REPORT OF

THE ROUNDTABLE ON THE ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT 2005:

Fostering ‘Open Government’ Through Access to Information.

18th—19th September 2006
Sheraton Kampala Hotel

Directorate of Information,
Ministry of Information & National Guidance

Foundation for Human Rights Initiative (FHRI)
TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT ........................................................................................................ Pg 3

INTRODUCTION .................................................................................................................. Pg 4

OPENING REMARKS ......................................................................................................... Pg 6

Livingstone Sewanyana  
Executive Director, Foundation for Human Rights Initiative, FHRI

KEY NOTE ADDRESS .......................................................................................................... Pg 7

Rt. Hon. Kirunda Kivejinja  
3rd Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Information and National Guidance

PRESENTATIONS AND EMERGING ISSUES ................................................................. Pg 9

CLOSING REMARKS ......................................................................................................... Pg 24

Mr. Apolo Kakaire  
Manager, Rights Monitoring & Advocacy Project, Foundation for Human Rights Initiative, FHRI

Mr. Faustine Misanvu  
Ag. Commissioner Monitoring & Inspection, Directorate of Information, Ministry of Information & National Guidance

Hon. Dr. James Nsaba Buturo  
Minister of State, Ethics & Integrity, Office of the President

APPENDICES .................................................................................................................... Pg 26

• Kampala Declaration on the Implementation of the Access to Information Act 2005
• List of Participants
• Agenda
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

FHRI would like to thank DANIDA, for the support towards the initiative of a Roundtable on the Access to Information Act 2005.

FHRI would also like to thank for The Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) for their technical support towards the Roundtable.

FHRI expresses gratitude to the Directorate of Information in the Ministry of Information and National Guidance for their collaboration in convening this Roundtable.

FHRI would also like to thanks the participants for taking time off to attend and actively participate in the proceedings of the Conference.

Participants at the Roundtable, Sheraton Kampala Hotel
INTRODUCTION


The Roundtable was convened to sensitize key stakeholders on The Act as well as to explore mechanisms for the operationalisation of the Access to Information Act 2005. It examined the subject of effective implementation as fundamental to the success of any access regime.

The Roundtable greatly benefited from the experience of several local media experts as well as the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative based in New Delhi, India who advocated and monitored the implementation of the Access to Information Act in India.

The meeting attracted ninety (90) participants including Members of Parliament, Public Relations and Information Officers from different Government departments, representatives of Civil Society Organizations, students from Makerere University and the media.

Hon. Adolf Mwesige, Minister of General Duties in the office of the Prime Minister represented the Rt. Hon. Kirunda Kivejinja, 3rd Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Information and National Guidance as the Guest of Honour at the opening session. Hon. Dr. James Nsaba Buturo, Minister of State, Ethics and Integrity, Office of the President, officiated at the closing ceremony.

To facilitate discussions and share experiences on the implementation of the Access to Information Act 2005, FHRI and the Directorate of Information, Ministry of Information and National Guidance invited distinguished Resource persons in the public service, academia and media fraternity at the Roundtable.

In attendance were;

- Dr. Henry Onoria, Senior Lecturer of Law, Faculty of Law, Makerere University on The Value of the Right to Information in Uganda: Underpinning Practical Experiences from the Commonwealth Countries;

- Mr. Haruna Kanaabi, Coordinator, East African Media Institute, discussant of the above presentation;

- Mr. Kalundi Robert Sserumaga, Senior Media Commentator, discussant of a presentation on “Balancing the Scales: The Rights to Information and National Security”;

- Prof. Fredrick Jjuuko, Professor of Media Law, Faculty of Law, Makerere University, discussant of a presentation on The Access to Information Act 2005: ‘A Catalogue of Exceptions’;

- Mr. Venkatesh Nayak, Coordinator, Right to Information Program, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, New Delhi, India on Entrenching Openness: Implementing the Right to Information in Practice;

• Mr. Faustine Misanvu, Ag. Commissioner, Monitoring & Inspection, Directorate of Information, Ministry of Information and National Guidance on Developing Mechanisms to Operationalize the Legislation: What steps have been initiated?

• Mr. John Mitala, Head of Public Service / Secretary to the Cabinet on Facilitation of Implementation of the Legislation: Developing a Culture of Transparency and Accountability;

• Mr. Ibrahim Semujju Nganda, Political Editor, The Weekly Observer, discussant of the above presentation;


At the end of the Roundtable, a Kampala Declaration on the implementation of the Access to Information Act 2005 was unanimously adopted.

This report summarizes the key discussions over the two days and captures suggestion, ideas and queries of participants with a view of ensuring the successful implementation of the Access to Information law in Uganda.

(Left) Mr. John Ken Lukyamuzi & Mr. Abdul Katuntu (Right)
OPENING REMARKS

Livingstone Sewanyana,
Executive Director,
Foundation for Human Rights Initiative (FHRI)

Mr. Livingstone Sewanyana welcomed the distinguished participants and Resource persons to the Roundtable.

He reaffirmed FHRI’s interest in upholding the right to freedom of expression including the media in Uganda and welcomed the Access to Information Act 2005 as an important step in expanding media freedom.

He noted that information is power and in the spirit of democracy and equality, it should be shared freely with the people. Information is also a strong weapon in fighting poverty and enhancing good governance. An effective access to information regime empowers the poor to demand information regarding pro-poor policies and ensure that their basic needs are met. It would easily ensure that public officials don’t easily engage in corrupt practices that deny the population the enjoyment of an acceptable standard of living and social infrastructure that meets their needs. An effective right to information regime would change the culture of secrecy, promote transparency and public accountability in the execution of government business, minimize data manipulation, increase investor confidence and empower people to engage more meaningfully in the democratic process.

He mentioned the fact that, whereas the enactment of the Access to Information Act 2005 was an important step, without implementation it remains an idle horse. There is need for joint partnership between the holders of information (Public Officials), civil society organizations and the media to ensure that the law is implemented. FHRI was therefore of the view that the Roundtable was an opportunity for all stakeholders to examine the law with a shared goal of identifying bottlenecks to its full implementation and making proposals for fast-track remedies. Mr. Sewanyana pointed out the impediments as;

- The existing legal framework that regulates journalists-multiplicity of legislations (Penal provisions of sedition, the Press and Electronic Media Act, etc)
- The multiplicity of agencies that regulate the media (Broadcasting Council, media Council etc)
- Executive policy pronouncements, for example, the media ban issued late last November 2005.

With appropriate surgery and an enabling political environment, FHRI was optimistic that the Roundtable would push further the space available for the full enjoyment of the exercise of the rights to freedom of expression in Uganda.

He, on behalf of FHRI thanked DANIDA, the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and HIVOS for the support towards the initiative of a Roundtable on the Access to Information Act 2005.

It was enacted as a fulfillment of Government’s commitment to building a State based on:
- Freedom
- The rule of law
- Transparency and accountability
These items are the pillars of Democratic Governance.

The International backdrop / setting

Article 41 of the Constitution where the law is derived states that “Every citizen has a right of access to information in the possession of the State or any other organ or agency of the State except where the release of the information is likely to prejudice the security or sovereignty of the State or interfere with the right to privacy of any other person”.

The article further obligates the Parliament as the law-making body to make laws prescribing the classes of information referred to and the procedure for obtaining access to that information.

The enactment of “The Access to Information Act” in 2005 and its subsequent assent by H.E. the President in 2005 and commencement on 20th April 2006 is concrete proof of the NRM Government’s political commitment to democracy, good governance and eradication of corruption and the attainment of national development goals.

It is not an idle boast that the NRM Government has created an enabling environment for observance of human rights, good governance and democracy in Uganda compared to the
undemocratic history of Uganda since independence. The Access to Information Act is a notable milestone and a regional achievement.

Government has got some bitter experiences of being too good or letting a good thing go bad. In the mid 90s, government liberalized the media. Private Televisions, radio stations and print media were licensed thus breaking the monopoly of government owned Uganda Television, Radio Uganda and The New Vision newspaper. There were no guidelines, no standards and no limits to the operations of private broadcasters.

Consequently, the private broadcasters reduced the industry to a near wasteland. There was no balanced programming, popular music dominated the airwaves punctuated by comedy, uncontrolled phone-in talk shows some of which went beyond decency. Worse, some stations and publications de-campaigned national programs like immunization of children against polio, the introduction of Value Added Tax (VAT). Others started programmes during which there were attacks on social-religious ethnic groups while others started featuring material that can be described as pornography.

Following the public resentment, government has come up with policies to control media excesses like pornography and the broadcasting policy. These are reactive measures comparable to the proverbial situation of closing the kraal after the cows have escaped.

The Government would like to avoid similar situations with regard to Access to Information. Much as he appreciated the enthusiasm of FHRI, civil society and the general public as evidenced by this Roundtable, he pointed out that:-

- Right to Access Information will benefit Uganda if we recognize the responsibility that comes with access to information.
- In particular, I want the deliberations of this workshop to be informed by part III – Article 24-34 which specifically caters for information that is protected.

Finally, he urged the participants to share experiences so that Uganda can quickly implement the Access to Information Act without re-inventing the wheel.
The Value of the Right to Information in Uganda: Underpinning Practical Experiences from the Commonwealth Countries

Dr. Henry Onoria
Senior Lecturer of Law, Faculty of Law
Makerere University, Kampala

Although the earliest formulation of the right to freedom of information can be traced to Sweden’s enactment of legislation to that effect in 1776, it would not be until the post-war period (after 1945) that the right would gain prominence in terms of its conceptualization in international law and in national legislative enactments. In international human rights law, in 1946 (two years before the Universal Declaration of Human Rights), the United Nations General assembly had proclaimed: ‘Freedom of information is a fundamental human right and the touchstones for all freedoms to which the United Nations is consecrated’. The right has since found an imprint – although in most instances as a species of the freedom of expression – in several international and regional human rights instruments (conventions and declarations) and reports.

The right has since been affirmed in national legal orders of States in form of specific guarantees under Bills of Rights in national constitutions and further, in particular States, by the enactment of specific access to information legislation. Recognition of the right of access to information has especially attained prominence in the Commonwealth in the past two decades or so. As of mid-2006, in addition to Uganda, at least twelve (12) Commonwealth countries had enacted specific access to information legislation, i.e. Australia (Freedom of Information Act 1982); Belize (Freedom of Information Act 1994); Canada (Access to Information Act 1983); India (Freedom of Information Act 2002); Jamaica (Freedom of Information Ordinance 2002); South Africa (Promotion of Access to Information Act 2002); Trinidad and Tobago (Freedom of Information Act 1999); Uganda (Access to Information Act 2005); United Kingdom (Freedom of Information Act 2000); and Zimbabwe (Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act 2000). Crucially, the enactment of access to information legislation has been seen as central to development of participatory democracy, ensuring governmental accountability and strengthening the fight against corruption.

Right of Access to Information in Uganda prior to the Access to Information Act 2005

Given the absence, from 1995 – 2005, of access to information legislation to give effect to the provisions of article 41 of the 1995 Uganda Constitution, it was left to courts to strip departmental and institutional heads of the discretion to disclose or withhold information. The decisions rendered have been central to efforts to elucidate the content and extent of the right as well as the duty-holders and beneficiaries.

Significantly, from decisions of the courts, what is evident – apart from depriving public officials of the discretion they hitherto possessed under the two pieces of legislation – is that the absence of a specific legislation to give effect to the right under article 41 of the 1995 Constitution meant that:-
• Access to information has been left to procedures that varied existing laws have had in place;
• Information that is available to and therefore accessible by the citizens has been difficult to ascertain;
• Enforcement by individuals of the right of access to information has largely been undertaken through filing of Constitutional petitions;

• Exceptions to the right of access to information have been asserted at the whim of the State to the extent that, as the Constitutional Court noted, the exceptions cover “a wide spectrum than article 41”, with the effect that “[t]he State would withhold information not restricted under article 41.

On a positive note is the fact that the courts were steadfast in enforcing the right of access to information under the constitutional guarantees in spite of absence of (and a failure to enact) a specific access to information legislation during the ten or so years. To that end, certain elemental aspects of the right are discernable from the jurisprudence of the courts since 1995:

• The right to information as including a “right to use such information in a court of law in support of a citizen’s case”;
• The right to information as arising as long as such information is in the possession of the State, its organs or agencies in “whatever capacity”;
• The burden of proof lies with the State to show that the information that is being sought is restricted.

Value of the Access to Information Act 2005 in Uganda and experiences from the Commonwealth

Article 41(2) of the 1995 Constitution envisaged the enactment of legislation to prescribe “classes” of information and the “procedures” for obtaining access to information. While the United Kingdom enacted its Freedom of Information Act in 2003 after almost 20 years of mothing of the idea for the legislation or for that matter Jamaica enacted its own in 2002 after 7 years of drafts of the law, this should not have served as precedent not to have in place a bill for an access to information legislation in Uganda after so long. The urgency of the need for the enactment of an access to information law stems from the need to provide detail as to the specific content and extent of the right as well as to provide for the simplified procedures for the access. As is manifested from the efforts and approaches taken by Ugandans to access information mainly through the courts, it is evident that, without a specific access to information legislation, the general public will continue to face significant bottlenecks in accessing information.

For effective participation of Ugandans in the governance and development of their country, they should be enabled to have easy and timely access to critical information. In effect, a people-friendly access regime guaranteed under a specific law would give practical reality and foundation to participation and, as a result, to good governance, transparency, accountability and development. In effect, the participation of Ugandans in public affairs needs to be “more informed” to be “effective”.
Enactment of the Access to Information vis-à-vis Practical Aspects of Access to Information

In practical terms beyond the above broad facets of access to information, a specific access to information legislation such as the 2005 Access to Information Act has very practical implications to the right itself beyond attributes of good / open government:

- First, the Access to Information act should do away with and deprive public officials of the discretion they have hitherto possessed to disclose or withhold release of information sought by the citizens.
- Secondly, the Access to Information Act clarifies the scope of “information” – whether recorded radio messages or visual and transcribed records of the proceedings of the Parliament.
- Thirdly, the Access to Information Act further spells out specific standards as to the ‘minimum’ information requirements by key information providers, including the State (and its organs and agencies).
- Fourthly, the Access to Information Act defines the “duty-bearer” as far as the obligation to provide or disclose information being sought as well as sets out the necessity for information officers (IOs).
- Fifthly, the Access to Information Act helps in terms of the beneficiaries of the right under article 41 of the Constitution. The courts have pronounced them to be ‘citizens’ – natural and corporate.
- Finally, the Access to Information Act does away with the cumbersome, lengthy and expensive pre-2005 approaches of enforcement of the right through filing of constitutional petitions (or miscellaneous applications) before the courts.

The Access to Information Act 2005 is not expected overnight to change attitudes of public officials as regards the need to disclose public information. It therefore becomes imperative that legislation be facilitated and implemented through monitoring, public awareness and the creation and maintenance of information management systems. Overall though, and most crucial, will be not just the willingness of the government to commit funds towards the facilitation process, but its demonstration of the ‘political will’ to utilize an access to information legislation as a tool for ‘open government’.
Mr. Haruna Kanaabi  
Coordinator, East African Media Institute

Mr. Kanaabi observed that, it is the role of the CSOs and media to point out the aspects that are contentious and do not promote the access to information like in the case of Paraguay, where such a law was passed and repelled after only one month.

He noted that it is unfortunate that, some Commonwealth countries, especially Britain has retained the Official Secrecy Act, which they continue to use against the journalists. In the case of Uganda, it was not the will of Government to have this law in place until the Private Member’s Bill was drafted.

Importance of the Access to Information Act
- For democracy to exist, there is a need to access information;
- Access to Information helps the market to grow;
- Gives an individual autonomy on what to do;

Discourages the culture of secrecy which inhibits progressive and informative debate, promotes corruption and creates a lot of speculation.

Threats of Access to Information Laws Worldwide
- Lack of political will to have them implemented.

War on terror

Players of the Access to Information
- Person with the information – do they understand the importance of giving the information?
- Disseminators – Media and CSO, do they appreciate the importance of disseminating his information accurately.

Consumers – Academia and legislators also need to have the information.

He concluded with the fact that, the key players of the access to information had a responsibility in ensuring that the Access to Information Act is put to good use.

Emerging Issues

- Information Officers: Access to information is lacking and there is need for an amendment to the effect that public servants who contravene the Access to Information Act be penalized.
- Implementation: Issue of its implementation should be put in context. Even if money has been passed by Parliament, it can’t be spent until revenue is available to do so. Thus, there is a political will to implement the Act but, poverty is a hindrance though there is also a possibility of poor planning by the Government.
- Creation of the Access to Information Bill: It was not the will of Government to have the Access to information law in place until there was a threat of a Private Member’s Bill. Thus, Government can only succumb to pressure.
- Bureaucracy: Bureaucracy by the Government official should be minimized in the case of accessing information by the citizens especially journalists.
Balancing the Scales: The Right to Information and National Security

Panel Discussion

Mr. Robert Sserumaga – Senior Media Consultant
Major A. A. Kagolo – Deputy Chief, Legal Services, UPDF
Mr. Apollo Asinja – Public Relations Officer, Uganda Prison Service

Mr. Robert Sserumaga

• In public life and politics, perceptions are often as important as realities. That is why we have the perception management industries and spin doctors.

• The State and government are not supposed to be the same thing but governments often want it that way. Where a threat to them is a threat to “the State”.

• The best way to build national security is to have a common army with all the stakeholders in the nation represented. Without the oneness;
  * You create an entry point for enemies through having a dissatisfied section of the population.
  * You develop a “us” and “them” mentality at Government level where you cannot share information.

• Questions that need direct answers but considered as national security:
  * What is the total percentage of Western Ugandans (especially Bahima) in senior positions (major and above) in the Uganda People’s Defence Forces (UPDF)?
  * Total percentage of South Western Ugandans in general in senior positions (major and above) in the Uganda People’s Defence Forces (UPDF)?

• What is the ethnic breakdown of those getting State house scholarships and what is the selection criterion?

• What is going to be the distribution process for Bunyoro oil?
  * Why was it that an army barracks was one of the first things to be built there? A lack of oneness will create a Niger Delta scenario.

• Therefore the problem of information access becomes a symptom of a bigger problem of governance.

• Advantages of Access to Information
  * Guarantees fair policies as, they can be “audited” by the public.
  * Ensures that nobody will want to destroy what they know they are benefiting from.
  * Removes the perception of unfairness.
• What can be done to balance the scales:
  * Separate the issues, agree on what is and is not “sensitive” information
  * Tackle and remove actual imbalances that give rise to arguments about “representation” that often turn into conflicts that become threats to the Government security as opposed to claimed National security.
  * Uganda should stop making enemies (Kenya, Sudan, DRC, Rwanda etc) who then develop an interest in the information about Uganda which is then shielded in the “national” interest.

Major A. A. Kagolo
• All rights are not absolute; they have limitations, especially where national security is concerned. National security is very important and very sensitive. It affects everybody not only at the national but international level as well. Without security, there can be no development and thus, it should be guarded jealously.

• Morale is very important to a soldier with or without a gun so, demoralizing stories that may not necessarily be accurate should be avoided by the media.

• There should be no separation between Government and the State. Governments have a duty to protect the State thus, cannot be separated.

Mr. Apolo Asinja
• In the Uganda Prisons Service, there is an open-door policy that allows the journalists to go to the prisons and interview the inmates. The only limitation lies with the fact that cameras are not allowed in the prisons.

Emerging Issues
• National Security: Classification of what national security is.

• Governments and States: Governments should appreciate the fact that States are here to stay whereas Governments come and go. Thus, the two should be separated.

**Discussant**

*Prof. Fredrick Jjuuko*
*Professor of Media Law, Faculty of Law, Makerere University*

- The importance of information has generally been underlined. As the world moves deeper into the information age, the avenues of distributing information will have to change.

- The exemptions in the Access to Information law need to be appreciated in the context of where Uganda is coming from. Exemptions and exclusions are not put in mandatory terms where a person may or may not give the information. The exemptions are also meant to bar non-citizens from accessing national information.

**Entrenching Openness: Implementing the Right to Information in Practice**

*Mr. Venkatesh Nayak,*
*Coordinator, Right to Information Program,*
*Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, New Dehli, India.*

**Difference Between ATIA and other laws**

- Ordinary laws are made by people's representatives, implemented by the Government and obeyed by the people.

- Access to Information Act is made by people's representatives, implemented by the people & obeyed by the Government.

- Access to Information has the potential to change power equations between the rulers and the ruled.

**Prioritising Implementation**

- Identify public bodies at various levels of govt.
- Designate Information Officers and publish contact details in public directories
- Make regulations for implementation
- Prepare Section 7 manuals
- Publish categories of records to be proactively disclosed under Section 8
- Lay down a uniform internal appeals mechanism.
- Publish guidelines for Information Officers, officers handling internal appeals and Courts.
Setting up Systems

- Review existing laws that impede access to information.
- Overhaul records maintenance and management systems - use electronic means for information storage and retrieval.
- Review and repeal unwarranted classification of records in light of the exemptions. Request time bound declassification and archivalization.
- Lay down procedures for inspection, granting copies of records on request.
- Develop registers and reporting formats.
- Do not make pre-printed application forms compulsory.

Some critical issues - pitfalls

- Information Officer refuses to accept information requests.
- Information Officer refuses to transfer request to concerned public body - 21 days - too long.
- Information Officer demands reasons from requestor for seeking information.
- Delay in access to records, deny information - compilation, collation, giving opinions, answering questions.
- Solution: Make these offences liable for penalty under the Act through regulations - Section 47(3).

Other issues - some critical issues - pitfalls

- Fees charged must be reasonable - no search, reproduction, computer and human resource charges.
- Only actual reproduction cost should be charged - Herish! taxpayer remember?
- Waive fees for poor people if information that is sought is in the public interest and delayed access.
- Requester should have a role in third party proceedings - quasi-judicial procedure.
- If Information Officer fails to furnish information despite paying fee or upon court's direction - penalize him/her.

Gateway Issues:

- Information Officer refuses to accept information requests.
- Information Officer refuses to transfer request to concerned public body - 21 days - too long.
- Information Officer demands reasons from requestor for seeking information.
- Delay in access to records, deny information - compilation, collation, giving opinions, answering questions.
- Solution: Make these offences liable for penalty under the Act through regulations - Section 47(3).

Increase Awareness about ATIA

Supply side:

- Develop training curricula for information officers.
- Integrated ATIA into regular training programmes and refresh courses for officers.

Demand side:

- Develop educational materials for CSOs and media.
- Developed public educational resources for use at the community level.
- Educate people about the law - especially drafting information requests.

ATIA – role of civil society and the media

Potential educator:

- Spread awareness about ATIA amongst people, focus on disadvantaged groups.
- Make public authorities accountable.
- Expose corruption & malgovernance.
- Ensure participation, transparency & accountability of government schemes.
- Encourage access to information for the people.

Potential requestor:

- Use ATIA to.
- Make public authorities accountable.
- Expose corruption & malgovernance.
- Ensure participation, transparency & accountability of government schemes.
- Encourage access to information for the people.

Potential monitor:

- Monitor public bodies for compliance.
- Design, conduct and publicise results of implementation audits.
- Advocate with govt. and public bodies for better implementation.

Potential advisor:

- Advise & assist citizens to access information, file complaints, etc. trouble shooter role.
- Monitor public bodies for compliance.
- Design, conduct and publicise results of implementation audits.
- Advocate with govt. and public bodies for better implementation.

ATIA – role of the Almighty and Openness

- And it shall be given to you:
- and you shall find;
- and shall be opened unto you:
- For every one that asketh receiveth;
- and he that asketh finds;
- and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

The Almighty and Openness

- Matthew 7:7-8
- “Ask and it shall be given to you; seek and you shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you.”
- For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that asketh finds; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.”
Developing Mechanisms to Operationalize the Legislation: What Steps have been Initiated?

Mr. Faustine Misanvu,
Ag. Commissioner Monitoring & Inspection, Directorate of Information, Ministry of Information & National Guidance

Against a global backdrop, implementation of the Access to Information Act 2005 will be influenced by its unique structure since it’s unlike other Access to Information laws like those in Finland and South Africa.

Both countries have Commissioners with specific legal status, functions and funding. Uganda’s Access to Information Act remains (in my opinion), silent and is at best vague on the key areas of implementation, compliance and monitoring.

In South Africa, promotion of the Access to Information Act is a unit of the South Africa Human Rights Commission. It supervises five (5) people responsible for its implementation and their roles are, among others:

- To guide
- Develop and conduct educational programs to advance the understanding of the access to information act by the public, especially disadvantaged communities
- Train information officers
- Receive reports
- Report to Parliament annually on the enjoyment of access to information
- Both Ireland and South Africa belong to the more than 25 member conference of information commissioners.

In Uganda, the Access to Information Act has generated a lot of interest from stakeholders like the Judiciary and Inspectorate of Government. They have pointed out the need for quick implementation of the law to fight corruption and entrench the rule of law.

Challenges of the Initiative to Implement the Access to Information Act 2005

- Funds and logistical support from government.
- Silence on the specific implementing agency / institution.
- Inherent weaknesses in the act like an individual citizen’s interest in accessing, protecting and recording oneself.
- Short time frame
- Inconsistent status of the Directorate of Information.
- The major challenge to the Roundtable stakeholders is to ensure this initiative gets into the foundation of synergy initiatives.
- Anticipated monitoring mechanism for all ministries to comply with #43 Annual report by each ministry to Parliament.
- Directorate of Information to draw up and implement a comprehensive education tool for officers of public bodies.
- Recommended public and private bodies to change their attitudes in the administration of the Access to Information Act.
• Receive reports from public and private bodies on the problems they encounter in complying with the Access to Information Act.
• Opportunities by the Directorate of Information to get experiences, practices and best practices through attending conferences of Information Commissioners.

Emerging Issues from Both Presentations

• **Declassification of Information:** Internationally recognized timeframe for information to be declassified?
• **Implementation plan:** Clear implementation plan especially for the rural and urban poor.
• **Gender:** The Act is not engendered thus, it should be done at the implantation stage.
Facilitation of Implementation of the Legislation: Developing a Culture of Transparency and Accountability

Mr. John Mitala,
Head of Public Service / Secretary to the Cabinet

The fact that access to information in the possession of the State or any other organ or agency of the State is now provided for in the Constitution and operationalized by an Act of Parliament is an important development.

Although issues of accountability, integrity and transparency have increasingly become topical under the general theme of good governance, transparency and accountability are not new. Ancient literature like the Bible had components of it in the stories of Cain and Abel, story of talents given to three servants and the story of Ananias and his wife Sapphira among others.

Factors that facilitate the implementation of the legislation

* Supportive constitutional provisions – although the legislation was primarily enacted to operationalise Article 41 of the Constitution, there are other provisions in the Constitution which should encourage people to seek information as provided in the Act. Such provision is the National Objectives and Directive Principle of State Policy No. 26 on accountability.

* Re-examination of the Official Secrets Act with a view to removing any provisions which may be in conflict with the provisions of Article 41 of the Constitution and the Access to Information Act 2005.

* Putting in place a simple but effective institutional arrangement through which information can be accessed. Each Ministry, autonomous and semi-autonomous Government institutions should be designated a Senior Officer as an Information Officer to be a focal person for access to information.

* Sensitization and education for both those in custody of the information and the wider public which may want to access the information.

* Translating the law into simple user friendly versions. Since accountability is at various levels right from the village, translating the law and having it published in simple to read booklets generally known as popular versions will quickly arouse the interest of the people to get on board for access to information as a contribution towards good governance.

* Timeliness – as much as possible, information requested for should be availed quickly.

* Culture of reading – if the law is going to enhance the culture of accountability, Ugandans need to build a strong culture of reading. There is a lot of useful information which is deemed to be public knowledge.
Factors the may hinder the implementation of the Act

* Fear of possible misuse – notwithstanding the clear provisions of the law, fear of possible misuse of the information being asked for may make the information officer reluctant to provide the information in a timely manner.

* Distortion – deliberate or careless distortion of information undermines the cordial relationships that must exist between those who are in custody of information and those who may seek access to it.

* Corruption – the law does not appear to be clear about unauthorized giving away of information especially if this is as a result of corruption.

Since information is power, there is no way the culture of transparency and accountability can be developed and sustained without people having the right access to information.

Discussant

Mr. Ibrahim Ssemujju Nganda
Political Editor, The Weekly Observer

Story to form the basis of his discussion

In 2004, The Weekly Observer published a story on the amount of money to be spent on educating the then Vice-President, Dr. Specioza Wandera Kazibwe at Harvard University, USA. It amounted to 1.5 billion shillings (1,500,000,000/=). He called the State House Comptroller and was told that he should disregard the “lie”. When he called Dr. Wandera Kazibwe, she told him to ask State House.

Challenges

* Attitude of the people working in the government offices - they make it appear like giving one the information is just doing one a favour. They need to understand that they are serving the public and not their appointing authorities when it comes to giving out in formation.

* The culture of transparency and accountability - who does the Inspector General of Government serve, when information requested for is not released because a requisition form hasn’t been gazetted.

* Procedure of requesting for information should be different for the media, researchers and scholars.

* The lack of access to information in the past was not necessarily due to the absence of the law but, presence of “professional liars” in the government.
Emerging Issues

- **Information Officers**: How much authority and lee-way will they have in giving information?

- **Role of the Government Information Bodies**: Role of the media council vis a vis media centre vis a vis Ministry of information? Wasn’t the Ministry of Information doing its job well?

- **Attitude of Civil Servants** – Aspect of attitude is two-way. The public too needs to change its attitude while requesting for information because, the public servant may not genuinely have it.
Protection of Whistleblowers; The Role of Government
Justice Faith E. K. Mwondha
Inspector General of Government (IGG)

Presented by
Ms. Susan Bisharira
Director of the Leadership Code, IGG’s Office

Corruption is a threat to our society today since it touches the core of the social, political and economic well being of the country. Corruption has far reaching implications and its existence is an indication that there is moral decay, lack of integrity and unethical conduct in the management of public affairs. There is no doubt corruption impairs effectiveness and efficiency in the administration of public offices resulting into delayed services and corruption.

The Inspectorate of Government cannot carry out its functions alone without the assistance of the public because, institutions rely on each other for information. Corruption occurs in secrecy hence making it difficult for agencies like the Inspectorate of Government, Police and Directorate of Public Prosecution (DPP) to procure sufficient and concrete evidence for prosecution.

People are always aware of corruption in their midst but fear to report it, for fear of victimization, harassment, intimidation and threat to personal life. As a result of fear, witnesses do not come forward to testify or even give evidence during investigations.

However, the concern is protection of these persons that provide the Inspectorate of Government, Police and other agencies with such information to encourage them to take part in exposing the corrupt.

Uganda has no Whistleblower Protection Legislation per se. The Legislation is to encourage and facilitate disclosure of corrupt acts, improper conduct by public officials or public bodies; and to provide protection for persons making such disclosure and those who may suffer detrimental action as a result of those disclosures. The law will provide for the matters disclosed to be investigated and dealt with.

Definition of a Whistle Blower
A Whistleblower is basically defined as a person who on his own free will makes a disclosure on corruption, misconduct, misbehaviour or maladministration, abuse of office and or criminal offence by a public official or agent or body or private sector to a person or agency capable of investigating the complaint and facilitating the remedies of the wrong doing.

Benefits of a whistlebower
• Whistle-blowing can be seen as serving public interest
• It helps to restore public trust and confidence in government and its processes.
• It enhances accountability within public offices.
• It creates opportunity to correct the misconduct or maladministration or corruption, or wrongdoing.
• It exposes corruption and in so doing assists the enforcing agencies to get evidence and punish the perpetrators of corruption and brings the corrupt to justice.
Who is a potential whistleblower

People who disclose are usually persons who know the internal mechanisms and systems of the department, institution or organization involved and these are first and foremost the employees or contractors.

A former employee can also be a potential whistleblower and should be provided with sufficient incentives to disclose corruption or improper conduct by a former employer.

The legislation should extend to ordinary persons also because there are occasions where disclosure of information about a public official or institution comes from a person who is close to the public official and has information about him or her and the institution that the public official works for.

Offences / Sanctions

Protecting whistleblowers and thus encouraging people to speak out clearly increases the chances of detection. Therefore sanctions should be sufficiently severe to guarantee the protection of the whistleblower and instill confidence in the people. The offences and penalties should include:

- Issuing threats against the whistleblower – the person issuing threats should be given a deterring sentence.
- Disclosing the identity of the whistleblower – any person who discloses the identity of the whistleblower should be given a deterring punishment to discourage others from disclosing identities of whistleblowers.
- Taking detrimental action against the whistleblower by the employer – any person being the employer or supervisor of the whistleblower and taking detrimental action against him or her should be given custodial sentence.
- Making false disclosures – any person who knowingly provides information knowing it to be false intending the said information to be acted upon as disclosed, should be punished.

Whistleblower Protection Legislation would be a timely legislation. It would be in line with the International Conventions against preventing and fighting corruption. Government needs to enlist the participation of the general public in the fight against corruption and unethical conduct by those who are entrusted with managing public affairs. Its importance cannot be overemphasized.

The public has a role to play through reporting corruption and wrong doing while the government’s role is to protect and reward persons who disclose. This enhances and strengthens investigation and protection of cases and builds public confidence in the

Emerging Issues

- **Role of the IGG**: Role of the IGG as an inspector who cannot prosecute and is instead portrayed as a “barking dog that doesn’t bite”.
- **Public awareness**: Measures taken by the IGG to educate the public on the aspect of declaration of assets.
- **Access to Information by the media**: Is a media house a citizen that can have access to information from the IGG even with the availability of requisition forms?
CLOSING REMARKS

Mr. Apolo Kakaire
Manager, Rights, Monitoring and Advocacy Project
Foundation for Human Rights Initiative (FHRI)

In his closing remarks, Mr. Kakaire gave a brief on the objective of the Roundtable and what it had discussed during the two days.

On behalf of FHRI and the organizing team of the Roundtable, Kakaire thanked the participants for their attendance and deliberations as well as the Directorate of Information in the Ministry of Information and National Guidance, for helping in the coordination and organization of the Roundtable.

Mr. Faustine Misanvu
Ag. Commissioner Monitoring & Inspection, Directorate of Information,
Ministry of Information & National Guidance

Mr. Misanvu thanked the participants and called on them to avoid being confrontational and instead work together with Government to implement the Access to Information Act 2005.

He then read through the “Kampala Declaration on the Implementation of the Access to Information Act 2005” for the benefit of the Hon. Minister of State, Ethics & Integrity.

Hon. Dr. James Nsaba Buturo
Minister of State, Ethics & Integrity, Office of the President

In his closing remarks, Hon. Nsaba Buturo pointed out that:

• The enactment of the Access to Information Act 2005 was an indication of Government willingness to see good governance in Uganda. It was not afraid of having an “open government” through the access of information.
• Government was fully supportive of the implementation of the Act because it was aware that people who are informed become active participants and partners in the country’s governance. An uninformed people are a burden to development.
• The country has come a long way since it was not easy getting the law in place. All fundamentals for having a country that is free, stable and prosperous are in place.
• The challenge now lies in the implementation of the Act which will be done as fast as resources allow.
• As Minister of Ethics and Integrity, he is keen to see implementation of the law taking place. The law will rejuvenate government’s campaign against corruption.

It will empower the Civil Society Organisations and the media to do a better job of investigating, exposing and informing.

He finally urged the participants not to only criticize but play their part as well.
APPENDICES

KAMPALA DECLARATION ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
THE ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT, 2005

Kampala Declaration

on

The Implementation of The Access to Information Act, 2005

WE, the participants of the Round Table on The Access to Information Act (ATI Act) 2005 having assembled at the Sheraton Kampala in Kampala on 18th and 19th September 2006, representing various sectors of government, civil society and the media, express our unequivocal support for the full operationalisation of the ATI Act. WE recognize that Article 41 of our Constitution guarantees access to information as a fundamental right to every citizen and that it is not a favour given to the people. The ATI Act was passed by Parliament to enable people to seek and receive information held by public bodies. WE also recognize that the ATI Act when fully implemented will play a seminal role in developing a synergic spiral of prosperity crucial for the eradication of poverty, and the elimination of corruption fostering open government.

WE believe that a proper implementation of the ATI Act requires collaboration between Government on the one hand, the national human rights institution, civil society and the media on the other. WE believe the following areas require urgent attention if the people’s right of access to information is to be truly realized:

1. The regulations that will lay down the detailed procedure and guidelines for seeking and giving information under the ATI Act should be drafted and implemented immediately. The Government should involve representatives of Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC), civil society organizations and the media in this process;

2. Public bodies that have a duty to provide information under the law should be identified at all levels of Government and Information Officers should be designated in all such bodies immediately. Contact details of all Information Officers should be published in public directories and on the Internet immediately;

3. Every public body should immediately initiate the process of preparing proactive disclosure manuals required under Section 7 and 8 of the ATI Act and make them available to the people within the deadline stipulated in the law;

4. The Government should immediately constitute a high level committee of legal experts drawn from the public service, UHRC, the civil society sector, the media and academia to harmonize the secrecy provisions in other laws such as the Official Secrets Act with the provisions of the ATI Act in order to avoid contradiction and confusion;
5. The Government should issue guidelines for the interpretation and the application of the exemptions to disclosure vis a vis the public interest as mentioned in Part III of the ATI Act and also review the operation of the Act from time to time in order to facilitate greater access to information;

6. The Rules Committee should make rules of procedure for the courts to regulate the procedure in respect of applications made under Sections 35 and 40 of the ATI Act within the deadline stipulated in the law;

7. Holders of information, to which citizens have a rightful claim under the law, should be properly sensitized through professionally designed training programmes so that they are fully aware that they are accountable to the people;

8. The people in general and representatives of civil society and the media in particular should be sensitized about the provisions of the ATI Act and trained in the art of making information requests. Representatives of UHRC, civil society and the media should be involved in all such exercises;

9. Public education resources such as simple language versions of the ATI Act and User Guides in local languages should be developed and disseminated as widely as possible particularly targeting the disadvantaged and vulnerable members of the community. Representatives of UHRC, civil society and the media should be involved in all such exercises;

10. The Government should allocate adequate resources for implementing the ATI Act and awareness raising programmes.

11. The Government should clarify the appeals system and internal procedures in the public bodies as required by the ATI Act.

WE recognize the need for bringing private bodies that receive public funds or those which perform public functions within the purview of the ATI Act. WE have further resolved to work together in a spirit of collaboration for securing full and proper implementation of the ATI Act.

(Declaration Adopted Unanimously)

Kampala, 19th September 2006
## List of Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>DESIGNATION / ORGANISATION</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Guests of Honour</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Hon. Rt. Hon. Kirunda Kivejinja</td>
<td>3rd Deputy Prime Minister / Minister of Information and National Guidance</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Hon. Adolf Mwesige</td>
<td>Minister of General Duties, Office of the Prime Minister</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Hon. Dr. James Nsaba Buturo</td>
<td>Minister of State, Ethics &amp; Integrity, Office of the President</td>
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<td><strong>Resource Persons</strong></td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Dr. Henry Onoria</td>
<td>Senior Lecturer of Law, Faculty of Law, Makerere University</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Mr. Haruna Kanaabi</td>
<td>Coordinator, East African Media Institute</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Mr. Kalundi Robert Sserumaga</td>
<td>Senior Media Commentator</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Prof. Fredrick Jjuuko</td>
<td>Professor of Media Law, Faculty of Law, Makerere University</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Mr. Venkatesh Nayak</td>
<td>Coordinator, Right to Information Program, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, New Delhi, India</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Mr. Faustine Misanvu</td>
<td>Ag. Commissioner, Monitoring &amp; Inspection, Directorate of Information, Ministry of Information and National Guidance</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>Mr. John Mitala</td>
<td>Head of Public Service / Secretary to the Cabinet</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>Mr. Ibrahim Semujju Nganda</td>
<td>Political Editor, The Weekly Observer</td>
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<td><strong>Participants</strong></td>
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<td>14.</td>
<td>Major Timothy Kanyoganya</td>
<td>Principal Legal Officer Chieftaincy of Military Intelligence, Uganda Peoples Defence Forces (UPDF)</td>
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<td>15.</td>
<td>Lt. Emmy Ekaruhanga</td>
<td>Legal Officer, Office of the Spokesperson, Uganda Peoples Defence Force (UPDF)</td>
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<td>16.</td>
<td>Major A. A. Kagoro</td>
<td>Deputy Chief of Legal Services, Uganda Peoples Defence Force</td>
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<td>17.</td>
<td>Ms. Zam Addah</td>
<td>Press Officer - Civil-Military Relations, Uganda People Defence Forces (UPDF)</td>
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<td>19.</td>
<td>Ms. Julie Gipwola</td>
<td>Ministry of Information &amp; National Guidance, Office of the Prime Minister</td>
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<td>20.</td>
<td>Mr. Fred Nangoli</td>
<td>Information Officer, Vice President Press Unit, State House</td>
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<td>21.</td>
<td>Ms. Mary Buhamizo</td>
<td>Principal Information Officer, (Dissemination), Ministry of Information &amp; National Guidance</td>
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<td>22.</td>
<td>Mrs. Sylvia Birahwa Nakabugu</td>
<td>Ag. Principal Information Officer (Monitoring &amp; Inspections), Ministry of Information &amp; National Guidance</td>
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<td>23.</td>
<td>Ms. Faridah Sengooba</td>
<td>Information Officer, Ministry of Information &amp; National Guidance</td>
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<td>24.</td>
<td>Mr. Jimmy Adar</td>
<td>Office of the Prime Minister</td>
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<td>25.</td>
<td>Mr. John B. Kaija</td>
<td>Office of the Prime Minister</td>
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<td>26.</td>
<td>Mr. John Byabakama</td>
<td>Uganda Media Centre, Office of the President</td>
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<td>27.</td>
<td>Hon. Henry Banyenzaki</td>
<td>Member of Parliament, Parliament of Uganda</td>
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<td>29.</td>
<td>Ms. Helen Nanteza Kawesa</td>
<td>Public Relations Officer, Parliament of Uganda</td>
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<td>30.</td>
<td>Ms. Joyce Ngaiza</td>
<td>Lawyer, Netherlands Embassy</td>
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<td>31.</td>
<td>Mr. Muriuki Jeremiah Wachira</td>
<td>Volunteer, Minority Rights Group International</td>
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<td>32.</td>
<td>Mr. Geoffrey Wokulira Ssebagala</td>
<td>Programme Coordinator, Human Rights Network for Journalists/ Reporter - Radio Sapientia</td>
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<td>33.</td>
<td>Mr. Musa Modoi</td>
<td>DCP, DANIDA - HUGGO</td>
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<td>34.</td>
<td>Ms. Sophie Kutegeka</td>
<td>Programme Officer, Advocates Coalition for Development &amp; Environment (ACODE)</td>
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<td>35.</td>
<td>Mr. Jasper Tumuhimbise</td>
<td>Senior Programme Officer, Anti-Corruption Coalition of Uganda (ACCU)</td>
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<td>36.</td>
<td>Mrs. Slyvia Muwebwa Ntambi</td>
<td>Governance/Legal Advisor, German Technical Cooperation (GTZ)</td>
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<td>37.</td>
<td>Mr. Kahima John Rebman</td>
<td>MA Human Rights Student, Makerere University</td>
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<td>38.</td>
<td>Mr. Godfrey Sssali</td>
<td>Communications/Advocacy Officer, Centre for African Research &amp; Development-Uganda</td>
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<td>39.</td>
<td>Mr. Steven Mondo</td>
<td>Coordinator, Rakai Development Foundation</td>
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<td>40.</td>
<td>Mr. Mukotani Rugyendo</td>
<td>Publications Editor, Uganda Debt Network</td>
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<td>41.</td>
<td>Mr. Sam Kayiwa</td>
<td>News Editor, Power FM</td>
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<td>42.</td>
<td>Mr. Onyait Aloysius</td>
<td>Legal Officer, Uganda Broadcasting Corporation</td>
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<td>43.</td>
<td>Ms. Salome A Lukwiya</td>
<td>Programme Officer, NURRU</td>
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<td>44.</td>
<td>Mr. Deo Tumusiime Kabwende</td>
<td>Press Officer, East &amp; Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Network</td>
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<td>45.</td>
<td>Mr. Peter Okello Jabweli</td>
<td>Press &amp; Public Relations Officer, Electoral Commission</td>
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<td>46.</td>
<td>Mr. Eliasa Kisawuzi</td>
<td>Public Relations Officer, Judiciary of Uganda</td>
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<td>47.</td>
<td>Mr. Patrick Tumwine</td>
<td>HRD/Advocacy Officer, HURINET-U</td>
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<td>48.</td>
<td>Ms. Patricia Nduro Musingura</td>
<td>Human Rights Officer, Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC)</td>
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<td>Ms. Florence Munyirwa</td>
<td>Public Relations Officer, Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC)</td>
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<td>50.</td>
<td>Mr. George Mutagubya</td>
<td>Communications &amp; Public Relations Officer, National Planning Authority</td>
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<td>51.</td>
<td>Ms. Hess Regihe</td>
<td>Deputy Head of Mission, Germany Embassy</td>
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<td>52.</td>
<td>Mr. Michael Wambi</td>
<td>Chairman, Uganda Parliamentary Press Association (UPPA)</td>
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<td>53.</td>
<td>Ms. Olivia Nyakarungu</td>
<td>National Programme Assistant, UN-OHCHR</td>
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<td>54.</td>
<td>Mr. Joseph Ntiro</td>
<td>Director, Asante Foundation</td>
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<td>55.</td>
<td>Mr. Donantus Orikiriza</td>
<td>Programmes Manager, National Foundation for Democracy and Human Rights in Uganda (NAFODU)</td>
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<td>56.</td>
<td>Mr. Apollo Baker Asinjah</td>
<td>Public Relations Officer, Uganda Prison Service</td>
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<td>57.</td>
<td>Mrs. Ann Abeja Muhwezi</td>
<td>Legal &amp; Administrative Manager, Monitor Publications Limited</td>
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<td>58.</td>
<td>Ms. Cate Najjuma</td>
<td>Programme Support Officer, Irish Aid</td>
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<td>59.</td>
<td>Mr. Steven Asiimwe</td>
<td>Mass Communication, Makerere University</td>
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<td>60.</td>
<td>Mr. Steven Kwegisa</td>
<td>Lecturer, Makerere Business Institute</td>
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<td>61.</td>
<td>Mr. Abel Atwine</td>
<td>Ag Public Relations Officer, Uganda Law Reform Commission</td>
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<td>62.</td>
<td>Mr. Michael Kayiwa</td>
<td>Paralegal, Kampala</td>
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<td>63.</td>
<td>Mr. S. S. Komunda</td>
<td>Principal Assistant Secretary, Ministry of Internal Affairs</td>
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<td>64.</td>
<td>Mr. George Ntambaazi</td>
<td>Makerere University, Kampala</td>
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<td>65.</td>
<td>Mr. Milton Goddie Tumutegeyereize</td>
<td>Ag Executive Director, Public Procurement &amp; Disposal of Public Assets Authority</td>
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<td>66.</td>
<td>Mr. Abdul Katuntu</td>
<td>Partner, Katuntu &amp; Co Advocates</td>
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<td>67.</td>
<td>Mr. Joel Masembe</td>
<td>CEDA, Kampala</td>
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<td>68.</td>
<td>Mr. Emmanuel Tumusiime</td>
<td>President General, Forum for Integrity in Leadership Party</td>
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<td>69.</td>
<td>Mr. Ken Lukyamuzi</td>
<td>President General, Conservative Party</td>
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<td>70.</td>
<td>Mr. Mike Kalemere</td>
<td>Secretary, Conservative Party</td>
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</table>
71. Mr. Ali Mubiru | Administrative Secretary, Conservative Party
72. Mr. Ssemusu Mugobansonga | Secretary General, Young Conservatives, Conservative Party

**Secretariat**

73. Mr. Livingstone Sewanyana | Executive Director, FHRI
74. Ms. Sheila Muwanga | Deputy Director – Programmes FHRI
75. Mr. Apolo Kakaire | Manager Rights Monitoring and Advocacy Unit FHRI
76. Mr. Vincent Babalanda | Team Member Rights Monitoring and Advocacy Unit FHRI
77. Ms. Carol Adoch | Team Member Rights Monitoring and Advocacy Unit FHRI
78. Ms. Wendy Kasujja | Public Relations Officer FHRI
79. Ms. Shamim Ddembe | Resource Centre Assistant FHRI
80. Mr. Daniel Bakayana | Field Officer, FHRI
81. Mr. Patrick Tom | Intern, FHRI

**Media**

82. Mr. A.G. Musamali | The New Vision
83. Mr. Nicholas Oned | The New Vision
84. Mr. Roderick Ahimbazwe | The New Vision
85. Ms. Evelyn Liri | The Daily Monitor
86. Mr. Samuel Wossita | The Daily Monitor
87. Ms. Halima Abdallah | The Weekly Observer
88. Mr. Stephen Galiwango | Red Pepper/Kamunye Daily
89. Mr. Tom Mutebi | WBS TV
90. Ms. Martha Nattembo | UBC TV
91. Mr. Matia Lwanga Bwanika | CBS
92. Mr. Collins Jjuko | CBS
93. Mr. Edwin Mamuto | Sanyu FM
94. Mr. Hakeem Buza | Radio One
95. Mr. Robert Kagolo | Super FM
96. Mr. Eddie Kasirivu | Star FM
97. Mr. Adrian Mususwa | Farmers Newspaper
98. Mr. Sam Nabwiso | Kiira FM
99. Ms. Zowena Nakayemba | Voice of Africa
100. Mr. Julius Ssenkandiwa | Metro FM
101. Mr. R. Yawe | Metro FM
102. Mr. George Khauhka | Freelance
## Agenda

**Monday 18th September 2006**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tr>
<td>8:30am – 9:00am</td>
<td>Arrival and Registration</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:00am – 9:30am</td>
<td>Practical Matters &amp; Introductions</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30am – 10:30am</td>
<td>Opening Session</td>
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<td>Introductory Remarks</td>
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<td><strong>Mr. Livingstone Sewanyana,</strong> <em>Executive Director, FHRI</em></td>
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<td>Keynote Speech on the theme: “Fostering Open Government through Access to Information”</td>
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<td>Guest of Honour, <strong>Hon Al-Hajji Ali Kirunda Kivejinja,</strong> <em>3rd Deputy Prime Minister</em></td>
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<td><em>Minister of Information &amp; National Guidance</em></td>
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<td>10:30am – 11:00am</td>
<td>Tea Break</td>
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<td>11:00am – 11:40am</td>
<td>The Value of the Right to Information in Uganda: Underpinning Practical Experiences from the Commonwealth Countries,</td>
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<td><strong>Dr Henry Onoria,</strong> <em>Senior Lecturer of Law, Faculty of Law, Makerere University</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>11:40am – 12:00pm</td>
<td>Discussant</td>
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<td><strong>Mr. Haruna Kanaabi,</strong> <em>Coordinator, East African Media Institute</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00pm – 1:00pm</td>
<td>Plenary Discussions</td>
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<td>Participants</td>
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<td>1:00pm – 2:00pm</td>
<td>Lunch Break</td>
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<td>2:00pm – 2:40pm</td>
<td>Balancing the Scales: The Rights to Information and National Security</td>
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<td><strong>Major Felix Kulaigye,</strong> <em>Spokesperson, Uganda Peoples’ Defence Forces (UPDF), Ministry of Defence</em></td>
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<td>2:40pm – 3:00pm</td>
<td>Discussant</td>
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<td><strong>Mr. Kalundi Robert Serumaga,</strong> <em>Senior Media Commentator</em></td>
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</table>
3:00pm – 3:30pm  Plenary Discussions
Participants

3:30pm – 4:10pm  The Access to Information Act 2005:
‘A Catalogue of Exceptions’
**Mr. Kagole Kivumbi,**
Director of Information,
Ministry of Information & National Guidance
Office of the Prime Minister

4:10pm – 4:30pm  Discussant
**Prof Frederick Jjuuko,** Professor of Media Law,
Faculty of Law, Makerere University

4:30pm – 5:00pm  Plenary Discussions
Participants

5:00pm  Evening Tea Break

5:30pm  Departure

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**Tuesday 19th September 2006**

8:00am – 8.45am  Arrival and Registration

8.45am - 9:00am  Review of Day One deliberations

PANEL DISCUSSION

9:00am – 10:00am  Entrenching Openness:
Implementing the Right to Information in Practice
**Mr. Venkatesh Nayak,**
Coordinator, Right to Information Program,
Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative,
New Delhi, India

10:00am -11.00am  Developing Mechanisms to
Operationalize the Legislation: What steps have been initiated?
**Mr. Faustine Misanvu,** Ag Commissioner Monitoring
& Inspection, Directorate of Information,
Ministry of Information & National Guidance

11:00am – 11.30am  Plenary Discussion
Participants

11:00am – 11:30am  Tea Break
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| 11:30am – 12:10pm | Facilitation of Implementation of the Legislation: Developing a Culture of Transparency and Accountability  
**Mr. John Mitala, Head of Public Service / Secretary to the Cabinet**  |
| 12:10pm – 12:30pm | Discussant  
**Mr. Ibrahim Semujju Nganda,  
Political Editor, Weekly Observer**  |
| 12:30pm – 1:00pm | Plenary Discussions  
**Participants**  |
| 1:00pm – 2:00pm | Lunch Break  |
| 2:00pm – 2:40pm | Protection of Whistle Blowers: The Role of Government  
**Justice Faith Mwondha,  
Inspector General of Government**  |
| 2:40pm – 3:00pm | Discussant  
**Dr Peter Mwesige,  
Ag. Head Mass Communications Department, Makerere University**  |
| 3:00pm – 4:00pm | Plenary Discussions  
**Participants**  |
| 4:00pm – 4:30pm | Recommendations  |

**CLOSING SESSION**

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| 4:30pm – 5:00pm | Remarks by Mr. Wolfgang Hilbrer,  
*Resident Representative, KAF*  |
| 5:00pm | Evening Tea Break  |
| 5:30pm | Departure  |