basic ATI principles
b. All public officials receive periodic communication regarding basic ATI principles but not formally
c. All public officials receive formal communication regarding basic ATI principles but not periodically
d. No systematized formal mechanisms are undertaken by the agency to periodically make public officials aware of basic ATI principles

18. Are training materials related to ATI created and maintained for future reference by public officials?
a. All training materials related to ATI are kept online or in an easily accessible reference center for consultation by public officials
b. Some but not all training materials related to ATI are made available for consultation
c. Training materials related to ATI are not created or they are not made available

19. Does the public official(s) responsible for ATI functions and duties have regular access to necessary equipment?
a. The responsible public official(s) has dedicated or regular access to **all** of the following: computers with internet; scanners; and photocopy machines
b. The responsible public official(s) has dedicated or regular access to some but not all of the above
c. The responsible public official(s) has no access or irregular access

20. Has the agency created a space, physical or virtual, to make requests, review documents, and share proactively published information?
a. The agency has created space for making requests, reviewing documents, and sharing proactively published information.
b. The agency has created some of the spaces, but not all
c. The agency has not created space for making requests, reviewing documents, or sharing proactively published information

21. Does the agency specifically allocate the financial resources necessary for fulfilling its ATI functions and duties?
a. Yes
b. No

22. Does the agency monitor its ATI functions and duties?
a. The agency regularly monitors its ATI functions and duties and written reports with findings and recommendations are issued on an annual basis
b. The agency regularly monitors its ATI functions but written reports with findings and recommendations are not issued on an annual basis
c. The agency does not regularly monitor its ATI functions

23. Does the agency's internal oversight body/auditing mechanism take into account ATI functions and duties?
a. Yes
b. No

24. Does the agency's performance review of persons appointed/tasked with ATI functions and duties takes these responsibilities into account in their review?
a. Yes
b. No

25. In your expert opinion, in practice does the agency effectively fulfill its fundamental functions related to access to information?
a. In practice, the agency fulfills its fundamental functions related to access to information
b. In practice, the agency partly fulfills its fundamental functions related to access to information
c. In practice, the agency does not effectively fulfill its fundamental functions related to access to information

26. Does the agency have written guidelines for receiving requests?
a. The agency has created or adopted written guidelines for receiving requests that include **all** of the following: determining what constitutes a request; providing an acknowledgment of receipt; and assisting the requester
b. The agency has created or adopted written guidelines that include some but not all of the above
c. The agency has not created or adopted written guidelines for receiving requests

27. Does the agency have written guidelines for processing requests?
a. The agency has created or adopted written guidelines for processing requests that include **all** of the following: coordination within the agency; timeframes; cost determination; fee collection; and transfer (where applicable)
b. The agency has created or adopted written guidelines that include some but not all of the above
c. The agency has not created or adopted written guidelines for processing requests

28. Does the agency have written guidelines for responding (release or deny) to requests?
a. The agency has created or adopted written guidelines for responding to requests that include **all** of the following: process for determining release; means for providing requested information; means for providing notice of denial; and reason for denial of information requested
b. The agency has created or adopted written guidelines that include some but not all of the above
c. The agency has not created or adopted written guidelines for responding to requests

29. Does the agency have written guidelines for internal review?
a. The agency has created or adopted written guidelines for internal review that include **all** of the following: receiving requests for review; reviewing agency's motives for initial decisions; and issuing findings and decisions
b. The agency has created or adopted written guidelines that include some but not all of the above
c. The agency has not created or adopted guidelines for internal review
d. Not applicable, if the law does not mandate/provide for internal review

30. Does the agency have a procedure for logging and tracking requests and responses?
a. The agency has created a logging and tracking procedure that includes **all** of the following: updating to keep current; tracking a request in one place; and detailing the request from submission through resolution, including processing agent(s), transfers, and internal reviews
b. The agency has created or adopted a logging and tracking procedure that includes some but not all of the above
c. The agency has not created or adopted a logging and tracking procedure

31. Does the agency have a procedure for processing a request?
a. The agency has created or adopted a procedure for processing a request that includes **all** of the following: identifying who in the agency holds the information searching and finding information; and determining release, redaction, or denial
b. The agency has created or adopted a procedure for processing a request that includes some but not all of the above
c. The agency has not created or adopted a procedure for processing a request

32. Does the agency have a procedure for transferring requests to other agencies?
a. The agency has created or adopted a procedure for transfer of requests that includes **all** of the following: identifying the correct agency; transferring requests; and providing notice of transfer to the requester
b. The agency has created or adopted a procedure that includes some but not all of the above
c. The agency has not created or adopted a procedure for transferring requests
d. Not applicable, if the law does not provide for transfers

33. Does the agency have a procedure for issuing and serving responses?
a. The agency has created or adopted a procedure for issuing and serving responses that includes **all** of the following: provision of requested documents; notice and collection of fees, where applicable; and sending notice of denial and right of review or appeal
b. The agency has created or adopted a procedure for issuing and serving responses that includes some but not all of the above
c. The agency has not created or adopted a procedure for issuing and serving responses

34. Does the agency regularly capture statistics related to receiving and responding to requests?
a. The agency systematically captures statistics on an annual basis including **all** of the following: number of requests; number of transfers (if applicable); number of denials; reasons for denial; and number of days to respond to requests
b. Some of the statistics are systematically captured on an annual but not all of the above
c. The agency does not systematically capture statistics on an annual basis

35. In your expert opinion, in practice does the agency effectively fulfill its function related to receiving and responding to requests?

a. In practice, the agency fulfills its function related to receiving and responding to requests
b. In practice, the agency partly fulfills its function related to receiving and responding to requests
c. In practice, the agency does not effectively fulfill its function related to receiving and responding to requests

36. Does the agency have written guidelines for proactive disclosure?
a. The agency has created or adopted written guidelines for proactive disclosure that includes **all** of the following: development of the publication scheme; updating and maintaining the scheme; guidance for clearly identifying/listing classes of documents to be proactively disclosed; and how documents will be disclosed
b. The agency has created or adopted written guidelines for proactive disclosure that includes some but not all of the above
c. The agency has not created or adopted written guidelines for proactive disclosure

37. Does the agency have a procedure for proactive disclosure?
a. The agency has created or adopted a procedure for proactive disclosure that includes **all** of following: creating and maintaining publication scheme; placing documents in public realm; updating and adding document(s) for proactive disclosure; and publishing previously requested document(s)
b. The agency has created or adopted a procedure for proactive disclosure that includes some but not all of the above
c. The agency has not created or adopted a procedure for proactive disclosure

38. Has one or more public official been appointed responsible for proactive disclosure functions and duties?
a. One or more public official has been appointed responsible for proactive disclosure functions and duties
b. One or more public official has been informally tasked responsible for proactive disclosure functions and duties
c. There is no specific appointment/tasking of proactive disclosure functions and duties

39. Does the public official(s) responsible for proactive disclosure have the time and staff necessary to effectively fulfill his/her functions and duties?
a. The public official(s) tasked/appointed responsible for proactive disclosure has both the time and staff needed to fulfill his/her functions and duties
b. The public official(s) tasked/appointed responsible for proactive disclosure has the time but not the staff needed to fulfill his/her functions and duties
c. The public official(s) tasked/appointed responsible for proactive disclosure does not have the time but does have the staff needed to fulfill his/her functions and duties
d. The public official(s) tasked/appointed responsible for proactive disclosure does not have the time or the staff needed to fulfill his/her functions and duties

40. Is the public official(s) responsible for proactive disclosure trained to comply with their duties?
a. The public official(s) responsible for proactive disclosure receives specialized training in order to effectively do their job

b. The public official(s) responsible for proactive disclosure receives some specialized training but not sufficient in order to effectively do their job

c. The public official(s) responsible for proactive disclosure does not receive specialized training

41. Does the agency capture statistics related to proactive disclosure on an annual basis?

a. Yes

b. No

42. Does the agency regularly monitor its proactive disclosure?

a. The agency regularly monitors its proactive disclosure and written reports with findings and recommendations are issued on an annual basis

b. The agency regularly monitors its proactive disclosure but written reports with findings and recommendations are not issued on an annual basis

c. The agency does not regularly monitor its proactive disclosure

43. In your expert opinion, in practice does the agency effectively fulfill its function related to proactive disclosure?

a. In practice, the agency fulfills its function related to proactive disclosure

b. In practice, the agency partly fulfills its function related to proactive disclosure

c. In practice, the agency does not effectively fulfill its functions related to proactive disclosure

44. How often does an agency official with authority over policy participate in meetings with public officials responsible for records management?

a. Twice a year

b. Once a year

c. Rarely or never

45. Has the agency created or adopted a records management policy for managing paper based and digital information?

a. Yes

b. No

46. Does the agency have written guidelines for records management, regardless of format (including digital records, maps etc.)?

a. The agency has created or adopted written guidelines for records management that include **all** of the following: creating records; organizing records; storing/preserving; retention; security; and retrieval and access

b. The agency has created or adopted some written guidelines for records management but do not include all of the above

c. The agency has not created or adopted written guidelines for records management

47. Does the agency have written guidelines for security classification of documents?

a. The agency has created or adopted written guidelines for security classification of documents that includes **all** of the following: determining classification and periods of classification (reserve); access and internal transmission of classified documents; and creation of index or other means of identifying classified documents

b. The agency has created or adopted some written guidelines for security classification of documents but they do not include all of the above

c. The agency has not created or adopted written guidelines for security classification of documents

48. Does the agency have a document(s) that establishes instructions/guidelines for implementation and/or operations for records-management?

a. Yes

b. No

49. Does the agency have a procedure for security classification of documents?

a. The agency has created or adopted a procedure for classifying documents that includes **all** of the following: assessing documents for security classification when created, received, transmitted and/or requested; security measures and access control; timelines for classification; and creating and disseminating an index or other means of identifying classified documents

b. The agency has created or adopted a procedure for security classification of documents that includes some but not all of the above

c. The agency has not created or adopted a procedure for security classification of documents

50. Does the agency have a procedure to manage its paper records?

a. The agency has created or adopted a procedure to manage paper records that includes **all** of the following: creation; organization/aggregation of files (non-security related classification); survey and inventory; indexes and circulation logs; access permission; and retention and disposal

b. The agency has created or adopted a procedure to manage paper records but it does not include all of the above

c. The agency has not created or adopted a procedure to manage paper records

51. Does the agency have a procedure to manage its digital records?

a. The agency has created or adopted a procedure to manage digital records that includes **all** of the following: creation, including structured metadata; organization/aggregation of files (non-security related classification); survey and inventory; organization; security rights and access permissions; and retention/preservation and disposal

b. The agency has created or adopted a procedure to manage digital records but it does not include all of the above

c. The agency has not created or adopted a procedure to manage digital records

52. Does the agency have a procedure to retrieve and access paper records?
a. The agency has created or adopted a procedure to retrieve and access paper records, which includes **all** of the following: Indexes or registries; scheme to physically locate records; and a log that tracks circulation and retrieval
b. The agency has created or adopted a procedure to retrieve and access paper records, but does not include all of the above
c. The agency has not created or adopted a procedure to retriev and access of paper records

53. Does the agency have a procedure to retrieve and access digital records?
a. The agency has created or adopted a procedure to retrieve and access digital records that includes **all** of the following: an organization (non-security classification) structure; naming conventions for records in shared drives; and location of systems holding digital records
b. The agency has created or adopted a procedure to retrieve and access digital records but does not include all of the above
c. The agency has not created or adopted a procedure to retrieve and access of digital records

54. Has one or more public official been appointed responsible for records management?
a. One or more public official(s) has been appointed with records management functions and duties
b. One or more public official(s) has been informally tasked with records management functions and duties
c. There is no specific appointment/tasking of records management function and duties

55. Does the public official(s) appointed/tasked responsible for records management functions and duties have the time and staff needed to fulfill his/her responsibilities?
a. The public official(s) appointed/tasked responsible for records management functions and duties has both the time and staff needed to fulfill his/her responsibilities
b. The public official(s) appointed/tasked responsible for records management functions and duties has the time but not the staff needed to fulfill his/her responsibilities
c. The public official(s) appointed/tasked responsible for records management functions and duties does not have the time but does have the staff needed to fulfill his/her responsibilities
d. The public official(s) appointed/tasked responsible for records management functions and duties does not have the time or the staff needed to fulfill his/her responsibilities

56. Does the public official(s) appointed/tasked responsible for records management and his/her staff receive specialized training on records management?
a. The public official(s) appointed/tasked responsible for records management and his/her staff receive specialized and formal training on records management
b. The public official(s) appointed/tasked responsible for records management and his/her staff receives only formal basic records management training

c. The public official(s) appointed/tasked responsible for records management and his/her staff receives no formal training

57. Are all public officials made aware of basic records management procedures?
a. All public officials periodically receive formal communication of basic records management procedures
b. All public officials receive periodic communication regarding basic records management procedures but not formally
c. All public officials receive formal communication regarding basic records management procedures but not periodically
d. No systematized formal mechanisms are undertaken by the agency to make public officials aware of basic records management procedures

58. Has the agency created space and facilities for storing paper and digital records?
a. The agency has created sufficient space/facilities to store and preserve all relevant paper and digital records
b. The agency has created space/facilities to store and preserve all relevant paper and digital records but it is not sufficient
c. The agency has not created space/facilities to store all relevant paper and digital records

59. Does the agency regularly monitor its records management functions and duties?
a. The agency regularly monitors its records management system and written reports with findings and recommendations are issued on an annual basis
b. The agency regularly monitors its records management system but written reports with findings and recommendations are not issued on an annual basis
c. The agency does not regularly monitor its records management system

60. In your expert opinion, in practice does the agency effectively fulfill its function related to records management?
a. In practice, the agency fulfills its function related to records management
b. In practice, the agency partly fulfills its function related to records management
c. In practice, the agency does not effectively fulfill its functions related to records management