

Introduction to CABRI in Digital Public Financial Management (dPFM) by Dr Kay Brown | Executive Secretary



CABRI is an international organisation that works with Ministries of Finance to **strengthen public finance capabilities and systems in Africa**



*Praxis
What Works*

Applying the CABRI approach to dPFM



Looking beyond iFMIS

Ministries of Finance have a role in stewarding digital solutions beyond just an iFMIS system

Learning from experiences

Encouraging learning across countries on what works, and how – including the role of people, politics and change management

Problem-driven approaches

Function over form – the tool chosen is less important than the function it improves

Driving outcomes for populations

Focusing on the functions that have a large impact on service delivery and outcomes



Digital PFM has huge potential for good... for starters

- Spending more in line with population needs
 - Higher data quality for better outcomes
 - Quicker reporting enables budget reallocation mid-year
- Improved efficiency
 - Faster funding flows to front line and service delivery
 - Streamlining manual processes
- Fiscal discipline and better oversight and accountability
 - Embedded spending controls
 - Improved reporting & reporting focus



...but digital reforms often fall short of expectations

- ! Systems introduced for ‘modernization’ or as a ‘checkbox’ activities, overlooking underlying issues
- ! Ineffective change management processes that fail to overcome internal resistance to reforms
- ! Insufficient focus on capacity building to maintain systems, or utilize data across government

Unsuccessful digital reforms represent a large wastage of money, time and effort and can undermine citizens’ confidence in government.

Home / Front Page / Govt threatens to cancel Ifmis contract

Front Page National News

Govt threatens to cancel Ifmis contract

Lloyd Chitsulo June 18, 2023

4 minutes read



Listen to this article

Five years after awarding a \$13.8 million (about K14.1 billion) Integrated Financial Management Information System (Ifmis) procurement contract to a Zimbabwean firm, government has written the contractor threatening to cancel it.

A letter from the Accountant General Henry Mphasa to the contractor Third Century Systems Private Limited (TTCS), which *Nation on Sunday* has seen, claims that Ifmis is performing poorly; hence, threatens Malawi’s chance to access the Extended Credit Facility (ECF) with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

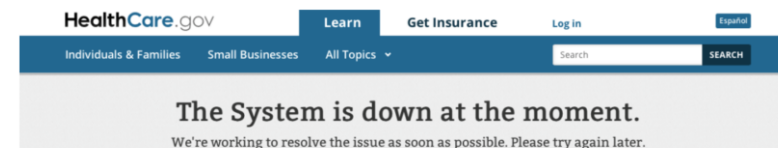
The Failed Launch Of www.HealthCare.gov

By ABC123 Alumni

MODIFIED NOV 18, 2016

Next:

[ImaginBank and its war against fintech](#)



The US Government's failed launch of the Healthcare.gov website highlights issues with integrating technology into a large bureaucratic organization.

Home / National

Senate raises concerns over continued inefficiency of IFMIS

By Judah Ben Hur | 2yrs ago



Senate in session during the election of the Senate Deputy Speaker of the senate at the Senate chambers in Nairobi, June 2, 2020 [Elvis Ogina, Standard]

Eighteen years since its advent, the [Integrated Financial Management Information System](#) (IFMIS), used in government to enhance transparency and accountable, remains inefficient.

Senators were taken aback when [Auditor General Nancy Gathungu](#) and Controller of

CABRI seeks to understand how digital reforms can be more:



Problem driven and outcome oriented

Reformers carefully define the barriers to achieving outcomes, and ensure the digital solution addresses these

Iterative and adaptive

Reflection, iteration and adaptation are built into planning and implementation to avoid traps of linear planning and legacy systems

Sustainable and context-appropriate

Digital systems are tailored to local context and capabilities are built to design, maintain and use the systems and data



Today's webinar

Objective

Introduce CABRI Member and other States and Partners to CABRI's new initiative:
Enhancing Digital PFM in Africa

Agenda

1

Welcome Message

Dr Kay Brown

2

Presentation on Challenges of Digitalisation

Nicolas Botton

3

Country Panel Discussion

Moderators: Giselle Hadley and
Nicolas Botton

4

CABRI's new initiative

Giselle Hadley



CABRI TEAM



Dr Kay Brown
Executive Secretary



Priya Beegun
Marketing and Communications
Manager



Ashani Singh
Events Manager



Joana Bento
Acting Head – Public Finance



Giselle Hadley
Program Manager in Public Finance



Nicolas Botton
Expert Consultant – Digital PFM

Challenges in Digital Reforms

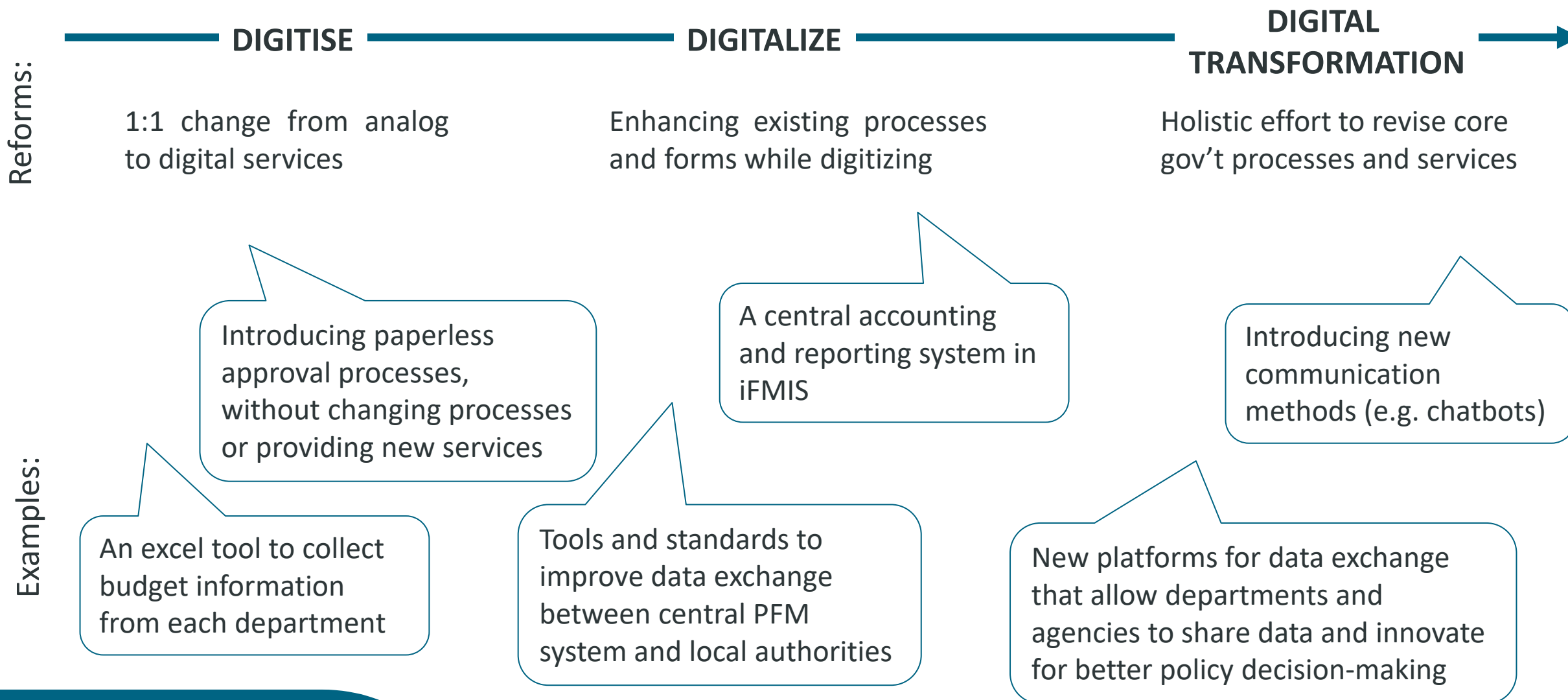
by Nicolas Botton



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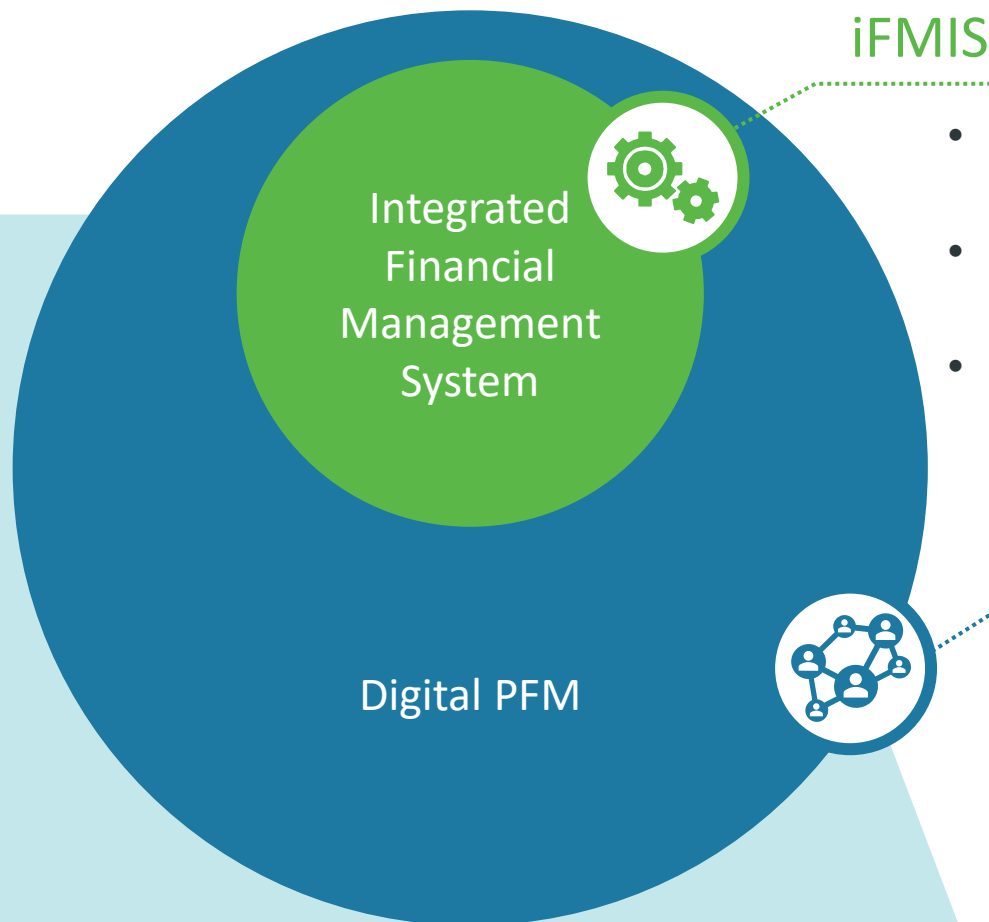


Digital reforms come in many shapes and sizes ...





Digitalising is not just about adopting an iFMIS system



iFMIS

- System providing timely, reliable and comprehensive reports, covering expenditure, revenue and other modules.
- Used to both generate and use the financial data and support the financial management processes.
- Core system of PFM but should evolve and is not enough to answer the needs of the population.

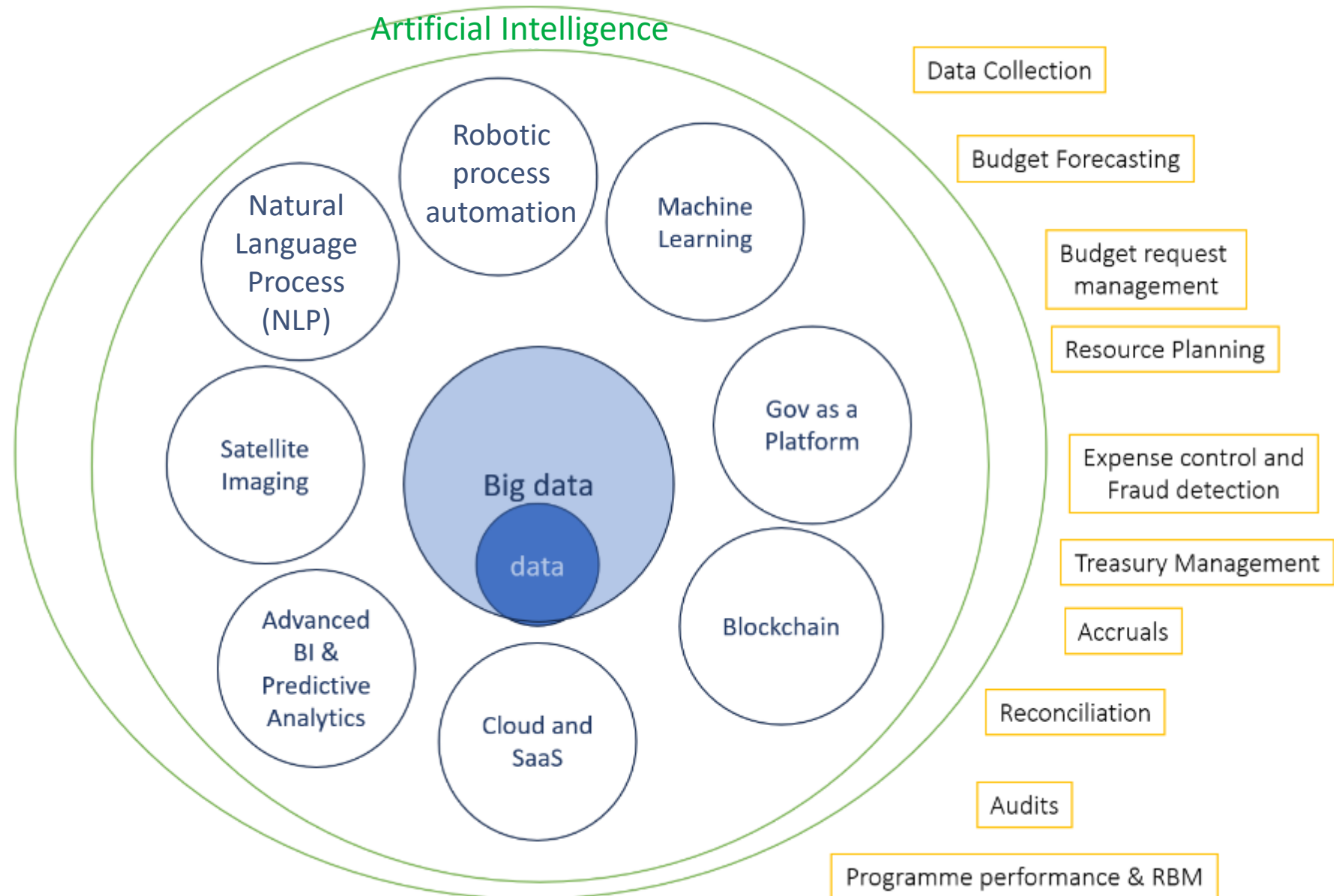
Digital PFM

- PFM revolving around the needs of the decision makers, civil servants and citizens with an architecture that allows for quick innovations and data sharing.
- Not limited to budget and accounting data, and including ways to make the data available and understandable to non-experts.
- Ways to encompass the data and systems of line ministries, local authorities, public companies.

The scope of 'digital' in government is also expanding rapidly

- Not just improvements to the FMIS anymore, major game changers
- Where does it impact your PFM process ? *Everywhere*

Defining what you are trying to achieve is essential, especially around which function of PFM you seek to improve





There are many "potential" obstacles in a digital initiative or reform

Technical and practical challenges, quality data common standards

- More systems have been built, but communication between them is challenging
- Require the *right multi-skilled* team to manage the process, with clear communication and engagement strategies

Resource and capacity constraints, funding, digital literacy and skills

- Donor funding: fewer 6+ year projects, but small agile approaches require the right procurement
- Need IT capacities in IT teams, and improved digital literacy of civil servants and citizens

Institutional, legal and cultural barriers

- Change management approaches need to allow iteration and frequent end user input
- Resistance to change may be high within users, especially where engagement, consultation and consensus has not been built



A new job for the Ministry of Finance

- New risks but **huge potential for Treasuries and our citizens**. In public finance, we turn to the Ministries of Finance as lead digital champion, a new job
- **There is no “start from scratch”** anymore: any new project needs to consider the current systems and data and how to evolve in the country’s context (modular, agile, PDIA, adaptative...etc)
- Great risks but **success stories** too, let’s not focus only on failures. **Need to share between us** the lessons learned, the main trends of use, evidence of impacts, policy implications
- It’s a new job, with new tools, but the focus on **population outcomes must stay central** to our efforts and investments

A paradigm shift will be essential to adopt systematic and whole-of-organization approaches to the digital transformation of the public sector

-- (OECD, State of the Art in the use of technology)

Panel Discussion

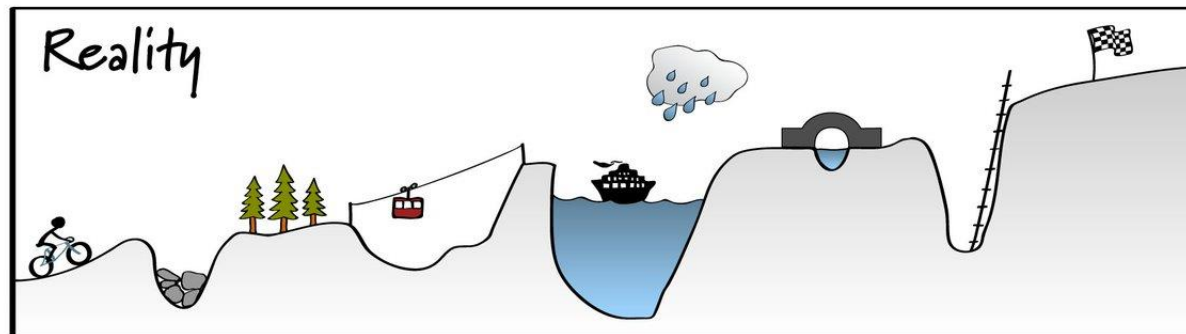
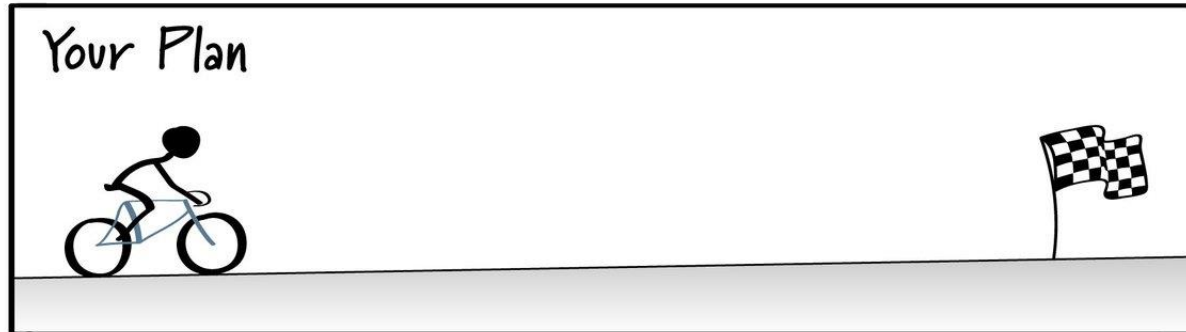
Moderated by Giselle Hadley
and Nicolas Botton



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Learning from good practices

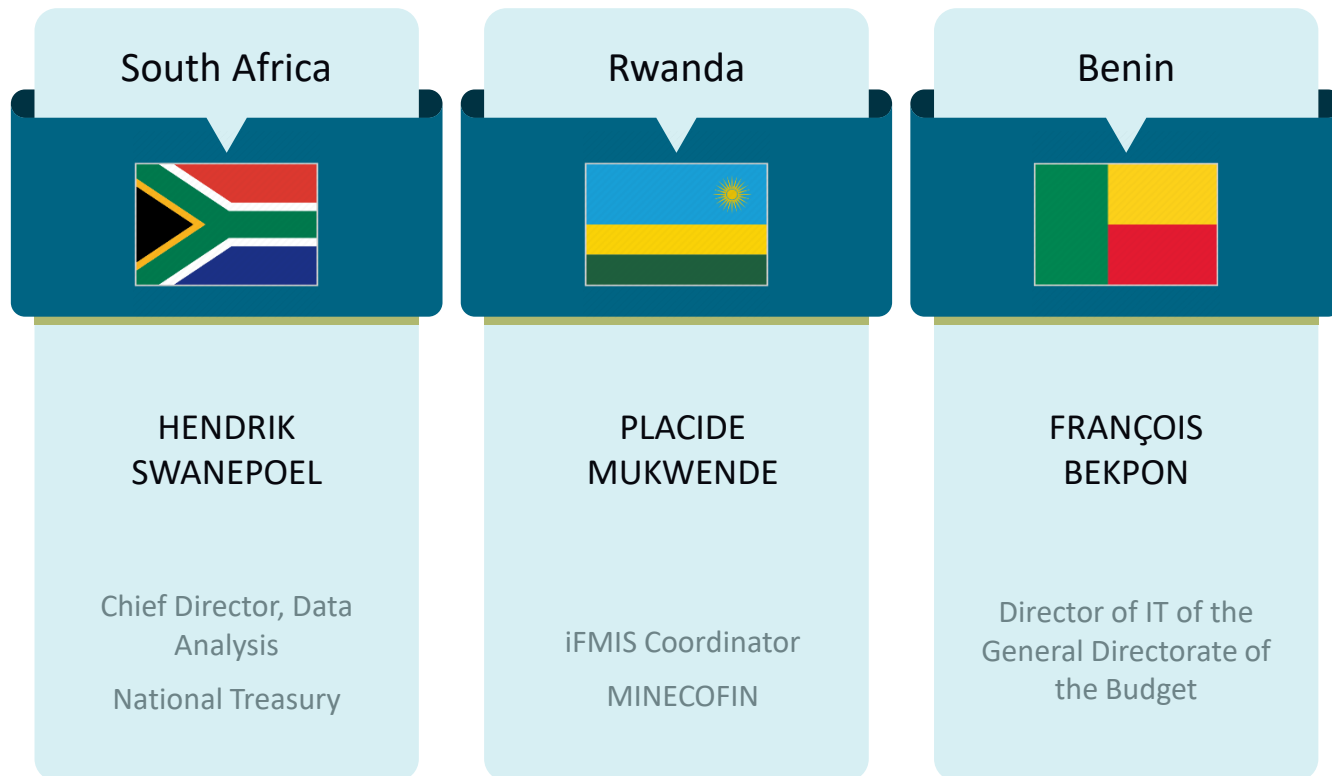


- There is no “right way” to implement a digital reform – local context matters
- Defining your ultimate goal well will have a big effect on where you end up – and if you have impact
- There will also be disruptions on the way: the question is how the political, process and administrative factors affect your ability to adapt in a continually agile way

Going to hear from 3 countries experience in overcoming challenges in their iFMIS implementation – to understand learnings from the successes on the path to digitalisation



Learning from iFMIS experiences



Enhancing Digital PFM in Africa

by Giselle Hadley



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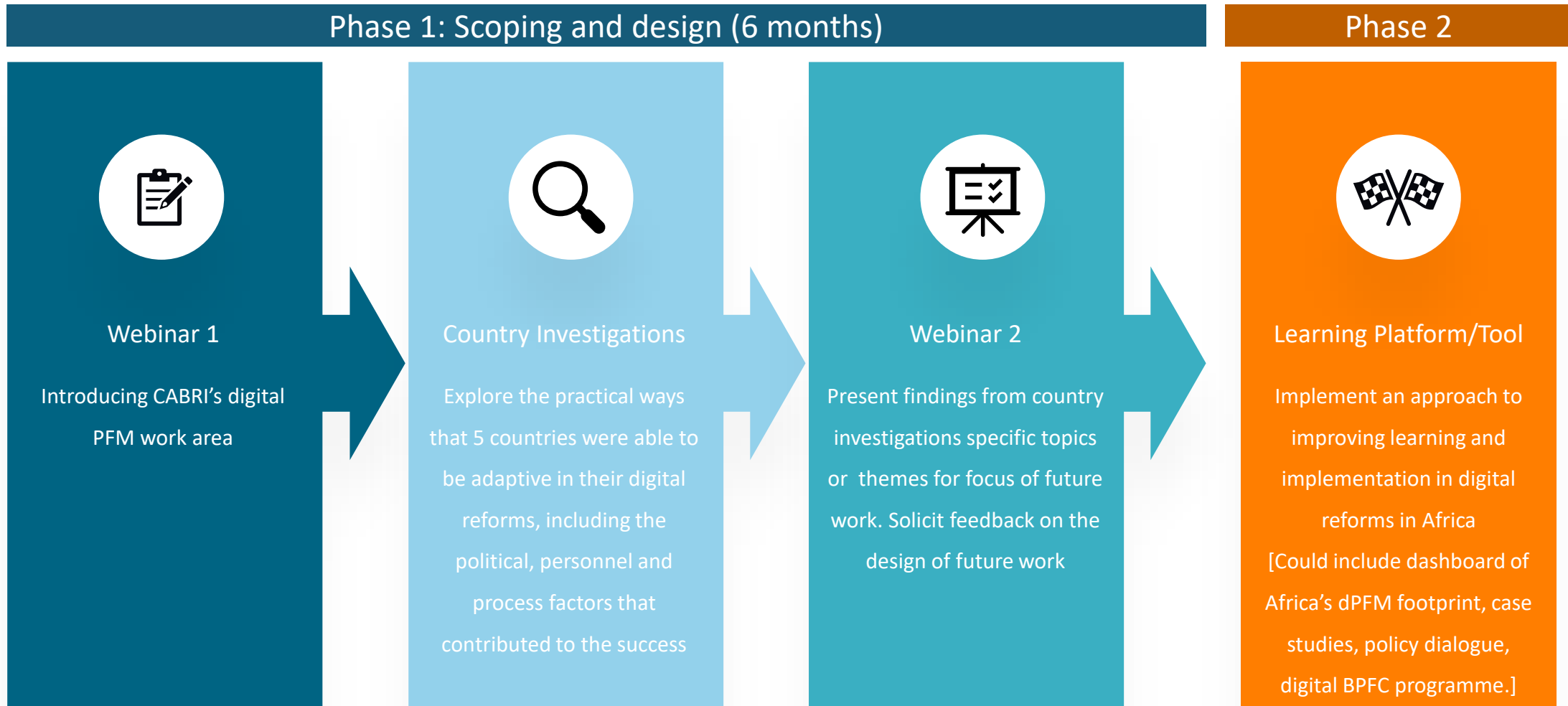


Identifying opportunities for cross-country learning on digital reforms

The Enhancing Digital PFM in Africa work area will focus on **understanding the praxis of how** countries have successfully improved service delivery and financial systems outcomes through digital tools.



Co-design CABRI's work in digital PFM in two phases





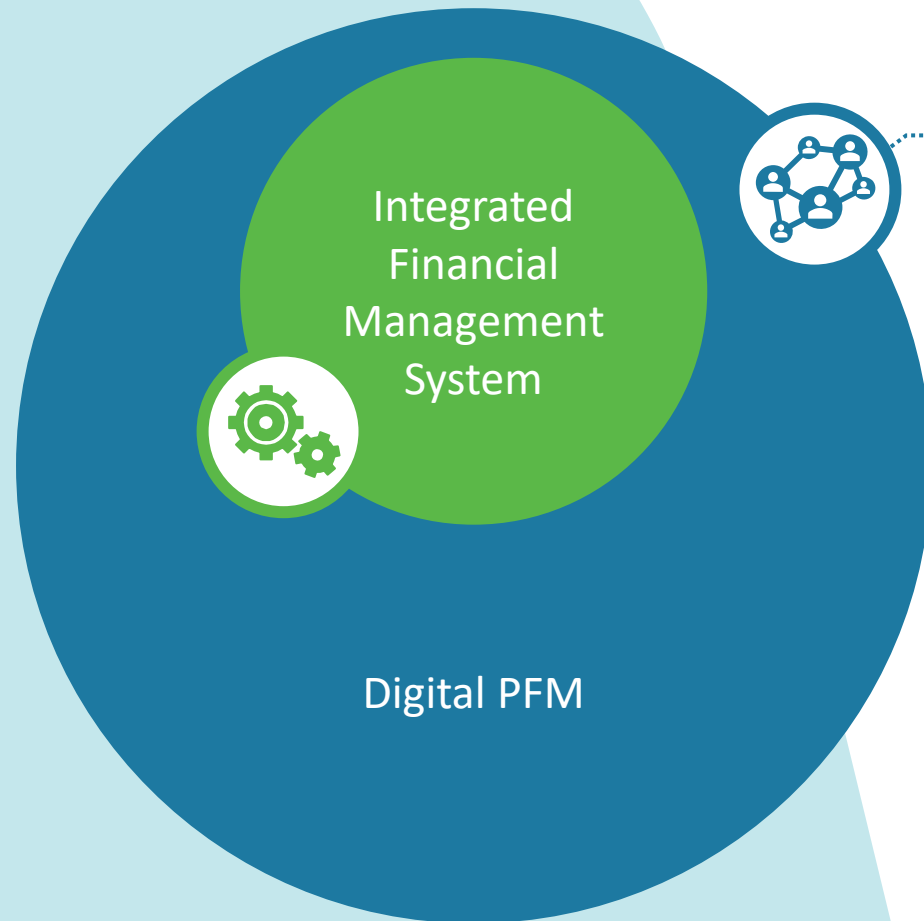
Focus of Country Investigations: what makes reforms work?



Through 5 country case studies, we seek to identify common features of a successful digital reform across 6 or more areas:



We are interested not just in iFMIS experience, but any digital reform that the MOF has been part of



- Ways the MOF has incorporated line-ministry output or outcome data into financial processes, such as for M&E or PBB budgeting processes
- Examples of using technology to engage citizens in aspects of the budgeting processes
- Ways in which expenditure approval or service delivery has happened faster
- Or other digital reforms that resulted in strong improvements in systems or citizen outcomes



Join our scoping
phase of
Enhancing Digital
PFM in Africa!





Help co-design our scoping phase...

- 1** What are your most pressing questions in the digital space?
- 2** What are the main barriers or challenges you have faced when designing or implementing a digital reform?
- 3** Would you like to participate in the country investigations? If so, please write your name and country in the chat



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