



# Benin City Declaration on Access to information at sub-national system in Nigeria 2022

*Declaration adopted by participants and Stakeholders at the International Day of Universal Access to information, held in Benin City on 28 th September 2022 to promote anti-corruption, human rights protection, good office practice and participatory governance in Sub-Nationals.*

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In view of the existing controversial judgment of the Court of Appeal of Nigeria that state should pass the freedom of information and adapt it to the national law to be applicable to the state. Stakeholders agreed that government obligation to ensure access to public records and information is an inalienable democratic governance practice and as such should not be treated in vacuum.

And being mindful of the other extant laws which is binding on the states as a federating unit, like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other universally recognized instruments and being cognizant that Article 19 (2) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), protects everyone's right to freedom of expression, which includes to "seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds" and the SDG target 16.10 which aims to 'ensure public access to information and protect fundamental

# We, therefore, call on sub-national government in Nigeria

**1. To sponsor an Executive Bill on the Freedom of Information law** which is crucial to sustainable development in the states

**2. To create a legal, policy and institutional environment in the sub-systems,** which ensures everyone's right to access information through adopting and implementing statutory and institutional mechanisms to guarantee this right, which meet the following standards:



- Applies broadly to all public authorities including the executive, legislative and judicial branches, both the state and local government, statutory and constitutional bodies; bodies which are owned, controlled or funded by these other bodies and private bodies exercising public functions and spending public funds;
- Incorporates user-friendly procedures such as the timely processing of requests, low-cost fee regimes, easy means for lodging requests and the provision of assistance to applicants where needed;
- Provides for a limited regime of exceptions that only protect legitimate interests against harm and includes a public interest override;
- Provides for an effective system of oversight, including by independent administrative bodies which are endowed with the necessary resources
- Provides for promotional measures such as broad public awareness, including through media, data and information literacy programmes, the appointment and training of information officials, proper records and data management regimes, and regular reporting on implementation
- Provides for expansive proactive disclosure of information, taking full advantage of digital technologies.

- 3. To maintain** the right of access to information during states of emergency, including to enable public debate about emergency measures and the observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms at the sub-national
- 4. To ensure transparency to combat corruption** through the proactive publication of information about public finances, assets and conflict of interest declarations, the agendas and records of meetings of public officials, making open access to company registration and beneficial ownership data, and registers of lobbyists and interest groups.



- 5. To accelerate and enhance its efforts to close digital divides**, including the digital gender divide, and ensure that everyone has affordable, open, secure and high-quality access to the internet without restrictions or discrimination, keeping in mind that to be impactful, such measures should also address political, socio-economic, linguistic and cultural barriers that might prevent equal access to information and communication

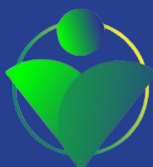
6. **To ensure that publicly held information is created and preserved** by developing a strong statutory and policy framework that requires public authorities to create accurate and complete records of their activity, and by setting and enforcing clear rules on record management, including the preservation and archiving of data, records and technologytechnologies.
7. **To facilitate access to information both by and about women** and gender, as well as by and about persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups,
8. **To guarantee annual compliance audit**

A photograph of a woman with dark hair and eyes, looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. She is surrounded by other people in a crowd, though they are out of focus. Overlaid on the image is a dark, semi-transparent rectangular box containing white text and a downward-pointing arrow.

**Call on civil society, media workers, academia and technology outfits**

- a. **To continue to raise awareness** and build coalitions among policymakers, media workers, businesses, citizens at large and vulnerable groups in particular, about their right to access information and how it can benefit them, and serve democracy and sustainable development,technologies.
- b. **To support best practices** in the adoption and implementation of the access to information Act and policies, to recommend measures aimed at facilitating the achievement of SDG indicator 16.10.2 on public access to information,

- c. To offer relevant training and expertise to officials and public authorities, on good practices in the field of FOI,
- d. To provide guidance, training and awareness to members of the public on FOIA, their application and how to exercise rights encompassed by them
- e. For the State Law to ensure gathering quality data for the measurement of the right of access to information in law and practice.



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The Undersigned stake holders here assembled at the John Oyegun Public Service Academy in Benin City on this 28th September 2022, Append their signatures in adoption of this declaration

Name	Organization	Signature
1. President Aigbolchan	RUNDIAR	
2. Austin Osafue	FGFSC	
3. Prof. AFEISIMI Dominic	BADAIKIMRUNDIAR	
4. Dr Godwin Uyi Oji	ERA/FRAN	
5. Comrade Abiola Daisy	LAGS	
6. Mr Leo Atakpu	ADVEET	
7. Bishop Dr. Osadolor Ochi	PEOPLE'S DEFENDER	
8. Ehis Agugu	NOCSON	
9. ONDIRIBHLO FRANCIS	JOURNALIST	
10. Tony Oluwo	JOURNALIST	
12. Eghora Osazele Ogbebor	OLCEE	
13. Oyejoke Mitchell Tanni	OSEC (Oseno Centre)	
14. Dr. Mrs B. O Emede	ELDEI	
15. Engr. Mrs Akinyele Anara	HMTS Foundation	
16. Idunkele Uduan Pearl	TACDI	
17. Utanere Faith Omoregbe	YALI	
18. Peace Usiosefe	Student	
19. Comrade Charity Osemwengie	Human Rights	
20. Solomon Otabore Abangbe	LEGAL PRACTITIONER	
21. Benjamin Olorun Pius Asemota	Foundation	
22. Annie Umoru	Iniative for Gender equality & advancement	
23. Okosun Bright	Student	

24 Khadi Ergemul

25 Justice Ose

26 Solomon Orutpe - Idungba

Journalist  
worker manager

Youth empowerment  
advocacy & Good  
Governance  
Initiative (Yeggi)

*[Handwritten signature]*

Name	Organization	Sign
27 Nwene Ighemuehinwa Ighemuehinwa	Connected Advocacy	<i>[Signature]</i>
28 Chabime Uzor Inyama	Outright	<i>[Signature]</i>
29 Victor Amanufo Gbato AGBOWO	Bendel TV	<i>[Signature]</i>
30 Bless Ojeruse	Strong Hand Development Initiative (SHADE-IN)	<i>[Signature]</i>
31 Olorunsola Liberty Olorunsola	Peace Image Fund	<i>[Signature]</i>
32 Aghedo Gifted	CONGOS	<i>[Signature]</i>
33 Oghafua Lisa Precious	CONGOS	<i>[Signature]</i>
34 Omoniyi-Olorunjiyi	V & N	<i>[Signature]</i>
35 Martha Okhelelem	V & N	<i>[Signature]</i>
36 TIWODHA REGINA	VIGILANTE GROUP OF NIGERIA	<i>[Signature]</i>
37 Bernard A. Eyimmosan	Vigilante G.N.	<i>[Signature]</i>
38 Josephine Owengize	Vigilante Group of Nig	<i>[Signature]</i>
39 Williams E. Ogemwagie	Vigilante Group of Nig	<i>[Signature]</i>
40 Yusuf Yusuf AbulKareem	TEAM HAFI/STRESS	<i>[Signature]</i>
41 Osayande Isaac Osaze	Ministry of Science & Technology	<i>[Signature]</i>
42 BENJAMIN IGIEKHUME J.	✓ ✓ ✓	<i>[Signature]</i>
43 Egbekawaye Frank	Ministry of Science & Tech	<i>[Signature]</i>
44 Ehinukhulan Kenneth Onian		<i>[Signature]</i>
45 Okonjo Ommechunior	UPOMI J.D.P.C.I	<i>[Signature]</i>
46 Idiozee Efe Paul	Media: National Point	<i>[Signature]</i>
47 Fortune Oyele	Parents' Rights	<i>[Signature]</i>
48 COMR. ABDUL-KARIM ORONSAYE	FOUNDATION FOR CIVILISED SOCIETY	<i>[Signature]</i>
49 Comr EZE Gift C.O	MOTHERS RIGHT	<i>[Signature]</i>
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52 Obuli Emmanuel	HOCSON	<i>[Signature]</i>
53 Oluwaluwa Phoebe's Aiyerowho	ICT	<i>[Signature]</i>
54 Bienose Julius - A.	CIBT	<i>[Signature]</i>
55 Oghafua Precious	Teenage care Centre	<i>[Signature]</i>
56 Iyadua Michael	AGEKS	<i>[Signature]</i>
57 Blessed Jaffeh	FDI Council	<i>[Signature]</i>