



NAMIBIA

2016 Report on Open & Secretive
Public Institutions in Namibia

INTRODUCTION

At the time of the writing of this report, Namibia had a working document, which is expected to transform into an Access to Information Bill before the end of 2016. This is a major achievement for the Access to Information in Namibia (ACTION) Coalition, which has campaigned for such a law since early 2013.

Not only did the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology (MICT) finally deliver on its promise to develop such a law, but they also consulted with civil servants, media houses and civil society on the working document as well as on the revision of their Information Policy. The Ministry has to be applauded for consulting with stakeholders from the onset, and not waiting for the Bill to be tabled in Parliament first.

Namibia is efficient at policy development and establishing a framework to operate within, but we have a long way to go with regards to effective implementation. Hence the need for these collaborative efforts to continue into the implementation phase. Civil society, the private sector and the media require Government's cooperation to ensure that every citizen has an understanding of the rights, freedoms and responsibilities that come with accessing information. There is no point in having a good law that is not implemented, without holding stakeholders accountable when they don't reach implementation targets.

With regards to the media and access to information, journalists continue to lament the difficulty in accessing information from most public institutions which leads to a delay in the provision of information that is in the public's interest. Furthermore, the lack of quotable information from official government sources, especially related to corruption and poor service delivery, results in journalists having to rely on anonymous sources.

We are still awaiting a whistleblowers protection law, which can go a long way in the eradication of corruption, because it means those who are brave enough to disclose corrupt elements within the public service will be protected from prosecution or victimisation. The Anti-Corruption Commission was the front-runner in the call for such a law, but it has been silent on the issue for the past year.

The ACTION Coalition will have to accept the responsibility of lobbying for the development of such a law, because transparency and good governance cannot exist without protecting those who risk their jobs to expose corruption.

There have also been no new developments with regards to the Electronic Transactions and Cybercrime Bill, which is probably for the best because there were a number of concerns raised on the first draft. It is important for stakeholders to be consulted on the second draft and we are committed to ensuring that the public's right to ATI and privacy, as well as their freedom of expression, is upheld.

Namibia must honour its obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the African Charter on Human and People's Rights and the SADC Protocol on Culture, Information and Sport. ATI has been positioned as a

critical ingredient in the attainment of the objectives of both the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Namibian government's Harambee Prosperity Plan (HPP). Regarding access to public information, the HPP commits to ensuring that citizens have access to relevant government information, and for the MICT to develop a plan for aligning the functions of the Public Relations and Liaison Officers to their core functions of information dissemination. In addition, permissible access to information by the public must also be included in the plan.

An ATI dispensation will lead to the establishment of a law and policy landscape that exemplifies the principled spirit of respect for human rights and freedoms as articulated in the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia.

RATIONALE AND RESEARCH PARAMETERS

Access to information is an essential human right that supports all other rights. Research on the Most Open and Secretive Public Institutions in Namibia shows that there is a lack of transparency within public bodies, and adds weight to the call for ATI legislation. The research was conducted from 2 August to 30 August. Institutions were given 21 days to respond to requests.

In Namibia, eight institutions were studied. The research included the study of their responses to requests for information, and evaluated websites and social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter.

The objective of the study was to measure the openness as well as difficulties faced by public institutions in providing information to the public. The study looked at whether the sampled offices made available the information without questioning the intentions of those requesting it. The results of the study will continue to inform our work in relation to access to information.

The following public institutions were surveyed:

1. National Council of Namibia (NC)
2. Ministry of Youth, National Service and Sport (MSYNS)
3. Ministry of Industrial Trade and SME Development (MTI)
4. Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation (MIRCO)
5. Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare (MPESW)
6. Ministry of Finance (MoF)
7. Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET)
8. Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC)

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Category 1: Website analysis

- Of the eight public institutions surveyed, only five had fully functional websites. Two institutions have no website, while the third has a website that does not convey much information, except the physical address and contact details of their Public Relations Officer (PRO) and the person responsible Information Communication Technology (ICT).
- There is still a low presence of public institutions on social media. However, the Ministries of Environment and Tourism, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare, as well as International Relations and Cooperation have active and informative Facebook pages.
- Compared to 2015, institutional budgets are now more readily available. The institutions that were open about their budget include the Ministry of Finance, via their website, and the Anti-Corruption Commission, via written request. The Ministry of Industrial Trade and SME Development, and the National Council provided budget information by referring the researcher to a link to the 2016/17 budget.
- Most of the information on the websites that could be accessed were not dated, this made it difficult to determine the exact date the information was uploaded.

Category 2: Requests for information

- All institutions had designated official(s) for information dissemination. The researcher only had one face-to-face interview with the Anti-Corruption Commission.
- As with previous years, most of the surveyed institutions took their time to respond. Some did not respond with the requested information, although they did acknowledge receipt of the request. These were the Ministries of Finance, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare, as well as Youth, National Service and Sport.
- Ministries that did not respond, were International Affairs and Cooperation, and Environment and Tourism

DETAILED FINDINGS

1. National Council of Namibia (NC)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

http://www.parliament.na/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=153&Itemid=1264

The National Council is the upper chamber of Namibia's bilateral Parliament and still shares a web address with the National Assembly. The National Council's section provides accurate and relevant information, even though it was last updated more than a year ago. It is well-presented and organised. The National Council of Namibia has a Facebook page which was self-generated by Facebook. It does not have a Twitter account. However, the Parliament of the Republic of Namibia has a Facebook and a Twitter 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?			•	Does not describe 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: 13/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to The National Council of Namibia:

1. What is the National Council's mandate?
2. Is the National Assembly and the National Council equally important? If so, how? If not, how not?
3. Which Bills did the National Council approve in 2016?
4. How does the National Council engage with grassroots Namibians?
5. What is National Councils Budget for the 2016 financial year and how is it applied?

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests?	•			Information Clerk
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days?	•			The Personal Assistant to the Permanent Secretary replied the same day they were contacted, she referred the researcher to the Chief of Information who referred her to the Information Clerk
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. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information?	•			The Information Clerk was very helpful and told the researcher that the office is open to additional requests for information if the information provided is not sufficient
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.			•	Referred the researcher to a link of to the 2016/17 Budget
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?			•	Not much information was given as the researcher was referred to the website

Total Score: 14/20

2. Ministry of Youth, National Service and Sport (MSYNS)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

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

The Ministry of Youth, National Service and Sport has a good website. It is well-organised and informative. MSYNS has no presence on Facebook or on Twitter.

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?			•	Does not indicate working hours
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: 7/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

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

1. How does the Ministry aim to reduce youth unemployment during the 2016/17 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?

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests?	•			Director of the Directorate of Youth
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days?	•			The PRO replied the same day, but directed the researcher to the Director of the Directorate of Youth
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. Did 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: 6/20

3. Ministry of Industrial Trade and SME Development (MTI)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

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

The Ministry of Industrial Trade and SME Development (MTI) has a good website, organised and informative. Their Facebook page is dormant and they do not have a Twitter account. The virtual presence of the MTI is low.

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?	•			

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
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 Ministry of Industrial Trade and SME Development

- Briefly describe your mandate.
- What challenges do you face with regards to facilitating access to funding for SMEs?
- What are the key goals in Vision 2030 that apply to the Ministry and how were their achievements addressed by the Ministry's strategy?
- Are women in business a thematic or programme area in the Ministry? If so, what activities do you implement in this regard. If not, why not?
- Vision 2030 wants an industrialised country; what are the challenges in achieving it?

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests?	•			Development Planner
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days?	•			Responded the same day, and responded to questions within 7 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?	•			Was very helpful and told researcher to ask for additional information should it be needed
6. Did 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: 18/20

4. Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation (MIRCO)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE
<http://www.mfa.gov.na/>

The Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation website is up-to-date with recent articles and well-organised. They have an active Facebook page, but no Twitter 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?			•	No indication of working hours
h) The contact details of specific public officials?			•	Website provides the contact details of their secretaries
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 Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation:

- Briefly describe your mandate.
- Last week, Namibia had a major foreign policy conference; did participants develop a roadmap towards the adoption of an official policy, and who are the major stakeholders identified?
- In your view, was the amount allocated for your Ministry in the 2016/2017 budget enough for your requirements?
- What are some of the major cooperation agreements signed in 2015/16?
- Which five (5) countries does Namibia have the strongest diplomatic relations with?

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests?	•			Public Relations Officer (PRO)
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. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information?		•		
7. Did the institution disclose information about its operations, budgets, structure etc.		•		

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	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

5. Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare (MPESW)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

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

The Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare does not have a website. They do however, have an active Facebook page which they update almost hourly, and thus quite informative. MPESW does not have a Twitter 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: 0/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare:

- How is poverty measured in Namibia?
- Approximately, how many impoverished people/households do we have in Namibia?
- What are poverty thresholds and poverty guidelines?
- Briefly describe your mandate.
- What were some of the Ministry's major achievements in 2015?
- What are some of the Ministry's major challenges in the implementation of its work?

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests?	•			Permanent Secretary
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days?	•			The email was replied to on the same day
3. Did the institution respond to the request for information?		•		

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
4. Does the authority publish their procedures for dealing with information requests?		•		
5. Did the institution provide all of the information requested?		•		
6. Did 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: 4/20

6. Ministry of Finance (MoF)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

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

The website of the Ministry of Finance is well-organised, informative and up-to-date, even though it states that the website is still under development. The MoF has a Facebook page which was self-generated by Facebook, and does not have a Twitter 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?			•	Do not indicate working hours
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: 15/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the Ministry of Finance:

1. Where can one get hold of any Acts under the Ministry of Finance?
2. How does one get the latest Budget Statement and Revenue and Expenditure Estimate?
3. What happens to the Governments budget surplus?
4. In your view, was the amount allocated for your Ministry in the 2016/2017 budget enough for your requirements?
5. What is the amount of funds the Ministry used in the last financial year?

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests?			•	Personal Assistant to the Permanent Secretary
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days?	•			The PA responded the same day
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. Did 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: 5/20

7. Ministry Environment and Tourism (MET)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

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

The Ministry Environment and Tourism’s website does not provide much information except the Ministry’s physical address, the contact details of the Public Relations Officer and ICT officers, and a short summary of what can be expected from the website once it is ready. The MET has a Facebook account, and their page is quite active, but it does not have a Twitter 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: 2/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

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

1. What is the Ministry's mandate?
2. There have been instances of killing animals, such as elephants and others in our national parks; what is your office doing to tackle this problem?
3. What are the strategies put in place by your office to ensure the safety of animals in the national parks and game reserves?
4. Domestic tourism is not so common among many Namibians since most of them do not visit their national parks and tourist sites, what does your Ministry do to promote domestic tourism?
5. Apart from the issues of poaching, what other critical issues are facing the tourism sector in Namibia?

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests?	•			Public Relations Officer (PRO)
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. Did 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?	•			The PA to the PS acknowledged our request for information the same day. It was forwarded to the PRO who has still not responded 3 weeks later
10. Was the information received clear and understandable?		•		

Total Score: 4/20

8. Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

<http://www.accnamibia.org/>

The website is currently 'under construction,' stating that the new website will be completed soon. The ACC has a Facebook page which was self-generated by Facebook. They also do not have a Twitter account. They have a limited virtual presence.

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?		•		

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
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: 0/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the Anti-Corruption Commission:

1. What does the ACC do to fight corruption?
2. Does the ACC enforce any anti-corruption laws? If so, which ones?
3. Are there any youth programmes initiated by the ACC to get the youth more involved?
4. What kind of environment does corruption thrive in?
5. Which public, civil and private institutions does the ACC work most closely with?
6. What implementation challenges does the ACC face?

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests?	•			Public Relations Officer
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days?	•			The PRO replied the same day the email was sent
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. Did the institution provide written reasons for the refusal of information?	•			The PRO was more than happy to assist and told the researcher not to hesitate to contact the PRO should the researcher need any 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: 20/20

SUMMARY IN NUMBERS

Institution	Website	Request for information	Total score
1. National Council of Namibia	13	14	27
2. Ministry of Youth, National Service and Sport	7	6	13
3. Ministry of Industrial Trade and SME Development	12	18	30
4. Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation	10	2	12
5. Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare	0	4	4
6. Ministry of Finance	15	5	20
7. Ministry Environment and Tourism	2	4	6
8. Anti-Corruption Commission	0	20	20

RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

The majority of public institutions failed to respond to our request for information. However, special mention must be made of the Anti-Corruption Commission, the Ministry Industrial Trade and SME Development, as well as the National Council for their speedy and friendly assistance. A general disregard for information requests was evident among surveyed public institutions. The designated official(s) were reluctant to assist, and preferred giving the researcher the run-around. Their failure to respond to written information requests suggests a culture of secrecy and/or incompetence. Public institutions' online presence is low, while a number of them have outdated sites or websites still under construction.

THE MOST SECRETIVE PUBLIC INSTITUTION IN NAMIBIA

The 2016 recipient of the Golden Padlock award for the Most Secretive Public Institution is the Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare. They scored 4, which places them as the poorest performer.

THE MOST OPEN PUBLIC INSTITUTION IN NAMIBIA

The 2016 recipient of the Golden Padlock award for the Most Open Public Institution is the Ministry of Industrial Trade and SME Development. They scored 30, which places them as the best performer.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Public institutions should be more active on social media and regularly update their websites. Online platforms are influential and effective tools for information dissemination and direct interaction with the public on issues of national interest. Citizens are now progressively using social media, and public Institutions should use this to their advantage, especially those who want reach the youth, who form the majority of the country's population.

Public Relations Officers and Information Officers need to be proficient in giving timely information to the public when requested to do so. They seem to want to continuously pass on the request/task to another person. These officers should be trained in updating websites, including social media sites. Public institutions should consider investing in new communication tools that will allow the public access to information, regardless of where they are.

The public also needs to hold public institutions accountable when their request for information is ignored or denied. Further, it is critical for the MICT to ensure that the almost completed Communication Strategy is understood and implemented by all public institutions.

MISA Namibia and the ACTION Coalition will continue to play our role in bringing about a society within which citizens can access information that results in them making more informed choices about their lives, and be actively involved in the strengthening of our democracy