

DECLASSIFIED

Government Secrecy

in an Information Age

2014 Report on Open & Secretive Public Institutions in Southern Africa

by the Media Institute of Southern Africa





© 2014 Media Institute of Southern Africa
MISA Regional Secretariat, 21 Johann Albrecht Street,
P/B 13386, Windhoek, Namibia
www.misa.org. Tel: +26461232975,
Fax+264 61 248016

Printing and Design funded by:

Frederich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES)
fesmedia Africa
Windhoek, Namibia
Tel: +264 (0)61 417500
E-mail: info@fesmedia.org
www.fesmedia-africa.org

*"Public bodies hold information not for themselves
but as custodians of the public good and everyone
has the right to access information..."*

African Charter on Human & Peoples Rights

The African Platform on Access to Information

www.windhoekplus20.org

**No part of this report may be reproduced or transmitted without
the permission of the Media Institute of Southern Africa.
Permission has been granted to Friedrich Ebert Stiftung to reprint
the reports in their original unaltered published form.**

Editor: Karen Mohan | Coordinator: Jessica Duffy
Researchers: MISA National Chapters
Layout: Clara Schnack

ISBN 978-99916-62-35-0

DECLASSIFIED
Government Secrecy
in an Information Age



CONTENT

Foreword.....	06
Regional Overview.....	07
Botswana.....	09
Lesotho.....	23
Malawi.....	37
Namibia	56
Swaziland.....	70
Tanzania.....	89
Zambia.....	105
Zimbabwe.....	119

FOREWORD

The Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) has for the last five years produced an annual report on the openness and secretiveness of public institutions in southern Africa. Each year, researchers throughout the region evaluate the websites and responses to written and oral information requests of dozens of public institutions across numerous countries.

Over this time there has been a gradual improvement in some areas and countries, but overall it remains clear that in most institutions secretiveness still trumps transparency. This is despite a number of countries guaranteeing the right to access to information in their Constitutions, and several institutions having client service charters setting out the minimum standards that these institutions should adhere to when dealing with the provision of information to the public.

The ongoing ambivalence or in some cases even resistance of institutions to the public's right of access to information demonstrates the dire need for countries to enact legislation promoting access to information held by public institutions.

The number of African countries with access to information (ATI) laws currently stands at 13. This includes three southern African countries – Angola, South Africa and Zimbabwe. The number of countries with ATI laws more than doubled between 2011 and 2014, and yet not one southern African country enacted ATI legislation during this time. As more and more countries recognise the need for positive ATI laws, southern Africa continues to lag behind, denying their citizens the tools to access the information crucial to enabling them to make informed decisions about their lives, their communities and their governments.

But the buck doesn't stop with legislation. While ATI legislation is an important tool to encourage governments to become more transparent, it is also the responsibility of each individual institution to make the choice and the effort to be more proactive in releasing information to the general public, both in terms of general information on their website and responding to requests for specific information.

An informed and empowered citizenry is the basis of a strong and legitimate democracy, something every country should aspire to.

MISA would like to thank the media project of Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, fesmedia, for their ongoing support for this project.

Zoe Titus
Regional Director
Media Institute of Southern Africa

REGIONAL OVERVIEW

This is the fifth year that researchers from all over southern Africa have evaluated the openness and transparency of government and public institutions throughout the region. Despite ongoing campaigns, only three southern African countries have access to information legislation. This annual research demonstrates why it's important that more countries develop legislation promoting and protecting the public's right to government-held information.

This year research was carried out in eight southern African countries between May and July 2014. Researchers evaluated institutions' websites, or in some cases, lack thereof, and also surveyed institutions' willingness to engage with the public by sending out written requests for information, as well as making oral requests by telephone or in person.

One significant improvement, which has been observed during the past five years, is an increase in the number of institutions with websites, as well as an improvement in the quality of these websites. It was encouraging to observe that this year almost all surveyed institutions have some sort of online presence, and in 2014 we are also slowly starting to see institutions develop a social media presence as well.

However, despite this positive trend, too many institutions still lack their own independent websites, and instead merely have a page hosted by the national government website, which severely reduces their capacity to provide relevant and updated information to the public. This practice was particularly prevalent in Swaziland, where six of the eight institutions surveyed only had pages on the national government website featuring only basic information. Botswana and Lesotho each reported three institutions with similar set-ups. There were also several institutions with non-functional websites, and a few with no form of website at all.

Unfortunately the trend with regard to responses to written and oral information requests is not so positive. Most countries reported little to no improvement in this category over the years. In Malawi they had their worst results in the five years of research.

There also appeared to be a trend throughout the region of institutions 'misplacing' letters of requests. Such instances were reported in Botswana, Swaziland, Zambia, and Malawi. One institution in Botswana, the Ministry of Local Government, refused to even accept receipt of a request for information.

In Botswana, none of the seven institutions that accepted a request for information provided a response, all insisting that information could not be released unless the letter clearly stated the researcher and the intended use for such information. This lack of responsiveness from Institutions in Botswana has been observed in the previous two studies, which yielded similar results. In Malawi and Tanzania, only one institution responded to written requests for information.

In Lesotho, two institutions insisted that the researcher write new letters addressed to different officials, as the designated information officials could not attend to requests addressed to other employees. In Swaziland, most of the institutions surveyed insisted on having information requests addressed to senior officials rather than information officers. In Zimbabwe, all of the institutions that acknowledged receipt of the written requests instructed the researcher to direct the requests to other offices. It was also noted in Zimbabwe that officials were reluctant to identify themselves and referred even trivial requests to higher authorities, suggesting a culture of fear in these institutions.

However, it should be noted that there were a few stand out institutions, which were very helpful, demonstrated a real willingness to engage the public and displayed a thorough respect for the right to access to public information. These institutions included the Ministry of Youth, National Service, Sport and Culture in Namibia, the Lusaka City Council in Zambia, and the Malawi Electoral Commission in Malawi.

What is clear from the 2014 report on the 'Most Open and Secretive Government Institutions in Southern Africa' is that public institutions in the region continue to improve with respect to the provision of information through information and communication technologies, but have been unable or unwilling to improve their ability to respond to public requests for information.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research will adopt qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection, and seek to assess the level of public access to information held by government and public institutions. In order to achieve this each chapter will conduct research by evaluating the websites of government and public Institutions, along with submitting oral and written reports requesting information. This method will seek to establish the transparency and efficiency of government and public institutions in providing information to the public.

DATA ANALYSIS

Category 1: Evaluation of government and public institution websites to determine the accessibility of public information.

Category 2: Submission of oral and written reports in order to determine the ease of which public information is obtained from government and public institutions.

Description of Assessment Criteria

The total number of points allocated to category 1 and 2 is 20 points (n = 20) each. Ministries and institutions will fall in to one of the following groups in accordance with the number of points that they receive.

Category 1: Website Analysis

Group 1: (0 – 6) Absence of a website or an extremely poor website that contains no or almost no relevant public information.

Group 2: (7 – 13) Average website that contains some relevant public information.

Group 3: (14 – 20) Well organised, transparent website that provides a good amount of relevant public information.

Category 2: Request for information

Part 1: Written Request

Group 1: (0 – 6) Denied access to reasonable information request or acted with high levels of secrecy.

Group 2: (7 – 13) Displayed an average level of openness in allowing access to public information.

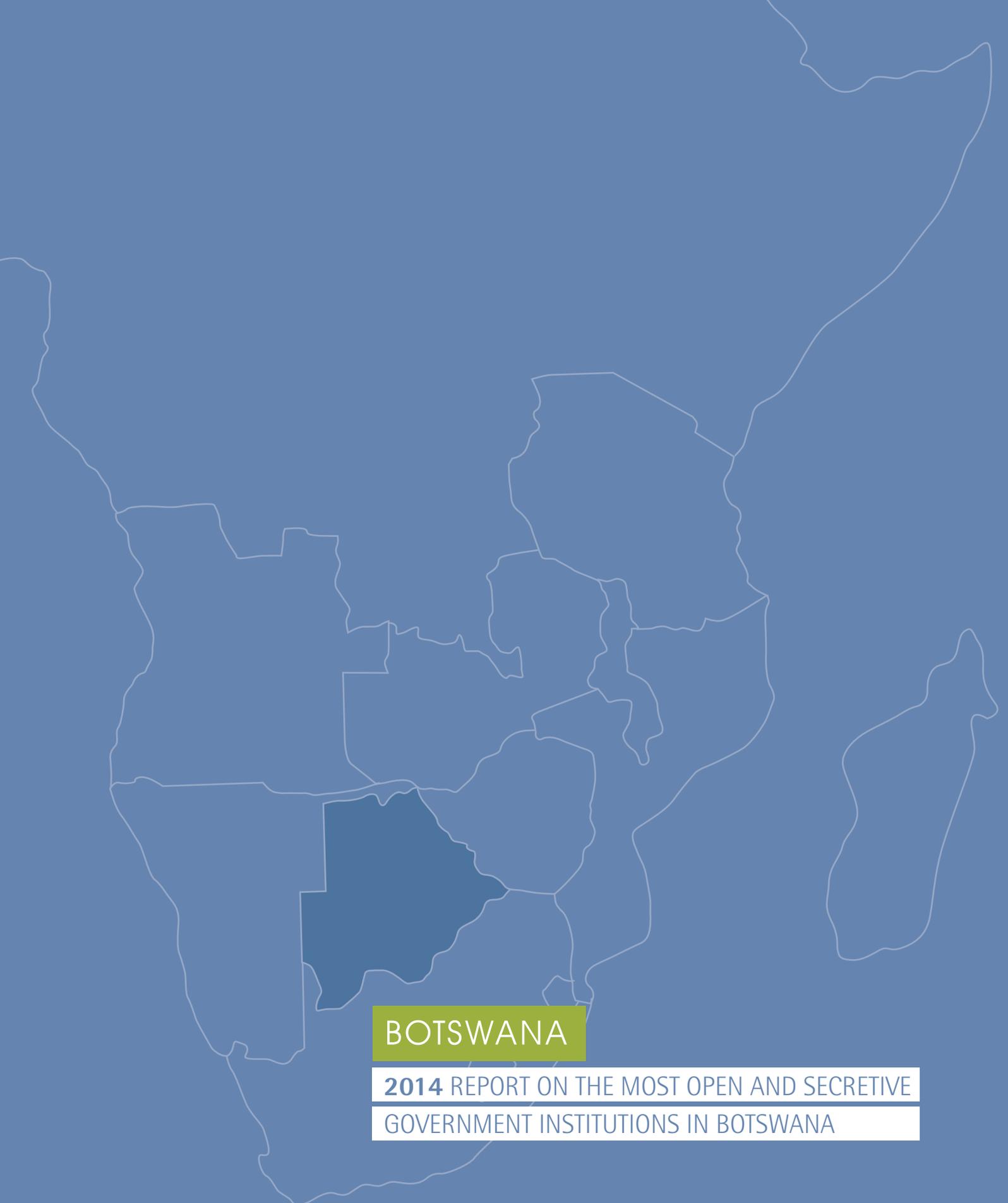
Group 3: (14 – 20) Displayed openness in allowing access to public information. Institution was helpful and transparent.

Part 2: Oral Request

Group 1: (0 – 6) Denied access to reasonable Information request or acted with high levels of secrecy.

Group 2: (7 – 13) Displayed an average level of openness in allowing access to public information.

Group 3: (14 – 20) Displayed openness in allowing access to public information. Institution was helpful and transparent.



BOTSWANA

2014 REPORT ON THE MOST OPEN AND SECRETIVE
GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS IN BOTSWANA

INTRODUCTION

Access to information, or the right to information, is a critical element of any functioning democracy. It serves as a safeguard against corruption and impunity amongst elected officials and also empowers citizens to demand important information relevant to their daily lives.

Although Botswana currently enjoys a reputation as one of the most democratic countries in Africa, access to information is by no means guaranteed. Transparency, consultation and accountability are just some of the attributes that have always found resonance in Botswana's traditional participatory democracy, which predates independence, achieved in 1966. Like many other oppressive governments, the government of Botswana has increasingly shown traits of secrecy in its operations.

Contrary to the traditional style of leadership where decisions were made by leaders (Chiefs), who encouraged public engagement, the new form of government we have adopted under the banner of democracy has failed to engage the public in decision-making and restricts public access to information. Leaders in the traditional system were born into office, not elected, but the structures allowed the public to have an input on issues affecting them with representation at different levels. The arrangement had entrenched systems of checks and balances that ultimately made Chiefs accountable to the people over whom they ruled. The Chief frequently shared his thoughts with his people and always sought their input and guidance before making far-reaching decisions through Kgotla meetings (public gatherings). We have since witnessed the collapse of these structures between independence and now, as the old system of ruling was completely reformed. Under the current decision-making and information sharing structures all powers now lie within the Office of the President, which oversees the entire system under the authority of the President.

Initially, efforts were made to enable citizens to participate in decision-making through different forums that allowed them to hold their leaders accountable. Such arrangements continued long into independence, with Presidents always allowing for public consultation, albeit to varying degrees. As our independence matured and different Presidents came and went, we witnessed the silent death of such structures at the hands of the government in power.

However, it appears that these open and transparent practices from the Bogosi era (where tribal leaders were the highest authority) have not found their way into Botswana's modern form of government, and there have been growing complaints that government has been making important decisions without public consultation.

This low degree of engagement has been widely criticised, with critics arguing that it has reduced the role of the public in decision-making, as 'rubber stamping' decisions are made solely by those in power. This has led to numerous complaints that government only releases the information it wants the public to know about.

Critics within this country have repeatedly cried foul against State media, which they label 'government propaganda machinery', used by the ruling elite to control public perception. The absence of independent reporting in the State media houses has denied citizens their right to access factual information and balanced reports, as coverage and control is held by those in power. The enactment of the Botswana Communications Regulatory Authority Act 2012 and the Public Service Act 2010 confirmed the government's intentions to restrict and control the flow of information. This monopoly of information has also weakened the country's democracy in many ways.

Critics claim that without the sufficient provision of information, citizens have routinely been unable to make informed decisions on critical issues that affect not just their lives but also the direction of the country, as well as the national public discourse. This new form of government has long been condemned for a lack of political will to combat corruption, particularly in light of the perceived lack of independence of organisations like the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC). These issues have created a breeding ground for corrupt officials and proliferate injustice.

Oversight institutions like the DCEC and the judicial system have failed to work efficiently to prosecute several high ranking officials who have been accused of foul play on many occasions. We have recently witnessed a case involving a top security agent where government machinery is using all of its powers to prevent justice from taking its course. It was revealed in the previous survey that the Directorate of Intelligence and Security was the most secretive organisation and that such institutions with undefined powers may pose a danger to our democracy.

RATIONALE AND RESEARCH PARAMETERS

This year's study focused on eight ministries with the aim of assessing the degree to which they are accessible and responsive to the public's demand for information. The survey was conducted between the 18th of June and the 11th of July 2014. The study indicates how transparent each ministry is by using prescribed tools to measure the level of responsiveness for each chosen ministry within a given time frame.

The following government institutions were surveyed:

1. Ministry of Lands and Housing
2. Ministry of Infrastructure, Science and Technology
3. Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs
4. Ministry of Education and Skills Development
5. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
6. Ministry of Environment, Wildlife and Tourism
7. Ministry of Youth Sports and Culture
8. Ministry of Local Government

AIM OF THE STUDY

The main goal of this study is to assess the level of transparency of government and public institutions in the country. The survey results will serve as empirical evidence for the ongoing campaign to encourage government to enact access to information legislation.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To assess the level of transparency in government and public institutions against international standards and principles of access to information.
- To influence the adoption of practices, laws and a culture that promotes transparency and openness in government and public institutions.
- To inform advocacy and interventions by MISA Botswana and civil society across the country.
- To encourage citizens to exercise their fundamental right to access information generated, held and under the control of government institutions necessary for accessing other social economic rights.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research adopts qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection, and seeks to evaluate the level of public access to information held by government and public institutions. Each MISA Chapter conducts research by evaluating the websites of government and public institutions along with submitting oral and written requests for information. This method seeks to establish the transparency and efficiency of government and public institutions in providing information to the public.

DATA ANALYSIS

Category 1: Evaluation of government and public institution websites to determine the access and presence of credible and updated public information, which includes but is not limited to: powers and functions of the institution in question; vacancy and budgetary allocations; procurement procedures and contact details and reports.

Category 2: This category was divided into two sections, namely written questionnaires and oral requests for information. These instruments were adopted to determine the ease with which public information is obtained from government and public institutions.

Description of Assessment Criteria

The total number of points allocated to categories 1 and 2 is 20 points (n = 20) each. Points are awarded based on the researcher's answer: Yes (2 points); Partial (1 point); No (0 points). Government ministries and institutions fell into one of the following groups in accordance with the number of points that they received.

Category 1: Website Analysis

Group 1: (0 – 6) Absence of a website or an extremely poor website containing no or almost no relevant public information.

Group 2: (7 – 13) Average website containing some relevant public information.

Group 3: (14 – 20) Well organised, transparent website providing a good amount of relevant public information.

Category 2: Written Request/Oral Request

Group 1: (0 – 6) Denied access to reasonable information request or acted with high levels of secrecy.

Group 2: (7 – 13) Displayed an average level of openness in allowing access to public information.

Group 3: (14 – 20) Displayed openness in allowing access to public information. Institution and was helpful and transparent.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Category 1: Website Analysis

- Of the eight government institutions surveyed, five had their own individual websites. The remaining three had brief pages hosted by the Botswana government website (www.gov.bw).
- The survey also revealed that only half of the surveyed government institutions had updated information on their websites. The remaining half had outdated information, eg the Ministry of Youth Sports and Culture website does not appear to have been updated since 2012.
- Of the eight government institutions surveyed, only one website, that of the Ministry of Infrastructure, Science and Technology, featured a budget (but no expenditure report).

Category 2: Requests for Information

- Of the eight institutions surveyed, only the Ministry of Local Government rejected a written request for information upon submission, while the remaining seven written requests managed to reach the intended Public Relations office.
- One letter of request, for the Ministry of Environment, Wildlife and Tourism, had to be re-sent after follow up calls established that the initial one had reportedly been lost.
- All of the seven institutions that accepted the letters acknowledged receipt, but didn't respond to the questions, despite confirmation that they reached the Public Relations offices to which they were addressed.
- All ministries cautioned that information could only be released if the letter clearly stated the researcher's name and the intended use for such information.

DETAILED FINDINGS

1. Ministry of Lands and Housing

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.mlh.gov.bw/>

This website falls into Assessment Group 2, as it scored 13 points. The website captures recent events and activities. Despite having up-to-date information and useful features there is still substantial room for improvement.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?	•			Captures recent events
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?		•		
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?	•			
c) Reports, policies, programs?	•			
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?	•			Tenders are listed
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?	•			Job vacancy list available
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?		•		Only switchboard line and toll free number
h) The contact details of public officials?			•	
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			

Total Score: 13/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to Ministry of Lands and Housing:

1. In total how many plots have been allocated nationwide so far?
2. How many of those plots are residential, commercial or industrial?
3. Which district still has more land available for allocation and which one is topping the list of land scarcity?
4. How many land ownership transfer cases have been registered in the past three years?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 2/20

2. Ministry of Infrastructure, Science and Technology

CATEGORY 1 - WEBSITE

<http://www.mist.gov.bw/>

This is a good website with excellent user interface and content. There is a need for improvement in keeping content up-to-date. The website scores 14 points, putting it in Assessment Group 3. Though it contains outdated information, it should be noted that of all the eight websites surveyed this was the only ministry which had its budget on the website.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?		•		No information from 2013 and 2014
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?			•	
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?	•			
c) Reports, policies, programs?	•			
d) Budget and expenditure?	•			
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?			•	
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?	•			
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?			•	Only telephone numbers
h) The contact details of public officials?	•			
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?			•	There are email addresses for certain officials

Total Score: 14/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to Ministry of Infrastructure Science and Technology:

1. How is Botswana ranked internationally in its technological advancement?
2. Which area needs more work to be done?
3. Who benefits from more of the tenders issued by the ministry annually?
4. How many Botswana contractors have benefited from the tenders issued by the ministry? If possible please indicate in figures (the total amount allocated to tenders and the percentage won by local contractors owned by citizens).

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		Public Relations Officer
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 2/20

3. Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.gov.bw/en/Ministries--Authorities/Ministries/Ministry-of-Labour--Home-Affairs-MLHA/>

The website scored 13 points out of 20, putting it in Assessment Group 2. The website looks good and contains mostly relevant information. There is, however, room for the ministry to improve the website through the inclusion of annual budgets and expenditure as well as a description of powers and responsibilities of the administration.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?	•			
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?		•		
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?	•			Very limited
c) Reports, policies, programs?	•			
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?	•			
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?	•			Job search available
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?		•		Only a telephone number
h) The contact details of public officials?			•	Only a switchboard line
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			Direct email address of the Public Relations Officer

Total Score: 13/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs:

1. How long does it take to acquire a work permit in this country?
2. Which sector of the economy has made more requests for such permits over the past three years? (Please provide statistics)
3. Do any of our national policies give privilege to those candidates from SADC member states to easily attain permits in Botswana over other candidates from different parts of the world? That is, is there any special consideration for them?
4. In total, how many people were deported from Botswana in the past three years? How many of these were from:
 - a) SADC member states
 - b) Other African countries
 - c) Other parts of the world

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		Public Relations Officer
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 2/20

4. Ministry of Education and Skills Development

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.gov.bw/en/ministries--authorities/ministries/ministry-of-education-moe/>

The ministry scored five points in this analysis, putting it in Assessment Group 1. This is an extremely poor website that needs significant improvement. This ministry has the largest share of the national budget, which therefore equates to an even greater need for transparency by sharing information with the public. It must be noted that this is not an independent website but rather a page on the national government's website.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?		•		
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?		•		
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?		•		
c) Reports, policies, programs?		•		
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?			•	
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?	•			

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?		•		
h) The contact details of public officials?		•		
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			

Total Score: 5/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the Ministry of Education and Skills Development:

1. Which district has performed best in past PSL examinations and which one was the worst?
2. What was the ministry's budget allocation specifically for primary school education for the past three financial years?
3. How many children have been enrolled back to school through the out of school programme for the past three years?
4. How many of those have sat exams and passed?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		Public Relations Officer
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 2/20

5. Ministry of Foreign Affairs And International Cooperation

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.mofaic.gov.bw/>

The ministry scored four points in this analysis, putting it in Assessment Group 1. This is an extremely poor website with only superficial content.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?		•		
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?			•	
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?		•		

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
c) Reports, policies, programs?		•		
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?		•		Only a switchboard line
h) The contact details of public officials?			•	
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			

Total Score: 4/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation:

1. How many embassies does Botswana host currently?
2. What is the total number of years that one can occupy an embassy office?
3. Which countries does Botswana have offices for ambassadors in?
4. What is our stand as Botswana regarding the recent abduction of school' girls by militants in Nigeria?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		Public Relations Officer
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 2/20

6. Ministry of Environment, Wildlife and Tourism

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.mewt.gov.bw/DMM/index.php>

This website is extremely poor, scoring five out of 20 points. It does not contain any relevant public information despite having recent data. There is a need for more work to be done to make the website more user friendly by improving the user interface.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?	•			
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?		•		
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?		•		
c) Reports, policies, programs?		•		
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?	•			List of awarded contracts also available
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?		•		Only a postal address and a switchboard line
h) The contact details of public officials?			•	
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?		•		

Total Score: 5/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the Ministry of Environment, Wildlife and Tourism:

- How many cases of wild animal theft have been recorded in Botswana for the past three years?
- Does Botswana have any agreement with neighboring countries on efforts to curb wild animal theft?
- How involved are Botswana at community level in tourism in general and environmental protection? Please state examples to support your case.
- Do we have any environmental regulation tool in Botswana in place to regulate pollution, especially from the booming mining sector?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		Public Relations Officer
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 2/20

7. Ministry Of Youth, Sports and Culture

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.mysc.gov.bw/>

This is an appealing website in terms of design, but has very limited public information. It must be noted, however, that this is the only website containing full names and direct contacts of relevant public officials.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?		•		
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?			•	Only information on the structure is available
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?		•		
c) Reports, policies, programs?	•			
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?			•	Information is outdated
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?		•		
h) The contact details of public officials?			•	
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			More detailed system with an enquiry form

Total Score: 7/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to Ministry of Youth Sports and Culture:

1. What is the total number of people living in this country who qualify to be referred to as youth?
2. In which part of this country do most of these people live?
3. How many youth offices are there nationwide?
4. How many youth are unemployed and not studying, including those in the Ipelegeng, national internship programme and tirelo sechaba? (If possible please provide statistics of each programme)

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		Public Relations Officer
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 2/20

8. Ministry of Local Government

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.gov.bw/en/Ministries--Authorities/Ministries/Ministry-of-Local-Government-MLG1/>

This website falls into Assessment Group 1, scoring seven points. It must be noted that this is not an independent website, but rather a page on the national government's website.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?	•			
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?		•		
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?		•		Has a separate page allocated for such
c) Reports, policies, programs?	•			
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?		•		
h) The contact details of public officials?			•	Only a Switchboard line
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			

Total Score: 7/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the Ministry of Local Government:

1. How many marriages have been registered in the past three years?
2. How many divorce cases have been registered in the past three years?
3. What is the current limit for lobola?
4. Do our current laws have any provision for a lobola refund?

The request letter was never delivered to the Public Relations office, as receipt was rejected at the records desk. The officer who attended the researcher rejected the letter, stating that the information requested was confidential. The researcher was advised to resubmit a more detailed request stating the intended use for the information, their full identity and more information about them or the organisation requesting the information.

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 2/20

RESEARCH CONCLUSION

Taking into account surveys conducted in previous years, it is evident that government ministries and departments are still not freely providing public information. Many citizens in Botswana find government departments inaccessible and information continues to be disseminated only on a selective basis. If the situation continues this way, with authorities starving their citizens of information, there will be no further development and democracy will remain vulnerable. Public information should be freely and willingly provided to the information seeker at any given time within a reasonable period. In past years the study managed to identify the most open institution, which is not the case in this year's study due to the low scores by the respective ministries. All the ministries failed to respond to the questions that were sent to them within 21 days.

THE MOST SECRETIVE PUBLIC INSTITUTION IN BOTSWANA

All eight institutions surveyed scored the majority of their points through websites, as they all failed to respond to the questions or requests for information. This then meant the institutions can only be distinguished through their website scores to determine their level of openness. This continuing practice of government officials not responding to requests for information is a worrying trend as it denies the public their right to access and benefit from information held by officials.

MISA Botswana is very concerned with the worrying trend of some public institutions scoring less points than the previous year and little or no improvement overall observed over several years of studies. This supports MISA Botswana's call to the government to enact a Freedom of Information Act. It is MISA Botswana's view that this law would go a long way towards making the government Public Relations offices much more open and useful to the information seeker.

The most secretive institution for this year is the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation**, with a total of six points.

This was the lowest score, followed by the MoESD and MEWT, both scoring seven points each. Despite having accepted and acknowledged the researcher's letter of request for information, unlike the Ministry of Local Government, these three ministries failed to accumulate points for their websites. The low scoring by the three ministries can be attributed mainly to the limited information provided by their websites, which deny users the right to access common/public information through these sites. The other feature common amongst the three is a poor user interface, which makes it difficult for users to maneuver through the websites.

Special mention should also be made of the Ministry of Local Government, which refused to accept the written request for information. The reasoning behind the rejection of the letter was that the letter requested confidential information, and therefore

couldn't be taken to the Public Relations office for a response until 'certain requirements' were met by the information seeker. Subsequently, the majority of the points scored by this ministry were from the website survey.

THE MOST OPEN PUBLIC INSTITUTION IN BOTSWANA

All the ministries surveyed had independent websites or pages within the Botswana government website, for which they should be commended. It should be noted however that not all these institutions had all the relevant information available in these platforms.

MISA Botswana made sure that it did not reveal its identity throughout the study to avoid influencing the results. As was the case with previous surveys, government institutions continued to display signs of secrecy. All the approached institutions demanded further explanation with respect to what the information requested would be used for, as well as by whom it was being requested. At the end of the study there was no response from any of the participants, which left MISA Botswana with no other option than to identify the most open institution based largely on an evaluation of the institutions' websites. It seems the secretive culture is well cultivated within the government enclave. MISA Botswana believes that a culture of secrecy is dominating our government institutions, while members of the public are tirelessly thirsty for service delivery and information dissemination.

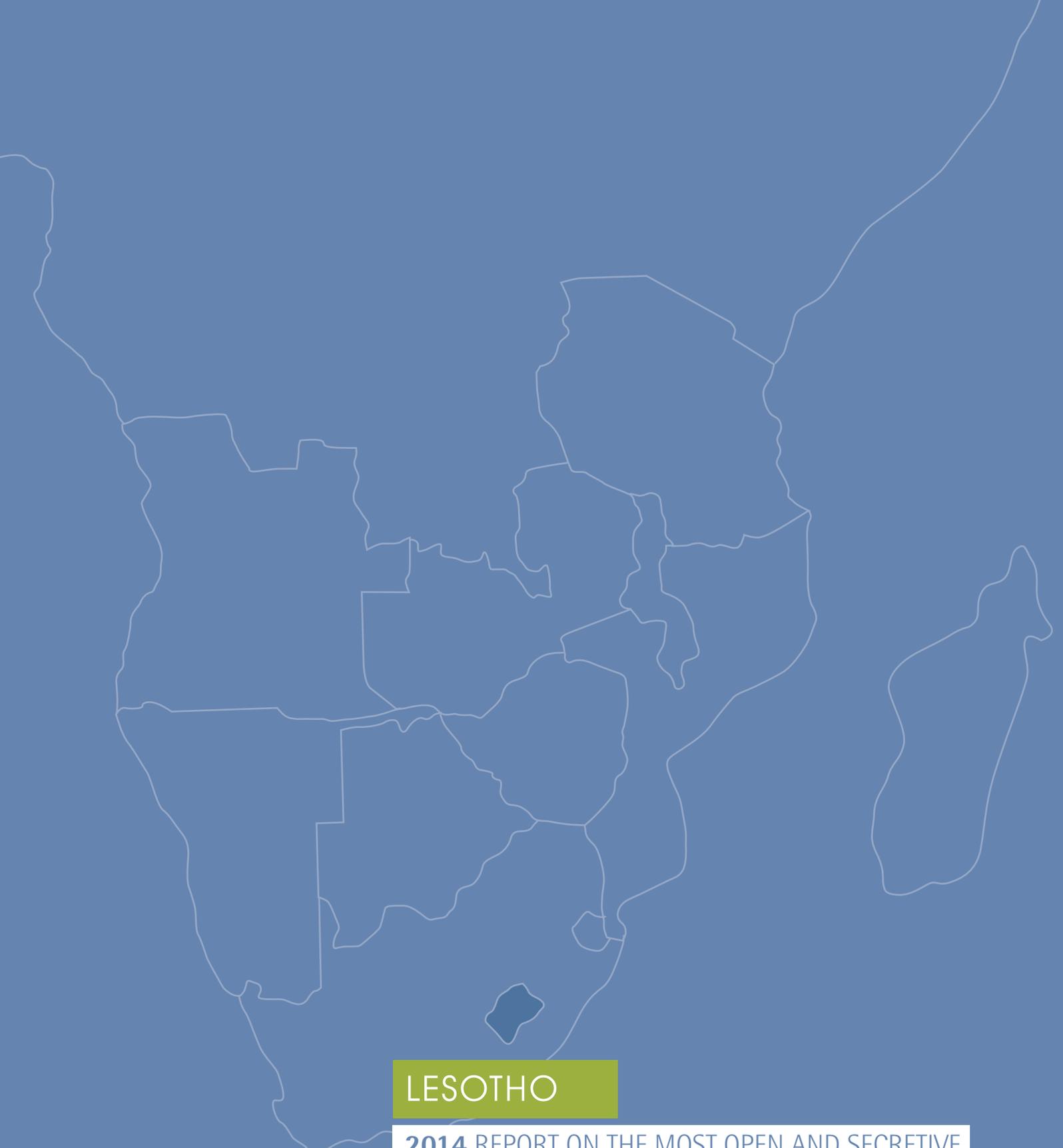
Although the Ministry of Infrastructure, Science and Technology scored well with a total score of 16 points, we could not recommend it as the most open public institution. The reason behind this decision is that like other institutions selected for the study this ministry also failed to respond to the request for information sent to them. It must be noted though that this is the only organisation, including those from previous years, which has included their budget on their website. It is critical for ministries to share such information with members of the public, due to the fact that the money spent is taxpayers' money.

Due to poor performance across the board, no Public Institution will receive the Golden Key award in 2014.

RECOMMENDATIONS

MISA Botswana received the same responses from Public Relations Officers (PROs) as in previous years, ie they wanted to know how the information would be used. MISA Botswana is of the opinion that government PROs should receive training to educate them on the importance of access to information. The issue of PROs having to sign non-disclosure forms should also be revisited, especially when it comes to employees who hold information of public interest.

It is recommended that MISA Botswana should continue to seek more support from different stakeholders to join efforts to influence legislators to enact a Freedom of Information Act, which has become a necessity for this country.



LESOTHO

2014 REPORT ON THE MOST OPEN AND SECRETIVE
GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS IN LESOTHO

INTRODUCTION

Lesotho is a signatory to the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR). However, the country has done very little to incorporate these instruments into domestic law. Lesotho is yet to promulgate a law that guarantees access to public information. It is, therefore, not easy for the public to demand access to public information where public institutions deny requests for information. There is no use requesting intervention from the judiciary, as existing laws do not grant access and therefore there is no legally enforceable right to access to information.

Section 14 of the Constitution of Lesotho guarantees freedom of expression, amongst many other freedoms and rights enshrined in the Constitution. However, media freedom is not explicitly protected. Lesotho is chiefly known for its laws that restrict media freedom. Lack of access to information impedes public participation in the democratic system. Citizens often have to rely on hearsay in order to know whether their country is progressing or stagnating. Lack of access to public information can contribute to the lack of context and background information of newspaper articles and research reports. It is very common to find journalists and independent citizens being denied information. The strict control of information has resulted in the public flooding press conferences. Many believe that journalists are given all the information and decide to give as little as possible to the public. This survey seeks to determine whether public institutions in Lesotho make information available to the general public.

There is little hope that the government will alter the status quo any time soon. After the 2012 general elections, where no political party achieved an outright majority, many had hoped for drastic reforms. The election results necessitated the formation of a coalition government for the first time in the history of Lesotho. The three former opposition parties – the All Basotho Convention (ABC), Basotho National Party (BNP) and Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD) – joined forces to form the government. This marked an end of the 14-year rule of Mr Pakalitha Mosisili, who had served as Prime Minister since 1998. The new regime has not done anything to ease the restrictions on media freedom.

RATIONALE AND RESEARCH PARAMETERS

This year's study focused on eight ministries with the aim to assess the degree to which they are accessible and responsive to public demand for information. The survey was conducted between the 23rd of June and the 25th July 2014. The study shows how transparent each ministry is by using prescribed tools to measure the level of responsiveness for each chosen ministry within a given time frame.

The following government institutions were surveyed:

1. Lesotho Revenue Authority (LRA)
2. Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority (LEWA)
3. Office of the Ombudsman
4. Lesotho National Dairy Board (LNDB)
5. Ministry of Home Affairs
6. Ministry of Energy, Meteorology and Water Affairs
7. Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences (DCEO)
8. Office of the Prime Minister

AIM OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of this study was to assess the level of openness in government and public institutions in the country. The results of the study will continue to inform MISA Lesotho's campaign for legislation on access to information and a media policy.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To assess the level of transparency in government and public institutions against international standards and principals on access to information.
- To influence the adoption of practices, laws and a culture that promotes transparency and openness in government and public institutions.
- To inform advocacy and interventions by MISA Lesotho and civil society across the country.
- To encourage citizens to exercise their fundamental right to access information generated, held and under the control of government institutions necessary for accessing other socio-economic rights.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research adopts qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection, and seeks to evaluate the level of public access to information held by government and public institutions. Each MISA Chapter conducts research by evaluating the websites of government and public institutions along with submitting oral and written requests for information. This method seeks to establish the transparency and efficiency of government and public institutions in providing information to the public.

DATA ANALYSIS

Category 1: Evaluation of government and public institution websites to determine the access and presence of credible and updated public information, which includes but is not limited to: powers and functions of the institution in question; vacancy and budgetary allocations; procurement procedures and contact details and reports.

Category 2: This category was divided into two sections, namely written questionnaires and oral requests for information. These instruments were adopted to determine the ease with which public information is obtained from government and public institutions.

Description of Assessment Criteria

The total number of points allocated to categories 1 and 2 is 20 points (n = 20) each. Points are awarded based on the researcher's answer: Yes (2 points); Partial (1 point); No (0 points). Government ministries and institutions fell into one of the following groups in accordance with the number of points that they received.

Category 1: Website Analysis

Group 1: (0 – 6) Absence of a website or an extremely poor website containing no or almost no relevant public information.

Group 2: (7 – 13) Average website containing some relevant public information.

Group 3: (14 – 20) Well organised, transparent website providing a good amount of relevant public information.

Category 2: Written Request/Oral Request

Group 1: (0 – 6) Denied access to reasonable information request or acted with high levels of secrecy.

Group 2: (7 – 13) Displayed an average level of openness in allowing access to public information.

Group 3: (14 – 20) Displayed openness in allowing access to public information. Institution and was helpful and transparent.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Category 1: Website Analysis

Three out of the eight institutions surveyed have independent websites. The Office of the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Energy, Meteorology and Water Affairs and the Ministry of Home Affairs did not have independent websites, but there is some information posted on the website of the Government of Lesotho. The Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences and the Lesotho National Dairy Board did not have websites at all.

Category 2: Requests for Information

The Lesotho National Dairy Board and the Office of the Ombudsman were the most cooperative institutions. The Ministry of Energy, Meteorology and Water Affairs scored the least points in this category. The ministry does not even have an officer designated for information dissemination.

DETAILED FINDINGS

1. Lesotho Revenue Authority (LRA)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

www.lra.org.ls

The website has a lot of information relevant to understanding Lesotho's tax regime. However, the website could benefit from some more information, such as recruitment procedures and information about procurement, as well as creating an online platform for messaging and whistleblowing.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?	•			
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?	•			
c) Reports, policies, programs?	•			
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?	•			
h) The contact details of public officials?	•			
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?		•		

Total Score: 12/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the Lesotho Revenue Authority:

1. What was the monthly revenue collected by LRA between the 1st April 2013 and the 31st March 2014?
2. How many mining companies were registered for tax purposes with LRA between the 1st April 2013 and 31st March 2014?
3. How much revenue was collected from the mining sector per month between the 1st April 2012 and the 31st March 2014?
4. Have there been any cases of fraud/corruption relating to taxation that were reported to the authority between the 1st April 2013 and the 31st March 2014?
5. Does the LRA have any information dissemination or communication strategy?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		Public Relations Officer
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 2/20

2. Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority (LEWA)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

www.lewa.org.ls

The website of the Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority is by far the most open website of the surveyed institutions. If the institution were to add important features such as information about recruitment and procurement procedures, it would be even more useful to the public.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?	•			
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?	•			
c) Reports, policies, programs?	•			
d) Budget and expenditure?	•			
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?			•	
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?			•	
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?	•			
h) The contact details of public officials?	•			
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			

Total Score: 16/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority:

- How much electricity was generated in Lesotho per month between the 1st April 2013 and 31st May 2014?
- What was the electricity consumption per district per month between the 1st April 2013 and the 31st March 2014?
- What was the percentage of electricity adjustment for household consumption per annum between 2003 and 2014?
- How many stakeholders were consulted prior to approval of the electricity tariff adjustment application by LEC for the year 2014/15?
- How many consumer complaints were handled by the authority between the 1st April 2013 and the 31st March 2014?
- Does the LEWA have any information dissemination or communication strategy?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		Public Relations Officer
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 2/20

3. Office of the Ombudsman

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

www.ombudsman.org.ls

The website of the Office of the Ombudsman is by far the easiest website to navigate. However, it could have scored more points had it included information on recruitment and procurement procedures.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?	•			
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?	•			
c) Reports, policies, programs?			•	The latest annual report uploaded is for 2010
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?	•			
h) The contact details of public officials?	•			
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			

Total Score: 13/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the Office of the Ombudsman:

1. How many complaints has the Office of the Ombudsman received per district between the 1st April 2012 and 31st May 2014?
2. How many complaints has the Office of the Ombudsman received per government ministry or institution between the 1st April 2012 and 31st May 2014?
3. How many of the cases filed with the Office of the Ombudsman between the 1st April 2012 and 31st May 2014 were attended to?
4. How many reports and publications were released by the Office of the Ombudsman between the 1st April 2012 and 31st May 2014?
5. Where could the public report cases of fraud/corruption relating to public service in the 10 districts of Lesotho?
6. Does the ministry have any information dissemination or communication strategy?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		Chief Public Relations Officer
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')	•		Within 6 Days
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?	•		
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')	•		
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.	•		
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?	•		

Total Score: 14/20

4. Lesotho National Dairy Board (LNDB)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

The Lesotho National Dairy Board does not have a website.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?		•		
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?		•		
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?		•		
c) Reports, policies, programs?		•		
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?		•		

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
h) The contact details of public officials?		•		
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?		•		

Total Score: 0/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the Lesotho National Dairy Board:

1. How many dairy farmers were producing milk in Lesotho between the 1st April 2013 and 31st May 2014?
2. How many liters of milk were produced in Lesotho per month between the 1st April 2013 and the 31st March 2014?
3. How many liters of milk were imported from the Republic of South Africa per month between the 1st April 2013 and the 31st March 2014?
4. How many liters of milk were exported by Lesotho between the 1st April 2013 and the 31st March 2014?
5. Have there been any reported cases of milk adulteration by farmers between the 1st April 2013 and the 31st March 2014?
6. Does the LNDB have any information dissemination or communication strategy?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		Marketing Officer
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')	•		Within 3 days
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?	•		
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?	•		
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	The institution is not collecting all information
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')	•		
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.	•		
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?	•		
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?	•		

Total Score: 18/20

5. Ministry of Home Affairs

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.gov.ls/safety/>

The Ministry of Home Affairs does not have an independent website. However, some information about the ministry is posted on the government website.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?		•		
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?		•		
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?		•		
c) Reports, policies, programs?		•		
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?	•			
h) The contact details of public officials?	•			
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?		•		

Total Score: 4/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the Ministry of Home Affairs:

- How many National Identity Documents were issued between the 1st April and 31st May 2014?
- How many IDs were issued each day for the month of May 2014?
- How many IDs were issued per district for the period between 1st April 2014 and 31st May 2014?
- Where can cases of fraud/corruption relating to issuing of IDs be reported?
- Have there been any cases of fraud/corruption relating to the issuing of IDs between 1st October 2013 and 31st March 2014?
- Does the ministry have any information dissemination or communication strategy?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		Chief Information Officer
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 2/20

6. Ministry of Energy, Meteorology and Water Affairs

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.gov.ls/energy/>

The Ministry of Energy, Meteorology and Water Affairs does not have an independent website. However, some information about the ministry is posted on the national government website.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?		•		
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?		•		
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?		•		
c) Reports, policies, programs?		•		
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?	•			
h) The contact details of public officials?	•			
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?		•		

Total Score: 4/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the Ministry of Energy, Meteorology and Water Affairs:

- How many vehicles consumed or made use of 50ppm diesel per month between 1st March 2012 and 31st March 2014 in Lesotho?
- How many households have been connected into the electricity grid per district for the period between 1st June 2012 and 31st May 2014?
- Where could consumers of petroleum products file their complaints against suppliers and distributors of Liquefied Petroleum Gas in Lesotho?
- How many new fuel filling stations have been constructed per district between 1st March 2005 and 31st March 2014?
- How many projects have been financed through the funds collected by the Petroleum Fund of the Government of Lesotho since its inception?
- Does the ministry have any information dissemination or communication strategy?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')		•	
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 0/20

7. Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

The Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences does not have a website.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?		•		
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?		•		
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?		•		
c) Reports, policies, programs?		•		
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?		•		
h) The contact details of public officials?		•		
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?		•		

Total Score: 0/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences:

- How many corruption suspects have appeared before the courts between the 1st April 2013 and the 31st March 2014?
- How many corruption cases have been reported to DCEO per district between the 1st April 2013 and the 31st March 2014?
- Have there been any cases of corruption relating to issuing of mineral rights between the 1st March 2013 and the 31st March 2014? (If so, how many?)
- Does the DCEO have any strategy to promote and protect whistleblowing?
- Does the DCEO have any information dissemination or communication strategy?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		Public Relations Officer
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?	•		
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')	•		
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 8/20

8. Office of the Prime Minister

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.gov.ls/pm/>

The Office of the Prime Minister does not have an independent website. However, some information about the ministry is posted on the government website.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?		•		Captures recent events
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?		•		
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?		•		
c) Reports, policies, programs?		•		
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		Tenders are listed
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		Job vacancy list available
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?	•			Only switchboard line and toll free number
h) The contact details of public officials?	•			
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?		•		

Total Score: 4/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the Office of the Prime Minister:

1. How many complaints did the Office of the Prime Minister receive between the 1st April 2012 and 31st May 2014?
2. What is the Office of the Prime Minister doing to reduce the number of days it takes for one to get a police clearance, which currently takes 90 days? I was informed of that wait time by the police officers at Maseru Central Charge Office when I went to their station on Friday 27 June 2014.
3. Does the Prime Minister or the Office of the Prime Minister have a social media account?
4. Where can individuals file complaints about poor service delivery and nepotism within the Government of Lesotho?
5. How many policies have been formulated and presented to the Cabinet for approval by the Office of the Prime Minister between the 1st June 2012 and 31st May 2014?
6. Does the Office of the Prime Minister have any information dissemination or communication strategy?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 4/20

RESEARCH CONCLUSION

The survey has revealed the secrecy within government ministries and public institutions, which serves to deny citizens their right to information. The Office of the Ombudsman has a balanced approach to the provision of information. It has a well-resourced website and is able to respond to written requests for information. It is utterly unacceptable for very important ministries and public institutions not to have updated websites. This is a weakness that even the best performer, the Office of the Ombudsman, has to overcome. Two out of the eight institutions were found not to have a website. The Office of the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Energy, Meteorology and Water Affairs and the Ministry of Home Affairs had very little information posted on the national government website. This makes evaluating the work of these institutions a near impossible task for citizens.

The written request was addressed to the officer designated for information dissemination at all of the institutions. Public institutions like the Office of the Prime Minister and the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences requested that the researcher write another letter to the Principal Secretary and the Director General respectively. A request addressed to the officer designated to disseminate information should be enough. The red tape only serves to delay or deny access to information. A journalist or researcher requesting the information could easily fail to meet deadlines, due to unnecessary requests to address letters to different people, especially when the content is the same, the only difference being the person addressed in the letter.

THE MOST SECRETIVE PUBLIC INSTITUTION IN LESOTHO

The Ministry of Energy, Meteorology and Water Affairs is the most secretive of the eight public institutions and ministries surveyed. The ministry was the only institution without an officer designated for information dissemination. It does not have an independent website and it only considers requests that have authorisation from certain institutions or researchers affiliated with those institutions, effectively denying information to freelance journalists, independent researchers and the general public. This excuse was given regardless of the fact that the Principal Secretary requested that the Department of Energy process the request. However, the researcher was denied information on the basis that he would only be given information if he was affiliated with a research or academic institution. The denial of information to an independent researcher only highlights the secrecy within which the ministry is operating. This means that citizens of Lesotho do not have a right to know what the ministry is doing unless they are affiliated with certain institutions.

THE MOST OPEN PUBLIC INSTITUTION IN LESOTHO

The Lesotho National Dairy Board (LNDB) scored highest when it comes to handling requests for information. The only challenge for the LNDB was the lack of a website. The organisation could better reach stakeholders if it were to have a small website with manageable information. That would go a long way towards ensuring that the public has access to information about the regulation of the dairy industry in Lesotho.

The **Office of the Ombudsman** is the most open public institution in Lesotho. The officer responsible for disseminating information was able to arrange a meeting for the researcher with the head of the organisation. The Office of the Ombudsman seems to be consistent in handling information requests, as it was the second highest scoring in 2012's study, when this research was last conducted in Lesotho. Information is easily accessible and anyone who is computer literate can send a message to the office through its website. It is, therefore, imperative that the public make use of the accessibility of the Office and file their complaints about poor service delivery.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of this study underscore the need for Lesotho to make public participation a priority. That would compel public institutions to provide the public with relevant and updated information. Access to information should be part of a liberal media policy. Lesotho must consider the formulation of a Public Participation Act and an Access to Information Act. These Acts would ensure that citizens have the information and tools to make informed decisions.

It is imperative that all public institutions have officers designated for information dissemination. In that way, the public would be able to approach such officers whenever they need information about the institution. It would make life very easy for the public if all public institutions were to have independent and up-to-date websites. It is very important that journalists, researchers and the public have access to updated information on the work of public institutions. Some of the people who may need information about Lesotho may not have the privilege of being able to visit the offices of these public institutions. Websites could save resources such as time and money used to search for information, which could be put towards other uses. The Office of the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Energy, Meteorology and Water Affairs and the Ministry of Home Affairs should have their own independent websites. A developing country like Lesotho should opt for efficiency in information dissemination in order to propel innovation and economic development.



MALAWI

2014 REPORT ON THE MOST OPEN AND SECRETIVE
GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS IN MALAWI

INTRODUCTION

Malawi enacted the democratic Constitution, which was published in the Government Gazette on 16 May 1994. Section 37 of the Constitution has a specific provision on access to information. The Malawi Constitution does not, however, provide a timeframe within which an enabling Act would be passed, which means there is no pressure on government officials to enact access to information legislation.

In 2003, the Malawi Chapter of the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA Malawi), in conjunction with other civil society organisations, drafted an Access to Information Bill (ATI Bill), which is yet to be enacted. The Bill aims to promote transparency and accountability in government and public institutions. It also seeks to ensure the public's right to access government records, which is an important component of ensuring government's accountability to the people it serves.

The need for an access to information law cannot be underestimated in Malawi, which is home to large numbers of people living in abject poverty. Like all nations in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) region, Malawi is also striving to meet the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, as well as tackling inter-related problems around corruption. Every citizen will have a right to know the decisions and working of government and how public resources are used.

The fact that the ATI Bill and accompanying policy have been drafted, and the latter duly approved by Cabinet is a major step towards the enactment of ATI legislation in Malawi. However, despite these inroads, critical challenges still remain. One of these requires changing the mindsets of public officers to begin appreciating the value of ATI, as most of them continue to show a lack of openness and pro-activeness in providing public information. It is in this context that MISA Malawi has been conducting various studies on the level of openness in public institutions in the country, not only as a way of instilling a culture of transparency amongst public officials but also as a strategy to develop evidence-based advocacy for the enactment of the law.

This report provides the results of 'The Most Open and Secretive Public Institutions in Malawi for 2014'. MISA Malawi has conducted such studies on a yearly basis since 2009 and these annual findings have revealed that public institutions in Malawi rarely value the public's 'right to know', and they are often not prepared to make information accessible. Most public institutions in Malawi either ignore requests for information or entirely refuse to provide requested information. Very few take a proactive approach in disseminating information by periodically releasing information generally.

In 2009, only two out of six institutions surveyed responded to written requests for information by MISA Malawi; in 2010 only three out of 10 institutions responded; in 2011 only two responded; in 2012 only three out of the eight surveyed

government departments and ministries responded to written requests for information; 2014 has seen the poorest performance with respect to the provision of information to the public.

RATIONALE AND RESEARCH PARAMETERS

Access to information is a fundamental human right and one that underpins all other rights. The framers of the Malawi Constitution clearly recognised the relevance of this right and guaranteed it under section 37.

It is on this basis that civil society organisations in Malawi, led by MISA Malawi, drafted an ATI Bill in 2005 to help facilitate development and implementation of effective ATI legislation. Since 2005, MISA Malawi and other civil society organisations have engaged a cross-section of stakeholders, including Members of Parliament, various ministries, journalists and the police to provide input into the draft ATI Bill. After thorough consultations, the final draft was presented to the Ministry of Information to be passed on to Cabinet for approval. However, the government indicated that the Bill could not be tabled in Cabinet or indeed Parliament unless accompanied by a policy on access to information.

In consultations with the Media and Communications Committee of Parliament, MISA lobbied various stakeholders, among them the Ministry of Information and Civic Education, to develop an ATI policy. By November 2010, the Ministry had formed a taskforce to spearhead the process and by January 2011, led by Professor Edge Kanyongolo, a special steering committee appointed by the taskforce produced a draft policy document on access to information.

In 2013, the Policy was approved by Cabinet, and the Minister of Information, Tourism and Civic Education pledged the government's commitment to ensure that the Bill would be finally tabled in Parliament for deliberation and subsequent enactment.

It is still pertinent, however, to foster a culture of openness and transparency in public institutions in order to entrench democratic values and beliefs in the country's public bodies. Therefore, MISA Malawi joined other MISA Chapters in conducting this research. The main aim of the study was to assess the level of openness in public institutions in Malawi as one way of promoting transparency and accountability in public bodies.

The survey began on the 18th of June 2014 and concluded on the 11th of July 2014. The majority of selected government and public institutions were identified randomly by MISA Malawi. Blantyre City Council and the Accountant General's Office were selected due to their poor performance in previous studies to determine whether there had been any improvement. All of the government ministries and departments that were selected play an extremely important role in the running of the country. MISA Malawi selected the following government and public institutions for the study:

1. Malawi Communications Regulatory Authority (MACRA)
2. Blantyre City Council
3. Ministry of Health
4. Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs
5. Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD)
6. Accountant General's Office
7. Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC)
8. Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Mining
9. Blantyre Water Board (BWB)
10. National AIDS Commission (NAC)

AIM OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to assess the level of transparency in government and public institutions in the country to support MISA Malawi's campaign on ATI legislation with empirical evidence. The results of the survey will be used to lobby for legislation on access to information.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To assess the level of transparency in government and public institutions against international standards and principles on access to information.
- To influence the adoption of practices, laws and a culture that promotes transparency and openness in government and public institutions.
- To inform advocacy and interventions by MISA Malawi and civil society across the country.
- To encourage citizens to exercise their fundamental right to access information generated, held and under the control of government institutions necessary for accessing other social economic rights.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research adopts qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection, and seeks to evaluate the level of public access to information held by government and public institutions. Each MISA Chapter conducts research by evaluating the websites of government and public institutions along with submitting oral and written requests for information. This method seeks to establish the transparency and efficiency of government and public institutions in providing information to the public.

DATA ANALYSIS

Category 1: Evaluation of government and public institution websites to determine the access and presence of credible and updated public information, which includes but is not limited to: powers and functions of the institution in question; vacancy and budgetary allocations; procurement procedures and contact details and reports.

Category 2: This category was divided into two sections, namely written questionnaires and oral requests for information. These instruments were adopted to determine the ease with which public information is obtained from government and public institutions.

Description of Assessment Criteria

The total number of points allocated to categories 1 and 2 is 20 points (n = 20) each. Points are awarded based on the researcher's answer: Yes (2 points); Partial (1 point); No (0 points). Government ministries and institutions fell into one of the following groups in accordance with the number of points that they received.

Category 1: Website Analysis

Group 1: (0 – 6) Absence of a website or an extremely poor website containing no or almost no relevant public information.

Group 2: (7 – 13) Average website containing some relevant public information.

Group 3: (14 – 20) Well organised, transparent website providing a good amount of relevant public information.

Category 2: Written Request/Oral Request

Group 1: (0 – 6) Denied access to reasonable information request or acted with high levels of secrecy.

Group 2: (7 – 13) Displayed an average level of openness in allowing access to public information.

Group 3: (14 – 20) Displayed openness in allowing access to public information. Institution and was helpful and transparent.

Limitations of the Study

The researcher made it clear in their requests for information that they were enquiring on behalf of MISA Malawi for the purposes of this study. It should be noted that this may have had an impact on how the institutions responded, especially since it is highly likely they are aware that this study is conducted every year and therefore the true purpose of the enquiries. The institutions' responses may have been different if an unaffiliated individual had made the enquiries.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Category 1: Website Analysis

- While there is some improvement in the number of institutions with websites, with only one institution (the Blantyre City Council) out of the ten surveyed institutions not having any website, it was however discouraging to note that the websites for two government ministries – the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development and the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs – were inaccessible during the time of the research.
- Most websites, however, were not updated frequently and did not have adequate relevant information. For example, the website of the Ministry of Health had many links whose pages had no content.
- Most websites of the mainstream government ministries performed poorly compared with those belonging to parastatals.

Category 2: Requests for Information

- Out of the 10 government ministries and departments that were sent written requests for information, only one (Malawi Electoral Commission) responded, meaning the levels of openness in public institutions seems to be getting worse instead of better.
- The MEC responded via email within 24 hours after the request for information was made.
- The case of Blantyre City Council is an interesting one. The Council boasts of having a Service Charter that contains information about its core services, the service standards, and customer rights as a way of improving their service delivery to their customers. The Service Charter, produced in 2011 with financial assistance from Irish Aid and technical support from the Malawi Human Rights Resource Centre (MHRRC), identifies the right of access to information as one of the core service rights of its "valued customers". Yet the Council's conduct and performance in this study is in clear breach of the core values outlined in its own Service Charter.

DETAILED FINDINGS

1. The Malawi Communications Regulatory Authority (MACRA)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

www.macra.org.mw

The website is up to date. It contains relevant information such as MACRA news, MACRA events, tenders, archives, press releases, quarterly reports, election monitoring, and contacts. It also provides detailed information and resources related to its core business of broadcasting licenses, such as general information on licensing, licensing application forms, license fees, and a list of licenses issued. With respect to information about the organisation, the website provides detailed information about its vision, mission, core values, objectives, organisational structure, functions and authority. It further provides information on its board and management.

The homepage has a section on key directories that is sub-divided into telecommunications, executive, broadcasting, postal, legal, finance and administration, as well as a consumer affairs unit.

It has downloadable resources on policy and legislation, publications and regulations. In addition to speeches and ICT indicators, website users can also access other information like adverts and/or vacancies, although there is no information about employment procedures. Similarly, the site has information about tenders, but doesn't have procurement procedures and signed contracts.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?	•			
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?	•			
c) Reports, policies, programs?	•			
d) Budget and expenditure?	•			
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?			•	
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?			•	
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?			•	The name of the contact person is not included in the contact details
h) The contact details of public officials?		•		
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?		•		

Total Score: 13/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the Malawi Communications Regulatory Authority (MACRA):

1. Explain the mandate of MACRA in Malawi?
2. What are the major challenges facing the telecommunication industry in the country?
3. To what extent has the telecommunication industry been involved in the formulation of policy frameworks that apply to the industry?
4. What is MACRA doing to ensure the expansion of the telecommunication's infrastructure in the country?
5. MISA Malawi and other stakeholders have been advocating for a review of the Communication Act; what role has MACRA played – if any – in these advocacy initiatives?
6. Malawians have been complaining about the prohibitive tariffs for calling on their mobile phones – probably one of the highest in the SADC region. What is MACRA's response to these concerns?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		Public Relations Officer
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	The insitution never responded to the questionnaire

Total Score: 2/20

2. Blantyre City Council

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

The Blantyre City Council does not have a website.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?		•		
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?		•		
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?		•		
c) Reports, policies, programs?		•		
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?		•		
h) The contact details of public officials?		•		
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?		•		

Total Score: 0/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the Blantyre City Council:

1. There is notable evidence that Blantyre City is heavily congested with vehicles during peak hours. What plans does the City Council have to improve the situation?
2. In terms of sanitation, what plans does the Council have to improve waste disposal in the city?
3. What is Blantyre City Council doing to improve the condition of Mudi River?
4. How do you plan to end the problem of congestion, which is popular in some areas of the district, for example, Chirimba and Ndirande?
5. Many people are selling their items alongside shops in town making the city crowded, how do you intend to end this problem?
6. How does the Council use money received from payment of city rates?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		Public Relations Officer (but it appears in practice there is no recognition of this position as we were being referred from one officer to another)
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	The responsible person was out of office
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	They kept referring us from one office to another
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	No responses were given
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	The institution never responded to the questionnaire

Total Score: 2/20

2. The Accountant General's Office

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

www.finance.gov.mw

Please note that as the Accountant General's Office is a part of the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development, the researcher chose to evaluate the website of the Ministry, as the Accountant General's Office does not currently have an independent website.

The website appeared to have relevant, current information. There is some important information displayed about the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development, such as its mandate, mission and vision. There is adequate information describing the management and operational structure of the ministry. It outlines its divisions and each division has its own webpage that describes its functions and mandates.

However, some key pages appear to contain misplaced information, e.g. the "Budget" page has a list of downloadable documents, but very few of them seem directly related to the budget (additionally, there appear to be issues downloading the documents). The "News" page didn't contain any content, while the content on the "Data and Statistics" page was the same as that on the "Documents" page.

Nonetheless, the "Contact Us" page had an electronic form to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?		•		
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?	•			
c) Reports, policies, programs?	•			
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?			•	The name of the contact person does not appear with the contact details
h) The contact details of public officials?		•		
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			

Total Score: 9/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the Accountant General's Office:

1. How much funding did the office of the Accountant General request in the 2013 / 2014 budget?
2. How much money was allocated to the office of the Accountant General for 2013 / 2014 budget and was this allocation enough? Explain.
3. How much was spent out of the total allocation, and on what?
4. What is the role the office of the Accountant General plays in the budget process?
5. Would you provide MISA Malawi with your budget structure?
6. Apart from the government budget allocation, what other alternative source(s) help(s) the running of the office of the Accountant General?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		The Accountant General
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	The responsible person was out of office
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	The institution never responded to the questionnaire

Total Score: 2/20

4. The Ministry of Health

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

www.moh.malawi.net

The website of the Ministry of Health had the following web pages: "Vision", "Mission", "Contacts", "About Us", "Global Health Events", "Policies", "Disease Info", "Procurement Info", "Statistics", and "Minister's Speeches". Of these pages, only three had content, namely the "Mission", "Minister's Speeches", and "Contacts" pages. Website visitors would struggle to learn anything about the Ministry as there is not content on the "About Us" page and the website lacks information policies, statistics, vision, and other resources.

There was also no updated information such as news and events, recent activities or ongoing programmes.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?		•		
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?		•		
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?		•		
c) Reports, policies, programs?		•		
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?			•	The name of the contact person is not included in the contact details
h) The contact details of public officials?		•		
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?		•		

Total Score: 1/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the Ministry of Health:

- Shortage of medicine and medical personnel is one of the challenges that the ministry faces. What is the ministry doing to overcome this problem?
- What is the ministry doing to ensure that medical training institutions improve their intake?
- Most district hospitals have frequently faced the problem of poor sanitation due to shortage of water. Has the ministry embarked on any measures to address the problem?
- What strategies have you put in place to minimise incidents of drug stock outs?
- How much money was allocated to the ministry for 2013 / 2014 budget and was this allocation enough?
- Would you provide MISA Malawi with the ministry's budget structure?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		The Spokesperson
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	The spokesperson claimed the questionnaire did not reach him
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	The institution never responded to the questionnaire

Total Score: 2/20

5. The Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

www.mec.org.mw

The website of the Malawi Electoral Commission appeared to be one of the most useful websites, providing adequate information on the following pages: "About MEC"; "Elections"; "Operations"; "News"; "Accreditation"; "Adverts"; "Publications and Reports"; and "Observer Reports". Most of these pages had drop-down menus displaying sub-pages and all the sub-pages have a reasonable amount of content, with no broken links.

The "News" section contained numerous recent news items and announcements.

The homepage contained key documents/information that users would likely find useful, such as the Presidential Election Results 2014, Parliamentary Election Results 2014, Local Government Election Results 2014, 2014 Tripartite Elections Observer Reports, Election Observer Information Pack, and a downloadable Complaint Form.

However, while the site has a contacts page with contact details for all regional offices in the southern region, central region, northern region, and its headquarters, the page does not have a web-based enquiry form. And the contact page is not a stand-alone page on the homepage, but is part of "About MEC".

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?	•			
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?	•			
c) Reports, policies, programs?	•			
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?			•	
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?			•	The name of the contact person is not included in the contact details
h) The contact details of public officials?		•		
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?		•		

Total Score: 10/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the Malawi Electoral Commission:

1. What were the challenges that the Commission faced in hosting the first tripartite elections?
2. During the 2014 elections there were many anomalies. What are some of the key factors that caused such anomalies?
3. What corrective measures have you put in place to avoid the same anomalies recurring in the future?
4. How did the riots staged on the polling days affect the elections?
5. How would you explain the level of cooperation between the MEC and other electoral stakeholders?
6. What are the three key lessons (in terms of priority) drawn from these Tripartite Elections from the Commission's perspective?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		The Spokesperson
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')	•		They responded within 24 hours
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?	•		
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)	•		
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')	•		
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?	•		

Total Score: 14/20

6. The National AIDS Commission (NAC)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

www.aidsmalawi.org.mw

The website of the National AIDS Commission has the following menu on its homepage: "Home", "About Us", "Downloads", "Webmail", "Research Database", "Press Releases", "Vacancies", "Procurement", and "Partner Websites". The site has updated information appearing on its homepage, and has news from as recently as July 2014. However, the site webmasters could have improved the site by dating the articles (most of the articles do not show the actual date on which they posted). Under "About Us" the site provides background information about the commission, its objectives, and the vision and mission statements.

The site also has downloadable documents on its own page sub-divided into the following categories: "Grants", "Corporate Documents", "Behavior Change Interventions", "Monitoring and Evaluation", "Research", "Policy Support", "Vacancies", and "Procurement". However, some categories did not have downloads.

The "Research Database", which is probably one of the most important pages, was inaccessible (broken link). For a government department that appears to be one of the most established and well resourced, it was disappointing that such an important resource was inaccessible, despite it being considered important enough to be included as a menu item.

Another significant issue with the website is that it doesn't appear to have contact details for the Commission anywhere on the website.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?	•			
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?			•	
c) Reports, policies, programs?			•	
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?			•	
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?	•			
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?		•		
h) The contact details of public officials?		•		
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?		•		

Total Score: 9/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the National AIDS Commission:

1. Can you explain the mandate of the National Aids Commission in Malawi?
2. What is the current HIV prevalence rate in the country?
3. What are some of the notable achievements that the Commission has registered to date?
4. How does the Commission ensure transparency on how it uses funds for HIV/AIDS related activities?
5. What is the Commission's relationship with the media?
6. Would you provide MISA Malawi with the NAC's grant management policies and annual budget structure?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		The Public Relations Officer
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	The institution never responded to the questionnaire

Total Score: 2/20

7. The Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Mining

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

www.nccpmw.org

The website of the Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Mining has the following links on its main menu: "Home", "About Us", "News and Events", "Documentation", "Media Centre", "EIA and Audits", "MoNREM Complaints Desk", and "FAQ". However, there was no content on the "About Us" page and, similarly, under "News and Events" there were categories like launches, ministerial visits and meetings and conferences, but none of these had any content/updates.

However, on a very positive note, the "Documentation" page had several important downloadable documents.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?			•	
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?		•		No content under the "About Us" page
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?			•	
c) Reports, policies, programs?	•			
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?		•		
h) The contact details of public officials?		•		
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?			•	The website had a section with an online complaints form

Total Score: 5/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Mining:

1. There has been a recent rise of fuel prices in the country, which seems to be out of hand. Are there any plans to manage this increase?
2. A few years back the country faced a shortage of fuel, what measures have you put in place to prevent a reoccurrence?
3. What long-term measures has your ministry put in place to ensure that there is a constant supply of fuel in the country?
4. Does the ministry frequently provide the media with information? If yes which media do you prefer?
5. How would you describe the relationship between the media and the Ministry of Energy and Mines in Malawi?
6. Would you kindly provide us with the ministry's policies and budget structure?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		The Public Relations Officer
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	The institution never responded to the questionnaire

Total Score: 2/20

8. The Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

www.justice.gov.mw

The website of the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs remained inaccessible throughout the research project.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?		•		
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?		•		
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?		•		
c) Reports, policies, programs?		•		
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?		•		
h) The contact details of public officials?		•		
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?		•		

Total Score: 0/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs:

1. Can you explain the mandate of Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs in Malawi?
2. There has been concern that a number of Parliamentary Bills take a long time to be enacted. Explain what has been the challenge from your ministry's perspective?
3. Besides your ministry, who are the other key stakeholders involved in the process of putting in place Parliamentary Bills?
4. How do you cooperate with the other key stakeholders listed above?
5. As far as the Ministry of Justice is concerned, what advice can you give to other relevant stakeholders if the speed of which Parliamentary Bills are to be enacted were to improve?
6. Share with us the list of pending Bills in your office and which ones you have prioritised to work on and complete by end of next month?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		The Public Relations Officer
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	The institution never responded to the questionnaire

Total Score: 2/20

9. Blantyre Water Board

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

www.bwb.mw

The main menu of the homepage for the website of the Blantyre Water Board (BWB) had the following links: "About BWB", "Customer Services", "News and Media", "Tariffs", "Projects", "Reports", "Social and Welfare", "Downloads", and "FAQ". Considering that most of these links had sub-categories of information and none of the links were broken, the site was among the most useful. The background information outlined BWB's history, its vision, mission and core values, and it had detailed information on its board and management, as well as operational zones.

Recent events were being updated in a timely manner under "News and Events".

The site also had several other links with information such as Online Bill Enquiry; Fault Reporting; News and Events; Bill Payment; Tip-Offs Anonymous; Water Conservation; Tenders; and Vacancies.

In addition to integrating an Online Bill Enquiry form and a feedback form into the site, the contact information for the organisation appeared at the bottom of all pages making easy and convenient for customers to contact the utility company.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?	•			
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?		•		
c) Reports, policies, programs?	•			
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?			•	
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?			•	
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?	•			

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
h) The contact details of public officials?	•			
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			

Total Score: 14/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following are questions were sent to the Blantyre Water Board:

1. There have been many cases of erratic water supply in Blantyre. What is the cause of this problem?
2. What is BWB doing to resolve this problem?
3. How is the money that is collected by the BWB in the form of water bills used to satisfy the needs of customers?
4. Blantyre Water Board has introduced the prepaid system in some of the townships in the city. How do you envisage the programme would improve your revenue and service delivery when it officially rolls out?
5. What challenges is the prepaid system facing so far?
6. Would you provide MISA Malawi with your workplace policies and annual budget structure?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		The Public Relations Officer
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	The institution never responded to the questionnaire

Total Score: 2/20

The Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

www.mlgrd.gov.mw

The website of the Local Government and Rural Development remained inaccessible throughout the research project.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?		•		
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?		•		
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?		•		
c) Reports, policies, programs?		•		
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?		•		
h) The contact details of public officials?		•		
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?		•		

Total Score: 0/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the Local Government and Rural Development:

1. Who manages the Constituency Development Fund and the Local Development Fund?
2. What are the key operational challenges currently being faced by the Constituency Development Fund and Local Development Fund?
3. What policies have you put forward to make sure that the development funds are delivered to the people and not misused?
4. How does the ministry allocate development in the country so that people are equally helped and aware of how their money is being used?
5. How does the ministry involve people in its development work?
6. What are the major challenges that the ministry faces in general?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		The Public Relations Officer
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	The institution never responded to the questionnaire

Total Score: 2/20

RESEARCH CONCLUSION

As in previous studies, this study has shown that government ministries and departments are still not open and do not freely release information in Malawi. Only one out of the 10 surveyed government ministries and agencies responded to written requests for information.

Evaluating the websites of these government ministries and departments, it was worrisome to note that some institutions, which did not have websites when surveyed in previous studies, have not made significant progress in this area.

Some websites, however, were partially updated. There is still a need for more advocacy efforts to educate public officers on the importance of giving public information to those who request it, and on the need to have informative websites as well as having proactive officers responsible for responding to information requests.

THE MOST SECRETIVE PUBLIC INSTITUTION IN MALAWI

All the sampled public institutions, save for the Malawi Electoral Commission, easily qualify under this category. While only a few institutions demonstrated the capacity to update their website and upload relatively relevant information (e.g. MACRA, NAC, Accountant General), the majority had an out of date or non-functional website, or in one case, no website at all. Most of the institutions also scored very poorly under the 'written request for information' survey.

Of particular note is the Blantyre City Council, which, despite having in place a Service Charter which identifies the right of access to information as one of the core service rights of its valued customers, performed very poorly in this study both in their website assessment and with regard to written requests for information. District councils play a major role in public life as they render public services such as city planning, distribution of public land, collection of revenue, etc. Members of the public have the right to know how district councils utilise public resources, hence the need for the councils to be more open and transparent.

The council scored 0/20 in the website assessment, and 2/20 in the written request for information category.

Two other institutions, the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs and the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development also scored a total of only two points each. The Blantyre District Council had an advantage over the institutions that are new to the study because it received the 2012 Golden Padlock award, and therefore had the opportunity to improve by learning from past weaknesses identified in earlier studies. Further, it did not have a website at all, whereas the aforementioned ministries do have websites, they are just not currently functional.

The **Blantyre District Council**, therefore, qualifies as a recipient of the 2014 Golden Padlock award for being the most secretive public institution.

THE MOST OPEN PUBLIC INSTITUTION IN MALAWI

The communications officer at the Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC) emailed back a completed questionnaire within 24 hours. Furthermore, the MEC was the only institution where hard copies of questionnaires were not hand-delivered (the following day) since the electronic version had already been responded to.

The MEC's prompt response also highlights the importance of public institutions having proactive, specialised officers responsible for providing information to the public, unlike in other institutions like the Blantyre City Council where we were being transferred from one officer to another and were at some point informed that the questionnaire could not be traced.

In terms of the website assessment, besides the websites of MACRA and the Blantyre Water Board, which both performed outstandingly well, the MEC website was also regularly updated.

MEC scored 10/20 in website assessment. But MACRA and BWB were outperformed by MEC on the written request for information, where the latter scored 14/20.

The **Malawi Electoral Commission** is therefore the recipient of the 2014 Golden Key award for the most open and transparent public institution in Malawi.

The MEC is an independent, Constitutionally-mandated and impartial institution, established to professionally deliver credible, transparent, inclusive, efficient and cost effective elections to promote and entrench democratic values and peace in Malawi.

RECOMMENDATIONS

While most of the surveyed public institutions had public relations officers (PROs), spokespersons or information/communication officers, it was clear that either these officers did not fulfill their mandate because of capacity gaps or the environment in which they were working was not enabling for them to effectively do their job. The fact that in some institutions we were being referred from one office to another could mean that institutions did not really recognise or respect the terms of reference for which these officers were employed in the first place. As such, we recommend that government ministries and parastatals put in place clear institutional communication strategies and policies that outline clear communication goals, objectives, expected results and outcomes, key indicators, as well as monitoring mechanisms. The documents should also outline the terms of reference of the PROs, spokespersons and communication officers, which should be made known to other officers as well.

The government ministries and parastatals that were surveyed should consider creating opportunities for refresher courses for their key officers responsible for communication so as to develop their capacity and ensure that they are in line with modern trends in communication (eg the use of internet-based communication tools like websites, facebook, Twitter, mailing lists, etc). It was observed that most of the communication officers did not have the basic skills to update the website themselves, a situation that affects the frequency of which websites are updated, as either they have to rely on another officer in the Information Technology (IT) department within the institution to do it for them (which might not be a priority to the IT officer), or rely on outsourcing external services each time they needed to update the websites.

The Ministry of Information and Civic Education which, according to the National ATI Policy approved by Cabinet this year, has been identified as the coordinating ministry for the implementation of the Policy is concerned, should ensure that the ongoing campaign on the enactment of the ATI law should also target PROs, spokespersons, information/communication officers and senior officials of government ministries and agencies in almost the same way they have done with the other stakeholders. Currently, there appears to be more focus on directing the messages to the policy makers (Members of Parliament) and the public, but there is need to emphasise the fact that both the ATI Bill and policy advocate for the systematic storage of public information, which entails storing and preserving public records in a form that is easily accessible by the public. This is possible if the coordinating ministry puts in place orientation programmes specifically targeting PROs, spokespersons, and information/communication officers of government ministries and agencies, together with senior officials.



NAMIBIA

2014 REPORT ON THE MOST OPEN AND SECRETIVE
GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS IN NAMIBIA

INTRODUCTION

Access to information held by government or public institutions is not easily obtainable. Though freedom of expression and human rights are guaranteed in a democratic Namibia, secrecy prevails, as there is no access to information law or even a government communication policy to guide public service information officers on how and when to communicate with the public.

Rather, Namibia's legal background is primarily designed to encourage secrecy and confidentiality, with apartheid-era legislation, such as the *Protection of Information Act 1982*, still need of repeal.

Access to information is necessary for the realisation of the basic rights to freedom of opinion and expression that are guaranteed in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, numerous other international human rights instruments, and the Namibian Constitution. The Namibian Government is not legally obligated to share or disclose any details regarding their operations and largely acts under a veil of secrecy, unless it decides on its own accord to share information or the information is leaked to the media by whistleblowers. Access to information is also essential for people to realise their basic right to participate in the governing of their country and to live under a system based on the informed consent of the electorate.

Access to information provides the public with the opportunity to report and comment on issues of local interest, which are recognised as critical enablers for empowerment of the poor and for social liberty. An improved information flow and a greater range of communication channels are needed to meet the information needs of the poor and rural citizens, and to advance perspectives in policy discourse.

The right of access to information is also guaranteed by Article 9 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights', which has been further developed by the Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa as a fundamental and inalienable human right and an indispensable component of democracy and development, including socio-economic development.

In addition to the absence of an access to information law, Namibia still does not have legislation protecting whistleblowers, which can act as a deterrent to citizens reporting dishonesty, bribery, and corruption.

New regulations added to the *Research, Science and Technology Act 2004*, which requires government permission to conduct research, further dampened citizens' access to information when inserted in 2013. The Act now defines research as "the systematic investigation or analysis into, and study of, materials, sources and the physical universe in order to establish facts and knowledge and reach conclusions". It also demands that any organisation or individual conducting any activity that could be termed 'research' apply to the government-appointed National Commission of

Research, Science and Technology for permission. The regulations stifle freedom of expression, access to information, and academic freedom.

In September, asserting its right to access public information, the Access to Information (ACTION) Namibia Coalition called on President Hifikepunye Pohamba to release the fourth Delimitation Commission report. The report not only contains recommendations made by the Commission, but also the views expressed during public hearings and direct submissions. The government's decision to create additional constituencies, split the Kavango Region in two, and rename several constituencies and regions is presumably based on the report.

The Ministry of Information and Communication Technology is in the process of developing an access to information policy, which should precede the drafting of a Bill on access to information. Two new laws that will further impact the public's access to information is the Data Protection Bill and the Cyber Law. It is unclear at this time when these will be enacted. Towards the end of 2014 Namibians will go to the polls to vote in the National Assembly and Presidential Elections.

RATIONALE AND RESEARCH PARAMETERS

MISA Namibia joined other MISA Chapters in participating in a study to establish the most open and secretive government and public institutions. MISA Namibia selected eight institutions to survey. The survey began on the 16th of June and was concluded on the 16th of July 2014.

The following government and public institutions were surveyed:

1. Roads Contractor Company (RCC)
2. Namibia Housing Enterprise (NHE)
3. National Council (NC)
4. National Planning Commission (NPC)
5. Ministry of Youth, National Service, Sport and Culture (MYNSSC)
6. Ministry Of Health and Social Services (MHSS)
7. Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare (MGECW)
8. Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF)

AIM OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of this study was to assess the level of openness in government and public institutions in the country. The results of the study will continue to inform MISA Namibia's campaign for legislation on access to information (ATI).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To assess the level of transparency in government and public Institutions against international standards and principals on ATI.
- To influence the adoption of practices, laws and a culture that promotes transparency and openness in government and public Institutions.
- To encourage citizens to exercise their fundamental right to access to information generated, held and under the control of government institutions necessary for accessing other socio-economic rights.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research adopts qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection, and seeks to evaluate the level of public access to information held by government and public institutions. Each MISA Chapter conducts research by evaluating the websites of government and public institutions along with submitting oral and written requests for information. This method seeks to establish the transparency and efficiency of government and public institutions in providing information to the public.

DATA ANALYSIS

Category 1: Evaluation of government and public institution websites to determine the access and presence of credible and updated public information, which includes but is not limited to: powers and functions of the institution in question; vacancy and budgetary allocations; procurement procedures and contact details and reports.

Category 2: This category was divided into two sections, namely written questionnaires and oral requests for information. These instruments were adopted to determine the ease with which public information is obtained from government and public institutions.

Description of Assessment Criteria

The total number of points allocated to categories 1 and 2 is 20 points (n = 20) each. Points are awarded based on the researcher's answer: Yes (2 points); Partial (1 point); No (0 points). Government ministries and institutions fell into one of the following groups in accordance with the number of points that they received.

Category 1: Website Analysis

Group 1: (0 – 6) Absence of a website or an extremely poor website containing no or almost no relevant public information.

Group 2: (7 – 13) Average website containing some relevant public information.

Group 3: (14 – 20) Well organised, transparent website providing a good amount of relevant public information.

Category 2: Written Request/Oral Request

Group 1: (0 – 6) Denied access to reasonable information request or acted with high levels of secrecy.

Group 2: (7 – 13) Displayed an average level of openness in allowing access to public information.

Group 3: (14 – 20) Displayed openness in allowing access to public information. Institution and was helpful and transparent.

Limitations of the Study

The researcher made it clear in their requests for information that they were enquiring on behalf of MISA Malawi for the purposes of this study. It should be noted that this may have had an impact on how the institutions responded, especially since it is highly likely they are aware that this study is conducted every year and therefore the true purpose of the enquiries. The institutions' responses may have been different if an unaffiliated individual had made the enquiries.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

MISA Namibia concluded that most institutions were not reluctant to grant access to information when they were contacted, but failed to eventually respond to the questions sent to them via email, after confirming that they had received the email and would reply in due time. Access to the information of public institutions is primarily reliant on whether public relations officers are efficient in their duties. A special mention must be made of Aina Shikesho, public relations officer at the Ministry of Youth, National Service, Sport, and Culture. She paid special attention to our researcher, responding almost immediately and granting the researcher an interview within two days. It was the quickest and most efficient response of all the public institutions. Most websites had all the necessary information needed to make contact, and even though they were not completely up to date, the information was not excessively outdated.

DETAILED FINDINGS

1. Roads Construction Company

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.rcc.com.na/>

The website was not up to date with recent activities or news feeds, but the information was still relevant, well presented, and useful.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?		•		
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?	•			
c) Reports, policies, programs?	•			
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?	•			
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?	•			
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?			•	Not working hours
h) The contact details of public officials?	•			
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			

Total Score: 15/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the Roads Construction Authority:

1. Briefly describe the RCCs mandate.
2. What are your main forms of income?
3. Which region received the most infrastructure development over the past 24 months?
4. Which international quality standards are followed by the RCC?
5. Who designs the RCC's annual work plan in terms of infrastructure development nation-wide?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		Mr Celsius Edward, Public Relations Clerk
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')	•		
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?	•		Rauna Mumbuu, the Corporate communications officer at RCC sent the researcher this mail: "I guess these questions will be suitable for RA (Roads Authority), they are responsible for designing the country's road network and it development thereof. RCC, we are just a contractor"
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	No information was received

Total Score: 6/20

2. National Housing Enterprise

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.nhe.com.na/>

The website proved to be informative and well presented. Last year it was not up and running. The website is well organised and useful.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?		•		
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?		•		
c) Reports, policies, programs?	•			
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?	•			
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?	•			
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?			•	Not the working hours
h) The contact details of public officials?	•			
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			

Total Score: 13/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the National Housing Enterprise:

1. What is your budget for 2014/15?
2. How much of this is used for salaries and board fees?
3. What are the cheapest and most expensive housing options available in Windhoek? Please describe the design and location of the houses.
4. How many people are on your waiting list for Windhoek?
5. How long has the 10th person on the list waited for a house?
6. What are some of the challenges faced by NHE to provide affordable housing?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		Mr G Gronewalt
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	No information was received

Total Score: 2/20

3. National Council

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

www.parliament.gov.na

The National Council is part of Parliament and therefore they share a web address. The section that is provided for the National Council on the webpage provides very little information under the various sub-headings. It is well presented and organised but lacks detailed information. It is also not up to date.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?		•		Last update was in 2011
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?			•	Members are presented but not in an organisational structure, nor are their responsibilities as members of Parliament detailed
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?			•	They have Bills, Acts and Hansards
c) Reports, policies, programs?		•		
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?	•			
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?			•	Not the working hours
h) The contact details of public officials?	•			
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?		•		

Total Score: 7/20**CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION****The following questions were sent to the National Council:**

1. What is the National Council's mandate?
2. Are the National Assembly and the National Council equally important? If so, how? If not, why not?
3. Which Bills did the National Council approve in 2013/14?
4. How does the National Council engage with grassroots Namibians?
5. What is National Council's budget for the 2014 financial year and how is it applied?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		Momley Amushendje, Public Liaison Officer
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')	•		
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?	•		
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	No information was received

Total Score: 8/20**4. National Planning Commission****CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE****<http://www.npc.gov.na/>**

The website was well presented and very informative. It is useful, well organised and contains relevant information.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?	•			Last updated in 2014
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?	•			
c) Reports, policies, programs?	•			
d) Budget and expenditure?	•			
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?	•			

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?			•	Working hours unavailable
h) The contact details of public officials?	•			
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			

Total Score: 17/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the National Planning Commission:

1. Does the NPC also partake in national campaigns such as national health campaigns, data collection exercises with the NSA or the My Namibia, My Pride Campaign? If so, how?
2. How does the NPC ensure grassroots understanding and participation in its work?
3. What is civil society's role in the achievement of our national development goals?
4. What have been the achievements and challenges in regard to the implementation of NDP4 thus far?
5. How important are international partnerships to achieve our national development goals, e.g. the European Union's partnership with the NPC?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		Michael Mutonga, Director: Administration
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')	•		
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?	•		Mr Mutonga replied telephonically
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	He did not reply with information requested
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	No information was received

Total Score: 8/20

5. Ministry of Youth, National Service, Sport and Culture

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.mynssc.gov.na/>

The website is not very informative, nor is it up to date with current affairs or news feeds. The website is organised and contact details are available.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?		•		
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?		•		
c) Reports, policies, programs?		•		
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?			•	Employment procedures unavailable
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?			•	The name and job titles of employees are not provided with the telephone numbers, nor are there working hours
h) The contact details of public officials?	•			
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			

Total Score: 8/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the Ministry of Youth, National Service, Sport and Culture

1. How does the ministry aim to reduce youth unemployment during the 2014/15 budget year?
2. How do you involve the youth when developing strategic plans, policies and action plans?
3. Who is your main target for youth programmes – urban or rural youth?
4. What are the main youth development projects?
5. How do you ensure that gender equality measures are understood and implemented by project coordinators?

(Note: Information was obtained orally; staff were very friendly and helpful. Interview took place with Mr Andrew Jules)

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		Aina Shikoshe, Public Relations Officer
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')	•		They replied immediately and granted the researcher an interview in two days
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?	•		
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)	•		

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')	•		
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.	•		
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?	•		
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?	•		

Total Score: 18/20

6. Ministry of Health and Social Services

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.mhss.gov.na/>

The website is useful and contains relevant information. It is up to date and well organised.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?	•			
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?		•		
c) Reports, policies, programs?	•			
d) Budget and expenditure?	•			
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?	•			
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?	•			
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?			•	Working hours not available
h) The contact details of public officials?	•			
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?		•		

Total Score: 15/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the Ministry of Health and Social Services:

1. How many state hospitals are there in the country?
2. How many national health campaigns have been planned for 2014 and how many of these have been implemented?
3. What has been the biggest health scare in 2014?
4. How many nurses and doctors are employed by the Ministry of Health and Social Services nationwide?
5. What is the budget for the 2014 financial year and how much is allocated for infrastructural development?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		Charles Usurua (researcher was directed to him by Public Relations Officer)
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')	•		
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?	•		
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	Mr Usurua directed the researcher to the Permanent Secretary and advised the researcher to put in a formal request by sending a letter from the researcher's "institution"
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	No Information was received

Total Score: 6/20

7. Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.mgecw.gov.na/>

The website is not up to date in terms of its recent activities but its functions were well placed and it contains applicable information, which is useful.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?			•	
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?		•		
c) Reports, policies, programs?	•			
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?	•			
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?	•			
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?			•	Not the working hours
h) The contact details of public officials?	•			
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?		•		

Total Score: 12/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare:

1. What policies and laws do you use to bring about gender equality?
2. What gender equality projects are being implemented to bring about gender equality?
3. What child grants does the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare have?
4. Briefly describe the work of the ministry in relation to gender based violence (GBV).
5. What are the biggest challenges of the Ministry in achieving its mandate?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		Rosa Nikanor, Public Relations Officer
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')	•		
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?	•		
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?	•		
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.	•		
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?	•		
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?	•		

Total Score: 16/20

8. Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.mawf.gov.na>

The website is not up to date with recent events and activities, but it is informative and the information is relevant. The Ministry's activities are well placed and it easy to use.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?		•		Last update: 30 September 2013
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?	•			
c) Reports, policies, programs?	•			
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?	•			

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?			•	Working hours unavailable
h) The contact details of public officials?	•			
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?		•		

Total Score: 11/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the Ministry of Veterans Affairs:

- Why does the Ministry have projects that involve the community?
- How many beneficiaries/participants are registered for the ministry's initiatives such as Greensheme, Etunda and community forestry? How many are male and how many are female?
- What skills do they develop by being part of these initiatives?
- How is the sustainability of community-based projects ensured?
- Please share one or two success stories with regard to community involvement in agricultural production.

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		Nekundi Erasmus, Public Relations Executive
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')	•		Only to confirm they had received the mail and will reply and answer the questions in due time. The questions remained unanswered.
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	No information received

Total Score: 6/20

RESEARCH CONCLUSION

The Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare is the most open public institution, closely followed by the Ministry of Youth, National Service, Sport, and Culture and the National Planning Commission.

The National Housing Enterprise (NHE) and National Council rank the lowest, with the Ministry of Agriculture, Water, and Forestry ranking only marginally better.

The NHE also ranked the lowest in last year's research. Important to note however, is that in 2013 their website was under construction during the time of review. This year, they received an average score for their website, but again scored lowest on the request for information.

The National Council and NHE rank the same, but the award will go to the NHE, because the National Council's Public Liaison Officer did respond to our request for information.

Some notable incidents: The Ministry of Health and Social Service's Public Relations Officer referred our researcher to the Senior Health Programme Officer, who directed her to send a formal request to the Permanent Secretary from her academic institution. We did not pursue the issue further, as we were assessing the ability of a member of the public to access information – not an organisation.

The Roads Construction Company's Corporate Communications Officer responded that the questions were more suited for the Roads Authority, also reviewed in 2013, stating that "they are responsible for designing the country's road network and its development thereof. RCC, we are just a contractor." However, they are, in accordance with the information available on their website, a State-owned enterprise.

In 2013, the National Planning Commission (NPC) and Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF) scored second and third place as Most Open Public Institutions, but their score was much lower this year, which could be attributed to a change in staff. At the time of the research, the NPC had no Public Relations Officer (PRO), as they did in 2013, and we were referred to the Director of Administration. At the MAWF, there is currently only a Public Relations Assistant.

THE MOST SECRETIVE PUBLIC INSTITUTION IN NAMIBIA

The most secretive public institution was found to be the **National Housing Enterprise**.

THE MOST OPEN PUBLIC INSTITUTION IN NAMIBIA

The most open public institution was found to be the **Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare**.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Government needs to employ skilled, competent information officers. At a MISA Namibia facilitated one-day workshop for government Information and Communication Officers on how to constructively engage with the media last year, only one out of nine participants had training as a PRO. Another concern was that a number of the participants needed to be convinced that they are spokespeople for the Government of the Republic of Namibia, and not the ruling party, SWAPO.

Recommendations made by participants included:

- For a Communication Policy to be developed by the Ministry of Information and Communications Technology, which would provide guidelines to government communicators on how to conduct external communication, in particular with the general public.
- For a consultation meeting to be held between the media and government communicators, in order for both parties to discuss challenges in communication and provide solutions.
- For government communicators to form part of their ministries' management committees. It was highlighted that very few of them are updated on developments within their ministries and are only informed about something when the media calls them for further information, or to get a quote.

MISA Namibia remains committed to ensuring that Namibians' right to access to information is realised through strengthening the ability of public institutions and the media to provide up to date and relevant information to the public, as well as the promotion of greater transparency and accountability within government. MISA Namibia also strives to promote multiple channels of communication to facilitate easier access to public information.



SWAZILAND

2014 REPORT ON THE MOST OPEN AND SECRETIVE
GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS IN SWAZILAND

INTRODUCTION

The kingdom of Swaziland adopted its current Constitution in 2005. The Constitution recognises the critical role openness and access to public information play in building a transparent and accountable government. Section 24(2)(b) provides: "A person shall not, except with the free consent of that person, be hindered in the enjoyment of right of freedom of expression, which includes the freedom of the press and other media, that is to say ... freedom to receive ideas and information without interference". Presently, there is no legislation that allows access to public information in the country, apart from the Constitutional provision above. There is however, a policy on information and media (the Information and Media Policy) that aims to promote public access to information held by public institutions.

RATIONALE AND RESEARCH PARAMETERS

Access to information is a fundamental human right that underpins all other rights.

MISA Swaziland selected the following government and public institutions for the study:

1. Ministry of Public Works and Transport
2. Swaziland Competitions Commission
3. Ministry of Tinkhundla Administration and Development
4. Smart Partnership Secretariat
5. Ministry of Education and Training
6. National Emergency Relief Council on HIV and AIDS (NERCHA)
7. Elections and Boundaries Commission (EBC)
8. Commission for Human Rights and Public Administration Integrity

AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study is to assess the level of transparency in government and public institutions in the country to support MISA Swaziland's campaign, which is focused on the enactment of access to information legislation, with verifiable evidence.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To assess the level of transparency in government and public institutions against international and regional standards and principles on access to information.
- To influence the adoption of practices, laws and a culture that promotes openness in government and public institutions.
- To inform MISA and civil society campaigns on access to information.
- To encourage citizens to exercise their right to access public information in order to enhance their development.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research adopts qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection, and seeks to evaluate the level of public access to information held by government and public institutions. Each MISA Chapter conducts research by evaluating the websites of government and public institutions along with submitting oral and written requests for information. This method seeks to establish the transparency and efficiency of government and public institutions in providing information to the public.

DATA ANALYSIS

Category 1: Evaluation of government and public institution websites to determine the access and presence of credible and updated public information, which includes but is not limited to: powers and functions of the institution in question; vacancy and budgetary allocations; procurement procedures and contact details and reports.

Category 2: This category was divided into two sections, namely written questionnaires and oral requests for information. These instruments were adopted to determine the ease with which public information is obtained from government and public institutions.

Description of Assessment Criteria

The total number of points allocated to categories 1 and 2 is 20 points ($n = 20$) each. Points are awarded based on the researcher's answer: Yes (2 points); Partial (1 point); No (0 points). Government ministries and institutions fell into one of the following groups in accordance with the number of points that they received.

Category 1: Website Analysis

Group 1: (0 – 6) Absence of a website or an extremely poor website containing no or almost no relevant public information.

Group 2: (7 – 13) Average website containing some relevant public information.

Group 3: (14 – 20) Well organised, transparent website providing a good amount of relevant public information.

Category 2: Written Request/Oral Request

Group 1: (0 – 6) Denied access to reasonable information request or acted with high levels of secrecy.

Group 2: (7 – 13) Displayed an average level of openness in allowing access to public information.

Group 3: (14 – 20) Displayed openness in allowing access to public information. Institution and was helpful and transparent.

Limitations of the Study

The researcher made it clear in their requests for information that they were enquiring on behalf of MISA Swaziland. It should be noted that this may have had an impact on how the institutions' responded, especially since it is highly likely they are aware that this study is conducted every year and therefore the true purpose of the enquiries. The institutions' responses may have been different if an unaffiliated individual had made the enquiries.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Category 1: Website Analysis

- All eight institutions had some internet-accessibility, especially the government parastatals. However, government ministries do not have independent websites but are part of the national government website.
- The website of the Elections and Boundaries Commission contained the least practical information.
- The websites of four institutions were not updated (Ministry of Education, Elections and Boundaries Commission, Human Rights Commission and Ministry of Education); two were partially updated (Smart Partnership Secretariat and Ministry of Public Works and Transport); and only two were updated on a regular basis (Swaziland Competition Commission and NERCHA).

Category 2: Request for Written and Oral Information

- All ministries and departments selected by MISA Swaziland for the study were given questionnaires.
- Of the eight institutions requested to return written responses only five – NERCHA, Swaziland Competition Commission, Smart Partnership Secretariat, the Human Rights Commission and EBC – provided responses.
- Three institutions (the Ministry of Tinkhundla, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Public Works and Transport) requested to be given another set of questions as they had misplaced the initial questionnaires. A questionnaire was sent via email to the Ministry of Tinkhundla and the others were hand-delivered to the institutions. Of note is that in six of the participating institutions, all questions were referred to the most senior officers, totally disregarding the role of information officers.
- The Ministry of Tinkhundla and the Ministry of Education ranked the worst, as they did not respond to the requests, due to their highly bureaucratic environment. These institutions required that the most senior officer deal with the requests, and such officers were usually tied up in meetings, hence they could not provide the information requested.
- The website of NERCHA ranked best of all the evaluated institutions as it contained the most recent information and is updated weekly. Also, this website is linked to social media platforms which are constantly updated.

DETAILED FINDINGS

1. Ministry of Public Works and Transport

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

http://www.gov.sz/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=237&Itemid=310

The official Swaziland national government website is the only website for all government ministries and departments. The website contains minimal information and is outdated. The information contained on the page covers three departments (buildings, roads and road transportation). However this information is too basic to enable one to understand the current activities and structure of the ministry. The only available information related to the Ministry and Public Works and Transport is the programs of the ministry and contact information for the various departments. Information regarding the budget of the institution is obtainable from the national budget, which is found on the homepage of the government website. This website is not user friendly as it does not have links that assist users in obtaining other relevant information which may not be contained on the page of the ministry. For example, there is no link to the national budget.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?			•	The page is outdated
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			Information includes organisational structure, functions and responsibilities of the ministry's departments
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?	•			These are listed but not obtainable within the same page, and there are no links to the websites where these can be viewed
c) Reports, policies, programs?			•	Although there are no reports, policies and programs are outlined
d) Budget and expenditure?			•	This is not available on the ministry's page but can be found on the homepage
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?			•	Working hours are not mentioned
h) The contact details of public officials?	•			
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			Telephone numbers and facsimile

Total Score: 12/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

Part 1: Request for written information

The following questions were sent to the Ministry of Public Works:

1. Does your office have an information desk?
2. Does your office have a website?
3. If so, how often is your website updated? And who is in charge of your website?
4. With the reported increase in crashes on the roads, what measures has the ministry put in to place to make the roads safer for drivers and pedestrians?
5. What steps is the ministry taking to make public transport safer and cheaper for customers?
6. How do you promote access to information, so that citizens can be informed?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		Communications Officer
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	After 5 days
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	When a follow-up was made, it was discovered that the ministry had misplaced the request
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	No information was received

Total Score: 2/20

Part 2: Request for oral information

Please note that there was no opportunity for an oral information session because the official was consistently unavailable.

Oral questions that would have been asked had the opportunity been given:

1. What is the annual budget for the ministry?
2. Does the ministry have plans to update its website?
3. Does the ministry have a policy on how the public can access information?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		There is a Communications Officer, however all information requests are directed to the Principal Secretary (PS)
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	There was no response within this period
3. Did the institution respond to your oral request for information?		•	They promised to make time for an interview, however this did not happen
4. Did the person dealing with your request have a friendly and helpful attitude?	•		The official promised to attend to the request but never did
5. Did officials provide reasonable advice and assistance when seeking information?		•	The personal secretary to the PS assisted in reminding the PS about the request and made appointments
6. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', and indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	The written request and oral interview could not be done as the official was always busy
7. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	There was no explanation. The ministry kept promising to attend to the request
8. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	There was no opportunity for this
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	No response

Total Score: 4/20

2. Swaziland Competition Commission

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

www.compco.co.sz

The website is informative and contains information about laws and regulations, complaints procedures and the programs of the Commission. The website also has links to other sites where relevant information can be sourced. The laws and regulations of the Commission are downloadable from this site. This website is user-friendly and ranks as the second best website in this study

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?	•			
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?	•			
c) Reports, policies, programs?	•			Only programs and policies
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?	•			
h) The contact details of public officials?	•			
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			Contact email addresses are given

Total Score: 14/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

Part 1: Request for written information

The following questions were sent to the Swaziland Competition Commission:

1. Does your office have an information desk?
2. Does your office have a website?
3. If so, how often is your website updated? And who is in charge of your website?
4. What is the Commission doing to promote a competitive business environment in Swaziland?
5. What steps is the Commission taking in order to make it easier for infant industries and small businesses to survive in Swaziland?
6. How do you promote access to information, so that citizens can be informed?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		Communications Officer
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')	•		
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?	•		
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?	•		
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)	•		
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.	•		
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?	•		
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		The institution contacted the office
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?	•		The information was both clear and understandable

Total Score: 18/20

Part 2: Request for oral information

Oral questions asked of the Swaziland Competition Commission:

1. How do you reach the ordinary Swazi in rural areas?
2. Do you have outreach programs that are delivered in local languages?
3. How do you use social media to widen your reach?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		Communications Officer
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')	•		
3. Did the institution respond to your oral request for information?	•		
4. Did the person dealing with your request have a friendly and helpful attitude?	•		The officer was friendly and open to assisting
5. Did officials provide reasonable advice and assistance when seeking information?	•		The officer contacted the researcher to give assistance
6. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', and indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)	•		
7. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')	•		Although there was no refusal, a non-disclosure policy exists
8. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	Most of this information is on the website
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		The institution contacted the office
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?	•		

Total Score: 18/20

3. Ministry of Tinkhundla Administration and Development

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

http://www.gov.sz/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=505&Itemid=430

The website contains basic information about the ministry and programs that are offered. There are also contact details for officials responsible for the various programs. This website is not frequently updated.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?	•			
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			There is information on the various departments

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?	•			
c) Reports, policies, programs?	•			No reports published
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		There is no link to the homepage where the national budget allocations are found
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?			•	Information does not reveal the working hours
h) The contact details of public officials?	•			
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			There are emails and faxes

Total Score: 13/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

Part 1: Request for written information

The following questions were sent to the Ministry of Tinkhundla Administration and Development:

1. Does your office have an information desk?
2. Does your office have a website?
3. If so, how often is your website updated? And who is in charge of your website?
4. What specific programs does the ministry carry out in order to better the life of citizens?
5. What steps is the ministry taking in order to encourage grassroots participation in policy formulation in Swaziland?
6. How do you promote access to information, so that citizens can be informed?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')		•	There is no formal set up. All requests are handled by the most senior official.
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	The officer responsible was unavailable
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		The emailed request was acknowledged on the same day, although responses to the questionnaire were not provided
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	No information was received

Total Score: 2/20

Part 2: Request for oral information

Please note that there was no opportunity for an oral information session because the official was consistently unavailable.

Oral questions that would have been asked had the opportunity been given:

1. How do you reach the ordinary Swazi in rural areas?
2. Do you have outreach programs that are delivered in local languages?
3. How do you use social media to widen your reach?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')		•	Status is unknown but all communications are directed to the PS
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the institution respond to your oral request for information?		•	
4. Did the person dealing with your request have a friendly and helpful attitude?		•	
5. Did officials provide reasonable advice and assistance when seeking information?		•	
6. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', and indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	We never sat down with anyone for an oral interview and there was no oral interview over the phone. An oral interview was requested and denied.
7. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
8. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	Information not received

Total Score: 0/20

4. Smart Partnership Secretariat

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

http://www.gov.sz/index.php?option=com_content&id=412&Itemid=216

A standard government website: mission statements, responsibilities, objectives and contacts details. There is no recent information.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?		•		
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?		•		
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?		•		
c) Reports, policies, programs?			•	Only programs
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?			•	No information on working hours

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
h) The contact details of public officials?	•			
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			Email addresses and fax numbers of officials

Total Score: 6/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

Part 1: Request for written information

The following questions were sent to the Smart Partnership Secretariat:

1. Does your office have an information desk?
2. Does your office have a website?
3. If so, how often is your website updated? And who is in charge of your website?
4. What specifically has the Smart Partnership done to improve the lives of citizens?
5. What is the budget for Smart Partnership this year?
6. How is the initiative working with other ministries to promote public participation?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		The Head of Secretariat
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')	•		
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?	•		
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)	•		
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	There was no refusal and the institution promotes access to its information
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.	•		
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?	•		
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?	•		All information received was clear

Total Score: 16/20

Part 2: Request for oral information

Oral questions asked of the Smart Partnership Secretariat:

1. How do you influence government policies and programs?
2. How do you get your message to the grass roots?
3. How does your department engage with the political process?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		The Head of Secretariat
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')	•		
3. Did the institution respond to your oral request for information?	•		
4. Did the person dealing with your request have a friendly and helpful attitude?	•		
5. Did officials provide reasonable advice and assistance when seeking information?	•		
6. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', and indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)	•		The institution is transparent, although some of its information is not available on the website
7. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')	•		There was no refusal
8. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.	•		
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?	•		The information was helpful

Total Score: 20/20

5. Ministry of Education and Training

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

http://www.gov.sz/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=208&Itemid=113

The website contains basic information about the institution and its programs. It also contains contact details for the officials.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?	•			
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?	•			
c) Reports, policies, programs?	•			
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?	•			
h) The contact details of public officials?	•			
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			There is a telephone number and email address

Total Score: 14/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

Part 1: Request for written information

The following questions were sent to the Ministry of Education and Training:

1. Does your office have an information desk?
2. Does your office have a website?
3. If so, how often is your website updated? And who is in charge of your website?
4. There have been public complaints about the manner in which schools introduce top-up fees in lower grades. Most parents have observed that these fees end up taking away the free primary education which ought to be enjoyed by all primary school children. What is the ministry doing to ensure that this program is in fact fully free for all primary school children?
5. How does the ministry work with the scholarship selection board to ensure that all qualifying students receive quality tertiary education?
6. How do you promote access to information, so that citizens can be informed?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')		•	Requests are handled by the Principal Secretary (a senior official)
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	There was no response at all
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	There was no response to the written requests
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	There was no feedback from the ministry
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	There was no information received

Total Score: 0/20

Part 2: Request for oral information

Please note that there was no opportunity for an oral information session because the official was consistently unavailable.

Oral questions asked that would have been asked had the opportunity been given:

1. How does the scholarship policy benefit underprivileged students?
2. How does the ministry communicate with schools and their students?
3. Does the ministry use social media to connect with young people?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')		•	Requests for information are handled by the PS, a senior official
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	There was no feedback from the ministry
3. Did the institution respond to your oral request for information?		•	The official was not available to attend to the request
4. Did the person dealing with your request have a friendly and helpful attitude?		•	The junior officers were friendly but could not assist with the information required

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
5. Did officials provide reasonable advice and assistance when seeking information?		•	The secretary recommended that I keep checking with the ministry for the availability of the official
6. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', and indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	There were no responses at all
7. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	There were no responses provided except promises that were not fulfilled
8. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	No information was provided
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	There was no feedback
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	There was no information given at all

Total Score: 0/20

6. National Emergency Relief Council on HIV and AIDS (NERCHA)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.nercha.org.sz/>

There are only contact details of one official, the Principal Secretary, who is the ministry's spokesperson. The website contains updated information. The website is reportedly non-functional at times.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?	•			By the time of compiling this report, it was updated
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?	•			
c) Reports, policies, programs?	•			
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?			•	There are no signed contracts
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?	•			
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?	•			
h) The contact details of public officials?	•			
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			Telephone numbers and email

Total Score: 17/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

Part 1: Request for written information

The following questions were sent to the National Emergency Relief Council on HIV and AIDS (NERCHA):

1. Does your office have an information desk?
2. Does your office have a website?
3. If so, how often is your website updated? And who is in charge of your website?
4. What proportion of NERCHA's budget is directly used to assist people living with HIV/AIDS? How does it assist?
5. How do you promote access to information, so that citizens can be informed?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		Information Officer
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')	•		
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?	•		
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?	•		
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)	•		
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.	•		
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?	•		
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		The request was acknowledged on the same day
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?	•		Very clear and helpful

Total Score: 18/20

Part 2: Request for oral information

Oral questions asked of NERCHA:

1. How does NERCHA include its services for LGBTI clients?
2. Are NERCHA's messages also delivered in the local language?
3. Does NERCHA use social media to reach its audience?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		Information Officer
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')	•		
3. Did the institution respond to your oral request for information?	•		The information officer availed himself and gave detailed information during the face to face interview
4. Did the person dealing with your request have a friendly and helpful attitude?	•		The person was friendly and very helpful
5. Did officials provide reasonable advice and assistance when seeking information?	•		
6. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', and indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)	•		All the information requested was provided
7. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	There was no refusal

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
8. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.	•		
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		The request was acknowledged on the same day it was made
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?	•		The information was very clear and understandable

Total Score: 18/20

7. Elections and Boundaries Commission (EBC)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

http://www.gov.sz/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=366&Itemid=343

There is no current information on the website. There is some information on elections, but there is no current report on the activities of the EBC.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?			•	Such information has to do with the rules and conduct of elections but not current news on the elections
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?	•			
c) Reports, policies, programs?		•		
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?			•	
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?			•	No information on working hours
h) The contact details of public officials?		•		
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			

Total Score: 9/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

Part 1: Request for written information

The following questions were sent to the EBC:

1. Does your office have an information desk?
2. Does your office have a website?
3. If so, how often is your website updated? And who is in charge of your website?
4. Following the successful elections in 2013, has the Commission compiled and made public its report?
5. What steps is the Commission taking in order to close the gender disparity or gap in the legislature? Is the Commission committed to implementing section 86 of the Constitution? If so what steps are being taken to implement this provision?
6. How do you promote access to information, so that citizens can be informed?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		The Principal Elections Officer, but all requests are handled by the chairperson, who is the most senior official
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	When the institution was contacted, the official responsible was unavailable to deal with the request
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?	•		
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.	•		
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?	•		
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		The request was acknowledged on the same day, although it took a long time to be processed
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	The official kept referring to reports which are pending and not available for public scrutiny

Total Score: 10/20

Part 2: Request for oral information

Oral questions asked of the EBC:

1. Does the EBC have outreach programs?
2. Does the EBC present information in the local language?
3. How does the EBC address the issue of gender inequality?
4. How does the EBC use social media to get more people to vote?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		The Principal Elections Officer, but all requests are handled by the chairperson who is the most senior official
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	When the institution was contacted, the official responsible was unavailable to deal with the request
3. Did the institution respond to your oral request for information?	•		The institution responded to oral requests, although after a long delay
4. Did the person dealing with your request have a friendly and helpful attitude?	•		
5. Did officials provide reasonable advice and assistance when seeking information?		•	
6. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', and indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)	•		Most of the information provided could not be supported by reports as these are not published
7. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	Some reports were pending
8. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.	•		
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	It was not clear when the reports would be published

Total Score: 12/20

8. Commission for Human Rights and Public Administration Integrity

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

http://www.gov.sz/index.php?option=com_content&id=368&Itemid=353

The Commission's website has relevant and contained descriptive information about the Commission. However, the information presented was very superficial, and there were no updated reports.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?		•		
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?			•	A brief description of the institution
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?		•		
c) Reports, policies, programs?		•		
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?	•			No working hours mentioned
h) The contact details of public officials?			•	
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			Telephone and fax numbers

Total Score: 6/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

Part 1: Request for written information

The following questions were sent to the Commission for Human Rights and Public Administration Integrity:

1. Does your office have an information desk?
2. Does your office have a website?
3. If so, how often is your website updated? And who is in charge of your website?
4. How many cases has the Commission dealt with since its inception? How often does the Commission publish its reports? Are these made available to the public?
5. How do you promote access to information, so that citizens can be informed?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')		•	All information requests are handled by the chairperson since the institution has limited staff
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')	•		
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?	•		
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)	•		

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.	•		Information was provided and this is linked to what is obtainable on the government website. The Commission is housed under the Ministry of Justice.
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?	•		
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		The request was acknowledged on the same day
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	The absence of reports remains a challenge

Total Score: 12/20

Part 2: Request for oral information

Oral questions asked of the Commission of Human Rights and Public Administration Integrity:

1. Does the HRC give sessions on civic education?
2. Does the HRC compile records on MPs' company interests, such as a 'declaration registrar', and other interests and is this information made public?
3. How does HRC use social media to promote human rights?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')		•	All information requests are handled by the chairperson since the institution has limited staff
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')	•		
3. Did the institution respond to your oral request for information?	•		The chairperson responded to oral requests
4. Did the person dealing with your request have a friendly and helpful attitude?	•		The secretary found at the office was friendly
5. Did officials provide reasonable advice and assistance when seeking information?	•		
6. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', and indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	The institution did not have reports to support the responses
7. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	Information was provided, and there was no mention of any limitations to access to information
8. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.	•		During the oral interview
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		It was acknowledged on the same day
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?	•		The information was clear, however it could have been better if there were reports to support it

Total Score: 14/20

RESEARCH CONCLUSION

The study shows that there is a moderate level of openness in public institutions in Swaziland. However, as you move away from the central government ministries to semi-independent public institutions, there is a high level of openness. For example, the study indicates that government parastatals and institutions outside of ministries have a high level of openness. The study also shows that public institutions that have officers designated to deal with information requests have a high level of openness. There are however several factors that contribute to the secretive nature of public institutions in Swaziland. These factors include, among others, the high level of bureaucracy within the departments. Fifty percent of the participating institutions insisted on having the requests directed to the most senior official despite them having officers who are responsible for disseminating information. For example, all the government ministries do not consider their information officers when dealing with requests for information but resort to having the Principal Secretary respond. Notably, the junior officers within these institutions display a desire to be open and responsive to information requests, but the fact that they cannot respond is disappointing. The central nature of information flow within public institutions inhibits accessibility to public information. For example, senior officials hold onto some duties that should be done by their subordinates, and subsequently end up not responding to information requests on time.

THE MOST SECRETIVE PUBLIC INSTITUTION IN SWAZILAND

Three of the participating institutions did not provide the requested information, although they had promised to respond. All these institutions misplaced the requests and their officials were unavailable to attend to the requests when they were re-sent.

The **Ministry of Education and Training** receives the 2014 Golden Padlock award for the most secretive public institution in Swaziland with a total 14/60.

THE MOST OPEN PUBLIC INSTITUTION IN SWAZILAND

Out of the eight participating institutions, only five responded to the requests for information. All of these institutions responded to both written and oral requests. Of these institutions, only three – NERCHA, the Smart Partnership Secretariat and the Swaziland Competition Commission – have designated information officers who are able to receive and process requests instantaneously. The Human Rights Commission and EBC's information requests were directed to senior officials, who are frequently unavailable. Despite this challenge, the two institutions were able to provide the necessary assistance, although after long delays. In relation to the first category of the research, which dealt with the usefulness

of the website, NERCHA and the Swaziland Competition Commission proved to have the most informative and useful websites in the study. The overall winner for the most open public institution in 2014 goes to **NERCHA** with a score of 53/60.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to ensure openness in public institutions, communication and information officers must be empowered to deal with public requests for information. Also, public institutions must recruit information officers and make them available to deal with information requests. Furthermore, government ministries and departments must regularly update their websites so that accurate and relevant information is made available.



TANZANIA

2014 REPORT ON THE MOST OPEN AND SECRETIVE
GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS IN TANZANIA

INTRODUCTION

The history of access to information in this country can be traced back to pre-colonial times. Dr Ayub Rioba, in his 2008 thesis entitled 'Media in Tanzania's Transition to Multiparty Democracy: An Assessment of Policy and Ethical Issues', says that in pre-colonial times access to information was mainly organised through local and traditional means.

According to Dr Rioba, information passed from one generation to another by elders through storytelling and drum beating. Furthermore, information such as early warnings on invasions, weddings, death or birth announcements etc. was shared through word of mouth. Elders and other members of the community would 'horn-foot' from the tallest trees or top of the mountains to spread information or pass on the message.

He mentions that drama, theatre, and music played a significant and unifying role in keeping the entire community informed of crucial events, and at the same time passing on the legacy from one generation to another.

The reason why Dr Rioba wrote this history was to show how our ancestors recognised the importance of access to information. Events such as hunger and famine would be communicated early and thus communities would know how to avert it or how to deal with it. It was crucial for the development of those communities.

Access to information is just as important today. Access to information and the ability to report and comment on issues of local interest are recognised as critical enablers for empowerment of the poor and social accountability. More open information flows and a greater range of communication channels are needed to meet the information needs of the poor and to advance pro-poor perspectives in policy dialogue.

Despite its Constitutional mandate, the government often does not inform the public about decisions and projects that could potentially be of benefit to them. This can be deliberate, due to the ignorance of information holders, or because sometimes authorities don't consider how important the information is for the intended recipients. When the public does learn of such acts through unofficial channels, enquiries into the withholding of information often fall on deaf ears. As a result, the public is often unaware of the potential hazards or benefits of many government decisions and projects.

Several international initiatives have stated categorically why access to information should be clearly provided for in national Constitutions. For example, part of the deliberations of the 2013 G8 Lough Erne Declaration, emanating from the Summit on June 18 2013 in Northern Ireland, states: "Governments should publish information on laws, budgets, spending, national statistics, elections and government contracts in a way that is easy to read and re-use, so that citizens can hold them to account".

March 2013 witnessed the adoption of the African Union's "Model Law on Access to Information for Africa" by the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR). The Model Law is intended to guide African States on the adoption of access to information (ATI) legislation, as well as provide benchmarks for their "effective implementation".

In Tanzania, efforts to enact an access to information law have been in progress for almost a decade. Both the government and civil society have been working towards this, sometimes separately, sometimes together.

In October 2006 the Ministry of Information, Youth, Culture and Sports took a positive step forward by posting, albeit briefly, on its website a draft Freedom of Information Bill, and invited stakeholders to provide their input on the proposed Bill. However, the draft Bill was almost immediately removed from the website and the government later renounced it. Nevertheless, it was the beginning of an intense and engaging dialogue between the government, media and human rights stakeholders calling for the repeal of laws, which were acknowledged in the Information and Broadcasting Policy 2003 as 'bad' laws restricting freedom of expression and the press.

In the same year stakeholders met to discredit the Bill and unanimously resolved to reject the draft Freedom of Information Bill 2006 due to the fact that the Bill had the potential to further restrict freedom of information and not to promote it, contrary to Article 18 of the current Constitution.

The stakeholders also made a commitment to conduct a nationwide consultative process to gather views and opinions from various stakeholders and to provide input to the government so that a better ATI law could be developed.

Since then, a Coalition on the Right to Information led by the Media Council of Tanzania (MCT) has conducted a series of consultative meetings with the government and the general public working towards drafting a more comprehensive ATI law.

The Stakeholders' Proposals on the Right to Information Bill contains the following features:

Title: "Right to Information Bill"

The stakeholders decided on the title 'Right to Information' rather than 'Freedom of Information' because a right can be exercised but freedom can be a mere recognition without binding effect. The title is derived from Article 18 of the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania 1977 (as amended in 2005). Similar provisions are also found in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Overriding effect on other laws

The stakeholders' proposed Right to Information Bill is intended to have an overriding effect on existing legislation after its enactment into law. The Bill includes a clause that aims to repeal provisions of any other statute that denies or exempts access to any information or document in the possession of a public or private body.

Section 3(2) of the draft Bill provides:

Subject to the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania 1977, the provisions of this Act shall override the provisions of any other enactment relating to right to information.

Maximum Disclosure

The stakeholders' proposed Right to Information Bill was based on the principle of maximum disclosure with minimum exemptions guaranteed by law. This principle requires governments enacting legislation to promote freedom of information to ensure that there is maximum disclosure of information from public and private bodies. Exemptions, which are allowed for in the Bill in certain circumstances, are normally accepted only if such exemptions are clearly provided for in the law. The stakeholders' Bill restricts the powers of public bodies to be able to deny access to information based on their personal discretion.

Right to Access Information

Part II of the Bill defines the right to access information, as well as setting out procedures on how to request and obtain information. Conditions and circumstances for refusal of access to information are also mentioned. If access is denied, the information seeker is entitled to appeal at a higher level within the same organisation. A second appeal can be made to the Information Commission. Any aggrieved party may refer the matter further to the High Court to review the legality of the decision of the Commission.

Appointment of Information Officers

The draft Bill imposes a duty on every institution, whether public or private, to appoint or designate an 'information desk officer' who will be responsible for providing information. The information officer will also handle all complaints concerning the provision of information from that institution. The information officer position does not necessarily mean recruitment of new staff; anyone within the organisation could be so designated, provided that person is conversant with available information within the institution.

Duty to Publish Information

The draft Bill imposes a duty on every public or private body to publish key information relevant to its activities. The recently established Commission of Information is empowered to make regulations regarding this obligation.

Disclosure of Information of Public Interest

This allows for the disclosure of exempt information on the grounds that it is in the public interest to disclose such information. Whistleblowers are also protected against actions and unfair treatment because of their voluntary disclosure of certain information. The main condition for people to be considered whistleblowers and bonafide informers is that they should act in good faith for the purpose of unearthing wrongdoing such as corruption, pilferage of public property and danger to the environment or public health.

New Institutions

This establishes new institutions that would be responsible for all issues relating to access to information. The Commission of Information was established with a mandate of implementing and supervising effective implementation of the law. The appointment procedure and qualifications of members of the

Commission and of the appointments' committee is laid down in the draft Bill. Another body proposed by the draft Bill is an independent stakeholders' forum.

RATIONALE AND RESEARCH PARAMETERS

MISA Tanzania joined other MISA Chapters in participating in a study to establish the most open and secretive government institutions in each respective country. The study started on the 16th of June and was concluded on 7th of July 2014.

Six of the eight participating institutions were randomly picked depending on the relevance of their mandated work. The other two – the Ministry of Energy and Minerals and the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare – were selected because they were the best and worst performers respectively from last year's study, and MISA Tanzania wanted to see if there has been any significant change with respect to their openness since the last study was conducted.

Selected Ministries included:

1. Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MoHSW)
2. Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT)
3. Ministry of Energy and Minerals (MEM)
4. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MoFAIC)

Selected agencies included:

5. The Judiciary of Tanzania
6. National Bureau of Statistics (NBS)
7. National Identification Authority (NIDA)
8. The Parliament of Tanzania (BUNGE)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research adopts qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection, and seeks to evaluate the level of public access to information held by government and public institutions. Each MISA Chapter conducts research by evaluating the websites of government and public institutions along with submitting oral and written requests for information. This method seeks to establish the transparency and efficiency of government and public institutions in providing information to the public.

DATA ANALYSIS

Category 1: Evaluation of government and public institution websites to determine the access and presence of credible and updated public information, which includes but is not limited to: powers and functions of the institution in question; vacancy and budgetary allocations; procurement procedures and contact details and reports.

Category 2: This category was divided into two sections, namely written questionnaires and oral requests for information. These instruments were adopted to determine the ease with which public information is obtained from government and public institutions.

Description of Assessment Criteria

The total number of points allocated to categories 1 and 2 is 20 points (n = 20) each. Points are awarded based on the researcher's answer: Yes (2 points); Partial (1 point); No (0 points). Government ministries and institutions fell into one of the following groups in accordance with the number of points that they received.

Category 1: Website Analysis

Group 1: (0 – 6) Absence of a website or an extremely poor website containing no or almost no relevant public information.

Group 2: (7 – 13) Average website containing some relevant public information.

Group 3: (14 – 20) Well organised, transparent website providing a good amount of relevant public information.

Category 2: Written Request/Oral Request

Group 1: (0 – 6) Denied access to reasonable information request or acted with high levels of secrecy.

Group 2: (7 – 13) Displayed an average level of openness in allowing access to public information.

Group 3: (14 – 20) Displayed openness in allowing access to public information. Institution and was helpful and transparent.

Limitations of the Study

- The culture of acknowledging the receipt of information requests is still a challenge in some agencies and ministries. In general, when a letter is sent, someone receives it, signs a dispatch form and delivers it to the intended target. This intended target doesn't notify the requester that he/she has received the letter. It is only after a follow up call is made when that the requester is informed, "yes we got it" or "maybe it is still at the registry". This year, some of the officials asked to accept receipt of the letters didn't even want to sign the dispatch form. This gives the impression that nobody wants to be held responsible.
- The timing of the research is challenging. This is the busiest time for most public offices, especially ministries, as it is around the time of the budgetary session in Parliament. Most of those who are supposed to respond to requests are not always available at this time.

- It was observed that while the websites contained information about tendering and procurement (some notices posted), none of the sites gave details with respect to who tenders were awarded to.

Category 2: Request for Written and Oral Information

- Of all the surveyed institutions, only the NBS acknowledged that they received the request within the first seven working days. They responded to all questions provided.
- The researcher hand-delivered the request letters and also sent them via email to the respective institutions. Unfortunately, only the NBS responded electronically, and the others did not respond at all.
- The requests for information were sent on the 16th and 17th of June 2014 respectively, and dispatches were signed by the person receiving them. A week later a follow up activity was conducted, mainly by telephone, and after fourteen days physical visits were made when it became evident that telephone communications were a challenge for some offices. At the Ministry for Health, for instance, a registry unit worker almost refused to sign that she had received the letter, and when the researcher tried to call the office to follow up, nobody answered the phone.
- At some ministries (eg MEM, MOFAIC), when the researcher called the office, staff answered and promised to call back, but never did. After a follow up visit the researcher received the response that "they are still working on the request".
- With the exception of the NBS office, whose response was timely and informative, other offices did not acknowledge that they had received a letter of request for information. Some of these offices have client service charters that provide details of providing responses, but it was observed that some staff were not aware that such a document exists.
- Most of the offices have websites and it was observed that the information posted is current and selected documents are available for download.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Category 1: Website Analysis

- It has been observed that almost all of the eight surveyed public institutions have relatively up-to-date websites. The websites are well organised and transparent, providing a good amount of relevant public information. From the websites one can determine the location of the office. Some websites have maps, contact details and working hours.
- Ample time was scheduled for monitoring the website objectively. Most of these sites were linked to the national government website, which facilitates information seeking and sharing. The Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, the National Identification Authority and the National Bureau of Statistics scored high in this category, each with 15 and 16 points respectively. The Judiciary of Tanzania website contained the least information, scoring 12 points.

DETAILED FINDINGS

1. Parliament of Tanzania (known as *Bunge* in Swahili)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

www.parliament.go.tz

This is one of the most updated websites. The website is in English, but information can be obtained in either of the two national languages – Swahili and English. However, the Constitutional Assembly website is only in Swahili, and can be accessed at <http://www.bungemaalum.go.tz/>.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?	•			Various reports and National Assembly/ <i>Bunge</i> reports from 2014
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			Well-described structures that serve Parliament and the public. The mandate of Parliament and the responsibilities of the administration are outlined.
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?	•			
c) Reports, policies, programs?	•			Parliamentary reports posted
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?			•	Tender notices are on the site but the signed contracts are not posted
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?	•			Vacancy notices are there, and the procedures are shown in the vacancy announcements
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?	•			There is some detailed information, but no working hours are shown
h) The contact details of public officials?	•			The contact details of the clerk of the assembly and private assistant are shown
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			There is an email address and a dialog box to post questions to MPs

Total Score: 17/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the Parliament of Tanzania:

1. There are reports and incidences of members of Parliament using immunity in the house to attack those individuals who cannot afford to be there to defend themselves. How is your office addressing this matter?
2. There have been concerns and complaints with regard to the mechanism of reaching a decision by the speaker when asking a YES or NO question over a subject under discussion. Do you think this is a fair method, and if not, is your office considering another method such as hand voting to reach a decisive judgment on a particular matter?
3. What is the annual budget of Parliament? Can citizens access the budget?
4. Citizens have had concerns over what our representatives earn; salaries and entitlements. As a result there has been inaccurate information as to how much they earn. Could your office supply me with this information?
5. How does the house ensure the proper use of the Constituency Development Catalyst Fund by Parliamentarians? Do you receive complaints of any misuse of the funds?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		The registry unit channels all correspondence to the Clerk of the National Assembly (<i>Bunge</i>)
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	The Dar es Salaam registry unit received the request but during follow-ups it was discovered that the letter had been misplaced internally. Though they promised to keep looking, after 21 days the researcher had not heard from them.
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	The responsible person was in Dodoma, another National Assembly/ <i>Bunge</i> office
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?	•		
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)	•		
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	No response was received from the National Assembly/ <i>Bunge</i> office
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	They did not disclose their operations and budget
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	When contacted the office promised to get back to the researcher but no response was received
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 6/20

2. Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

www.moe.go.tz

Scoring 15/20, this website is obviously one of the up-to-date ones. Like the rest of the government institutions it is linked to the national website. The site contains updated information and is linked to other Ministries' websites that are directly connected to it. It also has a visitors' counter that shows how many people have visited the page.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?	•			2014/15 budget, recent scholarships posted
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			It shows not only the organisational structure but also the chart and approved functions
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?			•	
c) Reports, policies, programs?	•			The education and training policy for 2011 can be accessed
d) Budget and expenditure?			•	
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?			•	Only announcements are posted, no signed contracts
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?			•	

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?	•			
h) The contact details of public officials?	•			
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?			•	

Total Score: 15/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to MoEVT:

1. There is a problem of inadequate numbers of teachers in our schools, but there are unemployed graduates coming out of teaching colleges and universities every year. What prevents these graduates from being employed?
2. There have been complaints by teachers every year concerning their welfare (salaries/allowances and housing). What is the ministry doing to address these issues?
3. There is proven evidence that pupils complete standard seven and join secondary schools, yet they cannot read and write. Do you know about this situation, and if so, what is the ministry's reaction to this matter?
4. What is the ministry doing in terms of curriculum development to ensure that primary and secondary school leavers can sustain themselves, if they don't get an opportunity to further their education?
5. The idea of a primary and secondary school capitation grant has been a success in some ways, but studies have indicated that the money (USD\$10 and \$20 for primary schools and secondary school respectively) do not reach the intended target. What has been the main reason and what is being done to solve the problem?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		Registry unit deals with all correspondence and directs them to the permanent secretary
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?	•		There is a client service charter
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 4/20

3. Ministry of Energy and Minerals (MEM)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<https://mem.go.tz>

Available in both Swahili and English languages, the MEM website is among the best. The site is up to date and contains almost all information about the ministry. It is also linked to the national website and all its affiliate agencies. It was one of the best last year and continues to maintain this standard.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?	•			Contains the 2014/15 ministry budget
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			Both administrative and political structures are detailed on the website
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?	•			The Mining Act 2010
c) Reports, policies, programs?	•			The Natural Gas Policy 2013
d) Budget and expenditure?	•			The 2014/15 budget and expenditure is presented
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?			•	While information on tender and procurement are available, no signed contracts are posted
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?			•	
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?	•			Office Working Hours: 07.30hrs – 15.30hrs, Monday to Friday.
h) The contact details of public officials?	•			The permanent secretary
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			Emails are monitored even after normal working hours

Total Score: 18/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the MEM:

1. Rural electrification is one of the key indicators for the country's development. To what extent has this been done in the country?
2. What are the strategies in place to make sure the country does not solely depend on water for electricity production?
3. To what extent is the local population involved in deciding or implementing energy-based projects established in their areas?
4. How easily available is information on energy-based projects to those who need it?
5. About the gas industry: is there going to be a gas plant in Mtwara so that Dar is one of the markets or will the plant be in Dar so that Mtwara is an external market for gas? Is there no way of establishing everything in Mtwara and only extending the pipes to other regions including Dar es Salaam and thereby creating employment opportunities to the natives? For example GAZPROM in Russia (if I'm not mistaken), has its gas taken to Western Europe for sale.

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		The registry unit and the permanent secretary's office deals with all correspondence
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	It was after the researcher called the office one week later
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?	•		There is a client service charter
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	During follow ups, conducted by phone. They responded that the office was still working on the request
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	When submitting the request, the researcher was asked the purpose of his request
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	During the follow-ups they acknowledged that they had received the request
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 4/20

4. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MoFAIC)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

www.foreign.go.tz

The website is loaded with useful and current information. It is linked to the national government website, and the Ministry also has Twitter and facebook accounts. Information is also available in both Swahili and English.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?	•			Contains the 2014/15 ministry budget
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			Departments and functions of the ministry are available
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?	•			
c) Reports, policies, programs?	•			Ministerial reports
d) Budget and expenditure?	•			
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?			•	There is a department that manages all procurement and the disposal of tender activities of the Ministry, including the missions. It does not deal with the adjudication and the award of contracts, in accordance with the Ministry's approved Annual Plan. No budget or contracts are displayed
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?			•	
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?	•			
h) The contact details of public officials?	•			
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			Email contacts for the ministry and diplomatic mission abroad

Total Score: 16/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the MoFAIC:

1. Tanzanians living abroad have had concerns (diaspora) over dual citizenship and the right to participate in elections back home. How is the ministry addressing these concerns?
2. What criteria are considered when establishing a diplomatic office in certain countries? What do we do to serve Tanzanians living in countries where we do not have a consulate?
3. What is the benefit of sending our troops for peacekeeping missions abroad?
4. There have been complaints by students studying abroad about not getting timely and necessary help when they encounter problems in the countries where they are studying. How is your office addressing this matter?
5. Despite the good intentions of the government to find employment opportunities abroad for citizens, there have been reported incidences where those who are sent overseas for work are poorly treated and do not get what they expected. Girls and women, for example, have been lured and forced to work as sex workers and other indecent jobs in countries like UAE and China by their agents. What is your ministry doing to address this problem?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		The registry unit and the permanent secretary
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	They called the researcher and promised to respond within the timeframe but no response was received after several calls and a physical visit
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?	•		There is a client service charter
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	They did not refuse to provide information, but the responsible person was away on a trip
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	They did not disclose the budget and operations
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	The officer called the researcher to find out why the request was made and how the information would be used
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	A call acknowledging the receipt was made after seven days
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 4/20

5. Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MoHSW)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

www.moh.go.tz

It has current information but it's not particularly user friendly. Of all the websites with a visitors' counter, this has a smallest number of daily visitors. Information can be accessed in both Swahili and English.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?	•			For example, health reports from 2014 and the 2014/15 budget
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			The administrative structure is there, as well as the ministerial levels
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?	•			The Law of the Child Act 2009
c) Reports, policies, programs?	•			Health Policy 2007
d) Budget and expenditure?			•	
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?			•	
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?	•			Employment notices and procedures
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?			•	
h) The contact details of public officials?			•	
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			Email contacts

Total Score: 16/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the MoHSW:

1. Fistula, a condition that women face with pregnancy that is easily preventable and treatable, is still a challenge in rural Tanzania. What is the government doing to make sure the problem is averted?
2. How does the ministry implement education surrounding nutrition for families and children in the country?
3. There have been issues between the government and the doctors in the national, referral and regional hospitals. The consequences have been severe, especially for ordinary citizens. What steps has your ministry taken to sort out this problem?
4. There have been complaints from communities and even Members of Parliament concerning the Medical Stores' Department (MSD) supplying outdated medical supplies. What has your ministry done to solve that problem?
5. There is a shortage of medical supplies and medical personnel in most public hospitals and health centers. What steps have been taken by the government to find a solution to this problem?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		The registry unit and the permanent secretary
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	The person at the registry was not cooperative
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	The person at first refused to sign for receipt of the letter, later agreed but was rude
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	The institution was not helpful and assumed everyone visiting the office knows the procedures
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	Even after trying to call several times, the phone was not answered
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 2/20

6. The Judiciary of Tanzania

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

www.judiciary.go.tz

The website contains information in both Swahili and English. Information is updated but only occasionally. The layout of the website is attractive but the information provided isn't sufficient.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?			•	Mentions Law Day 2014, but the court calendar shows 2010 details
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			Hierarchy of the judicial body
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?	•			Judicial rulings, judgments and orders
c) Reports, policies, programs?	•			
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?			•	Names of regional registrars are there, but working hours are not shown
h) The contact details of public officials?	•			List of court registrars
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			

Total Score: 12/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the Judiciary of Tanzania:

- How have you been addressing the issue of legal representation at the primary court level? Because of this legal right, there are reports that innocent people languish in jails due to inadequate representation. How are these concerns addressed by your office?
- Most of the primary court buildings are either dilapidated or lack necessary services, which lead to court sessions not being conducted properly and in a timely manner. What is your office doing to solve this infrastructure challenge?
- How do you address the confusion between the executive branch and the judicial branch? How independent can we say the judiciary is?
- Incidences of corruption are reported in most public offices, and the judiciary is not free from those allegations. Where do you draw the line when those who are supposed to interpret the law become the culprit?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		The registry unit directs the request to the chief court administrator
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	When asked, staff at the registry did not know if the office has that tool
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	The responsible person was out of the office
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	A call was made and the office said they are still working on the request
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	No, they did not disclose
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	Only after the researcher called the office one week later
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 2/20

7. National Bureau of Statistics (NBS)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

www.nbs.go.tz

This is one of the most current and updated websites. It has lots of information, both old and new. The only challenge with this website is that the majority of information can only be accessed in English, even though the majority of Tanzanians speak Swahili.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?	•			2012 census database posted
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			It has a structure chart showing directorates and functions, and a
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?	•			client service charter
c) Reports, policies, programs?	•			Statistics Act 2002
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		Dissemination and Pricing Policy 2010 and all statistical reports from 1967 – 2013
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?			•	There is information on procurement procedures but no signed contracts
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?	•			The detailed office physical address is posted
h) The contact details of public officials?	•			Director General
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			Email contact, and they acknowledge receipt of your email

Total Score: 15/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the National Bureau of Statistics:

1. How do common citizens access information useful to them from your office? Do they need to pay for information?
2. What kind of statistics are produced by your office?
3. How do you perform your duties? Do you have people and resources on the ground all over the country to undertake research?
4. How do you harmonise the data you provide and that provided by other agencies such as TACAIDS or TBS?
5. How do you work with other institutions, such as those of higher learning and research? Do you believe information/statistical information prepared by these institutions is relevant in shaping the development of the country?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		Director General of the Bureau
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')	•		The questions sent via email were replied to promptly, five days after they were sent
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?	•		They promptly responded to the request
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?	•		The client service charter contains the details on how a citizen/client can receive information
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)	•		The five questions asked by the researcher were answered
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	Requested information was received by the researcher
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.	•		The budget of the bureau can easily be accessed
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?	•		
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		An email was sent to the researcher
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?	•		Additional information was provided

Total Score: 18/20

8. National Identification Authority (NIDA)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

www.nida.go.tz

This website has both English and Swahili versions, although the English version is currently under maintenance. It is current and contains a lot of useful information.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?	•			A news article from 18 June 2014 was posted about a recent NIDA event
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			A detailed organisational structure
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?			•	
c) Reports, policies, programs?	•			
d) Budget and expenditure?			•	

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?			•	
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?			•	
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?	•			
h) The contact details of public officials?	•			The Director General's contact and hotline number
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			Email contact

Total Score: 16/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to NIDA:

1. Since the national ID exercise began, how many people/Tanzanians have been issued with IDs?
2. What processes are involved in the production of the IDs (time, money and security)?
3. Is NIDA working with other agencies such as the RITA to make sure that when children are born they are registered into the database at the hospital, for instance, without wasting other resources such as time and money?
4. What is the annual budget and where is the money coming from?
5. What are the challenges involved in the production of IDs and how are they addressed?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		The registry unit receives requests and directs them to the Director General
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	Not even when the researcher called both the mobile number and the landline number
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 2/20

RESEARCH CONCLUSION

The culture of secrecy among public officials still persists despite efforts by local and international stakeholders to ensure it is done away with. It is amazing how one can offer information on one platform and completely deny it on another. From the research findings, you will see that there is plenty of information provided on websites but when it comes to written requests or physical visits, the scenario is totally different. A lot still needs to be done in terms of creating awareness of the importance of opening up public institutions to the general public.

For the past five years, during the time this study has been conducted, there have been changes in the way public offices operate. There hasn't been consistency in the winners or losers. This means that there have been both positive and negative developments. For example, the study revisited the most open and most secretive institutions of last year's study to see if there have been any changes after one year. The study found that there have been serious improvements in website developments, but they have fared badly in other areas.

Generally, the findings for the past five years have been an agent of change in public offices in terms of how they behave towards information that is deemed 'public'. It is our sincere hope that these findings will continue to inspire positive changes towards greater accountability and transparency.

THE MOST SECRETIVE PUBLIC INSTITUTION IN TANZANIA

The two lowest scoring institutions were the Judiciary of Tanzania with 14 points, and the Ministry of Health, who scored 17 points.

Interestingly, both have their website up-to-date and one can access information easily, but they did very poorly in responding to written requests, and at the Ministry for Health and Social Welfare, for instance, the registry unit staff were unfriendly to clients.

According to the findings and the total score obtained, the recipient of this year's Golden Padlock Award for the Most Secretive Public Institution is the **Judiciary of Tanzania**.

THE MOST OPEN PUBLIC INSTITUTION IN TANZANIA

In this category the research was interested in transparency, responsiveness, client services, and openness of institutions to the general public. Of all of the eight participants, the National Bureau of Statistics scored a total of 33 points out of 40, outscoring the 2013 winner the Ministry of Energy and Minerals by 11 points. The latter performed well in the website evaluation but performed poorly in the written request category, failing to respond to the researcher's requests.

We are proud to announce that the 2014 recipient of the Golden Key Award for the Most Open Public Institution in Tanzania is the **National Bureau of Statistics**.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From this study, MISA recommends short training or capacity building sessions for public officers, especially at the reception and registry units. These need to be helpful to clients visiting their public offices; it was observed that some staff were rude and unfriendly when asked for information.

It is time that each public institution has a client service charter to ensure the public is served with respect and their requests addressed, regardless of other factors. Public officials also need to understand the content of the charter and be accountable, and the public made aware of their rights and responsibilities when seeking information from public offices.

As our country is working to attract more investors, it is high time that public officials uphold professionalism and are ready to 'listen' to clients visiting their offices.



ZAMBIA

2014 REPORT ON THE MOST OPEN AND SECRETIVE
GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS IN ZAMBIA

INTRODUCTION

Over the past number of years, media bodies such the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) Zambia, the Zambia Union of Journalists (ZUJ), the Press Association of Zambia (PAZA), the Zambia Media Women Association (ZAMWA) and the Press Freedom Committee (PFC) of the Post Newspapers have campaigned tirelessly to mobilise support for the enactment of a law that will guarantee Zambians greater opportunities to access information.

Under the previous regime, several appointed Ministers of Information and Broadcasting Services (MIBS) each promised to enact an access to information law. The Patriotic Front (PF) government campaigned strenuously on the premise that as soon as they came in to power the first thing they would do was enact an access to information (ATI) law, and even formed a task force, of which MISA was a part of, that would assist with the both the drafting and enactment of such a law.

The PF government has since changed its rhetoric and despite various promises to bring an ATI Bill to Parliament, has introduced delaying tactics on each occasion, which indicate no real willingness to do so.

However, despite the unwavering campaign for the enactment of a law, which has stressed the importance of citizen's access to information. The growing perception, especially by government and some sceptics within the public, is that the Bill, by and large, aims to benefit the media more than everybody else, as journalists would have considerably easier access to information than the general public, especially to information held by public officials. This notion has been challenged by both media bodies and other advocates who support the Bill, who maintain that the purpose of an ATI law is to empower the Zambian people and ensure a more participatory and democratic society, where the public can interact with government and influence public policies that affect their daily lives.

RATIONALE AND RESEARCH PARAMETERS

The researcher submitted written requests for information, as well as evaluated the websites of the selected institutions. Thereafter, the researcher made physical follow-ups as well as telephone calls to the institutions. This method sought to establish the transparency and efficiency of government and public institutions in providing information to the public.

The research was undertaken between the 9th of June and the 11th July 2014. MISA Zambia selected government departments and public institutions which play a vital role in Zambia's economy and development, and the welfare of the Zambian citizenry. The institutions include

1. Citizens Economic Empowerment Commission (CEEC)
2. Patents and Companies Registration Agency (PACRA)
3. The Zambia Revenue Authority (ZRA)
4. The Zambia Public Procurement Authority (ZPPA)
5. The Ministry of Health (MoH)
6. The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Services (MALS)
7. The Lusaka City Council (LCC)
8. The Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ)

AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study was to assess the level of transparency and openness in government and public institutions in the country. From this survey it becomes evident that Zambia is in critical need of a freedom of information law.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Some of the objectives of the research were to:

- Assess the level of openness and transparency in government and public institutions against international standards and principles of access to information.
- Encourage citizens to exercise their fundamental right to access information generated and held under the control of government.

Influence the adoption of practices, laws and culture that promotes transparency and openness in government and public institutions

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research adopts qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection, and seeks to evaluate the level of public access to information held by government and public institutions. Each MISA Chapter conducts research by evaluating the websites of government and public institutions along with submitting oral and written requests for information. This method seeks to establish the transparency and efficiency of government and public institutions in providing information to the public.

DATA ANALYSIS

Category 1: Evaluation of government and public institution websites to determine the access and presence of credible and updated public information, which includes but is not limited to: powers and functions of the institution in question; vacancy and budgetary allocations; procurement procedures and contact details and reports.

Category 2: This category was divided into two sections, namely written questionnaires and oral requests for information. These instruments were adopted to determine the ease with which public information is obtained from government and public institutions.

Description of Assessment Criteria

The total number of points allocated to categories 1 and 2 is 20 points (n = 20) each. Points are awarded based on the researcher's answer: Yes (2 points); Partial (1 point); No (0 points). Government ministries and institutions fell into one of the following groups in accordance with the number of points that they received.

Category 1: Website Analysis

Group 1: (0 – 6) Absence of a website or an extremely poor website containing no or almost no relevant public information.

Group 2: (7 – 13) Average website containing some relevant public information.

Group 3: (14 – 20) Well organised, transparent website providing a good amount of relevant public information.

Category 2: Written Request/Oral Request

Group 1: (0 – 6) Denied access to reasonable information request or acted with high levels of secrecy.

Group 2: (7 – 13) Displayed an average level of openness in allowing access to public information.

Group 3: (14 – 20) Displayed openness in allowing access to public information. Institution and was helpful and transparent.

Challenges and limitations of the research

Most organisations asked for the researcher's occupation or which organisation they were coming from. The researcher's assessment was that government and public institutions respond quicker to organisations rather than an individual.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Category 1: Website Analysis

All eight institutions selected for this research have websites, some good and some with very little information, as you will see from the tables below. It is encouraging, however, to see that most government and public institutions have an online presence as a tool for disseminating information to the public.

Of these, the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) has quite a dynamic and informative website with very recent information. It also has an online social media presence, which is appealing to young people.

All other public institution websites are adequate, despite the fact that they are not being frequently updated. The Lusaka City Council (LCC), although they have an online presence, still have some pages under construction. However, LCC are one of two public institutions that have a designated contact person for the information required.

None of the eight public institutions outline or disclose their budgets on their websites. The provision of reports, programs, and signed contracts on websites varies between institutions. Although all of the institutions did provide contact details and addresses only two institutions, the LCC and the CEEC, have contact details for designated public officers.

Category 2: Request for Written and Oral Information

Of the eight institutions written to, the Lusaka City Council (LCC) and the Citizens Economic Empowerment Commission (CEEC) responded verbally on the tenth day. The LCC's Public Relations Officer, Mulunda Habeenzu, provided the answers to a written request for information and advised that he could not answer the question regarding waste management, and directed the researcher to the responsible unit. The researcher subsequently visited the waste management system and was also provided with answers by a courteous Ms Idah Shaputu, who added that if the researcher needed any more information on waste management, they should not hesitate to call back. The researcher was given all the necessary information regarding garbage collection in accordance with the request for information, and was provided with contact details for the person responsible for garbage collection in area requested.

Although the CEEC could not trace the letter of request sent to them on 9 June 2014, the answers to the request were provided telephonically by Mr D. Kambilo.

The other six institutions did not respond to the request, suggesting that most public institutions are secretive and are not responding to individual citizens' requests unless they can demonstrate that they are asking on behalf of an organisation.

In a democracy like Zambia, access by the general public to information held by public institutions and government is crucial, as this holds government accountable for how they are spending taxpayers' money.

The Electoral Commission of Zambia acknowledged the researcher's request in less than seven days via email, but still did not provide the requested information. The Zambia Revenue Authority asked for an electronic copy of the request for information, which was duly sent, but this was neither responded to nor acknowledged.

The general response to requests illustrates why an ATI Bill must be enacted, as this would make it easier for citizens to verify information about their public facilities.

Best practice and standards must be exhibited by these institutions and public institutions must be required to respond to all requests, whether the request came from an individual or an organisation, within a reasonable time.

DETAILED FINDINGS

1. Lusaka City Council (LCC)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.lcc.gov.zm/>

The Lusaka City Council website has very little information. It only has a welcome message from the Mayor. Most pages still show that they are under construction.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?			•	
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?	•			
c) Reports, policies, programs?			•	Talks about projects but no reports or programs
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?			•	
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?			•	Working hours not provided
h) The contact details of public officials?	•			
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			

Total Score: 12/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the Lusaka City Council:

1. Is there an indication as to when our compounds will have flushable toilets and clean running water?
2. Is there information as to where we are supposed to go regarding information on garbage collection?
3. How often does the Council collect garbage in John Laing and on which days specifically?
4. How much are we, the residents, expected to pay to the Council if we want our garbage collected?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		The Public Relations Office
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')	•		
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?	•		
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?	•		
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	The PRO referred the researcher to the WMU dept and they provided the info the researcher was looking for
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	Information was provided by phone
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?	•		Asked if the information was for research purposes
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?	•		

Total Score: 14/20

2. Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.elections.org.zm/>

A very good website, dynamic and frequently updated with a lot of information.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?	•			
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?	•			
c) Reports, policies, programs?	•			
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?			•	There's a section for tenders and procurement but nothing published currently
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?	•			There's a section for vacancies, but no jobs were advertised
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?	•			Contacts are provided but not working hours
h) The contact details of public officials?		•		
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			

Total Score: 15/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the Electoral Commission of Zambia:

1. I would like to know how much the ECZ has spent on all the 17 by-elections since 2011?
2. How much does one by-election cost?
3. What preparations go into one by-election?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')		•	The Public Relations Department
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')	•		
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	The PRO referred the researcher to the WMU dept and they provided the info the researcher was looking for
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	Information was provided by phone
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?	•		Asked if the information was for research purposes
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?	•		

Total Score: 10/20

3. Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MALS)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.agriculture.gov.zm/>

The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock website is very attractive. It is not frequently updated but contains a lot of information.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?	•			
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			The site provides the powers, but does not have an organisational structure nor the responsibilities of the administration
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?		•		
c) Reports, policies, programs?			•	Some reports provide information on policies
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?			•	The physical address is provided but no postal address
h) The contact details of public officials?		•		
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?		•		

Total Score: 6/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock:

1. The Zambian Government, through the Minister of Agriculture, recently announced the good news that it has recorded a bumper harvest for the 2013/2014 season.
2. What strategies has government put in place to make sure that no harvests of the bumper go to waste, as has been the case in the past?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')		•	
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?	•		They responded saying it was sent to another department and would subsequently be attended to
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?	•		
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 6/20

4. The Zambia Revenue Authority (ZRA)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<https://www.zra.org.zm/>

The Zambia Revenue Authority website is not frequently updated and is not user friendly, but has useful information.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?			•	
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?	•			
c) Reports, policies, programs?		•		
d) Budget and expenditure?			•	The budget available is the national budget
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?	•			
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?	•			

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?	•			Does not stipulate working hours
h) The contact details of public officials?		•		
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			

Total Score: 14/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the Zambia Revenue Authority:

1. How much revenue do private mining companies contribute to the Zambian coffers in terms of tax per year?
2. Approximately how much revenue does ZRA collect in the form of duty tax per month or annually?
3. There are hundreds of vehicles being bought in the country every day, how much revenue does the ZRA make from this?
4. What other services does the ZRA provide and how can people access information about the Authority?
5. What are some of the penalties that one can encounter should they fail to pay tax?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')		•	
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 2/20

5. Ministry of Health (MoH)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.moh.gov.zm/>

The MoH website is very basic, but has improved from last year. However, it can still do better.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?			•	The only recent information is the commemoration of World Tobacco Day in 2014
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?		•		
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?		•		
c) Reports, policies, programs?			•	
d) Budget and expenditure?			•	
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?			•	
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?			•	
h) The contact details of public officials?		•		
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			

Total Score: 7/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following requests for information were sent to the Ministry of Health:

1. Has the Ministry ever embarked on any awareness raising on non-discrimination for patients with mental health? If so when and what were the outcomes and results?
2. People with epilepsy are shunned in most cases. How much awareness has been created around this?
3. What percentage of the main budget is allocated to the Ministry of Health?
4. I'm aware that the Ministry has been involved in a campaign on male circumcision, what is the target and what are the current figures standing at? How many males have been reached so far?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')		•	There is a person designated to receive mails, but not necessarily to deal with information requests
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		They acknowledged the request but referred the researcher to its sister Ministry, the Ministry of Community Development and Mother and Child Health
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 2/20

6. Patents and Companies Registration Agency (PACRA)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.pacra.org.zm/>

The PACRA website is a good website with a lot of information. It is also frequently updated and user friendly.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?	•			The site does have up to date information, although the registration fees are in the old currency, which then becomes a bit misleading to the public
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?			•	Has functions but not responsibilities and no organisational structure
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?	•			
c) Reports, policies, programs?	•			
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		There is no provision for the budget and how much is allocated to the Authority
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?	•			Information on signed contracts is not available
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		There is a jobs/vacancies section but nothing listed
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?	•			
h) The contact details of public officials?		•		
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			

Total Score: 13/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the Patents and Companies Registration Agency:

1. How many companies has the Agency registered in the first and second quarter?
2. What type of companies does PACRA register?
3. How easy is it to register a company with PACRA?
4. Lastly, how many companies are currently registered with PACRA?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		The Public Relations Office
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 4/20

7. Zambia Public Procurement Authority (ZPPA)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.zppa.org.zm/>

The ZPPA website is very plain and basic and is not frequently updated. It needs improvement and more pictures to make it more attractive to the reader.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?		•		
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?	•			
c) Reports, policies, programs?		•		
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		There is no provision for a budget and how much is allocated to the Authority
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?	•			Information on signed contracts has been provided
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?	•			Working hours are not provided
h) The contact details of public officials?	•			For the Director General
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			

Total Score: 12/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following question was sent to the Zambia Public Procurement Authority:

1. I write to request information on how I can go about bidding for government tenders.

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	But did acknowledge receiving the letter
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 4/20

8. Citizens Economic Empowerment Program (CEEC)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.ceec.org.zm/>

The CEEC website has dynamic pictures that make it attractive to the eye. It also has adequate information for the reader.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?	•			
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?	•			
c) Reports, policies, programs?	•			
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?	•			
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?	•			
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?			•	Working hours are not provided
h) The contact details of public officials?		•		
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			

Total Score: 15/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the Citizens Economic Empowerment Commission:

1. What are the requirements to obtain a loan from CEEC?
2. What is the maximum amount of money an individual is entitled to?
3. Is there a deadline in the year for applications to be done?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')		•	
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')	•		
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?	•		
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)	•		
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?	•		
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 10/20

RESEARCH CONCLUSION

This year's study shows that public institutions and government departments are still not open and do not freely give information to Zambians.

Although all of the institutions evaluated have a public relations or communications department responsible for public affairs and engagement with the general public, none of the eight institutions responded initially to the written requests for information, and only two of the eight institutions responded to the follow up oral requests.

With the exception of the LCC, all the government departments and public institutions had either misplaced the requests or lost them altogether. When the researcher followed up, she was either asked to bring another copy or send an electronic copy of the request for information. Although the ECZ acknowledged receiving their request in less than seven days, they still gave no answers to the questions. Other Institutions claimed they passed the letter on to another department, but it was clear this was a mere strategy to deny access.

Even though there are Information and Communications Officers in public institutions, it seems that this role is used to portray a positive image of the institutions and not to provide proactive tools of engagement with the general Zambian Citizenry. Most information officers do not act as a conduit of relevant information to the general public and other stakeholders.

THE MOST SECRETIVE PUBLIC INSTITUTION IN ZAMBIA

Of the eight public institutions, six did not respond to the written requests for information. Despite having very well updated websites, the ECZ, PACRA, and MALS acknowledged receiving the request, but failed to provide answers.

The least deserving is the Zambia Revenue Authority (ZRA), as they misplaced the letter, asked for an electronic copy and subsequently did not respond to it. After making follow-up calls to the Public Relations Officer (PRO), Mr Kufekisa said he sent the letter to another department so that the information could be simplified as it was too technical for the researcher to decipher. The next time the researcher called to make a follow up, the PRO said he was away for work on the Copper-belt attending a trade fair but someone was dealing with the request

However, with a very basic website and failure to respond to the written request for information, the **Ministry of Health** is the recipient of this year's Golden Padlock award for the most secretive public institution in Zambia.

THE MOST OPEN PUBLIC INSTITUTION IN ZAMBIA

Looking at last year's report, The Lusaka City Council is the most improved organisation, as they have upgraded their website, even though some pages are still under construction. They are also one of the two institutions that telephonically answered questions, and where the Public Relations Office could not respond to questions, the researcher was redirected to another department, which also provided the answers within the stipulated time.

Even though the Citizens Empowerment Commission (CEEC) misplaced the letter requesting information, they deserve a special mention, as they provided the requested answers over the telephone.

The **Lusaka City Council** is the recipient of this year's Golden Key award for the most open public institution in Zambia

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is highly recommended that the government stick to their campaign promise and enact an ATI law. Also, government needs to work with the employees of public institutions to educate them with respect to their roles as public officers, therefore information must be accorded to the people of Zambia.

Enacting an ATI law will help the citizenry in accessing information from public offices without suspicion or being asked questions. It was clear from the research that most government departments or public institutions do not respond to individuals, as this researcher experienced.



ZIMBABWE

2014 REPORT ON THE MOST OPEN AND SECRETIVE
GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS IN ZIMBABWE

INTRODUCTION

This research comes more than a year after Zimbabwe enacted a new Constitution, but the government is dragging its feet in aligning legislation with the new Constitution. Despite the enactment of a progressive Constitution that guarantees freedom of expression and access to information, Zimbabweans are yet to fully enjoy these rights as government delays either repealing or reforming old laws that are inconsistent with the spirit of the new Constitution.

Sections 61 and 62 of the new Constitution are more comprehensive compared to the former Lancaster House Constitution. Under the Constitution the following rights are explicitly guaranteed:

61 Freedom of expression and freedom of the media

- (1) *Every person has the right to freedom of expression, which includes—*
 - (a) *freedom to seek, receive and communicate ideas and other information;*
 - (b) *freedom of artistic expression and scientific research and creativity; and*
 - (c) *academic freedom.*
- (2) *Every person is entitled to freedom of the media, which freedom includes protection of the confidentiality of journalists' sources of information.*
- (3) *Broadcasting and other electronic media of communication have freedom of establishment, subject only to State licensing procedures that—*
 - (a) *are necessary to regulate the airwaves and other forms of signal distribution; and*
 - (b) *are independent of control by government or by political or commercial interests.*
- (4) *All State-owned media of communication must—*
 - (a) *be free to determine independently the editorial content of their broadcasts or other communications;*
 - (b) *be impartial; and*
 - (c) *afford fair opportunity for the presentation of divergent views and dissenting opinions.*
- (5) *Freedom of expression and freedom of the media do not include—*
 - (a) *incitement to violence;*
 - (b) *advocacy of hatred or hate speech;*
 - (c) *malicious injury to a person's reputation or dignity; or*
 - (d) *malicious or unwarranted breach of a person's right to privacy.*

62 Access to information

- (1) *Every Zimbabwean citizen or permanent resident, including the Zimbabwean media, has the right of access to any information held by the State or by any institution or agency of government at every level, in so far as the information is required in the interests of public accountability.*
- (2) *Every person, including the Zimbabwean media, has the right of access to any information held by any person, including the State, in so far as the information is required for the exercise or protection of a right.*

- (3) *Every person has a right to the correction of information, or the deletion of untrue, erroneous or misleading information, which is held by the State or any institution or agency of the government at any level, and which relates to that person.*
- (4) *Legislation must be enacted to give effect to this right, but may restrict access to information in the interests of defence, public security or professional confidentiality, to the extent that the restriction is fair, reasonable, necessary and justifiable in a democratic society based on openness, justice, human dignity, equality and freedom.*

There still exists subsidiary legislation that is clearly inconsistent with these new provisions. Notable among such laws is the *Official Secrets Act 1970*, which makes it difficult for citizens and media to access certain information held by government and public institutions. Another law is the *Public Order and Security Act 2002* (POSA), which restricts freedom of association and freedom of assembly.

In addition, the preamble of the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act 2002* (AIPPA) states that it will provide members of the public the right to access records and information held by public bodies. It further pledges to make public bodies accountable by allowing the public the right to request the correction of misrepresented personal information.

However, in effect the opposite is true, as the law takes away more than it gives. Under AIPPA, applicants seeking records or information held by a public body should request the information in writing and, in many cases, pay a fee to access the records. The head of the public body is given up to 30 days to respond. He/she is allowed to refuse to grant the requested information where it is deemed the information sought is not in the public interest. If the information involves a third party, the head of the public institution is allowed 30 more days to consult the third party before responding to the request. However, the head of a public body may also refuse a request for access to information, in which case he/she has to give the applicant reasons for such refusal.

In the event the applicant feels aggrieved by the decision not to grant information, he/she may ask the Commissioner to review the public body's decision. In essence, this constitutes a mere review process that does not guarantee access to information to the applicant. In fact, it actually makes the process of accessing information more cumbersome and complex. The process is unnecessarily bureaucratized, as it may take more than 60 days before a final decision is made on whether an applicant can have access to a record or requested information. This is one of those typical scenarios in which AIPPA begins to act as an impediment to access to information rather than foster the spirit of openness and transparency within public bodies. The process contradicts the law's intended principle of encouraging openness and accountability in the work of public institutions.

Some public officials take advantage of the bureaucratic nature of this legislation to frustrate requests for public information. This legislation has disempowered junior public officials who are fearful of disclosing any information to citizens or the media.

However it has not been all doom and gloom, as there have been positive jurisprudential developments, especially with the Constitutional Court recently ruling that criminal defamation is unconstitutional. Two cases have confirmed that sections of criminal defamation law were unconstitutional and should accordingly be struck down. In the case of *Madanhire and Matshazi v Attorney-General* the Constitutional Court (quoting from a South African case, *Hoho v The State* [2008] ZASCA 98) reaffirmed that:

"The importance of the right to freedom of expression has often been stressed by our courts. Suppression of available information and of ideas can only be detrimental to the decision-making process of individuals, corporations and governments. It may lead to the wrong government being elected, the wrong policies being adopted, the wrong people being appointed, corruption, dishonesty and incompetence not being exposed, wrong investments being made and a multitude of other undesirable consequences. It is for this reason that it has been said that 'freedom of expression constitutes one of the essential foundations of a democratic society and is one of the basic conditions for its progress and the development of man.'"

Similar sentiments were also echoed in the preceding 2013 case of *Kahiya and Chimakure v Attorney-General*.

The Ministry of Information also set up an Information and Media Panel of Inquiry whose mandate is to gather the views of citizens on how to reform the media sector. The recommendations will be used to reform media legislation and make other reforms that promote freedom of expression and access to information.

It was evident from this study that many officials in public institutions failed to demonstrate that they understand that public information is not the property of government, but rather is held by government on behalf of its citizens.

Written or oral requests for information were treated with suspicion by civil servants. More than half of the civil servants who received letters or oral requests for information as part of this study expressed surprise that ordinary citizens could make information requests. A significant number of them asked why the information was needed and made remarks about their institutions not providing information to individuals. They would only provide information to institutions or to the media.

A culture of fear was evident in many public servants who were reluctant to identify themselves or provide their contact details. Most of them referred the requests to a more senior official and there was no clear structure with regard to who was responsible for attending to the information needs of the public. Some institutions referred the researcher to the Permanent Secretary, who is the highest administrative authority in government ministries.

Although many institutions have websites, many of the websites are not taken seriously, lacking useful information, as well as information that is not updated. Some websites have details for officials who served under the previous cabinet.

RATIONALE AND RESEARCH PARAMETERS

Governments and public institutions are responsible for facilitating the right to access to information, and there are two key aspects to this responsibility: enabling citizens to access information upon request; and proactively disseminating important information. In June 2014, the Media Institute of Southern Africa – Zimbabwe Chapter (MISA Zimbabwe) assessed the level of accessibility of information held by government and public institutions in Zimbabwe. The public institutions assessed were randomly selected with particular attention paid to the relevance and nature of information these institutions hold.

The public institutions surveyed were the following:

1. The Zimbabwe Football Association (ZIFA)
2. The Zimbabwe United Passenger Company (ZUPCO)
3. The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
4. The Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure Development
5. The Ministry of Local Government, Urban and Rural Planning
6. The Zimbabwe National Roads Administration (ZINARA)
7. The Zimbabwe National Water Authority (ZINWA)
8. The Central Mechanical Equipment Department (CMED)
9. The Ministry of Psychomotor
10. Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology

AIM OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the level of openness in government and public institutions in Zimbabwe. The results of the study will continue to inform MISA Zimbabwe's campaign for access to information legislation.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To assess the level of transparency in government and public institutions against international standards and principles of access to information.
- To provide evidence-based research for use in advocating for the reform of laws that restrict access to information.
- To inform advocacy and interventions by MISA Zimbabwe and civil society across the country.
- To encourage citizens to exercise their fundamental right to access information generated by the government, in order to enjoy their socio-economic rights.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research adopts qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection, and seeks to evaluate the level of public access to information held by government and public institutions. Each MISA Chapter conducts research by evaluating the websites of government and public institutions along with submitting oral and written requests for information. This method seeks to establish the transparency and efficiency of government and public institutions in providing information to the public.

DATA ANALYSIS

Category 1: Evaluation of government and public institution websites to determine the access and presence of credible and updated public information, which includes but is not limited to: powers and functions of the institution in question; vacancy and budgetary allocations; procurement procedures and contact details and reports.

Category 2: This category was divided into two sections, namely written questionnaires and oral requests for information. These instruments were adopted to determine the ease with which public information is obtained from government and public institutions.

Description of Assessment Criteria

The total number of points allocated to categories 1 and 2 is 20 points (n = 20) each. Points are awarded based on the researcher's answer: Yes (2 points); Partial (1 point); No (0 points). Government ministries and institutions fell into one of the following groups in accordance with the number of points that they received.

Category 1: Website Analysis

Group 1: (0 – 6) Absence of a website or an extremely poor website containing no or almost no relevant public information.

Group 2: (7 – 13) Average website containing some relevant public information.

Group 3: (14 – 20) Well organised, transparent website providing a good amount of relevant public information.

Category 2: Written Request/Oral Request

Group 1: (0 – 6) Denied access to reasonable information request or acted with high levels of secrecy.

Group 2: (7 – 13) Displayed an average level of openness in allowing access to public information.

Group 3: (14 – 20) Displayed openness in allowing access to public information. Institution and was helpful and transparent.

Limitations of the Study

- Given the limited timeframe that was allowed for the survey, it was not feasible to test the openness of more government and public institutions.
- The study primarily relies on qualitative data, which is subject to personal interpretation.
- In making the written requests, while the researcher did not directly identify themselves as being associated with MISA Zimbabwe, they did make the request in the name of a MISA Zimbabwe employee, and some of the contact details were those of MISA Zimbabwe.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Category 1: Website Analysis

Of the 10 institutions surveyed, eight had websites, although the effectiveness with respect to content management differed between the institutions. The Ministry of Psychomotor had no website, while ZUPCO only has a domain registered and a default page. This does not constitute a functioning website.

Most of the surveyed websites scored poorly. Although some of the websites were organised well, they were not regularly updated and lacked useful information. The ZINARA, ZINWA, Ministry of Transport and Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology had more useful content, although they still fell short of acceptable standards. These websites had information such as contact details and legislation that governs their operations.

Of the three institutions that have websites with a feedback mechanism, none of them responded to electronic requests for information.

The rest of the institutions, including the CMED and Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, operated websites which had obvious content management problems and lacked a clear structural outline.

Only the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure Development website had a budget, albeit from 2012. None of the other websites contained any information pertaining to budgets or their operations. The failure to maintain informative websites could be attributed to capacity issues, but one is inclined to conclude that there is no commitment from these institutions to proactively inform the public about their operations. A culture of secrecy is evident in these institutions.

Category 2: Request for Written and Oral Information

Written Requests: Access Denied

Out of the 10 institutions surveyed, seven of them denied written requests for information. Three institutions displayed an average level of openness in allowing public access to information. Only four of the institutions acknowledged receipt of our requests, but all of these went on to ask that we direct our requests to other offices. The other institutions did not acknowledge receipt of our letters and did not respond to the requests. The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology, Ministry of Local Government, Urban and Rural Planning, and the Ministry of Psychomotor acknowledged receipt of the requests and attempted to help to varying degrees.

An official from the Ministry of Psychomotor invited the researcher to their office and explained that the Ministry was new and did not have any organised information yet. He did, however, attempt to answer questions orally and invited the researcher to come to their offices if they needed further information pertaining to the ministry.

Oral requests

Two institutions displayed openness in allowing access to public information. The institutions were helpful and transparent. Four institutions displayed an average level of openness. The remaining institutions denied access to information and showed a high level of secrecy.

The Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure Development responded well to an oral request for information. The Ministry of Psychomotor also responded well to oral requests for information. Despite ZIFA listing the mobile phone number of their media officer, the phone went unanswered following several calls made to the office.

While the majority of the institutions evaluated had officials that were inquisitive and suspicious of the motives of the researcher, a few others proved that they are lacking in capacity and have no appreciation of the need to inform the public about their operations.

The reluctance to identify themselves and the tendency to refer even trivial requests for information to a higher administrative office displayed a culture of fear within public institutions that prevented public officials from readily providing information. Even those who are designated as public relations officers tended to refer questions to a higher authority for clearance. It shows that these institutions are secretive and not forthcoming with information, making it very difficult for citizens to exercise their rights to access information held by public bodies.

DETAILED FINDINGS

1. Ministry of Psychomotor

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

The Ministry of Psychomotor has no website yet. The Principal Director of the Ministry, Mr Kurebwa, said they are in the process of developing one.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?		•		
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?		•		
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?		•		
c) Reports, policies, programs?		•		
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?		•		
h) The contact details of public officials?		•		
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?		•		

Total Score: 0/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

Part 1: Request for written information

The following questions were sent to the Ministry of Psychomotor:

- 1) How has the ministry ensured that the recommendations brought about by the Nziramasanga Commission of 1999 have been implemented?
- 2) What procedures have you implemented to ensure that the ministry works as per the recommendations?
- 3) What strategies is the ministry employing to ensure that the public is aware of the importance of the ministry?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')		•	Mr Kurebwa attended to us. There is no public relations department
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')	•		They called and invited us in for discussions
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?	•		
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	Most of the information requested was provided orally by a senior official in the ministry
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	This information is not yet available

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	The official questioned why an ordinary citizen wanted to know the information
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?	•		

Total Score: 8/20

Part 2: Request for oral information

Questions as per written request. The following additional question was asked of the Ministry of Psychomotor:

- 1) Has the ministry conducted a skills audit to ascertain what practical subjects should be invested in? If so, what investments have they made so far in equipment for areas such as carpentry, metal work and agriculture?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')	•		
3. Did the institution respond to your oral request for information?	•		
4. Did the person dealing with your request have a friendly and helpful attitude?	•		
5. Did officials provide reasonable advice and assistance when seeking information?	•		
6. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', and indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	Ministry is new and they do not have some of the information yet
7. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
8. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.	•		Partially
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?	•		

Total Score: 16/20

2. Zimbabwe Football Association

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.pacra.org.zm/>

The ZIFA website is visually appealing and fairly easy to navigate. The homepage is regularly updated, providing the latest news on the game. However, the website lacks useful information such as budgets. The information about how it operates is not very comprehensive. The website provides details of who to contact for information and it has a policy document on how its operations are governed.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?	•			
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?			•	
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?	•			A file containing the game statutes is provided

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
c) Reports, policies, programs?			•	The 'ZIFA village', meant to promote youth football development, is outlined
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?	•			
h) The contact details of public officials?	•			
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?			•	

Total Score: 11/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

Part 1: Request for written information

The following questions were sent to the Zimbabwe Football Association:

- 1) How does the institution ensure that the public gets information on the administration of football in the country?
- 2) What procedure has ZIFA taken to make sure that Zimbabwean football survives amidst the harsh economic situation?
- 3) What measures, if any, have been taken by ZIFA to ensure the country qualifies for the next World Cup and Afcon tournaments?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		Public Relations Officer
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 2/20

Part 2: Request for oral information

Questions as per written request. The following additional question was asked of the Zimbabwe Football Association:

1) What is ZIFA doing in the country to develop youth football?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the institution respond to your oral request for information?		•	
4. Did the person dealing with your request have a friendly and helpful attitude?		•	
5. Did officials provide reasonable advice and assistance when seeking information?		•	
6. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', and indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
7. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
8. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 2/20

3. Ministry of Transport and Infrastructural Development

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.transcom.gov.zw/>

The website is fairly easy to navigate. It contains budgets and Acts that govern the operations of the Ministry. There is a list of officials who work within the Ministry. The website is not regularly updated.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?			•	Not all pages are updated
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?	•			
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?	•			
c) Reports, policies, programs?			•	Not updated
d) Budget and expenditure?			•	Not updated
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?	•			Name, address and telephone number are available
h) The contact details of public officials?		•		Page still under construction
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?		•		Page still under construction

Total Score: 9/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

Part 1: Request for written information

The following questions were sent to the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructural Development:

- 1) What has necessitated the hike in tollgate fees as reported in the media?
- 2) What does the ministry plan to do in order to curb road accidents that have increased in the country?
- 3) When will the ministry effect the decision on the ban of kombis as public transport?
- 4) Why has there been little progress in the rehabilitation of our road network?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')		•	The website lists direct contact details of all departments that fall under its ambit. There is no designated Public Relations Department
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 0/20

Part 2: Request for oral information

Questions as per written requests. The following additional question was asked of the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructural Development:

- 1) How many accidents occurred on Zimbabwean highways in 2013?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')		•	No designated Public Relations department, but contact details of specific department heads provided
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')	•		
3. Did the institution respond to your oral request for information?	•		
4. Did the person dealing with your request have a friendly and helpful attitude?	•		
5. Did officials provide reasonable advice and assistance when seeking information?	•		
6. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', and indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)	•		
7. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
8. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?	•		

Total Score: 14/20

4. Zimbabwe National Water Authority

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.zinwa.co.zw/>

The website is not very organised and shows signs of poor content management. It has a feedback mechanism that promptly acknowledges receipt of queries, although the organisation does not follow up on queries made. It is visually appealing but lacking in useful information such as budgets, policy documents and statutes that govern the organisation.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?			•	
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?		•		
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?		•		
c) Reports, policies, programs?		•		
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?			•	Name, address and landline phone numbers available
h) The contact details of public officials?		•		Office contacts available
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?	•			It gives an immediate auto response

Total Score: 4/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

Part 1: Request for written information

The following questions were sent to the Zimbabwe National Water Authority:

- 1) Explain how water is distributed among ratepayers?
- 2) What is being done to meet the shortages in water supplies in residential areas?
- 3) How effective are the prepaid water meters if installed?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		Public Relations Officer
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 2/20

Part 2: Request for oral information

Questions as per written request.

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		Public Relations Officer
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the institution respond to your oral request for information?		•	
4. Did the person dealing with your request have a friendly and helpful attitude?		•	
5. Did officials provide reasonable advice and assistance when seeking information?		•	
6. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', and indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
7. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
8. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 2/20

5. Zimbabwe United Passengers Company (ZUPCO)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.planet.nu/sunshinecity/zupco/>

The website appears to still be under construction, and contains no useful information. The website is just a default page.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?		•		
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?		•		
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?		•		
c) Reports, policies, programs?		•		
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?		•		
h) The contact details of public officials?		•		
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?		•		

Total Score: 0/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

Part 1: Request for written information

The following questions were sent to ZUPCO:

- 1) What is the present number of ZUPCO employees?
- 2) How many buses does ZUPCO have within its fleet?
- 3) What measures is ZUPCO taking to revamp its operations?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')		•	
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 0/20

Part 2: Request for oral information

Questions as per written request.

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')		•	
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the institution respond to your oral request for information?		•	
4. Did the person dealing with your request have a friendly and helpful attitude?		•	
5. Did officials provide reasonable advice and assistance when seeking information?		•	
6. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', and indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
7. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
8. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 0/20

6. Ministry of Local Government, Rural and Urban Planning

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.zim.gov.zw/index.php/ministries/ministry-of-local-government>

The website has serious content management shortcomings. It has no useful information except for a description of the Ministry and its leadership. It is not updated at all.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?		•		
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?		•		
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?		•		
c) Reports, policies, programs?		•		
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?		•		
h) The contact details of public officials?		•		
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?		•		

Total Score: 0/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

Part 1: Request for written information

The following questions were sent to the Ministry of Local Government, Rural and Urban Planning

- 1) How many people are on the waiting list for accommodation in Zimbabwe's Harare alone?
- 2) Do you think the ministry has the capacity to provide accommodation to the majority of the citizens?
- 3) What initiatives have you taken to ensure that you provide for adequate housing as the ministry?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')		•	There is no designated Public Relations Department, however an official from research and development said he deals with information matters
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 2/20

Part 2: Request for oral information

Questions as per written request.

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')		•	Public Relations Officer
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')	•		
3. Did the institution respond to your oral request for information?		•	
4. Did the person dealing with your request have a friendly and helpful attitude?	•		
5. Did officials provide reasonable advice and assistance when seeking information?		•	
6. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', and indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
7. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
8. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?	•		

Total Score: 8/20

7. Zimbabwe National Roads Administration (ZINARA)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.zinara.co.zw/>

The ZINARA website is visually appealing and easy to navigate. Some pages are updated, while others are not regularly updated. In terms of content management, the website lacks useful information such as budgets and policy documents. It does however give a clear organisational structure for the management team. The website has contact details.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?			•	
2. Does the website contain the following:			•	
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?				
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?	•			
c) Reports, policies, programs?		•		
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		Just an explanation of how money is collected and disbursed
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?	•			
h) The contact details of public officials?		•		
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?		•		

Total Score: 6/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

Part 1: Request for written information

The following questions were sent to ZINARA:

- 1) Where does ZINARA get funds for its operations?
- 2) Where can we obtain the 2013 abridged audited statement for ZINARA?
- 3) What does the money that is sourced through toll gate fees go towards

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		Public Relations department
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?	•		
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 4/20

Part 2: Request for oral information

Questions as per written request. The following additional questions was asked of ZINARA:

- 1) What were the actual allocations disbursed to urban local authorities for road maintenance in 2013?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		There is a Public Relations officer, but the researcher was referred to an engineer in the organisation, Mr. Juma
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')	•		
3. Did the institution respond to your oral request for information?		•	
4. Did the person dealing with your request have a friendly and helpful attitude?	•		
5. Did officials provide reasonable advice and assistance when seeking information?		•	
6. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', and indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
7. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
8. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?	•		

Total Score: 10/20

8. Central Mechanical Equipment Department (CMED)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.cmed.co.zw/>

The website has clear content management problems. It does not show any useful information except for the department's vision and mission, and the services it offers the public. It is not regularly updated.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?		•		
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?		•		
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?		•		
c) Reports, policies, programs?		•		
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?			•	Physical address is present
h) The contact details of public officials?		•		
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?		•		

Total Score: 1/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

Part 1: Request for written information

The following questions were sent to the CMED:

- 1) How is revenue used in the operations of CMED?
- 2) How are vehicles for hire priced?
- 3) How does the company aim to improve its services for the target audience?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 2/20

Part 2: Request for oral information

Questions as per written request.

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')		•	There is no public relations department
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the institution respond to your oral request for information?		•	
4. Did the person dealing with your request have a friendly and helpful attitude?		•	
5. Did officials provide reasonable advice and assistance when seeking information?		•	

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
6. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', and indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
7. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
8. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?		•	
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 0/20

9. Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.mopse.gov.zw/>

The website has clear content management problems. It is not regularly updated and has no useful information pertaining to the operations of the Ministry.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?		•		
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?		•		
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?		•		
c) Reports, policies, programs?		•		
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?		•		
h) The contact details of public officials?		•		
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?		•		

Total Score: 0/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

Part 1: Request for written information

The following questions were sent to the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education:

- 1) What is the total amount of budget allocated to the Ministry by the Treasury?
- 2) How regularly do you update your website?
- 3) Does your Ministry have a public relations department which updates the public on various issues?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')		•	
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?	•		
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?	•		
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?	•		

Total Score: 8/20

Part 2: Request for oral information

Questions as per written request.

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')		•	There is no Public Relations Office, but an official referred us to Research and Development
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the institution respond to your oral request for information?	•		
4. Did the person dealing with your request have a friendly and helpful attitude?	•		
5. Did officials provide reasonable advice and assistance when seeking information?		•	
6. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', and indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
7. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
8. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?	•		

Total Score: 8/20

10. Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.mhtestd.gov.zw/>

Although the website is easy to navigate, it has clear content management issues. It is not regularly updated and does not contain useful information such as budgets and policy documents.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up to date information?		•		
2. Does the website contain the following:				
a) A description of its powers, as well as data on the organisational structure, the functions, and the responsibilities of the administration?			•	
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?		•		
c) Reports, policies, programs?		•		
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The name and address, telephone number, and the working hours of the respective institution?	•			
h) The contact details of public officials?		•		
i) A mechanism to request and receive a response to electronic messages and requests for information?		•		

Total Score: 3/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

Part 1: Request for written information

The following questions were sent to the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology:

- 1) Where can we obtain the audited statement for the ministry?
- 2) How often do you update your website?
- 3) How many tertiary institutions do we have in the country?
- 4) What is the total enrolment of the local tertiary institutions?

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')		•	
3. Did the Institution respond to a request for information?		•	
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•	
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
6. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
8. Did the authority provide information without questioning the aims and motivations of the applicant?		•	No information was given, they kept referring us to a higher authority. However they never questioned our motives for requesting information.
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•	

Total Score: 4/20

Part 2: Request for oral information

Questions as per written request.

n = 20	Yes	No	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests? (Please state title of officials in 'Additional Information')	•		
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days? (If less than 7 please state in 'Additional Information')	•		
3. Did the institution respond to your oral request for information?	•		
4. Did the person dealing with your request have a friendly and helpful attitude?	•		
5. Did officials provide reasonable advice and assistance when seeking information?		•	
6. Did the institution provide all of the information requested? (If partially please mark 'No', and indicate in 'Additional Information' how much of the information requested was supplied)		•	
7. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information? (If information was not refused, please contact institution to find out what the policy is in this regard – if they supply written reasons for refusal mark 'Yes')		•	
8. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•	
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•		
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?	•		

Total Score: 12/20

RESEARCH CONCLUSION

From the survey, one is inclined to conclude that the majority of institutions remain rather closed and averse to placing information in the public domain. Despite many of the surveyed institutions having websites, the websites do not contain useful information and are not regularly updated.

A general disdain for information requests was evident amongst the participating institutions. There is suspicion toward citizen requests for information and what some of them term 'hostile media'. The failure to respond to written information requests by some institutions suggested a culture of secrecy in these institutions.

THE MOST SECRETIVE PUBLIC INSTITUTION IN ZIMBABWE

The surveyed institutions have a long way to go towards transparency and opening themselves up to public scrutiny. Most of them can easily be classified as secretive after almost all failed to respond to written requests for information.

ZUPCO, for the third year running, had no functional website, did not respond to written requests for information and at the times telephone calls were made (three times) to their offices, the phone went unanswered. It is clear from this that the institution does not take its interactions with members of the public seriously.

ZUPCO therefore is the most secretive institution.

ZINWA, CMED and ZIFA follow closely behind after they failed to respond to written requests for information, in addition to operating relatively uninformative websites.

THE MOST OPEN PUBLIC INSTITUTION IN ZIMBABWE

Secondary Education, Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology, Ministry of Local Government and the Ministry of Psychomotor acknowledged receipt of information requests and recommended further action. A senior official at the Ministry of Psychomotor made the effort to explain issues in person at their offices. The Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure Development responded well to an oral request for information and in addition has a website which shows a budget and legislation that governs its operations. It also shows a clear organisational structure.

Based on this, the **Ministry of Psychomotor** is the most open institution of those surveyed as they took time to attend to our information requests in a helpful and friendly manner.

The Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure Development follows closely behind in second after their helpful assistance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

There is need for the government to swiftly align all legislation to make it compliant with the new Constitution, which guarantees freedom of expression and access to information. More advocacy work concentrated on pressuring the government to align legislation with the new Constitution is necessary.

Already the government has set up an information panel to make recommendations for the way forward. MISA and other institutions must take advantage of this panel to present their findings on the state of access to information in public institutions.

There was evidence that some institutions may be willing to disclose information but are lacking in capacity. More work and resources must be directed towards engaging these institutions on how they can improve their websites or information dissemination systems.

MISA CONTACT DETAILS

REGIONAL SECRETARIAT

21 Johann Albrecht Street,
Windhoek West
Private Bag 13386
Windhoek, Namibia
Telephone: +264 61 232975
Fax: +264 61 248016

MISA ANGOLA

Contact the Regional Secretariat

MISA BOTSWANA

Plot 111, SAMDEF House Block B,
Gaborone International Finance Park
Gaborone, Botswana
Tel: (+267) 3971972
Fax: (+267) 316119
Email: outreach@bw.misa.org
Twitter: @BotswanaMisa

MISA LESOTHO

House No. 1B,
Happy Villa
Maseru 100, Lesotho
Tel: (+266) 22 320941
Fax: (+266) 22 310560
Email: MISALesotho@gmail.com
Facebook: MISA Lesotho

MISA MALAWI

Onions Complex,
Off Chilambula Road, Area 4,
Lilongwe 3, Malawi
Tel: (+265) 1 758090
Tel/Fax: (+265) 1 758091
Email: misama@globemw.net
Twitter: @misamalawi2014

MISA NAMIBIA

21 Johann Albrecht Street, Windhoek West
Windhoek, Namibia
Tel: +264 61 232975
Fax: +264 61 248016
Email: director@misanamibia.org.na
Facebook: MISA Namibia Speaks
Twitter: @MisaNamibia

MISA MOZAMBIQUE

Contact the Regional Secretariat

MISA SOUTH AFRICA

Contact the Regional Secretariat

MISA SWAZILAND

Shop 12, Plot 56, Gwamile St
African City Arcade, African City Building
Mbabane, Swaziland
Tel: (+268) 40 46677/40 49700
Fax: (+268) 40 46699
Email: misa.swaziland@gmail.com
Website: <http://misaswaziland.com/>
Twitter: @MISA_Swaziland
Facebook: Media Institute of
Southern Africa Swaziland

MISA TANZANIA

Kinondoni Mkwajuni,
along Kawawa Road
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
Tel: +255 22 2762167
Fax: +255 22 2762168
Email: misatanzania@gmail.com
Facebook: Misa Tanzania

MISA ZAMBIA

Plot 3814, Martin Mwaamba Road,
Olympia Park
Lusaka, Zambia
Tel: (+260) 1 292096/292027
Tel/Fax: (+260) 292096
Email: jane@misazambia.org
Email: info@misazambia.org.zm
Website: www.misazambia.org.zm
Facebook: Misa Zambia

MISA ZIMBABWE

84 McChlery Drive, Eastlea
Harare, Zimbabwe
Tel/Fax: (+263) 4 776165/746838
Email: misa@misazim.co.zw
Website: misa@misazim.com
Facebook: Misa Zimbabwe
Twitter: @misazimbabwe

2014 Media Institute of Southern Africa, 21 Johann Albrecht Street, P/B 13386, Namibia, Tel: +264 61 232975, Fax: +264 61 248016

www.misa.org



ISBN 978-99916-62-35-0