



ESWATINI

TRANSPARENCY ASSESSMENT 2018

The Citizens' Analysis of Government Openness

INTRODUCTION

Withholding public information from information-seekers by government and public institutions appears to be the rule rather than the exception in Eswatini, formerly Swaziland. It is an open secret that a culture of secrecy still exists within the government and public institutions. As a result, public complaints of lack of access to information held by government and public entities abound. Amnesty International bears testimony to the culture of secrecy practiced and promoted by the authorities in Eswatini. In a recent Amnesty International report titled *They Don't See Us As People: Security of Tenure and Forced Evictions in Eswatini*, it is noted that there is a general lack of both public access to information and proactive disclosure of information by the authorities in Eswatini. The report further highlights the absence of national legislation promoting access to information.

Unprepared to heed calls for the enactment of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Bill, the 10th Parliament had passed the Public Service Act 2018 before its dissolution in June 2018. The law denies emaSwati their constitutional right to access information held by government. Section 8 of the Act deals with publications, interviews and use of official information, and bans public officials from releasing public information to the media without the express permission of the Secretary to the Cabinet. Subject to the provisions of the law, a public officer:

(b) whether on duty or on leave of absence shall not (except with due authority) allow oneself to be interviewed on questions of or connected with any matter affecting or relating to public policy, security or strategic economic interests or resources of Swaziland; and

(c) shall not directly or indirectly reveal, or use for private purposes, any information coming to the knowledge of the officer or acquired by the officer or the nature or the contents of any document communicated to the officer either in the course of the duties of that officer or in the capacity of that officer as an officer otherwise than in the proper discharge of the duties of that officer as authorised by law or a responsible officer.

Essentially, the Act bars public officers from entertaining requests for information from the media on behalf of citizens who need information to make informed decisions and choices.

For years, MISA Swaziland has been at the forefront of a campaign to press government to embrace a culture of openness. This

saw government making strides in e-governance by launching a revamped website (which hosts all national ministries) on 19 July 2018. The prime minister described it as a vehicle for the general public to easily access information and services. He also noted that the website will make the most informative and effective services available at the public's fingertips.

Back in 2007, the Information and Media Development Directorate drafted the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Bill 2007. It sought to enable the citizens to access public information. Not tabled for debate to the 8th Parliament (2003-2008), it also missed out in the 9th Parliament (2008-2013) and 10th Parliament (2013-2018). This has thrice rendered the Bill null and void. The access to information (ATI) workshops that MISA hosted for legislators, editors, journalists and civil society actors encouraged the Information and Media Development Directorate to redraft the legislation, now called the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Bill of 2016. Once again, it did not reach Parliament before its dissolution in June 2018. Notwithstanding the dilly-dallying, MISA alongside media partners and civil society actors will continue fighting for the enactment of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Bill.

RATIONALE AND RESEARCH PARAMETERS

This research set out to assess the ease with which members of the public can access information held by public institutions. Its aim was to generate credible evidence-based information to support the enactment of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy law in Eswatini. Importantly, its findings will be used by MISA Swaziland and freedom of expression activists in the on-going ATI campaign targeting the incoming Members of Parliament (MPs) in the 11th Parliament (2018-2023). This research was conducted on four ministries and four public institutions/enterprises in Eswatini between July and August 2018.

The following public institutions were surveyed:

1. Elections and Boundaries Commission (EBC)
2. Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)
3. Ministry of Natural Resources and Energy (MNRE)
4. Ministry of Public Service (MPS)
5. Ministry of Tinkhundla Administration and Development (MTAD)
6. Municipal Council of Mbabane (MCM)
7. National Maize Corporation (NMC)
8. Public Service Pensions Fund (PSPF)

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Category 1: Website analysis

- All four public institutions surveyed have professionally developed websites and active social media sites (ie Facebook and Twitter).
- Of the four public institutions surveyed, the MCM has the most active social media sites.
- Of the four public institutions surveyed, only three had officials designated as public relations or communications officers.
- Of the four public institutions surveyed, only two displayed their opening hours.
- All the websites of the four ministries surveyed were hosted by the government portal.
- None of the four ministries surveyed had social media sites.
- Of the four ministry websites, only one did not mention the designer of the website.
- Of the four ministries surveyed, two did not have a 'Contact Us' section and two did not have a 'News' section.

Category 2: Requests for information

- Of the eight surveyed institutions, only one managed to respond to the information requests, which were either hand-delivered or emailed.
- The MCM answered the information request within two days.
- When the first follow-up calls were made to the institutions, the office secretaries replied that the officials were too busy with the elections to respond to the information requests.
- When called for the second time, some institutions did not answer the phone, while officials of some institutions promised to provide the answers following the primary elections (held on 25 August), yet failed to do so.
- Of the four ministries surveyed, only the MNRE stated that it did not get the hand-delivered information request and asked for it to be re-sent.
- After being called four times, the seven public institutions still failed to provide answers to the requests for information.

DETAILED FINDINGS

1. Elections and Boundaries Commission (EBC)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

www.elections.org.sz

As 2018 is the elections year, the EBC's website is up to date. The Commission has interactive social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter. The former has 1 587 likes and 1 599 followers. The website is powered by Computronics Systems Ltd. The 'Media Centre' section provides up-to-date information on news and events, as well as information on the role of the media during elections and accreditation processes. For inquiries, it requests one to fill out an electronic enquiry form.

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 organisational structure is provided.
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 and/or signed contracts?		.		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		.		
g) The address, telephone numbers and working hours of the institution?	.			Written 'always open', although no specific working hours are 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: 10/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the EBC:

- How often is your website updated?
- Who is in charge of your website?
- How would you describe the relationship between the EBC and the media?
- What were the benefits of using the social media during the electoral process?
- What is the EBC's media relations strategy?
- How does the EBC handle electoral complaints?
- What is the EBC's annual budget?

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Is there an official designated to take and respond to information requests?	.			Communications Officer
2. Did the institution reply within 21 days?		.		
3. Did the institution respond to the request for information?		.		The Communications Officer told the researcher to direct their questions to the Head of Secretariat.
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: 4/20

2. Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

www.gov.sz/index.php/ministries-departments/ministry-of-agriculture

The MoA's website is hosted by the government portal. Although each ministry is free to update its own site within the revamped portal, this website is not updated. It still contains the email address of long-retired Principal Secretary Dr Robert Thwala. The site was designed by Ironstamp.

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
1. Does this website contain up-to-date information?			.	Standard information is provided but does not have a 'News and Events' section.
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 and/or signed contracts?		.		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		.		
g) The address, telephone numbers 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: 4/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the MoA:

1. How often is your website updated?
2. Who is in charge of your website?
3. How would you describe the relationship between the MoA and the media?
4. What is the MoA doing to comply with the Maputo Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security, which calls for a 10 percent national budget allocation to agricultural development?
5. What is the MoA doing to assist emaSwati farmers who want to lease farms from the MoA and put them into good use?
6. What is the MoA's annual budget allocation

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: 4/20

3. Ministry of Natural Resources and Energy (MNRE)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

www.gov.sz/index.php/ministries-departments/ministry-of-natural-resources

Hosted by the government portal, the MNRE's website has some up-to-date information in its 'News and Events' section. Unlike the other ministries' websites, it does not provide the name and details of a contact person, only telephone/fax numbers and an email address. It has a section on the ministry's values, which includes transparency. There is no mention of the designer or developer.

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 and/or signed contracts?		.		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		.		
g) The address, telephone numbers 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 the MNRE:

1. How often is your website updated?
2. Who is in charge of your website?
3. How would you describe the relationship between the MNRE and the media?
4. How does the MNRE ensure that the high percentage of the provision of potable water to emaSwati is a true reflection that takes into account the dry boreholes in drought prone areas?
5. What is the MNRE doing to ensure that emaSwati who have paid for the drilling of boreholes many years ago finally get the service?
6. What is the reasonable waiting period for the borehole drilling service after paying for it?
7. What is the MNRE's annual budget allocation?

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: 2/20

4. Ministry of Public Service (MPS)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

www.gov.sz/index.php/ministries-departments/ministry-of-public-service

Hosted by the government portal, the website of the MPS's does not have up-to-date information. Senior officials who left the ministry (through retirement or promotion) a long time ago are still listed as contact persons. Under the 'Documents' section, the latest available Performance Report is from 2011. The 'News and Events' section is empty.

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 and/or signed contracts?		•		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		•		
g) The address, telephone numbers and working hours of the institution?			•	

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
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: 6/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the MPS:

1. How often is your website updated?
2. Who is in charge of your website?
3. How would you describe the relationship between the MPS and the media?
4. How would you describe the relationship between the MPS and public service unions?
5. What is the MPS doing to decrease the public service wage bill said to be hovering around 85% for the past five years?
6. What is the MPS doing to ensure that public pension funds are not being misused by the public service pensions?
7. What is the MPS's budget allocation?

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: 4/20

5. Ministry of Tinkhundla Administration and Development (MTAD)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

www.gov.sz/index.php/about-us-sp-356925513

Hosted by the government portal, the MTAD's website has some updated information. But its 'News and Events' section has outdated information, with the most recent information posted in 2016. Their website does not provide the contact details of senior officials and there is no 'Contact Us' section.

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?			.	

n = 20	Yes	No	Partial	Additional Information
d) Budget and expenditure?		.		
e) Information about procurement procedures and/or signed contracts?		.		
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		.		
g) The address, telephone numbers 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: 6/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the MTAD:

1. How often is your website updated?
2. Who is in charge of your website?
3. How would you describe the relationship between the MTAD and the media?
4. What is the MTAD doing to ensure that struggling projects established with donor assistance benefit from the Rural Development Fund?
5. What is the Chief Development Plan all about and how many chiefdoms in the four regions have it?
6. What is the MTAD's budget allocation?

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: 4/20

6. Municipal Council of Mbabane (MCM)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

www.mbabane.org.sz

The MCM's website has up-to-date information and is professionally designed. It has social media sites like Facebook and Twitter, although the latter was suspended due to a major upgrade. At the time of this study, the former had 1 380 likes and 1 383 followers. Its 'News' section had current news and vacancy advertisements. The only blight was the 'Publications' section, which only displayed old annual financial reports from 2010 to 2013.

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 and/or signed contracts?	.			
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?	.			
g) The address, telephone numbers 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: 15/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the MCM:

- How often is your website updated?
- Who is in charge of your website?
- How would you describe the relationship between the MCM and the media?
- What improvements has the MCM made on city roads to ensure that the lives of the visually impaired are easier?
- Who has a stronger say in the running of the MCM between the ratepayers represented by elected councillors and the ministry?
- What is the MCM's annual budget?

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?	.			The institution responded within two 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: 16/20

7. National Maize Corporation (NMC)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

www.nmc.co.sz

The NMC's website has up-to-date information, especially in its 'Notices' section, which has a current press statement. It has current tenders issued for August. It has a Facebook page with had 766 likes and 778 followers. Under its 'Weekly Articles/Programmes' section, it has old articles dating back to 2017 and 2016. There is nothing in the 'Events' section except for the successful events that took place last year. Although it is professionally developed by Datanet, the spelling of *career* wrongly spelt as *carrer* was left unattended on the website. The misspelling, however, was later rectified.

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 and/or signed contracts?	.			
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?	.			
g) The address, telephone numbers 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 NMC:

- How often is your website updated?
- Who is in charge of your website?
- How would you describe the relationship between the NMC and the media?
- What is the improvement that the farmers might expect from the new arrangement for handling the subsidy for farming inputs?
- How is the NCM going to ensure that the farmers get their farming inputs on time so that they do not miss out on the early rains?
- How is the NMC going to ensure that there is no more shortage of tractors and fuel for the planting season?
- What is the NMC's annual budget?

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?		.		

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: 4/20

8. Public Service Pensions Fund (PSPF)

CATEGORY 1: WEBSITE

www.pspf.co.sz

Professionally developed, the PSPF's website has up-to-date information. It has a Facebook page and a Twitter account with the former having a total of 557 likes for and 564 followers. Under the 'Publications' section, it has the latest annual report of 2017 and a newsletter from June 2018. It also displays its opening hours: 8:00 am – 5:00 pm.

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 and/or signed contracts?			.	
f) Vacancy and employment procedures?		.		
g) The address, telephone numbers 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: 9/20

CATEGORY 2: REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The following questions were sent to the PSPF:

- How often is your website updated?
- Who is in charge of your website?
- How would you describe the relationship between the PSPF and the media?
- How does the PSPF ensure that the pensioners get maximum benefits from the investments?
- What mechanisms have been put in place to safeguard pensioners from losing their money invested with foreign investment companies, should these companies go under?
- What is the PSPF's annual budget?

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: 4/20

SUMMARY

Institution	Website	Request for information	Total score
1. Elections and Boundaries Commission	10	4	14
2. Ministry of Agriculture	4	4	8
3. Ministry of Natural Resources and Energy	8	2	10
4. Ministry of Public Service	6	4	10
5. Ministry of Tinkhundla Administration and Development	6	4	10
6. Municipal Council of Mbabane	15	16	31
7. National Maize Corporation	13	4	17
8. Public Service Pensions Fund	9	4	13

RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

Actions do not match the words of the officials designated to receive and respond to information requests in government and public institutions. This research concludes that a majority of them still find it hard to get rid of the deep-rooted culture of secrecy in the course of their duties. This becomes evident when seven out of the eight public institutions surveyed failed to respond to the researcher's information requests.

Remarkably, at the time of this particular research, all the targeted public institutions were dealing with relevant public issues that they were supposed to explain to citizens. Assessing institution's openness and transparency, the researcher made sure that he asked them about those issues. As usual, the Principal Secretaries authorised to release information hid behind the excuse of being too busy with the elections to respond to the information requests. Surprisingly, the EBC's Communications Officer told the researcher to direct the questions to the EBC's Head of Secretariat, while the NMC's Marketing and Communications Manager did not bother to respond despite several phone calls.

This situation does not appear likely to change any time soon. A majority of officials do not understand their public service role of disseminating information to citizens who need such information in order to make informed decisions and choices on the socioeconomic and political issues that affect them. All this goes to show that there is a great need for stepping up efforts in lobbying parliamentarians to enact the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Bill.

THE MOST SECRETIVE PUBLIC INSTITUTION IN ESWATINI

Of the eight public institutions that were assessed and evaluated for this particular study, the poorest performing institution and **winner of the 2018 Golden Padlock Award for the most secretive public institution in Eswatini is the Ministry of Agriculture.**

THE MOST OPEN PUBLIC INSTITUTION IN ESWATINI

The best performing public institution and **winner of the 2018 Golden Key Award for the most open public institution in Eswatini is the Municipal Council of Mbabane.**

RECOMMENDATIONS

- As the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Bill promises to be the answer to the deep-rooted culture of secrecy in Eswatini, it is long overdue.

MISA Swaziland plans to do the following as a contribution to positive developments with regard to government openness and transparency:

- Organise a media workshop on access to information for all the officials designated to receive and respond to information requests in government ministries and public companies; and
- Step up MISA's campaign for access to information by taking advantage of incoming parliamentarians, including:
 - Making efforts to lobby the parliamentarians, especially the incoming members of the Ministry of Information, Communication and Technology Portfolio Committee, to move a motion forcing the Minister of Information, Communication and Technology to table the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Bill within the tenure of the 11th Parliament (2018-2023).