

Online Proactive Disclosure under the RTI Act in Sri Lanka: A Monitoring Framework and Baseline Assessment

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The World Bank and Verité Research developed and tested a methodology to enable the government to objectively measure and inform the implementation of the online proactive disclosure requirements of the right to information Act (RTI Act). It focuses on the online proactive disclosure of the central government. The methodology is based on international good practice and on the requirements for proactive disclosure set out under sections 8 and 9 of the RTI Act, and Regulation No. 20 under the Act. Sections 8 and 9 of the RTI Act are applicable to all ministries (thereby excluding the Offices of the President and the Prime Minister), while Regulation No. 20 is applicable to ‘all public authorities’, including ministries. Verité Research then used this methodology to monitor and evaluate the online proactive disclosure of information under the RTI Act by 53 cabinet portfolios and the Office of the President and Prime Minister.

Public authorities were ranked for their online proactive disclosure of information pertaining to eleven categories of information, which were further divided into 30 subcategories. The categories of information include:

- 1.** Institutional Information
- 2.** Organisational Information
- 3.** Operational Information and Decision-making Processes
- 4.** Public Services
- 5.** Public Policy, Legislation and Regulation
- 6.** Public Participation
- 7.** Public Procurement and Subsidies

8. Budgets, Expenditure and Finances
9. Categorisation of and Systems for Accessing Information
10. Prior Disclosures of Information
11. Prior Disclosures of Public Investments under section 9 of RTI Act

A scoring scheme was devised to incentivise public authorities to disclose certain types of information. These three types of information were:

Type 1: up-to-date information (maximum score of 2 points)

Type 2: complete information (maximum score of 3 points)

Type 3: up-to-date and complete information (maximum score of 4 points)

Public authorities received a **content disclosure score**, a **usability score** and an **overall composite score**, and were accordingly placed within the following bands:

- 0-10%: unsatisfactory
- 11-40%: moderately unsatisfactory
- 41-60%: moderately satisfactory
- 61-80%: satisfactory
- 81-100%: highly satisfactory

The Overall baseline for online proactive disclosure is: 49 out of the 55 public authorities assessed scored only between 11% and 40%, placing them in the ‘moderately unsatisfactory’ band. By contrast, only three public authorities scored over 40%, falling within the ‘moderately satisfactory’ band. Furthermore, three public authorities scored less than 10%, falling within the ‘unsatisfactory band’. This can notably be explained by the recent adoption of this policy and the limited awareness about these specific legal requirements among public officials.

In terms of **content disclosure**, 49 public authorities (or 89%) scored within the ‘moderately unsatisfactory’ band. Only one public authority - the Ministry of Health – ranked within the ‘moderately satisfactory’ band, with a score of 43%. Five public authorities (or 9%) received ‘unsatisfactory’ scores. Public authorities tended to disclose more up-to-date and complete information in the *Budgets, Expenditure, and Finances, Institutional Information, and Public Policy, Legislation and Regulation* categories, although this was often hosted on secondary websites such as the Ministry of Finance (i.e. for budgets) or www.documents.gov.lk (i.e. for legislation).

A thematic analysis of online proactive disclosure was conducted across the following three areas:

1. Public accountability
2. Public accessibility
3. Disclosures pertaining to the right to information

The findings of this thematic analysis suggest that the implementation of the online proactive disclosure section of the RTI act is overall limited and uneven across public bodies and categories of information. While the disclosure of budget information is high (67%) it could be made more user-friendly through an open budget portal. On the other hand, the disclosure of timely and detailed information on public projects is very low (13%) in the absence of a central project database and effective disclosure policy for projects. Minimal disclosures of information on categories such as *Public Services* and *Public Participation* can inhibit the ability of citizens to engage with government and access basic services. The disclosure of responses to information requests of general interest and the corresponding data does not yet happen.

The low levels of RTI-relevant information disclosed, such as *Information Officer's and Designated Officer's contact information* and *RTI requesting procedures* indicate the urgency to disclose critical information for the effective implementation of the RTI Act. An assessment of adherence to obligations under sections 8 and 9 of the RTI Act, compared with Regulation No. 20, suggests that public authorities were relatively more likely to disclose types of information emerging from a statutory requirement. However, public authorities disclosed significantly more information in subcategories emerging from section 8 of the RTI Act, than section 9 of the Act. Aside from information pertaining to *Detailed Project Costs*, hardly any information was disclosed under other subcategories emerging from section 9 of the Act, such as *Notification of Project Commencement*, and *Terms and Conditions of Investment*.

Public authorities scored relatively higher in terms of **usability**, in comparison with content. Usability measures (a) language accessibility, (b) ease of access, and (c) format. Overall, 20% of public authorities scored in the 'moderately satisfactory' band. The majority (75%) of public authorities scored within the 'moderately unsatisfactory' band. 5% of public authorities received 'unsatisfactory' scores, which strongly limits effective access and the potential use and reuse of public sector information. The language in which most information was disclosed was English, followed by Sinhala and Tamil. Yet gaps in trilingual accessibility of information remain, as the highest language accessibility score was 50%.

Introduction

In August 2016, the Sri Lankan Parliament enacted the Right to Information Act, No. 12 of 2016 (the RTI Act). Enacting RTI legislation was among the key campaign pledges of President Maithripala Sirisena, who was elected to office in January 2015 with a mandate to advance good governance and combat corruption.

The RTI Act grants Sri Lankan citizens the right of access to information in the possession, custody or control of public authorities.¹ The Act was fully operationalised on 3 February 2017.² Accordingly, all public authorities falling within the scope of the RTI Act were expected to be prepared to receive and process RTI requests by this date.

1.1 Proactive Disclosure under the RTI Act

In addition to enabling citizens to file RTI requests, the Act requires proactive disclosure of information. Section 14 of the RTI Act affirms the principle of proactive disclosure in the context of the RTI Commission's mandate to prescribe fees to be levied by public authorities for the release of information. Meanwhile, section 8 of the Act places a duty on every minister to bi-annually publish a report containing information relating to their respective ministry, and all the public authorities falling under the purview of that ministry. This duty is also applicable to ministers of provincial councils.³ Section 9 of the RTI Act requires every minister to inform the public about the initiation

1 'RTI, lifting the curtain of secrecy', The Daily News, 4 October 2015. Available at <http://dailynews.lk/2016-10-03-193000/features/94810> [Accessed on: 1 February 2017].

2 Extraordinary Gazette No. 2002/42, issued in January 2017.

3 Section 8(4)(b), Right to Information Act, No. 12 of 2016.

of projects three months prior to the project's commencement.⁴

In February 2017, the then Ministry of Parliamentary Reforms and Mass Media issued a series of regulations under the RTI Act. Regulation No. 20 sets out a public authority's obligations with respect to proactive disclosure under the Act.⁵ Under Regulation No. 20, all public authorities are required to 'routinely disseminate', 'at a minimum', the following information (including through digital or electronic format):

- i.** Institutional information (e.g. internal regulations, powers and functions)
- ii.** Operational information (e.g. organisational structure, and the names and contact information of executive grade public officials and their remunerations)
- iii.** Decisions and acts (e.g. formal acts and documents used as a basis for formulating them)
- iv.** Public services information (e.g. description of serviced offered to the public)
- v.** Budgetary information (e.g. projected budget, actual income and expenditure)
- vi.** Open meetings information (e.g. information on meetings, and information regarding how to attend meetings open to the public)
- vii.** Decision-making and public participation (e.g. information on decision-making procedures, and mechanisms for public participation in decision-making)
- viii.** Information on subsidies (e.g. information on the beneficiaries of subsidies)
- ix.** Public procurement information (e.g. information on the public procurement process, criteria and outcomes of decision-making on tender applications)
- x.** Lists, registers and databases (e.g. registers and databases held by the public authority, and information about whether these registers and databases are available online)
- xi.** Information about information held (i.e. an index or register of documents held by the public authority)
- xii.** Information on publications (i.e. information on publications used, including a fee schedule for purchase)
- xiii.** Information about the right to information (e.g. information on how to request information and contact information of the respective information officer)
- xiv.** Disclosed information (i.e. information which has been disclosed pursuant to a request and which is likely to be of interest to others).

This report aims to support the implementation of the RTI Act in Sri Lanka by monitoring, evaluating and ranking 55 public authorities on the fulfilment of their online proactive disclosure obligations. A pilot assessment was conducted between 19 June 2017 and 31 July 2017, based on which the methodology of the assessment was refined. This report is the first in an intended series of reports that will assess progress with respect to online proactive disclosure by public authorities.

4 *Ibid.* Section 9 (1) (a).

5 Extraordinary Gazette No. 2004/66, issued in February 2017.

2

Methodology

Verité Research (VR) and the World Bank developed and tested a methodology that evaluates and compares the online proactive disclosure of information under the RTI Act by all 51 cabinet ministries, and the offices of the President and the Prime Minister.

The monitoring framework was devised based on the requirements set out under sections 8 and 9 of the RTI Act, and Regulation No. 20 under the Act. Section 8 and Regulation No. 20 respectively require ministries and all public authorities to publish information in electronic form (i.e. on their websites), as well as at their physical premises.⁶ Section 9 meanwhile requires ministries to make publicly accessible all details that are relevant to any new projects, three months prior to the project's commencement.⁷ Therefore, for the purposes of monitoring and ranking the online proactive disclosure of ministries, and the offices of the President and Prime Minister, VR utilised information publicly accessible on the websites of these public authorities, and other selected official online information platforms open to the public.

The monitoring framework covers two dimensions: (i) the information content disclosed (refer section 2.2 below) and (ii) the usability of the information (refer section 2.3 below). Each dimension is rated based on several criteria and combined in an overall score.

Some ministries with combined portfolios, such as the Ministry of Lands and Parliamentary Reforms, disclose information pertaining to the two separate portfolios on a single website. Other ministries, such as the Ministry of Finance and Mass Media, maintain two separate websites for the

⁶ Section 8 (4)(a), RTI Act.

⁷ *Ibid.* Section 9(1)(a).

two portfolios. Therefore, in the event the ministry's portfolios are split across two different websites, the websites were monitored separately as distinct public authorities. VR thus reviewed a total of 55 public authorities including those of the offices of the President and the Prime Minister, based on information found primarily on their websites and other official online information platforms.

2.1 Monitoring

The following eleven categories of information were used to assess the online proactive disclosure of the 55 public authorities:

1. Institutional Information
2. Organisational Information
3. Operational Information and Decision-making Processes
4. Public Services
5. Public Policy, Legislation and Regulation
6. Public Participation
7. Public Procurement and Subsidies
8. Budgets, Expenditure and Finances
9. Categorisation of and Systems for Accessing Information
10. Prior Disclosures of Information
11. Prior Disclosures of Public Investments under section 9 of RTI Act

All ministries and the offices of the President and Prime Minister were given a content disclosure rating based on the scores received for each category of information. Each category is a composite measure of subcategories that can be extracted, analysed, and compared independently. The rating system is discussed below in section 2.2.

There are a total of 30 subcategories across the eleven categories. The subcategories under each category are standardised and afforded an appropriate weightage in terms of the authority's overall category rating.

The subcategories under each category are:

1. **Institutional Information:**
 - a. Mandate: *mandate listed on website (broad vision and mission statements are acceptable)* ■
 - b. Functions and powers: *functions and powers of public authority listed on website* ■
2. **Organisational Information:**
 - a. Organisational structure: *organisation chart provided*
 - b. Names and contact information of executive grade public officials
 - c. Disaggregated payment information pertaining to remunerations; emoluments; and

allowances of executive grade public officials*

3. Operational Information and Decision-making Processes:

- a.** Internal rules, regulations and instructions: *listed on website*
- b.** Strategic plan: *listed on website*
- c.** Project and activity reports: *reports on completed/ongoing projects listed on website.* *
- d.** Decision-making procedures: *listed on website* ■

4. Public Services:

- a.** Description of services offered to the public: *services are listed* ■
- b.** Accessing public services: *information on how to access a particular service is published* ☐ ■

5. Public Policy, Legislation and Regulation:

- a.** Circulars and regulations: *circulars and regulations that have been issued since 1 January 2016 listed on website**
- b.** Legislation: *listed on website*
- c.** Policy memoranda and draft legislation: *listed on website**

6. Public Participation

- a.** Details regarding public meetings and consultations: *dates and information from past meetings and consultations; information on forthcoming public meetings listed on website**

7. Public Procurement and Subsidies

- a.** Publication of tenders: *listed on website**
- b.** Successful awards and publication of award: *listed on website**

8. Budgets, Expenditure and Finances

- a.** Projected budget for 2017 ■*
- b.** Disbursements in 2016 ■

9. Categorisation of, and Systems for, Accessing Information

- a.** Information index: *index of publications and databases held or produced by the ministry is published on website*
- b.** RTI requesting procedures: *instructions on how to make RTI requests to the public authority are listed on website*
- c.** Information Officer's and Designated Officer's contact information ■
- d.** Fee schedule: *charges for filing a RTI request are published on website* ■
- e.** Minister's report as per section 8 of the RTI Act: *published on website* ■

10. Prior Disclosures of Information

- a.** Publication of information supplied under RTI: *website has made provision to publish information supplied under RTI*

11. Prior Disclosures of Public Investments under section 9 of RTI Act

(for projects above USD 100,000 (foreign-funded) or LKR 500,000 (locally-funded):

- a. Notification of project commencement: *project justification published on website* ○
- b. Pre-feasibility and feasibility studies of projects: *published on website* ○
- c. Terms and conditions of investment (including expected costs, benefits and rate of return): *published on website* ○
- d. Detailed project costs (including disaggregated budgets): *published on website* ○
- e. Monitoring and evaluation reports: *published on website in accordance with requirements under section 9* ○

Exhibit 1

Subcategories marked with an asterisk (*)	These subcategories were ranked on the online proactive disclosure of documents published after 1 January 2016.
Subcategories marked with a square (■)	These subcategories are required under section 8 of the RTI Act. Some of these subcategories are also required under Regulation No.20 published in terms of the RTI Act.
Subcategories marked with a circle (○)	These subcategories are required under section 9 of the RTI Act.
Subcategories with no symbol	These subcategories are required exclusively under Regulation No. 20.

2.2 Content Disclosure Rating

Public authorities were ranked according to their scores across the subcategories and categories. The assessment was language neutral, as content availability was assessed regardless of the language in which the information was disclosed.

2.2.1 Subcategory scoring

The following scale was used, as relevant, in scoring content disclosure under each subcategory (see Annex 1 for a presentation of the scoring system in tabular form):

Exhibit 2

Type	Rating				
	Unsatisfactory	Moderately Unsatisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Highly Satisfactory
1	No information (0 points)	N/A	N/A	Information published - dated or unknown whether current (1 point)	Up-to-date information published (2 points)
2	No information (0 points)	N/A	Information published - but no details on whether complete (1 point)	Information published - but incomplete (2 points)	Complete information published (3 points)
3	No information (0 points)	Information published - but no information on whether up-to-date or complete (1 point)	Information published - up-to-date but unknown whether complete (2 points)	Information published - up-to-date but incomplete (3 points)	Up-to-date and complete information published (4 points)

Each subcategory received a maximum amount of applicable points depending on the nature of the information i.e. whether the information needs to be current, and whether the information needs to be complete. Depending on the type of subcategory, public authorities received ratings for each subcategory based on the scale: (a) unsatisfactory, (b) moderately unsatisfactory, (c) moderately satisfactory, (d) satisfactory, or (e) highly satisfactory.

Type 1

Where currency is required but completeness is irrelevant i.e. the information required relates to a single up-to-date document, the maximum amount of points applicable to the subcategory would be 2. The following subcategories fall within this scale:

1. Mandate
2. Organisational structure
3. Strategic plan
4. Fee schedule

The rating of these subcategories aims to incentivise public authorities to demonstrate that information is up-to-date. For example, if ‘information is published – dated or unknown whether current’, the public authority will score 1 point. If ‘up-to-date information is published’, the public authority will score 2 points.

Type 2

Where currency is irrelevant, but completeness is relevant i.e. the information required is not time-sensitive but relates to multiple components, the maximum amount of points applicable to the subcategory would be 3. The following subcategories fall within this scale:

- 1.** Details regarding public meetings and consultations
- 2.** Successful awards and publication of award
- 3.** Information index
- 4.** Notification of project commencement

The rating of these subcategories aims to incentivise public authorities to demonstrate that information disclosed is complete. Public authorities will score 1 point under these subcategories if ‘information is published – but there are no details on whether information is complete’, and 2 points if ‘information is published – but incomplete’. The extra point is awarded on the basis that the public authority discloses an index of information or other equivalent information that establishes the extent of information held within the public authority. Such disclosure would enable an assessment of completeness. On this basis, public authorities will score 3 points if ‘complete information is published’.

Type 3

Where both currency and completeness are relevant, the maximum amount of points applicable to a subcategory would be 4. The following subcategories fall within this scale:

- 1.** Functions and powers
- 2.** Names and contact information of executive grade public officials
- 3.** Disaggregated payment information pertaining to remunerations; emoluments; and allowances of executive grade public officials
- 4.** Internal rules, regulations and instructions
- 5.** Project and activity reports
- 6.** Decision-making procedures
- 7.** Description of services offered to the public
- 8.** Accessing public services
- 9.** Circulars and regulations
- 10.** Policy memoranda and draft legislation

11. Publication of tenders
12. Disbursements
13. RTI Requesting Procedures
14. Minister's report as per section 8 of the RTI Act
15. Publication of information supplied under RTI
16. Pre-feasibility and feasibility studies of projects
17. Terms and conditions of investment
18. Detailed project costs
19. Monitoring and evaluation reports

The rating of these subcategories aims to incentivise public authorities to demonstrate that information disclosed is both up-to-date and complete. If 'information is published – but there is no information on whether up-to-date or complete' the public authority will score 1 point. If 'information is published – up-to-date but unknown whether complete', the public authority will score 2 points. In such cases, the public authority scores an extra point for demonstrating that the information is up-to-date. For example, the authority could date stamp a document that it proactively discloses. If 'information is published – up-to-date but incomplete', the public authority will score 3 points. In such cases, the public authority will score an additional point for disclosing an index of information or other equivalent information that establishes the extent of information held within the public authority, and enables an assessment of completeness. If 'up-to-date and complete information is published' the public authority will score 4 points.

Type 4

Certain subcategories require a specific scoring method due to their unique nature and content.

Under the subcategory *Projected Budget for 2017*, public authorities will score 1 point if 'information is published – but not disaggregated', and 2 points if 'disaggregated information is published'. This rating scheme aims to incentivise disaggregation of information.

Under the subcategory on *Information Officer's and Designated Officer's Contact Information*, public authorities can score 1 point if 'IO's or DO's contact information is published', and 2 points if both 'IO's and DO's contact information is published'. This rating scheme aims to incentivise online proactive disclosure of contact details of both the Information Officer and Designated Officer of the public authority.

Under the subcategory on *Legislation*, public authorities can score up to 4 points depending on the percentage of relevant legislation (that the public authority is tasked with implementing) is published (i.e. less than 25% - 1 point, more than 25% - 2 points, more than 50% - 3 points, and 100% - 4 points). This rating scheme aims to incentivise public authorities to publish all relevant legislation.

2.2.2 Overall content disclosure rating

The **content disclosure rating** of a public authority is the total percentage score applicable to all relevant subcategories. These ratings enable cross comparison of public authorities in terms of overall ratings, category ratings and subcategory ratings. For instance, it is possible to rank public authorities in terms of online proactive disclosure in the *Public Procurement and Subsidies* category.

The highest total score that a public authority can receive as per the rating methodology is 104 points. However, if one or more categories or subcategories are not applicable to a particular authority, those categories or subcategories were discounted from the scoring system. For example, *Public Services* are ‘not applicable’ to the Ministry of National Policies and Economic Affairs. Moreover, disclosure requirements that are *exclusively* stipulated under sections 8 and 9 of the RTI Act (i.e. requirements not stipulated under Regulation No.20), do not apply to the President’s and Prime Minister’s Offices *per se*. Such requirements only apply to ‘ministries’. The overall content disclosure rating for each public authority was calculated as a percentage of the total possible score across all applicable subcategories.

Overall content disclosure ratings and category ratings were based on the following scale:

- 0-10%: unsatisfactory
- 11-40%: moderately unsatisfactory
- 41-60%: moderately satisfactory
- 61-80%: satisfactory
- 81-100%: highly satisfactory

2.3 Usability Rating

Usability was scored independently across all the subcategories in the rating system. The usability of information was assessed in terms of (a) language, (b) ease of access, and (c) format. Public authorities were therefore scored across these three indicators.

2.3.1 Language accessibility

The language accessibility of public authority websites was assessed on the level of trilingual online proactive disclosure on websites. First, public authorities were assessed for information disclosures in Sinhala, Tamil, or English, and then received one point for each additional language in which an information subcategory was available. These could add up to 3 points per information subcategory. Second, the scores for English, Sinhala, and Tamil information disclosures were aggregated, across information subcategories for each public authority, and given an overall language accessibility percentage score.

For example, if the Ministry of Foreign Affairs scored 25/30 for English, 15/30 for Sinhala and

5/30 for Tamil, its overall language accessibility score would be 50% (45/90*100).

2.3.2 Ease of Access

Ease of access was measured according to the ‘click rate’ (i.e. the total number of clicks required to access information on a website). Ease of access was monitored across all three languages. Each subcategory was monitored for ease of access according to the following scale:

- 1 to 2 clicks – 2 points – Satisfactory
- 3 to 5 clicks – 1 point – Moderately unsatisfactory
- Over 6 clicks – 0 points – Unsatisfactory

Thus the maximum score a subcategory could receive is 2 points. The individual subcategory scores were tallied and given as a percentage of the total possible score for all applicable subcategories for each public authority. The maximum score for *Ease of Access* is 60 points.

For example, if the Ministry of Foreign Affairs scored 45/60, it would receive an ‘Ease of Access’ score of 75%.

2.3.3 Format

The format of information that is proactively disclosed was also monitored across all three languages. The format in which information is disclosed in each subcategory was scored according to the following scale:

- Extraction-friendly (i.e. information can easily be re-used and shared, e.g. downloadable files, MS Excel files) – 2 points – Satisfactory
- Low re-usability (i.e. cannot be easily copied and pasted, non-reusable datasets and documents) – 1 point – Moderately unsatisfactory
- Not reusable (i.e. image, screenshot or locked PDF) – 0 points – Unsatisfactory

Thus the maximum score a subcategory could receive is 2 points. The individual subcategory scores were tallied and given as a percentage of the total possible score for all applicable subcategories for each public authority. The maximum possible score for *Format* is 60 points.

For example, if the Ministry of Foreign Affairs scored 24/60, it would receive a ‘Format’ score of 40%.

The aggregate of these three scores – for language accessibility, ease of access and format – was calculated to assess an **overall usability score**. Using the examples given above, the overall usability score of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would be 54% i.e. 114/210*100.

The overall usability rating is based on a scale similar to the overall content disclosure rating. The

scale is based on a percentage of the total applicable points the public authority could score in each usability indicator.

- 0-10%: unsatisfactory
- 11-40%: moderately unsatisfactory
- 41-60%: moderately satisfactory
- 61-80%: satisfactory
- 81-100%: highly satisfactory

2.4 Overall Score

A public authority's content disclosure rating is weighted at 75% while a public authority's usability rating is weighted at 25%. These two ratings have been combined to arrive at an overall composite score.

Each public authority has been given an overall rating based on the overall composite score received:

- 0-10%: unsatisfactory
- 11-40%: moderately unsatisfactory
- 41-60%: moderately satisfactory
- 61-80%: satisfactory
- 81-100%: highly satisfactory

2.5 Limitations

This assessment is based primarily on information proactively disclosed on the websites of ministries and the offices of the President and Prime Minister. Therefore, a limitation in the assessment is that it does not monitor the websites of departments or other bodies that fall under the purview of ministries, and of the offices of the President and Prime Minister. The main reason for this limitation was the sheer volume of departments and agencies (approximately 500) falling under the 55 public authorities considered. However, VR sought to ensure that the assessment was location neutral (i.e. ensuring that disclosure of information was scored regardless of the precise location of the disclosure) to the extent possible. Thus it scored information relevant to a public authority that was in fact disclosed on common locations found in specific ministry websites (e.g. the Ministry of Finance website for budgetary information and the Ministry of Justice website for legislation). Moreover, it considered a number of official online information platforms: <http://documents.gov.lk>, <http://www.data.gov.lk>, <https://www.rti.gov.lk> and <http://www.pmm.gov.lk>. However, it must be noted that these platforms were often inaccessible (e.g. the portals located at <http://documents.gov.lk> and <http://www.pmm.gov.lk> were routinely down), and the information on these portals

were often outdated (e.g. <http://www.data.gov.lk> had not been updated since 2012). Meanwhile, the public authority concerned was awarded points for disclosure if it provided a link that re-directed the user to another website that disclosed relevant information.

This assessment is the first in a series of assessments designed to monitor online proactive disclosure by public authorities under the RTI Act. Though the number of public authorities assessed in this report is relatively small, this number will be expanded in future assessments.

3

Proactive Disclosure: Statutory vs. Regulatory Obligations

Statutory obligations on proactive disclosure emerging from sections 8 and 9 of the RTI Act apply to all ministries. Section 8 refers specifically to a ‘Minister’s duty to publish a report’, which include: ‘the particulars relating to the organization, functions, activities and duties of the Ministry of such Minister and of all the public authorities falling within the functions so assigned.’⁸ Furthermore, section 8 requires ministries to publish information in all three languages. Section 9 requires every minister to inform the public about the initiation of projects three months prior to project commencement (trilingual disclosures of information are not explicitly required). These two statutory obligations do not apply to the Office of the President and the Office of the Prime Minister; they do, however, apply to the President and Prime Minister when they act in the capacity of a minister (e.g. Minister of Defence).

Regulatory obligations on proactive disclosure emanate from Regulation No. 20 published under the RTI Act. These regulations expand the statutory obligations under section 8 and section 9. According to clause 01 of Regulation No. 20, the obligations under Regulation No. 20 apply to all ‘public authorities’, including ministries, the Office of the President and the Office of the Prime Minister. Section 43 of the RTI Act defines ‘public authority’ to include (a) a Ministry of the Government; and (b) any body or office created or established by or under the Constitution.

Section 3.1 below provides a ranking of ministries according to the fulfillment of obligations emerging from section 8 of the RTI Act. Section 3.2 provides a ranking of ministries according to the fulfillment of obligations emerging from section 9 of the RTI Act. Section 3.3 provides a ranking of public authorities according to their compliance with both sections 8 and 9 of the RTI

⁸ Section 8(2)(a), RTI Act.

Act i.e. the overall fulfillment of their statutory obligations. Section 3.4 provides a ranking of public authorities according to the fulfillment of their obligations emerging from Regulation 20.⁹

Finally, section 3.5 provides a comparison of public authorities' performance on online proactive disclosure in terms of statutory and regulatory obligations. It shows that in general, public authorities were relatively more likely to disclose information that arose from a statutory obligation over a regulatory one.

3.1 Information Disclosure under Section 8 of the RTI Act

The following subcategories of information disclosure emerge from section 8 of the RTI Act:

1. Mandate
2. Functions and powers
3. Decision-making procedures
4. Description of services offered to the public
5. Accessing public services
6. Projected budget for 2017
7. Disbursements in 2016
8. Information Officer's and Designated Officer's contact information
9. Fee schedule
10. Minister's report as per section 8 of the RTI Act

Exhibit 3 below presents the ranking of public authorities in terms of online proactive disclosure under these subcategories of information. The scores below take into account both content and language accessibility.

Exhibit 3

Public Authority	Percentage score (%)	Band
Ministry of Public Administration	66	Satisfactory
Ministry of Justice	55	Moderately Satisfactory
Ministry of Education	53	

⁹ Obligations under section 8 are also reflected in Regulation No. 20. The Minister's report, which is specifically required under section 8 of the RTI Act, is included under Regulation 20 because this Regulation requires the publishing of reports held by the public authority.

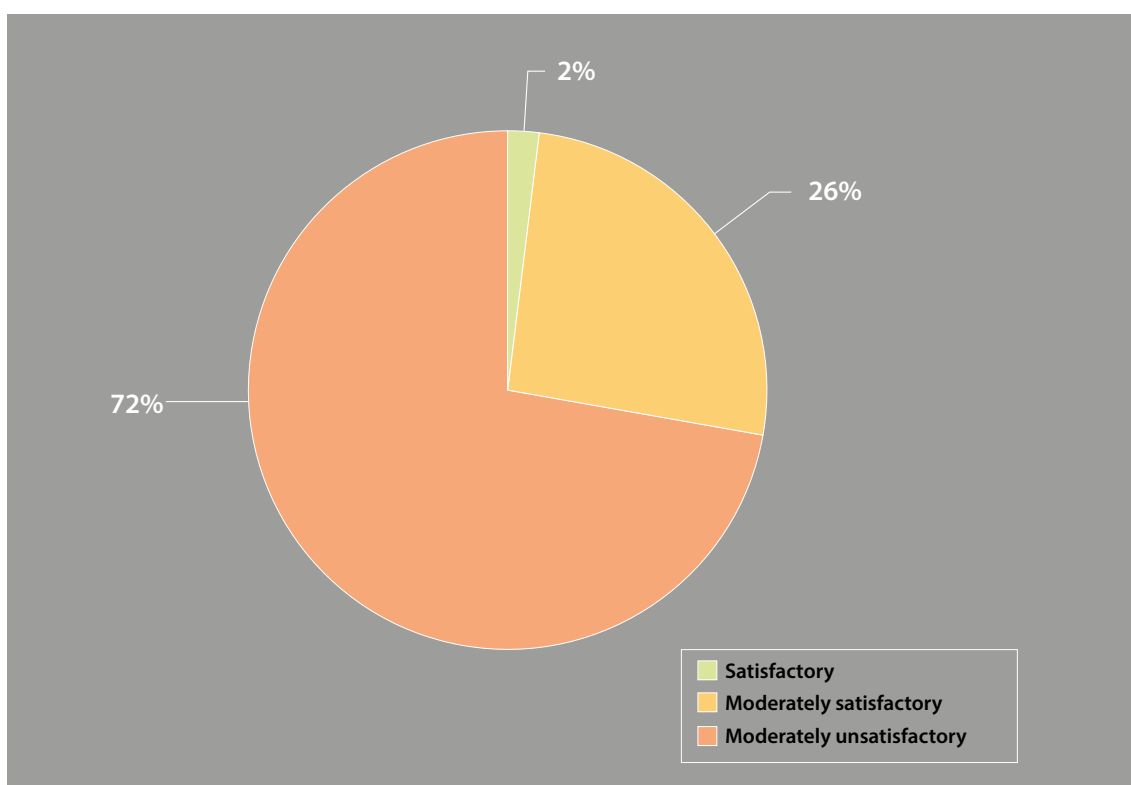
Public Authority	Percentage score (%)	Band
Ministry of Health	52	Moderately Satisfactory
Ministry of Social Empowerment, Welfare and Kandyan Heritage	52	
Ministry of Labour, Trade Union Relations and Sabaragamuwa Development	50	
Ministry of Higher Education	48	
Ministry of Internal Affairs, Wayamba Development and Cultural Affairs	48	
Ministry of Rural Economy	48	
Ministry of National Policies and Economic Affairs	48	
Ministry of Defence	45	
Ministry of Lands and Parliamentary Reforms	45	
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	44	
Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation	42	
Ministry of Sustainable Development and Wildlife	42	Moderately Unsatisfactory
Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment	40	
Ministry of Finance	40	
Ministry of Agriculture	40	
Ministry of Sports	40	
Ministry of Highways	40	
Ministry of Petroleum Resources Development	40	
Ministry of Disaster Management	39	
Ministry of Industry and Commerce	39	
Ministry of Postal Services	39	
Ministry of National Co-existence, Dialogue and Official Languages	39	
Ministry of Provincial Councils and Local Government	38	

Public Authority	Percentage score (%)	Band
Ministry of Women and Child Affairs	37	Moderately Unsatisfactory
Ministry of Telecommunication and Digital Infrastructure	37	
Ministry of Mass Media	37	
Ministry of Megapolis and Western Development	35	
Ministry of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Development	35	
Ministry of Plantation Industries	35	
Ministry of Power and Renewable Energy	35	
Ministry of Law and Order, and Southern Development	34	
Ministry of Home Affairs	34	
Ministry of Tourism Development and Christian Religious Affairs	34	
Ministry of Buddha Sasana	32	
Ministry of Prison Reforms, Rehabilitation, Resettlement and Hindu Religious Affairs	32	
Ministry of Regional Development	32	
Ministry of Development Strategies and International Trade	31	
Ministry of City Planning and Water Supply	29	
Ministry of Public Enterprise Development	29	
Ministry of Housing and Construction	26	
Ministry of Ports and Shipping	26	
Ministry of Special Assignments	26	
Ministry of Irrigation and Water Resources Management	24	
Ministry of National Integration and Reconciliation	23	
Ministry of Primary Industries	21	
Ministry of Science, Technology and Research	21	
Ministry of Skills Development and Vocational Training	19	

Public Authority	Percentage score (%)	Band
Ministry of Hill Country New Villages, Infrastructure and Community Development	19	Moderately Unsatisfactory
Ministry of Foreign Employment	16	
Ministry of Development Assignments	16	

Only the Ministry of Public Administration received a 'satisfactory' score of 66%. Fourteen public authorities (26%) received a 'moderately satisfactory' score, while 38 public authorities (72%) received a 'moderately unsatisfactory' score. No public authority received an 'unsatisfactory' score.

Exhibit 4 : Adherence to Section 8 of the RTI Act



3.2 Information Disclosure under Section 9 of the RTI Act

The following subcategories emerge from section 9 of the RTI Act:

1. Notification of project commencement
2. Pre-feasibility and feasibility studies of projects
3. Terms and conditions of investment
4. Detailed project costs
5. Monitoring and evaluation reports

Exhibit 5 below presents the ranking of public authorities in terms of online proactive disclosure under the above subcategories of information. Unlike section 8, section 9 does not require ministries to publish information in the 'official languages'. Therefore, public authorities are ranked according to content disclosure only. All public authorities scored within the 'moderately unsatisfactory' band.

Exhibit 5

Public Authority	Percentage Score (%)	Band
Ministry of Health	32	Moderately unsatisfactory
Ministry of Megapolis and Western Development	32	
Ministry of National Policies and Economic Affairs	26	
Ministry of Finance	26	
Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation	21	
Ministry of Internal Affairs, Wayamba Development and Cultural Affairs	21	
Ministry of Petroleum Resources Development	21	
Ministry of Education	16	
Ministry of Housing and Construction	16	
Ministry of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Development	16	
Ministry of Power and Renewable Energy	16	
Ministry of Agriculture	16	
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	11	
Ministry of Defence	11	
Ministry of National Integration and Reconciliation	11	
Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment	11	
Ministry of Disaster Management	11	
Ministry of Social Empowerment, Welfare and Kandyan Heritage	11	
Ministry of Women and Child Affairs	11	

Public Authority	Percentage Score (%)	Band
Ministry of Higher Education	11	Moderately unsatisfactory
Ministry of Sustainable Development and Wildlife	11	
Ministry of City Planning and Water Supply	11	
Ministry of Justice	11	
Ministry of Law and Order, and Southern Development	11	
Ministry of Home Affairs	11	
Ministry of Rural Economy	11	
Ministry of Lands and Parliamentary Reforms	11	
Ministry of Ports and Shipping	11	
Ministry of Labour, Trade Union Relations and Sabaragamuwa Development	11	
Ministry of Tourism Development and Christian Religious Affairs	11	
Ministry of Skills Development and Vocational Training	11	
Ministry of Industry and Commerce	11	
Ministry of Plantation Industries	11	
Ministry of Buddha Sasana	11	
Ministry of Public Enterprise Development	11	
Ministry of Public Administration	11	
Ministry of Postal Services	11	
Ministry of Prison Reforms, Rehabilitation, Resettlement and Hindu Religious Affairs	11	
Ministry of Sports	11	
Ministry of Telecommunication and Digital Infrastructure	11	
Ministry of National Co-existence, Dialogue and Official Languages	11	
Ministry of Primary Industries	11	

Public Authority	Percentage Score (%)	Band
Ministry of Irrigation and Water Resources Management	11	Moderately unsatisfactory
Ministry of Provincial Councils and Local Government	11	
Ministry of Development Strategies and International Trade	11	
Ministry of Mass Media	11	
Ministry of Highways	11	
Ministry of Science, Technology and Research	11	
Ministry of Foreign Employment	11	
Ministry of Development Assignments	11	
Ministry of Special Assignments	11	
Ministry of Regional Development	11	
Ministry of Hill Country New Villages, Infrastructure and Community Development	11	

3.3 Combined Ranking under Section 8 and Section 9 of the RTI Act

The ranking of public authorities based on fulfilment of their statutory obligations (i.e. section 8 and 9 of the RTI Act) is presented in Exhibit 6 below:

Exhibit 6

Public Authority	Percentage Score (%)	Band
Ministry of Public Administration	53	Moderately Satisfactory
Ministry of Health	47	
Ministry of Education	44	
Ministry of Justice	44	
Ministry of National Policies and Economic Affairs	42	

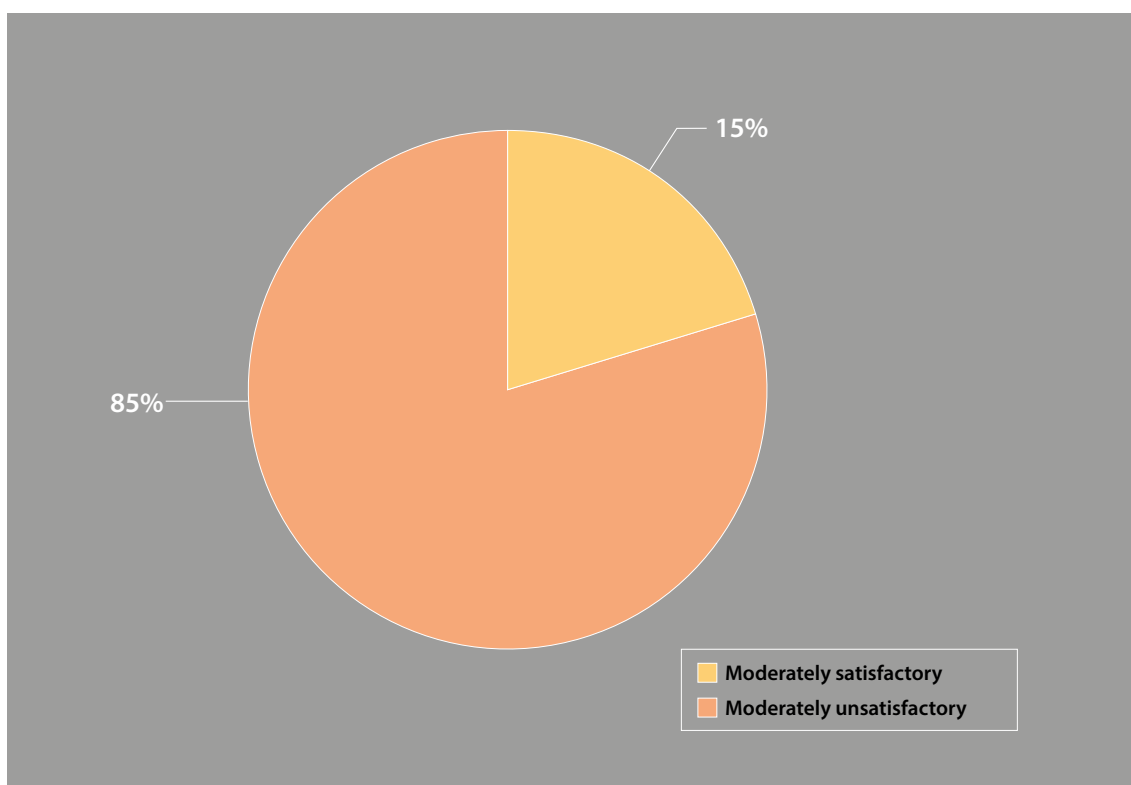
Public Authority	Percentage Score (%)	Band
Ministry of Social Empowerment, Welfare and Kandyan Heritage	42	Moderately Satisfactory
Ministry of Internal Affairs, Wayamba Development and Cultural Affairs	42	
Ministry of Labour, Trade Union Relations and Sabaragamuwa Development	41	
Ministry of Higher Education	40	Moderately Unsatisfactory
Ministry of Rural Economy	40	
Ministry of Defence	37	
Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation	37	
Ministry of Finance	37	
Ministry of Lands and Parliamentary Reforms	37	
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	36	
Ministry of Sustainable Development and Wildlife	35	
Ministry of Megapolis and Western Development	35	
Ministry of Agriculture	35	
Ministry of Petroleum Resources Development	34	
Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment	33	
Ministry of Sports	33	
Ministry of Highways	33	
Ministry of Disaster Management	32	
Ministry of Industry and Commerce	32	
Ministry of Postal Services	32	
Ministry of National Co-existence, Dialogue and Official Languages	32	
Ministry of Women and Child Affairs	31	

Public Authority	Percentage Score (%)	Band
Ministry of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Development	31	Moderately Unsatisfactory
Ministry of Power and Renewable Energy	31	
Ministry of Telecommunication and Digital Infrastructure	31	
Ministry of Mass Media	31	
Ministry of Plantation Industries	30	
Ministry of Provincial Councils and Local Government	30	
Ministry of Law and Order, and Southern Development	28	
Ministry of Home Affairs	28	
Ministry of Tourism Development and Christian Religious Affairs	28	
Ministry of Buddha Sasana	27	
Ministry of Prison Reforms, Rehabilitation, Resettlement and Hindu Religious Affairs	27	
Ministry of Regional Development	27	
Ministry of City Planning and Water Supply	25	
Ministry of Public Enterprise Development	25	
Ministry of Development Strategies and International Trade	25	
Ministry of Housing and Construction	23	
Ministry of Ports and Shipping	22	
Ministry of Special Assignments	22	
Ministry of Irrigation and Water Resources Management	21	
Ministry of National Integration and Reconciliation	20	
Ministry of Primary Industries	19	

Public Authority	Percentage Score (%)	Band
Ministry of Science, Technology and Research	19	Moderately Unsatisfactory
Ministry of Skills Development and Vocational Training	17	
Ministry of Hill Country New Villages, Infrastructure and Community Development	17	
Ministry of Foreign Employment	15	
Ministry of Development Assignments	15	

45 public authorities (85%) scored in the 'moderately unsatisfactory' band, while only eight public authorities (15%) scored in the 'moderately satisfactory' band, as shown in Exhibit 7 below.

Exhibit 7: Adherence to Sections 8 and 9 of the RTI Act



3.4 Information Disclosure under Regulation No. 20 under the RTI Act

The following subcategories are listed under Regulation No. 20. Obligations under section 8 of the RTI Act are also included in the assessment of implementation of Regulation No. 20, to ensure statutory and regulatory compliance are assessed separately.

- 1.** Organisational structure
- 2.** Names and contact information of executive grade public officials
- 3.** Disaggregated payment information pertaining to remunerations; emoluments; allowances of executive grade public officials
- 4.** Internal rules, regulations and instructions
- 5.** Project and activity reports
- 6.** Strategic plan
- 7.** Circulars and regulations
- 8.** Legislation
- 9.** Policy memoranda and draft legislation
- 10.** Details regarding public meetings and consultations
- 11.** Publication of tenders
- 12.** Successful awards and publication of award
- 13.** Information index
- 14.** RTI requesting procedures
- 15.** Mandate
- 16.** Functions and powers
- 17.** Decision-making procedures
- 18.** Description of services offered to the public
- 19.** Accessing public services
- 20.** Projected budget for 2017
- 21.** Disbursements in 2016
- 22.** Information Officer's and Designated Officer's contact information
- 23.** Fee schedule
- 24.** Minister's report as per section 8 of the RTI Act
- 25.** Publication of information supplied under RTI

Exhibit 8 below ranks public authorities according to online proactive disclosure under the above subcategories of information. As Regulation No. 20 does not specifically require public authorities to disclose information in the 'official languages', public authorities are only ranked according to content disclosure.

Exhibit 8

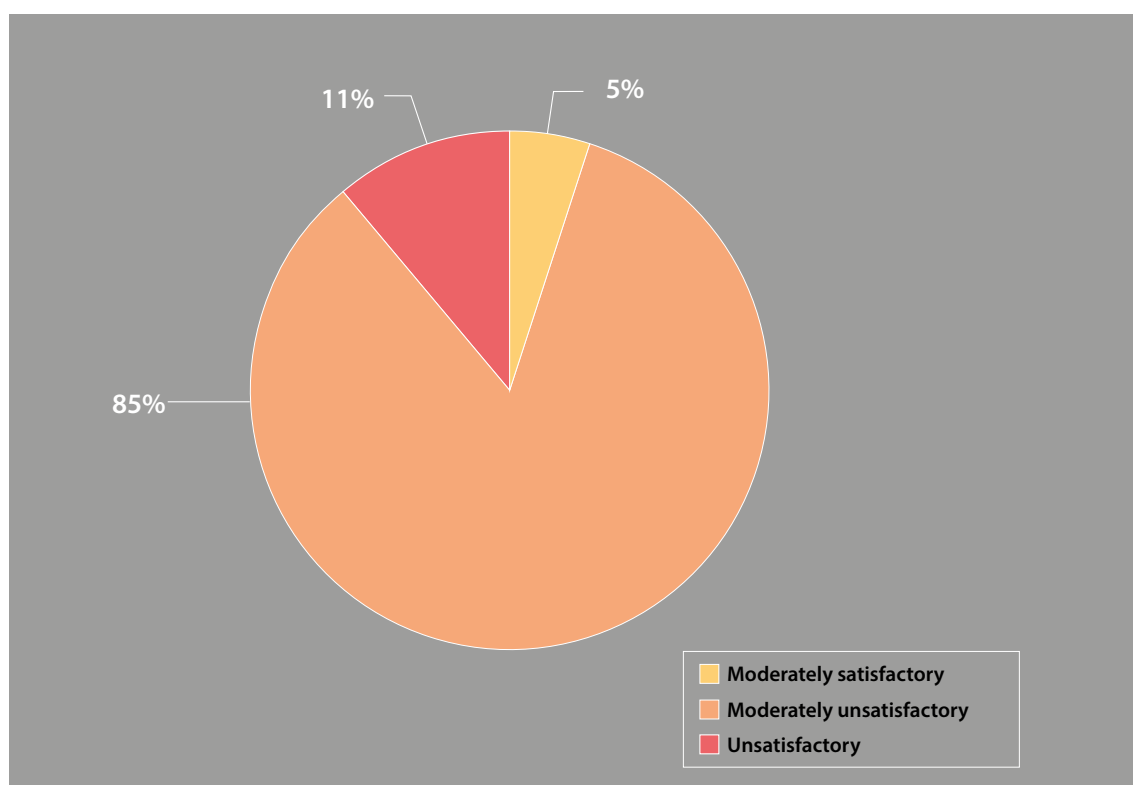
Public Authority	Percentage Score (%)	Bands
Ministry of Health	46	Moderately satisfactory
Ministry of Education	45	
Ministry of Public Administration	41	
Ministry of National Policies and Economic Affairs	40	Moderately unsatisfactory
Ministry of Justice	39	
Ministry of Social Empowerment, Welfare and Kandyan Heritage	38	
Ministry of Finance	38	
Ministry of Rural Economy	35	
Ministry of Women and Child Affairs	34	
Ministry of Higher Education	34	
Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation	33	
Ministry of Internal Affairs, Wayamba Development and Cultural Affairs	33	
Ministry of Defence	32	
Ministry of Labour, Trade Union Relations and Sabaragamuwa Development	31	
Ministry of Disaster Management	29	
Ministry of Lands and Parliamentary Reforms	29	
Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment	28	
Ministry of Law and Order, and Southern Development	28	
Ministry of Home Affairs	28	
Ministry of Telecommunication and Digital Infrastructure	27	
Ministry of National Co-existence, Dialogue and Official Languages	27	
Ministry of Highways	27	

Public Authority	Percentage Score (%)	Bands
Ministry of Provincial Councils and Local Government	26	Moderately unsatisfactory
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	26	
Ministry of Sports	26	
Ministry of Industry and Commerce	25	
Ministry of Agriculture	25	
Ministry of Postal Services	25	
Ministry of Mass Media	25	
Ministry of Sustainable Development and Wildlife	24	
Ministry of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Development	24	
Ministry of Housing and Construction	22	
Ministry of Tourism Development and Christian Religious Affairs	22	
Ministry of Petroleum Resources Development	22	
Ministry of City Planning and Water Supply	21	
Ministry of Megapolis and Western Development	21	
Ministry of Power and Renewable Energy	20	
Ministry of Prison Reforms, Rehabilitation, Resettlement and Hindu Religious Affairs	20	
Ministry of Plantation Industries	19	
Ministry of Buddha Sasana	19	
Ministry of Regional Development	19	
Ministry of Development Strategies and International Trade	16	
Ministry of Ports and Shipping	15	
Ministry of Special Assignments	14	
Ministry of Skills Development and Vocational Training	13	
Ministry of Irrigation and Water Resources Management	13	

Public Authority	Percentage Score (%)	Bands
Office of the Prime Minister	18	Moderately unsatisfactory
Ministry of National Integration and Reconciliation	11	
Ministry of Public Enterprise Development	11	
Ministry of Science, Technology and Research	9	Unsatisfactory
Ministry of Primary Industries	8	
Ministry of Hill Country New Villages, Infrastructure and Community Development	6	
Ministry of Foreign Employment	5	
Ministry of Development Assignments	5	
Office of the President	3	

Only three public authorities (5%) received a 'moderately satisfactory' score, while 42 public authorities (76%) had a 'moderately unsatisfactory' score. Seven public authorities received an 'unsatisfactory' score, while three public authorities (5%) had no content available. This breakdown is presented in Exhibit 9 below.

Exhibit 9: Adherence to Regulation No. 20



3.5 Overall Information Disclosure

Exhibit 10 below presents the overall level of compliance with respect to obligations under (a) section 8 and 9 of the RTI Act, and (b) Regulation No. 20.

Exhibit 10

Band	Sections 8 and 9 of RTI Act	Regulation 20
Moderately satisfactory	15%	6%
Moderately unsatisfactory	85%	76%
Unsatisfactory	-	13%
No content	-	5%

It is evident that there was relatively more information published in compliance with sections 8 and 9 of the RTI Act compared to information disclosures under Regulation No. 20 alone. However, higher information disclosure in the subcategories emerging from statutory obligations was largely driven by compliance with section 8.

4

Overview of Public Authority Information Disclosure

The study monitored the websites of 53 cabinet ministries, the Office of the President, and the Office of the Prime Minister. A total of 55 public authorities were assessed. Five ministries did not have websites during the monitoring period, and are discussed in section 4.

Overall, in terms of content and usability, most public authorities scored in the ‘moderately unsatisfactory’ band (11%–40%). Only 3 public authorities scored over 40%. 49 public authorities (89% of total assessed) received a ‘moderately unsatisfactory’ rating, while 3 public authorities (5%) received an ‘unsatisfactory’ rating. These ratings are perhaps to be expected given the relatively short period of time that has lapsed since the operationalisation of the RTI Act in February 2017. However, section 8 of the RTI Act stipulates that ministries proactively disclose relevant information biannually on 30 June and 31 December of each year respectively, and in any event within six months of the Act being operationalised. Hence, ministries were required to publish a report containing relevant information at least by early August 2017.

The public authorities with the **highest overall composite scores** were: the Ministry of Health, Nutrition and Indigenous Medicine (hereinafter referred to as ‘Ministry of Health’) with a score of 47%, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of National Policies and Economic Affairs with 42% each, and the Ministry of Finance with 40%. The top three public authorities fell within the ‘moderately satisfactory’ band, while the Ministry of Finance fell within the ‘moderately unsatisfactory’ band.

The public authorities (that possess their own websites) with the **lowest overall composite scores** were: the Ministry of Primary Industries with 11%, the Ministry of Public Enterprise Development with 13%, the Ministry of National Integration and Reconciliation with 13%, and the Office of the

President with 13%, all falling within the ‘moderately unsatisfactory’ band. The Office of the Prime Minister scored 28% – which also places it in the ‘moderately unsatisfactory’ band.

Exhibit 11 below presents the overall composite scores for all the public authorities assessed in this study. This score represents a weighted combination of scores from content disclosure and usability.

Exhibit 11

Public Authority	Percentage Score (%)	Band
Ministry of Health	47	Moderately Satisfactory
Ministry of Education	42	
Ministry of National Policies and Economic Affairs	42	
Ministry of Finance	40	Moderately Unsatisfactory
Ministry of Public Administration	39	
Ministry of Justice	38	
Ministry of Social Empowerment, Welfare and Kandyan Heritage	37	
Ministry of Internal Affairs, Wayamba Development and Cultural Affairs	35	
Ministry of Higher Education	33	
Ministry of Rural Economy	33	
Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation	32	
Ministry of Women and Child Affairs	32	
Ministry of Highways	31	
Ministry of Defence	31	
Ministry of Disaster Management	30	
Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment	30	
Ministry of Lands and Parliamentary Reforms	29	
Ministry of Labour, Trade Union Relations and Sabaragamuwa Development	29	

Public Authority	Percentage Score (%)	Band
Ministry of Home Affairs	28	Moderately Unsatisfactory
Office of the Prime Minister	28	
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	27	
Ministry of Law and Order, and Southern Development	27	
Ministry of Provincial Councils and Local Government	27	
Ministry of Agriculture	27	
Ministry of National Co-existence, Dialogue and Official Languages	26	
Ministry of Sports	26	
Ministry of Telecommunication and Digital Infrastructure	26	
Ministry of Megapolis and Western Development	26	
Ministry of Industry and Commerce	25	
Ministry of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Development	25	
Ministry of Housing and Construction	25	
Ministry of Petroleum Resources Development	24	
Ministry of Postal Services	24	
Ministry of Mass Media	24	
Ministry of Sustainable Development and Wildlife	23	
Ministry of City Planning and Water Supply	23	
Ministry of Power and Renewable Energy	22	
Ministry of Tourism Development and Christian Religious Affairs	22	
Ministry of Buddha Sasana	21	
Ministry of Prison Reforms, Rehabilitation, Resettlement and Hindu Religious Affairs	21	
Ministry of Regional Development	21	

Public Authority	Percentage Score (%)	Band
Ministry of Plantation Industries	21	Moderately Unsatisfactory
Ministry of Ports and Shipping	17	
Ministry of Development Strategies and International Trade	17	
Ministry of Irrigation and Water Resources Management	16	
Ministry of Skills Development and Vocational Training	15	
Office of the President	13	
Ministry of Science, Technology and Research	13	
Ministry of National Integration and Reconciliation	13	
Ministry of Public Enterprise Development	13	
Ministry of Special Assignments	12	
Ministry of Primary Industries	11	Unsatisfactory
Ministry of Hill Country New Villages, Infrastructure and Community Development	9	
Ministry of Foreign Employment	7	
Ministry of Development Assignments	7	

The public authorities with the **highest content disclosure ratings** were: the Ministry of Health (43%), the Ministry of Education (39%), and the Ministry of National Policies and Economic Affairs (38%). The public authorities with the **lowest content disclosure ratings** for those that had websites were: the Ministry of Primary Industries (9%), the Office of the President (10%), and the Ministry of Public Enterprise Development (11%).

The categories in which public authorities provided the most up-to-date and complete information were *Budgets, Expenditure and Finances* (category score of 67%), *Institutional Information* (49%) and *Public Policy, Legislation and Regulation* (35%).

The categories in which the least amount of information was disclosed was *Prior Disclosures of Information* (0%), *Prior Disclosures of Public Investments under section 9 of RTI Act* (13%), and *Categorisation of, and Systems for, Accessing Information* (14%). Notably, these three categories are directly related to the right to information i.e. information that enables the right to information. Thus there is an 'unsatisfactory' level of RTI-relevant online proactive disclosure of information across public

authorities.

The public authorities with the **highest usability scores** were the Ministry of Health (59%), the Ministry of National Policies and Economic Affairs (53%), and the Ministry of Education (51%). The public authorities (that possess their own websites) with the **lowest usability scores** were: the Ministry of Primary Industries (17%), the Ministry of Public Enterprise Development (17%), and the Ministry of National Integration and Reconciliation (18%).

5

Public Authorities that Lacked Websites

Five ministerial portfolios did not have a functioning website during the period of monitoring. These portfolios were the:

- 1.** Ministry of Science, Technology and Research
- 2.** Ministry of Foreign Employment
- 3.** Ministry of Development Assignments
- 4.** Ministry of Special Assignments
- 5.** Ministry of Hill Country New Villages, Infrastructure and Community Development

At the end of the pilot monitoring period, at 31 July 2017, eight ministerial portfolios did not have websites. However, at the end of the second monitoring period (24 October 2017), the Ministry of Buddha Sasana, the Ministry of National Co-existence, Dialogue and Official Languages, and the Ministry of Home Affairs had websites. By contrast, the Ministry of Science, Technology and Research – which had a website during the pilot monitoring period – did not have a functioning website during the second monitoring period. The above indicates that there is likely to be a degree of fluctuation and unpredictability in the accessibility of public authority websites.

Two of the five portfolios that did not have websites were gazetted in the period between January 2015 and May 2017. They were: the Ministry of Development Assignments and the Ministry of Special Assignments. Thus there appears to be a correlation between newly constituted ministries, and ministries that did not have a functioning website.

Despite these ministries lacking specially designated websites of their own, VR scored any information

disclosure relevant to these ministries that took place on any other easily accessed government website. It was not possible to search and assess all government websites for such information. Thus VR confined such scoring to instances where the relevant information could be found on another government website reflected in the 'top results' of an online search using the name of the public authority (that lacked a website).

6

General Trends on Content Disclosure

A number of trends regarding the online proactive disclosure of content that emerged during the monitoring period are discussed below. First, this section presents the public authority rankings for content disclosure, including each public authority's percentage score and the correlating information disclosure band. Second, it discusses information disclosure trends among the top-ranking and bottom-ranking public authorities.

6.1 Ranking Content Disclosures

The disclosure of content was monitored across English, Sinhala and Tamil. Public authorities were awarded the highest possible score for stipulated categories if up-to-date and complete information was disclosed – regardless of the language it was available in. Thus the assessment of content disclosure was language neutral.

No public authority received a score higher than 43% for content disclosure. 20 public authorities (36% of all public authorities assessed) scored between 25% and 43%, while 31 public authorities (56%) scored between 10% and 24% for content disclosure. 4 public authorities (7%) scored between 0% and 9%.

Exhibits 12 and 13 below present the public authorities' content disclosure percentage scores, and their corresponding information disclosure band. The exhibits highlight that a majority of public authorities (89%) are rated within the 'moderately unsatisfactory' information disclosure band. Only one public authority, the Ministry of Health is rated within the 'moderately satisfactory' information disclosure band.

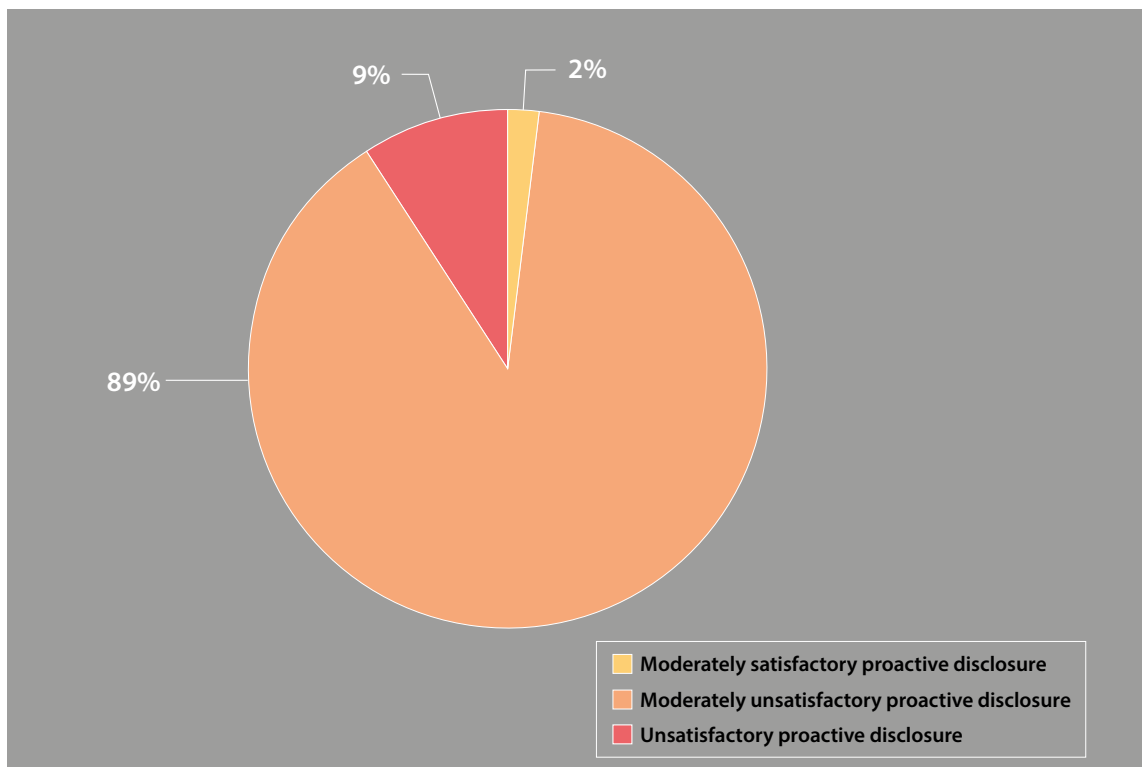
Exhibit 12

Public Authority	Percentage score (%)	Band
Ministry of Health	43	Moderately satisfactory
Ministry of Education	39	Moderately unsatisfactory
Ministry of National Policies and Economic Affairs	38	
Ministry of Finance	36	
Ministry of Public Administration	36	
Ministry of Justice	34	
Ministry of Social Empowerment, Welfare and Kandyan Heritage	33	
Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation	31	
Ministry of Internal Affairs, Wayamba Development and Cultural Affairs	31	
Ministry of Rural Economy	31	
Ministry of Women and Child Affairs	30	
Ministry of Higher Education	30	
Ministry of Defence	28	
Ministry of Labour, Trade Union Relations and Sabaragamuwa Development	27	
Ministry of Disaster Management	26	
Ministry of Lands and Parliamentary Reforms	26	
Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment	25	
Ministry of Law and Order and Southern Development	25	
Ministry of Home Affairs	25	
Office of the Prime Minister	25	

Public Authority	Percentage score (%)	Band
Ministry of Telecommunication and Digital Infrastructure	24	Moderately Unsatisfactory
Ministry of National Co-existence Dialogue and Official Languages	24	
Ministry of Highways	24	
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	23	
Ministry of Megapolis and Western Development	23	
Ministry of Agriculture	23	
Ministry of Sports	23	
Ministry of Provincial Councils and Local Government	23	
Ministry of Industry and Commerce	22	
Ministry of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Development	22	
Ministry of Postal Services	22	
Ministry of Mass Media	22	
Ministry of Petroleum Resources Development	22	
Ministry of Sustainable Development and Wildlife	21	
Ministry of Housing and Construction	21	
Ministry of Tourism Development and Christian Religious Affairs	20	
Ministry of City Planning and Water Supply	19	
Ministry of Power and Renewable Energy	19	
Ministry of Prison Reforms, Rehabilitation, Resettlement and Hindu Religious Affairs	18	
Ministry of Plantation Industries	17	
Ministry of Buddha Sasana	17	

Public Authority	Percentage score (%)	Band
Ministry of Regional Development	17	Moderately Unsatisfactory
Ministry of Development Strategies and International Trade	15	
Ministry of Ports and Shipping	14	
Ministry of Special Assignments	13	
Ministry of Skills Development and Vocational Training	13	
Ministry of Irrigation and Water Resources Management	13	
Ministry of National Integration and Reconciliation	11	
Ministry of Public Enterprise Development	11	
Ministry of Science, Technology and Research	11	
Office of the President	10	Unsatisfactory
Ministry of Primary Industries	9	
Ministry of Hill Country New Villages Infrastructure and Community Development	7	
Ministry of Foreign Employment	6	
Ministry of Development Assignments	6	

Exhibit 13: Content Disclosure



6.2 Content Disclosure Trends: Top-Ranking Public Authority Websites

The four public authorities that scored the highest for content disclosure included: the Ministry of Health (43%), the Ministry of Education (39%), the Ministry of National Policies and Economic Affairs (38%), and the Ministry of Finance (36%). It is noted that the language neutrality of the assessment impacted the ranking. If for instance, content availability was assessed purely on information disclosure in English, the Ministry of Health would not have scored 43%. The Ministry of Health scored more points due to the assessment considering additional content disclosures in Sinhala and/or Tamil.

These top-ranking ministries disclosed information of both a procedural nature as well as a substantive nature. Procedural information related to information that pertains to the day-to-day functions of a public authority (e.g. organisational information). Substantive information related to information on the performance of the public authority in accordance with its functions (e.g. financial disbursements and project activity progress).

The four top-ranking ministries gained high scores for procedural information disclosures in the *Organisational Information* and *Operational Information and Decision-making Processes* categories. The Ministry Health, the Ministry of Education, the Ministries of National Policies and Economic Affairs, and the Ministry of Finance also scored relatively highly in terms of publishing information of a substantive nature, such as information in the *Public Policy, Legislation and Regulation* and

Public Procurement and Subsidies categories. These three ministries also published some RTI-relevant information in the *Categorisation of, and Systems for, Accessing Information* category, scoring points in subcategories such as *Information Officer and Designated Officer contact information, RTI Requesting Procedures* and *Information Index*.

However, none of the above ministries achieved the maximum number of points attainable in any category or subcategory. The failure to achieve maximum points can be attributed to the fact that the ministries generally failed to indicate the currency or completeness of information on their websites. This trend was observed across public authorities that were monitored in the assessment. For example, the top-ranking public authority – the Ministry of Health – had published relevant information but did not indicate how up-to-date the information was. As such, there were no data stamps for information published in the subcategories *Mandate and Vision* and *Organisational Structure*. Furthermore, none of the top-ranking ministries scored any points in the category *Prior Disclosures of Information*.

Notably, there was a distinct lack of online proactive disclosure among these top-performing ministries on categories pertaining to public engagement with ministerial functions – i.e. *Public Services* and *Public Participation*. While the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education received only half the available number of points for *Public Services* (4 out of a maximum of 8 points), and the Ministry of Finance only scored 1 point. In fact, two pages (on hospital based care, and public health services) featured under ‘our services’ on the Ministry of Health website were ‘under construction’ during much of assessment period. Moreover, information about public meetings was particularly limited. Only the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of National Policies and Economic Affairs provided some information on *Public Participation*, whereas the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Finance both scored 0. This lack of information on *Public Participation* was a common trend across all public authorities monitored during the course of the assessment.

Exhibit 14 below provides the individual category scores for each of the ten top-ranking public authorities, including the four highest scoring authorities discussed above.

Exhibit 14

Category	Ministry of Health	Ministry of Education	Ministry of National Policies and Economic Affairs	Ministry of Finance	Ministry of Public Administration	Ministry of Justice	Ministry of Social Empowerment, Welfare and Kandyan Heritage	Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation	Ministry of Internal Affairs, Wayamba Development and Cultural Affairs	Ministry of Rural Economy
Institutional Mandate (out of 6)	2	5	4	3	4	5	4	4	4	4
Organisational Information (out of 10)	5	4	5	3	4	5	3	4	4	5
Operational Information and Decision-Making Processes (out of 14)	5	4	2	5	6	4	6	3	2	4
Public Services (out of 8)	4	4	N/A	1	5	4	3	3	4	4
Public Policy, Legislation and Regulation (out of 12)	7	8	8	8	4	7	7	6	7	5
Public Participation (out of 3)	0	2	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	0
Public Procurement and Subsidies (out of 7)	3	4	2	4	0	0	2	2	0	2
Budgets, Expenditure and Finances (out of 6)	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Categorisation of, and Systems for, Accessing Information (out of 15)	9	3	5	4	8	3	2	1	2	2
Prior Disclosures of Information (out of 4)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Prior Disclosures of Public Investments Under Section 9 of RTI Act (out of 19)	6	3	5	5	2	2	2	4	4	2
Total Applicable Score	45	41	36	37	37	35	34	32	32	32
Total Percentage Score	43%	39%	38%	36%	36%	34%	33%	31%	31%	31%

6.3 Content Disclosure Trends: Bottom-Ranking Public Authority Websites

Public authorities without websites were scored based on information found outside their primary website. The following bottom-ranking public authorities exclude those lacking a website.

The four lowest scores for content disclosure, among the public authorities that had websites, were the Ministry of Primary Industries at 9%, the Office of the President at 10%, the Ministry of Public Enterprise Development at 11%, and the Ministry of National Integration and Reconciliation at 11%.

These public authorities provided minimal levels of procedural information, such as *Institutional Information* and *Organisational Information*. Only the Ministry of Primary Industries and the Ministry of National Integration and Reconciliation provided any information on *Operational Information and Decision-making Processes* (scoring 1 point). Moreover, none of these public authorities provided any information pertaining to the following categories:

1. Public Policy, Legislation and Regulation
2. Public Services
3. Prior Disclosures of Information

Moreover, a number of bottom-ranking ministries failed to publish substantive information on their primary websites. For example, the Ministry of Primary Industries, the Office of the President, the Ministry of Public Enterprise Development, and the Ministry of National Reconciliation and Integration did not have any budgetary information on their primary websites. Budgetary information relevant to these ministries was only available on the website of the Ministry of Finance.

Exhibit 15 below provides the individual category scores for each of the ten bottom-ranking public authority websites.

Exhibit 15

Category	Ministry of Primary Industries	Office of the President	Ministry of Public Enterprise Development	Ministry of National Integration and Reconciliation	Ministry of Irrigation & Water Resources Management	Ministry of Skills Development and Vocational Training	Ministry of Ports and Shipping	Ministry of Development Strategies and International Trade	Ministry of Regional Development	Ministry of Buddha Sasana	Ministry of Plantation Industries
Institutional Mandate (out of 6)	1	2	3	1	2	0	1	2	4	2	4
Organisational Information (out of 10)	0	1	2	0	2	1	3	1	4	4	4

Category	Ministry of Primary Industries	Office of the President	Ministry of Public Enterprise Development	Ministry of National Integration and Reconciliation	Ministry of Irrigation & Water Resources Management	Ministry of Skills Development and Vocational Training	Ministry of Ports and Shipping	Ministry of Development Strategies and International Trade	Ministry of Regional Development	Ministry of Buddha Sasana	Ministry of Plantation Industries
Operational Information and Decision-Making Processes (out of 14)	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	2	1	0
Public Services (out of 8)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	0	1	0
Public Policy, Legislation and Regulation (out of 12)	0	0	0	0	0	4	3	4	0	2	1
Public Participation (out of 3)	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1
Public Procurement and Subsidies (out of 7)	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Budgets, Expenditure and Finances (out of 6)w	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Categorisation of, and Systems for, Accessing Information (out of 15)	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	2	2
Prior Disclosures of Information (out of 4)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Prior Disclosures of Public Investments Under Section 9 of RTI Act (out of 19)	2	N/A	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Total Applicable Score	9	8	11	11	13	13	15	14	18	18	18
Total Percentage Score	9%	10%	11%	11%	13%	13%	14%	15%	17%	17%	17%

In conclusion, while top-performing public authorities disclosed procedural and substantive information (including information relevant to RTI), the bottom-ranking public authorities only disclosed minimal procedural information. These public authorities did not disclose any substantive information or RTI-relevant information essential for public engagement with these authorities.

6.4 Content Disclosure Trends: Location of Information

In certain instances, information that could not be located on a public authority's primary website could be located on alternate government websites. The Department of Government Printing contains legislation and regulatory information applicable to ministries. For instance, at least 50% of legislation applicable to the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education was published on the Department of Government Printing website: <http://documents.gov.lk>. These ministries both failed to publish legislation on their primary website. However, they were awarded 3 points in the *Legislation* subcategory. Moreover, the Parliament website also publishes draft legislation that is not routinely published on the primary websites of public authorities. For example, although the Ministry of Transport did not have draft legislation on its primary website, the Parliament website published draft legislation titled 'Motor Traffic (Amendment) to amend the Motor Traffic Act (Chapter 203)'. Accordingly, the ministry scored 2 for the *Policy Memoranda and Draft Legislation* subcategory.

The website of the Department of Project Management and Monitoring published a report of projects implemented through the capital budget in 2016. The report includes financial information relevant to projects implemented through ministries (e.g. allocated budgets, and utilised funds). Financial information relating to *Project Costs* was also available in the above report, even though they were not published on the primary websites of certain public authorities such as the Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture. Moreover, the website of the Ministry of Finance published budget estimates for 2017. The report includes a breakdown of estimated expenditure for 2017 and 2016 by Ministry. Therefore, although a number of ministries failed to provide information on *Budgets, Expenditure and Finances* on their primary websites, such information could be accessed on the website of the Ministry of Finance, and was accordingly assessed.

7

Information Disclosure by Category and Thematic Area

Each category of information was scored by calculating the number of points achieved across all the relevant public authorities as a percentage of the total possible number of points attainable under each category (e.g. *Institutional Information* category score = $(163/330)*100$). Exhibit 16 below depicts the category scores for online proactive disclosure of information across all the public authorities surveyed.

Exhibit 16

Categories	Percentage Score (%)
Budgets, Expenditure and Finances	67
Institutional Information	49
Public Policy Legislation and Regulation	35
Organisational Information	27
Public Participation	20
Public Services	17
Operational Information and Decision-making Processes	16
Public Procurement and Subsidies	15
Categorisation of, and Systems for, Accessing Information	14

Categories	Percentage Score (%)
Prior Disclosures of Public Investments under section 9 of RTI Act	13
Prior Disclosures of Information	0

Overall, public authorities were more likely to provide procedural information, such as their *Institutional Information* and *Organisational Information*, on their primary websites. This information included vision and mission statements, organisational charts, and the powers and functions of the authority. The category *Institutional Information* scored 49%. 93% of public authorities surveyed provided at least some relevant information pertaining to this category on their websites. The only public authorities that did not provide this information were the:

1. Ministry of Skills Development and Vocational Training
2. Ministry of Foreign Employment
3. Ministry of Development Assignments
4. Ministry of Hill Country, New Villages, Infrastructure and Community Development

These ministries are thus failing to comply with minimum obligations under the RTI Act.

Meanwhile, although public authorities disclosed descriptive information on their relevant functions on their websites, there was less activity-related information relevant to (a) the performance of public authorities, or (b) the methods through which citizens could use and participate in government systems. The *Public Participation* category scored 20% overall.

Substantive information regarding a number of public authorities was available in other locations (i.e. not on the primary website). For instance, the Ministry of Finance contained budgetary information pertaining to all ministries, and www.documents.gov.lk contained legislation pertaining to a number of ministries. Thus two substantive categories – *Budgets, Expenditure and Finances* and *Public Policy, Legislation and Regulation* – scored 67% and 49% respectively, as information that was disclosed on secondary websites was also factored into the assessment.

Access to information in the above categories is essential to enable the public to effectively hold the government accountable to its policy positions, curb corruption, and access government services. Accordingly, the following section analyses information disclosures under the thematic areas of (a) public accountability, (b) public accessibility, and (c) disclosures pertaining to the right to information.

7.1 Public Accountability

Public accountability involves the ability to scrutinise government policy positions and the disbursement of public finances. The online proactive disclosure of information can enable the public to scrutinise and question policy positions and decisions on public finance. This section analyses the extent of information disclosure with respect to (a) financial information, and (b) decision-making and regulatory information.

7.1.1 Financial Information

Information that would improve financial accountability was lacking across public authorities' primary websites. However, as discussed above, much of public authorities' budgetary information could be found on the website of the Ministry of Finance. The categories that contain financial information are: *Budgets, Expenditure and Finance* and *Public Procurement and Subsidies*. The scores for information disclosure in the *Budgets, Expenditure and Finance* and the *Public Procurement and Subsidies* categories were 67% and 15% respectively.

The subcategories and their respective scores under the *Budgets, Expenditure and Finance* category were:

1. Projected Budget for 2017 – 100%
2. Disbursements in 2016 – 50%

Public authorities provided minimal information regarding *Projected Budgets for 2017* on their primary websites. In some instances, a public authority's budgetary information could be found in publications that did not directly correspond with its financial information (e.g. strategic plans). This placement of financial information resulted in significant time-lags in locating relevant information on the public authority's website.

However, detailed budgetary information was hosted on the Ministry of Finance website. The data provided was disaggregated and contained the following types of budgetary information:

1. Projected recurrent expenditure
2. Projected capital expenditure

In terms of *Disbursements in 2016*, some data was available in progress reports and performance reports published on public authorities' websites. For instance, progress reports contained a breakdown of disbursements for each project, including salaries, and transport and maintenance costs. Information on the Ministry of Finance website detailed disbursements both in terms of actual recurrent expenditure and capital expenditure (e.g. salaries, travelling expenses and investments).

No public authority scored the maximum points available for *Disbursements in 2016*. The shortfall was due to the fact that a detailed breakdown of disbursements was not provided (i.e. while some information was provided on how funds were disbursed, a particular allocation of funds was referred to only as 'other' disbursements).

The subcategories and their respective scores for the *Public Procurement and Subsidies* were:

1. Publication of Tenders - 22%
2. Successful Awards and Publication of Awards - 5%

Some websites were awarded points for *Publication of Tenders* yet it was difficult to assess how

complete or comprehensive the information on tenders was. The level of detail of the tender notices varied across public authorities, with some notices outlining minimal information pertaining to the project (e.g. a brief outline of the project and a contact number), while others provided a more detailed explanation of the project's technical requirements. Very few public authorities shared information in the *Successful Awards and Publication of Awards* subcategory.

In general, information on tenders was incomplete. For example, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Wayamba Development and Cultural Affairs' website had a 'Procurement Division', yet there were no tender notices posted on the website. The Ministry of Rural Economy provided a procurement plan for 2017, with a list detailing costs and sources of funding. However, the 'current status' section relating to 'procurement preparedness activity' on the website was incomplete.

Overall, gaps in the disclosure of information pertaining to tender awards had limited stakeholders' ability to challenge discrepancies and bias in tender processes.

The public authorities that received the highest proportions of the 2017 national budget were: the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Provincial Councils and Local Government, the Ministry of Public Administration, and the Ministry of Higher Education and Highways. Together, these ministries account for over 70% of proposed government expenditure. The online proactive disclosure of financial information, including budgetary allocations and expenditure of these public authorities is presented in Exhibit 18.

The *Projected Budgets for 2017* for these ministries were available on the Ministry of Finance website, as were details regarding *Disbursements in 2016*. Only the Ministry of Public Administration did not disclose information regarding the *Publication of Tenders*. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Highways scored full marks for this subcategory. Furthermore, information disclosure in the subcategory *Successful Awards and Publication of Awards* was minimal; the Ministry of Highways, the Ministry of Public Administration and the Ministry of Provincial Councils and Local Government scored 0 in this subcategory.

Exhibit 17

Subcategory	Ministry of Finance	Ministry of Defence	Ministry of Provincial Councils and Local Government	Ministry of Public Administration	Ministry of Highways	Ministry of Higher Education
Projected Budget for 2017 (out of 2)	2	2	2	2	2	2
Disbursements for 2016 (out of 4)	2	2	2	2	2	2

Subcategory	Ministry of Finance	Ministry of Defence	Ministry of Provincial Councils and Local Government	Ministry of Public Administration	Ministry of Highways	Ministry of Higher Education
Publication of Tenders (out of 4)	3	2	2	0	4	1
Successful Awards and Publication of Awards (out of 3)	1	2	0	0	0	1

7.1.2 Decision-Making and Regulatory Information

There are two categories that correspond to a citizen's ability to scrutinise decision-making processes and policymaking within government. These categories are *Operational Information and Decision-Making Processes* and *Public Policy, Legislation and Regulation*. These categories scored 16% and 35% respectively.

In terms of *Operational Information and Decision-Making Processes*, public authorities generally disclosed project and activity reports, but failed to disclose information on their internal rules, regulations, decision-making processes and outcomes.

The highest scoring public authorities, which achieved 6 points each out of a maximum of 14 points for this category, were the:

1. Ministry of Public Administration
2. Ministry of Social Empowerment, Welfare and Kandyan Heritage

Both these public authorities provided up-to-date strategic plans, and (incomplete) project and activity reports. However, the Ministry of Public Administration did not provide any information on decision-making procedures.

In total, 25% of the public authorities scored 0 for this category. These public authorities included the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Ports and Shipping, and the Ministry of Labour.

Under the *Public Policy, Legislation and Regulation* category, accessing information on legislation and regulations under the purview of the public authority proved challenging. Legislation and regulations published on primary websites were often incomplete, and websites failed to disclose the totality of legislation and regulations that pertained to the public authority. Additionally, some legislation that was not published on the primary websites of public authorities was located on www.documents.gov.lk. Accordingly, information disclosure on secondary websites was considered in this category. The public authorities that obtained the highest scores (8 points out of a maximum

of 12 points) were the:

1. Ministry of Finance
2. Ministry of Education
3. Ministry of National Policies and Economic Affairs
4. Ministry of Home Affairs

These ministries published a wide range of up-to-date circulars applicable to each ministry. However, these ministries did not publish up-to-date and comprehensive policy memoranda and draft legislation. In total, 18% of the public authorities surveyed (including those without primary websites) scored 0 for this category.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Justice scored 7 points out of 12 in the *Public Policy, Legislation and Regulation* category. While its own website and the Parliament website contained most of the legislation under its purview, the Ministry of Justice did not publish up-to-date and comprehensive policy memoranda and draft legislation, and circulars and regulations on its primary website.

Overall, the relatively poor performance of public authorities in the *Operational Information and Decision-Making Processes*, and *Public Policy, Legislation and Regulation* categories limits the capacity of citizens to participate in policymaking. Furthermore, the negligible level of information available with regard to decision-making processes could undermine transparency in the public sector.

7.2 Public Accessibility

Public accessibility refers to information disclosures that detail the process for utilising public services and engaging with public authorities. Such information enables the public to obtain timely services from government, participate in public meetings, and identify which public officers to approach when obtaining public services or information. Exhibit 19 below presents the categories relevant to promoting public accessibility and their corresponding scores.

Exhibit 18

Categories	Percentage Score (%)
Public Participation	20%
Organisational Information	27%
Public Services	17%

Information pertaining to *Public Participation*, including details on public meetings and consultations, was limited. Only one public authority – the Ministry of Education – scored 2 out of a maximum of 3 points. The website of the Ministry of Telecommunications and Digital Infrastructure had a tab detailing ‘latest events’, and was the only public authority to publish an agenda from one of its

events, scoring 1 point. Public authorities were awarded 1 point if they published photographs of public events, along with information such as the date and name of the past event. 42% of public authorities (including those without websites) scored 0 in this category.

Similarly, information regarding *Public Services* was lacking. The highest scoring public authority in this category – the Ministry of Public Administration – scored 5 out of a maximum of 8 points. Very few public authorities supplied information on the subcategory *Accessing Public Services*. 49% of public authorities (including those without websites) scored 0 for the *Public Services* category. These public authorities included the Ministry of Postal Services and the Ministry of Housing and Construction – ministries that are expected to provide day-to-day services to citizens. Some public authorities had a list of services, while others included a detailed description of what the services were. For example, the Ministry of Education disclosed detailed information on the Education Administrative Service, Teacher Educator Services, Sri Lanka Principal Service, and Sri Lanka Teacher Service. The Ministry of Sustainable Development and Wildlife provided information regarding community education programmes and school-based education programmes.

There was relatively more information published regarding *Organisational Information*. 87% of public authorities published some level of information in this category. However, the highest score received for this category was 5 out of a maximum of 10 points. The public authorities that received 5 out of 10 points were the:

1. Ministry of Health
2. Ministry of National Policies and Economic Affairs
3. Ministry of Justice
4. Ministry of Home Affairs
5. Ministry of Rural Economy
6. Ministry of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Development
7. Ministry of Postal Services

Most public authorities provided an organisational chart, and the names and contact information of executive grade public officials. However, no public authority provided disaggregated payment information pertaining to remunerations and emoluments.

7.3 Disclosures Pertaining to the Right to Information

A citizen's ability to utilise the RTI Act to file information requests is dependent on public authorities disclosing information that indicates whether, how, and to whom information requests should be submitted. The three categories on information disclosure pertaining to RTI were: *Categorisation of, and Systems for, Accessing Information*; *Prior Disclosures of Information*; and *Prior Disclosures of Public Investments Under Section 9 of the RTI Act*.

In general, information disclosures pertaining to RTI procedures and previous RTI requests were relatively low across public authorities (see Exhibit 19).

Exhibit 19(A)

Subcategories	Percentage Score (%)
Categorisation of, and Systems for, Accessing Information	
Information index	18
RTI requesting procedures	9
Information Officer's and Designated Officer's contact information	51
Fee schedule	9
Minister's report as per section 8 of the RTI Act	0

Exhibit 19(B)

Subcategories	Percentage Score (%)
Prior Disclosures of Information	
Publication of information supplied under RTI	0

Exhibit 19(C)

Subcategories	Percentage Score (%)
Prior Disclosures of Public Investments Under Section 9 of the RTI Act	
Notification of project commencement	6
Pre-feasibility and feasibility studies of projects	3
Terms and conditions of investment (including expected costs, benefits and rate of return)	1
Detailed project costs (including disaggregated budgets)	50
Monitoring and evaluation reports	3

A majority of public authority websites analysed made no mention of the RTI Act, or the contact details for their respective Information Officers and Designated Officers. However, these details could be located on the government's RTI website, www.rti.gov.lk. Notably, the website of the Ministry of Mass Media – the public authority responsible for the implementation of the RTI Act – did not provide contact details for its Information Officer and Designated Officer on its primary website. Furthermore, the Ministry of Mass Media scored 0 in both the *Prior Disclosures of Information* and *Prior Disclosures of Public Investments Under Section 9 of the RTI Act* categories. The only RTI-relevant information published by the Ministry of Mass Media was *RTI Requesting Procedures*.

Under the category *Categorisation of, and Systems for, Accessing Information*, the Ministry of Health scored the highest number of points (9 out of a maximum of 15 points), followed by the Ministry of Public Administration, with 8 points. 20% of public authorities scored 0 for this category, while 53% scored only 1 or 2 points. No public authority has yet published a *Minister's Report as per Section 8 of the RTI Act*.

Some public authority websites contained indices of information and publications. However, the level of detail and the structure of these disclosures of information varied greatly across websites. For example, although the Ministry of Telecommunication and Digital Infrastructure had a drop-down menu of 'Publications', links to publications such as 'Reports of Ministry' did not work and redirected the user back to the home page. By contrast, the Ministry of Health had a list of publications available for download, including documents available in all three official languages.

The online proactive disclosure of information that was previously requested via information requests under the RTI Act could greatly reduce the volume of information requests in the future. Such online proactive disclosure is in the interests of the public authorities, as it will reduce processing time and the administrative strain on information officers. However, no public authority published any information under the category *Prior Disclosures of Information*.

The disclosure of information pertaining to *Public Investments under Section 9 of the RTI Act* was generally higher with regard to *Detailed Project Costs*. However, this information could be found on the primary websites of only 41% public authorities. For 59% of public authorities, this information could only be found in a report available on the website of the Ministry of Finance.¹⁰ The Ministry of Health provided an Excel Sheet of project costs for one particular project, which included a clear breakdown of how funds were allocated. However, this was not consistently applied to other projects reported on its website. Disclosure of other public investment-related information, such as *Monitoring and Evaluation Reports, Terms and Conditions of Investments, and Pre-feasibility and Feasibility studies* was negligible.

7.4 Information Disclosures on Most Discussed Topics

According to data analysed by Manthri.lk,¹¹ a parliamentary monitoring platform, the most discussed topics in Parliament between 1 September 2015 and 31 August 2017 were:

1. Economic policy and development (assigned to the Ministry of National Policies and Economic Affairs)
2. Disaster management (assigned to the Ministry of Disaster Management)
3. Land (assigned to the Ministry of Lands and Parliamentary Reforms)

¹⁰ *Ministry of Finance*, Budget Estimates (2017). In addition, information on planned public investment is detailed in the 'Public Investment Programme 2017-2020'. This programme includes total budget information and annual allocation for projects under each ministry. However this programme was not monitored during the course of this study.

¹¹ *Manthri.lk*, accessible at: <http://www.manthri.lk>.

Despite the importance of the above ministries, information disclosure on their websites has been relatively poor (see Exhibit 20). For example, the Ministry of Disaster Management failed to provide information relating to *Public Services*. The absence of such information in the aftermath of a natural disaster could adversely affect displaced persons without access to emergency healthcare and sanitation. Moreover, the Ministry of Lands and Parliamentary Reforms did not disclose information relating to *Operational Information and Decision-Making Processes*. Additionally, the Ministry of Disaster Management failed to provide details relating to *Public Participation* on their websites.

Exhibit 20

Category	Ministry of National Policies and Economic Affairs	Ministry of Disaster Management	Ministry of Lands and Parliamentary Reforms
Institutional Mandate (out of 6)	4	3	4
Organisational Information (out of 10)	5	4	4
Operational Information and Decision-Making Processes (out of 14)	2	5	0
Public Services (out of 8)	N/A	0	4
Public Policy, Legislation and Regulation (out of 12)	8	6	3
Public Participation (out of 3)	1	0	1
Public Procurement and Subsidies (out of 7)	2	1	2
Budgets, Expenditure and Finances (out of 6)	4	4	4
Categorisation of, and Systems for, Accessing Information (out of 15)	5	2	3
Prior Disclosures of Information (out of 4)	0	0	0
Prior Disclosures of Public Investments Under Section 9 of RTI Act (out of 19)	5	2	2
Total Applicable Score	36	27	27
Total Percentage Score	38%	26%	26%

8

Usability

8.1 Language Accessibility

English was the most widely used language medium for information disclosure, followed by Sinhala and Tamil. Exhibit 21 presents all public authorities assessed, in alphabetical order, and their information disclosure scores in English, Sinhala, and Tamil.

Exhibit 21

Public Authority	Language Percentage Score		
	English	Sinhala	Tamil
Ministry of Agriculture	37	47	30
Ministry of Buddha Sasana	40	30	13
Ministry of City Planning and Water Supply	37	30	30
Ministry of Defence	47	33	23
Ministry of Development Assignments	10	10	10
Ministry of Development Strategies and International Trade	29	11	11
Ministry of Disaster Management	50	27	30

Public Authority	Language Percentage Score		
	English	Sinhala	Tamil
Ministry of Education	60	50	30
Ministry of Finance	63	30	37
Ministry of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Development	33	33	33
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	50	23	20
Ministry of Foreign Employment	10	10	10
Ministry of Health	70	40	27
Ministry of Higher Education	50	27	27
Ministry of Highways	37	27	27
Ministry of Hill Country New Villages, Infrastructure and Community Development	13	13	13
Ministry of Home Affairs	40	33	37
Ministry of Housing and Construction	47	10	10
Ministry of Industry and Commerce	37	30	20
Ministry of Internal Affairs, Wayamba Development and Cultural Affairs	53	53	30
Ministry of Irrigation and Water Resources Management	33	10	10
Ministry of Justice	53	47	50
Ministry of Labour, Trade Union Relations and Sabaragamuwa Development	33	37	43
Ministry of Lands and Parliamentary Reforms	43	33	20
Ministry of Law and Order, and Southern Development	43	10	10
Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment	50	43	33
Ministry of Mass Media	27	37	40
Ministry of Megapolis and Western Development	40	20	20
Ministry of National Co-existence, Dialogue and Official Languages	33	27	33
Ministry of National Integration and Reconciliation	20	13	10

Public Authority	Language Percentage Score		
	English	Sinhala	Tamil
Ministry of National Policies and Economic Affairs	57	46	46
Ministry of Petroleum Resources Development	39	18	18
Ministry of Plantation Industries	37	27	23
Ministry of Ports and Shipping	30	20	23
Ministry of Postal Services	37	10	23
Ministry of Power and Renewable Energy	33	30	27
Ministry of Primary Industries	20	10	10
Ministry of Prison Reforms, Rehabilitation, Resettlement and Hindu Religious Affairs	33	20	27
Ministry of Provincial Councils and Local Government	43	36	21
Ministry of Public Administration	53	43	47
Ministry of Public Enterprise Development	17	17	20
Ministry of Regional Development	33	33	33
Ministry of Rural Economy	47	30	23
Ministry of Science, Technology and Research	20	13	13
Ministry of Skills Development and Vocational Training	27	17	17
Ministry of Social Empowerment, Welfare and Kandyan Heritage	57	33	40
Ministry of Special Assignments	10	10	10
Ministry of Sports	40	33	17
Ministry of Sustainable Development and Wildlife	33	23	23
Ministry of Telecommunication and Digital Infrastructure	40	23	10
Ministry of Tourism Development and Christian Religious Affairs	33	23	10
Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation	43	33	17
Ministry of Women and Child Affairs	50	33	10

Public Authority	Language Percentage Score		
	English	Sinhala	Tamil
Office of the President	22	17	22
Office of the Prime Minister	35	39	39

Each public authority could score up to 30 points in each language. However some subcategories were not applicable to certain public authorities (e.g. Office of President could score a maximum of 23 points). Thus across all the public authorities, a total of 1,628 points could be scored in each language. The following sub-sections discuss the level of information available in each language, across all public authorities surveyed.

8.1.1 English

Out of a total of 1,628 possible points, public authorities received an aggregate score of 616 points for online proactive disclosure of information in English (38%). The public authorities that scored the highest for disclosures in English are presented in Exhibit 22 below. Incidentally, these public authorities were also among the top-scoring public authorities in the overall content disclosure rankings.

Exhibit 22

Top-ranking Public Authorities	English
Ministry of Health	70%
Ministry of Finance	63%
Ministry of Education	60%

The public authorities that scored the lowest for disclosure of English language information (of those that had websites) were the Ministry of Public Enterprise Development (17%); the Ministry of Primary Industries (20%); and the Ministry of National Integration and Reconciliation (20%).

8.1.2 Sinhala

Public authorities scored 439 out of 1,628 points for online proactive disclosure of information in Sinhala (27%). The public authorities that scored the highest for disclosures in Sinhala are shown in Exhibit 23 below.

Exhibit 23

Top-ranking Public Authorities	Sinhala
Ministry of Internal Affairs, Wayamba Development and Cultural Affairs	53%
Ministry of Education	50%
Ministry of Justice; Ministry of Agriculture	47%

The public authorities that scored the lowest for disclosure of Sinhala language information (of those that had websites) were the Ministry of Primary Industries, the Ministry of Irrigation and Water Resources Management, the Ministry of Postal Services, the Ministry of Law and Order and Southern Development, and the Ministry of Housing and Construction (10% each).

The negligible levels of information disclosures in Sinhala across these websites – including those pertaining to basic public services such as Housing and Construction, and Postal Services – reflects low levels of compliance with the RTI Act’s minimum obligations on language accessibility.

8.1.3 Tamil

Public authorities only scored 386 out of 1,628 points for online proactive disclosure of information in Tamil (24%). The public authorities that scored the highest for disclosures in Tamil are shown in Exhibit 24 below.

Exhibit 24

Top-ranking Public Authorities	Tamil
Ministry of Justice	50%
Ministry of Public Administration	47%
Ministry of National Policies and Economic Affairs	46%

The lowest score that public authorities received for disclosures in Tamil was 10%. Those public authorities that scored 10% included the:

1. Ministry of Tourism Development and Christian Religious Affairs;
2. Ministry of Telecommunications and Digital Infrastructure
3. Ministry of National Integration and Reconciliation
4. Ministry of Women and Child Affairs
5. Ministry of Law and Order and Southern Development

6. Ministry of Housing and Construction
7. Ministry of Irrigation and Water Resources Management

The number of websites with low levels of Tamil content was higher than those with minimal Sinhala content. Significantly, the website for the Ministry of National Integration and Reconciliation only scored 10% for disclosures in Tamil. A lack of information in Tamil about projects relating to reconciliation undermines the ministry's credibility in terms of commitment to fulfilling its mandate. Furthermore, a number of websites – such as the website of the Ministry of Women and Child Affairs 10% – had a tab for 'Tamil' on the website that redirected the user to a version of the English website with selected words in Tamil.

8.1.4 Overall language accessibility scores

The overall language accessibility scores for each public authority are presented below in Exhibit 25. They were calculated using the average of individual language scores in English, Sinhala and Tamil, and are presented as an overall language percentage score.

Exhibit 25

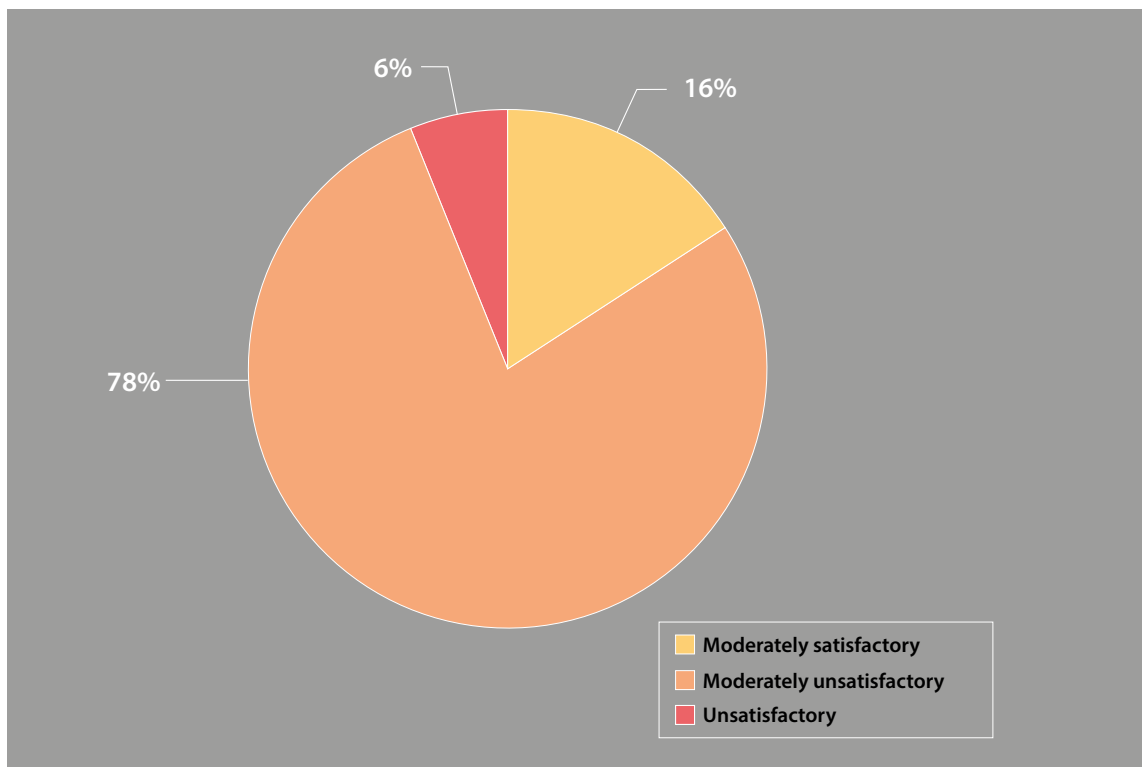
Public Authority	Percentage Score (%)	
Ministry of Justice	50	Moderately Satisfactory
Ministry of National Policies and Economic Affairs	50	
Ministry of Public Administration	48	
Ministry of Education	47	
Ministry of Health	46	
Ministry of Internal Affairs, Wayamba Development and Cultural Affairs	46	
Ministry of Finance	43	
Ministry of Social Empowerment, Welfare and Kandyan Heritage	43	
Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment	42	
Ministry of Agriculture	38	Moderately Unsatisfactory
Ministry of Labour, Trade Union Relations and Sabaragamuwa Development	38	
Office of the Prime Minister	38	

Public Authority	Percentage Score (%)	
Ministry of Home Affairs	37	Moderately Unsatisfactory
Ministry of Disaster Management	36	
Ministry of Defence	34	
Ministry of Higher Education	34	
Ministry of Mass Media	34	
Ministry of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Development	33	
Ministry of Regional Development	33	
Ministry of Rural Economy	33	
Ministry of Provincial Councils and Local Government	33	
Ministry of City Planning and Water Supply	32	
Ministry of Lands and Parliamentary Reforms	32	
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	31	
Ministry of National Co-existence, Dialogue and Official Languages	31	
Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation	31	
Ministry of Women and Child Affairs	31	
Ministry of Highways	30	
Ministry of Power and Renewable Energy	30	
Ministry of Sports	30	
Ministry of Industry and Commerce	29	
Ministry of Plantation Industries	29	
Ministry of Buddha Sasana	28	
Ministry of Megapolis and Western Development	27	
Ministry of Prison Reforms, Rehabilitation, Resettlement and Hindu Religious Affairs	27	
Ministry of Sustainable Development and Wildlife	27	
Ministry of Petroleum Resources Development	25	

Public Authority	Percentage Score (%)	
Ministry of Ports and Shipping	24	Moderately Unsatisfactory
Ministry of Telecommunication and Digital Infrastructure	24	
Ministry of Postal Services	23	
Ministry of Housing and Construction	22	
Ministry of Tourism Development and Christian Religious Affairs	22	
Ministry of Law and Order and Southern Development	21	
Ministry of Skills Development and Vocational Training	20	
Office of the President	20	
Ministry of Irrigation and Water Resources Management	18	
Ministry of Public Enterprise Development	18	
Ministry of Development Strategies and International Trade	17	
Ministry of Science, Technology and Research	16	
Ministry of National Integration and Reconciliation	14	
Ministry of Hill Country New Villages, Infrastructure and Community Development	13	
Ministry of Primary Industries	13	
Ministry of Development Assignments	10	Unsatisfactory
Ministry of Foreign Employment	10	
Ministry of Special Assignments	10	

5% of public authorities received 'unsatisfactory' language scores. 78% received 'moderately unsatisfactory'; and only 16% received 'moderately satisfactory' language scores.

Exhibit 26: Overall Language Accessibility



8.2 Ease of Access

‘Ease of Access’ refers to the user-friendliness of websites, including the ease of locating and using the information available.

Excluding the five public authorities that did not have websites, the websites monitored were easily accessible via a keyword request on an Internet search engine. It was noted that the Cabinet Office website¹² did not provide a link to each ministry’s website. Load times varied across websites. For example, pages that were still under construction took a considerably longer time to load.

Public authority websites were generally user friendly. Most website structures followed a tab system with sub-navigation. However, the process of searching for information – such as a list of public services – would often require clicking through several links. Moreover, some links were broken, and some tabs linked to an incorrect area of a website. For instance, a number of websites had tabs for Sinhala and Tamil language content that did not work. Several tabs on the Ministry of Housing and Construction’s website, such as the ‘Construction Programme’ tab, were blank. Furthermore, most pages under the Ministry of Plantation Industries were under ‘Under Construction’ during the monitoring period. Similarly, a number of tabs under the Ministry of City Planning and Water Supply were not accessible during various stages of the monitoring process.

12 Cabinet Office website, accessible at: <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.lk/cab/index.php?lang=en>.

Ease of Access was measured using the number of clicks it took to access a particular subcategory of information, and scored accordingly (as discussed in the Methodology). Exhibit 27 below provides a ranking of public authorities according to Ease of Access to information on their website.

The Ministry of Health received the highest score with 70%, and 8 other public authorities also scored between 50% and 57%. 33 public authorities (60%) scored between 11% and 40%. No public authority scored below 10% for Ease of Access.

Exhibit 27

Public Authority	Ease of Access Percentage Score (%)
Ministry of Health	70
Ministry of Social Empowerment, Welfare and Kandyan Heritage	57
Ministry of National Policies and Economic Affairs	57
Ministry of Justice	53
Ministry of Education	52
Ministry of Internal Affairs, Wayamba Development and Cultural Affairs	52
Ministry of Public Administration	50
Ministry of Women and Child Affairs	50
Ministry of Higher Education	50
Ministry of Finance	48
Ministry of Rural Economy	47
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	47
Ministry of Housing and Construction	47
Ministry of Disaster Management	45
Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment	45
Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation	43
Ministry of Defence	43
Ministry of Lands and Parliamentary Reforms	43
Ministry of Law and Order, and Southern Development	43

Public Authority	Ease of Access Percentage Score (%)
Ministry of Provincial Councils and Local Government	41
Ministry of Telecommunication and Digital Infrastructure	40
Ministry of Megapolis and Western Development	40
Ministry of Buddha Sasana	40
Ministry of Home Affairs	38
Ministry of Sports	38
Ministry of Highways	37
Ministry of Postal Services	37
Ministry of Industry and Commerce	37
Ministry of Agriculture	37
Ministry of Plantation Industries	37
Ministry of City Planning and Water Supply	37
Ministry of Petroleum Resources Development	36
Office of the Prime Minister	35
Ministry of Sustainable Development and Wildlife	33
Ministry of Labour, Trade Union Relations and Sabaragamuwa Development	33
Ministry of National Co-existence, Dialogue and Official Languages	33
Ministry of Tourism Development and Christian Religious Affairs	33
Ministry of Prison Reforms, Rehabilitation, Resettlement and Hindu Religious Affairs	33
Ministry of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Development	33
Ministry of Power and Renewable Energy	33
Ministry of Irrigation and Water Resources Management	33
Ministry of Regional Development	33
Ministry of Ports and Shipping	30

Public Authority	Ease of Access Percentage Score (%)
Ministry of Development Strategies and International Trade	29
Ministry of Mass Media	27
Ministry of Skills Development and Vocational Training	23
Office of the President	22
Ministry of National Integration and Reconciliation	20
Ministry of Primary Industries	20
Ministry of Science, Technology and Research	20
Ministry of Public Enterprise Development	17
Ministry of Hill Country New Villages, Infrastructure and Community Development	13
Ministry of Foreign Employment	10
Ministry of Development Assignments	10
Ministry of Special Assignments	10

8.3 Format

The format of information disclosed varied between public authorities, and across subcategories of information. The information published in each subcategory was assessed as (a) extraction-friendly (2 points), (b) low re-usability (1 point), or (c) not reusable (0 points). Exhibit 28 below presents each public authority's score as a percentage of the total possible format score for all applicable subcategories for each public authority.

Two public authorities – the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Finance – scored over 60% for format. Fourteen public authorities scored between 41% and 60%. The majority of public authorities (36) scored between 11% and 40%. The lowest ranking public authorities scored 10% each.

In general, public authorities published information in formats that were not re-usable. For instance, documents were not easily downloadable, and their contents were not easily searchable or transferable. Public authorities rarely provided disaggregated financial data in MS Excel format. These lapses in re-usability affect the public's ability to utilise and analyse government information effectively.

Exhibit 28

Public Authority	Format Percentage Score (%)
Ministry of Health	68
Ministry of Finance	62
Ministry of Education	58
Ministry of National Policies and Economic Affairs	54
Ministry of Public Administration	52
Ministry of Social Empowerment, Welfare and Kandyan Heritage	52
Ministry of Justice	48
Ministry of Disaster Management	48
Ministry of Higher Education	47
Ministry of Internal Affairs, Wayamba Development and Cultural Affairs	47
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	45
Ministry of Lands and Parliamentary Reforms	43
Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment	43
Ministry of Housing and Construction	43
Ministry of Defence	42
Ministry of Law and Order, and Southern Development	42
Ministry of Rural Economy	40
Ministry of Telecommunication and Digital Infrastructure	40
Ministry of Provincial Councils and Local Government	39
Ministry of Women and Child Affairs	38
Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation	38
Ministry of Megapolis and Western Development	38
Ministry of Home Affairs	38
Ministry of Sports	38

Public Authority	Format Percentage Score (%)
Ministry of Petroleum Resources Development	38
Ministry of Postal Services	37
Ministry of Industry and Commerce	37
Ministry of Agriculture	37
Ministry of Buddha Sasana	37
Ministry of City Planning and Water Supply	37
Ministry of Highways	35
Office of the Prime Minister	35
Ministry of Tourism Development and Christian Religious Affairs	33
Ministry of Prison Reforms, Rehabilitation, Resettlement and Hindu Religious Affairs	33
Ministry of Power and Renewable Energy	33
Ministry of Regional Development	33
Ministry of National Co-existence, Dialogue and Official Languages	32
Ministry of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Development	32
Ministry of Sustainable Development and Wildlife	30
Ministry of Labour, Trade Union Relations and Sabaragamuwa Development	30
Ministry of Plantation Industries	30
Ministry of Ports and Shipping	30
Ministry of Development Strategies and International Trade	29
Ministry of Irrigation and Water Resources Management	28
Ministry of Mass Media	25
Ministry of Skills Development and Vocational Training	25
Office of the President	22
Ministry of National Integration and Reconciliation	20

Public Authority	Format Percentage Score (%)
Ministry of Primary Industries	20
Ministry of Science, Technology and Research	20
Ministry of Public Enterprise Development	17
Ministry of Hill Country New Villages, Infrastructure and Community Development	13
Ministry of Foreign Employment	10
Ministry of Development Assignments	10
Ministry of Special Assignments	10

8.4 Overall Usability Score

The overall usability score includes public authorities' performance in terms of language accessibility in English, Sinhala and Tamil; ease of access; and format. Exhibit 29 below presents the public authorities in order of ranking for overall usability.

Exhibit 29

Public Authority	Overall Usability Percentage Score (%)	Band
Ministry of Health	59	Moderately Satisfactory
Ministry of National Policies and Economic Affairs	53	
Ministry of Education	51	
Ministry of Justice	50	
Ministry of Finance	50	
Ministry of Public Administration	50	
Ministry of Social Empowerment, Welfare and Kandyan Heritage	50	
Ministry of Internal Affairs, Wayamba Development and Cultural Affairs	48	

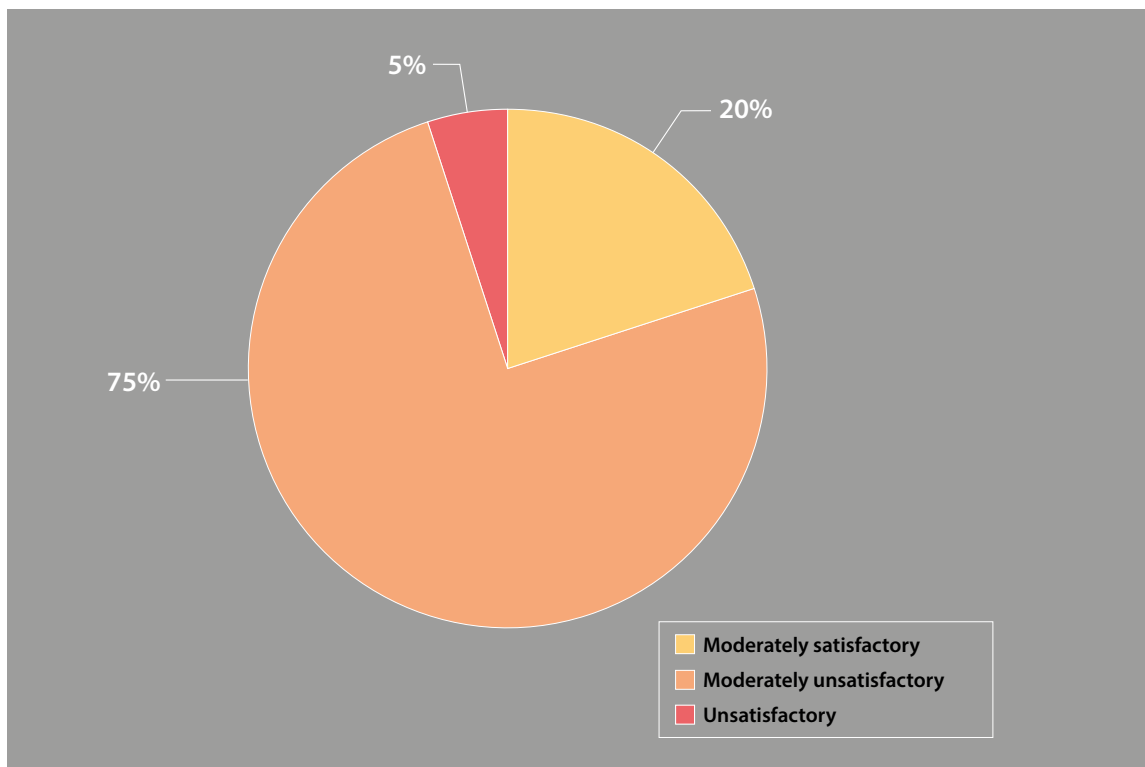
Public Authority	Overall Usability Percentage Score (%)	Band
Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment	43	Moderately Satisfactory
Ministry of Higher Education	42	
Ministry of Disaster Management	42	
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	40	Moderately Unsatisfactory
Ministry of Rural Economy	39	
Ministry of Defence	39	
Ministry of Women and Child Affairs	39	
Ministry of Lands and Parliamentary Reforms	39	
Ministry of Home Affairs	38	
Ministry of Provincial Councils and Local Government	37	
Ministry of Agriculture	37	
Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation	37	
Office of the Prime Minister	36	
Ministry of Housing and Construction	35	
Ministry of Sports	35	
Ministry of City Planning and Water Supply	35	
Ministry of Labour, Trade Union Relations and Sabaragamuwa Development	34	
Ministry of Megapolis and Western Development	34	
Ministry of Buddha Sasana	34	
Ministry of Highways	33	
Ministry of Law and Order and Southern Development	33	
Ministry of Industry and Commerce	33	
Ministry of Regional Development	33	

Public Authority	Overall Usability Percentage Score (%)	Band
Ministry of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Development	33	Moderately Unsatisfactory
Ministry of National Co-existence, Dialogue and Official Languages	32	
Ministry of Power and Renewable Energy	32	
Ministry of Petroleum Resources Development	32	
Ministry of Telecommunication and Digital Infrastructure	31	
Ministry of Plantation Industries	31	
Ministry of Postal Services	31	
Ministry of Prison Reforms, Rehabilitation, Resettlement and Hindu Religious Affairs	30	
Ministry of Sustainable Development and Wildlife	30	
Ministry of Mass Media	30	
Ministry of Ports and Shipping	28	
Ministry of Tourism Development and Christian Religious Affairs	27	
Ministry of Irrigation and Water Resources Management	25	
Ministry of Skills Development and Vocational Training	22	
Ministry of Development Strategies and International Trade	21	
Office of the President	21	
Ministry of Science, Technology and Research	18	
Ministry of National Integration and Reconciliation	18	
Ministry of Public Enterprise Development	17	
Ministry of Primary Industries	17	
Ministry of Hill Country New Villages Infrastructure and Community Development	13	

Public Authority	Overall Usability Percentage Score (%)	Band
Ministry of Foreign Employment	10	Unsatisfactory
Ministry of Development Assignments	10	
Ministry of Special Assignments	10	

20% of public authorities received ‘moderately satisfactory’ scores, while 75% of public authorities received ‘moderately unsatisfactory’ usability scores. 5% of public authorities received ‘unsatisfactory’ scores.

Exhibit 30: Overall Usability



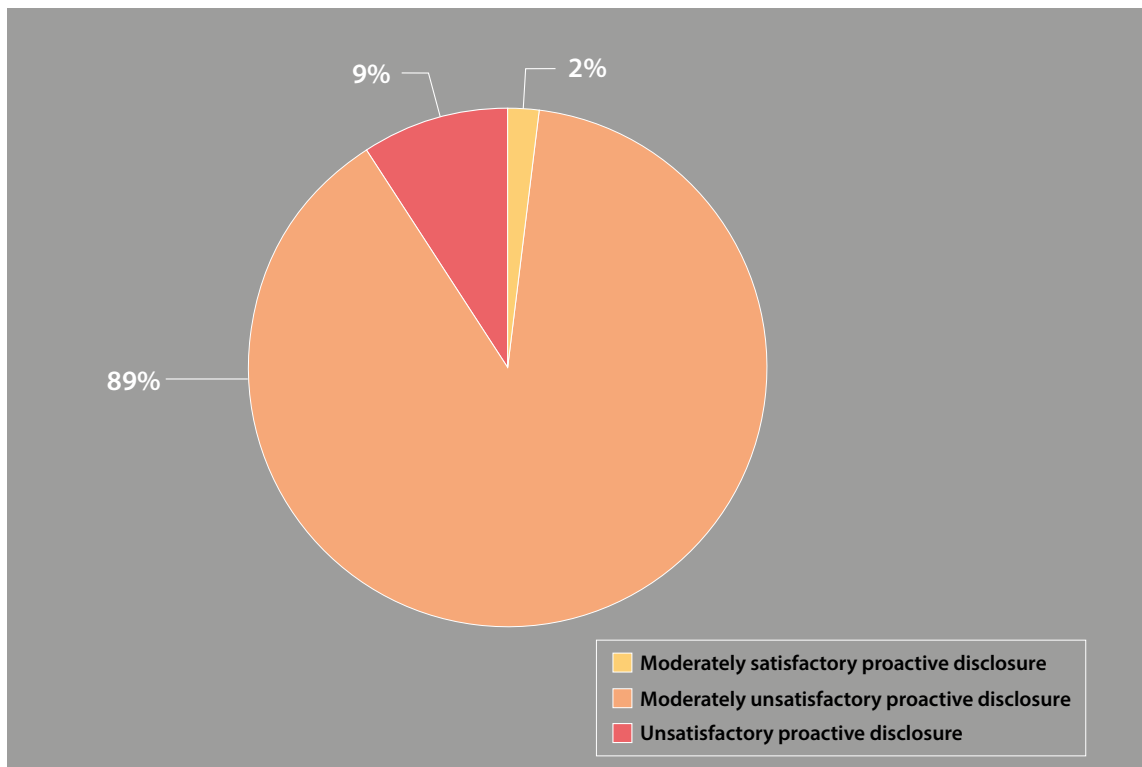
9

Conclusion

Proactive disclosure of information is a key requirement under the RTI Act of Sri Lanka. It enables the public to access vital information on public services, government spending and decision-making without the payment of a fee. This assessment set out to monitor online proactive disclosure under the Act and relevant Regulations. It evaluated and compared the disclosure of information by 55 public authorities associated with 53 cabinet ministry portfolios, and the Offices of the President and the Prime Minister.

In terms of overall composite baseline scores (comprising content and usability), most public authorities (89%) scored within the ‘moderately unsatisfactory’ band. The online proactive disclosure of **content** across public authorities was ‘moderately unsatisfactory’, with 89% of the selected public authorities falling within this band. Five of the selected public authorities did not have functioning websites during the monitoring period although they were assessed for information found on other websites to ensure that the assessment was ‘location neutral’.

Content Disclosure



Online proactive disclosure of information pertaining to the following thematic areas was assessed: (1) public accountability, (2) public accessibility, and (3) disclosures pertaining to the right to information. With regard to public accountability, the majority of primary websites lacked financial information, and decision-making and regulatory information. This lack of information on public authorities' websites is likely to inhibit the public's ability to hold the government accountable in terms of its planned policies and investments. However, certain categories of substantive information, such as *Budgets, Expenditure and Finances*, and *Public Policy, Legislation and Regulation* was most often found on other websites such as the Ministry of Finance's website (i.e. budgetary information), and the Government Printer's website, www.documents.gov.lk (i.e. legislation). Furthermore, the limited disclosure of information on public accessibility, such as *Public Services* and *Public Participation* can prevent citizens from accessing timely services or from attending public meetings or consultations.

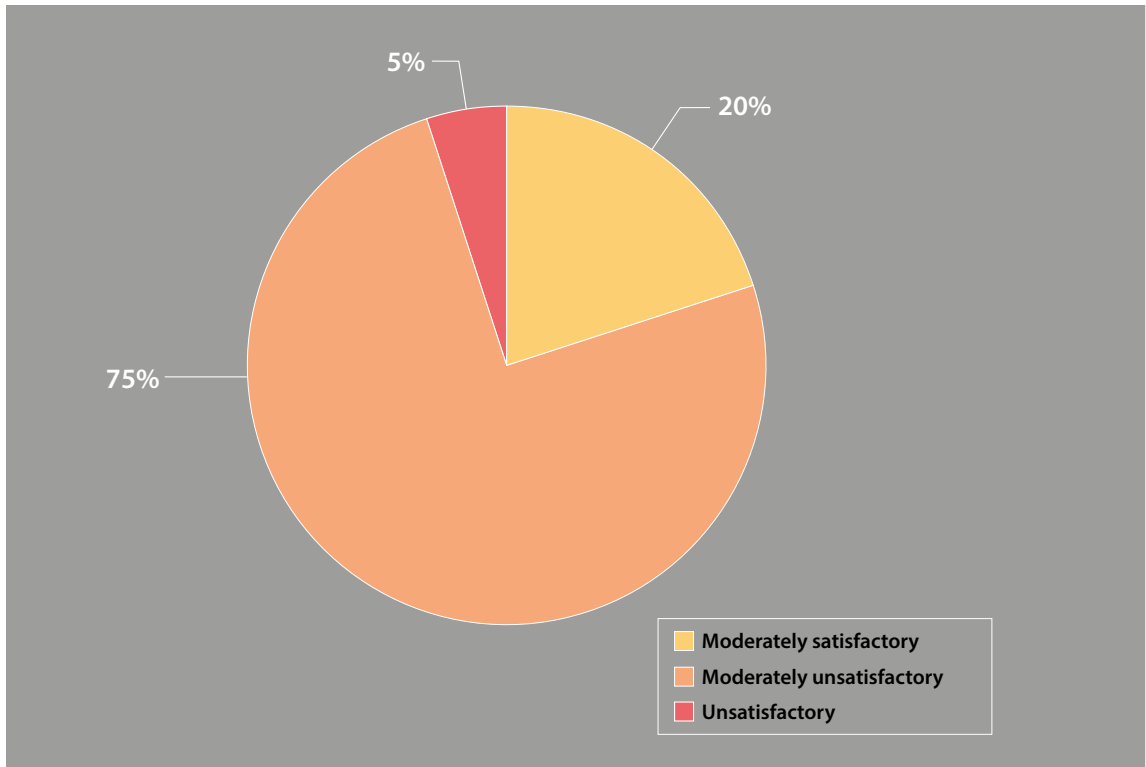
Low levels of online proactive disclosure directly relating to RTI (including requesting procedures, fee schedules, and Information and Designated Officer contact information) reflect weaknesses in RTI implementation across public authorities.

Public authorities disclosed relatively more information on subcategories of information emerging from statutory obligations than regulatory obligations. However, disclosures of information pertaining to section 9 of the RTI Act were low.

Public authorities fared relatively better in terms of the **usability of information** – including language accessibility, ease of access, and format – with 20% of public authorities ranking within the 'moderately satisfactory' band. English emerged as the language with highest level of information

disclosure, followed by Sinhala and Tamil. However, no public authority scored more than 50% for accessibility across the three languages. These gaps in online proactive disclosure impede public access to trilingual information.

Overall Usability





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