



Inter-Parliamentary Union  
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THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF  
THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

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# Public information strategies in the light of technological evolution

Parliament of Kenya  
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# Introduction

- Among the arms of government, legislature carries bigger burden of public information
- Legislators are 'people's representatives'
- Renewal or denial of mandate partly a consequence of public information success

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- Demographics have changed in favour of an educated techno-savvy public
  - Averse to traditional methods of information dissemination
  - Desire access to information with feedback mechanisms
  - Want their voice to count in their governance

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- To respond to this kind of citizenry, many governments have embraced the concepts of e-governments
  - This entails not only providing information but providing online platforms for exchange, provision of services etc

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# Statutory Frameworks

- Access to Information has been recognised as a universal right to citizens
- Articles 19 and 21 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- Many jurisdictions have domesticated this right
- Citizens' participation in governance is futile without access to relevant information

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# Constitution of Kenya 2010

- Given impetus by citizens unrest of 2008 demanding more open, transparent and citizen participatory governance
- Articles 118 and 196- imposes both positive and a negative duty: requires the involvement of the public and the
- negative duty bars the exclusion of the public and media from House and Committee Proceedings

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# Measures

- Review of Standing orders and other regulations
- No 'Stranger' reference
- Committee Chair as Speakers for decisions of access
- Training of entry points staff on new dispensation

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# Strategy 1: Live Broadcasts

Mars Group in 2007 before broadcasts:

“Live broadcasts of Parliament is an immediate priority and the poor performance of the 9th Parliament justifies taking all necessary measures to allow constituents and the wider public to see Parliament at work...Live broadcasts will assist in forcing members to prepare better for their presentations, promote public awareness and transparency...”

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- Parliament of Kenya launched full radio and TV live broadcast in 2008
  - National broadcaster contracted but feed available to all media houses
  - Available on digital platform
  - Attracted massive interest by public including Kenyans in diaspora

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# Impact

- Improved quality of debate
- Improved conduct in the chamber
- Improved quorum in the chamber
- Demystified parliament in the eyes of the public
- Improved public understanding of Legislature mandate

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- 2013 Verdict by AFRICOG:

“...Kenyan Parliament has been implementing measures to improve openness, participation and public scrutiny of parliamentary business. Critical milestones include introduction of the live coverage of proceedings; amendments to open up the proceedings of committees to public and increased use of technology in conduct of its business which eventually resulted in a website onto which important basic information has been uploaded, allowing members of the public easier access to parliamentary business”

# Strategy 2: Media partnership

- Most public access information through media
- Media too had to change in light of technology and social media has taken centre stage
- Parliaments to provide ICT facilities for Parliamentary reporters to report real time and on time
- Training on parliamentary coverage also necessary

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# Impact

- Increased coverage of regular parliamentary business alongside the usual 'odd' news
- Mastery of technical parliamentary process by media leading to accurate
- Reduced turnover of elected members in subsequent elections

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## Strategy 3: Online Access

- Conversion and storage to searchable form of historical hansard reports from 1911
- Online bill/motion/statement tracker
- Order Papers
- Sitting Calendars

## BILL TRACKER 2014

The Bill Tracker provides an overview of the current status of all Bills before the National Assembly during the year.

S/No	BILL	SPONSOR	NA/ Sen Bill/ No.	DATED	MATURIT Y DATE	GAZETT E NO.	1 <sup>ST</sup> READ	2 <sup>ND</sup> READ	3 <sup>RD</sup> READ	REMARK S	ASSENT
001	The Insurance (Amendment) Bill, 2013	Hon. Benjamin Langat, MP	NA 5 of 2013	18/6/2013	26/6/2013	84	27/6/2013	<b>Started on:</b> 1/10/2013; 9/10/2013; 10/10/2013; <b>Ended on:</b> 17/10/2013.	17/10/2013; 25/2/2014	Passed.	Assented to.
002	The Marriage Bill, 2013	Hon. Samuel Chepkonga, MP	NA 13 of 2013	5/7/2013	16/7/2013	97	16/7/2013	<b>Started on:</b> 18/2/2014; 20/2/2014; 26/2/2014; 18/2/2014; 19/3/2014;	25/3/2014	Passed	

# Strategy 4: Support to Members to stay connected with constituents

- ICT Infrastructure Support
- iPads with customised legislative programmes
- Offices some linked with Satellite links to constituency offices
- Social media – over 50 percent with active social media accounts
- 10 percent on YouTube channels

## Conducting a meeting with Constituents from Nairobi office



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# Strategy 5: Public Participation Mechanisms

- Law requires that all laws passed must have public participation.
- Most submissions received online and analysed
- Committee rooms and chambers limit public access and technology used to project to public

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CLAUSE	PROPOSED AMMENDMENT	BRIEF JUSTIFICATION	COMMITTEE COMMENT
1			
2			
3			

## Public submissions analysis template

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# Lessons Learnt

- Regardless of the process, the message has to be right
- The audience is the determinant
- Strategic sharing of information changes perceptions
- There are willing takers
- Use of ICTs is for the greater good

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# Conclusion

- The process is dynamic and situation specific
- Integrated method is the sure method
- Parliaments should not fear to break from traditions if they are to remain relevant



**And Thanks!**