Information systems in PFM
Back-to-basics: capabilities for effective design and utilisation of information systems

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$8 billion spent on FMIS projects and FMIS-related ICT solutions; recording, reporting, information sharing, and data analysis remain suboptimal

What the hell is this IFMIS?

By Lesotho Times — On Jun 11, 2009

JUST what is this IFMIS animal that has caused so much pandemonium in our drinking halls?

Of late Bacchus has been hearing this acronym a lot even from people who have never seen a blackboard in their lives.

It's now the common alibi that some of my boozing mates use to pass the round.

Every time it's their turn to buy booze they start lamenting endlessly about how the system has delayed their salaries or how their payments have been stuck at the treasury because there are problems with the financial programme.

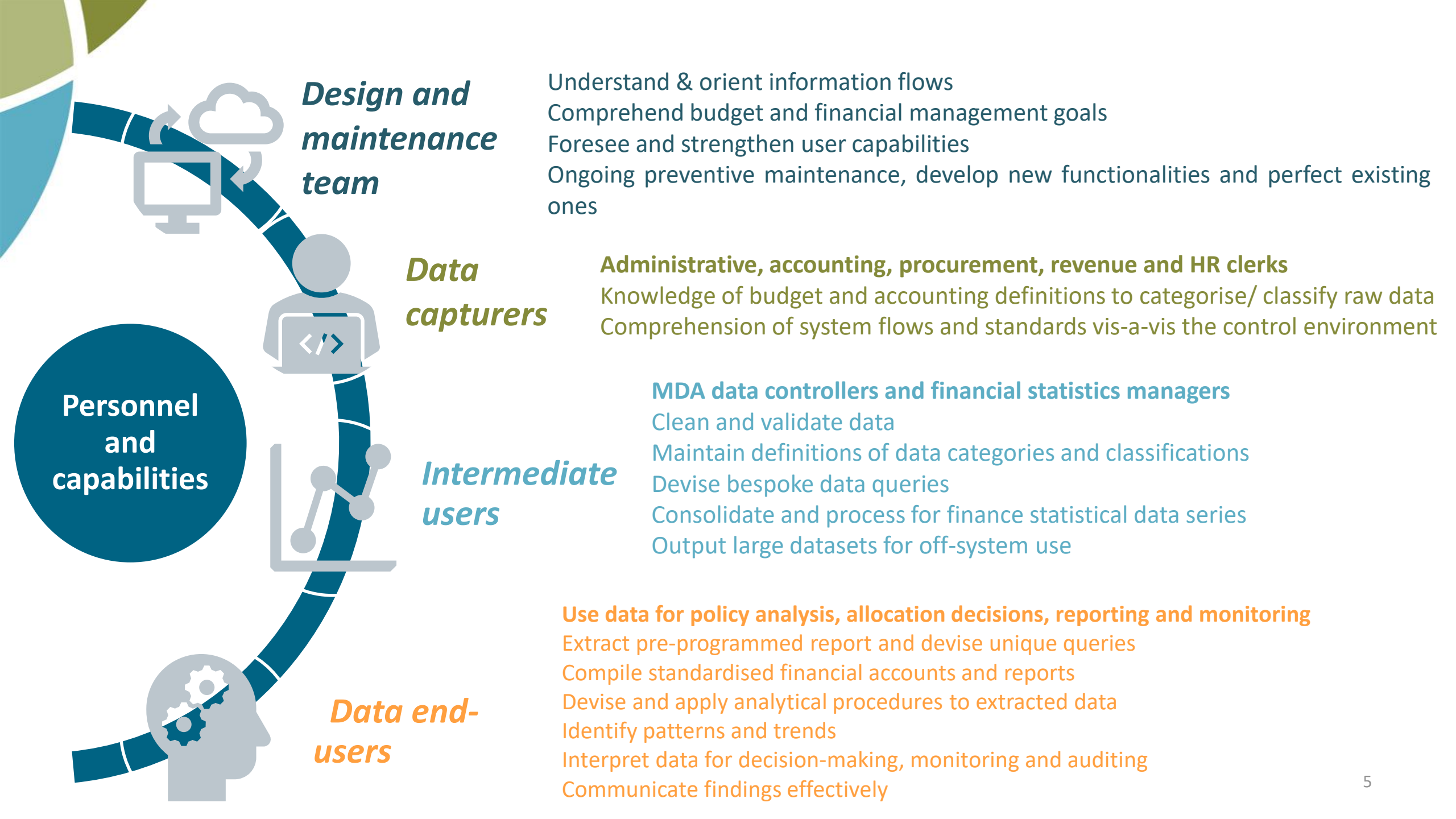# CABRI's Response: policy dialogue on information systems

- Challenges and successes in **integration**

- Considering **alternatives**: the modular approach and transversal systems

- PFM in the age of **digitalisation and big data**

- Extending the **institutional coverage**

- **FMIS in times of crisis**: balancing flexibility and accountability

- *Capabilities for effective design and utilisation of FMIS*

FMIS without capabilities: an empty shell

- While there is increasing recognition that data is an asset for the public sector, many African countries do not yet place sufficient emphasis on data capabilities.

- Without adequate IT, data science and data application capabilities, information systems cannot improve control, oversight or decision-making.

- In addition to optimising use of systems, strong data capabilities increase the value of data by:

  - Enabling more accurate forecasting

  - Informing and improving policy design and implementation

  - Improving evaluation and monitoring, allowing government to be more responsive to successes and failures

  - Facilitating improved oversight and control

  - Increasing efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery

Personnel and capabilities

Design and maintenance team

Understand & orient information flows
Comprehend budget and financial management goals
Foresee and strengthen user capabilities
Ongoing preventive maintenance, develop new functionalities and perfect existing ones

Data capturers

Administrative, accounting, procurement, revenue and HR clerks
Knowledge of budget and accounting definitions to categorise/ classify raw data
Comprehension of system flows and standards vis-a-vis the control environment

Intermediate users

MDA data controllers and financial statistics managers
Clean and validate data
Maintain definitions of data categories and classifications
Devise bespoke data queries
Consolidate and process for finance statistical data series
Output large datasets for off-system use

Data end-users

Use data for policy analysis, allocation decisions, reporting and monitoring
Extract pre-programmed report and devise unique queries
Compile standardised financial accounts and reports
Devise and apply analytical procedures to extracted data
Identify patterns and trends
Interpret data for decision-making, monitoring and auditing
Communicate findings effectively

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Capabilities amongst stakeholders in CAR, Ghana and Guinea

FMIS design and maintenance teams	CAR	Ghana	Guinea
Comprehending financial (and non-financial) data sources, system objectives and user needs	🔴	🔵	🔵
Determining key data, procedures and controls, how to structure data, and programme system	🔵	🔵	🔵
Designing reports in different format	🔵	🔵	🔵
Running system tests and adjust existing functionalities	🔴	🔵	🔵
Continuous capacity building	🔴	🔵	🔵
Long-term system management, including database and data warehouse management	🔵	🔴	🔵
Designing, devising and programming new functionalities and reports	🔴	🔴	🔴
System upgrade	🔴	🔵	🔵
Comprehending accounting standards and classifications	🔴	🔵	🔴

	CAR	Ghana	Guinea
Data capturers			
Competent in relevant software package (e.g. access, utilise, save and close templates)	🟦	🟦	🟦
Knowledge of budget and accounting definitions to categorise/ classify raw data	🟦	🟦	🟦
Comprehending system flows, processes and data standards vis-a-vis controls	🟦	🟦	🟥

Intermediate users: Public finance statistics manager and line ministry data controllers			
Outputting large datasets for off-system use	🟥	🟦	🟥
Cleaning and validating data to ensure accuracy, completeness and uniformity	🟦	🟦	🟦
Consolidating and processing data for for consistent public finance statistical data series	🟦	🟦	🟦
Defining and maintaining data categories and classifications	🟦	🟦	🟦

	CAR	Ghana	Guinea
Data end users			
Extracting pre-programmed reports	🟥	🟦	🟦
Competency in the chosen software package (e.g. read reports, authorise steps and extract data)	🟦	🟦	🟥
Compiling standardised financial accounts and reports	🟥	🟦	🟦
Interpreting data for decision-making, monitoring and auditing	🟦	🟦	🟦
Devising and applying analytical procedures to extracted data	🟥	🟥	🟦
Identifying patterns and trends in data	🟦	🟥	🟦
Effectively communicating and presenting findings	🟦	🟦	🟦

Cross-cutting challenges: CAR, Ghana and Guinea

Weak system administration and support functions

Limited analysis of trends and correlations hampers policy and decision making

Classifying and comprehending accounting standards and budget classifications is problematic resulting in inconsistencies and inaccuracies

Inability to output large data sets for use off-system resulting in inefficiencies in data processing and accessibility and visualisation constraints

Skills transfer is limited due to recourse to foreign IT experts

Capacity building is not always problem driven and has not significantly improved data capabilities

Capacity building is oriented towards data capture at the expense of data analysis

Objectives of today's session

- Highlight importance of strong data capabilities

- Lay ground for reflection of knowledge and capability gaps of user groups

- Bring about more problem-driven and effective capacity building within countries

- Strengthen intra-country collaboration and perspective sharing

- Share innovative or effective country-level approaches to building capacity and strengthening support to users

- Better understand and cater to end-users' data requirements

Thank you