

Annual Report 2015

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AFRICA FREEDOM OF INFORMATION CENTRE

Annual Report 2015



About AFIC

AFIC is a pan-African membership civil society organisation and resource centre consisting of 35 civil society organizations in 22 African countries promoting the right to information in Africa.

AFIC promotes democratic rule and socio-economic justice for African citizens through fostering a culture of increased transparency, integrity and accountability among governments, regional and international bodies

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Lead Coordinators Letter

The year 2015 marked the first full year of the implementation of our strategic plan. Key milestones in building knowledge base, programmes development, capacity strengthening and continental/global advocacy.

Knowledge base building: publication and dissemination of the second State of RTI in Africa Report with members' active participation; desk analysis of the Open Government Partnership African countries' national action plans in respect of open contracting (in partnership with PPDC); commencement of baseline study on ATI and citizen engagement with anti-corruption agencies in Malawi, Uganda and Kenya (with Article 19, ICJ, HURINET and CHRR), study on access to information in the context of electoral and political party financing in Uganda and Senegal (in partnership with Article 19 West Africa). In addition, AFIC piloted World Bank RTI indicators in Uganda.

Programme development: implementation of the pilot phase of the RTI and anticorruption commenced in Uganda, Kenya and Malawi (in collaboration with HURINET-U, Article 19 East Africa and Centre for Human Rights Rehabilitation). Implementation of another project to build knowledge base around transparency in election financing in Uganda and Senegal also commenced with Article 19 West Africa as AFIC's main partner. Implementation of the GPSA project also gained momentum towards the end of the year with Transparency International and Interfaith based action for ethics and integrity (INFOC) Uganda as the main partners.



Capacity strengthening: Our RTI resource kit which contains resource manuals for public officials, civil society and journalists is being finalized and will be launched in the first quarter of 2016. Ahead of finalization and translation (public officials), they were pilot tested with the help of our members in Nigeria, DRC, Angola, Sierra Leone and Malawi. Our members and partners will have appropriate tools to promote effective implementation of respective RTI laws across Africa. RTI training were conducted in Uganda, Kenya, Malawi and Rwanda on the basis of draft ATI manuals being finalized.

Monitoring and Advocacy: Our shadow reporting to UN Human Rights Council and ACHPR was also strong. We submitted reports to UN HRC (UPR) on Angola, Rwanda and Namibia. The review of Angola was completed with Czech Republic and other countries picking our recommendations on the need to review FOI law, implement it effectively and also ratifying and domesticating ATI treaties. In respect to ACHPR, AFIC in collaboration with members in respective countries submitted and presented shadow reports to ACHPR on Uganda, Malawi, Sierra Leone, Algeria, Nigeria and Kenya. The Special Rapporteur on FOE and ATI sent communication expressing gratitude to the importance of our work in this regard.

We are in discussions with the African Union Commission and the European Union on the elaboration of the State of RTI in Africa Report as well as the holding of a continental conference on freedom of expression in Africa as part of activities to mark 2016 as Africa's year of human rights.

As part of the African Platform on Access to Information that brings together 9 organisations, AFIC contributed to the successful campaign leading to the declaration of September 28th as International Day for Universal Access to Information (IDUAI) by UNESCO General Conference.

The major challenges were mainly fewer RTI laws being enacted and implementation still being challenged. The funding environment remains unstable but we hope for the best in 2016.

We are deeply grateful to the Governing Council and membership for great work in the past year.

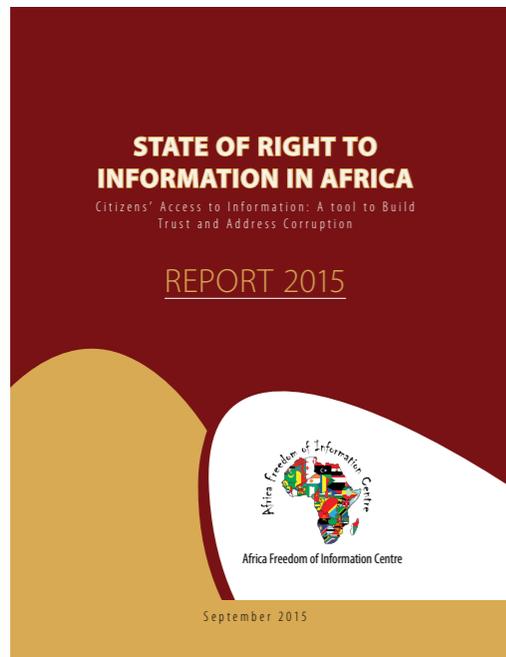
We look forward to a successful 2016!!

Publications

SN	Publication
1	State of the Right to Information in Africa Report 2015
2	Right to Information Manual for Public Officials
3	Right to Information Manual for Journalists
4	Right to Information Manual for Civil Society
5	Desk Study of Africa OGP National Action Plans in terms of Open Contracting

State of Right to Information in Africa Report 2015

Since September 2014, AFIC and its members launched an annual publication of the state of the right to information in Africa Report. These annual publications seek to provide a reflection on the state of the right to information from different perspectives with a view of strengthening advocacy for adoption and implementation of RTI frameworks.



On September 28, 2015 AFIC released a 104 page year 2015 State of the Right to Information in Africa Report. The report, written by AFIC members across Africa focused on the right to information and corruption in Africa. Sixteen countries, 2 more than the 2014 version were covered in the 2015 report.

In the foreword to the report, Hon. Pansy Tlakula, Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information in Africa underscores the importance of citizens' access to information in addressing corruption. She observes that, *"it is an established fact that lack of transparency facilitates and exacerbates corruption in all aspects of public life whether it is public contracting, legislating on high interest issues or delivering basic services to ordinary people"*

Commissioner Talkula further observes that the role of access to information in addressing corruption is vital and highlights Article 9 of the African Union Convention

on Preventing and Combating Corruption which obliges State Parties to adopt and effectively implement access to information laws as a means to address corruption.

On her part, Mrs. Habiba Merji Scheikh, African Union Commission Director of Information and Communication observes that access to information is at the heart of the African Union and Agenda 2063 on the war against corruption in Africa.

The launch of the publication was done on September 28, 2015 Right to Information Day in Kampala during a public dialogue and cocktail organized by AFIC in collaboration with HURINET and Office of the Prime Minister. Mr. Simon Mayende, who represented Uganda's Minister of Information and National Guidance observed that the publication was an important advocacy tool that was good not only for Uganda but Africa as a whole. Over 150 participants attended.

Dissemination of the publication was done using both online and offline platforms and feedback received was very positive.

Right to Information Manuals for Public Officials, Civil Society and Journalists

Since 2010, AFIC and its network have been focused on campaigns for adoption of national right to information laws in line with continental and international standards. This was out of the recognition that while adoption of national access to information laws had happened in other regions, the process was slow in Africa where only 5 countries as compared to 85 laws elsewhere.

These concerted efforts and the leadership of Hon. Pansy Tlakula yielded positive results and by end of 2014, 15 African countries had enacted national access to information laws. One of the key lessons learnt is that adoption of laws is only the first step of realizing the right to information. Nearly all the countries were struggling with implementation capacity challenges.

To address this gap, AFIC in collaboration with Advocate Pansy Tlakula and Fes Media Africa Programme of Friedrich Ebert Stiftung embarked on producing access to information resource manuals for public





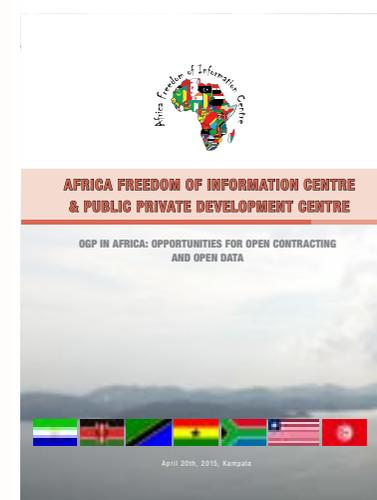
Shadow Reporting

Shadow reporting is an important tool for AFIC's advocacy in the right to information and freedom of expression. By submitting a shadow report to international and regional bodies, AFIC can highlight issues not raised by their governments or point out where the government may be misleading the committee or commission from a real situation. AFIC submitted shadow reports to the African Commission on Human and Peoples Right and the Universal Periodic Review.

officials, civil society and journalists. Through AFIC's membership, the manuals were pilot tested through workshops with key stakeholders in DR Congo, Malawi, Sierra Leone and Angola to ensure that content is adequate and appropriate to different contexts in Africa as well as the presentation well done. Members who participated in pilot testing the manuals include Collectif, MISA Malawi, Society for Democratic Initiatives and IFJ/FAJ (with its affiliates in Nigeria, Angola and DRC). Positive feedback was received and integrated to produce final drafts. The manuals are now being translated into French and Portuguese ahead of launch.

Desk Study of Africa OGP National Action Plans in terms of Open Contracting

Every year governments spend billions of dollars in public contracting to deliver goods and services. However, many times value for money is not obtained due to conflicts, contract delays, falsification, cost escalation, ghost contracts and air supply, among other problems. AFIC has over the past 2 years piloted actions geared at promoting citizens access to information and public participation (open contracting) through contract monitoring with promising results.



The Open Government Partnership (OGP) through National Action Plans provides an important space for civil society to negotiate strong commitments for reforms. To examine how this platform is being used to promote open contracting, AFIC in collaboration with Public Private and Development Centre (PPDC) analysed OGP National Action Plans for Kenya, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Tanzania and South Africa. Findings reveal that no country prioritized reforms to promote citizens access to information and participation in public contracting. The study recommends this as an important area for civil society and government stakeholders working on OGP issues to engage.

African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights

The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) is quasi-judicial body tasked with promoting and protecting human rights and collective people rights throughout Africa; as well as interpreting the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights and considering individual complaints of violations of the Charter. Article 62 of the Charter requires African states to submit periodic reports on the state of human rights in their respective countries.

AFIC has observer status with the ACHPR therefore enjoys the benefit of preparing 'shadow' reports for the ACHPR on access to information and freedom of expression on countries across Africa. These 'shadow' reports enable the Commission to have a constructive dialogue with a State representative when that country's periodic report is being considered.

For the 56th session of the ACHPR held in April 2015 AFIC prepared and submitted reports on Uganda, Malawi and Nigeria. While for the 57th session of the ACHPR held in November 2015 AFIC submitted reports on Algeria, Kenya and Sierra Leone.



AFIC presenting a statement at the ACHPR's

Kenya

The shadow report on Kenya was written in collaboration with Article 19 West Africa and the International Commission of Jurists. The report recommended that provisions in Kenyan statutes that prohibit the public from accessing information should be repealed; Kenya ratifies the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance as well as the African Statistics Charter, that have crucial provisions related to the right to information. The report also recommended the amending

of Kenya Access to Information Bill. The report also encouraged Kenya to focus on Open Government Partnership commitments.

Algeria

In Algeria's shadow report AFIC was concerned with a systematic failure by the Algerian authorities to uphold and promote the rights to information characterized by the lack of legislation to facilitate access to information, bad laws affecting freedom of expression, poor proactive disclosures, criminal defamation, deprived media indecency and media violence and intimidation. AFIC made recommendations aimed at encouraging the ACHPRs to call upon the Algerian to appropriately apply international obligations to the right to information.

Nigeria

Nigeria's shadow report was written by AFIC in collaboration with Media Rights Agenda Nigeria. The report recommended that Nigeria should amend or repeal laws and policies that continue to hamper the access to information regime particularly the Official Secrets Act which public officials still cite to deny access to information. The Government of Nigeria was called up to also make deliberate efforts to sensitize public institutions and officials at all levels of government about the rights of the public to access information held by public institutions. Recommendations were also made to improve proactive disclosure and record keeping.

Sierra Leone

The report on Sierra Leone was written in consultation with the Society for Democratic Initiatives Sierra Leone. With respect to Sierra Leone, AFIC recommended the improvement of administrative structures to support the Right to Access Information Act i.e independence of media commissioners. AFIC also encouraged the Sierra Leonean government to have a cross-cutting and integrated strategy raise awareness of the right to information and to harmonizing laws with the existing access to information legislation.

Uganda

AFIC recommended that the Government of Uganda should implement previous recommendations of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights regarding expanding and protecting civic space, ratification and effective implementation of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance. AFIC also encouraged pro-actively disclosing information; the amendment of the Access to Information Act to particularly align it with the African Union Model Law on Access to Information, Principles of Freedom of Expression in Africa as well as other regional standards and international best practice. The training of all appointed Information Officers in ministries, departments and agencies on establishing and running an effective access to information regime, and finally called the Government of Uganda to join the Open Government Partnership.

Malawi

The report on Malawi was written in collaboration with the Centre for Human Rights and Disability. AFIC recommended that Malawi, adopt its Access to Information Bill that is yet to be enacted and address its weaknesses; ratify and domesticate African Charter on the Values and Principles of Public Service Administration, and improve public awareness on the right to information, and address the weaknesses in Malawi's Access to Information Bill to align it with the African Union Model Law on Access to Information.

Universal Periodic Review

The Universal Periodic Review is conducted by the Human Rights Council. The Human Rights Council is composed of 47 elected member States of the United Nations. It is mandated to conduct Periodic Reviews (UPRs) of all member States. According to Human Rights Council Resolution 5/1, the goals of the UPR include "promoting universality, interdependence, indivisibility and interrelatedness of all human rights". The review includes three documents: a State prepared report; a compilation of the State's recent treaty body reviews; and a compilation of information from NGOs, NHRIs, and other "relevant stakeholders."



Legislative Review

NGOs and NHRIs are invited to submit information to be compiled into a report and considered by the Human Rights Council. AFIC submitted two country shadow reports highlighting areas of concern being freedom of expression and access to information to the Human Rights Council.

No response to the report has yet been received from the Council

Namibia

AFIC commended Namibia for positive developments in the area of freedom of expression and access to information. The report takes note of Namibia's apparent willingness to cooperate with international human rights bodies and mechanisms since the last review period, evidenced by the submission of reports to human rights bodies and facilitation of official visits of three UN Special Rapporteurs. While recognising the positive steps taken by Namibia, AFIC recommended the adoption of a law relating to access to information should remain a top priority of the government. Considering the absence of a constitutional provision on access to information, the Government should as soon as possible implement the policy framework for the enactment of legislation on access to information. Further AFIC encouraged civil society to include increased engagement and sensitization of the public. Advocacy for the right to access to information should be enhanced. Effective monitoring systems should be developed to assess efforts at increasing access to information.

Rwanda

This shadow report examined Rwanda's compliance with its international human rights particularly access to information and freedom of expression. The report was written in consultation with Opens Society and Development Initiative. Rwanda continues to face a legacy of poor freedom of expression and access to information. To curb this, the report recommended the improvement of implementation of the law relating to Access to Information particularly, the appointment of information officers for all agencies covered by the law. Rwanda should also adopt a standard freedom of information implementation policy. Rwanda should also promptly revise its libel laws to meet international standards for freedom of expression and the media.

AFIC analyses the latest legislative developments across Africa. AFIC reviews these laws by taking stock of regional standards such as the Model Law on Access to Information in Africa, The Declaration of Freedom of Expression in Africa and other international standards. AFIC provides guidance on the bills and laws in line with international experiences and best practices regarding access to information and freedom of expression.

Listed below are the bills reviewed by AFIC in 2014

Country	Title of the Law
Kenya	Kenya Access to Information Bill
Kenya	Kenya Public Procurement and Disposal of Assets Bill
Kenya	Kenya Public Audit Bill
Burkina Faso	Burkina Faso's Access to Information Bill
Tanzania	Tanzania's Access to Information Bill
Tanzania	Tanzania's Media Services Bill

Projects

Global Partnership for Social Accountability Project

Each year, governments around the world spend trillions of dollars in public contracting provide goods and services to citizens. In some countries up to 70% of national budget is spent through public contracting. However, many times public contracting does not deliver intended volume and quality of goods and services expected. This is mainly due to conflicts, delays, cost overruns and collusion between private sector service providers and public sector employees or their agents. This in turn undermines value for money in public contracts. Uganda's Inspectorate of Government in 2012 revealed that 99.3% of public contracts over shoot planned budgets while only 29% of public contracts are completed on time.

Experience has shown that open contracting could address shortcomings of two party contract processes by promoting disclosure of information and participation in entire contract process including planning, tendering, contract implementation and closure. Following pilots actions, AFIC successfully responded to a global call for proposals by the World Bank's Global Partnership for Social Accountability. The US\$ 650,000 project seeks to improve value for money in public contracts by increasing citizens' access to information and monitoring of contracts and services in health, education and agriculture in Uganda.

During the reporting preparatory activities for implementation were implemented. These included recruitment of the Monitoring Coordinator, Sub contracting implementing partners and engaging respective ministries of health, education and agriculture. In addition, a memorandum of understanding with the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Authority was executed. Further members of the Uganda Contracts Monitoring Coalition were trained in strategic communication and engagement as well as fundraising. At the close of the year in December 2015, had been made in reviewing and updating key governance documents of the coalition as part of the broader implementation of the coalition's strategic plan.

In the coming year 2016, implementation of district level activities by implementing partners, Transparency International in health and education sectors and INFOC Uganda in the agricultural sector will be undertaken.

During the year, AFIC in collaboration with Public and Private Development Centre published a report of the analysis of open contracting in Africa Open Government Action Plan. It was also part of the panel on open contracting during the October 2015 Open Government Summit in Mexico.

In 2016, in addition to implementing the above mentioned GPSA project, AFIC will work with its members to ensure that open contracting is strengthened in national action plans.

ECOWAS Framework

Since 2009, the ECOWAS Commission has been involved in the process of adopting a regional supplementary framework on freedom of expression and access to information. In 2012, a decision was made to separate the right to information from freedom of expression and get two separate frameworks. AFIC was requested to propose the one on freedom of expression.

AFIC working with Media Rights Agenda and the Ghanaian freedom of information coalition drafted the framework and submitted report with recommendation that a regional consultation meeting bringing together stakeholders from member states, civil society and ECOWAS Commission be organized to discuss the drafts. This however, could not proceed because of the changes at the level of directors for legal affairs and communication. When new officers were appointed, the process faced a new challenge because no budget had been allocated.

Given the importance of the frameworks it was agreed that joint fundraising be undertaken by the ECOWAS Commission, AFIC and Media Rights Agenda. In 2015, part funding of US\$30,332 was secured from the Open Society Initiative of West Africa to organize the consultation. Ford Foundation was also engaged to provide the outstanding balance of US\$60,000 for the consultation meeting. Ford Foundation has expressed interest to support the initiative and requested for some clarification especially regarding possibility of formalizing the unique relationship with civil society on the issue as well as outlining plans for the post adoption process to ensure that when adopted the two frameworks will have strong effect on the ground within member states. Consultations between AFIC and MRA on the one hand and ECOWAS Commission on the other are underway.

During the first half of 2016, the regional consultation meeting will be held to advance the process.

Enhancing transparency and accountability of electoral processes in Senegal and Uganda

Disclosure of election candidate and party finances, including campaign spending and contributions serves to protect the integrity of the electoral process and enables voters to make informed decisions concerning election candidates. Few African countries require political parties, electoral candidates, or their donors to disclose campaign contributions and other sources of income. The African Union has attempted to advance disclosure of electoral party and candidate income processes through the African Charter on Democracy, Elections, and Governance, whose objective is to ensure that political parties promote the establishment of the necessary conditions to foster transparency and access to information.

With support from the National Endowment for Democracy, to the tune of US \$41,000 AFIC seeks to empower civil society to engage in monitoring the financing of political parties. The ultimate objective is to create awareness of the right to information and its impact on democracy, particularly in the electoral process. Civil society will be empowered largely in making use of right to information



Meeting with Uganda's Speaker of Parliament

tools. AFIC will issue reports with recommendations on how to improve the legal framework, lobby for political commitment, and propose monitoring initiatives during electoral processes.

The 2016 Elections in Uganda resulted in a record for campaign spending for Uganda. AFIC has established that about ten million US dollars has been spent on the election by political candidates. While in Senegal election reform process are currently underway that AFIC is closely observing. The expectation is with the generation of knowledge on financing of political parties coupled with recommendations that will be shared among key stakeholders will stimulate public debate. It will also create channels for social accountability of electoral processes, provide fair information to citizens and ultimately enhance democracy.

AFIC training Civil Society

The first part of the draft report is being completed. Once these are complete, it will be translated from English to French (Uganda) and French to English (Senegal). This will then be shared with AFIC members being 35 civil society organizations in 22 African countries for additional reviews and inputs.

Enhancing good governance through citizens access to information in Malawi, Uganda and Kenya

Whereas African countries have made important efforts to decentralise decision-making and to allow citizen's participation in governance, the lack of information, accountability mechanisms and unresponsive public institutions, inhibits their meaningful participation in governance and holding of



leaders accountable. For these reasons and a vast experience, civil society organisations, governments and donors have recognised the role of effective access to information and citizens' participation in positively impacting development. AFIC is carrying out a pilot multi-approach project that addresses different dimensions of the same problem.

Through a grant from the Swedish International Development Cooperation to a tune of US \$ 289,960 AFIC is creating knowledge around the right to information as a tool to promote transparency and public sector accountability and ultimately build collaboration between citizens and government in the fight against corruption.

Public officials, civil society leaders and journalists have been trained in a 2-day workshop in each country. These workshops seek to increase capacities of citizens to demand information, hold their government accountable and anti-corruption agencies' work.

Within this project and in collaboration with the national anti-corruption agencies, AFIC and implementing partners (Article 19 East Africa and Centre for Human Rights and Rehabilitation) have analysed the national anti-corruption frameworks in reference to the United Nations and African Union conventions and their provisions on ATI. The analysis looks at the existing engagement channels between anti-corruptions agencies and citizens.

Impunity for crimes against freedom of expression advocates in Africa

With support from IFEX to the tune of \$8000, AFIC is conducting research to investigate the implementation and state of compliance with international regional mechanism, recommendations and decisions of the African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights as well as the UN Human Right Universal Periodic Review to address impunity.

After the research phase, AFIC will raise awareness by calling on national policy actors to implement resolutions and decisions based on the findings from the research.

International and Regional Engagement

Important Engagements and Platforms

SN		Organizer/Partner	Remarks
1	Africa-Europe Partnership on democratic governance and human rights	AUC; EU	AFIC is a member of CS steering committee. Key CSO recommendations adopted by AU-EU high level dialogue
2	Engagements with the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights	ACHPR	Submitted shadow reports and engaged on expansion of Principles of Freedom of Expression in Africa to strengthen ATI
3	Promote protection of the rights of mining communities in Africa.	International Alliance for Natural Resources in Africa (IANRA)	Inputs made into draft model mining law and first principles. These are hoped to strengthen advocacy for the protection of the rights of communities affected by mining in Africa.
4	Freedom of Information Advocates Network (FOIANet)	FOIANet	AFIC is a member of the steering committee and more recently was elected to host the Secretariat
5	African Platform on Access to Information	MISA	Declaration of International day for Universal Access to Information by UNESCO General Conference
6	Open Government Partnership	OGP Secretariat; Government of Tanzania	Africa Regional Meeting and Open Government Mexico Summit
7	Africa Democracy Forum	Ghana Centre for Democratic Development	Action plan to revive Africa Democracy Forum

AU–EU partnership on democracy and human rights

During 2015, AFIC joined the African Steering Committee and AU-EU joint civil society steering committee on AU-EU partnership on democratic governance and human rights. This space provides civil society in Africa and Europe to engage both Commissions on democratic governance and human rights in both continents. In November 2015, AFIC Coordinator joined other members of the steering committee to discuss the work of the steering committee and the hosting of the AU-EU joint CSO Seminar.

The Seminar held in Kigali, Rwanda, brought together 40 civil society leaders from Africa and Europe to discuss the situation of freedom of expression in Africa and Europe. The opening was graced by Ambassador Salah Hamad from the African Union and Ambassador Michael Ryan Head of EU Delegation in Rwanda. Topics included safety and security of journalists, surveillance, right to information among other topic.

Participants were hosted for a lunch discussion by the EU Special Representative for Human Rights, Mr Stavros Lambrinidis with whom wide ranging challenges including shrinking civic space, freedom of expression and right to information were discussed.

Mr. Omar Faruk from the AU civil society steering committee and Jean-Marie Rogue represented the joint Steering Committee in presenting Seminar recommendations to the High Level Dialogue which was led by HE Dr. Aisha L. Abdullahi, AUC Commissioner for Political Affairs and HE Stavros Lambrinidis from the European Union. AU and EU accepted key civil society seminar recommendations and made important commitments and observations:

Jointly support a Continental Conference on Freedom of Expression in 2016.

Develop national action plans on safety and security of journalists and freedom of expression advocates in conflict zones in Africa.

Support the production of status report on implementation of access to information in line with the African Model Law on Access to Information adopted by the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights.

Jointly commemorate the UN declared International Day to End Impunity of Crimes against Journalists on 2 November 2016 as part of their common commitment to fight impunity.

Partner in organizing the High-Level Dialogue on the promotion and protection of Human Rights in Africa in which issues of mutual interests will be discussed.

Jointly provide technical and financial support to their respective civil society steering committees in order for them to effectively execute their mandate. AU and EU encourage both steering committees to develop individual mandates as well as a joint mandate to govern and guide their scope and modalities of work.

Recommended to both Civil Society Steering Committees to inclusively and meaningfully contribute and ensure their role in all activities and programmes of the partnership on democratic governance and human rights.

The two institutions agreed that the CSOs Seminars are of great value within the context of the Human Rights Dialogue and jointly affirmed the need for greater space for civil society within this partnership to do its work without undue interference.

In 2016, AFIC will work with other members of the Steering Committee in following with both AU and EU on the actualisation of the commitments. It will also engage other members of the steering committee regarding the joint recommendation of AU and EU stated in (g) above.

Engagement with ACHPR

The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) is mandated by the African Charter to ensure the promotion and protection of the rights guaranteed by the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. AFIC obtained Observer Status with ACHPR in 2013 and has actively engaged this platform through shadow reporting and other forms of advocacy. AFIC has also collaborated with ACHPR's special mechanism on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information in Africa.

During 2015 in particular, AFIC in collaboration with its members: Media Rights Agenda, MISA, Society for Democratic Initiatives, Centre for Human Rights Rehabilitation, Article 19, Kenyan Section of the International Commission of Jurists and Never Again Rwanda (partner) produced and submitted shadow reports on countries such as Algeria, Nigeria, Kenya, Malawi, Sierra Leone and Rwanda.

In addition, AFIC and its African Platform on Access to Information partners collaborated with ACHPR's Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information in drafting the expansion of Principles of Freedom of Expression in Africa to strengthen the right to information. During 2015, drafting was done and a consultative meeting was held. This process will continue in 2016 when the report is expected to be presented to the ACHPR for consideration and possible adoption.

International Alliance for Natural Resources in Africa (IANRA)

One of the key strategic objectives of AFIC is to promote the right to information at continental and sub-regional level. In this regard, during 2015, AFIC's engagements and promotion of the right to information through different fora and platforms continued to broaden and deepen. The following are some of the key platforms and initiatives engaged in 2015.

Promote protection of the rights of mining communities in Africa.

Africa is rich yet its people remain among the poorest in the world, who takes the benefits? It is a fact that extraction of natural resources in Africa has been done over the last decades and the new rush is causing concern as people are not only left poor but without rights. Through the IANRA network, AFIC and other members are seeking to make a contribution to ensure that people get information they need to influence decisions that affect them in respect of mining.

Over the past year, IANRA has undertaken a legal analysis of mining laws, proposed first principles and draft model mining law. In addition, it has developed a draft advocacy guideline on influencing policy action at continental level. Through the technical advisory committee and co-convenor of the advocacy working group of the network AFIC contributed to these processes. It also authored

sections on the right to information for communities in the first principles as well as the draft model law. In addition, AFIC contributed a section regarding engaging African Union organs and institutions. Understanding of these procedures is essential for civil society activists given Africa's integration agenda. During 2016, it is expected that these drafts will be finalized and advocacy intensified.

Open Government Partnership (OGP)

Launched in September 2011 by eight governments, the initiative seeks to promote transparency, accountability, citizen participation and public integrity. It among others emphasizes the need for governments to adopt and effectively implement right to information laws as a means to achieve meaning full participation and public accountability. OGP has now grown from eight founding governments to nearly seventy and over 1,000 commitments have been made in respective national action plans to promote openness, citizen participation and public accountability.

AFIC has accompany this process first to promote its awareness and support its members and partners to use it to advance the right to information. In May 2015, the Africa Regional Meeting was hosted by the Government of Tanzania in Dar es Salaam. The meeting provided an opportunity to discuss regional specific issues as well as ways to advance the open government agenda with and across governments and civil society. The meeting served the purpose of mobilising civil society and governments from the region to effectively engage the process and promote sharing of experiences. During the meeting, AFIC together with Public and Private Centre (PPDC) co-hosted a panel on open contracting. This was preceded by the release by the two organisations of the analysis report of how open contracting and open budgets are covered by governments in their respective open government action plans. During the same regional meeting AFIC together with Article 19 Eastern Africa co-hosted a panel discussion on the situation of the right to information in Africa.

Later in October 2015 AFIC participated in the Open Government Partnership Summit hosted by the Government of Mexico. The summit provided learning and sharing from different experiences and perspectives and allowed for knowledge sharing. AFIC together with Alianza Regionale co-hosted a panel on the role of networks in promoting the right to information. In addition, AFIC also participated in different panels and side meetings regarding open contracting and Access to Information Working Group among other engagements.

Africa Democracy Forum

The situation of democracy in Uganda continues to be challenged with elections full of fraud, disputes, violence, lack of transparency and confidence of the people in electoral processes by the population. These have in a number of times escalated into wide scale violence. AFIC has since 2011 been promoting the right to electoral information specifically by promoting the ratification, domestication and effective implementation of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance. In 2011, AFIC in collaboration with the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information in Africa organised an Eastern Africa conference on the consultation on the then AU draft Model Law on Access to Information, ratification of the AU Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance as well as promotion of freedom of information. This conference and its

recommendations inspired other campaigns which together resulted into coming into force of the charter in February 2012.

During 2015, AFIC worked in partnership with other civil society organisations to revive the Africa Democracy Forum (ADF). ADF brings together various democracy, human rights and governance civil society organisations committed to the advancement of democracy in Africa. Various online discussions were held to review ADF, its strategy, coordination and future. These were followed by broader consultation meeting at which a working group of which AFIC is a member was tasked with discussing an action plan to revive the forum, mobilise resources and hold a general assembly where the old executive would hand over to the new one to be elected at the meeting. This assembly would also discuss and approve a new strategy.

Follow-up meetings were then held in Washington (at the side-lines of USA Africa Summit, August 2015) and Accra (September 2015). The Accra Working Group meeting resolved to hold a general assembly in Zimbabwe in 2016. The assembly would be hosted by the working group with ZimRights as the convenor. A draft budget and action plan were also discussed. A number of funding agencies have been successfully approached through ZimRights and it is now confirmed that the assembly will take place. At the beginning of 2016, the Working Group will meet to plan the assembly.

Transparency and Accountability

Balance Sheet

AFRICA FREEDOM OF INFORMATION CENTRE

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31st DECEMBER

	NOTES	2015	2014
		\$	\$
ASSETS			
Current Assets	2	455,972.79	119,678.30
Cash and Bank			
TOTAL ASSETS		455,972.79	119,678.30
FUND BALANCE			
Fund Balance	3	455,972.79	119,678.30
LIABILITIES			
TOTAL		455,972.79	119,678.30

Income and Expenditure

AFRICA FREEDOM OF INFORMATION CENTRE

STATEMENT INCOME & EXPENDITURE FOR YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER

	NOTES	2015	2014
		\$	\$
INCOME			
DONOR FUNDING	6(A)	560,965.00	163,742.82
OTHER RECEIPTS	6(B)	882.37	3,662.34
TOTAL INCOME		561,847.37	167,405.16
EXPENDITURE			
ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES	7	23,317.89	18,118.86
PRINTING & PUBLISHING	8	-	3,101.66
RESEARCH AND BUILDING KNOWLEDGE BASE	9	-	-
STAFF COSTS	10	95,536.52	67,328.88
FINANCE COSTS	11	636.14	845.94
ADVOCACY FOR IMPLEMENTATION	12	10,272.62	7,635.11
INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY STRENGTHENING	13	13,250.55	62,429.22
CONTINGENCY	14	-	-
ADVOCACY FOR IMPROVED LEGAL AND POLICY ENVIRONMENT	15	82,539.16	44,074.90
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		225,552.88	203,534.57
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR		336,294.49	(36,129.41)

AFRICA FREEDOM OF INFORMATION CENTRE

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 2015

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Cashflow from Operating activities		
Operating surplus (deficit)	336,294.49	(36,129.41)
Net cash generated from operations	336,294.49	(36,129.41)
ANALYSIS OF MOVEMENT IN CASH & CASH EQUIVALENTS		
Balance as at 1st January	119,678.30	155,807.71
Movement in cash	336,294.49	(36,129.41)
Balance at 31st December	455,972.79	119,678.30
Cash & Cash Equivalents as at 31st December	455,972.79	119,678.30



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