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Access and Accountability
- A Study of Open Data in Kenya

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Abstract

This study explores Open Data actors in Kenya, focusing on the issue of transparency and accountability. Drawing on an exploratory quantitative analysis of existing statistical material of usage of the Kenya Open Data Initiative website and 15 qualitative interviews conducted primarily in Nairobi, the study analyses key factors – both enabling and disabling – that shape transparency initiatives connected to Open Data in Kenya.

The material is analysed from three perspectives:

a) a review based on existing research around impact and effectiveness of transparency and accountability initiatives;

b) based on theories on human behaviour in connection to transparency and accountability; and

c) introducing a critical perspective on power relations based on Michel Foucault's concept of 'governmentality'.

The study shows that the Kenya Open Data Initiative has potential to become an effective transparency and accountability initiative in Kenya, but that its future is heavily dependent on current trends within the political context and fluctuations in power relations. Applying a stronger user-perspective and participatory approach is critical.

Open Data is a relatively new area within the governance and development field, and academia can play an important role in enhancing methodology and impact assessments to create more effective and sustainable initiatives and ensure that future Open Data initiatives can be both accessible and constitute a base for accountability.

Keywords: Open Data, Open Government Data, Kenya, transparency, accountability, ICT, ICT4D, communication, information, development, democracy, governance

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1. Introduction

In our interconnected world, where access to information and communication technologies are increasing, new possibilities open up for citizens to get access to information, to organize, and to hold people in power accountable. In theory.

'Open Data' has become a buzzword in the development community, and aid agencies have competed in the amount of published datasets. However, there is a growing critique about Open Data initiatives being top-down products rather than being demand-driven. There is an assumption that transparency automatically produces accountability. However, according to many writers, little research has been done on how access to information affects governance.

One of my recent assignments at Malmö University MA programme Communication for Development focused on the usage of Open Aid Data by Swedish taxpayers. In brief, the limited study indicated that the data available about Swedish international development is, to some extent, useful for students and academics, as well as for other actors in the aid context. It can also serve as giving an overall view of aid. However, for a journalist, who can be seen as an intermediary for the 'general public', the data available today seems to lack the details and information about results, evaluations and references or links to other sources of information, which would be of use for the media. Based on these conclusions I wanted to expand on the subject, and move on to the other aspect of accountability in development cooperation – the people in the partnership countries where aid money is spent.

With the logic of "following the money", my choice of country for a case study fell on Kenya – not only a large partnership country for Swedish development cooperation, but also a country, which has been in the forefront of implementing Open Government Data. It was in 2011 that the Kenya Open Data Initiative (hereafter called KODI) was launched and there are also initiatives to make data on development programmes and projects available. The KODI website[1] has been up and running for more than two years now and there are some user statistics as well as other reports and ongoing research projects.

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[1] Visit the site at https://opendata.go.ke/

Open Data is still in its infancy but there is some research being done. However, the conversations I have had with people within this field indicated that it is important to conduct more research with a demand perspective to get the viewpoint of the intended end users.

The ICT4D (Information and Communication Technology for Development) field is growing and technological inventions are reshaping the area. This fact opens up the possibility for more research to be done on how new technical information and communication tools can be used to enhance the effectiveness of development-related activities and initiatives, which use communication as a means for social change. Open Data is one of the more recent developments within the area and what I want to explore is how it can be used as a means to create transparency – but also its usefulness as a tool to create new ways to exercise accountability and therefore enhance efficiency and lead to social change.

1.1 Aim and objectives

My aim, with this thesis, is to use the Kenya Open Data Initiative to shed light upon the question of transparency and accountability. The two words are often used in the same sentence, as if the latter naturally follows the former, whereas, in fact, there is little research which shows that this is the case. As a first, in Sub-Saharan Africa, Kenya launched a platform with hundreds of sets of government data in 2011. However, the possibility for normal citizens or civil society organisations at grassroots level to access and use the data might be limited due to a number of factors, such as lack of access to the internet, limited data literacy or underlying democratic deficits. My aim and objective is to map out enabling and disabling factors for this transparency initiative to actually work as an instrument for accountability, as well as summarising recommendations for the future development of Open Data in Kenya.

1.2 Research questions

My main research question is:

- What are the factors – both enabling and disabling – which shape the possibilities that transparency initiatives connected to Open Data in Kenya will lead to accountability?

Other key research questions are:

- What are the conditions on the 'supply' side?
- What are the conditions on the 'demand' side?
- What can be done to enhance the possibilities that a transparency initiative like KODI can be used as a tool for accountability?

1.3 Core theories

In their study *Review of Impact and Effectiveness of Transparency and Accountability Initiatives*, Rosemary McGee and John Gaventa (2010) have undertaken an extensive review of studies as to what makes this chain work – or break. I will use their findings as a base for my own analysis of a developing country, and their effort to use a 'new wave'-type transparency initiative. I will also lean on theories with a more behavioural approach, as synthesised in connection to transparency and accountability by, for example, Amatai Etzioni (2010) and Fung *et al* (2006). To put this issue into a broader critical perspective, I will also touch upon the theories on 'governmentality' by Foucault.

1.4 Research design

Backed up by quantitative data on visits to the KODI website as well as a survey conducted by the initiative, I will mainly base my analysis in a qualitative approach where I have interviewed twelve people in Kenya who are directly connected to KODI, or who have been in contact with the initiative or the website in some way. I have tried to achieve a balance between representatives from the 'supply' side; intermediaries, like civil society organisations and journalists; and representatives from the 'demand'-side, such as people at grassroots level. The interviews were conducted in and around Nairobi in March 2014, and were complemented by three e-mail-based interviews.

1.5 Open Data

Over the last ten years the idea of Open Data as a means by which to reach transparency and accountability has been increasing, both for governments and within the development arena. Open Data can be said to contain three basic elements:

1) Proactive publishing (governments - or other parties - should put data online without being asked for it);

2) Machine readability (possibility to process data with a computer to sort and filter); and

3) Permission to re-use (no legal restrictions to prevent sharing or using the data)[2].

Open Government Data (hereafter called OGD) is growing. Since the first major OGD portal went live, hundreds of national and local governments have established portals. The idea has spread across the globe and by 2013 the concept could be found on all continents. However, the work is still in its infancy, according to the Open Data Barometer 2013[3]. International institutions, NGOs and businesses are all "exploring, in different ways, how opening data can unlock latent value, stimulate innovation and increase transparency and accountability" (Davis, 2013, p. 6).

The World Bank writes, in a special report on accountability through open access to data, that "the logic of Open Government Data is simple – a more open and transparent government invites citizen engagement. As citizens engage with their government, they demand greater accountability while also contributing to innovation: by using their newfound knowledge to demand better services and by offering their own solutions to perennial problems, citizens enhance the quality of governance via the 'insights of the crowds'. Greater accountability can lead to efficiency gains that ultimately give rise to better services and greater social and economic well-being" (Gigler *et al*, 2011, p. 50).

With the rapid spread of ICTs and greater access to information on the internet through, for example, mobile phones, data is available for a greater number of people in the world. However, Gigler *et al* write that much can be done to focus on demand instead of focusing only on the supply side.

Open Data initiatives within the development area have been breaking ground for Open Data in general and the argument has been that greater accountability will make aid more effective and produce greater and more visible results (McGee and Gaventa, 2010, p. 3).

However, Development Gateway states that "the legitimacy and effectiveness of one-size-fits-all models of development and top-down models of governance have been challenged, most recently by citizens' demands for more open, transparent and accountable governance. 'Open development' sets out a new vision of what

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[2] Davies, Tim. *Open Data Impacts*. http://www.opendataimpacts.net/
[3] Davies, Tim. *Open Data Barometer*. http://www.opendataresearch.org/dl/odb2013/Open-Data-Barometer-2013-Global-Report.pdf

development means, how it comes about and what role external partners can play".
Open Data plays a key role here – by supplying information that is freely available and
reusable, this can enable citizens to hold governments accountable and to ensure that
resources are invested well (2012, p. 1)[4].

The idea of open development means that "all stakeholders – from citizens to
journalists, NGO workers to government officials, parliamentarians to entrepreneurs –
are able to access the information they need to make informed choices, exercise their
voice, and be more effective in their development efforts" (ibid).

In her literature review on transparency and accountability initiatives, Carter writes that
"there is a consensus that more and better data is a necessary but not sufficient condition
for increasing citizens' access to data. Likewise, increased access to more and better
data is a necessary but not sufficient condition for strengthening a government's
political accountability to its citizens" (2014, p. 1). Carter writes that the understanding
for how, where and under what circumstances transparency and accountability
initiatives lead to access and accountability is a work in progress and that there is still a
lack of evidence about the impact of such initiatives.

1.6 The Kenyan context

Kenya is often described as a tech-hub and a driver of economic growth in Sub-Saharan
Africa. The expected growth for 2014 is up to 6 per cent[5] and approximately 75 per cent
of its inhabitants have a mobile phone[6]. However, the economic, as well as the digital,
divide is great between the rich and the poor (between 34-42 per cent of the population
is estimated to live below the poverty line[7]) and between the urban centres and the rural
countryside (around 28 per cent of the population has access to internet and the main
users are in the cities[8]).

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[4] Development Gateway. *Enabling Open Development: An overview of Initiatives to Improve Information.*
http://www.developmentgateway.org/dg_uploads/pdfs/final_gift-iati-ibp-oap-
ogp_initiative_overview_4_10_12.pdf
[5] The World Bank. *Kenya Overview*. http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/kenya/overview
[6] Pawelczyk, Kate. *Kenya Study looks at the growing Community of Young Internet Users.*
http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/kenya_70525.html
[7] Numbers from World Bank (see link above), who write that "however, the last household survey was
conducted in 2005-06. A new survey is necessary to update the poverty estimates".
[8] See UNICEF link (footnote 5)

Development is also hampered by widespread corruption: the country holds an unflattering 136th place out of 177 counties in the Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index for 2013.

The current era of multiparty elections stretches back only as far as 1992. The country has a new constitution, which came into place after an overwhelmingly 67 per cent of votes in 2010. The event "marked the end of a struggle that has preoccupied Kenyans since 1982 when section 2A was inserted, making Kenya a *de jure* one party state", Gĩthĩnji and Holmquist write (2012, p. 54). The constitution also opens up public access to information. However, the bill on access for information is still in the Attorney General's office and it is not clear when it might be passed. Another important reform which has taken place since the adoption of the new constitution is devolution – a decentralisation process by which the country is divided into 47 Political and Administrative Counties[9].

Kenya's media scene is quite diverse, supported by, according to the BBC, a "sizeable middle class that sustains a substantial advertising market" [10]. In 2013 Kenya was ranked 71st out of 179 countries in the Press Freedom Index[11].

Kenyan civil society is large compared to other countries on the continent and Gĩthĩnji and Holmquist write that it is "extremely heterogeneous and included some well-run professional organizations but also many less effective 'brief- case' NGOs" (2012, p. 63)

In July 2011 President Mwai Kibaki launched the KODI website calling it "an important step forward towards ensuring that Government information is readily available to all Kenyans"[12]. The Open Data Barometer 2013 Global Report states that[13] "benefiting from the presence of a vibrant technology scene in Nairobi, and with support from the World Bank, the Kenya OGD initiative generated significant interest and discussion" (2013, p. 32). The country has the highest ranking in Sub-Saharan

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[9] Kenya Law. *Laws on Devolution.* http://kenyalaw.org/kl/index.php?id=3979

[10] BBC News. *Kenya Profile.* http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13681344

[11] Reporters without borders. *Press Freedom Index.* http://en.rsf.org/press-freedom-index-2013,1054.html

[12] State House Kenya. *Presidential Speech 8th July 2011*. http://www.statehousekenya.go.ke/speeches/kibaki/july2011/2011080702.htm

[13] Davies, Tim. *Open Data Barometer*. http://www.opendataresearch.org/dl/odb2013/Open-Data-Barometer-2013-Global-Report.pdf

Africa, being 22nd out of 77. However, the report states that in "2012 the lead architect of the initiative, then PS Bitange Ndemo, suggested the initiative may have stalled, due to challenges in securing new and updated datasets from a wide range of government departments" (ibid).

According to Finch, writing on a World Bank Open Data blog at the beginning of 2013, traffic to the KODI portal "has been consistent, with the Government's portal generating around 100,000 page views a month, mostly from Kenya. The number of datasets on the portal has doubled from the initial 200 to more than 400 today, but still represents a tiny fraction of the data in Kenya"[14].

The initiative is described as "one of the first sustained attempts in Africa focused on making Open Data relevant to and used by citizens" (ibid) and the platform was followed by projects to 'embed' Open Data experts in media and civil society organizations, as well as attempts to encourage the tech-community to develop applications.

Nevertheless, a survey of Kenyan citizens conducted by Mokua & Chiliswa in 2013 and cited in the Open Data Barometer, shows that even though there was a significant citizen demand for government data, only 14 per cent of Kenyans were aware of, or had accessed, the national Open Data portal (ibid).

Currently there are several parallel initiatives related to digitalising government, transparency and Open Data in Kenya. There are initiatives around Open Government Data (such as KODI), as well as Open Aid Data (such as the web tool e-ProMIS) and the digitalisation of government (such as the Integrated Financial Management Information System IFMIS).

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[14] The World Bank. *Making Open Data work for Citizens – Four Lessons from Code4Kenya.* https://blogs.worldbank.org/opendata/making-open-data-work-for-citizens-four-lessons-from-code4kenya

2. Literature review and existing research

2.1 Transparency and accountability

Definitions and problematising

According to Transparency International "transparency is about shedding light on rules, plans, processes and actions. It is knowing why, how, what, and how much. Transparency ensures that public officials, civil servants, managers, board members and businessmen act visibly and understandably, and report on their activities". The organisation embraces the idea that transparency creates accountability and goes on to state that this "means that the general public can hold them to account. It is the surest way of guarding against corruption, and helps increase trust in the people and institutions on which our futures depend"[15].

Accountability, as a concept, is harder to define. I will use the definition chosen by McGee and Gaventa drawing upon Tisné and Goetz and Jenkins:

"[…] accountability refers to the process of holding actors responsible for their actions. More specifically, it is the concept that individuals, agencies and organizations (public, private and civil society) are held responsible for executing their powers according to a certain standard" (2010, p. 4);

and, described as a stronger category of accountability;

"By general consensus, accountability generally involves both answerability – the responsibility of duty-bearers to provide information and justification about their actions – and enforceability – the possibilities of penalties or consequences for failing to answer accountability claims" (ibid).

Lately the focus in the development context has been on 'participatory development' and forms of accountability beyond channels associated with elections led by citizens (p. 5). In this work I will mainly focus on social accountability, which is about "how citizens demand and enforce accountability from those in power" (p. 6).

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[15] Transparency International. *FAQs on Corruption.*
http://www.transparency.org/whoweare/organisation/faqs_on_corruption/2

Transparency and accountability are often cited as ingredients for good governance, which in turn is seen as fundamental for democracy and development. However, accountability is often described as an automatic effect of transparency, when in fact there is little research on, and evidence for, the ways in which transparency initiatives can be turned into acts of accountability.

Several writers underline this: Hale, for example, writes from a perspective of global governance that "most policymakers who advocate transparency do so from a general sense that 'sunshine is the best disinfectant'. Few can specify how – or even if – openness and disclosure actually alter the behaviour of global actors to promote accountability" (2008, p. 73).

Etzioni writes from a political philosophy perspective that "transparency is viewed as a self-evident good in Western society", but that "there are few empirical studies of the effects of transparency" (2010, p. 389 and p. 349). Fung *et al*, from a perspective of policy analysis, go on to say that "transparency policies are effective only when information becomes embedded in an action circle, becoming an intrinsic part of the decision-making routines of users and disclosers" (2006, p 156).

McGee and Gaventa, in turn, from a development perspective, talk of transparency and accountability as having emerged over the last decades as "key ways to address both developmental failures and democratic deficits" and that greater accountability will address corruption and inefficiency and produce results (2010, p. 3).

Accountability is also seen as a path for empowerment and enhances the effectiveness of civil society and donor organisations. However, McGee and Gaventa argue that there is little evidence of impact, the main evidence being context-specific and "little is understood about the factors which make these things happen" (2010, p. 1 and p. 11). They criticise the underlying assumption that transparency creates accountability and state that "how information accessibility affects accountability and improves quality of governance is still poorly understood" (p. 4).

Carter echoes these conclusions, saying that "the common conclusion is that while the provision of more and better data can lead to increased access to that data by citizens, this is not an automatic process: the provision of more and better data is necessary but not sufficient for increased citizen access", (2012, p. 3).

The success (or failure) of transparency and accountability initiatives

There are claims that Transparency and Accountability Initiatives (hereafter called TAIs), built upon participatory processes and citizen engagement, are more likely to generate state responsiveness to citizens' demands. However, McGee and Gaventa question whether these are direct causal links or mere correlations, and state that "the assumptions underlying the causal chain, from inputs to outcomes and impact, are absent, vague and too implicit" (p. 9).

They refer to a set of variables, conditions and key factors of success, based on O'Neil *et al* and Malena *et al*. Merged together we can set them out to be:

- Political context and existing power relations;
- Enabling environment;
- The nature of the state and its institution or state capacity;
- Civil society capacity;
- Access to information;
- Enabling environment;
- State-civil society synergy; and
- Institutionalisation of accountability mechanisms.

McGee and Gaventa reinforce findings around the "importance of looking at factors for success on 'both sides of the equation' – that is at the capacities of state supply or responsiveness on the one hand, and capacities of citizen voice, or demand, on the other" (p. 37).

The necessary conditions on the 'supply' side can thus be stated as:

- Level of democratisation;
- Level of political will; and
- Broader enabling legal frameworks, political incentives and sanctions;

and factors on the 'demand' side as:

- Capabilities of citizens' voice/civil society;
- Degree to which TAIs interact with other mobilisation and collective action strategies;

- The engagement of citizens in the 'upstream' as well as the 'downstream' stages of TAI (citizens involved in formulating policies are more likely to monitor them).

However, McGee and Gaventa call for a more nuanced approach, focusing on synergies between state-led and citizen-led approaches, or lifting the view to an even level higher and going beyond the state-civil society dichotomy, which they criticise as being too simplistic. New thinking of governance could draw upon the ideas of networked governance as well as governance in a globalised setting. They also stress that the success of TAIs often depends on "how these are mediated through power relations" and that "the interactions involved are highly political" (pp. 40-41).

Based on their extensive review, McGee and Gaventa conclude that evidence of impact is uneven and remarkably sparse, but that it suggests that TAIs can make important differences in certain settings and contribute to:

- Increased state or institutional responsiveness;
- Lowering of corruption;
- Building new democratic spaces for citizen engagement; and
- Empowering local voices.

Amid a number of cautions raised, such as methodological challenges and a lack of knowledge about how change happens, the team concludes that "to argue that the current knowledge base of the impact and effectiveness is weak does not mean that the impact of TAIs [is] not significant, nor that they do not hold strong potential for change. It is just to say that we cannot necessarily prove these impacts clearly one way or another, and that we cannot make a strong, generalizable case for the potential of TAIs from the existing evidence" (p. 42).

2.2 A 'behavioural' approach

Human behaviour and psychological factors have to be taken into account when talking about communication processes, such as actions and interactions connected to transparency and accountability. I call this a 'behavioural' approach.[16]

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[16] As a suggestion for future expansion of this perspective, one could use the findings of Kleine, drawing upon the 'choice framework', which looks upon "development as a process and tries to capture the ways in which individuals use resources to navigate social structures, thereby

Looking at the chain of transparency and accountability one must take into account, not only concepts and 'goods', such as the right to information or other good governance values; for transparency to lead to accountability there must be actions taken from a number of involved stakeholders, based on their context, their capacity and their needs. As mentioned above, Fung *et al* talk of regulatory transparency as being effective only when embedded in an action circle. Information can never be separated from its social context, they argue, citing studies on behaviour, which show that individuals ignore information that is too costly for them to acquire, and stating that "providing useable information to improve services is nothing but automatic" (2002, p. 157). They argue that the success of information being used by an individual relies on complex chains of action, response and comprehension.

For transparency policies to be effective, they need to be embedded, not only in the systems of the discloser (or the 'supply side', to use the same term used by McGee and Gaventa), but also in the user (or the 'demand side'). They state that: "Transparency systems alter decisions only when they take into account [the] demanding constraints by providing pertinent information that enables users to substantially improve their decisions with acceptable cost". Hence, "when new information becomes part of users' decision-making routines despite the challenges of bounded rationality, we say that it becomes embedded in user decisions" (p. 158). Standards-based regulatory systems for disclosers "send unambiguous signals to regulated parties concerning whether, when or how to change their practices", while "transparency systems, in contrast, do not specify whether, when or how organisations should change practices". Instead, changes are relying upon the responses of the users – which in turn create incentives for disclosers. Therefore, highly effective transparency policies are 'doubly embedded' (ibid).

Central elements for user 'embeddedness' are, according to Fung *et al* (p. 161):

- The relevance of information for users' decisions;
- The compatibility with users' decision-making processes;
- The comprehensibility of information to users' decisions (relating to format, for example if raw data is summarised at a more general level or simplified);

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leading them to have certain choices, which, if individuals are aware of them and use them based on what they themselves have reason to value (capabilities) may achieve desired outcomes for these individuals (achieved functionings)" (Kleine, 2013, p. 201).

- The cost of information collection; and
- The role of user intermediaries (that can help collect ant interpret information, thereby reducing its costs).

For disclosers, the following factors can be used to evaluate the degree of embeddedness (p. 164):

- Impact of user decision on discloser goals;
- Compatibility of response with ongoing discloser decisions;
- Ability to discern changes in user behaviour; and
- Cost of collecting information regarding changes in user behaviour.

Fung *et al* write that "disclosers may be more willing to invest time and effort when they perceive clear opportunities to beat the competition or avoid damage to their reputation. Disclosers' changes in practices sometimes anticipate rather than respond to user actions" (p. 165).

The writers also touch upon the potential of Information and Communication Technologies (hereafter called ICTs) to increase effectiveness of regulatory transparency as they "make it easier for public managers or intermediaries to customize information, for disclosing organizations to understand and respond to users' choices, and for users to specify the information they want" (p. 175).

Etzioni also states that the effectiveness of transparency depends upon the customers' or voters' ability to process the information. "Transparency cannot by itself suffice to serve the goals set for it", he writes and continues to say that it is "far from demonstrated that information which is reasonably comprehensive can be digested by most people" (2010, p. 399). Etzioni also stresses the importance of intermediaries to process 'first order' information into 'second order' information. However, the same issues of absorbability and veracity are faced in dealing with the two categories and the "users of intermediaries (and the information processed by them) face many of the same problems individuals encounter when they deal directly with raw information" (p. 401). There is always the risk of information overload, as when we are given too much information in a limited time that can result in "confusion, cognitive strain and poorer decision making" (p. 402). As a conclusion, Etzioni writes that "transparency reflects the idea that people are rational choosers who can govern themselves", when, in fact,

empirical studies indicate that "people are neither as able to process information nor as likely to act on it as transparency theory presumes" (pp. 403-404).

Roberts goes as far as criticising the operation and adequacy of transparency as a form of accountability, pointing towards the possibilities that the demand for universal transparency is likely to encourage the evasions, hypocrisies and half-truths that we usually refer to as 'political correctness' but which might more forthrightly be called either 'self-censorship' or 'deception' (2009, p. 963). Many times transparency interacts with 'blame avoidance' strategies, such as seeking scapegoats, no- or low-blame strategies, manipulation of performance numbers, flooding others with information (also known as 'snowing') or venue shifting (important decisions being moved to a different and undocumented setting) (ibid). Roberts argues for the potential of a more 'intelligent' accountability, stressing, for instance, the importance of listening as an active enquiry and an accountability that extends over time, preferably by face-to-face encounters (p. 966). What emerges then, he concludes, is "something of the weight of our practical dependence upon each other which accountability as talk, listening and asking questions then allows us to explore and investigate. Accountability is thereby reconstituted as a vital […] and on-going necessity as a social practice through which to insist upon and discover the nature of our responsibility to and for each other" (p. 969).

2.3 Open Data Initiatives

Open Data is a relatively new phenomenon, but there is already some research being undertaken into its impact. Many of the studies focus on Open Aid Data, such as Linders, who have been looking at the scope for Open Data to support the development communities' commitment to improving the effectiveness of aid by adopting a more systematic, coherent and strategic approach to aid delivery. As evidence for the new vital role that 'information' has been given in planning, managing, coordinating and evaluating aid projects he mentions that "the words 'information', 'data' and 'transparency' receive a collective 52 mentions in the Paris Declaration and its two following agreements in Accra […] and Busan" (2013, p. 428).

His analysis is that there is a lack of timely and comparable data and that even the information available is seldom in user-friendly formats. He also points out the 'usual barriers', namely language, cost and access to computers as well as computer literacy (ibid). However, he stresses the possibilities of disaggregated data and geo-tagged

project data, which give opportunities to 'mash up' the data with other variables (p. 429). He also mentions KODI and says that "the general trend towards openness should help advance the principle of country ownership, as transparency will provide donors with a mechanism to confirm their money allocated through government systems" (ibid).

The development of new technologies gives way to new possibilities for participatory methodologies, e.g. "locally driven monitoring tools to measure the efficiency of aid as seen by the population" (ibid); these mechanisms could work as accountability tools and feedback loops. However, Roberts points out that aid data has not been widely used and it is clear that it is not a question of 'just putting the data or website out there'. Due to the barriers mentioned above, the "mobile and web 2.0 interactivity cannot be counted upon to engage the most disadvantaged" (p. 430). Instead these communities "will have to rely on third party information intermediaries, or 'info-mediaries', who are able to 'bring the data to life' by tailoring complex data to local needs and present it in an accessible, relevant way" (ibid).

In an annex to McGee and Gaventa, Rosemary McGee presents an in-depth study on Aid Transparency. The initiatives she has been looking at stretch from projects on a technical basis to those on a more normative, value or rights basis; I will focus on the former. These 'new wave' initiatives can be state-led, like the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI), or citizen-led like Publish What You Fund. McGee arrives to a couple of conclusions, which can be relevant for this study. The cost-benefit study of IATI shows that aid effectiveness from aid transparency is approximately equivalent to a "permanent increase in global aid of 1.3 per cent" and that "at a time when aid budgets are under pressure, these would be significant increases in poverty reduction without adding to aid spending" (2010, p. 9). However, she adds that there has been an over-emphasis on donors providing aid data at the cost of attention to the potential use of the data by the beneficiaries in the South, and citizens to use the information, for example to demand accountability. The potential powers of these transparency initiatives are really only "unlocked by the hands of non-governmental academic and campaigning info-mediaries" (p. 16). We should be "contemplating the width of the experiential abyss that lies between information age cybernaut info-mediaries based at US universities, and illiterate Mozambique, and who could turn aid data into citizen-led accountability demands levelled at their local government" (p. 17).

In many new wave initiatives, "transparency all too often seems to be understood as availability of statistics, albeit timely, comprehensive and comparable statistics; in fact many activists and observers concerned about the uses and effectiveness of aid are not interested in the numbers but the policies and guidelines, or even the politics and relationships". This creates what we can call an 'opaque transparency' rather than a 'clear transparency' (p 19). McGee concludes by saying that we should neither forget that information produces neither activism nor policy change *per se,* and that the involvement of civil society is too often taken for granted. Therefore a user perspective is crucial for the transparency and accountability initiatives to bear fruit (p. 22).

Narrowing down from a global scale to the Kenyan perspective, there is also some existing research to be found on Open Data. There is also a lot of interesting information and opinions on blogs and websites. KODI has definitely been able to engage tech-interested academia, developers and other Open Data stakeholders, both nationally and internationally. A case study made by a student at Princeton tells the inside story of how the former Minister of Information Bitange Ndemo opened up Kenya's government to the country's citizens and the world[17]. Looking through the rear mirror this 'success story' might not feel as powerful, but it is still an interesting account of how a 'champion' like Ndemo can work his way through massive government resistance to be able to get the President on board and launch the site – within a very short timeframe. It gives an insight into power dynamics, both within the government and towards external actors, such as the World Bank.

Another interesting study, which is relevant to this thesis, is the iHub base line study on the consumption of Open Data in the Kenyan population[18]. The research centre carried out an assessment of applications currently used by a sample of the Kenyan population and the study had a clear user perspective. Some of the key findings were that the majority of those surveyed has access to information through some device, like computers or phones – but that television was the most popular. Most of the respondents had a mobile phone, which was Internet-enabled. The most common mobile applications used were Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp and Opera Mini.

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[17] Majeed, Rushda. *Disseminating the Power of Information – Kenya Open Data Initiative, 2011-2012.* http://www.princeton.edu/successfulsocieties/content/data/policy_note/PN_id206/Policy_Note_ID206 .pdf

[18] iHub Research. *Kenya´s Low Consumption of Open Data.* http://www.ihub.co.ke/blog/2013/10/kenyas-low-consumption-of-open-data/

One part of the survey focused on how the citizen currently interacts with the government to obtain information. A total of 62 per cent of respondents said they receive information on services from the government, including information related to the ministries, and the various programmes and services they offer, such as youth fund, census, security, health services, trainings, etc. 23 per cent said they received information from the government on politics. However, the main information on politics was received by 'traditional media'. Out of the respondents, 54 per cent said they receive their information online.

Hardly any of the people surveyed were aware of the KODI platform, and the few that were, did not say they used it. Even students in Nairobi, with good access to social and traditional media, had not heard of the initiative. The study showed, however, that the demand for information was very high. Three thematic areas were highlighted namely: health, education and water. Most people said they would like to receive the information through visuals, diagrams or pictures, and 46 per cent of respondents said they would like to receive information on an internet site, while 36 per cent would like to receive it via a mobile application.

The study illustrates the low awareness levels as a challenge, but points towards more popular media – such as traditional media and social media – as a means by which to reach out and create awareness, since the demand for information is there.

2.4 Related features of Foucault's concept of 'governmentality'

Michel Foucault's concept of 'governmentality' is a semantic linking of the words 'governing' and 'modes of thought', which, according to Lemke "indicates that it is not possible to study the technologies of power without an analysis of the political rationality underpinning them" (2002, p. 2). His theories can thus be used to analyse power beyond a perspective that focuses on either consensus or violence – it "links the technologies of the self with the technologies of domination, the constitution of the subject to the formation of the state, finally it helps to differentiate between power and domination" (p. 3). Foucault insists on distinguishing "the relations of power as strategic games between liberties – strategic games that result in the fact that some people try to determine the conduct of others – and the states of domination, which are what we ordinarily call power" (p. 5). Hence, power relations do not have to result in less liberty of options but rather the contrary – power could result in an 'empowerment'

or 'responsibilisation' of subjects, forcing them to 'free' decision-making in fields of action" (ibid). To analyse political power does not then necessarily imply the investigation of whether practices conform to rationalities, "but to discover which kind of rationality they are using" (, p. 7). Hence, when Foucault talks of the 'governmentalisation' of the state, he talks of the state itself as a tactics of government, and as a dynamic form and historic stabilisation of societal power relations.

Lemke analyses the emergence of new actors, such as NGOs, on the scene of government with governmentality as a theoretical framework and comes to the conclusion that the "strategy of making individual subjects 'responsible' […] entails shifting the responsibility for social risks, such as illness, unemployment, poverty, etc., and for life in society into a domain for which the individual is responsible, and transforming it into a problem of 'self-care'" (p. 12).

Löwenheim focuses on Foucault's notion that "all knowledge is political". The construction of discourse is a way of creating legitimacy where a certain discursive environment sets out standards of normalcy. The production of truth is intimately interlinked with power and there is a hierarchy of knowledge where the nexus of knowledge is related to material power (2008, p. 263).

Löwenheim writes that "governmentality focuses on self-optimization of subjects through individual liberty and freedom of choice" and that "governmentality works on actors assumed to be capable of choice, this choice is limited and steered by powerful agents". Hence governmentality is a "process that delineates the boundaries of responsible and rational choice and seeks to guide the subject into what power wielders consider to be appropriate choices" (ibid).

Rossi analyses the development discourse from a Foucauldian perspective with reference to the governmentality concept, saying that this discourse "identifies appropriate and legitimate ways of practicing development as well as speaking and thinking about it" (2004, p.1). All practices exist within a certain regime of rationality and a discourse "works as a structure external to individuals or collective actors, and to a large extent unacknowledged insofar as it invests actions and objects with meaning and it bestows people with morally-charged identities, discourse is a form of power" (p. 2).

Since knowledge is power, this means that there is a limit to the extent to which actors can manipulate knowledge in power games when these do not take place between equals. Foucault's work can be used to grasp the "conditions which make certain practices acceptable (and sometimes unavoidable) at a given historical moment" (p. 22). Thus, those who have power to define the discourses set the terms, and disallow and marginalise differences. Often the only thing actors in unfavourable bargaining positions can do is to 'buy into' the dominant discourses (p. 23).

According to Rossi, Foucault's principal contribution to the social sciences has been "to illustrate how forms of rationality embedded in cultural wholes have totalising effects with regards to pattern(s) of conduct and forms of identity available to individuals and institutions" (p. 25).

3. Theory and methodology

3.1 Theory

I have used the main points stressed by McGee and Gaventa regarding the different actors and variables or enabling factors for TAIs to work, and have put them into the following table (see table 1). In this table I have also added free media as an enabling factor, not explicitly mentioned in the main points by McGee and Gaventa, but a relevant factor mentioned in other parts of the study, as well as by Carter. I use this table to structure my interview responses in the analysis.

Table 1.

Actors	Variables/enabling factors as found in the literature
'Supply' side or disclosers	Access to information
	Institutional or state capacity
	Institutionalisation of accountability mechanisms
	Level of democratisation
	Level of political will
	Broader enabling legal frameworks, political incentives, sanctions
Intermediaries/Info-mediaries	Civil society capacity
	Free media (not explicitly mentioned by McGee and Gaventa, but, for example, by Carter on p. 7)
'Demand' or users	Capabilities citizens
	Degree to which TAIs interact with other mobilisation and collective action strategies
	The engagement of citizens in the 'upstream', as well as the 'downstream', stages of TAI

3.2 Methodology

I have used a combined quantitative and qualitative method in order to be able to connect findings from interviews to real numbers. The data on usage is from the survey that KODI published on the website for a couple of months in 2014. There were over 100 respondents. I also have access to some statistics on visits to the site. Using a survey in which I have not been involved has its limitations. I have not taken part in structuring it, neither do I have a complete overview of who has answered it, who has not, etc. However, the material it quite large and I have had access to the 'raw' answers, and its composition works well with my aim of looking at who uses the website and for

what purpose. However, one should always bear in mind off course, issue of who actually takes time to complete such a survey.

Combined methods

The introduction of cultural studies in the 1960s transformed human sciences with an anti-positivism approach and the rediscovery of hermeneutics. The epistemological left steered research towards qualitative methods and away from the quantitative approaches of the transmission paradigm. Cultural studies focused on the 'deconstruction of meaning', while statistics were seen as the 'construction of meaning' (Pickering, 2013, pp. 91-93).

Many writers concur with the viewpoint that mixed methods, and especially quantitative and qualitative methods, give a good balance and enrich possibilities to reach good conclusions. Pickering states that the cultural studies approaches have much to contribute to enrich the rationale, design, presentation and interpretation of qualitative evidence (p. 102).

Hence, the literature backs up my decision to use a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. To use only a case study as a method has the limitation that it is difficult to generalise statistically from using a small number of cases to the population as a whole. Somekh and Lewin write that "using methods that gather and represent human phenomena with numbers […] along with methods that gather and represent human phenomena with words […] are classic instances of mixing data gathering and analysing techniques" (2011, p. 274).

Thus, a twin methodological approach answers the researcher's concerns of reliability and validity, and I thereby feel more than confident in my choice of a qualitative/quantitative methodology.

Qualitative interviews

My main focus has been on the qualitative interviews. According to Pickering interviews used to be seen as auxiliaries to quantitative research but today they can stand alone or in conjunction with statistical material. This represents a break from the dominance of positivist approaches and a sign of the alternative conceptions of knowledge as being inter-relational and defined by meaning rather than quantification

(2013, p. 70). Pickering adds to the social constructionist perspective of knowledge not being 'out there to collect', but rather produced by the interaction within the interview. The researcher is thereby part of the production of knowledge. Pickering calls the research participants "active meaning makers rather than passive information providers, and interviews offer a unique opportunity to study these processes of meaning production directly" (ibid).

Somekh and Lewin write that "employing laboratory-designed methods for research that focuses upon the complex, dynamic, plastic worlds of everyday social and personal life is rather like taking a pile driver to do lace work" (2011, p. 43). As a journalist and communications expert I have a lot of experience of the qualitative interview as a method. However, the challenge has been to apply a more scientific approach to interviewing and to plan the structure of interviews carefully to fit my research questions.

In this project I have used, as May calls it, a 'deductive interview approach' (2009, p. 199); I think this is relevant considering the topic. This is not an ethnographic study of human life, but rather an investigation into the usage of certain material as well as values and opinions around the phenomenon of Open Data within the Kenyan context.

May emphasises the importance of a carefully constructed interview guide to "collect information into (a) manageable form for later analysis", but always to leave room to "discover the unexpected and uncover the unknown" (2009, p. 204). He underlines that "a structure or sequence of questions, which is rigid and which is devised in advance by the interviewer, by definition lacks flexibility and sensitivity to context, and particularity is required if we are to listen to our interviewees' ways of interpreting and experiencing the social world" (p. 231).

For this research I have chosen a semi-structured interview, based on a guide with questions and topics, which I want to cover, but leaving room for flexibility. I wanted to avoid the completely structured interview with a direct and interventionist interviewer role. I have also tried to avoid interrupting and cutting off during the interview (Pickering, 2013, p. 81), following the advice of Somekh and Lewin to "evoke rather than impose on the realities of people's experiences" (2011, p. 43-44).

Sampling

I will discuss my position as an employee at Sida (the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) under the following topic, but it has also, of course, influenced whom and in what manner I have been able to gain access to in Kenya. I have used a 'snowball method' (Browne, 2005, pp. 47-60) to get hold of the people for interviews. Starting with contacts in my work environment I have reached out to contacts at the World Bank, the IATI-context and the Swedish Embassy in Nairobi, as well as fellow Swedes in other international organisations and Swedish civil society organisations (hereafter called CSOs) working with these issues or working in Kenya. Relatively swiftly I managed to acquire the names of people who have been directly or indirectly involved in the KODI-process. They, in turn, provided me with contacts in other civil society organisations and representatives from the media. It was harder to gain access to what I want to call the 'end-user', i.e. a citizen who has come into contact with the website in some context and could give their opinions about the site, and their views of both the importance of transparency and the possibilities for accountability. The closest I could get was a representative from a loosely-formed urban activist network; a rural development worker in a civil society organisation; and a representative of a small grassroots organisation working in the slum areas. Due to time constraints in Nairobi, I complemented this with three Q&A interviews with respondents via e-mail, one of which I found via social media. Nevertheless, these were also well-educated and initiated people from the 'tech-world'.

The sampling process is far from ideal if you want to get a representative picture of general awareness about, and usage of, the website, or the 'common citizen's' opinions and views about transparency and accountability in general, and Open Data, in particular. However, since my research questions concern issues, such as political analysis and detailed recommendations for the initiative, there might be more conclusions to be drawn from interviews with persons who are involved in these processes and know about the issues in more detail. As other studies have shown, the general public's awareness regarding Open Data is low, and with a more general sampling technique I would probably just come to an identical conclusion. That said, the strength of having at least talked to a couple of individuals who have no direct ties to the initiative is apparent in the responses.

The sample I am building on is quite young: most people I spoke to were in their early 30s or even younger (average age – 29 years). The gender balance is not as good as I

would have wanted – five women and ten men – and the sample is not at all representative of the Kenyan population as a whole. This is a highly-educated, technologically-aware sample, but they have good insight into the initiative and in the political setting in Kenya, and can thus give interesting views and recommendations for the future of KODI.

The interviews took about one hour to complete and were conducted at locations chosen by interviewees, mostly in their offices, sometimes in cafés. The interviews were then transcribed. The Q&As conducted via e-mail obviously gave less substantial answers.

Ethics

As mentioned before, I have not been able to keep my two different roles as a development professional and an academic completely separate. In order to gain access to people I have used my contacts at Sida. I have been clear in my contacts and requests that the project is something I am doing outside of my work at Sida, but I am aware that many people do not make a clear distinction between these two roles. Obviously, being a representative of a large donor in Kenya, this might have coloured the answers from the interviewees. However, I felt that the people I interviewed were expressing themselves freely, so I hope that this has not influenced the findings in any major way.

I decided not to create a written, formal consent form, since I felt that the people I spoke to were aware of the implications of doing these kinds of interviews. However, I have clearly stated the intent of the study and how it will be used, so there is in existence an informal consent. I also made it clear to the interviewees from civil society that they will remain completely anonymous for the purposes of the study. In the small circles of Open Data-actors in Kenya it might not be very hard to figure out individuals' identity, but since some of the matters are of a political nature, I have decided not to present age, gender or position/organisation in the study, except for the official representative of the government, who is a public figure.

4. Findings

4.1 Findings from quantitative empirical data

Website visitors' statistics

KODI site visitors

According to the statistics for the KODI website (Appendix 1) the platform had 436 datasets in 2013. The total number of page views during the year was 3.5 million. The top three datasets were 'Poverty Rate, by District', 'County Urbanization: Nairobi' and 'Per Capita County Expenditures Nairobi' (each downloaded between 10,000 and 13,000 times). The top three search terms were 'Age Pyramid', 'Local Authority Expenditures by Year' and 'County Urbanization' (each searched for about 430,000 times). The top three downloads were 'Schools – Districts', 'Vision Progress Report' and 'Schools' (each downloaded between 7,000 and 11,000 times).

User survey

The user survey had 103 respondents as of the 23rd March 2014. I have put together some useful numbers from the survey, related to this project (Appendix 2) and will present some of the findings below.

The main visitors were from Kenya – a total of 82 per cent of the respondents were national, while the other nationalities were mainly European and North American, but there was also one respondent from Uganda and one from Bangladesh. Of the respondents, only 17 per cent were from a rural setting while 52 per cent were from either Nairobi or Mombasa. The respondents were relatively young; the largest group (35 of respondents) being aged between 25 and 34, and only 14 respondents were aged 44 or older. The education level was quite advanced: only 6 respondents with secondary education while a full 48 respondents have a graduate degree and 40 have a post graduate degree. Divided into professions, the largest group was entrepreneurs, business owners and other tech-related professions within the private sector, followed by students and academics or researchers. Divided into industries or sectors the main industry was information technology (23 respondents), consultation services (14), education (14), non-profit organisations (11), government services (10) and healthcare (10).

The majority of the respondents were first time users (35 respondents), while the rest were quite spread out with usage being from once a week to less than four times a year. The main reason for using the website was academic research (30 respondents) and policy research (18), but also insights for business decisions (9). There were as many

respondents that said they download datasets 'frequently' or 'always', as those who said they download datasets 'rarely' or 'never'. The answers were equally balanced between respondents that use, or do not use, visualisations. However, the usage of API (application programming interface) is less frequent; only 19 users said they use the API 'frequently' or 'always'.

The datasets in which the respondents were most interested are county level data (35 respondents) and national level data (30 respondents).

In response to the request: "Please describe how you have typically used the content and tools on our website" there are comments indicating usage for analysis of economic and social decision-making, the creation of visualisation software for poverty indices at county levels, forecasting needs and research analysis, among others.

With regard to the statement: "Data availability is good and covers my needs" the responses were quite evenly spread, the main respondents achieving 3 on a scale of 1-5 (where 1 indicates 'Strongly Agree' and 5 indicates 'Strongly Disagree').

With regard to the statement "Data is up-to-date" the largest group of respondents ticked '5' – 'strongly disagree', but responses were quite evenly spread here as well. In response to the statement "Site is easy to use" the largest proportion of respondents gave the site a '2', only five of them ticked '1' and the same amount of respondents ticked '5'.

Among the features that the respondents saw as being the most urgent to improve was the need to sure that the data is up-to-date (38 respondents marked this as "most urgent"), followed by making the data layout more logical (22) and better tools with which to manipulate the data online (21).

Respondents said they have looked for certain data but had been unable to find it. The main missing data were census data (9 respondents), agriculture and county statistics (8 respondents on each topic), health and CDF (5 respondents on each topic).

Suggestions for improvements made by the respondents in free text were centred on things like the improvement of details, level of data, the dissemination of data and knowledge of KODI, and encouraging onsite interaction, but also to make the data more disaggregated on a local level.

4.2 Findings from outcome of interviews

The analysis below will be structured based on the main questions from the questionnaire (Appendix 3).

How did you come into contact with KODI?

Three of the respondents are representatives from the government or former employees of the government. Two of them have been directly involved in the Kenya Open Data Initiative, the other being responsible for the e-ProMIS initiative. The answers from the two KODI officials related to how the project came into place and under what circumstances.

Bitange Ndemo, the former Minister of Information, said that he started the initiative as a way for the government to be transparent and change the image of the country from an image of secrecy. On the latter point, he said: "This is nonsense; we need to open up this thing". The government was also able to "piggyback" on the OGD movement (see Appendix 3, quote 1). The way both Ndemo and the KODI official talk of how the KODI project came into being tells a story about a project starting in a dynamic but quite disorganised way. The official said that he/she was between jobs and was asked if he/she could be a volunteer, but ended up as the consultant and only employee, with support from the World Bank (quote 2).

From the intermediaries, there is one journalist and six representatives from civil society organisations or tech-collectives. Several of the civil society organisations are highly professionalised organisations that have been directly involved in the initiatives. All of them have used the site, for example, for budget information and data on county differences (quote 3). However, few of them have found it very useful for their scope of work. One of the respondents said that, "navigating through the forest of information was very difficult" (quote 4). Several respondents said that the data was not there, or was not up-to-date. Instead they have had to rely on other sources, like the OECD website or just by using personal contacts within organisations or the government (quote 5). The interviewed journalist wrote about the platform when it was launched, but has not actually used any information to feed into a story (quote 6).

Five of the respondents are labelled as 'end users' – either citizens who have been in contact with KODI on a personal interest basis or representatives from grassroots

organisations or activist groups that have heard of the initiative or been in contact with it somehow. Three of the end-users are very tech 'savvy' and have been in contact with the initiative via social media and the ICT authority. Two of them have used the site to find data and were happy about the experience. The activists/grassroots users were not as impressed. In fact, two of the grassroots representatives (from semi-rural and slum settings) have not really used the site. One of them said that he/she has heard reference to the site but that it is not updated (quote 7) and the other respondent has not used the site either. The respondent said:

> "I have heard of it, but I'm not familiar with it. I've heard about information, access of information, through it. I heard [about] it through another organisation that deals with information sharing; it is a non-government organisation. Once they told people in a meeting to access the website and maybe have a view [of] what was inside, but I think I was ignorant and I never visited [it] ."

What are the good things about KODI?

Many of the responses to this question concluded the same, non-flattering fact, "that it exists". The initiative, as such, is an important symbol, a foundation upon which to build and a starting point. With the initiative there is a vision of not having to go to different ministries and authorities to knock on doors and ask for information, which is not always given out. They said that it is "encouraging that it exists", that it is "commendable that the information was released" and that it can work as an "important foundation". One respondent said that it shows they have made an effort and that "*theoretically* it is a one-stop-shop for information". Another respondent said that "to someone *else* in the public who doesn't want use data that covers up until yesterday, that is a positive thing" (quotes 8-11)

Even the KODI officials see it rather as a starting point than a finished project. The positive thing about it is that it has "removed the fear" within the government. Before it was launched there was a lot of controversy and debate about what the project would mean for the work of the government (quote 12).

Some respondents have more positive things to say, for example, connected to the usefulness of Open Data as raw, machine-readable information. They say it works as a "good first point of contact and a "repository to learn more about the government". It is a "starting point" (quotes 13-14).

The KODI official had a positive view of the usefulness of the site:

> "One of the best things about it is that this is all free data and most of it is raw data, actually almost all of this is raw data, so what it means is that you are at base zero of the thought process. When you read reports you start with someone's thoughts you know, but when you work with raw data you are at the bottom and you are experiencing all these beautiful things about the data that you are working with."

What are the bad things about KODI?

Notwithstanding the foregoing, there is a lot of negative criticism about the site. The main criticism is about the lack of data and that the information is not updated frequently. Also, there is criticism relating to the structure and user-perspective, but there are also points raised about sustainability, political will and ownership.

Several respondents talked about the data that exists on the site and said things like: "I didn't find anything useful to us"; "there were components missing"; "the information was too broad"; "aged and irrelevant information"; "information dated back years" and "for this initiative to be sustainable it needs to be regularly updated".

However, many of the respondents recognised that the lack of data is not necessarily the fault of the initiative, but rather a result of the information environment. In fact, they said it is not really the problem of the platform but a problem of the government in general, which comes out "exaggerated on the platform", since no-one is giving them updated data. One respondent said that much of the information "is actually not there" and that is why the information on the platform is incomplete (quotes 15-16).

The structure on the website was mentioned by many of the respondents who concluded that it would need to be analysed or synthesised in some way for it to be useful to the "common citizen in the street" (quote 17). One respondent called the structure a "dump":

> "[…] in a low information environment you need a little more guidance from the website. So the principle of the website is that it is a dump, it is a place where you dump data. I think there are a couple of problems with that. First of all, most users aren't savvy enough to navigate that, so there has to be a better structure. Second of all, because of the issues of data quality, you need someone to help you to understand what is this data that I am looking at, how reliable is it and what other sources are there for the same data, so I don't suddenly have to get confused."

Some of the respondents questioned at whom the website is actually aimed, the user perspective and user friendliness. They underlined the fact that there is quite a lot of know-how required to manage the site and questioned how many citizens can actually use this kind of information, in this form. One respondent said that today it is actually hard to find anyone "who would say something positive about KODI" and he/she would give it 3 out of 10 in terms of user-friendliness (quote 18).

Several respondents talked about the need to try to find out who the users actually are and to structure it according to its intended audience. There is a lack of awareness about the site, but they also mentioned the problems of accessibility, since it is a highly technological tool in an environment where not everyone has access to the internet, nor are they used to handling this kind of digital information (quotes 19-22). Even the developers have lost interest, said one respondent:

> "[…] when the Open Data started it was in the realm of lots of countries doing Open Data and it was Kenya, Kenya, Kenya, but then when you looked on the ground and especially developers, people were coming in to do apps thinking Open Data is a competition, but they found there was no money to be made and they moved on."

Even Ndemo and the KODI official are critical about the site as it is now. Ndemo said that he is disappointed and that at the moment there is no driver, no-one who is "inclined to push" the project. The official said that there is a need for someone doing what he/she used to do, respond to demands, get data, do forums, reach out, build a community, etc. (quotes 23-24).

This lack of political will, sustainability and ownership was echoed by some of the other respondents. One criticism was that there is no policy framework behind it, which means that no-one is obligated to release any data to the project. One respondent underlined the fact that it was never really a Kenyan government initiative but rather that it had been "pushed on to the government by the World Bank". Ndemo is described as a champion within the government to push it, but with a lack of framework it became a question of which ministries and authorities actually provided data to the website (quote 25).

What does the demand for information look like?

There is a lot of criticism on lack of information or data available on the site. What, then, is the kind of information that the respondents suggested should be there? As a distillation from their responses we can map out some areas, the main clusters being budgets and resource allocation, another being different services; and a third, useful information with which to sustain livelihoods.

Resource allocation and policies: examples mentioned:

- Corruption
- Politicians' use of money
- MPs' and officials' records
- Budgets (especially local budgets from counties)
- Resources that have been devolved
- Development spending
- Pro-poor policies

Livelihoods: examples mentioned:

- Land tenure and land issues
- Information on promotion of livelihoods
- Climate and weather
- Agriculture

Services: examples mentioned:

- Education
- Hospitals

One respondent suggested that the most important need for transparency among citizens might not be Open Data transparency, but rather open processes:

> "For example, if I need to apply for a certain permit, what do I need to do, what form do I fill in, where do I take it, how long does it take, where do I go to collect my permit, [and] what do I expect the permit to look like? We have focused a lot on data transparency, but process transparency is important."

Who is the intended 'end-user' for KODI?

According to the web-site, KODI is focusing on a wide range of users, from developers to academia and researchers, down to civil society and the general public. Having such a broad intended audience makes it difficult to satisfy all needs. So what did the respondents say about the end-user? Bitange Ndemo told a story about how his own love for data made him go to see young developers once a week and that they showed great interest in getting access to data to operate mobile applications. Since there were some registries, which had already been digitised by the government, Ndemo decided to make data available to them to start working. "Those were the number one people I was thinking of", he said (quote 26).

According to the KODI official, the project started in the realm of the hype of Kenya as a tech-hub with the developers in mind, but quite quickly they realised that the government information was not always what the developers needed for businesses. They started to collect information on what people really wanted and needed, and the focus shifted from the developer to the citizen (quote 27).

However, one of the respondents said that the site does not really reflect this broad user perspective. He/she said that the initiative rather reflects an "end-user like themselves, someone who is connected, who goes to a website, who would go looking for this information" and beyond that, the government leaves it to the responsibility of others to take advantage of the information. "Their role is finished at the point when they published", claimed the respondent (quote 28).

Other voices echoed the criticism regarding the limited user perspective and said that the information might be useful to analysts or researchers, but definitely not for a farmer in rural Kenya (quote 29-30).

However, there might have been a strategic thought behind targeting the tech-community first hand. The KODI official said that data is never neutral; there are people who represent political interests behind it:

> "So, if Open Data had been positioned as purely a transparency exercise, it could never have seen the light of day. […] it had to be positioned as an entrepreneurial innovation kind of conversation, and that is how it was sold within government. […] the whole idea about transparency and accountability is there in the background, I think everyone expects it to be about transparency and accountability, but the primary positioning for it was not about that. That was key to getting it to happen in the first place."

What are the recommendations to improve KODI?

Based on the main criticisms being the lack of data and structure, the recommendations also fall within this area, e.g. "wider data sets" and "open the data fire hose". As one respondent puts it: "if a platform like KODI is to be used it depends on the quality of the information and the people knowing it is there" (quote 31).

There seems to be consensus on the usefulness of having a centralised platform where data and information is gathered. From there, it is important to restructure and think about audiences, but also to build initiatives around it to make it sustainable and to reach out by creating awareness.

Some of the suggestions are based on making it more user-responsive, based on different audiences (quote 32-33). One respondent gave his/her view on how the structure could be built to actually serve different kinds of users:

> "[…] if you want to serve all these end users you have to be careful about how you structure the site so that if you are a general citizen who wants to download a dataset it is easy to do that, but if you are a more technical [user] or developer who wants to use the API, it is easy to do that too."

Here is another elaborated idea about structure:

> "[…] it would be more helpful if the website itself was organized into sectors […] and on that page it would be organized into intuitive sectors based on what people would be looking for. […] And then there is some structured information that has been processed by someone. Like, here is an easy-to-use graph […] then under that is the data so I can actually start playing around with the data, if that is what I wanted. […] So that in the end of the day the people who want just raw data can get it but an average person who can't actually operate in that environment can follow the website like a map which they can follow to actually get to the information they are looking for." (sic)

Somehow the initiative has to ensure that there is an incentive for the end user because they are spending time as well as money accessing the internet or downloading data, as one respondent said (quote 34).

The comment from one of the end-users, in a semi-rural setting, related the level of computer literacy that some of the intended users might have that will have to be taken into account, especially considering that this is a person with a university degree, basic computer literacy and access to the Internet:

> "What I need first is maybe the time, to visit there, and the skill maybe. I don't know if when you go to the internet, you google, you have the information or if there are some procedures to get into that website."

There are several ideas about how to work with the structure of the site: some are more general like "the results of data layering digested into more palatable forms for the regular citizen ", or "better cataloguing and better user friendliness" or "stratify information so that it responds to [the] needs of different audiences" (quotes 35-37).

Some of the respondents underlined the need to access information on the site which is as disaggregated as possible, one saying that "the smaller you get, the more local you get, the more relevant it is." Having information reaching people in the rural areas is key, according to another respondent (quotes 38-39).

One concrete example of just how local the information should be in order to make it relevant is this:

> "[…] if I'm able to see what my member of parliament is doing and some of the projects map down to a location, you can say 'hey, that is next to my house. But wait, that building doesn't exist'. So this creates a way that the citizen can demand better services and be able to out false claims by their representatives." (sic)

There are several suggestions regarding complementing the site with more low-tech solutions, like TV or radio, in order to close the gap between different audiences. One should be able to "access it in the middle of nowhere", said one respondent (quotes 40-41).

Others stressed the importance of building internal relations to institutionalise the initiative and make it sustainable, as well as creating ownership. The respondent said that KODI had "hit a dead end" when it comes to governmental relations. Not until the internal challenges are sorted out, could one move on to work on things like the capacity of intermediaries, civil society and journalists. "The first is existential: if that is broken you don't have an initiative," the respondent said (quote 42).

One respondent went as far as saying that the project has to be rebooted and "maybe even change the name". This respondent is convinced other projects, such as e-ProMIS,

has more ownership and will be the way forward. However, KODI could work as a common website for all state e-initiatives (quote 43)[19].

Another respondent also talked of the possibility of having many parallel digital transparency initiatives, since there seems to be a fierce sense of ownership of the information, especially in the counties:

> "So if they want to publish but they feel that the Ministry of Information is getting all the credit for their efforts to be transparent, then they might decide not to publish on the Ministry of Information portal. What I feel is what we actually want to see – Open Data; it doesn't matter if everyone sets up their own portal, let them. Because it is Open Data, licencing allows someone else to aggregate it."

What does transparency mean to you?

Lifting one's gaze a level, I wanted to know how the respondents look upon the wider issues of transparency, accountability and what is needed in a society for this to work. So the second part of the questionnaire is about their definitions and views on this, as well as enabling and disabling factors, and recommendations on a more general level.

What, then, is transparency to the interviewees? The most used word was "openness" but they also talked of "visibility", "not hiding anything", "everything is put on the table". Many of the respondents touched upon the issue of corruption and "overcoming suspicions and doubts".

You can read some of the more elaborated definitions of transparency as a state of governance and as part of public processes in quotes 44-45. Others responses were more personal and specific, stating, for example, that "I want to know how people are using my money" (quote 46).

Another respondent elaborated on the limits of transparency, and discussed the fact that it should be demand-driven. We should show people what is critical and what they need to know, but "too much information just ends up being useless". "Don't shove irrelevant information down people's throats", he/she said (quote 47).

What does accountability mean to you?

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[19] To expand on this subject, one could look closer at the concept of 'disruptive technologies' or 'disruptive innovations' by Clayton Christensen. As referenced in for example Kopetzky *et al* (2011) who underline that resources allocated for continuous technology development may prove inefficient with the rise of a disruptive technology providing new and more attractive customer propositions.

Here the most used words/phrases among the respondents, talking of accountability, were "responsible", "responsiveness" and taking "responsibility for actions taken", but also being "answerable", "own up to what you have done", "reporting back" and "closing the feed-back loop". One respondent talked of it as being a "two-way communication". Another respondent elaborated upon it being "the trust that is bestowed on you when you hold a public office" and being responsible to the public to "explain the mandate, the failure or success of fulfilling that mandate" (quote 48).

The journalist problematised how Open Data could work for accountability. An Open Data website, which is comprehensible, can provide possibilities to hold leaders accountable, but, he/she said, the ones who would in the end hold them accountable would be the journalists and civil society, and that is an elitist kind of accountability, since both media houses and civil society organisations have their own agenda (quote 49).

Another respondent connected the issue to the current situation in Kenya:

> "Looking at, for example, leaders. We elect them, we put them in office, they come to Nairobi, for example to the parliament, then they forget that we were the ones who put them there. So they get all these resources […] they start doing all these things with their family, but they are not accountable to us, about what they are doing. They think they should not report back."

What is needed for transparency to actually lead to accountability?

One of the respondents put his/her finger on the main issue of this thesis - the 'leap of faith' when one talks of transparency as leading to accountability (and, in the end, good governance and development) as something automatic. "The feeling is good governance resulting in economic growth and openness is part of good governance. For me I think this is the largest leap of faith – we are getting a lot more examples where economic growth is not linked to good governance," he/she said (quote 50).

The respondents gave several ideas and recommendations on how transparency and accountability could actually work. The main focus was on access to information and how to make it work. Here I quote a few points:

- Designing and getting the information to the right people, and doing so effectively. If you have the right information, you know it is useful; it has to make someone angry enough to do something about it.

- It is the information, the levels of awareness that would then empower citizens to be able to ask more questions, and ask questions about whether there is proper use of the trust that has been bestowed upon people.

- The most important pillar of public participation is access to information: the public would be able to understand a lot of things and ask questions, but the reason why information is kept away from people is actually for that same reason - that people should not ask questions.

- Make information available to all levels of society. Hold public forums. To have that dialogue with the government, at all levels.

- There probably needs to be a better link between the legislative attempts of transparency and accountability, and initiatives like KODI.

- Every public undertaking should be well documented, not only from the financial aspect but on all aspects, and decisions concerning the use of public resources should be based on facts. This will only happen with availability of quality data for sound decision-making.

- It's not a fact about institutionalisation, it's more a human thing, human relations. We need to nurture champions - champions with reach within government, who can push for Open Data, even from a transparency and accountability aspect.

The idea about champions[20] within the system is elaborated upon by the respondent:

> "You can tell there is more political will now than there was in the past but without the champions, especially at the devolved level, the national government can be as willing as possible, but if the county governments are not, the really high interest data for the grassroots, [if it is not opened up], - the value for the grassroots of Open Data becomes less […] I think champions at the devolved level, nurturing champions, creating that environment that allows that to happen, might be just institutional."

Which are the enabling factors?

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[20] Renken and Heeks (2013) expand on the subject of 'champions' – visionary individuals in the ICT4D area – and present a model for understanding and researching them, which could be used for a further deepening of the subject.

There are a couple of different thematics when the respondents talk about enabling factors for transparency, accountability and Open Data initiatives like KODI in Kenya. One was legislation, where the new constitution, as well as devolution (decentralisation), were the most prominent examples among the answers. The other was capacity among stakeholders, where civil society is mentioned as well as the media. Another frequently mentioned aspect was the proliferation of information and communication technology and digitisation taking place within government.

According to one correspondent the new constitution provides for access of information as a matter of right. However, not until there is a law, which ensures provision, can this lead to a real cultural change (quote 51).

The devolution process was described as chaotic, but a way to move some of the power outside Nairobi – a pre-requisite for access to local data sets, which can present opportunities for accountability (quote 52). One respondent said that "devolution offers the best opportunity to leverage Open Data for improved governance."

The Access to Information Bill, which is currently at the Attorney General's office awaiting approval, was mentioned by many as a future enabling factor. However, there were doubts about the strength of the bill when it is finally passed. According to one respondent it has already been diluted a few times so, he/she said: "I am optimistic that we will have a law, but I am pessimistic about the quality of the law" (quote 53-54).

Some of the respondents talked of the media as a possible enabling factor and the fact that it is fairly vibrant and free. They also talked of the strength of interest groups and advocacy groups, as well as "allies" in banks, also ministries and the opposition (quote 55-58).

There is also reference to Kenya as a tech-hub with active citizens in social media and young people using the internet to share information and learn (quote 59-60), as well as for activism. The mobile penetration in the country is high and there are several initiatives going on to reach citizens with mobile services, for example with pensions or welfare payments. The efforts to make more government-related services digital and electronic could be an enabling factor (quote 61-62).

Several respondents opened up for a positive future, with less corruption and a new information environment. Here are three comments:

"[…] we are moving forward, although it is at snail speed. […] civil servants, they don't steal as much as they used to, they don't take bribes as much as they used to. Because you never know who is watching you, you don't know your colleague, you never know if you are being set up. So if I want an ID you can go and you can get it, if I want ta passport I can get it. Without paying a bribe." (sic)

"I grew up in Kenya, and we complain about the state of access to information right now, but Kenya is a vastly freer place. I am thinking about the information from my primary school days, what I used to see in the media and what I used to see on television. Kenya is a vastly freer space than it was ten years ago. We still have a long way to go but […] sometimes I am even surprised at how easily I can get information; there are initiatives that I get surprised [about]."

"I think Kenya is on the right track, we only need to keep up the momentum."

Which are the disabling factors?

However, the list of disabling factors is slightly longer than the positive list (seven entire pages of transcribed responses, compared to four on the enabling factors). Here there are also references to legislation. Another topic that came up frequently is that of culture (of secrecy, of corruption).

One respondent added up the two most commonly mentioned factors, saying that even if legislation changes there is still a culture, and it is "the culture of not sharing". There seems to be a fear of sharing information since the person sharing does not know what the information will be used for (quote 64). Another respondent talked of Kenya as a country in transition from a past that firmly believed in secrecy, and gave a telling example:

"[…] you will tell people this and they will think you are joking, yet it is not, it is that information – almost everything that would be received in a government office – would be stamped confidential. I remember a cabinet minister telling me … that even his newspapers are stamped confidential […] You would come here at the reception of a public office and you would ask 'What is the name of the director?', and you would be asked questions but you would not get that information, and yet you should ask yourself why that information is so important to withhold. It is that culture that we are coming from. So in a sense we are now in the middle of crossing the river and I think the currents could go either way, to be honest with you."

Many of the responses focussed on the low levels of maturity within the democratic institutions and the legislation (or lack of). One of them underlined the fact that the country is only seeing its fourth presidency since dictatorship. There are a lot of people

who do not actually know how the systems work and what you can expect from them, especially devolution, which is a recent reform. That makes it difficult to push in the right direction (quote 65).

The journalist tells a story of a media landscape, which is getting more restricted, where reporters are locked out from the parliament's media centre and the Minister of Information refuses to give recorded interviews. The respondent also talks about industrial interests putting pressure on the media houses about what to publish and what not to publish. He/she said that the government is "double faced" in their relations to the media and that you have to be "cleverer than you ever were and more cunning than you ever were if you want to play your role as an intermediary between the government and the people" (quote 66). Several other respondents talked of restraints on the media, for example by defamation laws, or lack of capacity (quote 67).

One respondent talked about the government also limiting the possibilities for civil society to work, for example by new laws on international financing of CSOs. He/she said that restrictive laws are connected to the ICC case (where Kenyatta was ordered to The Hague for suspicions of genocide in connection to the violence in the elections in 2007) and said: "they want to kill the civil society and to kill the media because the media has played a big role to ensure that accountability is there" (quote 68).

Other respondents talked about the limited capacity of citizens, especially in the rural areas, such as low numeracy, problems with the education systems, and people not being aware of what is happening around them (quotes 70-72).

Many of the respondents talked about a secrecy culture, with a lot of fear. One respondent called it "an aversion" and concluded that "the more useful information is, the more scary it seems to get it out there", which is seconded by another respondent saying that every public official balances his or her own risks and benefits before releasing any information, since "there is always someone who might yell at you" (quotes 73-74). It is as if we are trying to "change a whole culture", one respondent said, referring to the corruption at all levels of society:

> "It is not instant coffee that will change overnight, it is a process. And I think that people who have benefited from corruption or people who are benefiting from that […] they want to maintain status quo, they want this to be the way it is. So there is resistance at all levels."

Several respondents also mention the digital divide, where not everyone has access to the internet, and certainly not people in the rural areas, where often there is not even access to electricity (quotes 75-77).

Which are your recommendations to the government (supply side)?

Many of the respondents were clear about the responsibility of the government to do something about the situation and to put a new effort into the transparency issues. As one respondent said:

> "Now it is time to reflect on what is happening. We can see that people are not using the applications. Why is that? We say Open Data is useful for citizens – so why does no-one care about it?"

Another one said that since the greater part of the information that people will look for is in the hands of the government, then it is their responsibility to get the information out to the people. It is a public good, the respondent said (quote 78).

Several respondents urged the government to get the Access to Information Bill into place, and create a policy framework around the transparency and Open Data initiatives. The writing in the new constitution is not enough. Without a public policy framework "we are still in limbo", one interviewee said. Several respondents also mentioned the fact that the government has the responsibility to create awareness around which information is there and how to access it.

One respondent said that the accountability structures and institutions must be strengthened. Many of the institutions are new, and stem from the new constitution. They have "potential to function better", the respondent said.

Which are your recommendations on the demand side (civil society/citizens)?

The responses about what civil society and citizens can do are focused on increasing civil engagement and levels of awareness. If the government decides to be open and transparent, the citizens are also responsible for acting upon it and thereby contribute to closing the feedback-loop (quote 79). Another respondent said that it is crucial that the public is aware that the information is available and to strengthen and develop its own capacity. However, this cannot "happen overnight", the interviewee said (quote 80).

One respondent was of the opinion that the tax-payers (only around 2-3 million of Kenyans) are actually the only people to care about this kind of information:

> "[…] we can make all these things transparent, we can customize it to you and say this is what your member of parliament is doing, this is what your child is doing at school, this is what your child's school is doing, this is what the health centre is doing, this is how many doctors there are, but the bigger challenge, maybe 90 per cent of what I call connection is the 'why should I care?'," the respondent said.

One respondent said that what is needed is a lot of civic education. Another one urged citizens to be insistent and to start to litigate over information to speed up the process to get an 'access of information' bill passed. The respondent called this a "self-testing of the system" (quotes 81-82).

Which are your recommendations to the intermediaries (developers/media, for example)?

Many of the respondents stressed the importance of the intermediaries in the transparency and accountability process, as well as Open Data. One said that new intermediaries, such as developers, academics and civil society, have to breach the gap between citizens and government. The intermediaries have to be "amped up" for Open Data to be successful, the respondent said, and this was echoed by another interviewee who said that the intermediaries play a key role since the "government can give information, but there is some information that they won't give" (quotes 83-84).

There is a belief also in the work that the 'info-mediaries', such as developers, can play. One respondent called them the "middle people" and said that they are the ones who can "look at data and project tools around it that are more accessible for the citizen" (quote 85-86).

The journalist said that there is very little knowledge or tradition of data journalism in Kenya. It is a challenge to translate even comprehensive data into a public interest story when the tradition is to create 'he-says-she-says'-journalism. More capacity is needed among journalists to create stories from facts rather than to rely on the 'newsmakers' (quote 87).

Another respondent agreed that "something has to be done with media, the people in the media houses who have already been educated poorly."

General recommendations

Some of the recommendations are more cross-cutting and touch upon changing attitudes and culture, as well as creating relations. Transparency and accountability are not only about the "government saying freely here is what is happening and here is what is going on", there also has to be an "incentive for the citizen to listen", one respondent said (quote 88).

One respondent suggested that Open Data can function as a bridge creating this relationship:

> "How is the government transparent – through Open Data? Where does accountability come into play? Citizens look at the Open Data and use it to ask questions and the government can also [make] reference to the Open Data to show what they have done, so I think it plays a really central role in this information loop between citizens and government" (quote 89).

Some of the recommendations are about changing culture. Today there is a situation where most people "don't even expect their official representative or local official to deliver for them to begin with", one respondent said. There is a need for information, but also a need for different ways to be able to act on that information, otherwise there is a risk that it "just breeds despondence", the interviewee said. To be able to organise themselves, people need access to information on things that really matter to them (quote 90).

Some of the recommendations relate to ICT-solutions, such as information centres in remote areas, where there are people who can help citizens to access the information and to share it with them in a way that is easy to understand. It could be by printing it, for example, the respondent suggested (quote 91).

One respondent was very clear about what access to information can actually mean for the country:

> "So information is power as it is. If you have the information you can actually use that information to generate wealth for this country."

The KODI official talked of a need to change focus altogether for initiatives like KODI, for them to function in the African continent, where the historical political context has been one of secrecy:

"We have a Secrecy Act, but no Freedom of Information Act. It is hard to tell the politicians to put up their data sets when they have no tradition of transparency, so how can we get the governments and stakeholders to understand the importance of Open Data to improve services? Maybe we will have to shift focus from transparency and accountability to improving service delivery. I think transparency and accountability will follow. This is based on what I have been observing. If we put service delivery on the agenda we can create more efficiency. Today a lot of companies are the ones delivering the services. Open Data is an opportunity for innovation for the private sector to become more effective. It also helps governments in planning and helps citizens to be more active."

4.3 Summary in relation to McGee and Gaventa's variables

I have fitted some of the main answers into the table of variables based on McGee and Gaventa (see Appendix 3) adding two columns for disabling and enabling factors connected to the variables. The answers fit very well into the variables, except for the variable regarding citizens being engaged in upstream activities also being more committed to downstream activities. This was not mentioned in the interviews.

5. Analysis and conclusion

The combination of a small quantitative analysis and a larger amount of qualitative material has given me the possibility of drawing conclusions around the answers to my research questions. Also, there are the limitations of not having the full picture of the survey, since I have not taken part in conducting it. However, it is worth noting that a comparison between the results from the quantitative survey and the interviews in the qualitative study shows that the interviewees seem to have a slightly more critical view of KODI. This could be explained by the limited possibility to expand on the subject in a web survey, or that the people who actually take time to answer the questionnaire on the website are those who find the site useful. If I were to have interviewed more 'end-users' in the qualitative study, the results might have been even more negative. However, the trouble with finding end-users is an important finding *per se*. It is in a way symbolic for the conclusions of this study; since it suggests that not even the intermediaries have had much contact with the 'general public' or 'ordinary citizens' in their outreach activities.

With this limited study and sample, I am hesitant to draw far-reaching general conclusions about KODI, or transparency and accountability in Kenya, at an impact level. However, the responses from the interviewees, together with the quantitative

analysis and conclusions from the literature, give indications of existing and emerging enabling and disabling factors and some recommendations for the future of transparency initiatives, like KODI, in Kenya. Below I will analyse and touch upon some of the conclusions in connection with the main theories in the literature reviewed.

5.1 The effectiveness (or non-effectiveness) of TAIs

KODI is an innovative transparency initiative in Kenya, which may open doors for a future where Open Data is made more accessible for the country's citizens and potentially can be used as a basis on which leaders can be held accountable. However, a sole initiative cannot make a change on its own: the possible future success of KODI is heavily dependent on currents in the political context and fluctuations in power relations. Looking at the variables, conditions and key factors for the possible success of a TAI, according to McGee and Gaventa, we can see that there are currently conflicting movements in politics and power balances in Kenya, some heading in the right direction while others point towards a more disabling environment. A quote from one the respondents sums this up, saying that "we are now in the middle of crossing the river and I think the currents could go either way".

On the one hand we can see enabling factors, such as the new constitution, which opens up possibilities for an Access to Information Bill; a new 'devolved' political system, which brings decisions closer to citizens; and a country with a relatively high level of digitisation within government and one of the highest mobile and internet penetrations in Sub-Saharan Africa. Civil society and the media are also considered to be relatively active and free. On the other hand, based on the respondents' answers, disabling factors seem to weigh down the balance on the negative side. These factors are pointing towards existing democratic deficits in the Kenyan society, such as a low maturity of democratisation and accountability mechanisms, which have not yet been institutionalised, as well as a deeply-rooted 'culture of secrecy', mentioned by the majority of the respondents.

Low education and awareness levels were also mentioned as existing limiting conditions. Additionally, there were references to emerging disabling factors, such as a growing hostility between the government and civil society, apparent, for example, in political restraints of CSO financing, as well as an air of caution in the media environment. The level of political will to go through with the initiative and strengthen

KODI seems to be lingering, and even though there are signs of a new 'push' in the work around KODI, it is unclear how strong the ownership for the project is at a government level. There is a young and vibrant activism – including digital activism, for example, in social media – within the cities. However, access to, awareness of, and capacity to use this kind of digital, internet-based information is low within the general population. Based on the conclusions of McGee and Gaventa, recommendations to the future management of KODI would be to find and pilot "new approaches to impact assessment", "develop a more rigorous user/participatory approach" and incorporate lessons learned from other similar new initiatives (2010, p. 44).

5.2 The 'behavioural' perspective

Several of the respondents described KODI as an initiative without a clear aim and elaborated user-perspective. One respondent claimed that the KODI officials seem to have a mentality of "if we build it they will come" (a quote from the motion picture Field of Dreams). However, from a behavioural approach, there has to be incentives, both on the discloser and user sides, for transparency initiatives to be effective. Not only does the information have to be of relevance for the user's daily decision-making and comprehensible enough for them to be able to use it when taking these decisions, it also has to be clear to the disclosers that the decisions taken by the users will have an impact on their own goals. The cost has to be low – not only economic costs, but also time spent on accessing and processing information. According to this limited study, there seems to be little evidence today that KODI is embedded in an action-circle including both disclosers and intended users. Rather, it seems that the information existing on the website now has not been considered useful enough for the needs of intermediaries (who constitute the majority of the respondents) nor accessible enough for end-users to be able use as a basis for their decision-making. Instead of disclosers perceiving the initiative as a means to beat competition or avoid damage to their reputation, the perception seems to be that transparency could instead expose facts which do not favour the disclosers' goals.

Etzioni talks of the risk of information overload, and Open Data as such might be an explicit example of this. The idea of making raw information accessible online might sit well with an idealistic view of transparency and letting the 'sunshine in', but it also places a very heavy burden on inter- or info-mediaries to analyse the users' needs, and process and format the information accordingly. There is a risk that an Open Data

initiative made without caution provokes a situation as described by Roberts, where it encourages evasions, hypocrisies and half-truths, and where important information is hidden in a flood or 'snowing' of information towards the users. To use McGee's definition, it creates an opaque rather than a clear transparency. As echoed by several of the respondents, as a way of creating a more 'intelligent' accountability, transparency initiatives could be, if not exchanged for, at least complemented with, face-to-face accountability encounters, which might strengthen relationships. That could create a more integrated and embedded action-circle over time.

5.3 The Foucauldian perspective

The transparency discourse is certainly strong in the current international policy setting. Using a critical Foucauldian perspective, connected to the concept of 'governmentality', we can distinguish two important power relations and 'technologies of domination' in the case of KODI:

1) There is the relationship between important development donors, such as the World Bank and the state of Kenya (which to 6.5 per cent relies on international development cooperation[21]); and

2) there is the strategic power game between liberties and states of domination played by the government of Kenya in relation to its citizens.

'Transparency' and 'Open Data' have been important buzzwords in the development community – putting pressure on developing countries to open up and publicise government data. Using and referring to different barometers and indices is one way of 'governing' the behaviour of partnership countries in relation to the dominant discourse of the donor countries or agencies. Simplified, it is a way of saying – "you are ethical actors responsible for your own actions and capabilities"; however, as 'holders of material power' (Löwenheim, 2008, p. 268), these 'independent' actions are measured against these indices of, for example, transparency. Hence, the partnership countries are described as actors capable of choice, but, in fact, the choice is limited and steered by the discourses of the dominant powers (donors). If there is truth behind the critique against KODI from some of the respondents about a lack of national ownership and being partially driven by the World Bank, this perspective can most certainly be used.

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[21] Net ODA received was 6.5% of GNI in 2012 according to The World Bank. *Data.*
http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/DT.ODA.ODAT.GN.ZS/countries

The same argument, but with a slightly different outcome, could be developed around the relationship between Kenya's government and people. Initiatives, such as KODI, can be seen as using a discourse of citizen responsibility, empowerment and responsibilisation of subjects, when in fact a transparency initiative, which does not open up real accountability action options to citizens, actually consolidates unequal power relations rather than changing them. The citizens are convinced by the rationale that they are free, decision-making subjects – "all the information is out there, it is your responsibility to access it and act on it" – when in fact the initiative does not create the basis for actual accountability to take place. Drawing on Löwenheim, this can be said to be a way to "depersonalize and detextualize their power", generating an appearance of impartiality and thus reducing legitimate opposition to authority (p. 268). This can be likened to the Lemke analysis of the rise of new non-governmental actors creating a discourse of shifting responsibility of social issues and needs to an individual sphere but in this case the "self-care" is not about physical needs, but societal needs, where the individual is told that they, themselves, are responsible for democratic transformation.

"Information is power", said one of the respondents, stressing the Foucauldian notion that knowledge is political and can be used in a construction of discourse to create legitimacy for powerful actors. Here, the 'truth' constructed by donor countries and agencies is that transparency leads to accountability and good governance – an ideal state towards which developing countries should aim (sometimes explicitly or inexplicitly mentioned as a condition to receive funding). The Kenyan government 'buys into' this discourse, creating its own power game towards the citizens, stating that they have put the 'truth' out there for anyone to access, download and act upon. It is clear that this manipulation of knowledge does not take place between equals in either case: both are examples of what Rossi calls 'totalising effects' created by forms of rationality embedded in cultural wholes. These are critical perspectives on power relations, which could be taken into account when moving forward with the transparency and accountability agenda in Kenya.

Figure 1.

5.4 Recommendations and concluding comments

Based on the recommendations mentioned by the respondents in this degree project, we can see that there are a number of processes, which may take a long time to change. These are linked to the comments on immaturity of democracy and systems, and poor educational levels, as well as references to culture. Systemic changes and the changing of attitudes are lengthy processes. However, there were also references to more short-term changes within existing systems, which might create a more solid base for initiatives like KODI, as well as a foundation for more large-scale changes in the future. As McGee and Gaventa underline, many of these are related to thinking of transparency and accountability in a more cross-cutting way, relevant in today's networked and interlinked society, by creating coalitions across boundaries. Several respondents touched upon the shared responsibility between different actors to make transparency and accountability work and close the feedback loop.

If the government is willing to continue the Kenya Open Data Initiative, develop it and scale up the activities, there are several things that they could do to make it work better, according to the interviewees. Right now might be a good moment to take a step back and reflect upon the project, its aims and conditions. The majority of the respondents seemed to be in agreement that if KODI is aimed at representing the main transparency

and accountability Open Data project at a national level there has to be an Access to Information Bill in place and a supportive policy framework, which ensure that comprehensive data are regularly made available on the website. However, the strengthening of other accountability institutions, such as oversight agencies, also plays an important role for the success of this project in a long-term perspective. The site would have to integrate a user-perspective and be made more user-friendly. Also, the project needs to reach out to create more awareness of the site and think of ways to make the initiative accessible to a larger public. An example of such a recommendation within this area is to create, or take advantage of the resources of existing, ICT-centres.

On the demand side, the end-users or broad civil society actors can make their contribution to the success of this transparency initiative by representing an active citizenship, and engage in activities, such as raising awareness, civic education and by pushing for the Information Bill and policies to come into place, according to the respondents.

The 'middle people', the inter- or info-mediaries, such as developers, more professionalised CSOs or journalists, can play their part by making the information more accessible. It is important, however, for them not to lose focus of the user-perspective and to engage more actively with the grass-roots. The media are also identified as having to take the responsibility of engaging in a more analytical and facts- (or data-) based journalism. Information on services, which affect citizens' daily lives, is identified by many of the respondents as being in most demand. This is something that should be taken into account if the initiative is to respond to the end-users' needs.

Putting all the responses together in one document and creating a word cloud (see figure 1), it is very clear that the key word in the area of transparency and accountability is 'information'. Open Data is about the relevant sources distributing relevant information based on the needs of the target audience and ensuring that it is accessible and accessed, and can be acted upon. The initial years of the KODI project can be seen as a first step – an initiative, which might give way to a culture of more openness in Kenya. The future will tell if it is to be continued in its current shape, changed or merged with other transparency initiatives. However, in its current form it is far from the vision of Open Data as a locally-driven monitoring tool.

As indicated in studies about the Open Data area as a whole it is clear that this is a field, which is in development and at an early stage. At best it can be claimed that it has opened up for more efficiency, for example within the development scene (as mentioned by Linders, and in the example of cost-benefit-study of IATI described by McGee). There is most certainly hype around ICT-initiatives in the development field today. One of the respondents described the hype as being centred on Kenya as a tech-hub and says that "low-tech solutions often work better, but you need to throw in the 'app' to get the funding. I find there is often a reversed correlation between what is trendy and the things that really work. Often the simplest things work".

This study indicates two things:

1) that old knowledge about human behaviour, communication and information stills stands; and

2) that this knowledge, and the lessons learned from other communication initiatives focused on social change, has to be integrated into a new networked society with new technological tools.

Some of my own reflections after analysing the material is that incentives is a key issue here – how can the initiative create incentives for end-users to actually be willing to take the 'cost' of using the website? The answer can probably be found in some of the 'missing data' suggested in both the interviews and the website survey. Simplified, the incentives on the government side will be related both to 'risks' connected to a more effective accountability, but also to gains that can be made from learning more about the needs of the citizen and future voter – to be able to create demand driven policy and thereby create trust (and gain votes), for example[22].

Sustainability is off course another key issue, where the reliance upon 'champions' is important, but also a risk for the sustainability of the project if the transparency initiatives are not systematised, institutionalised and with a clear ownership at all levels.

ICTs are not magical answers in themselves but used in the right way they can be incorporated into effective democratic initiatives. The user-perspective has to be in

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[22] One could further deepen the understanding of this using a 'choice focused' view of development here, that is judging the contribution of ICTs to development depending on how much these technologies contribute to people´s "freedom to live the lives they value" (Kleine, 2013, p. 12).

focus – what are the intended audiences' information needs, in what format do they need this information and which are the relevant media for them to be able to access it? In the cross-cutting actions to enhance methodology and impact assessments to create more effective and sustainable initiatives, academia obviously has a role to play. When more 'new wave' transparency initiatives can be studied and evaluated we can enhance the knowledge of what works and why. With this common effort Open Data can both be accessible and ensure that people in power can be held accountable.

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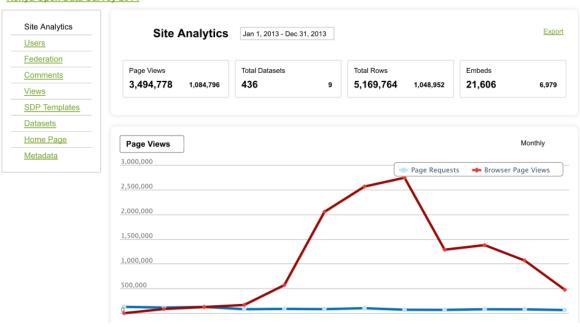**The World Bank.** *Making Open Data work for Citizens – Four Lessons from Code4Kenya.*
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Appendix 1: Website analytics

Kenya Open Data Survey 2014

Site Analytics

- Users
- Federation
- Comments
- Views
- SDP Templates
- Datasets
- Home Page
- Metadata

Site Analytics Jan 1, 2013 - Dec 31, 2013   Export

Page Views		Total Datasets		Total Rows		Embeds	
3,494,778	1,084,796	436	9	5,169,764	1,048,952	21,606	6,979

Page Views   Monthly

Page Requests   Browser Page Views

Top Datasets

Name	
Poverty Rate, by District	13,250
County Urbanization: Nairobi	11,649
Per Capita County Expenditures: Nairobi	10,623
Local Authority Expenditures by Year: Nairobi	10,368
County Urbanization: Kiambu	7,969

Show More

Top Referrers

Name	Referrals
https://www.google.com	23,230
http://www.google.com	13,638
https://opendata.go.ke	11,230
https://www.google.co.ke	4,758
http://datascience.co.ke	3,062

Show More

Top Search Terms

Name	Count
Age Pyramid	428,237
Local Authority Expenditures by Year	428,236
County Urbanization	428,234
Population Density	428,233
Per Capita County Expenditures	428,232

Show More

Top Embeds

Name	Embeds
https://opendata.go.ke	1,512
http://www.google.com	1,017
http://chroniclesinmyhead.blogspot.com	749
http://kisiionline.com	606
http://daimakenya.com	480

3/25/14, 9:58 PM

Top Downloads

Name	Downloads
schools_districts	10,878
Vision%202030%20progress%20report	10,800
schools	6,805
Kenya County Fact Sheets Dec 2011	6,475
Medium Term Plan 2008-2012%5 B1%5 D	5,619

Appendix 2: Main results from user survey

A selection of interesting statistics from the extensive survey.

Nationality: Kenya – 82 per cent

Urban/rural: Rural - 17 per cent

Age:

18-24	17 respondents
25-34	35
35-44	25
>44	14

Educational level:

Primary	0 respondents
Secondary	6
Graduate	40
Post graduate	40

Profession:

Entrepreneurs + business owners + self-employed+software developers+ technical workers+private sector	66 respondents
Students	18
Academics+researchers	17
Professionals from NGO+civil society	17
Public sector	11

Industries

Information technology	23 respondents
Consulting services	14
Education	14
Non-profits	11
Government services	10
Healthcare	10

Frequency of use

First time users	35 respondents
Less than four times a year	14
More than four times in a year	14
Once a month or more	10
Once a week or more	9

Reason for using the website:

Academic research	30 respondents
Policy research	18
Insights for business decisions	9
Community outreach	8
Software or web development	6

Usage:

Activity	Always/frequently	Rarely /never
Download datasets	52 respondents	42
Use visualizations	40	42
Use API	19	66

Interest in datasets:

County level data	35 respondents
National level data	30 respondents

Selection of free text answers to the question "Please describe how you have typically used the content and tools on our website":

- To analyse the economic and social situation and present data for decision making.
- I create data visualization software, one that I have created is called a picture worth 47 counties showing poverty index by counties view
- Elaborate and interpret data for internal business decisions and strategies
- Only downloaded data but the aggregation level is too coarse for very meaningful analysis in most cases
- To help in forecasting product needs
- In research analysis
- I have used the Kenya Open Data mainly for education and health and take this opportunity to appreciate the availability of data and information. I would suggest more raw data sets, for example, KNEC School Results by each school in each county, that could then be used by researchers to assist in the analysis and development of the country and the counties respectively.
- Filter sub-segments of the population data to get specifics Census data becomes the base for most of the sampling procedures we carry out in marketing and business

Agreement statements:

Statement	1 (strongly agree)	2	3	4	5 (Strongly Disagree
"Data availability is good and covers my needs"	9 respondents	15	28	7	11
"Data is up-to-date"	6	12	15	9	17
"Site is easy to use"	5	18	14	9	5

Most urgent improvements:

Data is up-to-date	38 respondents mentioned as "most urgent"
Making the data layout more logical	22
Better tools to manipulate the data	21

online	
Improved navigation	15
Improved data download	15

Data looked for but not found:

Census data	9 respondents
Agriculture	8
County statistics	8
Health	5
CDF (Constituency Development Funds)	5

Selected suggestions for improvements made by the respondents in free text:

- Detail level of data needs to be improved, sublocation level for KNBS data which is already outdated (2009) but still very useful
- Display metadata of the data-sets such as when it was collected and a description of the contents and codes if used
- Disseminate data and knowledge of KODI widely.
- Encourage onsite interaction.
- First step would be informing Kenyans that there is a data portal where anyone can download or visualize data for free. Data from KAA would be highly appreciated e.g previously flight destination and departure. Health data should be live data or a maximum update of one week. A great idea that I had was to collect GPS information from volunteers from an app, upload the path to a visualizing tool that will visualize the path taken, I think best data for research e.g what's the best location to build a police st, hospital, fire st. Major concern is to evaluate your data collection techniques.
- For census data, provide breakdown by villages as well. Currently only exists data for sub locations only. Provide updated data to 2013 from the Ministry of education on: colleges, universities, secondary schools and primary schools   provide youth unemployment rates by gender and county.
- I would like to see much more GIS, API and location mapping functions, to enable data to be viewed according to the new administrative structures. There is insufficient information on disability on the site.
- Include development work data such as aid by counties, impact, etc.
- Kindly enable navigation for easy and quick access
- Kindly present more raw and actual data for researchers, academicians and students to use for research. I personally appreciate this novel initiative and the excellent work so far done! My concern is that we are in 2014 and data and information available is still stuck in 2007!
- More data, latest data
- Please license the data under a Creative Commons version 4.0 license which covers both content and data domains.

Appendix 3: Interview guide

<u>Sociodemographic details</u>

Age:
Gender:
Educational background:
Profession:

<u>About KODI</u>

How did you come in contact with Kenya Open Data?

Why have you visited the site?

What were you looking for?

Did you find what you were looking for?

How did you find the experience?

Was it easy to use?

What was good, what was bad?

Suggestions for changes?

<u>Transparency and accountability</u>

What do you think about when I say transparency?

What do you think about when I say accountability?

What do you think needs to be done so that Open Data and transparency is translated into accountability?

Which are the positive or enabling factors in the Kenyan context for Open Data to be used to hold leaders responsible?

Which are the negative or disabling factors?

<u>Recommendations</u>

What should the government or KODI do to make this work?

What can be done from civil society?

Appendix 4: Full quotes from interviews

How did you come into contact with KODI?

1. "So, when I accidentally was appointed into government in the area of information I said, this is nonsense, we need to open up this thing, then we can begin to do research around several things. I didn't see the reason why it should be secret. So that was what drove me into that. And luckily there was the Open Government Data movement that was coming and that I could piggyback on to fully open up the government".

2. "[…] in 2011 it all came together and I just started off at KODI as a volunteer it was this boardroom full of policymakers and ministers and CEOs but then they did not actually have a lot of technical capabilities and a friend of mine who is also in the tech industry said "hey there is this thing happening, do you want to become a volunteer?". I was in between jobs at that time, moving into full time consultancy so I said "why not" so I joined as a volunteer and later on I was offered a consultancy position within the World Bank."

3. "[…] we have certainly used information from it in the past. We had downloaded some of the budget information which was made available and expenditure estimates, historical estimates that are on the website. […] we tried to collect quite a bit of data on county differences on a lot of different indicators, which would potentially affect the formula. So my researcher used data from the website from KODI for that."

4. "Occasionally I would go there […] open up the portal, and try to look for information, specifically about my rural place. I wouldn't get much. In fact, navigating through the forest of information was very difficult."

5. "We do get some info from KODI, but you must have noticed by now that it is not the most up to date bottle, so we rely on OECD data. However we also rely on personal contacts within lead organisations, governmental or civil society."

6. "Since then, my interaction with the platform has primarily been writing about the platform and why it's working and why it's not working".

7. "I think there was reference to that, but that the information was not really, really relevant. Number one is that it is not up to date, I don't think it is updated[…] "

What are the good things about KODI?

8. "It was impressive, that it exists and encouraging for that reason."

9. "I think it is commendable that the information was released […] the portal is an important initiative and for me it is an important foundation upon which greater access can be built."

10. "[…] theoretically it is a one-stop-shop for information […] within the realm of what is possible, they have made an effort to get as much information in one place as possible"

11. "[…] you have to say that is very positive about it is the fact that it actually exists […] to someone else in the public who doesn't want use data that covers up until yesterday, that is a positive thing, the fact that it exists.

12. "[…] it is a beginning. It has removed the fear that was there at the beginning that the government will give data out and it will bring out all the controversy, those were the debates that were going on. I went through hell to get it approved by the president."

13. "I think the website is a good first point of contact."

14. "[…] it's good that there is a repository that you can learn about our government better. […] It's good that when I want to know about some factor both on a national, regional, county, district or any lower level, I have a starting point."

What are the bad things about KODI?

15. "[…] it is not primarily a problem with the Open Data platform, I think it is a problem with government in general. You see the problem coming out exaggerated on the platform, because

in addition to getting data from the different government offices, agencies, etc, the platform also has to handle the fact that not everyone is giving them updated data."

16. "My impression is that they are trying to update it, but that there have been some challenges for them to get the data. Some of it is because the information is actually not there, like information on teachers, for example […] You can't actually get the numbers, the total number of teachers and the distribution of teachers. From KODI or anywhere else. So it's not necessarily KODI's fault that the information is incomplete, because it is the information that is incomplete."

17. "[…] In terms of getting data that would be useful for the common citizen in the street it is very difficult. I am not saying you cannot get it, you can get it, but it is extremely difficult. It is not analysed or synthesised in any way, so you just get full documents, just put there online. Which is a good thing. But a lot more needs to be done to get the information in terms of access."

18. "You will have a hard time going to look for someone who will say something positive about KODI right now. In terms of userability. In terms of an initiative, if you are going to be transparent and out up a – as a first step it is ideal but in terms of how it has been from launch until now in terms of how user-friendly it has really been, on a scale from 1 to 10 I would probably give it 3."

19. "KODI are begging people to use the website. But it would have been better if it was the interest groups that would require the things to go on the website. It would be interesting if someone could curate that so that the Open Data reflect what people are really looking for."

20. "You don't want to have all that mixed together on the platform it just gets confusing to the different people, so trying to get together these different users and trying to understand the different experiences they have."

21. "[…] it is a technology tool, right now it is very much technology, not everyone has access to technology."

22. "[…] there is no awareness, of Open Data among the citizens. There is demand, but because of that lack of awareness it is difficult to point the demand to the actual platform or to the actual Open Data. But the information that is there is needed."

23. "I am disappointed. That we have not continuously brought in new data. […] Right now we don't have a driver, the new team are not inclined to push it."

24. "[…] for over a year there has not been a team on Open Data, no one doing what I used to do, respond to demands, get the data, do forums, media, write about Open Data, go to conferences on Open Data, look at the technology and trying to find out is the design right, are people using it, how can we drive more use. So all those things that needed to happen, building a community around it with civil society, with students, with common citizens, these things have not happened in a year."

25. "KODI is not really a Kenyan government initiative. KODI was kind of pushed on to the government by the World Bank. It was a joint project between the government and the World Bank […] was financing it and the technical lead provided the technical lead. Bitange Ndemo was there, he was the champion within the government and then the World Bank came and said 'you must launch this within this timeframe', so they did it, there was no policy framework behind it, so it became like a thing of will, if I am willing to put data on it then I put data on it, but there is no framework informing the initiative, so that's why it went wrong."

Who is the intended 'end-user' for KODI?

26. "[…] I love doing data, I like playing around with data, and I think there is so much information behind data that people don't know. And I thought, there is no one who has monopoly over knowledge, you can't be like the only one who could do the analytics and come back with good information out of it. […] I used to address young developers at a place called iHub, every Friday end of month[…] They wanted data from government in order to develop applications from it. And at the time we had digitized some registries and they say, if you digitized, we need to know how the data flows so that we can create applications. So they said, if there is something you can give us, just one thing, is data from government. And I said I am going to do

it. I will do it so that it can enable them to create. Those were the number one people I was thinking of".

27. "At that point Kenya was becoming the tech-hub of Africa and there was all this hype of Kenya and Nairobi and we were like let's provide this data so that developers can create apps and make money and create businesses, but very quickly […] we realized that a lot of the developers could really not see the value. […] at that time we started collecting information about what do people want, what do they really need, not only what could we find, but what do the people want that we out up. So quickly we started realizing that and it started moving out from being focused on the developer to focus on the citizen. How does the fact that the members of the parliament spent an extra [*unhearable*] shillings impact your life more than how does it add to someone's business? So we started looking at the citizens in general and civil society and even within government, how do we better allocate resources. […] So then it just started to get a wider view on whom can we focus on."

28. "I think maybe (they have thought about) an end-user like themselves, someone who is connected, who goes to a website, who would go looks for this information. […] their focus was to getting the information, getting it in good form and getting it up. Beyond that they felt it was the responsibility of the others participating in the workshop, of the outsiders, to take advantage of that. They only take it to this point, they publish it, it is there, is accessible, and from there it is up to other people to use it, to develop these mobile apps, to use the data, to analyse it, to make decisions about the tea-industry based on it. But their role is finished at the point when they published."

29. "[…] that information is only useful for analysts and people who are undertaking studies and who want the data for research. In terms of getting data that would be useful for the common citizen in the street it is very difficult."

30. "If I am a farmer in Machakos looking for information on climate or weather, to decide on what kind of farming I should engage in, it is pretty difficult to get that information. You can look for it and it may actually be there, but you will look for it and it will not be easy."

Which are the recommendations to improve KODI?

31. "Sometimes just knowing that something exists is good. From there – how do you really make it applied, it depends of the quality of the information and people knowing it's there I guess."

32. "[…] make sure that they know what information that is and who it is relevant to. That would make it more relevant. In partnership with groups who could really act on that information."

33. "KODI are begging people to use the website. But it would have been better if it was the interest groups that would require the things to go on the website. It would be interesting if someone could curate that so that the Open Data reflect what people are really looking for."

34. "So you have to think about the end user, you have to make it worth for them to actually spend money for this information. Even if you zero rate it, you have to know what the incentives are to make them access their information."

35. "[…] there is need to stratify that information in a manner that responds to the needs of different audiences. … So if that information can be synthesized, organized, and synthesised in a way that respects different audiences, it can make a lot of difference. But having said that, we also need to popularize that portal. A lot of people, the professionals and the working class, would know that that initiative exists, but you will hardly come across anyone who has been there […] if that information was to be stratified in a way it could be useful to a lot of people."

36. "[…] to make it a more useful repository. If I am thinking about a user who is interested in education, so I go to the KODI website and I type in education and all kinds of weird stuff comes up. […] it would be more helpful if the website itself was organized into sectors and you would go to the education page. And on that page it would be organized into intuitive sectors based on what people would be looking for. […] And then there is some structured information that has been processed by someone. Like, here is an easy to use a graph […] then under that is the data so I can actually start playing around with the data, if that is what I wanted. […] So that

in the end of the day the people who want just raw data can get it but an average person who can't actually operate in that environment can follow the website like a map which they can follow to actually get to the information they are looking for."

37. "[…] the majority of the public need a little bit of explanation and that is how communication comes in and it is very important to have a government position – being user friendly and available to the mass, so they must have a portal online that is very, very user-friendly and that links all available government information that has been sanctioned to one registry. So even if it is not stored on that, there is a link on that site.

38. "The smaller you get, the more local you get, the more relevant it is."

39. "[…] disseminating information to the public in rural areas, because most of the voters are in rural areas, so if you want any specific change to happen you need their support a lot more than ours is actually needed."

40. "So technology could be in form of tv or radio and if Open Data platforms were built around these services, definitely this gap could be closed. So not the actual technologies, but the services around these technologies is what is missing."

41. "[…] the Open Data website will have to be – I will have to be able to access it say in the middle of nowhere. For us to really be able to hold the government accountable. Three things that are important – you will have to make the ministries to actually give the information, and give the data and in a timely manner, and we have to make it accessible to as many people as possible. Not only to me, who sits with my PC here and maybe will spend one hour trying to navigate my way through the website and eventually I will figure out how to do it."

42. "The governmental relations. I think it is one of the biggest challenges. Where does KODI reside and how does where it resides interact, and how are the relationships framed how are they managed? Because one of the results of the first attempts around KODI was this feeling that it hit a dead end. Because the government offices weren't delivering data, partly because that aspect of the project was never really explicitly articulated. If that is not done, going forward, it is like bashing the head against the wall. New walls maybe, not the same wall, but walls nonetheless. Because there are new political landscapes now, the governmental landscape has changed, so that is one of the biggest challenges to be sorted out. When that is done, the supply side becomes easier to deal with. Then the demand side is what we will have to worry a bit more about. The capacity of those intermediaries, the civil society, the journalists, to pick up the data and turn it into information, entertainment, that is I think the second level problem The first is existential, if that is broken you don't have an initiative."

43. "I don't think KODI can exist as KODI. It has to do a lot of revamping. […] Maybe KODI might be eventually the communications arm of all e-matters of government, but terms of source of data I don't see a future for KODI."

What does transparency mean to you?

44. "I think transparency is a state of governance where the citizen is aware what the government is doing and can definitely use this awareness to demand better services, so it is a state of awareness, how is the government spending our money and transparency tends to be when institutions open up, so putting information out there, not necessarily a two-way communication where I have to ask you so that you tell me, it has to be a permanent state of you always showing me and when I start asking questions it becomes accountability."

45. "In simple terms we would call it openness, and openness basically means that things are done openly without any inhibitions or without any secrecy, it basically means that public processes are understood and there is a free flow of information on the processes. Except off course the very few areas or bundles of information that might be classified. That might be classified for security reasons or for commercial reasons. That would be the definition."

46. "I want to know how people are using my money. That is the first thing that comes to my mind. I am a tax payer. I know how much the government takes from us in terms of tax collection. … That may be one level of transparency. But on the other side where the money goes and how the

money is used eventually is not very clear. […] I would like to know what you are doing with the taxes that you collect from me as a citizen. … and I want to be able to know in a timely manner."

47. "Transparency to me is being able to show what is critical and what is critical is showing what we need to show […] don't show people too much, but then give them enough, give them what they need. […] I need to find out what I am interested in. So transparency means to give to the citizen what is central to them, what they need to know and what influences their lives. […] Not everything should be available to the citizen. […] Too much information just ends up being useless. […] If people want to know what the governments expenditures have been over time and you think that that should be kept secret then maybe you start to change your mind and you say maybe we should give that out, but if a lot of people are not interested in how many schools there are, you don't shove that down their mind because you think that should be transparent. So transparency is collaboration and communication."

What does accountability mean to you?

48. "If you have been given a public office, there is a reason that you have been given that public office, and there is a manner in which you are supposed to discharge those functions. […] you take responsibility for the mandate you have been given the trust that has been placed in you, And you take responsibility also for the upholding of upholding or the failure to uphold the principals and values for you discharging that mandate. Because it is a trust that is bestowed upon you from the public, whether it is through the executive or other government agency or arm that has appointed you. As long as you are getting your remuneration from public resources it means that you are responsible to the public really to explain the mandate, the failure or success of fulfilling that mandate. Or to settle account, if we use that word."

49. "If the Open Data website was comprehensive, in terms of the time that it covers, the data that it provides, it could go a great way in that to make people accountable. But who would be holding people accountable, probably us journalists and the civil society. Now the problem with that is, sort of taking an elitist view of accountability, because journalists will set the agenda in terms of what they think is important, and civil society will set the agenda […] they will point out what they think are problem areas, according to what they think is important."

What is needed for transparency to actually lead to accountability?

50. "There are some things which we say […] it have embedded huge leaps of faith. The link between transparency and development for example, that many are arguing about, the link between transparency and accountability. The feeling is good governance result in economic growth and openness is part of good governance. For me I think this is the largest leap of faith – we are getting a lot of more examples where economic growth is not linked to good governance, I think maybe the philosophy […] strongly relies on that first idea – good governance result in economic growth, therefore we need to do all these things that for us represent good governance. You know, transparency, accountability, responsiveness. As part of our work to eradicate poverty, where economic growth play a very big part. How do we get there, how do we get to the elimination of extreme poverty in whatever year we give ourselves?"

Which are the enabling factors?

51. "I think we have a new constitution that provides access of information as a matter of right but for that access to be meaningful depends on the law on how to provide it, and that that provision leads to a culture change, an attitude change within the public sector that information is a public good that is held in trust for the public and that it should be released to them, as a matter of right. That's why we encourage the issue of proactive disclosure, because if you recognize that information is a public good, then you would want to get as much of it out as possible so that it can benefit people."

52. "Also the devolution. It is chaotic, completely chaotic right now. But I think it can get power, we can get government and power to the other centres outside Nairobi, it also bods well for people to get access to something like Open Data. Because I think they will be able to interact, if it works. It is currently not working very well, but even from what you see, people are able to interact to the centre of power more closely to them. It might help in terms of accountability […] It also gives the opportunity to have very localized data, ... So I think devolution can present a lot of opportunities, for making the Open Data platform work better."

53. "This time I am a bit more optimistic (about the Access to Information Bill) then I may have been a couple of years ago. Because these are now part of the implementation of the new constitution, a road map. I am not certain that it will be strong, as an access to information law, I am not certain that it will be a strong law. It has already been diluted a few times, the last few years. There have been various attempts to get it passed, so I am optimistic that we will have a law, but I am pessimistic about the quality of the law."

54. "I think we have a media that is fairly vibrant, and free. […] our media is certainly open and we have media professionals or practitioners who are interested in using this information to point out issues to educate, to entertain."

55. "[…] the first positive thing is that the initiative exists, which is in my view a recognition that this information is important to get out there. When you have research data or research information here on shelves, it doesn't help anyone. If you release it out I can be used by different people to handle different situations. So I would say that the act that that recognition exists, by the Open Data initiative, and governments are also enjoying the open government partnership and has developed an action plan […] The Access to Information Bill is at the Attorney General's office, so maybe it might be enacted this year, after over ten years of agitating for it. I think I could say that the environment allows it if you have the sufficient political will to make it happen."

56. "I think specific interest groups or advocacy groups working on certain issues, I think the allies within the government institutions, especially when you get a change in government."

57. "There are allies out there, there are allies as major banks, at ministries, so how do you take advantage of the people who are new, who are in there for the rights reasons, so that they don't get up and leave? Give in to the bureaucracy. I think that there is an opening with all the things that are happening here, with the devolution process and so on. Governmentwise."

58. "In Kenya I can see that despite the many evils that exist in this country, I can say that the awareness is there. I can see from the national level there is the opposition, which acts as a check for the government, there is also the civil society. We have very key people who, when the president states something which is not true, tomorrow you will see that in the newspaper, in the evening that will be refuted by these key civil society people. I can say that that strength is there, the civil society is there, the opposition at the national level is there, but here is also a gap. […] So I can say that we as a country have the media, the civil society and the opposition."

59. "I think in this field and in the age of social media we are really seeing citizens being vocal about what they view or what they need from their government, so the demand is there. It may not be directly towards Open Data, but the demand for information exists. And when there is a demand for information there is a demand for Open Data. There are also different civil society groups lobbying for freedom of information, for legislation, because they do want to access the government information so there is also demand being created from that field and then finally the demand from developers may have dropped off, from the tech community, but I think it could easily be brought about if more outreach is done and if the supply is met."

60. "[…] people who access the internet, especially the young, they share information, they get information and then they learn from the internet"

61. "[…] nearly everyone has a phone […] so if you can reach thousands and give them money on their phone, then you should also be able to reach millions with simple information, if you can do it over the phone. […] I think it is only the ICT authority that is really driving it […] they are driving a policy where they are trying to make everything digital and electronic […] That I think

is an enabling factor - that they are trying to go digital with everything. Whether they have the will to do that, because it is always seen as dangerous, is another question."

62. "[…] even the simple phones nowadays in Kenya, the phones which are coming, because of the competition, every phone has access the internet. I think all of them, even the fake Chinese, they have internet and people can use it. But they are usually the people who are more informed they have some level of basic education, basically somebody who can read and write. […] (there are) many internet cafés (even in the slums). We have resource centres, institutions and NGO:s. There are so many."

63. "I think 76 per cent of Kenyans has access to a mobile phone or a mobile subscription. And 99 per cent of internet access is from a mobile device. And numbers on internet penetration is around 40 per cent."

Which are the disabling factors?

64. "There are two things, one is legislation, the other one is the culture. For a long time we have been trying to get a freedom of information act, we are still not there. […] I realized there are challenges to that like the existing bill in its current state does not require for government digitalization for example […] But then there are just other legislations around it, the secrets act that makes government employees keeping things secret.. […] The other one is culture and it is the culture of not sharing. Like the government has data but it won't share it because they don't know what you will do with it. So I won't do it. So when it starts at this level, it comes down to the citizen and the ministers are like, 'I have data but I won't share it with you, I don't know who you are giving it to, who will use it, you might use it against me'. So until that changes the most impossible thing is, even if we had all the right legislation, even if we didn't have the secrecy act even if we didn't have the mandate for the national bureau of statistics to make money - we don't have a culture of people who are willing to share, who are willing to put themselves out there to be judged, then this is not going to change."

65. "We are at a low level of maturity, this is just the forth presidency since dictatorship. People don't really know what to ask for, people are just asking for a job […] when devolution came into place, people have to ask 'what is the role of the governor or the county representative', so that they know themselves what they are supposed to be doing and so that the community can know and push them in the right direction. I think that you have to have that understanding of how structurally it is supposed to work, or at least work towards it."

66. "Media in Kenya is relatively strong. But that the strength may be veining. […] I think we have tried to raise a lot of questions about it and make a lot of noise about it, but there is also an air of caution. […] I don't want to ask too many questions or be too critical so that someone will say that I am biased. […] Now after the Kenyatta government came into power, it has been subtle, but they have been systematically been reducing the media space…So it is kind of a double faced thing that we see with this government. They came out and they were friends with the media. […] but then when you look at the nature of the information, that's coming out, they say they are transparent, but they are not really transparent. It is a new sort of operating environment and I have to say maybe the first couple of months we were blindsided and we thought this was a media friendly – and it is really just starting to sink in that it is really not, and that you'll have to be cleverer than you ever were and more cunning than you ever were if you want to play your role as an intermediary between the government and the people."

67. "There is intolerance to this information. Even if it is leaked it does not get published, if it is not in the media's short term to medium term interest to do so. There are journalist friends of ours who just sit in information, they are told that it is a question of national security and they don't publish. Or they sit on documents and they will cut a piece out of that piece and they are told to take certain parts out. […] Also the power dynamic. You write a piece and allege something, there will be a law suit filed even before you get it published. For defamation."

68. "[…] no one has the capacity or the resources to do that kind of digging. Certainly not media who do not have the right structures in place to dig that deep into a story."

69. "[…] the current government interfered with the law of the civil society whereby they amended the public benefits organization act, whereby they said that the civil society or the NGOs should not get money directly from foreign countries. And the big reason that they say that is that they are claiming that the ICC case has been supported by the civil society, and they want to kill the civil society and to kill the media. Because the media has played a big role to ensure that accountability is there."

70. "[…] the education system does not prepare people to use data. […] People are afraid of numbers, they don't know how to use excel, and beyond basic addition and subtraction, multiplication, there is very little basic numeracy. So we start there. […] We do a lot of training with journalist and most of them are terrified with numbers, we force a report on them and the best they can do so is usually just copy-paste. […] So, that is a problem at the level of the education system, it is not a problem we solve by training, it is not a problem KODI can solve, it is not a problem that an infinite number of CSO:s can solve. People need to be better educated. When they leave secondary school, they need to not be afraid of numbers. We are not talking about anything sophisticated, we are not talking about regression analysis, we are talking about basic numeracy, which is very low."

71. "[…] you can create transparency, but people don't read. Even if you put data out there. Unless some journalists stumble upon it and says here is a scandal. … Even media does not read the data objectively; they actually look for some scandal. […] So we lack the people to read it, interrogate it and bring the issues out. Including parliament, which is supposed to do that. […] We could create more transparency, if more people read what they find in the Open Data. Even as we work on the freedom of information, it is not going to work. The country who have already that bill, or law, in place, nothing goes on. Nobody goes to ask for information. People generally don't know what is happening."

72. "[…] if you go to rural Kenya […] The level of education and awareness on what the government should be doing is daunting, so people lack the ability. That kind of awareness is there in urban centres but that knowledge in rural centres, we still have a long way to go."

73. "I think just an aversion. If it feels dangerous to release voters registration centres info that is not a good environment to be in. Because it is true that someone could map out all the voter registration offices and bomb the ones they don't want people to register at. But there is also a huge public interest involved in this information being public and available. I think that kind of aversion, like the more useful information is, the more scary it seems are to get it out there."

74. "The more useful the info is, the less interest from an official to release it. He has to balance his own risks and benefits. There is always someone who might yell at you."

75. "there might be a digital divide in terms of services. […] So technology could be in form of TV or radio and if Open Data platforms were built around these services, definitely this gap could be closed. So not the actual technologies, but the services around these technologies is what is missing. And that is what's also really making the awareness low."

76. "The internet I can say is not widely all over the county, the people who are in the urban centres or towns within the county's access internet through the cybercafés. Whereby they go, and also the learned few who are in the towns".

77. "… the rural areas have their challenges, there is no access to electricity, even the people there, the citizens in the rural areas there education level tend to be a little bit low. So investing in rural areas in an internet café, where you don't have electricity. […] Honestly the young, vibrant the well-educated they have all come to the city to work."

Which are your recommendations to the government (supply side)?

78. "I think it is the responsibility of government. […] I think that a bigger part of the information that people would be looking for would be in the hands of government and therefore government is the greatest repository of information. Almost on anything. … Information is a public good, so if you see it that way, you want to put it out there, and let people consume it as it were. It is the responsibility of government."

Which are your recommendations on the demand side (civil society/citizens)?

79. "I think strong citizen engagement is what is needed to enable this to happen. […] increasing levels awareness around the platform and the possibilities of the platform […] trust is built from that engagement. So they are telling us ask us, we are open and transparent, but how do you respond, do you respond? If you don't close that feedback-loop to the citizen it is useless, so citizen engagement is very critical for Open Data to work in Kenya."

80. "[…] there is that need to make the public aware, that this information is available, you can access it, after you find this information, you have to look at A B and C, there are these aspects that you need to check, in these information. Then after that, it doesn't end there, they need also for their capacity to be strengthened and developed. So that they can hold their leaders accountable. Especially in Kenya this cannot happen overnight. If that information is there the awareness needs to be there."

81. "[…] it is a lot of civic education. […] we need to put a lot of resources into educating people that there is this information and there is somewhere where you can get this information."

82. "The citizens have to demand the information and they have to be insistent. Because many times you will be turned away, but […] you could get a court case […] As more people litigate over this, I think the government will see the futility of withholding that information. And that will ignite a debate that will be held about what information should be withheld from the public. That debate we are yet to have it in this country. Many people will be telling you that everything should be kept away from the public. To me it is the self-testing of the system, and since we don't have an administrative process of dealing with access to information issues, I think the court process becomes almost the only option to get any important information from the government."

Which are your recommendations on the intermediaries (developers/media, for example)?

83. "[…] new intermediaries have to play a role to breach that gap between citizens and government and also we are lacking these intermediaries, if it is developers, academics or the civil society – so we need to really amp up the kind of intermediaries who are in place to for Open Data to be successful."

84. "The government yes can give information but at least the media, the civil society, those two play a very key role to make sure that the people can access the information because the government can give information, but there is some information that they won't give."

85. "[…] you cannot afford to lose focus on the developers, who are more likely middle people. Because how the data is now on the site, it needs a researcher or developer to come in an understand it. The citizens are not knowledgeable to do that or does not have the time. So you need these developers and researchers who can come and look at it and say this is what it means. Who can come and look at the data and project tools around it that are more accessible for the citizen."

86. "[…] the info-mediaries working to help other people to get the information in a form that is useful to them. Those people who will not necessarily go to a website. Even for those people a better KODI website would help them to do their work. […] So somebody actually has to do some work."

87. "I think today even if you get even the comprehensive and Open Data that we need, it would still be very difficult for us to translate that into public interest story, and it is because we haven't traditionally practices data journalism. It has been the sort of journalism of he says, she says […] So sometimes even when the facts are there […] I think we need to strengthen our capacity to do data journalism and to rely on facts, not to rely on these news makers, because we make them newsmakers."

General recommendations

88. "Someone have to find a way to create a connection between the citizen and the government, because when we are talking about accountability and transparency, accountability from government to citizen, but transparency should also be a proactive kind of thing from the government to the citizen where the government is saying freely here is what is happening and here is what is going on. And there has to be that incentive for the citizen to listen."

89. "For transparency and accountability to be useful concepts for governance, there has to be access to information. Open Data is that first point of accessing information, the information has to be very specific to whatever data is available, the role that Open Data plays is just closing that bridge. How is the government transparent – through Open Data. Where does accountability come into play – citizens look at the Open Data and use it to ask questions. And the government can also reference to the Open Data to show what they have done, so I think it plays a really central role in this information loop between citizens and government."

90. "I think that most people don't expect their official representative or local official to deliver for them to begin with, I think there are other factors for it to really be necessary for it to be effective, and like you need the information and you need a way to be able to act on it. I think if you have too much information without a way to act on it, it actually just breeds despondence. 'Oh, I didn't really know how bad things were and now I have a figure on just how bad things are and there is nothing I can do about it'. So I think I worry about it sometimes that when we publish something on corruption it just breeds a mentality on this is just so bad and there is nothing we can do about it, we are just small. If you had those other mechanisms then communities could organize themselves to respond to them information has to be on basic things, in their daily lives, things that really matters. Land tenure, land issues, what is to be afforded to you, taxes and basic services. VAT or prices of basic goods."

91. "Maybe if civil society can be empowered, to some down and develop, even in remote areas like this, develop some information centres whereby these communities, when they are going to the markets they can go and access the information. Because even if you tell them to go to the internet, they might lack the expertise to access the information, but if you provide the information and maybe there is somebody who can give the information at a lower level. I have seen in different areas where in the community there is an information resource centre – whereby if you want information on agriculture you can get it, if you want information on the budgeting you can get it. Any information you can get there. Because at the local level, if there is someone like me, a development practitioner, I can print and share with the people."

Appendix 5: Table of variables

Actors	Variables/enabling factors as found in literature	Disabling factors according to interviewees	Enabling factors according to interviewees
'Supply' side or disclosers	Access to information	- No access of information bill in place - Secrecy act	- Constitution opens up for access to information - High level of freedom of speech (in regional comparison)
	Institutional or state capacity	- Lack of capacity among (for example) parliamentarians to understand and analyse data - High level of corruption - Low digitization	- ICT authority in place - High proliferation of mobile/internet technology - New oversight institutions
	Institutionalisation of accountability mechanisms	- Accountability systems that are not yet set up/immature - Low knowledge of how the systems work (even within oversight institutions)	- An active opposition - Transparency initiatives in place (for example KODI, e-ProMIS, Huduma)
	Level of democratization	Low level of maturity (fourth presidency since dictatorship)	- New constitution in place (which has been internationally recognized as progressive)
	Level of political will	- Lack of ownership for transparency measures (like KODI) - Culture of secrecy and corruption	- "Champions" and "allies" within government - Attitude change within the public sector on access to information - Level of corruption diminishing
	Broader enabling legal frameworks, political incentives, sanctions	- Hostile environment between government and civil society	- Digitalization of many documents and transactions in the state (for example IFMIS) - Devolution (or decentralization) takes leaders closer to the citizens and fosters accountability
Inter-mediaries/Info-mediaries	Civil society capacity	- Current political restraints against civil society (laws on financing, for example)	- An active civil society - Many tech "savvy" developers, etc
	Free media (not mentioned explicitly by McGee and Gaventa in their bullet points, but for example by Carter on p. 7)	- Air of caution in media environment - Restrictive defamation laws - Interests of industry that interferes with what media houses publish - Low capacity of media for numeracy and critical analysis - Limiting media logic – looking for scapegoats/scandals and "he-says-she-says"-reporting - Manipulation of media by politicians	- Media that is fairly vibrant and free - Citizens vocal in social media
'Demand' or users	Capabilities citizens	- Low literacy (especially rural) - Low computer literacy/technical skills - Low numeracy - Low level of critical analysis skills	- Rising access to ICT:s and computer literacy - Youth activism - Growing demand for info and freedom of info
	Degree to which TAIs interact with other mobilization and collective action strategies	Low level of awareness about transparency initiatives (like KODI)	Active citizen engagement, especially young and urban
	The engagement of citizens in the 'upstream' as well as the 'downstream' stages of TAI	Not mentioned by respondents	Not mentioned by respondents