

# Morocco

## *Nurturing a culture in favor of access to information*

### Background

Since July 2016, the laws regulating the media sector in Morocco have been changing to reflect international principles on freedom of expression and access to information. However, challenges to implement the law and legal provisions continue to undermine Morocco's ability to deliver the results of the constitutional reforms on freedom of expression made in 2011. Nevertheless, the establishment of institutions to improve journalists' safety, such as the National Press Council, a co-regulatory body and a mediator in the cases of disputes involving the press, is part of a positive trend, along with the adoption of a new law to guarantee people's public access to information.

### What we are doing

- After supporting the introduction of the law and its adoption, UNESCO is currently providing technical support for the implementation of the access to information law and ensuring the establishment of a national mechanism for safety of journalists.

[Learn more about our work \(Story on the back page\)](#)

### What we could further do with your support

- Reinforce policy advice to support the country's media reforms.
- Ensure the full implementation of the Right to Information law.
- Expand the network of judicial and media operators to strengthen dialogue between media and the judiciary.

### Key Achievements

- **The Prime Minister pledged his support** to fully implement the new Access to Information law (ATI), and mainstreaming it within the government, and to promote transparency and accountability.
- **Ensuring the effective implementation of the new media laws** by supporting dialogue between the media and the judiciary and the training of members of parliament on freedom of expression and access to information.
- **Sustained work on safety of journalists and gender sensitive reporting**, thanks to the commitment of 14 media outlets to continue safety trainings and strengthening gender coverage in media, in all provinces of the country, on their own expense.
- **A more gender responsive film sector in the South Mediterranean Region** due to the adoption of the "Call of Salé", where key regional actors from the film industry pledged to support a policy for change in the region.

Actions in Morocco fall under the following outputs of the Multi-Donor Programme (MPD):

**Output 1:**

Awareness-raising and advocacy

**Output 3:**

Enhancing the safety of journalists

**Output 4:**

Policy advice and reinforcement of duty bearers' capacities



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# “UNESCO’s support on the right to access information has been instrumental to bridge the gap between CSOs and government, especially during the long and arduous adoption process of the law.”

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Mohamed Leghtas

*Former coordinator of the Network of Civil Society Groups for Access to Information (REMDI)*

## ► Upholding Morocco’s shift to openness and accountability

In 2011, Morocco started to reform its Constitution with the aim of expanding the individual and collective civil liberties, including the right to access to information. Since then, the country embarked on a process toward the adoption of an access to information law in order to guarantee the Moroccan people’s right to request information held by the public administration, elected institutions, and public service bodies.

UNESCO and partners have been closely accompanying Morocco by providing technical support, advocacy and capacity-building to all stakeholders involved in the law-making process.

Early efforts were targeted to facilitate dialogue between the government and civil society, and integrate civil society’s inputs into this process. UNESCO helped to create an advocacy network of civil society organizations, known as *Réseau Marocain du Droit d’Accès à l’Information* (REMDI). The network was crucial to provide comments on the draft law and in promoting its adoption.

Today, REMDI is comprised of 40 organizations and is the most recognized actor in the country given its initiatives among the general public and in particular the youth.

After the law was adopted in 2018, UNESCO has been supporting the country’s efforts to implement it and mainstream international access to information principles at various levels.

A key initiative to achieve this has been the training of information focal points within the public administration service. As of 2019, UNESCO has supported the training of 800 information focal points, thereby, preparing institutions to comply with obligations provided in the law to release public information, such as processing requests in a proactive manner.

UNESCO also works closely with journalists associations and the media as they are the main requestors of official data and public documents. In order to address the flaws and obstructions of the access to information law, UNESCO has supported the National Press Council to help the media identify existing provisions that still limit their access to information.

In addition, the National Press Council has developed educational and awareness-raising tools to foster a culture of transparency among civil servants, citizens and journalists.

UNESCO will continue to support Morocco’s shift to openness and accountability in order to empower its citizens and make access to information a reality for all.

Read more about our work, visit:

<https://en.unesco.org/themes/fostering-freedom-expression/mdp>



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