TIG FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

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I. Project Goals and Objectives (maximum 1 page). Identify the goals and objectives set forth in the LSC-approved evaluation plan for the project. Describe any significant changes in the goals that were made during the course of the project.

TIG 14051 was a project that set out to improve the free legal information and other resources on IllinoisLegalAid.org. Its goal was to advance the quality and responsiveness of Illinois' statewide website by implementing improvements discovered through a business process analysis of the content management process. Prior to the TIG project's launch, staff from LAF and Illinois Legal Aid Online participated in a business process analysis (BPA) of how website content is created, updated and evaluated. The BPA resulted in a set of recommendations that were used as the basis of work for the TIG project.

TIG 14051's goal of implementation was achieved through three objectives. First, the project partners (Prairie State Legal Services, Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation, LAF and Illinois Legal Aid Online) would improve the process for developing, updating and translating content for the statewide website. Second, the partners would increase the quantity and quality of volunteer content developers and editors. Finally, the partners would ensure that the content improvements made to IllinoisLegalAid.org were user-centered.

All three objectives have been achieved. Full analysis of the partners' achievements are described in Section IV.

There were no significant changes to the goal or objectives, as written, made during the course of the project. There were some challenges to the technical implementation of the process, which resulted in a system that needs further integration. These are detailed later in the report (see Section V).

Although the project partners accomplished what they set out to do, the BPA vision is based on the idea of continuous, incremental improvement. This notion means that the partners' work is cyclical and ongoing.

II. Evaluation Data and Methodologies

The evaluation data planned was the same as what was used to evaluate Objective 1 - improving the process for managing content of Illinois' statewide website. It consisted of:

- Descriptive documentation including a plan for implementation; prioritized improvements and specific tasks; descriptions of capacities / functionalities of modules incorporated into the site; descriptions of ongoing test protocols; and, a summary of protocols for developing, updating and translating statewide website content
- Qualitative analysis including pre- and post-implementation data re:
    1. Number of substantive updates per year
    2. Average time spent on updating English content
    3. Lag time between updates from English content to its Spanish equivalent

Likewise, the data used to evaluate Objective 2 - increasing content volunteers' numbers and their quality of contributions - did not change from the initial evaluation plan. It consisted of:

- Data re: training and resource materials, ongoing technical assistance to editors, and editor assignment process
- Pre- and post-implementation data re:
    1. Number of volunteer editors taking assignments
    2. Number of volunteer editors from private bar versus legal aid
- Number of volunteer editors who agree to take another assignment within 6-12 months
- Survey results re: editors' assessments of training and support systems

The data used to evaluate Objective 3 - ensuring good user experience - consisted of:

- Online usability testing software comparison and selection
- Testing protocols and reports
- List of prioritized improvements and implementations
- Pre- and post-implementation data re:
    1. Return visitors to the statewide websites
    2. Direct traffic to the statewide websites

III. Summary of Major Accomplishments, Recommendations and Future Steps

Major accomplishments of the project:
- Initial indicators show a **43% reduction in time it takes** volunteer editors to review and update legal information on IllinoisLegalAid.org
- ILAO staff **increased the number of volunteer assignments completed** over the course of the grant by **nearly 600%**
- **89%** of volunteer editors surveyed **would recommend this opportunity** to a colleague or friend
- **71%** of the content editor team responded that the new system for editing content is '**worlds better**' than the old one

Findings of the project:
- Consistent, quality content requires good governance (the system by which content gets created, reviewed and published) and a continuous management process which includes an audit, drafting, review, and evaluation then repeat
- Volunteer editors are happier and more productive when expectations are set up front about their engagement and when they have reliable tools (including understandable training), detailed instructions and ongoing support
- The ability of subject matter experts to contribute their edits and suggestions directly in the content management system shows great promise in terms of adding efficiency and increasing contributions to statewide legal information websites.

Recommendations:
- Invest in content strategy and management because content is king. No matter how a website looks or functions the guts of what statewide websites deliver is legal information. How can we make the process of creating and updating information more efficient, while keeping the information current and comprehensive?
- Invest in systems that implement and enforce high-quality standards.

IV. In-Depth Analysis of Accomplishments

The statewide website content improvement project set out to improve the quality of legal information published on IllinoisLegalAid.org and the efficiency of how that information is reviewed and updated. Prior to this project, legal information on Illinois' statewide website was being updated in an inconsistent way and was not happening quickly enough to result in current, accurate information. Through work on this grant, the project partners (LAF, Illinois Legal Aid Online, Prairie State Legal Services and Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation) sought to increase the quality of the legal resources on IllinoisLegalAid.org by making them more accurate and reliable. They also sought to make the content management process more efficient. They achieved both.

The first objective of the project was to improve the process for developing, updating and translating content for Illinois' statewide website. Process improvements were the focus of a business process analysis (BPA) conducted prior to the start of the TIG, in which both LAF and Illinois Legal Aid Online (ILAO) participated. The updated content management process from the BPA consultants looked like the linear chart at right.
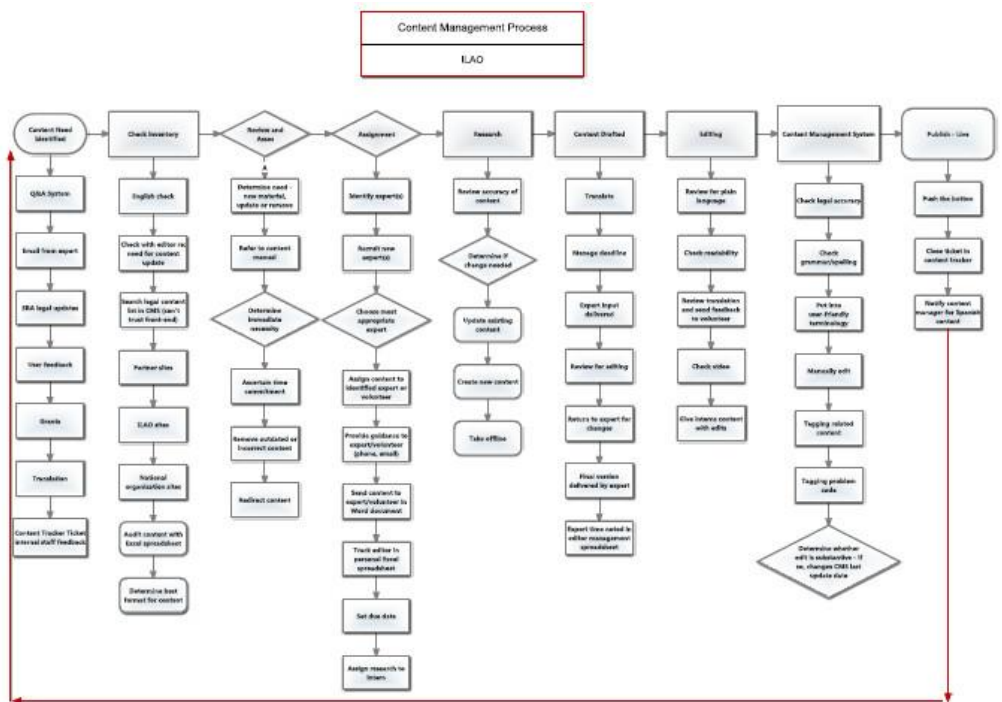
ILAO created a more nuanced workflow which added people, tools/systems, and annotations.
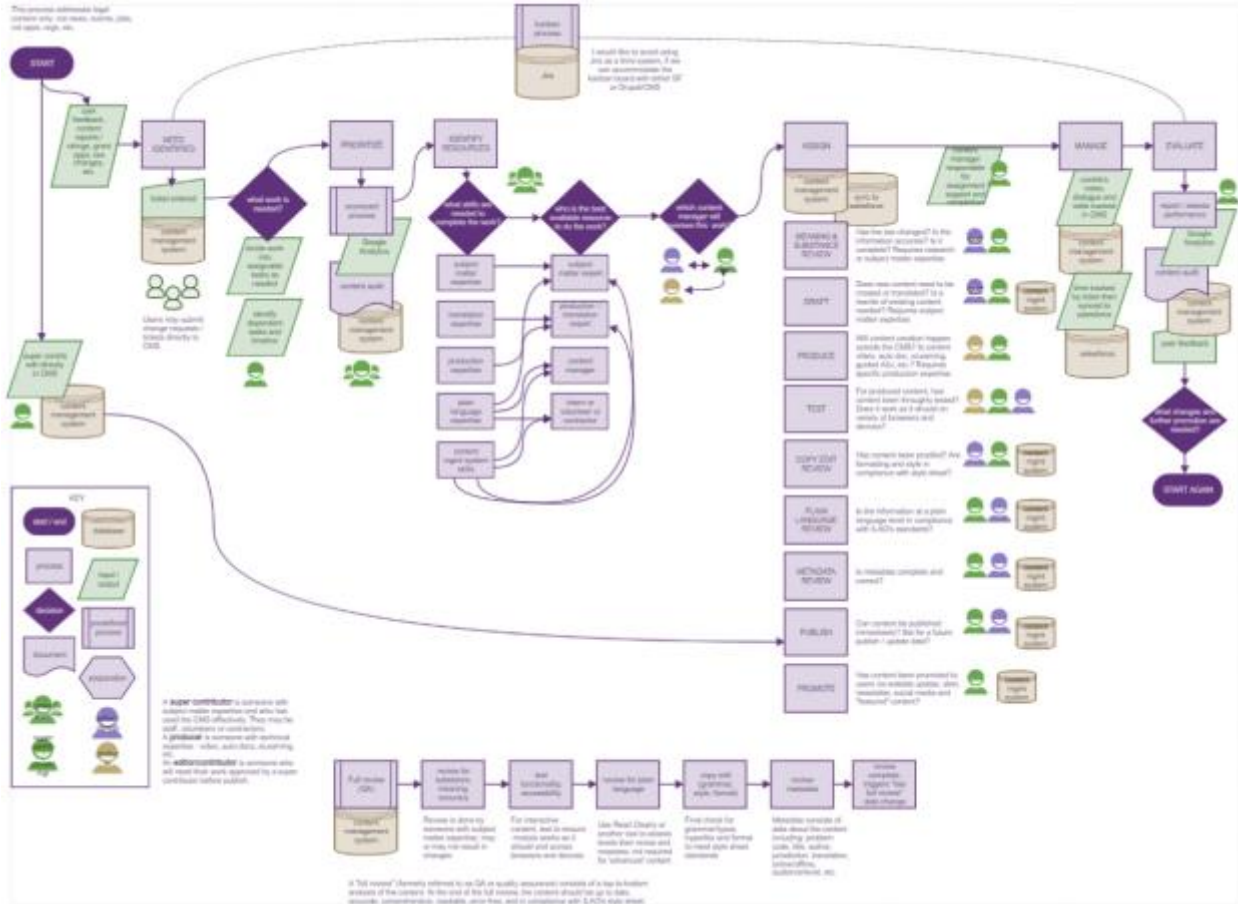
This workflow provided the framework for the project and is explained in further detail in the partner's [Business process analysis plan for implementation](). One of the key next steps identified in the implementation plan was to research Drupal modules to see what functionality existed and didn't need to be created from scratch. ILAO did this and documented it at [Evaluation of Workbench, Support and other Drupal modules](). ILAO then took this research and business requirements and set out technical requirements for the project in its [Requirements for implementing business process maps into Drupal]().

Technical implementation of the workflows proved to be more difficult and took longer than anticipated. The new content management system did not launch until August 1, 2016, and did not include all of the integration and steps in the original process' vision. Three items were set aside. First, integration with external systems - Jira (the website team's project management tool) and Salesforce (ILAO's time-tracking and relationship management) - has yet to happen. Second, adding internationalization and machine translation into the automated content workflow did not occur until December 2016; this was highly complex work involving more than just the content management system. Finally, automatic promotion of content via social media, email and other channels was taken out of the project's original vision when research revealed that Drupal's modules do not offer this functionality.

In their initial proposal, the partners set a goal of performing a 20% reduction in average time spent on updating English content. The old process of updating legal information on IllinoisLegalAid.org was onerous. It consisted of a series of emails between website staff and external, subject matter experts (editor volunteers) with Microsoft Word documents attached and changes tracked. When a final draft was completed, website staff then had to cut and paste from Word into the website's content management system, stripping out all the formatting from Word and reformatting using the website's WYSIWYG editor and style sheet.

The importance of the subject matter expert / volunteer editor in the content management process cannot be overstated. Most statewide legal services websites have very few staff dedicated to create and maintain information across dozens of areas of law; they cannot be experts in all areas. Knowing this, the partners designed the project to engage a team of content editors to act as testers of the new system. The content editor team was made up of 3 attorneys from each of the 3, LSC-funded partners, all with varying expertise. See the team roster. The team was asked to perform a series of assignments using the old system and the new system. ILAO staff engaged the team with regular check-ins, conducted via GoToMeeting. See the agendas for these calls:

     Kickoff meeting 3-5-15
     Check-in meeting 10-2-15
     Check-in meeting 12-16-15
     Check-in meeting 4-5-16

The team also participated in several focus groups and trainings, discussed below.

To measure time-savings of the new content system, website staff compared the hours spent by each member of the 9-person content editor team in performing assignments using the old system of

updating content, against the hours they spent performing an assignment in the new system. To conduct this comparison, website staff counted the words in the content that the legal expert / volunteer editor reviewed, and divided it by 1000, then divided the hours spent by that number to get the hours spent per 1000 words. The data was then averaged. Here are the results:

      Old process (up to August 2016): 2.35 average hours per 1000 words

      New process (after August 2016): 1.28 average hours per 1000 words

      Difference = -1.07 hours per 100 words (**43% reduction**)

                        See attached TIG14051 Hours per words comparison

Although this is a relatively small sample size, these results are very promising. Being able to work directly in the website publishing system adds great efficiency to the content management process. Note that these numbers do not include time spent by website staff, which was not collected on an assignment-by-assignment basis. When surveyed, the website staff using the new content management system did say, "Once we get the process hammered out, it will definitely decrease the time we spend coordinating SME [subject matter expert] review."

In their narrative, the partners also set out a goal of a 20% reduction in lag time between updates from English content to its Spanish equivalent. Because the internationalization features on the website were only recently added, the partners do not yet have the data to evaluate this goal. Because translation is now fully integrated into the content workflow, it is not a matter of whether the system has reduced the lag time but a question of how much. The translation integration is a significant upgrade from the old content management process, which treated translations as separate articles (one in English, one in Spanish, etc.) with only a cross reference to the other. The integration of translation into the workflow has two substantial differences from the old system. One is that the translation is merely a different version of the same article, not a separate piece of content. Because the article is served up in multiple languages, the system knows when a change to a legal article is made in one version and triggers a task or reminder for the website staff to verify and publish the change to the other versions.

Finally, another goal set by the partners for the project's first objective was 30% more substantive updates to IllinoisLegalAid.org's legal content per year using improved processes and systems. One of the problems using the old system was that the website staff was unable to perform regular review of the full library of content available. This project set out to implement systems to improve that. The data they collected to measure this goal was the number of volunteer editor assignments completed. Only those assignments that were substantive in nature were included in these numbers. A substantive assignment is one where the legal expert volunteer was asked to review the substance of the information to ensure that it complied with current laws, regulations, and procedures and revise as needed.

Here are the numbers for volunteer editor jobs / legal content assignments, broken out by year:

      2014: 22 (VISTA legal content volunteer coordinator started in August, 2014)

      2015: 149 (577% increase)

      2016: 155 (4% increase)

As described below, most of these assignments were performed using low-tech processes while the technical components of the content management system were being developed. It is important to note that very few process are improved entirely by using technology. The partners employed a range of solutions to improve the efficiency of managing IllinoisLegalAid.org's legal information and the information's effectiveness. This is explained further in Section VI.

The second objective of the project was to increase the quantity and quality of volunteer content editors. As noted above, subject matter experts are key to keeping online legal information current and accurate. While the technical work in accomplishing the first objective lingered, the partners made use of lower-tech methods to ensure that the process of contributing one's time and expertise to IllinoisLegalAid.org was faster and better. Detailed below, this objective was achieved and more. The success with creating a network of content volunteers was largely due to the AmeriCorps VISTA project and the dedication of 2 exceptional VISTA members (serving one year each from 2014-2016). These VISTAs developed and refined a system to recruit, train, support and otherwise manage a network of subject matter experts to review and update the free legal information on IllinoisLegalAid.org.

With a full-time person devoted to designing and implementing processes to manage a network of legal content volunteers, the AmeriCorps VISTA program truly helped ILAO build its capacity, just as it was designed to do. The above data showing the increase in number of assignments is proof of the effectiveness of this model. Here is a collection of documentation about IllinoisLegalAid.org's creation and management of a 'volunteer network' as it has evolved over the last 2 years:

Legal Content Volunteer Recruitment Plan (2015)
Legal Content Volunteer Survey and Research Results (2015)
Frequently Asked Questions for Volunteer Editors (2016)
Volunteer editor training slides (2016)
Volunteer editor training video: How to make edits on IllinoisLegalAid.org (2016)
Legal Content Volunteer training materials (2016 - google drive folder)

Related to this, the partners also set out a goal to increase - by 15% each year - the number of volunteer editor taking content assignments. Here is a breakdown of volunteers who completed an assignment:
2014: 19 volunteers who complete one or more assignments
2015: 65 volunteers who complete one or more assignments (**242% increase**)
2016: 92 volunteers who complete one or more assignments (**41% increase**)
See attached TIG14051 Unique editor volunteers by year

Finally, the partners set a goal of 60% or more of volunteer editors agreeing to take another assignment within 6-12 months. ILAO emailed a survey to its volunteer editors twice during the tenure of the project - once in November 2015 (31 respondents) and again in August 2016 (26 respondents). Volunteers were asked in both surveys if they would take another assignment within a year:
81.5% agreed to take another assignment (Nov 2015 survey)

94% agreed to take another assignment (Aug 2016 survey)

See attached TIG14051 Editor volunteer satisfaction surveys

In the same survey, ILAO asked if the volunteer editor would recommended this opportunity to their friends and colleagues. They responded:

89% would recommend to a colleague (Nov 2015 survey)

90% would recommend to a colleague (Aug 2016 survey)

The surveys asked volunteers other questions about their experiences. Results from both surveys were very positive. In the November 2015 survey:

- 81% said I feel my volunteering made an impact on my community.
- 89% said My volunteer duties were what I expected.
- 62% said I was given the tools and resources necessary to complete my project.

In the August 2016 survey:

- 94% said I provide a valuable service to the community as a content volunteer for ILAO.
- 71% said I received clear guidelines about what was expected of me.
- 94% said The volunteer coordinator was available when I had questions or needed support.

The third objective of the project was to ensure that content improvements to the statewide website were user friendly. To achieve this objective, ILAO conducted studies with website staff, website users and volunteer editors as set out in CMS TIG testing plan 1 and CMS TIG testing plan 2. ILAO also researched numerous user testing software applications; see their research summary. They used two tools during the course of the project - Optimal Workshop and Validately.

One of the ways ILAO used these tools was to test and refine its information architecture (IA) for the website. It used both tree sort and card sort tests to test the IA with users. The IA provides the framework for all the legal information on IllinoisLegalAid.org and its main navigation for people to find out about their legal issues. ILAO tested its IA several times in several ways, most recently in May. See the testing plan and its results.

Another way ILAO used the testing software was to conduct click testing to study different options for how it organized its legal information. The screenshot at right shows a strong result for organizing complicated issues, like foreclosure, into this Learn More and Take Action format. See the complete testing results.

In 2016, two in-person user tests were conducted. ILAO staff tested how to best structure jurisdiction information. See the Jurisdiction Select Test Plan and Jurisdiction Select Test Results. ILAO staff also tested navigation options for legal aid partners to be able to manage their profiles on IllinoisLegalAid.org. See the Add/Edit Organization Test Plan and Add/Edit Organization Test Results. Prioritized recommendations from both tests were implemented into the site as improvements. The jurisdiction select was implemented upon launch of the new site on August 1, 2016. Navigation for organization profiles was implemented on November 15, 2016.

ILAO conducted two focus groups with the content editor team during 2016. On May 20, 2016, 4 content editors from LAF and Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation participated in a focus group about the website's personal dashboards, and task/assignment management. See the Agenda for the focus group and the Summary of focus group meeting and recommendations. Recommendations from the focus group were prioritized for development in this document. These recommendations have yet to be implemented, but are captured in ILAO's backlog of technical work and will be done in the coming year.

The second focus group was held on November 3 with 5 members of the content editor team to gather their opinions of doing an assignment directly in the content management system. Here is a summary of the results. The team members were also surveyed individually about their experience using the new system. Seven of the nine editors responded to the survey, with promising results.

When asked "*You initially did an editing assignment using the 'old' process of email and Microsoft Word / Google docs. How did using the new content management system compare?*", they responded:
> It was worlds better. (5 of 7 - 71%)
> 6 to one, half dozen to the other (about the same). (1 of 7 - 14%)
> I am an old dog who doesn't like new tricks (I liked the 'old' way). (1 of 7 - 14%)
>> See the attached TIG14051 Content editor team survey

As noted above, one the significant improvements to the new content management process is the ability of editors to edit directly in the content management system. IllinoisLegalAid.org has essentially wikitized its legal content to enable easier and more frequent contributions to its information - any logged in member with 'legal aid advocate' permissions sees an 'Edit now' button on the legal information pages they view. Clicking on this button allows the member to edit content directly in the system and save it. This then triggers a message to the content team at ILAO to review the changes.
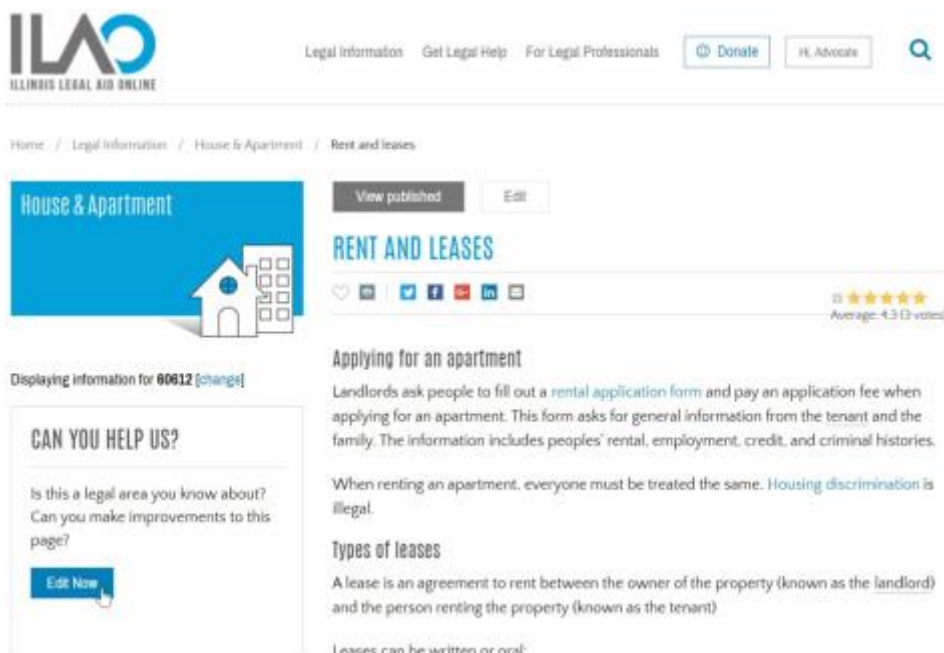
Regarding this 'edit now' feature, one ILAO staff member said, "The ability to have people spontaneously edit content or add comments has already proven to be valuable. I would estimate we've already had nearly 10 pieces of content updated because of this feature."

The final evaluation metric for assessing user-centered improvements was comparing pre- and post-implementation data of return visitors to the statewide websites and direct traffic to the statewide websites. Mentioned above, ILAO launched a new website on August 1, replacing its old websites. The new IllinoisLegalAid.org launched with a completely different website structure. This resulted in an initial loss of SEO and, as a result, a decline in site sessions (visits). The partners do not believe this dip is

any indication of the website being less user friendly than the old website. Rather it is a result of the complete transformation of the new site. The numbers break down like this:

Google Analytics metric	Aug 1 2015 - Jan 29 2016	Aug 1 2016 - Jan 29 2017
Returning users vs. new users	24% / 76%	24% / 76% (0% change)
Direct traffic (as a percentage of overall traffic	17%	15% (-2%)
Average session duration	1:50	2:25 (+25%)

While direct traffic is down slightly over the same period last year and the ratio of new versus returning users to the site are the same as they have been in previous years, average session duration has increased. This is a strong indicator that people are more engaged in using the site and its information.

To sum up, the statewide website content improvement project set out to increase efficiency of updating legal information on the website as well as improving the quality of the website's content. The partners succeeded at doing both. The above narrative describes how LAF and ILAO succeeded in meeting their project's goal to advance the quality and responsiveness of Illinois' statewide website by implementing improvements discovered through a business process analysis of the content management process.

V. Factors affecting project accomplishments

Several factors affected the project's accomplishments, both in terms of challenges and enhancements.

For challenges, as mentioned in Section IV, the technology development of getting the workflows into the content management system was much more significant that the partners anticipated when they scoped the work of the grant. The amount of effort forced the technology staff at ILAO to look at the universe of the content management process to determine what to prioritize for development first. This required three changes to the initial vision for the system.

The first most evident feature to remove from the initial workflow development was translation. Integration of translation into the content management system required additional work outside the scope of the grant. Primarily, it required that the site be configured for internationalization.

The second feature to remove from immediate technical development was automated promotion of newly updated or published content on the website. The BPA revealed that promotion was an important step that was missing from the old process of managing content. It was therefore included into the workflows for the new content management process. But it wasn't until after the grant started that the technical staff at ILAO discovered that the Drupal modules it was using did not accommodate for this step in its workflow. This will need to be custom built into the content management system later on. In the meantime, website staff will promote the content manually as it has always done via social media and email.

Finally, ILAO determined that integration with external systems - Jira (the website team's project management tool) and Salesforce (ILAO's time-tracking and relationship management) - was not necessary. While integrating these systems with the content management system and each other would increase efficiency, ILAO was unsure that the benefits gained would be worth the work required to effectively implement and sustain the integrations.

For enhancements, as mentioned in Section IV and the following sections (VI and VII), the dedication of a full-time AmeriCorps VISTA member to the project was a key to its success. The VISTA member was able to create and sustain an active network of editor volunteers who have helped keep the website content accurate and current.

VI. Strategies to address major challenges (maximum 2 pages). Identify and discuss the effectiveness of strategies used to overcome important challenges.

As noted in other sections, the major challenge in this project was delay in technical development due to an unanticipated amount of work required to custom configure the Drupal modules to meet the workflow set out in the BPA. To overcome this challenge, the partners employed several strategies.

Once technical development began, it became clear that the project scope needed to be scaled back or it would never end. The partners reviewed the process workflow for anything that was expendable or involved work outside the scope of the project. This enabled the partners to remove three steps from the process as it related to its initial technical implementation. With a more streamlined process and a smaller scope, the partners were able to complete the project work in two years.

The most important strategy was to recognize that process improvement is bigger than a technical problem and to employ low-tech options while the high-tech solutions were still in development. The best evidence of this was a successful implementation of a volunteer editor network using Salesforce, google docs and email, led by a dedicated, full-time volunteer coordinator, who was an AmeriCorps VISTA. Even though this project was a technology initiative grant, the most successful part of it was really due to committing adequate staffing resources in an area that had been neglected. ILAO relied on the AmeriCorps VISTA members to build a model for recruiting, training, supporting and retaining volunteer editors. Hosting a robust network of content volunteers will enable ILAO to keep its content more current and accurate.

VII. Major Lessons and Recommendations (

Illinois' statewide website content improvement project taught its partners three primary lessons.

The most important lesson learned was the value an AmeriCorps VISTA position can bring to build an organization's capacity for volunteer management and a recognition that volunteer management is a role unto itself and one that is worthy of investment. The Illinois statewide websites have always relied on volunteers to provide subject matter expertise for review of its legal information. Until this TIG project, this volunteer management work was done by one or more content managers who were not only responsible for recruiting, training, and supporting volunteers, but also for the content itself - its accuracy, completeness, alignment with the website's style guide and plain language standards, quality, breadth, depth and publication. Therefore, the management of volunteers was a lesser priority and consequently not done well or consistently. By devoting a full-time VISTA member to a volunteer editor network, content volunteers finally got the attention and investment they needed and deserved.

A second lesson learned was that some pieces of functionality cannot be effectively bifurcated from their larger parts. This was true of the translation step of the workflow. Translation could not be properly implemented with the other workflow steps because it involved configuring IllinoisLegalAid.org for internationalization. This configuration affected the whole website, not just its legal content. The statewide website is not configured and will be launching Spanish features in February 2017.

Finally, the project shows great promise for the practice of 'wikitizing' legal information on statewide websites. Allowing external editors to contribute their expertise directly in the content management system adds efficiency and creates a better experience for volunteers and website staff alike.

In terms of recommendations for further development, ILAO now has content governance tools, but enforcement of standards are still an issue. ILAO is actively discussing how to better enforce its processes; they will starts with creating reporting and analysis tools in the content management system.

Another recommendation is better integration of automated plain language tools such as WriteClearly into the content management system. Finally, the partners believe that further user testing of content comprehension and factors such as voice, style and format for delivering legal content online would be highly beneficial to everyone in the community.