



TANZANIA

TRANSPARENCY ASSESSMENT 2017

The Citizens' Analysis of
Government Openness

INTRODUCTION

The right of access to information is recognised as a fundamental human right in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 9 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and is legally binding under Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. More importantly, Article 18 of the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania guarantees the right to access to information. In 2016, Parliament passed an Access to Information Act which is intended to ensure the enforcement of this right.

The right to information is essential as it facilitates the exercise of the full range of other human rights. In particular, the right underscores the essence of an informed public through guaranteeing citizens' access to public information, empowering people to call their governments to account for their actions. However, it is feared that the Tanzanian Access to Information Act may actually limit access.

The restriction of access to information may take the form of limiting access to governmental or official information, as well as harassment of the press, which may lead to censorship. Such restrictions may be imposed by political authorities or by private organisations.

In Tanzania, efforts to legislate access to information can be dated back to the early 1990s. Notable forward progress was made in the 2000s—firstly with policy reforms in the broadcasting sector, followed by the Government introducing a draft Freedom of Information Bill in 2006. The process of developing access to information legislation stalled until 2015, when the Access to Information Act and the Media Services Act were issued by Government.

However, concerns were raised about both Acts which, according to stakeholders' analysis, carried some provisions which were likely to infringe on principles of freedom of speech, media freedom and free flow of information. In fact, both Bills were deemed by some critics as being more draconian than the 2015 Cybercrimes and Statistics Acts. These two laws, which influence how Tanzanians access and share information, were widely opposed by stakeholders for their potential of curtailing people's rights to access to information and freedom of expression.

The Media Services Act, for instance, contains provisions that would weaken the independence of the media and subsequently limit citizens' access to information. Under the Access to information Act, the wrongful release of information is punishable by 3 – 5 years imprisonment. In contrast, wrongful withholding of information is not punishable, providing information holders with an incentive to refuse the provision of information.

The Access to Information Act was ideally meant to operationalise and enforce provisions of Article 18 of the country's Constitution, however no regulations have been gazetted as of mid-July this year.

Little has been done with respect to publicly promoting the Access to Information Act (neither its contents nor its implementation), neither by the government nor by civil society. This may be the reason why most public servants behave in the manner this study reports, and probably why the general public does not know that they have a right to access information on the activities of both the Government and private bodies which utilise public funds.

RATIONALE AND RESEARCH PARAMETERS

MISA Tanzania joined other MISA Chapters to participate in the study which seeks to establish the most open and most secretive public institutions in Southern Africa. The study was conducted from 11th July to 10th August 2017. All eight institutions were picked randomly, depending on the relevance of their mandated work. Most were surveyed for the first time since their establishment. Information request letters were hand-delivered and emails were sent to the selected institutions. The study also assessed the quality of these institutions' websites—whether they contain relevant and useful information for the public.

The following public institutions were surveyed:

1. National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF)
2. Bank of Tanzania (BOT)
3. Prevention and Combating Corruption Bureau (PCCB)
4. Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA)
5. Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU)
6. Tanzania Forest Services Agency (TFS)
7. Tanzania Investment Centre (TIC)
8. Tanzania Insurance Regulatory Authority (TIRA)

Limitations of the Study

- Limited financial and manpower resources.
- Time: 21 days were allocated for the study which seems to be too little time for some busy organisations; regardless of the fact that several public officials seemed inattentive.
- Lack of understanding of the importance of access to information by some public officials.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Category 1: Website analysis

- It is impressive to see that all eight government institutions surveyed have websites which contain useful information such as their policies, areas of expertise, regulations, and news.
- Not all the information provided is up-to-date.
- It was interesting to find language diversity:
 - BOT, TIC and TIRA use two languages, namely Swahili and English.
 - TCU, NHIF and TFS mix English and Swahili on their websites.
 - TANAPA's website is exceptionally multilingual, displaying its information in more than 57 national languages.
- BOT updates some of the information on their website every day.
- TANAPA, TIRA and PCCB had current information on their websites.
- Most sites look old fashioned and boring.
- On some websites, e.g. TCU and BOT, the 'Contact Us' feature was faulty, therefore there is no guarantee that a request sent via the website will reach the targeted institution. The fact that not one institution acknowledged receipt of the emails sent to them via their respective websites is a clear indicator of a defective contact mechanism.

Category 2: Requests for information

- Letters were hand-delivered and emailed to the respective organisations.
- Only two organisations, NHIF and TANAPA, acknowledged receipt of the letters.
- Even after three follow up attempts with other institutions, some still did not respond.
- Only five organisations responded.
- BOT, TIC and TANAPA did not provide the required information.
- Different reasons were given as to why information was not shared:
 - TIC claimed that the person assigned the job was at a funeral.
 - TANAPA failed to respond because they were unable to locate the person who received the letter. A second letter was sent and additional follow-up attempts made without resulting in the receipt of information.
- Some public officials found it questionable that a citizen would request information for personal use and knowledge, and did not take our information requests seriously.
- Staff at other institutions remained friendly and seemingly cooperative; yet assistance was only forthcoming upon repeated and consistent follow-ups.

- There appears to be challenges with some tasked with the handling of information requests. The researcher had to resubmit emails and letters because the staff at various institutions was unable to locate the letters/emails.

DETAILED FINDINGS

1. National Health Insurance Fund [NHIF]

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.nhif.or.tz/>

The website contains some important information on their services, location, contact details, organisational structure, etc. The information is displayed in Swahili which makes it easy for non-English speaking Tanzanians to understand. The organisation has linked their Twitter and Facebook to their 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, programmes?	•			
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?	•			
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?	•			
g) The address, telephone number, and working hours of the institution?			•	Working hours are not indicated
h) The contact details of specific 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 NHIF:

1. Why should someone choose NHIF as his/her health insurance fund? What is it that you offer over other funds?
2. Are non public servants allowed to join the Fund? If yes, what are the membership enrolment procedures?
3. A lot of citizens, especially those from rural areas, don't understand the importance of having health insurance; as a government agency, what do you do to get the importance of health insurance across to them?
4. As a public institution set to help citizens, how cost-friendlier are your services for the average citizen compared to private funds?
5. Are public servants bound to only join NHIF?
6. Many government servants that are members of NHIF, such as the police, prison wardens, and fire fighters have minimum salary/wages; what do you do to make sure the amount cut from their salaries them doesn't negatively affect their finances?

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests?		•		
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days?	•			
3. Did the institution respond to the 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?	•			
6. Does the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information?	•			

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	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: 14/20

2. Bank of Tanzania (BOT)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.bot.go.tz>

The website contains up-to-date information and details on their area of work, including the currency exchange rate. It displays budget reports, financial statements and other important information such as vacancies, tenders and so forth. The style of the site seems old fashioned, meaning it has not been improved for some time. The website displays information in two languages: Swahili and English, and they have a Facebook account.

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, programmes?	•			
d) Budget and expenditure?	•			
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?	•			
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?	•			
g) The address, telephone number, and working hours of the institution?	•			
h) The contact details of specific 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 BOT:

- Who is responsible for setting bank charges; for example, the amount charged to withdraw money from the ATM; and is it BOT's responsibility to ensure charges are fair?
- What are the procedures of microfinance registration versus commercial bank registration?
- What does BOT do when our currency rate drops?
- What are the procedures for opening a bureau de change? Which organisation sets the exchange rate amount for bureaux de change, the TRA and banks?
- Is it BOT's task to stop/control fake notes? If yes, how do you do it? What are the legal procedures to follow if one receives a fake note?
- What are the reasons for changing a note to a coin or a coin to a note?

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests?		•		
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days?		•		
3. Did the institution respond to the 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?		•		No information was provided because the institution could not trace the letter. The person to whom the letter was hand-delivered to was on holiday.
6. Does the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of 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: 0/20

3. Prevention and Combating Corruption Bureau (PCCB)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.pccb.go.tz>

Compared to other websites, PCCB's website has less information and uses one language: Swahili. No links to any social media accounts are displayed.

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, programmes?	•			
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The address, telephone number, and working hours of the institution?	•			
h) The contact details of specific 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 PCCB:

1. What do you do to make sure PCCB is free from corruption?
2. Why has PCCB become inactive compared to previous years?
3. During my O-Level school years, there were PCCB clubs in schools and they were very helpful and educational; are school PCCB clubs still alive? If not, why? And if yes, how many are still active and what do you do to help the clubs survive?
4. Is there a process to follow if a person needs your help/services? And to what extent do you prove that you are trustworthy?

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests?		•		
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days?	•			
3. Did the institution respond to the 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?	•			
6. Does the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of 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: 14/20

4. Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.tanzaniaparks.go.tz>

This website stands out among all the eight organisations surveyed in this study; it is very appealing with a lot of information on their area of work. However, some vital information such as their budget and expenditure reports is not available. The information on this website can be obtained in more than 57 languages, including Swahili. The website provides links to their Facebook and Twitter accounts.

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, programmes?	•			
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?	•			
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?			•	No information on employment procedures is provided.
g) The address, telephone number, and working hours of the institution?	•			

h) The contact details of specific 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 TANAPA:

1. Tanzania's tourism sector depends highly on foreign visitors, and thus their safety is of paramount importance. What does your organisation do to ensure safety of tourists and their properties?
2. There have been campaigns to encourage and promote local tourism; to what extent have these campaigns been successful?
3. What are the main challenges to local tourism in the country?
4. What is TANAPA doing to promote and take Tanzania's national parks worldwide?
5. Tourism is an important sector in our country, and it contributes significantly to the national economy. But to what extent? And in which way?
6. How big is poaching in Tanzania? And what do you do to combat it?

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests?		•		
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days?		•		
3. Did the institution respond to the 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?		•		
6. Does the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of 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: 0/20

5. Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.tcu.go.tz/>

Most of the information is displayed in English, which might be a challenge for many locals who do not understand the language. The website has some incorrect details such as their email address as well as some links. The website provides a link to their Instagram and Facebook accounts.

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, programmes?	•			

d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?	•			
g) The address, telephone number, and working hours of the institution?			•	No information on working hours is provided.
h) The contact details of specific 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 TCU:

1. What criteria do you use when admitting students into a particular university?
2. There has recently been a mushrooming of colleges and universities in Tanzania. However, some of them don't seem to have what it takes. What are the requirements for registering a University?
3. There have been several cases of students from private universities to postponing their studies by a year/ semester, with some even dropping out of college due to challenges such as tuition fees. Considering that not every student receives government loans, how does TCU ensure private universities set and provide affordable university education?
4. There have been claims by employers that many university graduates in recent years are "half-cooked," in other words, they are not well prepared. Does your office have a mechanism to check and recheck the curriculum or the skill levels of university lecturers?

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests?		•		
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days?	•			
3. Did the institution respond to the 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?	•			
6. Does the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of 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?		•		Seemed to doubt our staff member who handed in the letter
9. Did the institution acknowledge your request for information within 7 days?	•			
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?	•			

Total Score: 15/20

6. Tanzania Forest Services (TFS) Agency

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.tfs.go.tz>

The website links to the organisation's Facebook and Twitter accounts and contains current information about the institution. It uses more English than Swahili which might be a challenge for most Tanzanians.

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, programmes?		•		
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?	•			
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?			•	Employment procedures are not provided.
g) The address, telephone number, and working hours of the institution?			•	Working hours are not provided.
h) The contact details of specific 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 TCU:

1. How many forests are under your care?
2. What do you do to maintain our forests despite issues which force people to cut trees?
3. How much bee resources do we have and how much do they contribute to our economy?
4. What do you do as TFS to encourage bee-keeping in our country?
5. What are procedures for selling raw materials from tree farms that are government-owned?

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests?		•		
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days?		•		
3. Did the institution respond to the 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?			•	Only three out of five questions were answered. Some questions were not answered because no one could be found to answer them—they were busy attending other important matters, while others who were available to do it simply refused to.
6. Does the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information?		•		
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.			•	Some questions were not answered.
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

7. Tanzania Investment Centre (TIC)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.tic.co.tz/>

The information on the website can be obtained in several local languages, including Swahili. No social media details are displayed on the website. The website provides useful but not comprehensive information, such as signed contracts, the budget and financial 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?	•			
b) A list of laws, Acts etc. issued within the scope of its powers?	•			
c) Reports, policies, programmes?		•		
d) Budget and expenditure?	•			
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?			•	No signed contract information/details provided
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?			•	No employment details displayed
g) The address, telephone number, and working hours of the institution?			•	No information on working hours available
h) The contact details of specific 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 TIC:

1. Is TIC responsible for all investment activities, including entering into agreements with different companies?
2. What are the procedures for investing in our country and how do you make sure all agreements are in our country's favour?
3. Are procedures the same for local and international investors? If not, what are the differences?
4. There have been complaints by local investors that they are not being given priority, especially when it comes to large scale investments such as minerals and gas. How do you ensure that there is an equal playing field for both potential local and international investors?
5. What do you consider to be the main challenges to local investors and how do you address them?

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests?		•		
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days?		•		
3. Did the institution respond to the 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?		•		
6. Does the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of 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?		•		

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	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

8. Tanzania Insurance Regulatory Authority (TIRA):

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.tira.go.tz/>

The website uses both English and Swahili. It displays current information. There are no social network links displayed.

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, programmes?	•			
d) Budget and expenditure?		•		
e) Information about procurement procedures, signed contracts?			•	No information on signed contracts available
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?			•	No employment details displayed
g) The address, telephone number, and working hours of the institution?			•	No working hours provided
h) The contact details of specific 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 TIRA:

1. What are the procedures for registering an insurance company and what qualifications must one have?
2. As insurance is very important, whether it's health or property; how does TIRA to ensure that insurance companies operate for citizens' best interest?
3. How safe are certain insurance company members in terms of their invested funds in case something goes wrong with the company?
4. How does TIRA monitor and ensure members of the insurance industry follow orders, laws and ethics?
5. How important is TIRA to citizens and Government?

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests?		•		
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days?	•			
3. Did the institution respond to the request for information?		•		
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?	•			

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested?	•			
6. Does the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of 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: 12/20

SUMMARY IN NUMBERS

Institution	Website	Request for information	Total score
1. National Health Insurance Fund [NHIF]	13	14	27
2. Bank of Tanzania (BOT)	16	0	16
3. Prevention and Combating Corruption Bureau (PCCB)	8	14	22
4. Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA)	17	0	17
5. Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU)	11	15	26
6. Tanzania Forest Services (TFS) Agency	8	6	14
7. Tanzania Investment Centre (TIC)	13	0	13
8. Tanzania Insurance Regulatory Authority (TIRA):	11	12	23

RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

It is undeniable that poor governance, by defeating the objective of inclusion, retards economic growth and mostly hurts the poor.

In a democracy, the principle of accountability holds that government officials — whether elected or appointed by those who have been elected — are accountable to the citizenry for their decisions and actions. The principle of transparency requires that the decisions and actions of those in government are open to public scrutiny and that the public has a right to access government information.

Global trends reveal a growing commitment by states to embrace the ideals of transparent and democratic governance. This has been reflected in the increasing adoption of various instruments, policies and declarations by state parties aimed at strengthening transparency and openness, such as the Access to Information Act of 2016 in Tanzania.

THE MOST SECRETIVE PUBLIC INSTITUTION IN TANZANIA

Given the lack of information on its website and the fact that they did not do well in the information request category, the most secretive public institution in Tanzania in 2017 is the **Tanzania Investment Centre (TIC)**.

THE MOST OPEN PUBLIC INSTITUTION IN TANZANIA

Due not only to the scores but also considering how they acted during the process of conducting this study, the most open public institution in Tanzania in 2017 is the **National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF)**.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For both the Access to Information Act and the laws which in one way or another impact the public's ability to access information, to be progressively useful to this country, the study makes the following recommendations:

- There is a need for an awareness of the Access to Information Act among public servants. It is in public offices where most information is generated. It is important that public servants know what the law entails in order for them to be able to fully enforce it.
- There is a need for specialised trainings/seminars/workshops for public officials on freedom of information issues and the public's right to access to publicly-held information vis-à-vis its importance to their country's development.
- There is an urgent need for information desks/offices/resource centres at government offices, which would play a big role in information dissemination to the general public.
- Monitoring and evaluation tools for access to information held by public offices and/or private firms that use public funds or perform public functions should be developed.
- There is a need for public awareness of the Access to Information Act. This will encourage citizens to demand information that is necessary for their personal or their community's development.
- Encourage and promote the use of ICTs in public service; it is very discouraging, for example, when an email sent to the email address displayed on an institution's website bounces back or will be completely ignored. For a country as large as Tanzania, physical follow-ups of every request are a luxury many cannot afford.
- A move to modern filing systems is needed to encourage accountability in public servants. It is embarrassing to receive someone's letter and it gets lost after a week.
- Most importantly, the need for regulations for the Access to Information Act cannot be overemphasised.