

Question 1: Do you have other ideas or suggestions about how government information and data could be made more accessible and user friendly?

- Call someone and talk to a live person.
- Have a contact person for people without internet access or phone.
- Training session.
- Call center for how to access information.
- Have a call-back feature to avoid queuing on the phone.
- A phone number for people to call who need help accessing information, or with registry on system.
- Speak to a live person.
- Have wider advertisement of events programs (i.e. through post office).
- Advertise outside government website.
- People are not aware of deadlines and timelines.
- Better promotion of deadlines/timelines.
- LAMPS system (AES), difficult to register.
- Can we get a password automatically, not in 2-3 weeks?
- Data interpretation.
- Make the data clear.
- Timely and immediately.
- Searchable by region.
- Anytime government has research and study it should be available automatically.
- Access for people who don't have access to computers or are illiterate.
- Other ways for seniors to access information.
- CAP(community access program) sites have been removed.
- Something to let seniors access information.
- People who put it online, know how to use it, but difficult for an average user.
- There are older people and people who cannot use internet so they will be disproportionately affected.
 - Rural issue.
- Application process.
 - Notification of changes to process to people who have applied in previous years.
- Change the government website so you can find things more easily.
- Update the government website more regularly.
- Has a system that alienates citizens.

Open Government Initiative Public Engagement Feedback.

St. Anthony-Port au Choix Region, September 9, 2014

Question 2: Do you have other ideas or suggestions about how government can do a better job of engaging the public?

- Understanding the geography of the province and impact on policies.
- Limitation to use of technology because of limitations in regions.
- People don't realize distances and how rural we are when they're engaging.
- Sessions in Plum Point, Roddich, St. Anthony, PAC, River of Ponds, Rocky harbor.
- Have smaller sessions in communities' sites instead of regional Open Government Initiative session; people won't travel.
 - Moose concern and driving.
 - Cost to stay overnight.
- Post Office. Post invitation to everyone.
- Government should travel more.
- Have more sessions not expecting people to travel.
- Go back to old ways, like newspapers.
- People are concerned that information will not be used, so people feel it's useless.
- No action.
- People are less interested because of inaction and lack of transparency.
- Ability to change policy.
- Process to change policy and make people aware of this. Ensure follow-up and follow through.
- Want to hear back from participation in events or surveys.
- Different approaches for different ages.
- Communication challenges.
- People are overwhelmed.
- Lack of trust.
- Engage municipalities.
- Target groups, like a regional council or development group.
- Major campaigns for things that are affecting the whole province.
- Tell people why they should attend. Encourage people to attend in emails.
- Celebrities to appeal to youth.
- Target youth groups who are more likely to use information.
- Get youth interested in government in general.
- Need to understand government as a whole to want to get engaged.
- Information on policy and how to change these.

Question 3: Do you have any ideas or suggestions on how government can be a better partner when collaborating with external groups?

- Provide more money and say yes to proposals.
- Government should be initiating engagements, not being reactive.
- No money for core staff. Stable staff person.
- More stable funding for external organizations.
- More visible to outside groups.
- Government should provide resources; staffing and funds for groups to collaborate.
- Different approaches for different groups.
- Provide staff locally for assistance.
- Government take away programs before citizens can get adjusted.
- Don't have difference between supports for different age-groups i.e. children vs seniors vs disabled.
- Government should be more visible and accessible in the regions.
- Enough staff to represent regions in the province.
- Government should act on their commitments.
- Make relevant information more available and easier to get.
- Make government staff experts available to external groups.
- Decision-makers should be in region.
- Need more collaboration between departments.
- Should be easier to get government staff.
- Government should come and visit projects more often.
- More people on the ground.
- More contact.
- Everything is now centralized. Don't get to speak to the same person when I call the 1-800 number (AES) – income support.
- Would like to see regional approvals and authority back. Speeds up collaboration, know who to call.
- Authority levels of staff in region.
- Fear of reprisal/lack of freedom of speech for external stakeholders.
- For collaboration groups, need people there who can talk to the issues (example: Deputy Minister).
- All about relationships.
- NL Housing is a good example of an agency that connects well.
- Timing of collaboration; at idea generation stage, not when decision has been made.

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- Ministers never reply to letters.
- Employees want to better themselves, but if they leave to go to school they lose their right to employment insurance.
- We want to be a purposeful partner, not just on paper (make somebody look good).

Question 4: Do you have other ideas or suggestions about how government could be more responsive or proactive when it comes to informing you of the outcomes of public engagement activities?

- Should not rely on news media because they put their own spin on it.
- Given credit to change-makers in public.
- Teach by example.
- Don't be a hypocrite.
- Look at demographics by region.
- Be responsive by planning age-appropriate engagement and providing appropriate service.
- Put it as a job for the Rural Secretariat to promote results.
- If citizens have to travel for basic services, they should provide travel costs.
- Inform you if things are going to be late e.g. if you've said 3 months, but it will actually take 6.
- Want to know what's happening in other regions and provincially.
- Departments should be aware of what's happening in other departments.
- Increase inter-departmental collaboration.
- Don't waste money printing up documents when you can use cheap paper (put money towards delivery of plan).
- Government should always respond to inquiries.
- Respond to inquiries quicker.
- Don't wait 2 years to put the information out e.g. session reports (before you forget that you took part!).
- 6 weeks - 2 months is an acceptable time to report back.
- Timely follow-ups.
- Put information on website and make it user-friendly.
- Better promotion of what's happening.
- Use newspapers, television and radio for older people.
- List comes up.
- Provide an open and welcoming environment.
- Be less secretive with information to allow for better collaboration.
- Don't do strategies etc. if there're no plans on following through.
- Stop using studies as a cop-out so as to not do actions.

Question 5: Do you have any additional ideas re: possible actions that the GNL should consider when developing its first Open Government Action Plan?

- Provide a general line/contact person besides the political route.
- If people/resources already exist, make it clearer.
- Make it easier for individuals to provide criticism/constructive criticism.
- Government should represent all citizens, not just special interest groups.
- All groups and ages should be treated fairly.
- Open government should start at the basic level of municipal government.
 - Mandatory for municipal government be open.
- Grants. Information on what is spent on Northern Peninsula vs. other parts of the province made accessible.
- If you're going to have Open Government, be open.
- Action plan can't only involve the Avalon Peninsula. Are actions going to work in Plum Point or Conche?
- Realize that Newfoundland is not St. John's and the Avalon: biggest problem.
- People don't realize how big the province is.