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Governance

Digital Government in Seychelles

ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Draft Version

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Introduction

According to Seychelles forthcoming National Development Strategy, ICT development plays a key role in furthering government efficiency vis-à-vis citizens and businesses. At the core of the public sector modernization reforms put forward by the strategy, are continued reforms and investments to support the development of digital government services. In a similar vein, as highlighted by the Department of ICT (DICT)[1] **Institutional Strategic Plan** (2018-2022), the development of digital government services is equally aligned with the country's ongoing reforms on results-based management (RBM). Ultimately, this development provides the information architecture to support decision-making, through data analytics solutions and measurement of public service performance.

Digital government platforms are also a key element to support the Seychellois recent adhesion to the Open Government Partnership (OGP). A multilateral effort that brings together public sector reformers and civil society leaders, the OGP seeks to promote more inclusive, responsive and accountable governments. In this respect, as demonstrated by other OGP member-countries, digital government platforms play an essential role towards the promotion of open government reforms. These include, for instance, the use of digital platforms to support the implementation of freedom of information legislation, and citizen engagement (civic tech) processes.

Digital government platforms also play an essential role given the Seychellois characteristics as a small state and an archipelago. First, by lowering the number of people necessary to handle government procedures, the digitalization of services supports the government's coping with a limited workforce availability. Second, it may promote a more inclusive access to public services, particularly to populations who are in remote areas and islands across the Seychellois territory.

Bearing these considerations in mind, and given the clear aspirations of the Government of Seychelles towards improving its services through digital means, this report provides an analysis of the current use of digital technologies in the public sector, and offers a set of recommendations for more effective use in future. The first section of this report provides context to the state of the Seychellois digital government, and highlights the importance of changes on the way that states currently provide digital services. The second section briefly describes the methodology used in this report. The third section, looks at the strengths,

1 DICT is the Government institution responsible for regulating the broadcasting and telecommunication sector of Seychelles in accordance with the Broadcasting and Telecommunication Act, 2000 (Act 2 of 2000). DICT is also responsible for the implementation of E-Government in Seychelles and serves as the principal technical IT outfit of Government (i.e. the Government CIO & IT department).

weaknesses, opportunities and threats that shape the Seychelles ability to successfully use digital technologies in government. The report then proceeds to a set of recommendations to the Seychellois government. The final section underlines immediate suggestions to the government on how to get started with the implementation of recommendations.

Context

According to the United Nations e-Government Development Index (EGDI), Seychelles figures among the top six countries in Africa with relatively high performance in digital government. In a similar vein, only four countries (Mauritius, South Africa, Tunisia and Seychelles) are in the top fiftieth percentile along with countries that have EGDIs above the world average.

Country	Sub-region	OSI	HCI	TII	EGDI	EGDI Level	2018 Rank
Mauritius	Eastern Africa	0.7292	0.7308	0.5435	0.6678	High	66
South Africa	Southern Africa	0.8333	0.7291	0.4231	0.6618	High	68
Tunisia	Northern Africa	0.8056	0.6640	0.4066	0.6254	High	80
Seychelles	Eastern Africa	0.6181	0.7299	0.5008	0.6163	High	83
Ghana	Western Africa	0.6944	0.5669	0.3558	0.5390	High	101
Morocco	Northern Africa	0.6667	0.5278	0.3697	0.5214	High	110
Cabo Verde	Western Africa	0.4861	0.6152	0.3926	0.4980	Medium	112
Egypt	Northern Africa	0.5347	0.6072	0.3222	0.4880	Medium	114
Rwanda	Eastern Africa	0.7222	0.4815	0.1733	0.4590	Medium	120
Namibia	Southern Africa	0.4514	0.5850	0.3299	0.4554	Medium	121

Yet, the metrics often used to understand governments' use of ICTs do not adequately capture the nature of the actions and interactions that are involved in the use of new technologies. This data, whilst helpful, conceals a more human story, a story of what it is like to be a citizen living in a modern state.

The world is now full of digitally-enabled services. From Google Maps to Tripadvisor, to AirSeychelles.com, the vast majority of the public now regularly uses digitally-enabled tools to solve problems or seize opportunities in ways that are fundamentally different to the way those problems were solved just twenty five years ago. As these services have become widespread, the public's expectation of what is 'normal' has shifted. It is now normal for citizens to get their news on a phone, rather than reading it in a newspaper. It is normal to plan and

arrange leisure trips and holidays through a variety of online tools, without ever speaking to another human.

The speed at which the meaning of 'normal' has changed is challenging for institutions, especially those that are not habituated to changing their services and ways of working rapidly. But keeping up with people's expectations of 'normal' is extraordinarily important for organisations that wish to have vibrant futures: when people feel that a service is not 'normal', it is very easy to conclude that the institutions that offers the service must be 'broken' or 'not fit for purpose'.

No government wishes to end up in a situation where its citizens conclude that the services and experiences that are offered are 'less good than expected'. Not only does this represent a failure of service delivery, it is likely to undermine trust in government itself. It is therefore vital that the Government of Seychelles takes a variety of steps to make sure that the services it offer meet, and, where possible, exceed, the public's expectations of what it will be like to interact with us.

Methodology

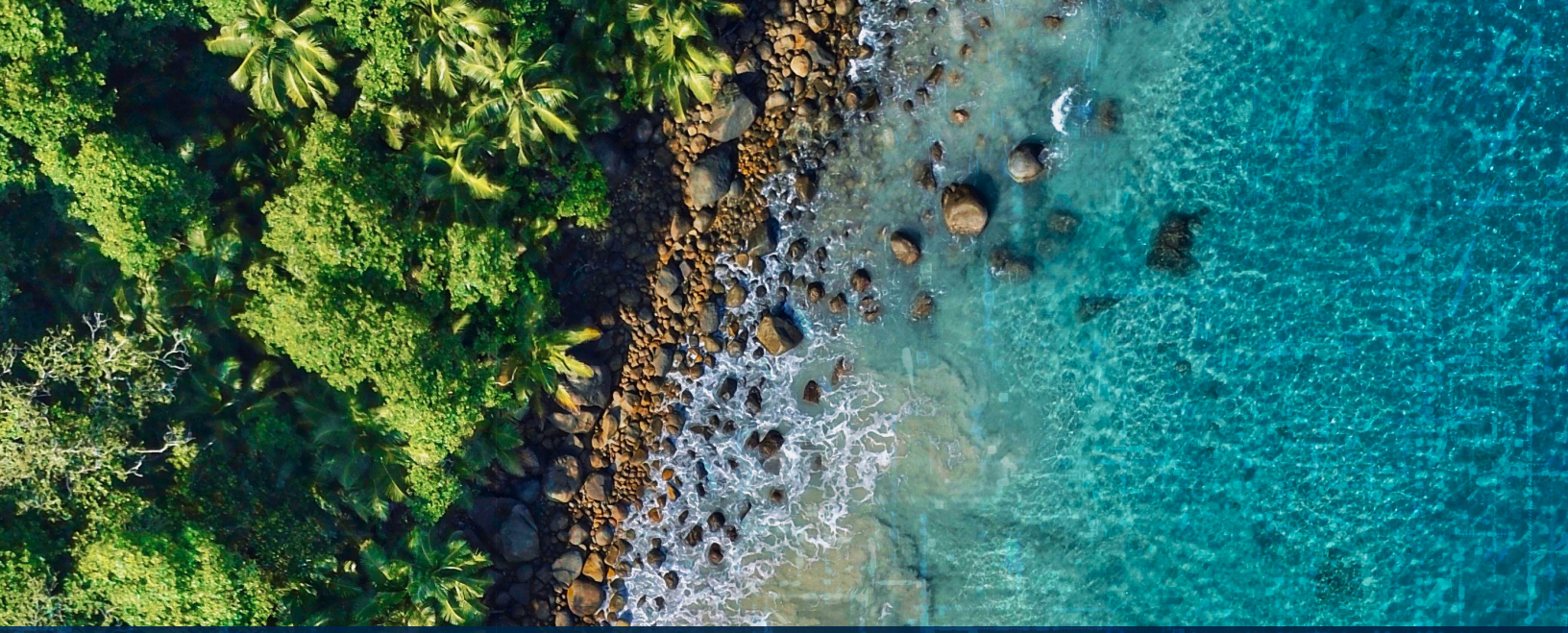
The authors of this report conducted a series of interviews with government staff and private sector actors. To make answers across stakeholders comparable, the authors used semi-structured interviews. The focus of the interviews was on the current uses of technology by the government, and on its aspirations for the future. Interviewees included representatives from the following institutions:

Office of the President of the Republic	Social Protection Agency
DICT	Seychelles Postal Services
Economic Planning Department	National Tender Board
Seychelles Planning Authority	Ministry of Education
Seychelles Revenue Commission	Department of Business Entrepreneurship
Business Register	Department of Investment
Seychelles Licensing Authority	Seychelles Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Department of Immigration and Civil Status	Seychelles Bar Association
Seychelles Investment Board	Kokonet
Seychelles Central Bank	National Institute of Science, Technology and Innovation

The authors also held numerous conversations with members of the general population. These conversations, less formal and structured than the interviews with the government, were meant to capture citizens' nuanced experience as users of public services.

Complementary to these interviews, the authors conducted desktop research and analysis of official documentation provided by the government. Part of the desktop analysis was dedicated to a rapid assessment of the user experience of digital services provided by the government, in an attempt to assess—although superficially—the standard "user journey" of digitalized public content and services.

Building on the data collected, the authors conducted a SWOT analysis, in order to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats related to the improvement of digital government services in the Seychelles. This analysis provides the insights that inform the recommendations and next steps included in the concluding sections of the report.



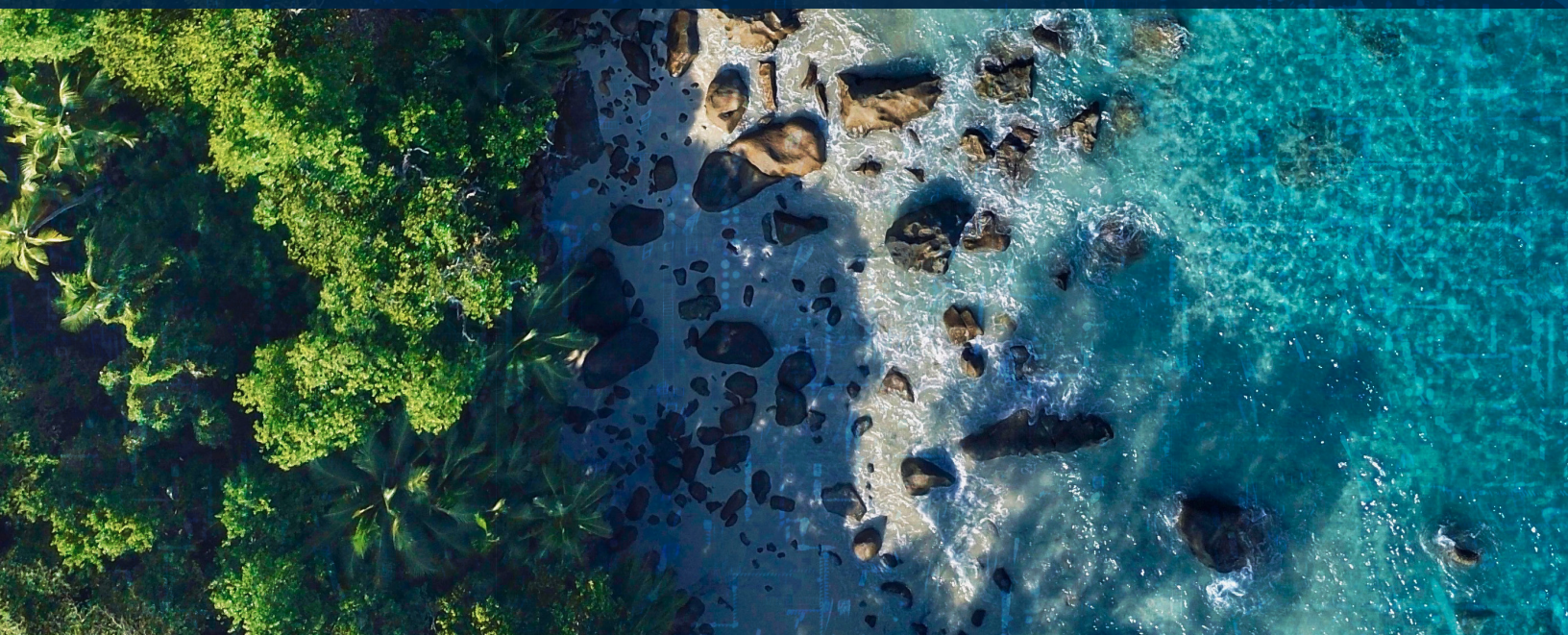
SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS

WEAKNESSES

OPPORTUNITIES

THREATS



STRENGTHS

Digital technologies are being widely used. The great majority of key government services do use at least one digital system to enable their delivery. There are very few services that are entirely paper-dependent. The systems that are used are normally database-driven applications that allow public servants to process and award applications of various kinds, from building permits to customs slips. This baseline is what helps Seychelles feature towards the top of the United Nations e-Government Development Index, for African countries.

There is a fundamental core of in-house technical capacity. The systems deployed within government ministries have most often been built in house by specialists at the Department of Information and Communication Technology (DICT). One key strength of the Government of Seychelles is that it has DICT represents a solid foundation for future development. It is an advantage that the government has over others that do not have such a core to build upon.

The National Identity Numbers system. Unlike many countries, Seychelles has a comprehensive identity database, with cards that are widely used and widely held. Wide use of and public support for such a system is a key asset for making easy-to-use systems in future.

There is a considerable amount of other government data that is already digitised. Many nations face an extensive process of migrating basic administrative data from paper into databases. Due to the number of digitally enabled internal systems, much of this data has already been digitised and structured. Whilst this was done to help deliver individual services, it is an advantage since it creates a potentially wider platform of data to build other services upon.

WEAKNESSES

An inward-looking service design culture. Whereas performing digital services can only be delivered by organisations that focus relentlessly on understanding and empathising with the users, the standard working style of many departments is best described as inward-looking. The focus on internal stakeholders, especially 'key decision-makers' has led to an expectation that new projects will be delivered for and judged by internal decision makers, not citizens and businesses. This leads to a disproportionate focus on the development of digital solutions to address internal needs—or internal perceptions of external needs—whose linkage to the provision of better public services is often unclear or unachieved.

Not enough data is being captured on usage of and satisfaction with government services. The government has limited capacity to identify and prioritize digital solutions that would best serve citizens and businesses. There is a notable absence of good quality data to

signal if there is a real problem with a service from an end-user perspective, or which services—once streamlined and digitalized—would best address users' needs. The last survey2 conducted to explore this question—although focused on satisfaction only—was done several years ago, and suffered from methodological weaknesses. There is a significant knowledge gap between the governments' own assessment of what services are a priority and service users' everyday experience, which may be concealing problems and opportunities that are salient to Seychellois citizens and businesses.

Too many services require citizens to make physical trips and fill in paper forms. Whilst most government services do use digital systems to help them operate, the standard experience for citizens remains a mixture of paper forms and face-to-face meetings. The technology that does exist is mainly used by public servants, who then supply services to the public. This intermediation between citizens and the services they are trying to access slows access to systems and makes more travel required.

Online services exist, but have not been designed around user needs. It is possible to apply for a range of key government services online, such as the registration of a new business. However the user experience of these services is often poor quality, which is contributing to an overall very low take-up of digital services by the public. As highlighted above, one particular problem is the lack of customer journeys that can be started and completed entirely online (end-to-end). Too many services allow citizens to start online, but then end up with a physical trip to a government office, and submissions of paper forms.

The low offer of end-to-end services can be partially attributed to two factors: digital payments and digital signatures. Several government services (e.g. taxes, business registration) require payments or signatures. However, the absence of platforms that allow for users to easily pay or sign online, constitute a hurdle for the further development of an important number of services.[3]

The limited end-to-end digitalization of processes associated with challenges in user-centricity has led to a low uptake of digital services. For instance, out of 13 digital services provided by the government, only three of them has an uptake above 50%. Amongst the ten remaining services, the average uptake is 3.2% points, with five of them with zero uptake, as illustrated below:

2 "Public Service Delivery Survey 2014", published by National Bureau of Statistics in collaboration with the Department of Public Administration (January 2015).

3 It should be noted however that the team has been unable to get official data on: i) the exact number of services that require payments and/or signatures, and ii) whether these requirements – particularly signatures – are the fruit of legal requirements and, if so, fit-for-purpose vis-à-vis due diligence and security requirements.

E-Service Usage Statistics

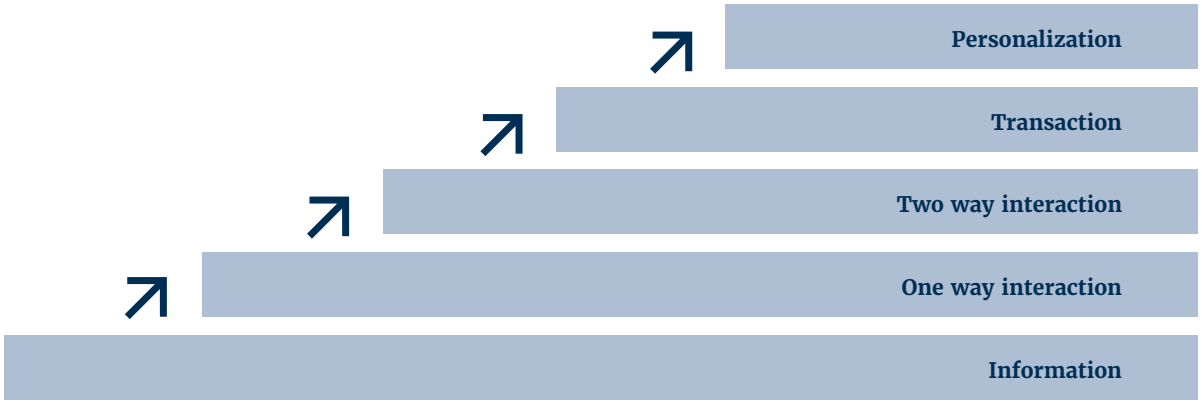
No.	e-Service	Service Provider (Ministry , Department , Agency)	Short Description	Percentage of use for 2017
1	IE Permit	Ministry of Finance, Trade and Economic Planning	IE Permit is an online service which allow you to apply for an import or export permit	53.6%
2	Planning Authority E-Service	Planning Authority	E-Service to lodge planning application	59%
3	Taxation e-service	Seychelles Revenue Commission	E-service to lodge income tax by organisations	3%
4	Business Licensing E-Service	Seychelles Licensing Authority	E-Service to lodge business license	0%
5	Taxation - BAS	Seychelles Revenue Commission	E-service to lodge business activity statement	3%
6	Road Licensing E-Service	Seychelles Licensing Authority	E-service to lodge vehicle and driving licenses	0%
7	My First Job Claim Service	Employment Department	My First Job Claim Service	20%
8	Automatic Exchange Of Information	Seychelles Revenue Commission	The e-service will allow Financial Institutions to upload FATCA and CRS files to the Government electronically	100%
9	VTS e-service	Seychelles Land Transport Agency	Booking appointment for vehicle testing	0%
10	Social Welfare Services	Agency for Social Protection	Application for Reimbursement of Leaves	0%
11	Taxation - VAT	Seychelles Revenue Commission	E-service to lodge value tax return	3%
12	Taxation- PS	Seychelles Revenue Commission	E-service to lodge Income and Non-Monetary Benefits Tax	3%
13	Taxation - YTR	Seychelles Revenue Commission	E-service to lodge yearly tax return	0%

The lack of high quality digitalized services is costing Seychelles citizens and government unnecessary time and resources. There are some key public services that are currently primarily obtained by visiting offices in person. Where these services are used by a lot of citizens the time consumed could have a real impact on the economy. For example, we estimate that each year up to 155 working years are lost in travel and queuing time to pay for gas and electricity. This one example could be as much as 0.3% of the working time consumed within the entire economy. In a similar vein, about 1500 paper landing cards are daily typed-up by immigration officers.[4]

Limited attention is given to the provision of information as a public service in itself. One of the most basic functions of digital government platforms is to provide actionable information concerning routine interaction with public services. Nevertheless, if most Seychellois public services require some type of in-person interaction, limited information related to these interactions are provided online to public service users (e.g. steps and documentation required, offices opening hours). This leads to a "skipping stages" pattern of provision of digital services, in which online transactions with governments are the focus of attention, prior to the appropriate provision of online information.

4 The time-savings that could be enabled with passport control procedures (kiosks) is estimated to range between 33% and 45%.

ILLUSTRATIVE STAGES OF DIGITAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES PROVISION



OPPORTUNITIES

Allowing citizens to pay for more services online. As underlined earlier, one current complaint heard from service users is that they sometimes start online, with the user filling in information electronically in their own home. However, before the process is over, it turns out that the citizen then often has to carry out a physical trip to a government office or a bank to make a payment. Integrating payment systems smoothly into the online user journey would prevent these trips, and reduce manual workloads within government and banks. The government has already taken steps towards making payments for services more widespread, which brings to the issue of digital identification.

Offering citizens a useful digital identity service. With a high quality national identity register already in place, Seychelles is well placed to develop a digital identity system that could be used to a) make online transactions quicker and easier and b) facilitate the growth in new digital businesses and c) help to reduce fraud and waste. Without a digital identity system, the digital payments system that is already underway will only be able to partly smooth user journeys and the quality of digitally enabled services.

Obtaining clarity about relative service improvement priorities for decision-makers. Currently, it is hard to know which services, if upgraded, would create the most new value for citizens, visitors and businesses. More data and user research about experiences and failure rates would help the Government to prioritise resource allocation.

Giving citizens more usable, attractive online public services. Intensive bursts of user research and design-focused development will enable major steps forward in the usability and

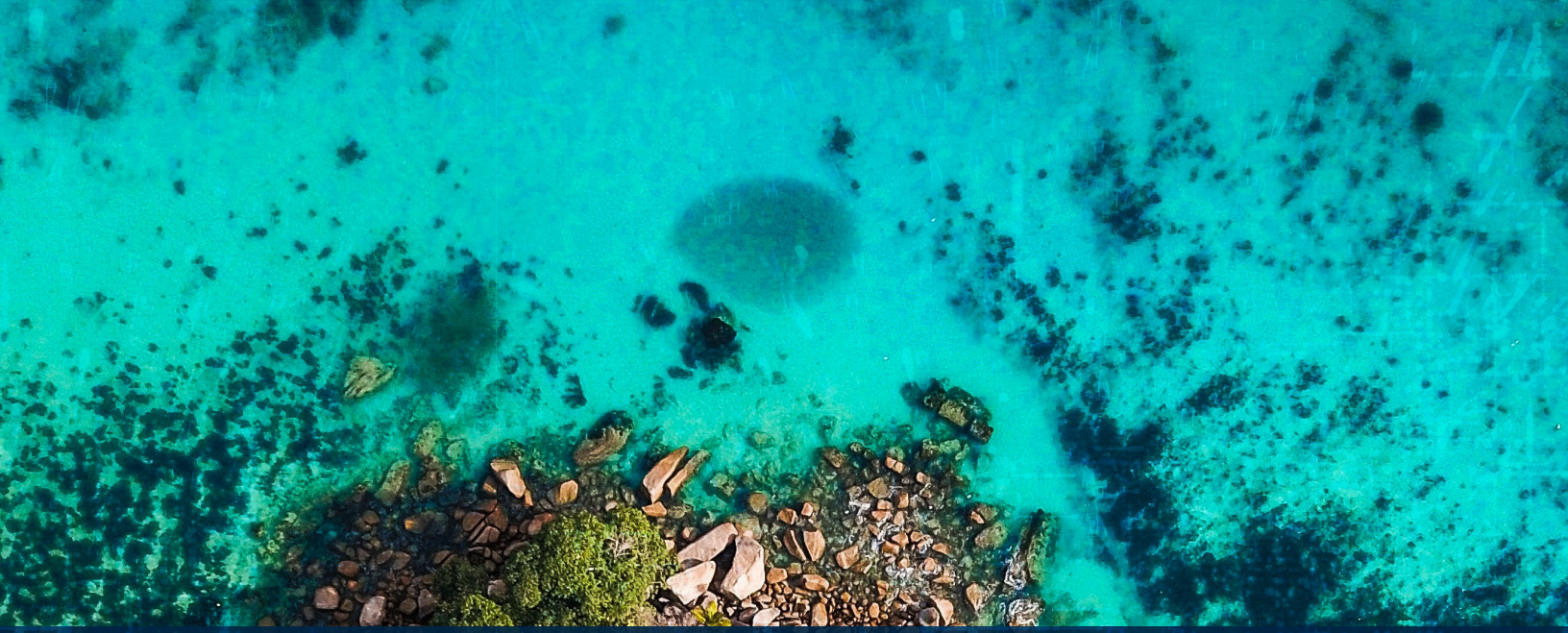
quality of key online services. These will almost certainly boost uptake of services, and ultimately will start to enable cost savings as usage of old channels fail, and they can be scaled down or eliminated entirely.

Seize 'low hanging fruit'. Not every digital service transformation project has to be complex and time-consuming to offer real value to the public. Relatively simpler exercises, such as alerting citizens to services and benefits that they may not be aware they are eligible for, may create major rewards for citizens and governments alike. In a similar vein, providing easy-to-find information about offline public services may address a sizeable and unidentified demand, particularly while services are not digitalized end-to-end.

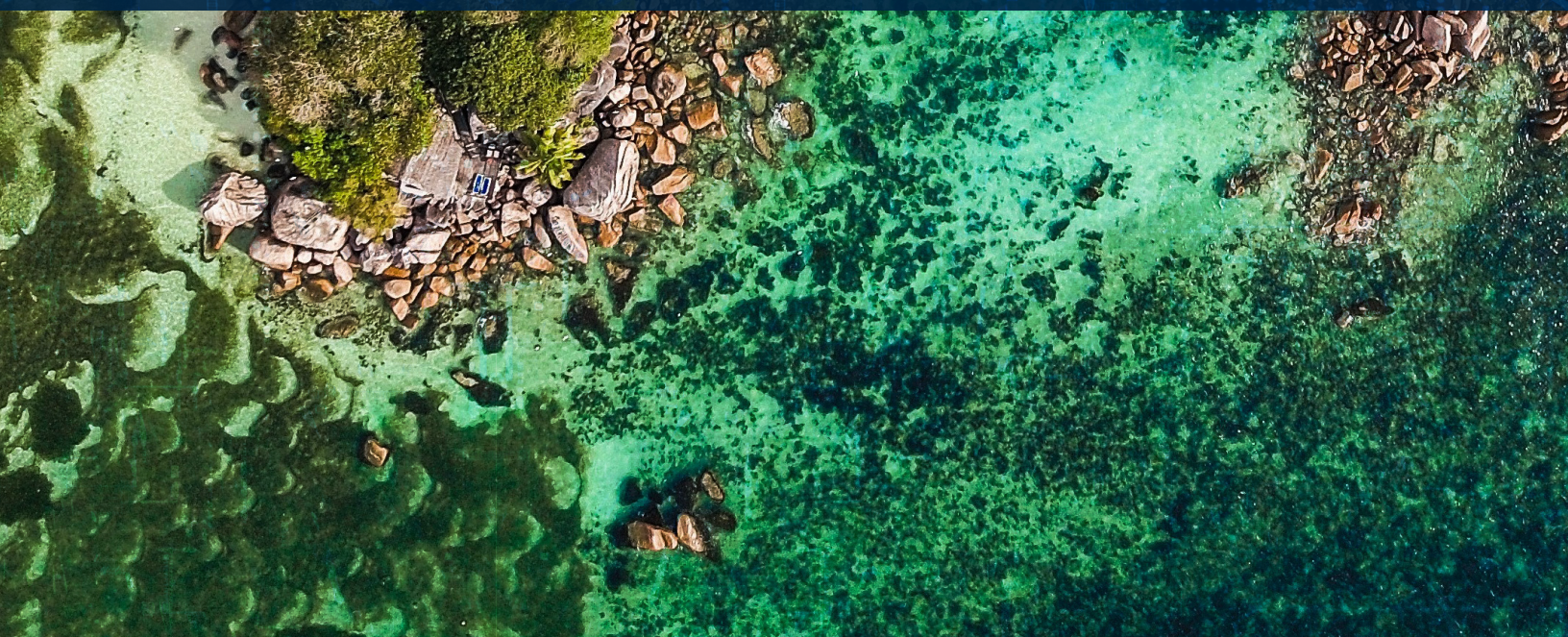
THREATS

Security. All ICT systems are at risk of compromising incidents, driven both from without and within. This threat is exacerbated by a lack of security investment, especially in regular penetration testing.

Too many simultaneous ICT projects with too few resources threatens Seychelles digital reputation, and threatens backlash from the public. DICT currently has over 40 distinct projects it is supposed to deliver for government departments in 2019, with only 15 staff. This ratio, of roughly one technical specialist per two projects, is so far off the international norm that it is contributing substantially to the low quality of online services, and their low usage by citizens and businesses–along with an ever growing dissatisfaction of internal government "clients" of DICT. If the Government of Seychelles cannot start to prioritise projects, putting more resources into fewer, carefully prioritised projects, the overall low quality will eat away at key metrics like ease of doing business, and public confidence in government.



Recommendations



RECOMMENDATION 1
CHANGE DICT'S REMIT TO FOCUS ON CITIZEN-CENTRIC SERVICES

Government services, such as business registration, will not become dramatically more attractive, usable and efficient unless there is a forceful push owned and driven by a specific part of government. Simultaneously, the imminent creation of a separate ICT regulator creates the space for deeper DICT reforms that strengthen its capacity to delivery user-centric digital government services. It is recommended that this push is driven by a renewed DICT, with a changed remit, new powers, and greater capacity to deliver. The new remit should be framed in terms of giving citizens and businesses great quality services, rather than serving internal demands within government.

For illustrative purposes, one possible wording of a new remit could be, "To ensure that people living in or visiting Seychelles have access to public services that meet their needs, and their expectations".

RATIONALE FOR REMIT CHANGE

Departments that have been delivering services in a certain way for a long period of time tend to find it difficult to rapidly make changes to the way they work, especially without external stimulus.

The current development approach from departments is expert-driven: individual domain specialists within departments decide on required services, and then commission DICT to build systems to enable them. There is a substantial gap between this way of working an user-driven, design-led iterative development, which requires substantial investment of time and skills in understanding user needs, followed by an iterative process of building better and better prototypes until customers report real satisfaction.

To bridge this gap, it is recommended that the government focuses on a small number of exemplar projects which show how service design and delivery can be done, using a combination of modern skills and modern technology. These exemplars can then be used to build skills in other departments, and more important, change expectations about what normal ways of working are.

The only realistic way of getting a small number of exemplar projects up and running in a timely fashion is to have them driven from a single team that has the right values, and the right skills.

DETAILS OF REMIT CHANGE

DICT should be given a new remit that is strong and clear, but sufficiently brief that it can be widely shared and well understood across government. We therefore recommend a remit that has just a few parts:

1 – A clear mission, such as:

"DICT ensures that people living in or visiting Seychelles have access to public services that meet their needs, and their expectations".

To give some examples from other countries:

"The Canadian Digital Service is focused first and foremost on delivery: building simple, easy to use services directly with federal departments."–Canada

"At the Digital Transformation Agency, we help government improve digital services to make them simple, clear and fast."–Australia.

"18F partners with agencies to improve the user experience of government."–USA

2 – An unambiguous power and responsibility to work with decision-makers in multiple departments to pick shared priorities for the year ahead, included a shared understanding of projects that will have to be delayed or cancelled. This is because without a substantive injection of new resources, DICT simply cannot deliver all the requirements given it by other departments whilst focusing on citizen-centric service delivery. In this perspective, some projects must be delayed, outsourced or cancelled entirely, so that those that matter most to citizens can be delivered to meet citizens' expectations.

3 – A Ministry of Finance backed power to veto spending on technology projects by other departments and ministries.5 This is to prevent departments from procuring technologies that are not likely to meet users needs, or that create other problems such as proprietary vendor lock-in.

5 Leading digital government countries have given their senior digital leaders delegated powers to control or stop spending across departments, in the name of efficiency and quality. This is the case, for instance, for Estonia, United States and United Kingdom. Details on the UK process can be found here.

4 – A mandate to gather and analyse data on the relative priority of services that need overhauling. Currently there is no formal mechanism to know that Service X is causing more problems for people and businesses than Service Y. By building a permanent research capacity, DICT will be able to learn which service improvements will yield the greatest value for Seychellois individuals and citizens,and will be able to share that knowledge with ministries and the public.

RECOMMENDATION 2
SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASE DICT'S SKILLS AND CAPACITY.

Good quality, digitally enabled services that people like to use cannot be built by single individuals working on several projects at once. As is extensively documented, good services can only be built by teams of individuals who have different but complementary skills, working together in carefully coordinated and iterative ways.6

Currently DICT delivers more projects every year than it has members of staff, with over 40 projects in the current build pipeline, but fewer than 20 technical specialists to deliver them. This means the ratio of projects:people is around 2:1. Best practice from other countries suggest this should be closer to 1:3 or even 1:10. The current ratio—2:1 -needs to be changed, which can only be achieved by two mechanisms:

- Reducing the total number of projects worked on every year

- Increasing the total staff7

Because budget and labour market talent are finite, we suggest that DICT follows both of these options—cutting yearly project counts and simultaneously increasing the number and diversity of specialists working on them.

POSSIBLE STAFF ALLOCATIONS AND RATIOS PER PROJECT

It is suggested that each project that DICT wishes to deliver at an acceptable quality has at least 6 months uninterrupted full time availability of:

- A product owner/manager
- A senior software developer
- A senior designer
- A domain knowledge specialist borrowed from the department being supported

6 See, for instance, When The Strategy is Delivery (Greenway et al. 2019).

7 This means directly employing public servants who have skills not only on computer programming, but in other core areas such as digital design, agile project management, user research and testing. Beyond improving the quality of digital services delivered, such approach has the benefit to strengthen DICT's ability to deal with wider digital policy questions – including when to outsource or not technological development, exploring the tradeoffs associated with each option. Such approach should also foster the development of data and webservices for third party applications, crowding-in private sector investment and strengthening the local digital economy.

If DICT aims to deliver 10 quality projects within a 12 month period it should have a total staff of at least 20, calculated as:

Calculation: 10 projects x 4 person teams x 0.5 (for 6 out of 12 months) = 20 people.

If DICT aims to deliver as many projects as it does now (over 40), in a single year, it would need a much greater number still, namely 80 people.

Calculation: 40 projects x 4 person teams x 0.5 = 80 people.

Given the current budget of DICT, and given the size of the entire Seychelles technical specialist population, we recommend working hard to limit the number of simultaneous projects, at least for the first year.

RECOMMENDATION 3
PICK A SMALL NUMBER OF EXEMPLAR PROJECTS AND START TO DELIVER THEM IN A NEW WAY.

One of the recurrent issues on public sector (and digital) reforms refers to the difficulties associated with changes in the way services are delivered. Consequently, it is predictable that parts of the wider government outside DICT will almost certainly not see or understand the rationale for working differently, or the rationale for DICT's new remit, until it is shown the superior outputs of this new approach.

It is therefore important that DICT is able to start to deliver visibly superior outputs as soon as possible. In order to do this it should select a very small number of exemplar projects which it can start to work on as soon as the relevant skills are assembled. The ideal exemplar projects share certain properties:

- They relieve an annoyance or a problem for a high number of service users, an annoyance which any reasonably minded observer can empathise with.
- They reveal user behaviours or expectations that were not previously known or understood by government, but that are important to people.
- They are fundamentally quick to fix, or at least to improve upon the status quo.
- Initial exemplar projects should be chosen after a time-limited period of user research and data analysis. This is because whilst the projects must be user-driven, the time required to examine and weigh up feedback across all public services is far too great to allow for swift action, and clear, visible delivery.

To illustrate potential projects based on a limited research carried out by the authors, possible contenders could include:

- Opening times of popular services—knowing when the medical clinic is or isn't open is a regular problem for citizens everywhere.
- Access to bus timetables—bus transport is critical to Seychellois citizens, but the times of forthcoming buses cannot easily be called up on the phones that citizens mostly carry with them.
- Booking yearly vehicle testing—all drivers need to get their car tested, smoothing this process will reduce inconvenience right across the country.

- Smoothing the customer experience for citizens receiving overseas packages through the post office—a huge amount of goods are now purchased online, but the experience of getting them to a home or a business is far from smooth, especially compared to the benchmark experience in other countries.
- Paying for gas and electricity—paying for this service is vital and non-optional, and our calculations suggest that the physical trips are costing the Seychelles citizens and economy and unacceptable amount of forfeit time.
- More helpful messages sent to Social Protection Agency's beneficiaries protection beneficiaries.

RECOMMENDATION 4
WRITE AND ADOPT A SET OF PRINCIPLES TO GUIDE PUBLIC SERVICE OVERHAUL.

Many governments that have taken major steps forward with digitally enabled public services in recent years have, as part of this work, codified their principles and values in simply, clear, public documents.

These exist in various countries including:

- The USA
- Canada
- Australia
- Italy

Overleaf we show two sets of principles, from the governments of the USA and UK.

The primary function of these principles or value statement is to provide an asset within government to overcome the inertia that can lead to new projects being delivered in the same way as old ones. They provide a framework for public servants to lean upon, and standards for the public to reference. They also represent a sign that a government has joined the unofficial club of international governments that are making these kinds of user-focused commitments as statements of intent. This increases the likelihood of accessing more peer support from governments around the world.

Once DICT has increased its capacity, it should develop a set of digital service principles, in conjunction with colleagues and stakeholders, and publish them both online and offline, as a form of aide memoire and inspiration.

The USA

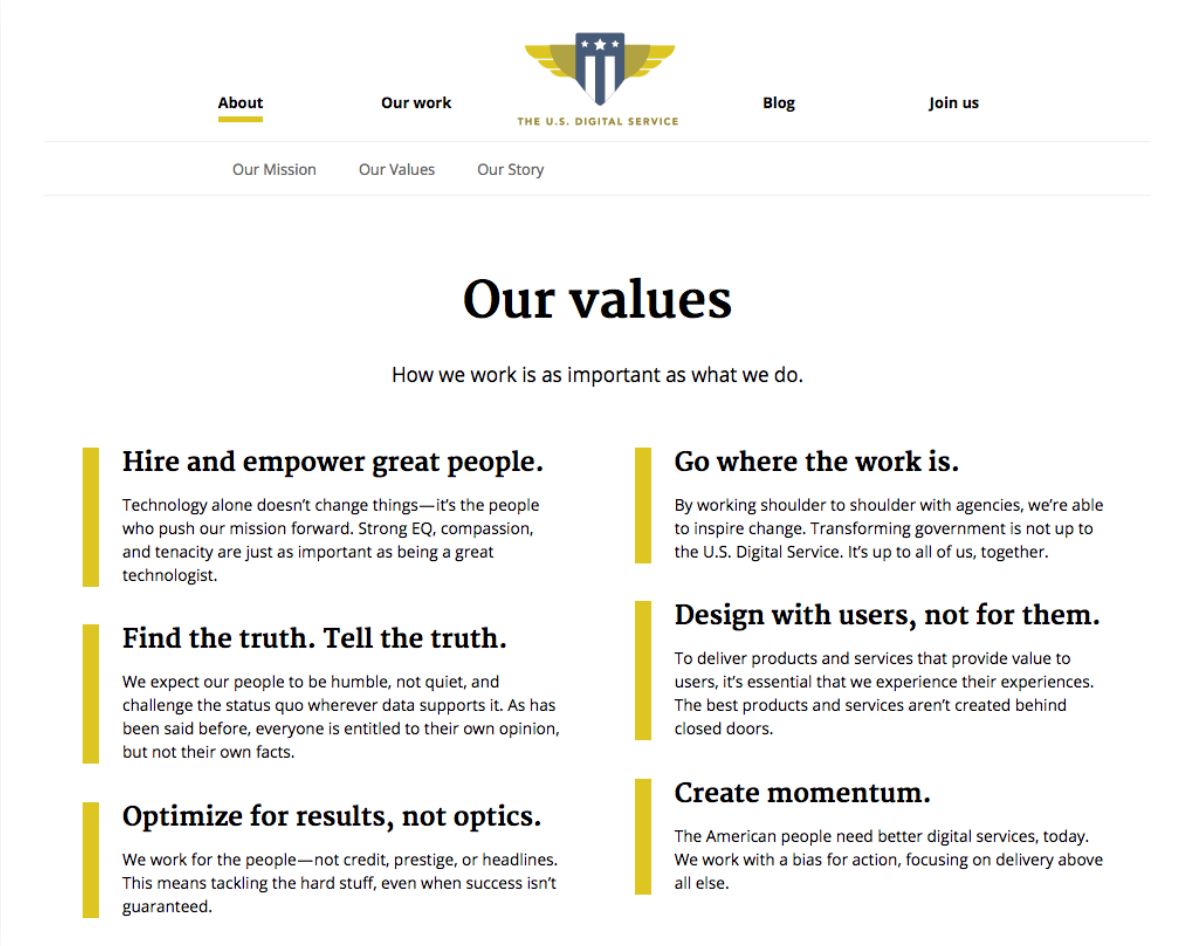
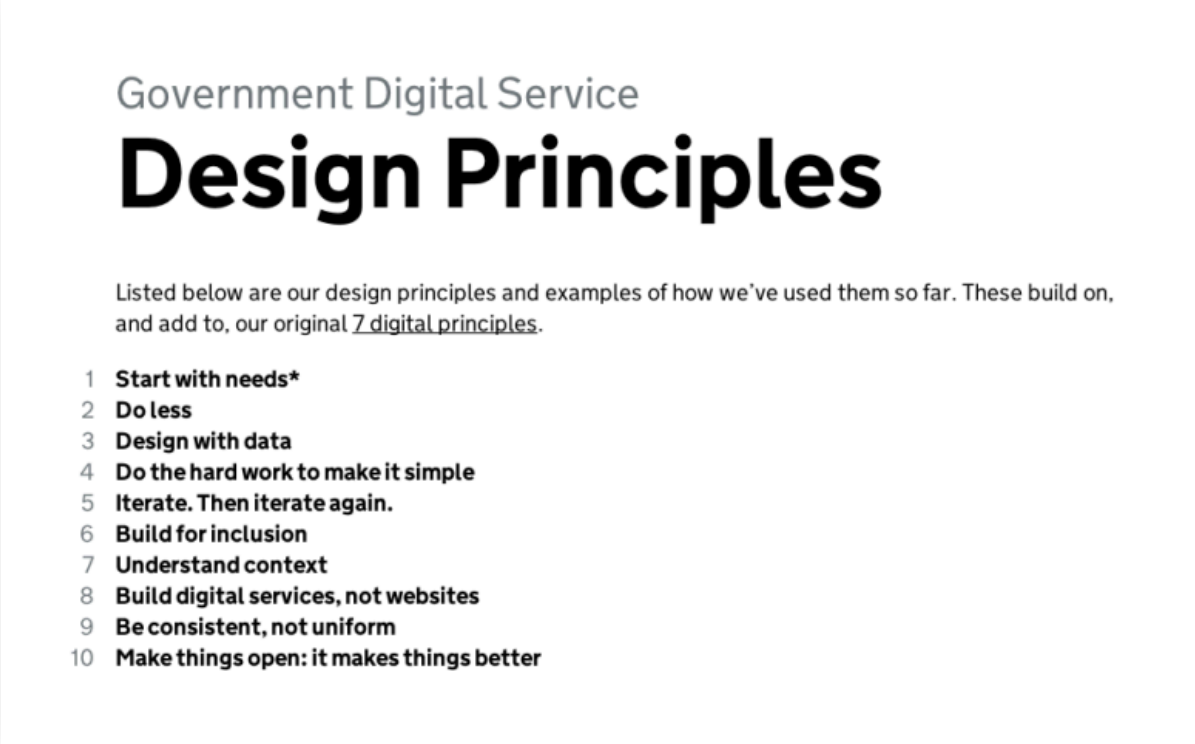


Fig 1: The statement of values from the United States Digital Service

The UK



Government Digital Service

Design Principles

Listed below are our design principles and examples of how we've used them so far. These build on, and add to, our original 7 digital principles.

1. **Start with needs***
2. **Do less**
3. **Design with data**
4. **Do the hard work to make it simple**
5. **Iterate. Then iterate again.**
6. **Build for inclusion**
7. **Understand context**
8. **Build digital services, not websites**
9. **Be consistent, not uniform**
10. **Make things open: it makes things better**

Fig 2: The UK Government's Digital Service Design Principles

RECOMMENDATION 5
MOVE TO A SINGLE DOMAIN

We recommend that the Seychelles government nominates a single web domain as the official 'Website of the government' and migrates all citizen-facing services to sit beneath that domain, with content authored and published on a single web publishing system. In doing this it would be copying the UK, Argentina, Ontario, and Peru, to name but a few.

Different ministries within the Government currently operate about 30 separate websites, under about 30 separate contracts with web design agencies.

By moving to a single domain for different ministries, the government could achieve several positive outcomes in one go.

1 – Citizens should not have to know the structure of government to get services. Whilst ministries need to arrange the business of government into manageable units for internal process reasons, there is no positive reason that citizens should have to know about the machinery of government to access services. A single domain would eliminate the need to know which bit of government provides which service, making services more accessible and increasing their online uptake.

2 – Reduce contract inefficiency. The Seychellois government currently handles 30 contracts for MDAs websites. 30 contract relationships means 30 sets of negotiations, 30 sets of contracts management, 30 payments. A single publication system that colleagues from across government could publish content to would be more efficient.

3 – Enforcement of quality standards. Currently there is no mechanism to ensure that a ministry produces online information or services at a minimally acceptable standard. By having a unified system, unified quality standards can be adopted, enforced through gateway reviews.

In order to overcome inertia in departments, DICT could be given various powers and incentives, which include:

- A budget to dispense to departments to pay for staff whose role would be to update content on the single domain government website.
- Specialist assistance supplied by DICT could help colleagues in other departments to understand the value of publishing.

RECOMMENDATION 6

BUILD A FULL DIGITAL IDENTITY SYSTEM ON TOP OF THE CURRENT DATA

Even organisations with high quality multi-disciplinary teams can struggle to build truly usable services if citizens have no easy, digital way of proving their identity.

The Government of Seychelles already has an impressively complete pre-digital identity system that is widely used and understood. Its key limitation is that it cannot be used to prove a user's identity when using a digital service online.

We recommend expanding upon the current system so that people have an online variant of their identity, as well as the traditional card. There are now numerous government-used identity systems used worldwide, and the Government of Seychelles would have its pick of pre-tested systems, instead of having to innovate too extensively itself.

This recommendation is different from others in this list in that it would almost certainly require legislation to bring about, and needs to be accompanied with a review of legislation and practices around preventing abuse of personal data by individuals with privileged access.

Without a matching identity system, the current investment in online payments will not yield the returns that the government is hoping. Individuals will be able to pay online, but not prove their identity, which will quite often lead to them having to continue to visit physical government offices.

RECOMMENDATION 7

DEVELOP GUIDELINES AND PRINCIPLES TO HELP WORK OUT WHERE TO OUTSOURCE, AND THEN DEDICATE A TEAM TO MIGRATING KEY SYSTEMS THAT WOULD BENEFIT.

Finding the right balance between which parts of a government's technology estate to keep in house, and which to out-source is an ongoing and never-ending process.

Instead of carrying out a single review and a single adjustment, the Government of Seychelles should put in place a facility to constantly review the question, and be in a position to steadily make changes over time.

This function should be incorporated with DICT, under the guise of a senior technology leader with a remit and a capacity to constantly evaluate.

We do not recommend that services are outsourced or insourced in projects solely dedicated to this end: that would mean making time-consuming technology changes that would not have a direct benefit to the public. Instead we recommend that every time a service is built, upgrade or overhauled, part of the change process is to review which parts need to be in-house and which are safe to outsource.

We believe it is highly likely, as Seychelles get their second fibre connection to the wider world, that many services will be built by in-house teams but using an increasing number of outsourced 'software as a service' systems. Again, the right way to make these decisions is during the overhaul process that is focused on user benefits.

NEXT STEPS

There are a few immediate next steps we would recommend to the government, if it wishes to explore the ideas in this report further:

1 – DICT colleagues, and possibly those of other critical departments are encouraged to start exchanges with 'Digital Service' teams in other countries, such as the US, UK, Canada, Australia, Argentina, Peru, Estonia and Italy.

2 – DICT should make key senior hires for skills that it entirely lacks, such as user research, content design, interaction design and product management. By heading heads or directors of this roles, it will both gain immediate delivery capacity, but more important will gain the ability to plan and recruit successfully.

3 – DICT should develop a short term action plan (6 months) that, in particular, detail how it will go about redefining its remit, gaining the political support it will require for this remit, and how it will go about changing its skills mix.

4 – DICT should conduct an Identification Management Systems Assessment, in order to assess the current identity management infrastructure and single out next steps for the establishment of a nationwide digital identity system.

5 - DICT should use the RBM-RAS survey questionnaire to start building knowledge about MDAs services (e.g. number of users, frequency of interactions), which would be the first step towards the elaboration of a government services catalogue.

Appendix 1

E-Service Usage Statistics

No.	e-Service	Service Provider (Ministry , Department , Agency)	Short Description	Percentage of use for 2017
1	IE Permit	Ministry of Finance, Trade and Economic Planning	IE Permit is an online service which allow you to apply for an import or export permit	53.6%
2	Planning Authority E-Service	Planning Authority	E-Service to lodge planning application	59%
3	Taxation e-service	Seychelles Revenue Commission	E-service to lodge income tax by organisations	3%
4	Business Licensing E-Service	Seychelles Licensing Authority	E-Service to lodge business license	0%
5	Taxation - BAS	Seychelles Revenue Commission	E-service to lodge business activity statement	3%
6	Road Licensing E-Service	Seychelles Licensing Authority	E-service to lodge vehicle and driving licenses	0%
7	My First Job Claim Service	Employment Department	My First Job Claim Service	20%
8	Automatic Exchange Of Information	Seychelles Revenue Commission	The e-service will allow Financial Institutions to upload FATCA and CRS files to the Government electronically	100%
9	VTS e-service	Seychelles Land Transport Agency	Booking appointment for vehicle testing	0%
10	Social Welfare Services	Agency for Social Protection	Application for Reimbursement of Leaves	0%
11	Taxation - VAT	Seychelles Revenue Commission	E-service to lodge value tax return	3%
12	Taxation- PS	Seychelles Revenue Commission	E-service to lodge Income and Non-Monetary Benefits Tax	3%
13	Taxation - YTR	Seychelles Revenue Commission	E-service to lodge yearly tax return	0%

Appendix 2

Government of Seychelles Digital Survey

Please answer these questions to help us to understand more about the use of digital services in Seychelles

What is the name of your ministry?

Your answer

What is your email address?

Your answer

What is the service run by your department that has the most external users? This could be citizens, businesses, non-citizens or a mix of all three.

Your answer

When people use this most-well-used service, how much of the service can they complete using a web browser, without leaving their own home/office?

- ○ The entire process can be started and completed online, in a browser.
- ○ People can start the process online, but to finish it they must visit an office and/or post some papers.
- ○ People can learn about the service through a web browser, but they must visit an office and/or use paper forms to complete it.
- ○ People have to carry out the entire process on paper, or entirely via a visit to an office.
- ○ Other:

How many people use your most popular service? Please share any key data you have on the numbers of users, who the users are, success rates, or satisfaction.

Your answer

Now please tell us the names of other services you offer, and where possible tell us how many people use each one (preferably usage per year).

Your answer

Please tell us what the most common complaints are from customers, for your most popular services. You do not have to perform data analysis - just an impression will do.

Your answer

If your ministry has a website, please tell us how many unique visits it has per month. If you can't get this data, please tell us too.

Your answer

Please tell us about the process by which new or modified content or services gets added to your ministry website. Please be as clear as you can about which roles are involved.

Your answer

Does your ministry directly employ any digital staff, i.e web managers, software developers, designers, product managers, user researchers or similar? If so, how many and in what roles?

Your answer

Do you have any significant technology systems that are outsourced to external suppliers. If so, what are they?

Your answer

SUBMIT

Never submit passwords through Google Forms.

Digital Government in Seychelles

ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS