

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Ministry of Information, Cultural Affairs and Tourism was created by an Act of the National Legislature in 1965, the MICAT has the Statutory responsibility to develop and disseminate information at home and abroad about the Government of Liberia.

In addition to information dissemination, its core functions promote people-friendly Cultural and Tourism activities through institutions such as the National Museum, which is the custodian of Historical Artifacts, as well as Cultural Villages and the historical Providence Island.

This report covers activities of the Ministry of Information, Cultural Affairs and Tourism (MICAT) for the period January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2015, for four programs areas including:

- A. Information Services
- B. Cultural Affairs and Tourism
- C. Foreign Missions
- D. Administration/ Management

The Ministry underwent several changes, key among which was the dissolution of the Technical Services Department and the Office of the Deputy Minister of Culture and Tourism.

New Liberia Newspaper

During the period under review, the Government-owned newspaper, the New Liberia Newspaper could not appear on the newsstand because of financial constraints under the Technical Services Department earlier this year. However, after the dissolution of said department in July 2015, the Office of Minister Lewis G. Brown resumed the production of the New Liberia Newspaper. The paper is being produced once a week and now more voluminous serving as an historical reference newspaper.

Liberia News Agency (LINA)

The Liberia News Agency, LINA has established offices in thirteen (13) of the 15 counties, each county has a Coordinator who is responsible to feed the head office in Monrovia with news stories. News stories from the counties are edited and posted on LINA website for the general public, as well as in some local dailies.

Information Services/Public Affairs

The Ministry of Information, Cultural Affairs and Tourism through its Information Services Department organized and hosted eighty-one (81) Live Press Conferences, twenty-eight (28) Radio Talk Shows and several Palaver Hut Meetings. The Department accredited 43 journalists and waived the accreditation fees for 52 journalists who came to Liberia to cover the Ebola situation. The press conferences were dedicated to explaining government policies and programs to the general public; Tuesdays and Thursdays Press Conferences were exclusively

for situational reports on the Ebola epidemic and its preventive measures until Liberia was first declared Ebola-free by the World Health Organization on May 9, 2015.

In order to enhance the capacities of all Government Public Relation Officers in the discharge of their duties, MICAT in partnership with the American Embassy organized eight day training workshop from October 7-15, 2015 in the Charles Gbenyon Press Hall. Participants received certificate of participation at the close of the training. The training sessions were facilitated by a renowned American Public Relation Expert, Mr. Eduardo Cue.

Culture Department

The Ministry through the Department of Culture embarked on a project to make Liberia's Culture and Historical Sites gain World Heritage Status, when completed will become a milestone accomplishment. The Ministry resurveyed the 50 acres of land situated in Ben's Town, Margibi County for the proposed National Cultural Center. The National Cultural Troupe participated in key national events, including welcoming home H.E. Madam Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, other presidents and foreign guests at the Roberts International Airport and at national programs.

Tourism Department

During the period under review, the Department of Tourism set up a Technical Committee after bilateral discussions with the Economic and Financial Sector Policy Department of the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning to collaborate in identifying tourist attractions and potentials tourism areas in Liberia and then devise marketing strategies to attract tourists from distance markets. The Technical Committee is also responsible to assess tourist entities in the fifteen (15) counties of Liberia for possible and accurate budget projection by the Tourism Bureau per annual. This year's World Tourism Day September 27, 2015 Commemoration was held in Buchanan, Grand Bassa County with participations from all counties.

Foreign Missions

During the period under review, the Department of Foreign Missions notably the Minister Consular assigned to Nigeria witnessed the swearing-in ceremony of two Liberian Senators as members of the ECOWAS Parliament. The ceremony was held in Abuja, Nigeria on May 11, 2015 when Speaker of the ECOWAS Parliament, His Excellency Ike Ekweremadu, swore in Liberia's Montserrado County Senator, Hon. George M. Weah and Nimba County Senator, Hon. Prince Y. Johnson to the ECOWAS Parliament.

Senators Weah and Johnson replaced Hon. Mobutu Vlah. Nyenpan, and Hon. Theodore V. K. Momoh, former Senators and outgoing members of the ECOWAS Parliament of Sinoe and Gbarpolo Counties respectively.

Administration/Management

With enormous support from the Civil Service Agency (CSA), the Ministry of Information, Cultural Affairs and Tourism (MICAT) successfully completed the retirement process of forty-

eight (48) Civil Service Retirees who had rendered their services to the Government of Liberia in various capacities from 9 years to 41 years. The Honoring/Retirement Program was held on August 6, 2015 in the Ministry's Charles Gbenyon Press Hall at the Ministry with retirees receiving their retirement handshakes.

As one of the participating ministries implementing the Public Sector Modernization Project (PSMP) which is aimed at restructuring and right sizing, pay and pension reform, managing human resources developing leadership, and gender equity in the Civil Service, the Ministry of Information, Cultural Affairs and Tourism has so far achieved one of the key deliverables. The Ministry developed job descriptions for one hundred thirty-nine (139) position titles for employees. These job descriptions have been quality assured, validated and the final copy is to be produced by the Civil Service Agency in the shortest possible time.

Open Government Partnership (OGP)

As the lead Ministry on the Open Government Partnership initiative, the Ministry of Information, Cultural Affairs and Tourism played a key role in developing Liberia's 2nd year Action Plan. MICAT, along with the OGP Steering Committee embarked on Regional Consultations in developing the 2nd year National Action Plan for citizens' increased participation. The four thematic areas considered in developing the action plan are Transparency, Citizens' Participation, Accountability and Integrity and Technology and Innovation. The Consultation targeted all of the fifteen counties grouping them in three regions with Montserrado, Bong and Grand Gedeh being the host counties. The target groups were the Superintendents, Women leaders, Youth leaders, Gender Coordinators and people with Disabilities for holistic participation which yielded desired results. The regional consultations began May and ended in June 2015; the validation workshop for Liberia's 2nd year action plan was held on June 12, 2015 in the Charles Gbenyon Press Hall with stakeholders from the 15 counties.

Three Hundred copies of the 2nd Year Action Plan have been produced and are being distributed to responsible parties, strategic partners and other stakeholders. This milestone could not have been achieved without the financial support from our biggest donor, the World Bank. The Ministry of Information, Cultural Affairs and Tourism expresses profound thanks to the World Bank Family for their enormous support during the development of the 2nd Year Action Plan and anticipates more in the coming year.

Knowledge about Open Government Partnership is widespread since the regional consultations. In fact the Ministry's Focal Person, the Deputy Minister for Administration was selected as the Focal Point for six African Countries, namely: Liberia, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Malawi, Tanzania and South Africa during the OGP African Points of Contact Meeting that was held in South Africa from 23-24 July 2015.

MICAT' Website

During the period under review, the Ministry's website, which is one of the main sources of information dissemination, attracted more views on its various social platforms as explained. To date, the Online Content Management Unit has built and is maintaining an **Online Information Portal**, and **YouTube channel**, a **Sound Cloud Page**, a **Facebook Page**, a

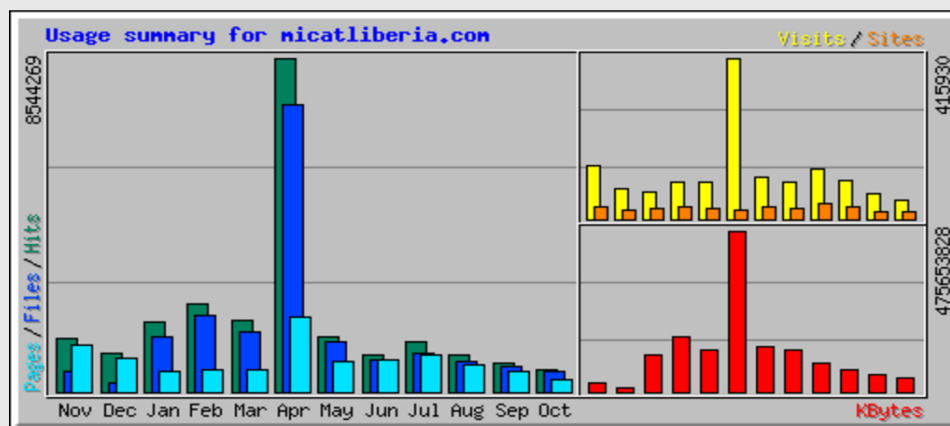
Twitter Account, a **Flickr Page** and a **Google Plus** page. Each of these platforms deals with a specific kind of content targeting different audiences around the world. Through these digital communication outlets, MICAT has succeeded in reducing the time span between when an event relevant to Liberia occurs and when people get to know. They have also served as media for the generation of feedbacks on national policies and decisions from Liberian communities spread around the globe.

Using various online statistical tools, the Ministry of Information can easily determine how often Liberians use these digital platforms to get information about their country and where in the world these platforms are popular. **Please see statistics below.**

Statistical Analyses

Online Information Portal

(www.micatliberia.com)



Summary by Month										
Month	Daily Avg				Monthly Totals					
	Hits	Files	Pages	Visits	Sites	KBytes	Visits	Pages	Files	Hits
Oct 2015	31957	28681	18677	2688	18836	41031941	48385	336197	516272	575231
Sep 2015	24176	21523	17167	2123	19187	52611441	63706	515039	645695	725309
Aug 2015	30283	24858	22490	3164	31024	64600352	98102	697209	770619	938777
Jul 2015	40787	32298	31019	4199	40153	82867375	130196	961600	1001251	1264423
Jun 2015	31537	27603	27883	3239	26582	124088021	97181	836516	828096	946138
May 2015	45745	40817	24868	3471	30142	133640062	107606	770912	1265332	1418108
Apr 2015	284808	244734	63396	13864	23452	475653828	415930	1901897	7342042	8544269
Mar 2015	58824	50062	19001	3051	26950	122477194	94603	589054	1551932	1823573
Feb 2015	80700	70549	19615	3474	31055	161234635	97295	549223	1975375	2259620
Jan 2015	58241	45422	17524	2236	27773	111429786	69324	543261	1408096	1805501
Dec 2014	31369	7208	27405	2537	22835	14303409	78671	849567	223467	972441
Nov 2014	45039	17871	40685	4615	31699	26423817	138465	1220568	536151	1351199
Totals						1410361861	1439464	9771043	18064328	22624589

The above graph and chart show a clear picture of the volume of traffic MICAT's website has been handling. From November 2014 to October 19, 2015, the portal has had a total of 1,439,464 unique visitors (no returning visitor is captured in this column) and 22,624,589 hits.

These datasets (Visits and Hits) are important in determining the effectiveness of the platform and the relevance of the materials. New unique visits show that visitors get to the site from popular search engines and social media redirects based on what their queries are while Hits show that people find the materials on the site important, thus luring them into interacting with the site. There are other important pieces of information in the above statistics but 22 million hits from over a million unique visitors say a lot about the effectiveness and relevance of the Government of Liberia's Information Portal.

Facebook Page

(www.facebook.com/micatliberia1)

Facebook is now a ubiquitous component of digital communication strategies and the Ministry of Information has utilized the popularity of this social networking platform well to achieve its goal of reaching out to a massive audience. In Liberia, Facebook is ranking number 1 amongst social media tools according to the Internet Live Stats (www.internetlivestats.com). The Ministry of Information has used its Facebook page to strategically package its contents from all the other platforms and deliver to audience of varying demographical outlooks. Through this page, all the popular Liberian based Groups and served with every bit of information about Liberia (sound, photos, text, videos).

The page averages 25,000 page views per week. Of this amount, 20% are females and 80% males.

The top five countries that view the Facebook page are (in order of number of persons viewing per week) Liberia, United States of America, India, Ghana and Nigeria. The top five cities are Monrovia, Paynesville (Facebook GPS technology distinguishes Monrovia from Paynesville), Accra, Gbarnga and Philadelphia. **Please see snapshot below for details.**



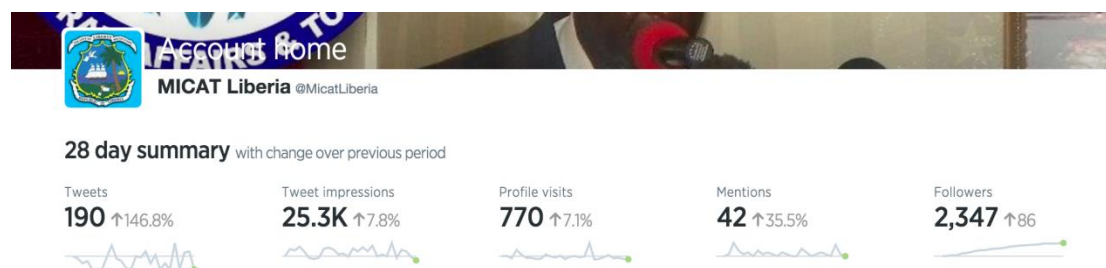
Twitter

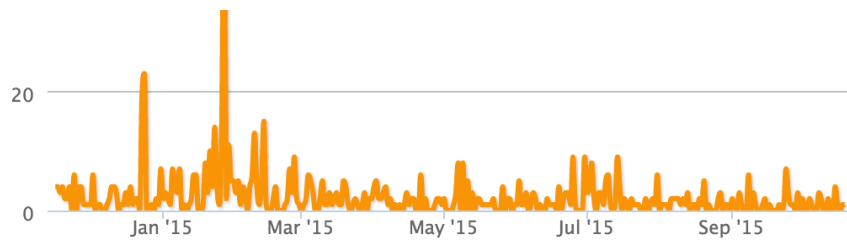
(www.twitter.com/MicatLiberia)

Like Facebook, Twitter is also an incredibly brilliant way to reach out to a target audience. Twitter is ranking 3rd in Liberia but second to Facebook in most parts of the world. Micat has twitter integrated with its information portal so that every update is seen live by followers and those tracking specific hash tags.

The Ministry has 10,900 tweets, 2,017 following, and 2,347 Followers. Beyond this moderate statistics, MICAT's hash tags are being watched by thousands of individuals and institutions around the world. A statistics of importance from MICAT's Twitter account is the fact that it has a "Potential Reach" of over one million. This means, whenever a tweet is posted, there is a possibility that over one million people view the tweet. This figure changes on a weekly basis.

See summary stats below.





236 users

Potential Reach ⓘ **1,064,420**

👤 Most influential users ⓘ

 **24,712**

 **24,148**

 **18,425**

 **16,911**

 **15,888**

YouTube Channel

(www.youtube.com/micatliberia)

For many reasons beyond the scope of this report YouTube is ranking second in Liberia. The online team ensures that there is a brief clip for every event that is covered. These clips help to validate and give extra flavors to the stories being reported. The YouTube Channel has 258 subscribers and 63,014 page views.

Google Plus, Sound Cloud & Flickr

Google Plus, Sound Cloud & Flickr are affiliate platforms that are not too popular in Liberia. However, there are still many people in other countries who use them for specific kinds of materials. Google Plus, for instance, is used by some viewers to get a combination of stories, videos and headlines posts. Sound Cloud is used primarily for audio clips posting while Flickr is for photos only. Contents from every major event are broken into info-bits and posted to its specific platform.

MICAT's Google Plus Page current has 83, 477 views.

Organizational Structure of the Ministry of Information, Cultural Affairs and Tourism

The Ministry of Information, Cultural Affairs and Tourism, which was established by an Act of the National Legislature in 1965, now consist of four programs that undergird the effective and efficient functionality of the Ministry. These programs include:

- A. Information Services**
- B. Cultural Affairs and Tourism**
- C. Foreign Missions**
- D. Administration/Management**

A. INFORMATION SERVICES

The Department of Information Services which is pivotal to the dissemination of Government programs and policies to the general public; this Department has several sub-divisions including 1. Public Affairs 2. Broadcasting 3. The New Liberia Newspaper, 4. Liberia News Agency (LINA) 5. Audio Visual Aide comprising a. Graphic Arts, b. Television and c. Still Photo.

Public Affairs

The Division of Public Affairs, in compliance with the mandate of MICAT, has a fundamental responsible to provide reliable and factual information about government programs and activities through media portals such as radio, television, newspapers (New Liberia Newspaper), Liberia News Agency (LINA), magazines, live coverage, MICAT Website, etc.

Being cognizant of the fact that the Public Affairs Division is to keep the general public informed at all times, the Division for the period under review organized and hosted eighty-one (81) Live Press Conferences, twenty-eight (28) Radio Talk Shows and several Palaver Hut Meetings. The Department accredited 43 journalists and waived the accreditation fees for 52 journalists who came to Liberia to cover the Ebola situation. The press conferences were dedicated to explaining government policies and programs to the general public; Tuesdays and Thursdays Press Conferences were exclusively for situational reports on the Ebola epidemic and its preventive measures until Liberia was first declared Ebola-free by the World Health Organization on May 9, 2015.

In order to enhance the process of information dissemination, MICAT in partnership with the American Embassy organized eight day training workshop for all Public Relation Officers from various ministries, agencies and commissions (MACs) from October 7-15, 2015 in the Charles Gbenyon Press Hall. Participants received certificate of participation at the close of the training. The training sessions were facilitated by a renowned American Public Relation Expert, Mr. Eduardo Cue.

Broadcasting

The Broadcasting Division under Information Services is one of the means through which information is disseminated to the general public. This Division interprets Government programs and activities into the various Liberian vernaculars to the locals through the program dubbed MICAT- Half Hour and it is aired on the National Station, E LBC.

During the period under review, the Broadcasting Division gathered news stories from MICAT regular press briefings, Temple of Justice, Capitol Building, etc. The news stories gathered were produced by the Language Program Producers and aired through ELBC Radio and Radio VERITAS by our language vernacular announcers.

New Liberia Newspaper

During the period under review, the Government-owned newspaper, the New Liberia Newspaper could not appear on the newsstand because of financial constraints under the Technical Services Department earlier this year. However, after the dissolution of said department in July 2015, the Office of Minister Lewis G. Brown resumed the production of the New Liberia Newspaper. The paper is being produced once a week and now more voluminous serving as an historical reference newspaper.

We believe that increased and committed support to the New Liberia will make it better vehicle in promoting the culture of peace, tolerance and reconciliation.

Liberia News Agency (LINA)

The Liberia News Agency, LINA has established offices in thirteen (13) of the 15 counties, each county has a Coordinator who is responsible to feed the head office in Monrovia with news stories. News stories from the counties are edited and posted on LINA website for the general public, as well as in some local dailies.

National Communications Bureau

In keeping with Chapter 31.8 of the Law creating the National Communications Bureau, all media entities, Managers of Printing Press, Advertising Firms, Cable TV entities operating in Liberia are required to register with the Ministry of Information/ National Communications Bureau, the first two weeks of January every year. Below is the matrix of some media and media related entities that have complied with their annual registration procedure, while others are operating without operational permits.

Total Number of Media Institutions	Registered Institutions	Non Compliance Institutions
57 Newspapers	19 Newspapers	38 Newspapers
24 Radio Stations	5 Radio Stations	19 Radio Stations
7 Television Stations	3 Television Stations	4 Television Stations
32 Community Radio Stations	4 Community Radio Stations	28 Community Radio Stations
4 Cable TV	1 cable TV	3 Cable TV
27 Printing Houses	5 Printing Houses	22 Printing Houses
2 Magazine	2 Magazine	

Audio Visual Aide

The Division of Audio Visual Aide has three sections; namely, Graphic Arts, Television and Still Photo. The division is responsible to videotape government functions and activities and keep same in the archive, produce billboards posters, flags, banners, newsletters, magazines, T-shirts, etc. It also caters for the photographic needs of the Ministry.

.During the period, Audio Visual Aide Division provided coverage for the following events of the Government of Liberia.

- President Sirleaf's 2015 Annual Message
- Armed Forces Day Celebration
- All MICAT Press Conferences
- The AU Chairman visit to Liberia
- Opening ceremony of the 4th Session of the 53rd Legislature
- Solidarity visit of the Presidents of Togo and Guinea
- Head of UNMEER visit to Liberia

To quantify the achievements for the period under discussion, the division, total number of (30) thirty coverage were provided and three (3) banners and posters were designed. Out of the 30 coverage provided, 11 were produced into News chips and aired on LNTV, Nineteen (19) became outstanding.

Information Center

The Information Center was established within the Ministry of Information, Cultural Affairs and Tourism as the result of the Passage into Law of the Freedom of Information Acts by President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf on September 16, 2010.

During the reporting period, the ministry served as lead in championing the Freedom of Information Law (FOI) of Liberia. The ministry in collaboration with the Carter Center conducted awareness of the FOI Law through seminars, trainings, regular press briefings,

media engagements and public outreach on the FOI Law, among others for FOI officers and partners. The Ministry also participated in the planning and commemoration of the Right To Know Day held on September 28, 2015. During the period, there were two requests received and responded to by the division. The first information was requested by Ms Iga Perzyna, a master student of Architecture History at the University college of London undertaking a research project for master thesis on Modern Architecture in Liberia. Ms Perzyna requested the following documents from the FOI Center:

- Governmental publications (pamphlets) about economy, development, culture and tourism from 1954 to 1964.
- Periodicals: newspapers, journals, magazines from the 1950s to 1960s/souvenir, advertisement brochures from Liberia in the 1950s and 1960s.

The Liberia Media Center (LMC), the second requester for the period, requested the soft and hard copies of the below listed information.

- The Act establishing the Ministry of Information, Cultural Affairs and Tourism
- All existing policies, procedures and rules which help the public to interact with MICAT
- Organizational chart, including lines of reporting within MICAT.
- Financial accounts of MICAT covering fiscal years 2012/13 and 2013/14.
- Budgets of the MICAT covering fiscal years 2012/13 and 2013/14.
- All material contracts entered by the NIC covering 2012/13 and 2013/14.

It is important to note that all documents not in the Information Center of MICAT requested for are respectfully acknowledged and subsequently referred to the appropriate Ministries, Agencies and Commissions in possession of said documents for further processing in accordance with the FOI Law.

Other FOI Related activities implemented during the period are discussed below:

The MICAT FOI Center participated in a one day stakeholders' meeting for the Validation of the FOI appeal procedure on March 4, 2015.

On March 26, 2015, MICAT Information Center attended a meeting with ILab Liberia so as to use a technological program call "ALAVETELI" to enhance the implementation of FOI where citizens access information via the Internet.

The FOI Center participated in a program marking the formal lunching of the guidelines and procedures for the handling and determination of FOI appeal on May 28, 2015.

There are sixty (60) Information Officers working with various ministries, agencies, commission and corporations promoting and making awareness of the Freedom of Information Law of Liberia.

B. CULTURAL AFFAIRS AND TOURISM

Culture

The Ministry through the Department of Culture embarked on a project to make Liberia's Culture and Historical Sites gain World Heritage Status, when completed will become a milestone accomplishment. This project is progressing; a contract to conduct workshop was signed between UNESCO/World Heritage and the State Party (Liberia) on November 19, 2015.

The workshop to be conducted from January 2016-May 2016 with a facilitator from South Africa.

The Ministry resurveyed the 52 acres of land situated in Ben's Town, Margibi County for the proposed National Cultural Center. The National Cultural Troupe participated in key national events, including welcoming home H.E. Madam Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, other presidents and foreign guests at the Roberts International Airport and at national programs.

Motion Picture Review

The Motion Picture Review Division at the Ministry of information Cultural Affairs and Tourism was established in May 1976 by an Act of Legislature to censor by previewing and to approve for public screening all locally produced and imported movies. It issues permits for the operations of movies entities, including video clubs, video center, cinemas and television stations. Its regulatory functions include inspection, monitoring, public awareness and collection of regulatory fees.

During the aforementioned period, the division generated the Sum of LD-\$ 321,000.00 LD Three Hundred and Twenty One thousand Liberian dollars. This division can boast of contributing to government revenue a little sum of LD-\$321,000.00 Three Hundred and Twenty one Thousand Liberian Dollars which we believe can be tripled within the same time frame if given the logistical support and attention to visit the fifteen counties on a regular inspection. All payments of regulatory fees under the administration of Hon. Lewis G. Brown, II have since been paid into government consolidated account at the Ministry of Finance through its assigned account numbers (142384-MOI and 142382-MOI) with the flag receipts brought to the Division for the Issuance of clearances/permits.

According to the division zonal structure, Montserrado County is divided into ten (10) zones each with an assigned inspector to ensure that the Motion Picture Review regulatory policies are adhered to.

During the period, for out station activity, the division visited only 4 counties due to the lack of vehicle couple with financial constraint. Those counties visited are Grand Bassa, Bomi, Bong and Margibi.

National Museum

The National Museum of Liberia which is the custodian of historical artifacts for the period was involved with the following activities.

The National Museum participated in an exhibition with the Theme: Recovery. **"New Water From The Ancient Well"**. Said exhibition Depicted photographs of painting and textiles on reconciliation. According to the painter, veteran Liberian Artist Mr. Baba Shabu, the exhibition

was meant to console families who witnessed their loved ones being devastated by the deadly Ebola Virus who were taken to various (Ebola Treatment Units where some died and some also survived.

The National Museum did an exhibition on the selection of photographs dating from 1950-1970, depicting the pictorial view of Monrovia and past government administrations.

The National Museum Conservator initiated conservation survey, a kind of periodic survey under taken to detect any agent of deterioration or signs of infestation in order to preserve the objects from further damage.

A research and documentation were done on the three galleries of the museum building beginning from the ground floor which is the ethnographic gallery, comprising of historical items including past Government Administration Documents and lastly the second floor, this gallery is the contemporary section use for hosting temporary exhibitions.

The National Museum hosted a one month exhibition in concept with the Liberia Visual Academy (LIVARTS) in partnership with Accountability Lab. The exhibition was meant to showcase Liberian best artist works, is was held under the theme: "Eliminating the Challenges Affecting Liberia's Quest for Integrity". Those paintings were done in water colors by Liberian best selected fifteen (15) artists working within the theme mentioned.

The Professional Artists of Liberia (PAL) in collaboration with the National Museum launched as exhibition on the story of the deadly killer virus Ebola, with the theme: "THE OUTCOME OF EBOLA". Those paintings were done by Liberian artists depicting people being dead, sick, quarantined and being transported to various Ebola Treatment Units.

Tourism

During the period under review, the Department of Tourism set up a Technical Committee after bilateral discussions with the Economic and Financial Sector Policy Department of the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning to collaborate in identifying tourist attractions and potentials tourism areas in Liberia and then devise marketing strategies to attract tourists from distance markets. The Technical Committee is also responsible to assess tourist entities in the fifteen (15) counties of Liberia for possible and accurate budget projection by the Tourism Bureau per annual. This year's World Tourism Day September 27, 2015 Commemoration was held in Buchanan, Grand Bassa County with participations from all counties

C. FOREIGN MISSIONS

This Department has the total number five foreign missions; New York, Washington, London, Paris and Abuja. The achievements/activities from the various foreign missions for the period are discussed below.

Overview of activities of the Office of the Minister Counselor for Press and Public Affairs at the Embassy of Liberia in Abuja, Nigeria for the Period January 1- December 31, 2015

Nigeria

The achievements/activities of the Office of the Minister Counselor for Press and Public Affairs in Abuja, Nigeria for the period under discussion:

The Office of the Minister Counselor covered the official visit of Her Excellency, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and official delegation to the Inauguration of the President of Nigeria, His Excellency Muhammadu Buhari; (Delegation included then Foreign Minister Augustine K. Ngafuan and Information Minister Lewis G. Brown); Coverage included: On-the-spot commentary and reports live on LBS' morning and afternoon news bulletins respectively, and its flagship talk-show **The Bumper Show** late into the afternoon; An immediate press release was dispatched to Monrovia for the Executive Mansion Press and subsequently to national newspapers and radio stations.

The Minister Consular assigned to Nigeria witnessed the swearing-in ceremony of two Liberian Senators as members of the ECOWAS Parliament. The ceremony was held in Abuja, Nigeria on May 11, 2015 when Speaker of the ECOWAS Parliament, His Excellency Ike Ekweremadu, swore in Liberia's Montserrado County Senator, Hon. George M. Weah and Nimba County Senator, Hon. Prince Y. Johnson to the ECOWAS Parliament.

Senators Weah and Johnson replaced Hon. Mobutu Vlah. Nyenpan, and Hon. Theodore V. K. Momoh, former Senators and outgoing members of the ECOWAS Parliament of Sinoe and Gbarpolo Counties respectively.

The Office of the Minister Counselor covered the official celebration of Liberia's 168th Independence Day held in Abuja, Nigeria, and also Contributed an analysis to the Special Independence Day Edition of the *New Liberia Newspaper* with the Topic, **"From Peace-Dependency To Peace Exporter, Liberia's Contemporary Role in ECOWAS."**

A total of 22 press releases, daily news analyses from Liberia and Nigeria on weekdays, an accomplished magazine for the Mission to be released by December 15, 2015, 2015 album a 2016 calendar and including other major official functions are hallmarks of the Office of the Minister Counselor Press and Public Affairs of Abuja, Nigeria for the period under discussion.

Overview of activities of the Office of the Minister Counselor for Press and Public Affairs at the Embassy of Liberia in France, Paris for the Period January 1- December 31, 2015

FRANCE

The achievements/activities of the Office of the Minister Counselor for Press and Public Affairs in France, Paris for the period under discussion:

The Office of the Minister Counselor form part of the delegation of the President at the G-7 Summit in Elnau, Germany. Stories and photos were provided. The President's visit included a Speech at the ONE and Global Poverty Action outdoor gathering in Munich with politicians, policy makers, artists, musicians and opinion leaders.

The Office provided coverage and planned five interviews for President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf at the EU High Level Conference on Ebola in Brussels, Belgium from March 4 to 6, 2015

The President was interviewed by the BBC, Euro News, CNN, France24 and Aljazeera television. These interviews were made possible by the Minister Counselor for Press and Public Affairs. The Office also provided coverage and photos of the EU 279 Million euros development package signed in March, between the Liberian Government and the European Union in Brussels.

The Office participated and provided coverage for the official launch of the Liberian Biometric Center in Brussels. Mrs. Finda Y. Davies, Liberia's Passport Director and Ambassador. Isaac W. Nyenabo participated in the launch.

The Office has prepared and launched the website of the Liberian Embassy in Belgium and has already updated the site with relevant information. This project was completed in April, 2015.

The Office formed a part of, participated and reported on the Paris Climate Change Conference from November 30, 2015 to December 12, 2015. The conference highlighted Climate Change issues from countries across the world. The Liberian delegation was headed by Finance and Development Planning Minister Amara Konneh.

The office participated and reported on the Hague Conference on Investment on Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone held in the Netherlands. The Liberian delegation to the Hague Conference was headed by Vice President Joseph Nyuma Boakai, government ministers and members of the Liberian business community. It was held on November 30th, 2015.

The office participated and reported on the 38th Session of the UNESCO General Conference in Paris, France. The Conference brought together Liberian participants from the Ministries of Education, Youth and Sports and Information, as well as the UNSECO Liberia Office and a youth representative. Education Minister George Werner headed the Liberian delegation. The UNSECO Conference ran from November 3rd to the 18th, 2015.

The office participated and reported on the Valletta Migration Conference held in Malta. The conference brought together Africans and European Leaders to discuss the possibilities of addressing the huge migrant situation across the Mediterranean Sea. Liberia was represented at that conference by Ambassador Isaac W. Nyenabo. It was held from the 10th to the 12th of November.

The office accompanied H.E. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf at the Women Conference held in Berlin, Germany. The Conference discussed Post 6-7 Summit issues that affect women and how they could play a vital part in addressing some of those issues. The G7 Forum for Dialogue with Women was held from September 15-16, 2015. Reports were filed to various news agencies across the world.

The Minister Counselor attended and provided coverage for the last meeting of the working party of Liberia ascension to the World Trade Organization-WTO in Geneva, Switzerland.

Commerce Minister Axel Addy headed the discussions and the Liberian Government delegation. The conference was held from October 4- 6, 2015.

The Office made three outreaches to Liberians in Holland, Germany and Luxemburg under the period. The office also attended and briefed Liberian journalists in the USA about the work of the missions and the significant role MICAT has played to keep its people informed about government programs and activities and the many impact and development initiatives for the period under discussion.

The Office of the Press and Public Affairs during the period under review, processed, disseminated and distributed press releases, video recordings and audio messages from the Executive Mansion, the Ministries of Information, Cultural Affairs and Tourism, Foreign Affairs, Finance, Justice, Agriculture, Education, Commerce, Defense and Health and Social Welfare among others to over One Hundred-Five (105) media outlets and media houses.

Website Upgrades and Magazines:

For the period under review, the office upgraded and updated three European based Liberian Embassies, namely; France, Switzerland and Belgium.

Those missions had websites that needed upgrade while others had no website at all. Currently, websites are being developed for the missions in Germany and Italy respectively.

The office is currently completing the second semester editions of the **Paris Journal Magazine** and the **Liberian Belgium Embassy Review Magazine** respectively. These are the official magazines of the two Embassies in Europe, as part of their Public Diplomacy Program.

Overview of activities of the Office of the Minister Counselor for Press and Public Affairs at the Embassy of Liberia in New York for the Period January 1- December 31, 2015

During the period under discussion, the Office of the Minister Counselor in New York provided coverage for the following events:

On the 6th of February 2015, President Sirleaf as head of the Liberian delegation visited New York to participate in several high-level conferences including the UN thematic debate on “Advancing Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls for a transformative Post 2015 Development Agenda”. Also on the agenda, was the UN Women pinnacle celebration of the historic landmark of the Beijing Conference which sets a roadmap for women’s equality and empowerment at the global level. President Sirleaf gave the keynote speech at the forum

The period under review, also marked a series of media interviews with President Sirleaf which included the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal as well as the UN radio based at the headquarters in New York.

D. ADMINISTRATION/MANAGEMENT

This Department is the administrative arm of the Ministry of Information, Cultural Affairs and Tourism, which ensures the effective coordination of the Ministry. It oversees all contractual agreements, monitors workers' activities and makes administrative decisions. Matters emanating from central government are filtered through administration to the various departments of the Ministry.

The Administration/Management Department contributed to achieving the ministry's mandate for the period under review through its key divisions as discussed below.

Open Government Partnership (OGP)

The Ministry of Information, Culture Affairs and Tourism (MICAT), as the lead Government Ministry in charge of OGP activities called civil society organizations and government institutions on January 8, 2015 to form part of the OGP steering committee in order to formulate the second year draft National Action Plan. Government institutions responding to the request were: MFDP, MIA, IIC, LRC, GC, MOJ, LISGIS, LEITI, LACC, Judiciary, MOS, LNP, MOPT; while civil society organizations and international partners were: CENTAL, CEMESP, Carter Center, Accountability Lab, iLab, CUPPADL, LMC, TGCI, UNPOL. Under the watchful leadership of Hon. Andrew G. Tehmeh, the steering committee had series of meetings. After these meetings, the steering committee members decided to embarked on a nation-wide regional consultations to validate the draft new National Action Plan. As the lead Ministry on the Open Government Partnership initiative, Administration/Management played a key role in developing Liberia's 2nd year Action Plan. MICAT, along with the OGP Steering Committee embarked on Regional Consultations in developing the 2nd year National Action Plan for citizens' increased participation. The four thematic areas considered in developing the action plan are Transparency, Citizens' Participation, Accountability and Integrity and Technology and Innovation. The Consultation targeted all of the fifteen counties grouping them in three regions with Montserrado, Bong and Grand Gedeh being the host counties.

The target groups were the Superintendents, Women leaders, Youth leaders, Gender Coordinators and people with Disabilities for holistic participation which yielded desired results. The regional consultations began May and ended in June 2015; the validation workshop for Liberia's 2nd year action plan was held on June 12, 2015 in the Charles Gbenyon Press Hall with stakeholders from the 15 counties.

Three Hundred copies of the 2nd Year Action Plan have been produced and are being distributed to responsible parties, strategic partners and other stakeholders. This milestone could not have been achieved without the financial support from our biggest donor, the World Bank. The Ministry of Information, Cultural Affairs and Tourism expresses profound thanks to the World Bank Family for their enormous support during the development of the 2nd Year Action Plan and anticipates more in the coming year.

Knowledge about Open Government Partnership is widespread since the regional consultations. In fact the Ministry's Focal Person, the Deputy Minister for Administration was selected as the Focal Point for six African Countries, namely: Liberia, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Malawi, Tanzania and South Africa during the OGP African Points of Contact Meeting that was held in South Africa from 23-24 July 2015.

Consultation photos: (Zwedru, Grand Gedeh County)



The Judicial Consultation held on May 26, 2015.



Validations photos



Hon. Andrew G. Tehmeh – Deputy Minister for Administration/ OGP Focal Person



Hon. Isaac W. Jackson – Deputy Minister for Public Affairs



Cross section of platform guests



Cross section of participants

Human Resource

The Human Resources Division cooperates with the Deputy and Assistant Ministers for Administration to monitor and handle employees' related matters such as performance, wages, attendance, etc.

The Human Resources Division for the period under review, with enormous support from the Civil Service Agency (CSA) and Management successfully retired/pensioned forty-eight (48) Civil Service Retirees who had rendered their services to the Government of Liberia in various capacities from 9 years to 41years. The Honoring/Retirement Program was held on August 6, 2015 in the Ministry's Charles Gbenyon Press Hall at the Ministry with retirees receiving their retirement handshakes.

As one of the participating ministries implementing the Public Sector Modernization Project (PSMP) which is aimed at restructuring and right sizing, pay and pension reform, managing human resources developing leadership, and gender equity in the Civil Service, the Ministry of Information, Cultural Affairs and Tourism has so far achieved one of the key deliverables. The Ministry developed job descriptions for one hundred forty six (146) position titles for employees. These job descriptions have been quality assured, validated and the final copy is to be produced by the Civil Service Agency in the shortest possible time.

Another deliverable dubbed as **“One Employee One File”** is at the concluding stage. It is incumbent upon all MACs to ensure that all Human Resource Directors complete the employees' files with required documents such as Resume/CV, Personnel Employment Form,

2 passport size photos, academic documents/credential, copy of approved Personnel Action Notices (PANs).

In order to enhance the work of the division, the Civil Service Agency under the Public Sector Modernization Projects donated to Administration on September 11, 2015 two desktop computers with its accessories, a laptop, two file cabinets, four reams of A-4 Paper and a gigantic laser-jet printer.

For the period under review, administration is pleased to announce that a total of two hundred and eighty seven (287) employees are now on the Ministry's payroll.

Below are the statistics per Department:

CODE	PROGRAMS	STAFF
25-01	Technical Services	92
25-02	Information Services	53
25-03	Cultural & Affairs Tourism	73
25-04	Administration/Management	69
Total	Four Programs(4)	287

Scholarship and Training

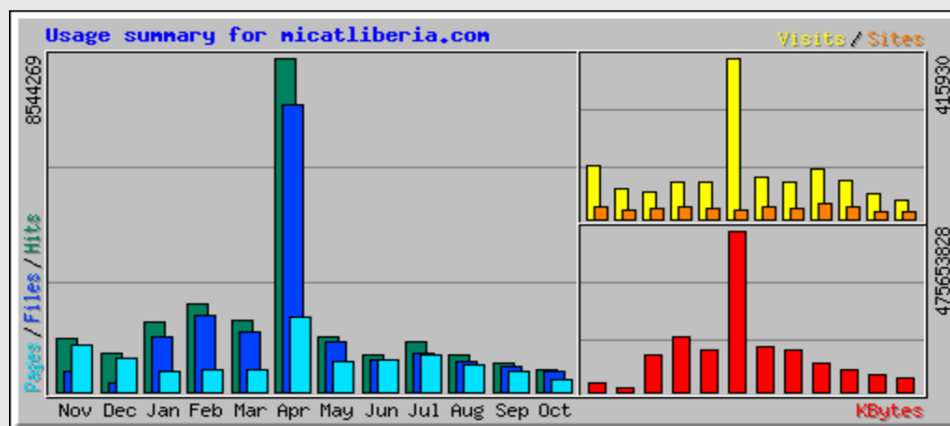
During the period under review, the Bureau Scholarship and Training was involved with soliciting scholarship opportunities from friendly embassies near Monrovia and also visiting the Foreign Ministry regularly. These visits resulted to the Ministry receiving two scholarships from friendly nations such as China, Masters' Degree program, and Austria, in the area of Tourism.

MICAT Website

During the period under review, the Ministry's website, which is one of the main sources of information dissemination, attracted more views on its various social platforms as explained. To date, the Online Content Management Unit has built and is maintaining an **Online Information Portal**, and **YouTube channel**, a **Sound Cloud Page**, a **Facebook Page**, a **Twitter Account**, a **Flickr Page** and a **Google Plus** page. Each of these platforms deals with a specific kind of content targeting different audiences around the world. Through these digital communication outlets, MICAT has succeeded in reducing the time span between when an event relevant to Liberia occurs and when people get to know. They have also served as media for the generation of feedbacks on national policies and decisions from Liberian communities spread around the globe.

Using various online statistical tools, the Ministry of Information can easily determine how often Liberians use these digital platforms to get information about their country and where in the world these platforms are popular. **Please see statistics below.**

Statistical Analyses



Summary by Month										
Month	Daily Avg				Monthly Totals					
	Hits	Files	Pages	Visits	Sites	KBytes	Visits	Pages	Files	Hits
Oct 2015	31957	28681	18677	2688	18836	41031941	48385	336197	516272	575231
Sep 2015	24176	21523	17167	2123	19187	52611441	63706	515039	645695	725309
Aug 2015	30283	24858	22490	3164	31024	64600352	98102	697209	770619	938777
Jul 2015	40787	32298	31019	4199	40153	82867375	130196	961600	1001251	1264423
Jun 2015	31537	27603	27883	3239	26582	124088021	97181	836516	828096	946138
May 2015	45745	40817	24868	3471	30142	133640062	107606	770912	1265332	1418108
Apr 2015	284808	244734	63396	13864	23452	475653828	415930	1901897	7342042	8544269
Mar 2015	58824	50062	19001	3051	26950	122477194	94603	589054	1551932	1823573
Feb 2015	80700	70549	19615	3474	31055	161234635	97295	549223	1975375	2259620
Jan 2015	58241	45422	17524	2236	27773	111429786	69324	543261	1408096	1805501
Dec 2014	31369	7208	27405	2537	22835	14303409	78671	849567	223467	972441
Nov 2014	45039	17871	40685	4615	31699	26423817	138465	1220568	536151	1351199
Totals						1410361861	1439464	9771043	18064328	22624589

The above graph and chart show a clear picture of the volume of traffic MICAT's website has been handling. From November 2014 to October 19, 2015, the portal has had a total of 1,439,464 unique visitors (no returning visitor is captured in this column) and 22,624,589 hits.

These datasets (Visits and Hits) are important in determining the effectiveness of the platform and the relevance of the materials. New unique visits show that visitors get to the site from popular search engines and social media redirects based on what their queries are while Hits show that people find the materials on the site important, thus luring them into interacting with the site. There are other important pieces of information in the above statistics but 22 million hits from over a million unique visitors say a lot about the effectiveness and relevance of the Government of Liberia's Information Portal.

Facebook Page

(www.facebook.com/micatliberia1)

Facebook is now a ubiquitous component of digital communication strategies and the Ministry of Information has utilized the popularity of this social networking platform well to achieve its goal of reaching out to a massive audience. In Liberia, Facebook is ranking number 1 amongst social media tools according to the Internet Live Stats (www.internetlivestats.com). The Ministry of Information has used its Facebook page to strategically package its contents from all the other platforms and deliver to audience of varying demographical outlooks. Through this page, all the popular Liberian based Groups and served with every bit of information about Liberia (sound, photos, text, videos).

The page averages 25,000 page views per week. Of this amount, 20% are females and 80% males.

The top five countries that view the Facebook page are (in order of number of persons viewing per week) Liberia, United States of America, India, Ghana and Nigeria. The top five cities are Monrovia, Paynesville (Facebook GPS technology distinguishes Monrovia from Paynesville), Accra, Gbarnga and Philadelphia. **Please see snapshot below for details.**



Twitter

(www.twitter.com/MicatLiberia)

Like Facebook, Twitter is also an incredibly brilliant way to reach out to a target audience. Twitter is ranking 3rd in Liberia but second to Facebook in most parts of the world. Micat has twitter integrated with its information portal so that every update is seen live by followers and those tracking specific hash tags.

The Ministry has 10,900 tweets, 2,017 following, and 2,347 Followers. Beyond this moderate statistics, MICAT's hash tags are being watched by thousands of individuals and institutions around the world. A statistics of importance from MICAT's Twitter account is the fact that it has a "Potential Reach" of over one million. This means, whenever a tweet is posted, there is a possibility that over one million people view the tweet. This figure changes on a weekly basis. **See summary stats below.**



YouTube Channel

(www.youtube.com/micatliberia)

For many reasons beyond the scope of this report YouTube is ranking second in Liberia. The online team ensures that there is a brief clip for every event that is covered. These clips help to validate and give extra flavors to the stories being reported. The YouTube Channel has 258 subscribers and 63,014 page views.

Google Plus, Sound Cloud & Flickr

Google Plus, Sound Cloud & Flickr are affiliate platforms that are not too popular in Liberia. However, there are still many people in other countries who use them for specific kinds of materials. Google Plus, for instance, is used by some viewers to get a combination of stories, videos and headlines posts. Sound Cloud is used primarily for audio clips posting while Flickr is for photos only. Contents from every major event are broken into info-bits and posted to its specific platform.

MICAT's Google Plus Page current has 83, 477 views.

SPECIAL PROJECTS/OPERATIONS

The Division of Operations/Special Projects, which is expected after the consummation of the ongoing reform to be transformed or renamed the Division of Administration currently, is the arm of the Ministry which is responsible to provide supervision for three sections: Maintenance, Motor Pool and Security. This Division is also responsible to carry out general operational activities of the Ministry. During this period, the three sections under the Division of Special Projects and Operations worked assiduously.

Motor Pool

This Section during the period has been performing our duties and functions; the various assigned vehicles in the Ministry's fleet have drivers assigned. The Ministry's two buses; the employees' bus and the Tourism bus are all up and in running condition and serving the purposes.

Maintenance

The maintenance of the Ministry, in terms of providing quality janitorial services continues to be of much consideration. The staffs of this Section, for the periods under review have been very meticulous and committed in doing their respective chores. The staffs have exuded high degrees of commitment, dedication and passion for their jobs.

Security

During the period under discussion, the Director for Special Projects/Operations worked assiduously with host of recruited Security Guards assigned to the building in providing quality services. With the situation created as a result of the withdrawal by the last Professional Security Guard provider-PROSECOM.

MICAT Major Projects

There are four (4) major projects being implemented by the Ministry, they include:

1. Ben Town
2. Renovation of the National Museum
3. Behsao Cultural Village
4. World Heritage Status for Liberia's Culture and Historical Sites

Updates on the above mentioned projects:

The Ben Town Project is underway; the contract has already being signed by the contractor awaiting budget note from the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning which will enable the ministry to receive approved procurement addendum plan from the Public Procurement Concession Commission (PPCC). The contractor has cleared 80% of the 52 acres of land and the fencing of the premises has begun since December 3, 2015.

The next project, the National Museum renovation is pending negotiation and also awaiting budget note from the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning for approved procurement addendum plan from Public Procurement Concession Commission.

As for the Behsao Project, all necessary documents for evaluating the two bidders have been turned over to the Evaluation Panel members for evaluation report and the ministry awaits approved procurement addendum plan from Public Procurement Concession Commission.

The project to make Liberia's Culture and Historical sites gain World Heritage Status is progressing; a contract to conduct workshop was signed between UNESCO/World Heritage and the State Party (Liberia) on November 19, 2015.

The workshop to be conducted from January 2016-May 2016 with a facilitator from South Africa.

The Ministry through the Department of Culture will in December 2015 meet with CDC representatives in Atlanta, Georgia, the National Museum of Georgia, and Ebola in the eyes of the Painters Painting Exhibitions.

MICAT remains thankful for the budgetary support and is hopeful of making significant strides as regards these projects by the end of this year.

Procurement

The Procurement Section for the period under review undertook the below listed activities:

- (1) Preparation of 2015/2016 Project & Core Procurement Plans for submission to PPCC;
- (2) Prepared short listing of EOI received by Travel Agencies.
- (3) Prepared, advertised, received, and opened Bids for Rice & Fuel.
- (4) Initiated assessment trips to project sites; The National Museum and Marshall
- (5) Prepared Restricted bidding letter for National Museum Project
- (6) Prepared Contract Award Report for 2015/2016 Fiscal Period.
- (7) Advertised for Foreign Travels and Procurement Packages for 2015/2016
- (8) Advertised for Equipment Rental & Lease

Finance Section

This status report covers the period July 1, 2015 to December 31, 2015 referred to as the first and second quarters of FY 2015/16.

I. BASIC BUDGET SUMMARY:

1. Budget sum	2.411M
2. Year-to-date Expenditure	0.773M
3. Year-to-date percentage of budget utilized	32%
4. Year-to-date balance in appropriation —	1.638M
5. Year-to-date percentage of budget in appropriation-	68%
6. Year-to-date liabilities	.205M
7. Bank balances:	
a. LRD Operation account at CBL-----\$101K	
b. USD Operations account at CBL----\$4K	

II. PERFORMANCE CHART PER BUDGET EXPENSE CATEGORY:

For the period ended, July 1, 2015 - December 31, 2015 (1st & 2nd Quarters)

Code	EXPENDITURE CATEGORY	Approved Budget FY 2015/16	Allotments (JULY 1,2015-Dec 31,2015)	Expenditure (July 1,2015-- Dec. 31,2015)	Bal - In - Allot @ Dec. 31,2015	Bal -in- Approp @ Dec. 31,2015	% of Expenditure @ Dec. 31,2015
21	Compensation of Employees	1,016,015.00	385,312.00	385,312.00	0.00	630,703.00	37.92
					0.00	0.00	
22	Goods and Services	660,401.00	474,303.95	387,624.95	86,679.00	272,776.05	58.70
					0.00	0.00	
23	Capital Expenditure	15,000.00			0.00	15,000.00	0.00
					0.00	0.00	
25	Grants and Subsidies	20,000.00			0.00	20,000.00	0.00
					0.00	0.00	
51	GOL Projects	700,000.00	80,000.00		80,000.00	700,000.00	0.00
	Grand Total	2,411,416.00	939,615.95	772,936.95	166,679.00	1,638,479.05	32.05

The total budget sum as mentioned above excludes an amount inserted in MICAT's budget for general claims totaling US\$525,000. Total expenditure as reflected above is for expenditure categories of Wages and Salaries for July 2015 up to and including 31st December 2015; and goods and services for the same period.

The liabilities amount of over \$205,000.00 are balances reflected on our books that we have not been able to service for some time between one to six years. Also there is a current media bill of

US\$18,900.00 collectively payable to varying media institutions in Liberia not supported by budgetary provisions.

PROJECTS:

There are three projects under consideration for the Fiscal year in service:

		Project Amt. Allotted	
✓	The National Culture Center Relocation Project (Margibi County)	200K	80K
✓	The National Museum Renovation Project	400K	0
✓	The Behsao Village-Bomi County Rehabilitation Project	100K	0

Expenditure for all projects year-to-date stands at nil; the National Culture Center Relocation Project has an allotment of 80K, currently under processing for pre-financed activities at the project site in Marshall, Margibi County. Both the Behsao Cultural Village Rehabilitation and the National Museum Projects are work-in-process.

ONGOING ACTIVITIES:

- ✓ Restructuring the Income generation areas to enhance GOL tax collection.
- ✓ Continuation of processing of all vouchers yet in the system at the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning.

Obituary

The Ministry is sad to report that during the year under review, the following employees died.

1. Mr. Johnson K. Yarkpawolo, Reporter, Public Affairs
2. Mr. Jacob G. Hinneh, Director, Broadcasting Division
3. Madam Musu Wenta, Traditional Culture Coordinator, Gbarpolu County

The Ministry played a major role in assisting the respective bereaved families during burial.

May their souls and the souls of all other faithful departed rest in perfect peace and light perpetual shine on them.