

Implementation of Integrated Financial Management Solution (IFMS) for Malawi Local Government



“IFMS HELPS MALAWI GOVERNMENT IN INTEGRATING ITS FINANCIAL SYSTEMS, AVOIDING TIME DELAYS AND INCREASES THEIR ANNUAL REVENUE.”

Local Assembly Management



CLIENT:

As of 1996, Malawi was divided into three administrative regions – Northern, Central, and Southern—which were subdivided into 24 districts. The Government of Malawi has 40 Local Assemblies spread across the Country.

The local government provides markets, postal agencies, roads, and, rural watersupplies and exercise control over business premises and the brewing and sale of beer.

The scope to perform informed activities in a short duration of time was totally unlikely as majority of the local assemblies were using mostly manual systems and few disparate accounting and billing systems. It was hard for the management to access the up-to-date view of the business, forming gaps between the various departments which led to disorganized activities causing waste of time and Human resources.

Local assemblies’ financial systems were not integrated, making it difficult for National Local Government Finance Committee to get the information needed to manage local authorities efficiently and effectively. Considerable amount of time was wasted in the process as everything from the purchase order system had to be re-keyed into the accounts payable system.

One of the challenges for the government is managing multiple grants and funds. This can be a complicated process because the grants often run for different time periods and each activity needs to be associated back to the right grant/fund. Indirect and direct costs must also be tracked and reported as such.

Wanting to overcome the process drawbacks and take advantage of a fully integrated system, the government through the office of the Accountant General decided to implement a solution by Microsoft® Certified Partner called Serenic Navigator, a financial management software solution based on the Microsoft Dynamics™ NAV business–management solution.

Implementation of Integrated Financial Management Solution (IFMS) for Malawi Local Government



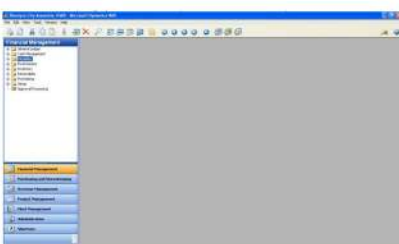
BUSINESS SITUATION:

Malawi Government challenge included the management of multiple grants and funds from various sources. Added to it, was the complication of different time periods and each activity being associated back to the right grant/fund.



SOLUTION:

TBL proposed a unique customized solution for the client, whereby it implemented its product 'Integrated Financial Management Solution' for Malawi Government.



Techno Brain Ltd deployed both functional and technical personnel's to resolve and handle the complexity of the project. Government financial management requirements are complex hence systems that were more flexible and helpful in uniting the disparate modules to manage different operations, such as inventory, grants and revenue are required to simplify the situation.



An outline for the scope of work for the above project was specified by the Project Charter which consisted of functional requirements document [FRD], detailed analysis and customization, capacity building and documentation, system testing and quality assurance, master data upload and system configuration, user acceptance testing and go-live operations and hand-holding support.

Techno Brain had delivered the following modules as part of the solution:

- The General Ledger Chart of Accounts.
- Cash Management.
- Budget management.
- Grants and Funds Management.
- Payables, Procurement and Commitments Management.
- Fixed Assets.
- Inventory and Stores.
- Projects Management.
- Revenue and Property Management - A custom made add on solution localized for local government.
- Fleet Management- A custom made add on solution.

Implementation of Integrated Financial Management Solution (IFMS) for Malawi Local Government



BENEFITS:

Detailed documented step by step procedure of the whole implementation was carried.

Various systems were integrated and the financial system.

Efficiency was improved, time delays were reduced, costs were decreased as a result of this implementation.

Techno Brain believes in involving all the users to deliver the desired product, which required Techno Brain to perform a comprehensive requirements gathering and analysis. The findings and recommendations were documented in the form of a proposed solution which will enhance the operations of the entity. Based on the proposed solution a detailed system design and customization was built with the support of additional agreements and understandings reached with the client during the project management meetings. The customized processes were documented and tested. Different training activities were conducted for various sets of Users. The users were grouped, based on their roles and background including system managers, super users and end users.

The necessary data conversion templates and data-ports were designed and made available to the client. The users then populated the templates and the data so obtained was cleaned, verified and imported into the system. The system was passed on to the users for a detailed examination of the various processes and procedures, to check whether they produce to the expected results. The system was then signed-off as conforming to the expected standard for Live Operations. The system was deployed in live environments. At the start of this phase, users were provided with hand-holding support to help them be conversant with system operations and the system is still on warranty.

In total Malawi Government has over 110 personnel competent in the use of Navigator after the training sessions conducted by Techno Brain.

Implementation of Integrated Financial Management Solution (IFMS) for Malawi Local Government



To protect NLGFC from undue risks and to assure regular communications and agreement as a way forward, Techno Brain followed a phased approach to the project that incorporates regular “go-forward” decision points.

Techno Brain provided a high level documentation which included a description of how the system will work from a business perspective, serve as an ongoing repository for functional requirements and towards changes to systems and business processes from which testing, training materials and procedures can be derived. Techno brain also provided training to key users in setup and operations of the system which included Administration Training, Super Users Training and Process Owners Walk through.

As part of the implementation of the project, servers and PCs were to be setup in five assemblies and NLGFC (National Local Government Finance Council) headquarters. The exercise was done in collaboration with the client personnel to make sure that Techno Brain transferred the required knowledge to the client to enable them manage the environment.

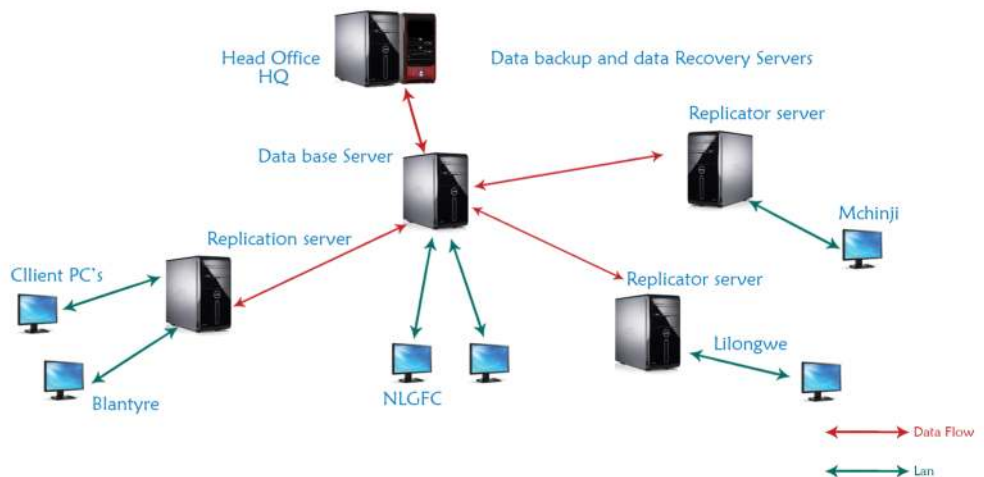
Implementation of Integrated Financial Management Solution (IFMS) for Malawi Local Government



IFMS implementation involved client specific approach as it involved numerous geographical locations, databases.

When Techno Brain started implementing IFMIS, most Local Assemblies were using manual and semi-manual paper-based systems. One of the first tasks therefore was to develop data conversion templates, and train Users on how to populate them. Techno Brain consultants went through the templates with the users to clarify all the necessary areas. Although IFMIS can use a variety of data formats, EXCEL was preferred as it being a commonly used tool that End-Users are conversant with.

Many more value additions such as business growth, improvement in efficiency, performance, competitive advantage, customer satisfaction were achieved by Malawi Government.



Deployment of the System went through the following stages:

User Acceptance Testing

- The UAT covered all the modules to be implemented at the sites and get the acceptance from the client.
- The whole process took 5 days of intensive and detailed walkthrough of the entire system and getting feedback from the client.
- The training was streamlined into functional areas and the users attended depending on their functional roles.
- Immediately after the group was trained, they were advised to go to their respective offices and practice using the test database and TBL consultant offering support.

Go Live

- After the 5 days training, the consultants with the help of the desk officers of the assemblies from NLGFC uploaded the master data and budgets at the assembly server.
- Hand holding phase took 3 weeks.

Implementation of Integrated Financial Management Solution (IFMS) for Malawi Local Government



TECHNOLOGIES

Windows Server
Windows Vista and XP
Office 2007 Standard
Symantec Backup Exec
Anti-Virus End Point
Protection
Serenic Navigator
Microsoft SQL Server 2005

In order to build up capacity within the government, Techno Brain conducted awareness and technical trainings. The awareness training concentrated on the technical aspects of the system and end user support. The attendees were the MISOs from the respective assemblies, NLGFC and Accountant General IT staff. Overall there were around 20 people.

At the end of the training the participants did an exam where all were able to pass. They exhibited good understanding of the system and were able to troubleshoot and create custom reports for various modules to analyze data.

TBL is setting up a help desk and training center in AG office to address the need of the users in Malawi. In addition TBL will also have hotline at its office for all the support required on daily basis and all the consultants are reachable by cell 24 hours a day.

“We have improved reporting and internal control systems especially in Market Operations. Previously, we had a big problem reconciling Revenue Books with collections, but now IFMIS is a big relief”.

Implementation of Integrated Financial Management Solution (IFMS) for Malawi Local Government



For more information about
Techno Brain Solutions and
Services:

Call: 255222113502/2118302

or visit the Web site at:
www.technobrainltd.com.

About Techno Brain Limited



Techno Brain is one of the leading IT Solutions & Training Company in Africa, with operations in Africa, Australia and India. Techno Brain, with almost a decade of experience in the IT industry is a leader in African markets playing a key role in shaping the future of IT in Africa as the company is well positioned to understand the business process, style and ethos of organizations in Africa.

Techno Brain is following Quality Management practices as per the ISO 9001: 2000 norms in the areas of IT System integration, consultancy, custom development and IT education & Training during July 2007.

About Serenic Corporation



Serenic Corporation is a global provider of financial and business management software products that satisfy the unique and sophisticated functionality requirements of non-profits, international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the public sector.

Serenic's own mission includes delivering peace-of-mind and exceptional service to its client and partner communities by building high-quality, innovative and highly functional software solutions.

About Microsoft Microsoft Dynamics

Is a United States-based multinational computer technology corporation that develops, manufactures, licenses, and supports a wide range of software products for computing devices. Headquartered in Redmond, Washington, USA, Microsoft is the developer and distributor of such software as Windows 95, Microsoft Office, DirectX, and numerous other programs and games.