

ADVOCACY TIMELINE



For the proclamation of 28 September as International Day for Universal Access to Information

2002

28 September, originally called Right to Know day, has been celebrated globally since 2002 as result of a conference of international freedom of information experts establishing a coalition of advocates -FOI-net, held from 26 to 28 September, 2002 in Sofia, Bulgaria.

2009

Establishment of the African Platform on Access to Information (APAI) Working Group (WG), formerly known as the Windhoek + 20, with the aim to advance access to information in all its dimensions, regionally and internationally.

2011

UNESCO is a partner of the Pan-African Conference on Access to Information (PACAI), which adopts the APAI Declaration on 19 September.

The APAI Declaration calls on UNESCO to proclaim 28 September as International Right to Information Day.

2012

Letter of appreciation for support of the Campaign to UNESCO Director General and reiteration of call to UNESCO as stated in the APAI Declaration.

Continued discussions with representatives of African governments requesting support

2013

1st Mission to UNESCO Headquarters (HQ) in Paris in May: Meetings with 5 UNESCO Delegations and the UNESCO Assistant Director General; presentation at a meeting of the UNESCO Africa Group

APAI consults with UNESCO delegates and receives valuable strategic advice.

Further engagement of governments and UNESCO Commissions on national level

2nd Mission to UNESCO HQ in September: Meetings with 8 UNESCO delegations; presentation at the UNESCO Africa Group Meeting; informal side discussions

2014

3rd Mission: Attendance of UNESCO World Press Freedom Day Celebrations in Paris, in May: APAI hosts a panel on ATI and development; meetings with 8 UNESCO delegations

Final Statement of the UNESCO World Press Freedom Day International Conference (the Paris Declaration) under call to UNESCO states: "Consider support for, as reflected in the Africa Platform for Access to Information, the recognition of 28 September as World Right to Information Day."

The WG updates the APAI information package, including information on the APAI Declaration, campaign developments, goals and milestones with the APAI WG's specific 'Ask to UNESCO delegates' and a roadmap on how to achieve the goal.

Prior to the 195th Session of UNESCO's Executive Board, 15- 31 October: APAI WG sends formal letters requesting support for a resolution to proclaim 28 September International Right to Information Day to Chair and Deputy Chair of the Executive Board and African Executive Board Members

2015

APAI WG members continue advocacy during national, regional and international conferences and meetings.

4th Mission to UNESCO HQ in July: Meeting with 14 UNESCO delegations and UNESCO representatives, Director, Division of Freedom of Expression and Media Development and Director of the Division for Cooperation, Intersectoral Follow-up and Partnerships in the Africa Department

July

Angolan delegation requests a slot during the plenary meeting of the Africa Group for the APAI WG to address the Group.

The UNESCO Africa Group sets up a Working Group to work on the draft Resolution proposed by the Angolan delegation.

5th Mission: APAI WG addresses the plenary of the Africa Group and has meetings with 2 delegations and valuable side discussions.

The item is included on the agenda of the 197th Session of the Executive Board of UNESCO, 7-21 October.

The UNESCO Africa Group works on the draft Resolution requesting the 38th Session of the UNESCO General Conference to adopt 28 September as International Access to Information Day.

On 19 October the 197th Session of the UNESCO Executive Board adopts draft Resolution co-sponsored by Angola, Nigeria and Morocco.

Oct

APAI sends letters of appreciation for the support and adoption of the draft Resolution to the co-sponsors of the Resolution, all members of the UNESCO Africa Group and UNESCO Executive Board Members.

Nov

On 11.November the Communications and Information Commission of UNESCO discussed and approved the proposal to designate 28 September as International Day for the Universal Access to Information (IDUAI).

6th Mission: The APAI WG attends the 38th Session of the UNESCO General Conference, on 3-18 November, and meets with the Chief of Section of the Universal Access and Preservation Team, the Director of the Division of Freedom of Expression and Media Development, 11 UNESCO delegations and has several valuable side meetings and discussions.

On 17.November the 38th Session of the UNESCO General Conference adopts Resolution 38 C/70 declaring 28 September as International Day for Universal Access to Information.

THE EXPERIENCE

The direct engagement with UNESCO representatives was crucial in understanding UNESCO structures and decision-making processes.

Face to face meetings with national UNESCO delegations helped to identify common interests and goals.

Feedback and recommendations fed into the planning process: next steps, important deadlines as well as countries and persons to consult and engage with.

PRACTICAL LESSONS LEARNED:

Have an information package outlining who you are, what you want to achieve, why this goal is important/how it is beneficial to & provide a clear and concise roadmap on what is asked of those you engage with to achieve set goal.

If you address an international audience, have your delegation consist of different relevant language speakers.

Follow up with those you have engaged, send them updates and meet them again to keep them informed about progress made.

Have someone on the ground to provide administrative support and coordinate meetings.

If you lobby internationally, make sure to have a local phone number to facilitate easy communication.

LIST OF DELEGATIONS:

MISSION 1: Brazil, Namibia, Nigeria, Uganda, United Kingdom

Mission 3: Angola, Benin, Brazil, Ecuador, India, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal

Mission 5: Peru, Indian

MISSION 2: Angola, Congo Brazzaville, Djibouti, India, Nigeria, Kenya, Uganda, Zimbabwe

Mission 4: Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Brazil, Egypt, Ethiopia, France, Gambia, Germany, Mali, Morocco, Nigeria, Sweden, The Netherlands

Mission 6: Austria, Azerbaijan, Costa Rica, Colombia, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Turkey, Uganda, Nigeria