

NEWSLETTER



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**INDUCTION CEREMONY FOR THE NEWLY
APPOINTED EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
OF RTI COMMISSION**

VISION



“To facilitate the right of access to information: promote, and sustain awareness of the citizenry in their right of access to information and of institutions in their obligation to disclose information.”

MISSION



“To build an informed citizenry, to promote transparency in public discourse, protect, monitor and enforce the right of access to information and to hold public institutions accountable.”

CORE VALUES



- **Transparency**
- **Accountability**
- **Fairness**
- **Professionalism and**
- **Independence**



Welcome Message – April Edition | RTI Commission Newsletter!

Dear Readers,

In this month's edition, we spotlight a landmark moment for the RTI Commission—the swearing-in of Ms. Genevieve Shirley Lartey, Esq. as our new Executive Secretary. Presided over by President John Dramani Mahama, this ceremony marks a fresh chapter in the Commission's pursuit of transparency, accountability, and open governance in Ghana.

We delve into the highlights of the induction, explore Ms. Lartey's vision, and reaffirm our commitment to ensuring every Ghanaian's right to access information. As a new season unfolds, we're reminded that transparency is a foundation for growth and civic empowerment.

The RTI Commission draws inspiration from spring — a time of growth and renewal — to reaffirm our commitment to transparency and open governance. In this April edition, we highlight how access to information continues to empower citizens across Ghana. Whether you're new to RTI or deeply involved, there's something for everyone. Let's keep asking the right questions — because informed citizens build stronger democracies.

Stay engaged, stay informed — and let's continue building a more transparent future together.

Happy reading!





INDUCTION CEREMONY FOR THE NEWLY APPOINTED EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF RTI COMMISSION

On Wednesday, April 16, 2025, a significant milestone was marked at the Presidency as Ms. Genevieve Shirley Lartey Esq. was officially sworn in as the new Executive Secretary of the Right to Information Commission. The ceremony, presided over by His Excellency John Dramani Mahama, President of the Republic of Ghana, was attended by members of the RTI Commission's board who witnessed Ms. Lartey's formal induction into office.

This momentous occasion signifies the beginning of a new chapter for the RTI Commission and its operations in advancing transparency and accountability in Ghana.

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to Ms. Lartey on her appointment and express our confidence in her Leadership. Her experience and

dedication are expected to play a vital role in strengthening the Commission's operations and promoting citizen's right to access information.

The Right to Information Commission remains steadfast in its commitment to ensuring that every Ghanaian can fully exercise their right to access information. With Ms. Lartey at the helm, we are optimistic about continued progress and collaborative efforts to deepen transparency and good governance across the country.

Congratulations to Ms. Genevieve Shirley Lartey Esq.

We wish her every success in her new role and look forward to working together to further the mission of the Commission.





ATI Division Pays Courtesy Call on New Executive Secretary of RTI Commission

On April 23, 2024, the Access to Information (ATI) Division paid a courtesy call on the newly appointed Executive Secretary of the Right to Information Commission, Ms. Genevieve Shirley Lartey Esq. The delegation, led by Dr. Nafisa, was warmly received by the Executive Secretary, who was accompanied by Mr. Stephen Owusu Esq., Head of Legal at the RTI Commission.

During the meeting, Dr. Nafisa formally welcomed the Executive Secretary and emphasized the importance of deepening the existing collaboration between the ATI division and the RTI Commission. Discussions focused on enhancing public sensitization and the implementation of the Right to Information Act, particularly in relation to information officers trained by ATI. The Executive Secretary was briefed on the ongoing initiatives and the need to intensify sensitization activities across various regions to address existing disparities.

The team highlighted the ATI Division's core mandate to ensure compliance with the RTI Act across public institutions. The team lead briefed the Executive Secretary on the Division's collaborative efforts with the RTI Commission, the media, and the RTI Coalition.

A proposal was made to institutionalize the open forum as an annual event, with discussions centered on increasing public awareness and generating greater interest in the law.

Stephen Owusu Esq. raised concerns about potential clashes between ATI information officers and RTI officers at public institutions

during sensitization exercises. Ms. Bridget Mensah of the ATI Division acknowledged the concern and pledged to work closely with the Regional Director to ensure seamless coordination between both teams for effective delivery.

In her closing remarks, Ms. Lartey expressed her appreciation for the visit and reiterated her commitment to strengthening the partnership between the RTI Commission and the ATI Division. The meeting was a significant step toward enhancing collaboration and ensuring the effective implementation of the Right to Information Act.





STRENGTHENING TRANSPARENCY AND EMPOWERING CITIZENS THROUGH SENSITIZATION

In a bold effort to deepen transparency and promote good governance, the Right to Information Commission (RTIC) ramped up its public education campaign in Kumasi, Ashanti Region, throughout April 2025. These sensitization sessions were a crucial part of the Commission's ongoing mission to ensure that public institutions not only understand but also effectively implement the Right to Information Act, 2019 (Act 989).

The outreach began with an insightful face-to-face session at Abofra World School and Manhyia Local Prisons. This session underscored the transformative power of the RTI law, emphasizing its role as a tool for civic empowerment and institutional accountability, beyond just a legal obligation.

Building on this momentum, the Commission extended its sensitization drive to a diverse range of media and private institutions. At the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC), multiple sessions were held across various departments to

explore the media's dual role as both a user and promoter of the RTI law. Similarly, Adehyee FM hosted an interactive discussion, highlighting the media's responsibility to educate the public and advocate for transparency.

Astolinks International, a private entity with a strong focus on governance and public access to information, also participated in the sensitization. Their involvement highlighted the growing relevance of RTI principles beyond the public sector, as private institutions strive to align with the standards of transparency and accountability.





Each session provided a comprehensive overview of the RTI law, covering the process for accessing information, applicable exemptions, and the legal consequences of non-compliance. The sessions were highly interactive, with participants posing insightful questions on topics such as the scope of exemptions, the enforcement powers of the Commission, and the collaborative roles of other institutions in supporting the law's implementation.



The active participation and thoughtful discussions reflected a growing awareness of the importance of access to information in strengthening democracy. Many participants expressed interest in using the RTI law to enhance transparency within their own institutions and hold public offices accountable.

Ultimately, these sensitization exercises were not just informational—they were foundational. They reflect the Commission's steadfast commitment to fostering a culture where transparency is essential, and where the right to information is not just a theoretical concept but a practical tool for promoting good governance.

In addition to engaging established institutions, the Bono Office of the RTI Commission also reached out to the youth and recently led a session with the Young People's Guild of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana – Magazine branch. The session aimed to equip the young members with the knowledge and skills they need to navigate the RTI law, preparing them to be future leaders and informed citizens.

The session provided an in-depth exploration of the RTI law, focusing on the core functions of the Right to Information Commission, which works to ensure transparency and accountability within public institutions. Officers of the Commission explained the obligations of public institutions to maintain openness, as well as the process by which the public can request access to information and shared practical tips on how to submit RTI requests effectively.

A key component of the session was a discussion about the exemptions in the RTI law—particularly when and why information can be withheld and also highlighted the serious consequences of breaching the law, such as disclosing exempt information or impersonating someone to unlawfully access sensitive data.



The interactive question-and-answer segment was a standout feature of the session, with participants asking insightful questions and engaging with the material. Their enthusiasm and thoughtful responses showed that the session had successfully sparked their interest and provided them with a deeper understanding of the RTI law. It also demonstrated their eagerness to apply this knowledge to advocate for greater transparency and accountability in their communities.

The feedback from the Guild members was overwhelmingly positive, with many expressing appreciation for the opportunity to learn about a law that directly impacts their rights and the workings of public institutions. This session highlighted the vital role that informed youth play in building a more transparent and accountable society.

These sensitization initiatives, whether engaging with public institutions or the youth, reflect the Commission's continued commitment to educating and empowering individuals at all levels. By ensuring that the right to information is not only understood but actively utilized, the Commission is helping to build a generation of informed citizens ready to lead the charge for transparency and good governance.

A well-informed society is an empowered society. Let's continue the conversation and advocate for transparency together!





RTI COMMISSION STRENGTHENS COLLABORATION WITH UNESCO

The Right to Information (RTI) Commission, led by the Executive Secretary, Genevieve Shirley Lartey, Esq., paid a working visit to the UNESCO Accra Office to reinforce ongoing collaboration and explore new areas of partnership on 29th April 2025. The delegation included Mr. Stephen Owusu Esq. (Head, Legal), Mr. Kofi Sarpong Amoah (Head, Policy Planning, Budgeting, Monitoring, and Evaluation), and Ms. Audrey Korlekuor Odjeawo (Executive Assistant to the Executive Secretary).

Representation from UNESCO led by its Country Director Mr. Edmond Moukala N'Gouemo warmly welcomed the team to the meeting. The meeting highlighted the longstanding cooperation between the two institutions, particularly in relation to the International Day for Universal Access to Information (IDUAI). UNESCO shared details of the upcoming 2025 IDUAI event and reaffirmed its support for the Commission's involvement in the African Network of Information Commissioners (ANIC) and other regional initiatives.

Key discussions centered on addressing hate

speech, disinformation, misinformation and limited access to information in rural areas. The Commission shared updates on its development of a Legislative Instrument to support proactive disclosure and plans to expand public awareness campaigns to underserved communities. The work of the Enforcement, Investigation, and Compliance (EIC) Unit in empowering citizens was also highlighted.

Mr. Hamid provided information on UNESCO's online training resources to enhance staff development at the Commission. Mr. Moukala on the other hand affirmed UNESCO's commitment to coordinating its sectoral activities with that of the Commission to optimize efficiency and impact.





The representatives of UNESCO included Mr. Abdul Hamid (National Program Officer, Communication and Information) and Mr. Abdul Dayan Alhassan (Programme Assistant - Communication and Information). Ms. Lartey reaffirmed the Commission's dedication to strengthening its collaboration with UNESCO.

STAFF DURBAR



The Right to Information Commission held a Staff Durbar on 17th April, 2025, where Genevieve Shirley Lartey Esq. was formally introduced as the new Executive Secretary. This significant event marked a new chapter in the Commission's leadership, and staff were given the opportunity to welcome and familiarize themselves with the new Executive Secretary. The introduction ceremony allowed for a smooth transition and provided a platform for the New Executive Secretary to outline her vision and goals for the Commission.

The immediate past Executive Secretary, Yaw Sarpong Boateng Esq. and members of the Governing Board who were in attendance, encouraged staff to collaborate and support Genevieve Shirley Lartey Esq. in her new role. They commended the staff for their hard work and urged them to continue working together to achieve the Commission's objectives, emphasizing the importance of teamwork and

unity in driving the Commission's mission forward. With a renewed sense of purpose and teamwork, the Commission is poised to build on its successes and continue promoting Transparency and Accountability, ultimately enhancing the right to information for all citizens. The staff's dedication and commitment to the Commission's goals will be crucial in supporting Genevieve Shirley Lartey's leadership and ensuring the continued growth and effectiveness of the Commission.





CHAMBER OF OIL MARKETING COMPANIES (COMAC) ENGAGES RTI COMMISSION ON STRATEGIC COLLABORATION

On April 17, 2025, the Right to Information (RTI) Commission received a high-level delegation from the Chamber of Oil Marketing Companies (COMAC) Ghana, led by its Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Riverson Oppong. The purpose of the visit was to explore opportunities for strategic collaboration between the two institutions in support of access to information within the downstream petroleum sector.

The COMAC delegation was warmly welcomed by the Executive Secretary of the Commission, Ms. Genevieve Shirley Lartey Esq., alongside Board Member Nana Kwame Duah and the Head of Legal, Mr. Stephen Owusu Esq. The visiting team included Mr. Gabriel Kumi, Board Chairman of COMAC, as well as the Chamber's Legal Director and Board Secretary, and Director of Research.

In their remarks, COMAC emphasized the vital role access to timely and accurate information plays in their operations, especially given their oversight of more than 200 oil marketing companies and associated gas entities across Ghana. Dr. Oppong noted that COMAC frequently requires information on downstream petroleum activities and highlighted the

importance of partnering with the RTI Commission to facilitate the lawful acquisition of such data.

The delegation further expressed COMAC's readiness to sensitize the Commission on the Chamber's operations and regulatory environment. In response, the RTI Commission welcomed the proposal for collaboration and expressed its willingness to provide capacity-building sessions for COMAC's management and staff on the provisions and application of the Right to Information Act, 2019 (Act 989).

The meeting concluded successfully, with both parties reaffirming their commitment to transparency, information accessibility, and a strengthened collaborative relationship that will benefit both the public and private sectors.





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