
Ministry of Community and Social Services SAMS Transition Review

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Executive summary

In November 2014 the Ministry of Community and Social Services (“Ministry” or “MCSS”) launched the Social Assistance Management System (“SAMS”) after a multi-year effort to design and build a new enterprise social assistance solution to replace the Service Delivery Model Technology (“SDMT”) system. Cúram, a Commercial-Off-The-Shelf (“COTS”) product, was selected by MCSS as the basis for its IT legacy system renewal that is tailored to social assistance case management functionality and performance. Since go-live, MCSS and its service delivery partners have experienced several transition challenges with SAMS, that include resolving system defects, improving user adoption and addressing data conversion issues all with the focus of enhancing the predictability of SAMS for front line staff and enhancing operations. MCSS and its delivery partners have invested time and resources to advance SAMS transition in order to reach full operations.

This report provides an independent review of MCSS current transition plans and activities to:

- i. Determine whether the plans and activities actioned are addressing the challenges associated with SAMS post implementation (i.e. Is the Ministry doing the right things?), and
- ii. Identify enhancements that could further strengthen ongoing transition activities and efforts (i.e. Are the right things being done in the most effective way?).

Context

Ontario’s social assistance system is accessed by over 11,000 staff, delivered through a network of over 250 locations across the province using a combination of MCSS staff, who deliver the Ontario Disability Support Program (“ODSP”) and Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities program (“ACSD”), and 47 local municipal partners who deliver the Ontario Works programs (“OW”) on behalf of the province – making it one of the most complex social services delivery environments in North America. Adding to this complexity are the various program rules that determine benefit eligibility and payment amounts, and a service delivery network that includes 47 municipal partners who operate autonomously from the Ministry and apply discretion in the way they address local client needs.

When compared to SDMT, SAMS represents a significant change in terms of system functionality and user experience. Whereas SDMT was largely used by front line staff to enable case specific financial management transactions, SAMS presents a more comprehensive case management tool that enables additional functional capabilities in support of a case life cycle of events. Moving to SAMS is not a “like for like” change in technology platforms, rather the implementation represents a fundamental change in how delivery partners use the enabling technology tool to manage client cases, specifically in the level and amount of information collected and retained. A literature search associated with large scale IT implementation experiences suggest organizations often observe a drop in user productivity and a less than optimal user experience during the initial months following go-live. This provides some insights into the SAMS implementation experience to date, noting the complexity of social services programs in general, the significant change in technology in moving from SDMT to SAMS, and the user adoption challenges experienced during the initial period following system “go-live”, which was further impacted by several system defects.

SAMS transition currently finds itself in the early stages of the user adoption curve and system maturity. Since the November go-live date, the Ministry has focused its resources to address SAMS defects and associated delivery challenges while continuing to provide business support to delivery partners and staff. Entering into its 6th month since “go-live”, the Ministry continues to focus on planned efforts to address existing system defects and enhancements, provide ongoing business and training support to front line staff, and engage with delivery partners and stakeholders during transition.

Jurisdictional Scan - Findings

A review of other jurisdictions highlights post go-live and transition experience of public sector organizations who have implemented similar IT solutions. Overall, the transition experiences shared by the other jurisdictions are not dissimilar to that experienced by MCSS at this stage of post go-live and transition. All of the jurisdictions reviewed

experienced some level of business remediation in the months that followed go-live that required specific interventions and activities in order to effectively transition to business operations. However, the response, and how those challenges were addressed, varied across jurisdictions. Common challenges centred on four key points - data conversion, managing the level of customization, user adoption and change management, and knowledge transfer. Like SAMS, these challenges were known by public sector organizations as they moved into the transition stage of the project, and required additional strategies, resources and support to manage.

Relevant lessons learned from the jurisdictional scan include:

- Like SAMS, many of the jurisdictions had daily releases during the initial stages of post implementation before moving to less frequent releases (monthly and then quarterly) over time;
- Across jurisdictions, the move to the new IT solution represented a significant change to how users managed case files and to underlying business processes. Several raised the point that many business processes that worked in the past no longer were suitable when users transitioned to the new IT solution. For some, this may have been underestimated prior to go-live and required attention and support during post-implementation activities;
- On-going business support was one of the common themes shared as both a lesson learned and a key success factor through the jurisdictional review. However, the level of support needed to achieve business operations varied among organizations; and,
- All jurisdictions noted the importance of an effective organizational change management program to obtain buy in for their respective projects post go-live, and of ongoing resourcing in this area during transition.

There was recognition among all jurisdictions that there are many challenges to address when implementing similar IT solutions and when considering the complexity needed to support a human services delivery environment. However, there was also acknowledgement that there are benefits to be achieved with these systems once the initial post implementation challenges are addressed and business operation is achieved.

SAMS Transition Challenges

Delivery partners and the Ministry have been working through several issues since SAMS go-live and to minimize client impact. Both have responded quickly to mitigate operational issues. OW and ODSP staff have been particularly sensitive to client needs and how they have been impacted by SAMS. In many cases, front line staff have placed their client needs ahead of their own and have taken action to reduce the impact of SAMS on service delivery. Over the first 5 months of transition there have been positive achievements, namely:

- The Ministry was able to quickly respond to system defects, prioritize them and generally resolve many of them as of the end of March 2015. As a result, SAMS has become more stable, while improving predictability for front line staff remains a focus.
- The Ministry, based on stakeholder input, quickly convened staff groups (Front Line Staff Working Group, Technical Working Group) to assist with priority setting, and resolving operational and service delivery challenges.
- The Ministry has responded to front line staff requests for additional support by developing and running specialized training (e.g. working with converted data, outcome plans). The Ministry has also been regularly updating user guides, tips and tricks documents and other communications shared with staff.
- The Ministry has conducted site visits to understand delivery agent challenges, provide direct support by SAMS experts and enable the escalation of critical issues.

ODSP and OW offices have experienced similar issues and impacts since go-live. Stakeholder feedback, the review of Ministry transition planning documents, and leading practices associated with transition planning, have identified several challenges and observations concerning transition. These are grouped under four categories - planning and governance, change management and stakeholder engagement, technology, and process.

Planning and governance:

- There is a level of uncertainty among stakeholders regarding transition plan objectives and outcomes beyond resolving the 57 priority items identified just after go-live;
- There remains a lack of understanding and awareness regarding the governance structure, and associated roles and responsibilities required to support transition efforts;
- There is an opportunity to build on the partnership and collaboration between MCSS and its municipal delivery partners in support of transition;
- There is need for a common definition of term “transition”; and
- There is an opportunity to advance the work associated with the measurement, monitoring and reporting of key business metrics, KPIs and outcomes to help evaluate transition progress and benefits realization.

Change management and stakeholder management:

- Stakeholders have expressed communications “fatigue” and being overwhelmed by the level of information disseminated since go-live;
- Dissemination of information to OW and ODSP offices have varied by site and have not always been fully synchronized or coordinated;
- At times, SAMS lacks predictability which creates uncertainty for front line staff and results in a lack of trust;
- Moving forward, stakeholders commented that training should follow an end-to-end business process approach where front line staff are exposed to a full suite of transaction activities incurred during specific business processes rather than training on SAMS system transactions only;
- OW and ODSP offices expressed concerns that the ongoing capacity of staff to absorb change must be considered in future transition actions – some offices are experiencing change “fatigue”;
- Current operational impact assessments may not be at a sufficient level of detail needed to inform effective training and communications on an ongoing basis; and,

Technology:

- The Ministry introduced a number of methods to log issues specific to SAMS which has proved effective following go-live. However, these methods have also created confusion and impacted the ability to centrally track, manage, address and report on issues raised;
- A high volume of issues tickets was anticipated by the Ministry at time of go-live, however the current volume is significant and has created challenges for the Ministry during transition (e.g. the ability to consistently close and communicate back to submitters in a timely fashion);
- Like other jurisdictions, the Ministry followed an accelerated release cycle following go-live to quickly address system defects. Moving forward the Ministry plans to follow a monthly moving to a quarterly release schedule for SAMS and supported by a more comprehensive testing environment prior to release into production;
- SAMS systems enhancements continue to move forward and must balance the need to resolve identified deficiencies against new enhancements, as well as balancing priorities of front line staff against program priorities;
- MCSS continues to work toward creating a sustainable IT environment for SAMS. Supporting a complex core system such as SAMS would typically require availability of multiple environments for development, testing, training, staging and production – all of which are critical to SAMS stability and reliability; and,
- The Ministry has a knowledge transfer plan in place to transfer skills from the vendor to the Ministry over a 12 month timeframe. It’s acknowledged that this requires implementation attention in order to achieve operational sustainability for SAMS support.

Process:

- OW and ODSP offices have developed workarounds, where necessary, to address SAMS issues and support service delivery. Where workarounds have been introduced at the local level, they are not widely known or tracked, creating a risk that workarounds will become the new ‘normal’ even when system fixes are put in place.
- Although the Ministry and delivery partners have been working to address data quality issues since go-live, many stakeholders perceive that a high number of system issues are related to data that was converted and migrated from SDMT;
- OW and ODSP office staff are currently supported in their daily use of SAMS by user guides and job aids. The utility of these documents has been challenging based on their length, terminology and accessibility;
- Staff from OW and ODSP offices commented that they would find it more useful to have documented end to end business process that highlight SAMS touch points - providing front line staff with a greater understanding of the system and how it impacts day to day work; and,
- Staff from OW and ODSP offices acknowledged that support by focused SAMS subject matter experts/champions (i.e. no caseload) has been helpful, particularly with reducing stress and concern across the sites, enabling sites to develop their own subject matter specialists and funnelling issues so that they can be assessed holistically and addressed more consistently.

Several themes emerge from the collective insights associated with the jurisdictional scan findings, stakeholder consultation feedback, review of transition related documentation and leading practice:

- The Ministry’s post go-live implementation experience is not uncommon and the challenges observed are, for the most part comparable to what other public sector organizations also managed when they went live with similar IT solutions;
- In the months following go-live, the Ministry quickly mobilized resources needed to address system defects, enhance communications and information sharing with its delivery partners, and provide additional business supports to delivery partners. Similarly, delivery partners actively responded to the challenges associated with SAMS while maintaining a strong focus on client service delivery; and,
- Ministry resources have been largely focused on resolving system defects and supporting delivery agents, as a result several transition related plans and actions are at various levels of completion and implementation detail. Notwithstanding the immediate transition focus, the Ministry has in place or is working to develop the necessary plans and actions required to advance the transition to business operations.

Proposed recommendations aim to address observed gaps with existing transition efforts and provide additional implementation details to guide direction and efforts needed to accelerate the transition to business operations and realize the intended benefits associated with SAMS.

Recommendations

PwC is proposing 19 recommendations to build on and enhance the Ministry’s SAMS transition planning efforts to business operations. Proposed recommendations are grouped in four categories for the Ministry’s consideration. These include:

Planning and governance:

1. Support the adoption of a governance structure with consideration for transition, business as usual and the integration of an Integrated Transition Plan and Program Manager.
2. Enhance and strengthen the on-going planning through an integrated approach to transition that will provide a holistic view of the continued effort and interactions required to achieve identified outcomes.
3. Confirm and communicate business acceptance criteria for the SAMS Transition to business as usual. This will provide greater clarity to key stakeholders within the project and operations teams

in terms of on-going operational responsibilities of SAMS. Business acceptance criteria are conditions that must be satisfied before moving business as usual. These criteria will also provide greater insight into the prioritization and sustainability of decisions that are being made as the transition continues.

4. Support the Ministry's decision to engage a Program Manager to own the integrated transition plan – plan, manage, monitor and report on transition progress and outcomes.
5. Leverage current performance measures and metrics to develop a consolidated dashboard that measures and tracks metrics related to program benefits, system performance and usage.
6. Enhance the stakeholder management and engagement strategy with municipal delivery agents and other stakeholders to enable transition objectives and align outcome expectations.

Change management and stakeholder engagement:

7. Strengthen insight into SAMS-related changes and people-related impact by expanding the level of detail in the Organizational Impact Assessment. Insights should continue to be refined and validated with front line staff on an on-going basis.
8. Using the Organizational Impact Assessment as a foundational document, design and deliver an Integrated Change and Communications Plan with tailored change interventions (training, communication, engagement) to address specific stakeholder needs.
9. Based on insights from the Organizational Impact Assessment, continue to refine the training approach, curriculum, audiences, and materials with a focus on both new and existing front line staff needs.
10. Review the knowledge transfer plan and incorporate into the integrated project plan, recognizing the impact on resources if they are shadowing vendors and may not be able to perform other planned activities.

Technology:

11. Continue to move to an ITIL compliant industry standard release management process for introducing change into the SAMS application. Differentiate between changes that are unit tested, changes that have been validated through some level of User Acceptance Test and changes that have been fully regression tested prior to implementation in production.
12. Continue to develop a complete set of automated use cases that exercise the application on an end-to-end basis and use this for regression testing. Components that do not successfully execute the regression test suite may not be promoted into the production environment.
13. Ensure key environments are synchronized to the same level of code in a timely manner. Consider using more advanced vendor cloning aids to assist in refresh of key environments with a target objective of having these environments synchronized within a one week timeframe.
14. Repeat the capacity planning exercise based on feedback and metrics and confirm the infrastructure (servers, storage, network) are adequate to support expected application performance.
15. Balance defect resolution with planned enhancements, as well as Cúram upgrades, based on value to the business and front line staff impact. The governance process supported by a clear prioritization framework should be followed to guide and confirm the prioritization of enhancements over defects.
16. Develop an end user support strategy that is responsive, simplified and supported by a knowledge database which is accessible by end users. The user support strategy should provide for access, as appropriate, to experts who can support tickets that are escalated.

Process:

17. Develop an approach to catalogue and document workarounds in SAMS to reduce downstream risks and potential challenges with system validity.
18. Leverage and expand on the business process documentation developed prior to go live to continue to support front line staff.
19. Perform a data quality assessment and develop a plan to address identified gaps, focusing on areas that are necessitating workarounds and may require manual database clean-up.

Summary Considerations

The following recommendations should be prioritized by the Ministry as they are critical for the transition in the short term, and lay the foundation for the other recommendations.

- Enhance the current transition plan to develop an **Integrated Transition Plan** to inform the transition going forward. The integrated transition plan should be at a sufficient level of detail, including milestones, resources, timelines, dependencies, etc. (Recommendation #2)
- Identify and select a **Program Manager** to be accountable for the Integrated Transition Plan and all related streams of work, milestones and activities. (Recommendation #4)
- Support the adoption of a **governance structure** with consideration for transition, business as usual, the Integrated Transition Plan and Program Manager. (Recommendation #1)
- Refine and reconfigure the current **Organization Impact Assessment** to provide greater visibility, at the activity / task level, into how different functions within a job are impacted by SAMS for both OW, OSDP and ACSD. The Organization Impact Assessment builds a foundation for future change and training-related activities. Further to this is activity, the change, training and communications plan should be confirmed. (Recommendation #7)
- Develop an **end user support strategy** that is responsive, simplified and supported by a knowledge database that is accessible by front line staff. The end user support strategy should provide access, as appropriate, to experts who can support tickets that are escalated and provide more immediate support for front-line staff. (Recommendation #16)
- Create a complete set of automated use cases that exercise the application on an end-to-end basis and use this for **regression testing**. (Recommendation #12)

To support the implementation of the recommendations, current and future resource capacity will need to be assessed. The Integrated Transition Plan will be a key input for this assessment, confirming the resources required by both the Ministry and delivery partners to achieve the outcomes detailed in the plan.

It is important to acknowledge that, throughout this review, we have observed a considerable amount of effort, passion and commitment displayed by stakeholders engaged in transition activities across the province, including management and front-line staff. The Ministry and its stakeholders are all working toward the same goal: enabling SAMS to support front-line staff in delivering services to their clients. The recommendations put forward in this report are meant to support this goal and minimize the impact of the transition, as well as decrease the time it will take to reach a state of business operations. Engagement between the Ministry and front-line staff is critical to the success of SAMS, and it's important that the Ministry continue to engage and listen to front-line staff throughout this process.

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to present our assessment of the Social Assistance Management System (“SAMS”) post-implementation transition activities and propose recommendations to enhance planning and delivery efforts by the Ministry of Community and Social Services (“MCSS” or “Ministry”) to complete the transition, achieve operational stability and ultimately improve service delivery. A key focus of the assessment examined the Ministry’s current transition plans and activities to:

- i. Determine whether the plans and activities actioned are addressing the challenges associated with SAMS post-implementation transition activities (i.e. Is the Ministry doing the right things?); and
- ii. Identify enhancements that could further strengthen ongoing transition activities and efforts (i.e. Are the right things being done in the most effective way?).

In addressing these questions, it’s important to set the context in which the SAMS transition efforts are proceeding.

Setting the context

SAMS was launched in November 2014 after a multi-year effort to design and build a new-enterprise social assistance solution to replace the Service Delivery Model Technology (“SDMT”) system. The Ministry selected Cúram, a Commercial-Off-The-Shelf (“COTS”) tailored to social assistance, as the basis for its IT legacy system renewal case management functionality and performance. Investment in SAMS is seen by the Ministry and its stakeholders as a catalyst to enable enhancements to the delivery of social assistance through technology and business renewal, namely by:

- improving customer service through new online services and service tools;
- creating a more flexible and adaptable solution for timely implementation of government priorities, program changes, etc.;
- improving business processes and increasing efficiencies across the delivery system; and
- enhancing program integrity by increasing audit capacity and accountability.

Ontario’s social assistance system is accessed by more than 11,000 staff, in more than 250 locations across the province, through a combination of MCSS staff, who deliver the Ontario Disability Support Program (“ODSP”) and Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities program (“ACSD”), and municipal partners who deliver the Ontario Works programs (“OW”) on behalf of the province. Delivery of the OW programs is managed through 47 municipal delivery partners across the province and 101 First Nations partners, creating a delivery environment where OW offices are autonomous and able to apply discretion in how operations are structured and managed. Business processes, operational practices and organizational structures can vary from one OW office to another to accommodate local client needs and conditions. First Nations did not use SDMT and as a result were not part of the initial SAMS implementation. In contrast, ODSP and ACSD programs are delivered through a network of MCSS ODSP offices and staff, where operating structures, business processes and practices are more consistent through the ODSP delivery network. Overall, the Ministry and its delivery partners oversee the allocation of \$7.9 billion in benefits annually to more than 560,000 social assistance cases, making this one of the most complex delivery ecosystems of social assistance providers and clients in North America. Adding to this complexity is the various program rules that determine benefit eligibility and payment amounts.

When compared to SDMT, SAMS represents a significant change in terms of system functionality and, subsequently, user experience. SDMT was largely used by front-line staff to enable case-specific financial management transactions, while SAMS presents a more comprehensive case-management tool that enables additional functional capabilities in support of a case life cycle of events and is more “rule-based” in its design. Like similar case-management tools, SAMS requires the collection of more data than would have previously been required under SDMT, thus having a resulting impact on time and effort on the part of the front line staff. Moving to SAMS is not a “like for like” change in technology platforms; rather, the implementation represents a

fundamental change in how front line staff use the enabling technology tool to manage client cases, specifically for the level and amount of information collected and retained.

A literature search associated with large-scale IT implementation experiences suggests that organizations often observe a drop in user productivity and a less than optimal user experience during the initial months after “go-live”. Referred to as the “adoption S-curve,” front line staff requires additional time to improve their level of proficiency with a new or replacement solution. System defects at “go-live” can also negatively impact user adoption rates until solution stability and predictability issues are resolved, despite investments in user training and business preparedness. In some ways, these findings offer insights into the SAMS implementation experience to date, noting the complexity of social services programs in general, the significant change in technology in moving from SDMT to SAMS, and the user adoption challenges experienced during the initial period following system “go-live,” coupled with the level of system defects needed to be resolved by the Ministry.

The SAMS transition currently finds itself in the early stages of this user adoption curve and system maturity. Since the November go-live date, the Ministry has focused its resources to address SAMS defects and associated delivery challenges while continuing to provide business support to delivery partners and employees across the Province. The Ministry made the strategic choice to focus its transition efforts on resolving system defects identified as a priority to best stabilize the system. Over the past several months, weekly patches have been implemented, with the majority now completed. SAMS is operational and has completed several payment cycles for social assistance clients. Entering into its 6th month since “go-live,” the Ministry continues to focus on planned efforts to address existing system defects and enhancements, provide ongoing business and training support to staff, and engage with delivery partners and stakeholders during the transition.

Objectives and scope

The Ministry is working to address SAMS rollout issues by dedicating resources and creating plans and activities needed to remediate and support a successful transition to a desired end state. In addition, the Ministry has determined that an independent, objective third-party review of its post-implementation and transition plans and activities is necessary to:

- validate that the Ministry is doing the right things to address current challenges and support the transition to its desired end state;
- learn from similar projects and build those leading practices into its overall plans and activities; and
- restore stakeholder and front line staff that transition challenges will be adequately addressed and that the investment made to SAMS will be seen as a key system enabler for service delivery and program enhancements and renewal.

The review examined SAMS post-implementation and transition. In-scope activities included the following:

- reviewing current plans for system transition (e.g. prioritization, sequencing, resourcing and level of comprehensiveness of current plans, including risks or impacts that require immediate attention);
- reviewing planned technology enhancements and operational improvements;
- consulting key stakeholders and front line staff who access the system (e.g. ministry staff, municipal and provincial delivery partners, front-line staff, etc.);
- reviewing project artefacts, including incident tickets, issue logs, change requests, KPIs, etc.;
- reviewing current change-management plans and activities to accelerate system adoption;
- reviewing existing strategies, plans and processes that are planned over the next three months by the Ministry; and
- researching leading practices and a relative maturity scale from projects of a similar scope and scale to SAMS in other jurisdictions.

During the course of the engagement, PwC also undertook the task of:

- reviewing the project governance structure in place to manage and monitor post-implementation and transition efforts;
- reviewing stakeholder engagement and partner engagement activities and efforts; and

- providing a summary of any variables that could prevent the Ministry from meeting its objectives and opportunities to strengthen current plans and activities.

It is also important to note those areas that were out of scope for this engagement, including:

- the review does not provide an opinion on the functional or technical readiness of the SAMS solution and only comments on our knowledge and leading practices with respect to the implementation of similar solutions in the context of the Ministry’s remediation and transition plans;
- the report does not provide an assessment of the overall system or infrastructure performance of SAMS; and
- the report does not provide a historical assessment of project performance since inception.

Approach

The SAMS rollout has created several challenges for the Ministry, program delivery partners and staff. The Ministry’s efforts continue to focus on addressing immediate rollout issues while prioritizing system enhancements to business processes to normalize operations and change-management activities that focus on front-line staff and delivery. Our approach took this business context and the current phase and focus of the SAMS initiative (i.e. post-implementation and transition phase) into consideration. Our approach also acknowledges that the Ministry has not yet reached its desired operational end state for SAMS (e.g. business as usual). Four distinct activities anchored our review approach:

1. We applied PwC’s Project Review Assessment Framework and Change Management Assessment Framework (Appendix A). These reference frameworks were used to guide stakeholder consultations and examine existing transition-planning documentation.
2. We generated data from stakeholder interviews and consultations and reviewed project documentation and artefacts generated for additional information and insight. Stakeholder and staff interviews provided a well-rounded set of perspectives from the Ministry, service delivery partners, front-line staff and unions. Transition-planning documents and other related artefacts provided an overview of the level of planning and future activities forecasted by the Ministry as it moves forward with the overall transition. Information aggregated from the consultations and documentation review informed our key observations regarding current and future planned activities and helped us identify potential gaps and opportunities.
3. We researched several jurisdictions that implemented similar case-management solutions in support of social services programs. We looked to understand the respective organizational experience upon “go-live” that was specific to the research. Lessons learned from these experiences were additional reference points used to inform proposed recommendations.
4. We identified recommendations that addressed key observation points from our consultations and, more importantly, looked to build and enhance the Ministry’s transition-planning efforts.

Structure of this report

This report proceeds in the following manner. Section one provides a summary of findings from similar project implementation experiences across several public sector organizations in other jurisdictions. Section two presents current SAMS transition challenges and observations drawn from stakeholder consultations and a review of project transition documentation. Section three puts forward recommendations for the Ministry’s consideration aimed at enhancing its current transition activities and efforts. Section four proposes a set of immediate implementation priorities for the Ministry and other considerations it should address when setting priorities moving forward.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge the participation and engagement of Ministry staff, technical and front-line working groups, OW and ODSP staff who participated in various consultations, and union representatives from the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (“OPSEU”), Canadian Union of Public Employees (“CUPE”) and Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (“OMSSA”). Their perspectives were greatly appreciated and provided considerable insight into the current set of challenges and potential future enhancements to the SAMS transition.

Jurisdiction review summary

Objectives of the jurisdiction scan

The objective of the jurisdiction scan is to highlight the post-go-live and transition experiences of public sector organizations that have implemented similar IT solutions. More importantly, the scan of other public sector implementation experiences helps to identify “lessons learned” and “leading practices” that made a positive impact on their transition efforts and would be relevant to the ongoing transition of the SAMS solution. In particular, this section highlights the following:

- common challenges experienced by jurisdictions interviewed (“experience post-go-live”); and
- strategies and opportunities for mitigating challenges and post-go-live stabilization (“activities that made an impact and lessons learned”).

Jurisdictions reviewed

Selected jurisdictions represent public sector organizations that have implemented similar IT solutions in support of social services programs and, for the most part, are past their initial go-live period. Representatives from each jurisdiction were interviewed using a consistent set of questions that were issued prior to the consultation. Publicly available information was also reviewed to supplement the interview findings for each jurisdiction. Although it’s difficult to establish a direct comparison with SAMS, these jurisdictional experiences provide valuable insight on how similar solution implementations behaved at go-live and, more importantly, how public sector organizations moved to resolve transition challenges. In the following table, we map the jurisdictions against environmental characteristics used to identify selected organizations and IT implementations. Please refer to Appendix B for additional details for each jurisdiction reviewed.

Jurisdictional characteristics	Jurisdictions					
	Ontario, Canada	North Carolina, U.S.	City of Hamburg, Germany	Government of New Zealand	South Australia, Australia	Alberta, Canada
Programs supported	Social Assistance Management System	NC Fast Program, economic benefits, child welfare, adult and family services	Youth and social welfare programs	Welfare program reform	Workers’ rehabilitation and compensation programs	Employment and training, income support, health benefits and child support services
Number of users	Approximately 11,000 users	Approximately 6,200 users	Approximately 3,250 users	Approximately 5,000 users	Approximately 3,000 users	Approximately 1,900 users
Delivery network	Province wide across 250 sites	100 county departments	Through city departments	150 sites in 11 regions	WorkCoverSA and third-party agencies	240 worksites province-wide; combination of ministry staff and third-party delivery partners
Implementation approach and go-live date	Single implementation go-live, 2014	Phased implementation, with initial go-live in 2008	Multiple releases: R1 (spring 2012), R2 (2014) and R3 (2015)	Phased implementation, with initial go-live in 2013	Single implementation, with go-live in April 2010	Phased implementation, with initial go-live in 2006; major release, 2009/10; current project ongoing

Jurisdiction scan findings

Summary of findings

Experiences from each jurisdiction varied based on a number of factors, including size of project, implementation approach and project methodology, number of users, geographic scope and underlying business objectives. As a result, the outcomes of the jurisdiction interviews have been consolidated to focus on common themes with respect to key challenges and lessons learned. The following provides a summary of the challenges and key success factors identified.

Overall, the experiences shared by the other jurisdictions are not dissimilar to those experienced by MCSS at this stage of post-go-live and transition. In many ways, MCSS post-go-live implementation experiences are somewhat consistent when compared to other jurisdictions during the initial months preceding system go-live. However, the response—and how those challenges were addressed—varied across jurisdictions. The following summary identifies common challenges and actions taken that had an effective impact on addressing these challenges.

Implementation challenges

While each jurisdiction experienced challenges that were unique to their particular project, the following highlights those challenges that were most common among the jurisdictions interviewed.

- **Data conversion** Many of the jurisdictions interviewed identified that managing the mapping of data elements from their legacy systems to the new technology was a challenge. Each jurisdiction had unique approaches to data conversion, and the magnitude of challenges varied based on the implementation approach, data conversion methodology, risk tolerance, number of records and data conversion efforts prior to go-live.
- **Customization** The jurisdictions noted a number of challenges with respect to customization. While many of these challenges were initially experienced through pre-go-live project activities, the impact was noted as an important consideration for transition and future upgrades related to the ongoing cost of maintenance and the timeliness of upgrades.
- **User adoption and change management** User adoption was noted as a challenge across many of the jurisdictions, and continued change management and communication efforts were required throughout the transition (and ongoing as changes were made in business as usual). It was noted that, in most jurisdictions, users experienced a considerable learning curve with the new system, and there were varying levels of commitment from users/stakeholders across each implementation.
- **Knowledge transfer and resources** The availability of skilled resources—specifically in the area of Cúram development and architecture—was identified as a common challenge across jurisdictions and required focus and the development of knowledge transfer/resourcing strategies to manage it.

In many instances, these challenges were known moving into the transition stage of the project, but they required additional strategies, resources and support to manage post-implementation.

Actions and lessons learned

Release management

Many of the jurisdictions had daily releases in the initial stages post-implementation, and they moved to less frequent releases (monthly and then quarterly) over time. Key actions undertaken included the following:

- **Timing and the impact of releases and fixes require clear prioritization and communication** Clear prioritization and governance around defects were noted as key success factors. With respect to communication, transparency around priorities and what would be fixed (and would not be fixed) was important to share with stakeholders and users.

- **Business drives the prioritization of issues** In several jurisdictions, there was ongoing end user groups/social services directors who met regularly post-go-live to prioritize defects and changes. In one jurisdiction, business owners had to sign off on defects to be classified as “severity 2” or greater.
- **Governance around defects and release management is critical during post-implementation** Defects had to have a certain level of testing and sign-off before they were promoted to production in the live system. This process, along with the strict controls surrounding it, was important for success.

Business process

Across jurisdictions, the move to the new IT solution represented a significant change in how users managed case files and in underlying business processes. Several jurisdictions raised the point that many business processes that worked in the past were no longer suitable when users transitioned to the new IT solution. For some jurisdictions, this may have been underestimated prior to go-live and required attention and support during post-implementation activities. Actions included:

- **Undertaking deep dives on process changes** Several jurisdictions spent considerable effort to understand business processes impacted by their new technology solution. One jurisdiction introduced a working group post-go-live that was specifically tasked with analyzing how the system was impacting workflow. Another jurisdiction had dedicated a resource to focusing on business processes. Engaging users in continued process mapping was noted as a key success factor in multiple jurisdictions, with one jurisdiction engaging User Experience (UX) resources to help facilitate ongoing business process reviews to focus on “usability.”
- **Understanding process changes to provide critical input into change-management activities** It was noted that understanding process changes was critical. Some jurisdictions used business processes to inform communication strategies and training by incorporating process changes into training materials.
- **Identifying the consequences of workarounds (intended and unintended) early** It’s important for workarounds to be flagged early where there are known defects. In addition, putting controls in place to manage risk was seen as a key success factor.

Business support

Ongoing business support remained one of the common themes shared, as both a lesson learned and a key success factor through the jurisdictional review. The level of support needed to achieve “business as usual” varied, but common responses included:

- **Appropriate resourcing for transition** One of the jurisdictions specifically commented on the release of the project team, noting that “If we would have released the project team too early, we would have had major problems.”
- **Co-location of resources for support** This was found to be a key success factor in some jurisdictions. One of the jurisdictions set up an “operations centre” (similar to a crisis response centre) during the initial post-go-live phase of their project. This structure enabled all support resources to work together, allowing them to monitor issues on a real-time basis as they arose.
- **Terminology used by support resources** Differences in terminology used between front-line users and IT were found, in some cases, to create a disconnect between the two groups. As a result, one jurisdiction found that users felt they were not being supported by the help desk due to challenges with terminology. Bridging the business/IT terminology gap and the cultural differences between business and IT was identified as a key lesson learned. One jurisdiction ran “boot camps” for IT staff to learn the business and for users to become more familiar with IT terminology to help bridge this disconnect.

Organizational change management

All jurisdictions noted the importance of an effective organizational change-management program for their respective projects post-go-live and ongoing resourcing in this area during the transition. Actions included:

- **Understanding the impact of change to existing business processes** Understanding business processes from a people and change-management perspective was a key factor in change-management strategies. In one example, the jurisdiction noted the challenges of how business processes can impact user adoption if users don't understand why they are performing certain tasks: "When we went live, we heard that 'this takes too long' or comments about the new requirements for data entry. But this is part of what makes the solution data rich, and change management has to be prepared to tackle this early on with stakeholders and understand its impact." To deal with this effectively requires an understanding of what the new system is doing differently from the old system.
- **Coordinating a change agenda and a common goal through the go-live period** Jurisdictions noted that "having a coordinated agenda and a common goal for implementation and transition" was critical to ensuring that everyone understands what is happening, when it is happening and why.
- **Transparent and open communication with stakeholders** The importance of communicating with stakeholders in an open and transparent manner was noted by jurisdictions, including the latitude of system design that can realistically be achieved. Interviewees noted that it was important to recognize (both pre-implementation and post implementation) that stakeholders are experiencing a big change and that there is a need for ongoing messaging.
- **Addressing specific stakeholder needs through communication and engagement** Jurisdictions described a number of different channels used to address different stakeholder groups in a targeted fashion. Some of these channels included online communication, newsletters and updates, working groups and change networks. In a number of jurisdictions, it was noted that greater support for front-line supervisors, including training to support staff through the changes, was a key success factor.
- **Training materials that reflect a business context** The importance of training that reflects business scenarios was noted by several jurisdictions to help users understand the impact of changes.
- **Understanding the language of the new system** A need to understand the system language, as compared to the business language, was highlighted as being important, particularly from a user perspective. The differences in language and terminology were found to create a disconnect between the system and users and, in some cases, led to frustration with the system, as users were unclear what the system could and could not do. It was noted by several jurisdictions that they underestimated how much time it takes to "translate" terminology between users and the system.

Risk-management considerations

The following risk-management considerations were identified during the jurisdictional reviews as areas that needed to be addressed through the transition and planning for business as usual. While not necessarily common across jurisdictions, it is worthwhile to understand these considerations on a go-forward basis:

- **Data quality** From a transition perspective, one of the jurisdictions commented that there has to be an acknowledgement of "garbage in/garbage out" from a data perspective. One of the jurisdictions implemented a team of data stewards as part of a large-scale data remediation project to address these concerns.
- **Security/access management and confidentiality (essential monitoring)** The ongoing management of appropriate system access and access to client information was identified as a key consideration, and the importance of continual monitoring around security and access was highlighted.
- **Continued attention to process risks and controls** Jurisdictions noted the importance of understanding the flow of funding and how process changes could impact the controls required.
- **Infrastructure sizing** It was specifically noted that the Cúram system needs to be able to scale both vertically and horizontally and, with the ongoing growth of the database, this may be an ongoing challenge if not addressed.

Some jurisdictions identified a number of strategies that helped to identify and address risks on an ongoing basis, including:

- **“Black hat” risk-identification session** These sessions are designed to highlight areas of risk and concern and were run by one jurisdiction to ensure that all project risks were identified and documented. In addition, the appropriate mitigation strategies were determined to effectively respond to the risks and issues identified.
- **External third-party involvement** In one jurisdiction, an external third party was involved in the system implementation project, as well as through transition and business as usual by assuming a role on the steering committee. This enabled them to offer advice regarding critical decisions and potential risks and controls to consider.

In all jurisdiction discussions, there was recognition that there are many challenges to address when implementing similar IT solutions and when considering the complexity needed to support a human services delivery environment. However, there was also acknowledgement that there are benefits to be achieved with these systems once the initial post-implementation challenges are addressed.

Current challenges and observations with the SAMS transition

Overview

Similar to other jurisdictional experiences, MCSS is working through its own particular set of transition challenges associated with the SAMS implementation. Current transition challenges experienced by MCSS are not uncommon when compared to the experiences of other similar IT implementations. In this section of the report, we highlight the current challenges facing MCSS and its delivery partners during this transition period, providing a summary of observations commonly raised by stakeholders consulted and based on the review of MCSS transition-planning documentation.

Through the consultations, stakeholders¹ shared their perspectives on the SAMS transition, provided feedback on efforts to date and raised future expectations. These perceptions, along with PwC's independent review, contributed to the observations detailed below. These observations have been grouped into five categories: Overall Observations, Planning and Governance, Change Management and Stakeholder Engagement, Technology and Process.

Overall observations

Delivery partners and the Ministry have been working through the challenges with SAMS to minimize the impact to clients. Both have responded quickly to the challenges to mitigate downstream issues.

Delivery partners and front-line staff have been particularly sensitive to clients' needs and how they have been impacted by SAMS. In many cases, front-line staff have placed their clients' needs ahead of their own and have taken whatever action is needed to reduce the impact of SAMS on their clients. These actions have supported the transition period from a client perspective, and the efforts of the front-line staff should continue to be acknowledged. Despite differences between the ODSP and OW, both groups have experienced similar challenges as a result of SAMS.

Transition positives

The Ministry has been responsive and action oriented through the transition period in support of delivery partners and front-line delivery staff:

- The Ministry was able to quickly respond to system defects, prioritize them and generally resolve many of them as of the end of March 2015. As a result, SAMS has become more stable, while improving predictability for front line staff remains a focus.
- The Ministry, based on stakeholder input, quickly convened user groups (Front Line Staff Working Group, Technical Working Group) to assist with priority setting and resolving operational and service delivery challenges.
- The Ministry has responded to front-line staff requests for additional support by developing and running specialized training (e.g. working with converted data, outcome plans). The Ministry has also been regularly updating user guides, tips-and-tricks documents and other communications shared with staff.

¹ Stakeholder groups consulted included OW and ODSP front-line staff and management, Ministry staff, unions and OMSSA.

- The Ministry has conducted site visits to understand delivery agent challenges, provide direct support by SAMS experts and enable the escalation of critical issues.

Transition challenges

In the following section, we highlight challenges raised by those stakeholders consulted and based on the review of existing transition-related documentation. These observations are not intended to present a full assessment of the SAMS implementation but rather present a stakeholder viewpoint associated with the transition to date and comments on specific areas of the MCSS transition that may require more attention and resource efforts.

Planning and governance

Uncertainty of the transition plan beyond the 57 priority items The focus of the transition over the past five months was on a combination of addressing the 57 high-priority system issues and enhancement requests. Moving forward, a similar focus will be taken, with prioritization on the next set of high-priority issues, along with key actions and outcomes to be achieved. At this point in time, stakeholders are unsure of the vision or immediate objectives regarding transition and/or the sequencing of activities. As a result, stakeholders are not aligned and uncertain around the next steps for SAMS. Transition planning is an area acknowledged by stakeholders as requiring further communication.

Transition governance structure and clarity around roles and responsibilities The governance structure used to manage the transition has been adjusted since go-live (e.g. addition of working groups), but it remains unclear to stakeholders what the post-transition structure will be and how the transition to business as usual will occur. A combination of the SAMS project team structure and Ministry operational governance structure are in place to help drive transition activities, but in the minds of stakeholders, there remains a lack of clarity with respect to roles and responsibilities between the groups (e.g. Social Assistance and Municipal Operations Branch role and responsibilities versus the role of the SAMS project team).

Engagement and collaboration through the governance structure Through the transition period, the Ministry has invested resources and time to enhance stakeholder engagement (e.g. number of site visits by the Ministry, working group meetings, meetings across governance groups). Consulted OW offices acknowledge MCSS engagement and communication efforts and would like to build on those efforts by advancing a stronger partnership between the Ministry and OW delivery partners—a partnership that works collaboratively and proactively to best address business recovery challenges.

There is a need for a common definition of “transition” Generally, stakeholders find the term “transition” to mean different things. Transition has been referred to as “business recovery,” “implementation,” “post-go-live” and “stabilization period.” All imply an end state that is slightly different, creating confusion in the minds of stakeholders.

Metrics, KPIs and benefits realization The Ministry is allocating resources and efforts to develop a mechanism to track, measure and report on both the status of “business recovery” and the overall benefits of SAMS. Value drivers and potential KPIs for each of the key SAMS benefits have been identified. The initial focus of the Ministry is to identify key metrics in the areas mentioned above. Although business recovery and overall benefits are generally known across management, the status and progress of those benefits to date is not currently known.

Change management and stakeholder engagement

Communications fatigue There have been significant communications to OW and ODSP offices and staff. However, the volume of communications, the terminology used and the way communications have been distributed and stored are creating a challenge for front line staff and system. Stakeholders commented that they are feeling overwhelmed by communications—this is particularly true for front-line staff, where communications related to SAMS aren’t always organized and sorted when received. The Ministry’s Corporate Communications team is

engaged and working to improve communications, particularly with respect to how information is shared and stored online.

Dissemination of communications The dissemination of communications materials can be difficult when considering the composition of Ontario's social services delivery network, where you have autonomous OW delivery partners and MCSS-managed ODSP offices. Notwithstanding the delivery network structure, stakeholders from both OW and ODSP offices raised the point that communications materials have varied by site, which impacts the consistency of the messages shared across all front-line staff. With communications filtered through different channels, depending on the group, messages can vary in terms of content and consistency. As a result, front-line staff experience a slightly different understanding of the messaging around SAMS. In addition, different means of communications, including updates, user guides and tips and tricks, are not always synchronized, and sometimes duplicate messages are sent, further contributing to staff fatigue around communications.

Stakeholder trust The challenges with SAMS through the transition period have impacted stakeholder trust in SAMS, specifically in how predictable the solution behaves from case to case and from day to day. OW and ODSP offices commented that when SAMS produces an incorrect result that is not consistent with the nature of the client case, it raises accuracy concerns (e.g. many sites have currently assigned additional staff to review all payments before they are issued), requires front line staff to spend additional time on resolution (e.g. troubleshoot) or causes users to question their level of proficiency with the solution (e.g. training). Expectations of front line staff and management related to the benefits of SAMS, set through implementation engagement activities, have not been met through the transition period.

Training and using SAMS Training on SAMS pre-go-live focused on how to use the system and complete certain tasks (e.g. how to create a letter, intake, etc.). Given that business processes often differ from one OW office to another, taking a task-based approach to training allowed OW offices the flexibility to modify local business practices as required. Stakeholders commented that, in retrospect, taking an end-to-end business process approach to training, where front line staff are exposed to a full suite of transaction activities incurred during specific business processes, would have been more beneficial. By not understanding the end-to-end impact on business processes, both staff and management in OW and ODSP offices expressed frustration in some instances where an outcome is expected and not achieved. There is a potential risk that additional workarounds are being undertaken and front line staff are experiencing greater time and effort to complete tasks. To support front-line staff going forward, the Ministry has begun offering focused training sessions on specialized areas (e.g. overpayments), which have been well received.

Capacity for change Stakeholders raised concerns about their capacity for change. Although the level of change at this point in time may be necessary to address the updates needed to SAMS, OW and ODSP offices noted that the ongoing capacity of staff to absorb change must be considered in future transition actions. If not considered, many believe the adoption of SAMS will be further slowed.

Readiness and impacts OW and ODSP offices and staff have been focused on learning and adapting to SAMS. Of the delivery offices visited, site readiness and the level of user adoption of SAMS varies, as does the impact of SAMS on day-to-day activities. Some OW offices have been proactive by implementing business process and organizational changes to better support the use of SAMS. However, not having access to a detailed impact assessment, with clarity around the impact of SAMS to front line staff and system users by job function and state of operational readiness, continues to limit user adoption of SAMS. In the case of OW offices, MCSS is reliant on its municipal delivery partners to assist in this exercise, given their operational autonomy and the operational discretion they apply to business processes and practices. The current impact assessments may not be at a sufficient level of detail needed to inform effective training and communications on an ongoing basis.

Capacity and knowledge transfer Capacity and knowledge transfer to front-line staff have been acknowledged by the Ministry and stakeholders as an area requiring attention to sustainably move forward. There is the potential to lose SAMS expertise as Ministry project resources return to their day-to-day positions (e.g. Regional Change Leads (RCL) and Local Change Implementation Coordinators (LCICs)) and SAMS Champions in the field return to

their caseloads. Concerns have also been noted that access to more SAMS experts would be helpful to the front line to support day-to-day operations (e.g. tips and tricks).

Technology

Logging issues regarding SAMS To support front-line staff, the Ministry introduced a number of methods to log issues specific to SAMS. Front-line staff has appreciated these methods, as they have allowed the project team to respond faster wherever possible (e.g. helpline). However, these methods have also created confusion and impacted the ability to centrally track, manage, address and report on issues raised. Current methods to log an issue include the provincial ticketing system (Remedy), HP Quality Center (HPQC), helplines and hotlines, as well as directly with the SAMS transition team. In addition, issues are currently being identified through the Front Line Staff Working Group and the Technical Working Group. There is currently a backlog of tickets, and tickets are not consolidated in one place. Although having multiple access points to log issues enabled stakeholders to access business support, it has created a challenge for MCSS to manage and respond in an efficient and effective manner. MCSS may need to reconsider this approach as it moves forward with the transition.

Issue management and resolution An increase in tickets during the initial stages of any system implementation is not uncommon and was anticipated by the Ministry. However, the high volume of tickets has created challenges. In some cases, tickets are being closed without the submitter being notified and without any resolution confirmation. This makes it difficult for front line staff to understand what caused the issue and how it was resolved. In addition, some tickets are being closed in bulk on the assumption that they have been resolved by another fix related to a similar issue. The volume of tickets and limited resources available for problem determination and defect resolution may be resulting in a less-than-optimal issue-resolution process being followed. Confidence in the problem-submission process may be eroded as a result. The backlog of tickets is also putting strain on resources and adding stress to front-line staff, who feel as though the project is not responding to their issues and concerns. The backlog of tickets is negatively impacting front-line staff, causing frustration.

Release management Like other jurisdictions, MCSS followed a weekly release schedule immediately following go-live to address SAMS defects. This was a strategic decision made by MCSS based on the short-term requirement to address a combination of priority issues (e.g. defects and data-quality issues) and enhancement requests in an accelerated manner. The Ministry recognized the risks associated with this approach and were willing, like other jurisdictions have, to use this approach on a short-term basis to stabilize SAMS. Considerable progress has been made using patches to resolve issues and defects in the short term. Moving forward, as SAMS stabilizes, this risk should be minimized.

MCSS is currently moving from a weekly patch approach (with unit testing only) to a monthly build schedule (with limited UAT). This is expected to be followed with a release-management approach based on quarterly releases that are fully supported with a comprehensive suite of regression tests and follow Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) compliant processes. Although the Ministry is moving from a weekly to monthly maintenance schedule, there may still be insufficient time and resources to perform full regression testing (once this test suite becomes available). In general, the rate of defects introduced through application maintenance is a function of the amount of testing performed prior to moving the application into production. The Ministry is moving to an end state model based on quarterly releases, targeted for March 2016. In the meantime, monthly releases have the potential to create additional issues as new fixes and enhancements are introduced. This situation has caused frustration for front-line staff and a lack of confidence in the predictability of the application following the application of a patch.

System enhancement System enhancements are not currently the only focus, but there are a number of enhancements being considered, including those requested by front line staff and those requested by the Ministry. Front-line staff are waiting for a number of enhancements to support their use of SAMS (e.g. summary page), while the Ministry is looking at enhancements to continue to build additional features to service clients. There is risk involved with the introduction of enhancements concurrent with defect resolution, and these should be weighed against the benefits.

Technology infrastructure In general, the infrastructure has been stable, and there has only been some minor outages impacting service. Moving forward, there is a need for MCSS to ensure that infrastructure capacity aligns with the SAMS release plan. New features and capabilities may require more hardware capacity (e.g. introduction of a self-serve portal), eventually supporting tens of thousands of clients. Attention must also be given to the use of virtualization technology at the server level to ensure that sufficient resources are available during peak periods to provide expected performance for transactional processing.

Environments MCSS continues to work toward creating a sustainable IT environment for SAMS. Supporting a complex core system, such as SAMS, would typically require availability of multiple environments for development, testing, training, staging and production. Some of these environments would be expected to be “full data-size” environments, capable of supporting end-to-end testing of the system. The pre-production environment should be physically identical to production (i.e. number and size of components) so that performance testing can be performed. However, this does not appear to be the case at present. The ability to perform full regression testing or training across the case-management life cycle relies on the availability of an environment that is synchronized and comparable to the production environment. This requires that as fixes are introduced into production, the exact same fixes are reflected in all other environments. In the past, the lack of synchronization appears to have resulted in end users being trained on the back level of the system, which didn’t operate the same way in training as it did in production. As part of a release-management strategy, the availability of these environments should be addressed.

SAMS knowledge transfer There is a knowledge transfer plan to transfer skills from the vendor to the Ministry over a 12-month time frame. There are approximately 87 interfaces (20 in Cúram and the rest using Informatica) that have been built and require knowledge transfer as well. Depending on the complexity of the required skill, significant job shadowing may be required over a lengthy period of time. This may impact resource availability for other maintenance and development activities.

System performance In general, online transaction performance at remote locations has been very good, but some degradation was reported during peak periods. The last capacity-planning exercise took place about nine months ago. End-to-end performance is a function of many components, including the SAMS GDC infrastructure, wide area network connectivity and end user workstation and browser. Ongoing monitoring is required to help ensure that performance remains as expected.

Process

Workaround within SAMS Both the Ministry and front-line staff have been reacting to system issues, which is not uncommon during a post-go-live period. Both groups have developed workarounds, wherever necessary, to address issues and support business as usual. However, where workarounds have been introduced at the local level, they are not widely known or tracked, creating a risk that workarounds will become the new “normal,” even when fixes are put in place. There is also the potential for duplication of effort, with multiple groups resolving the same issues.

Data quality There is a perception from front line staff and management across the Province that a high number of system issues are related to data that was converted and migrated from legacy systems (e.g. SDMT). These issues do not appear when a new case with no prior history is created within SAMS. It would appear that historical (migrated) data is, in some cases, negatively impacting SAMS performance and causing issues and unintended consequences. This is a challenge, given the volume of historical data loaded in the system. In addition, it’s challenging to proactively identify where historical data will cause issues for front-line staff until an issue is identified.

Supporting documents Front-line staff are currently supported in their daily use of SAMS by user guides and job aids. The utility of these documents has been challenging based on their length, terminology and accessibility. There have also been version issues due to the frequency of change that the system is currently undergoing, potentially impacting the overall accuracy of these tools. There is concern that a workaround or alternative process will be put in place in lieu of using the appropriate user guide and/or job aid. At an earlier point in time, a

knowledge database was created. However, this has not been maintained and is not widely available to front-line staff.

Business process Varying degrees of business process mapping have been completed across OW offices. Although the ODSP has documented its respective business processes, both OW and ODSP management and staff have made similar comments that end-to-end business process views where SAMS has a touch point are critical to providing staff with a greater understanding of the system and how it impacts day-to-day work. Stakeholders from both OW and ODSP offices expressed the view that documented end-to-end processes could also support future training and on-boarding.

Local support and resources Local sites have adapted to SAMS in different ways. For example, some OW and ODSP sites have identified local SAMS subject matter experts and have relieved them of their caseload to support front-line staff with SAMS (e.g. processing payments). Some have made structural changes to how application intake activities are performed (e.g. all intake triage completed by a common group of resources before being delegated to a caseworker). Front-line staff supported by focused SAMS subject matter experts/champions (i.e. no caseload) have indicated that this model is helpful, particularly with reducing stress and concern across the sites. This has enabled sites to develop their own subject matter specialists and funnelling issues so that they can be assessed holistically and addressed more consistently.

Recommendations

Overview

In this section of the report, we outline the recommendations that have been formulated based on the observations that emerged from the detailed documentation review, stakeholder interviews, jurisdictional scan findings and PwC's Project Review Assessment Framework (PRAF) Methodology, which includes the "Six Pillars of Project Success." Recommendations have been grouped into categories that reflect the observations highlighted in the previous section, including: Planning and Governance, Change Management and Stakeholder Engagement, Technology and Process.

Each recommendation includes the following sections:

- **Summary** Outlines what the overall recommendation is, its purpose and high-level actions to be taken
- **Rationale** Details why this recommendation has been put forward for consideration
- **Benefits** Outlines the benefits of implementing each recommendation for the Ministry
- **Considerations for implementation** Outlines how this recommendation should be implemented, along with important considerations for the Ministry

Overall recommendations

To support the implementation of the recommendations in this report, current capacity and resources will need to be assessed. The Integrated Transition Plan (recommendation under Planning and Governance) will be a key input to this assessment, confirming the resources required by both the Ministry and municipal partners to achieve the outcomes detailed in the plan.

Overall, to enable the recommendations, engagement between the Ministry and front-line staff is critical. It is important that the Ministry continue to engage and listen to front-line staff throughout this process. A dialogue between both groups is needed, and the Ministry and front-line staff should work together to determine the most effective way to do so (e.g. leveraging and building on current efforts, like the Front Line Staff Working Group).

The following is a high-level summary of the recommendations for the Ministry's consideration and are detailed in the following section:

Planning and governance

1. Governance structure realignment
2. Integrated transition plan
3. SAMS business acceptance criteria
4. Transition program manager
5. Transition-specific metrics and measures
6. Enhance the stakeholder management and engagement strategy with municipal delivery agents and other stakeholders

Change management and stakeholder engagement

7. Enhance organizational impact assessment
8. Integrated change and communications plan
9. Refine SAMS training approach and materials
10. Knowledge transfer for Cúram resources

Technology

11. Release management
12. Regression testing and automated use cases

13. Environment synchronization
14. Capacity planning specific to infrastructure
15. Balance defect resolution with planned enhancements, and Cúram upgrade plan
16. End user support strategy

Process

17. Identify and document workarounds
18. Business process documentation
19. Data quality assessment

Planning and governance

1. Support the adoption of a governance structure with consideration for transition, business as usual and an Integrated Transition Plan and Program Manager.

Recommendation: Governance structure realignment

The current SAMS transition structure has served the transition well. To further support SAMS in moving to business as usual and to support the other recommendations put forward in this report, a governance structure change is recommended.

Interim, during transition: A governance structure for business as usual should be developed, leveraging the SDMT structure and transition structure as key inputs (e.g. review current working groups). To effectively support the transition phase, key governance bodies within the structure should meet on a regular basis (i.e. weekly) to address the need for an accelerated rate of change, as they do as part of the current transition governance. The governance structure through the transition should also support the Program Manager (see Program Manager recommendation) as the single point of accountability for the transition.

Post-transition, business as usual: Adjust the meeting frequency to support business as usual (e.g. biweekly meetings in place of weekly meetings).

Rationale

It has been observed that roles and responsibilities and relationships between governance bodies and newly formed engagement bodies are not well understood (e.g. technology working group, front-line staff working group). Based on PwC's experience, governance should be a priority that is addressed quickly, as it will impact a number of other recommendations that have been made.

Governance is a project success factor within PwC's Project Review Assessment Framework (PRAF) and is an important foundational element to successfully underpin the transition and business as usual. Given that SAMS is currently in transition, there is a need for quick decisions and a faster escalation path. As such, a transitional structure is still required. However, business-as-usual governance bodies should be engaged wherever possible to lessen the transition to a business-as-usual structure and reduce the overall change impact.

Benefits

- Opportunity to embed those who will be managing SAMS on an ongoing basis through the transition as part of the governance structure.
- Acknowledges and addresses the challenges voiced by stakeholders around the current governance structure.
- Formally includes the working group/user groups as part of the structure, demonstrating that feedback received from those groups directly informs decisions made as part of the management and executive-level governance.
- Enables a smooth transition to business-as-usual governance once the transition is deemed complete.
- Opportunity to leverage existing terms of reference/committee details to enable a faster transition to the new governance structure.
- Creates a foundation to effectively engage key stakeholders in the decision-making process (see Change Recommendations).

Considerations for implementation

- To accelerate the development of the governance structure, we suggest that the Ministry plan and facilitate a working session to help define the business-as-usual governance structure. This should include defining the governance structure, including coordinating/management bodies, terms of reference, membership, meeting frequency, roles and responsibilities, and scope.
- The agreed upon business-as-usual governance structure should then be adapted from a meeting frequency perspective (and membership where it makes sense) to support accelerated decision making during transition.
- To inform the development of the governance structure, the SDMT structure and current SAMS transition structure should be leveraged as key inputs.
- The stakeholder analysis (recommendation under Change Management and Stakeholder Engagement) should be leveraged as a key input to defining governance body membership.
- The governance structure should consider engagement with municipal partners when determining membership and terms of reference

2. Enhance and strengthen the ongoing planning through an integrated approach to transition that will provide a holistic view of the continued efforts and interactions required to achieve identified outcomes.

Recommendation: Integrated transition plan	
<p>Build on the Ministry’s current transition plan through the development of a more integrated transition plan that would include clearly defined workstreams, deliverables, plan milestones, dependencies and transition outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure the integrated project plan using six-month increments/stages that lead to a business-as-usual desired state. • Identify key milestones, deliverables and transition outcomes for each stage of the plan. • Identify and define measurable goals and objectives for specific time frames. • The dedicated Program Manager will own the transition plan moving forward and actively manage the plan. • Identify leads to deliver each workstream where new workstreams are introduced in the Integrated Transition Plan. • Review and enhance the change control process for existing planning to ensure that changes are properly monitored and managed. 	
Rationale	Benefits
<p>Since go-live, the Ministry has been operating in a rapid-response mode and recognizes that it now needs to move to a more structured approach. The Ministry has a transition plan, but it is not at the level of detail we would expect to see going forward, based on our experience with similar transition-planning efforts and leading practices. Given the feedback from our consultations and observations, stakeholders would like to understand the transition plan at a greater level of detail. They would like to understand key milestones and deliverables to have a better sense of what the Ministry is striving to achieve and the Ministry’s expectations for transition.</p> <p>Planning in a dynamic and transitioning environment is challenging, but leading practices in project management suggest that success for large, complex projects relies on how uncertainty is explicitly addressed in project planning. Integrated planning also directly relates to the PwC Six Pillars of Project Success with respect to the fact that both “work and schedule are predictable” and “scope is realistic and managed.”</p> <p>An Integrated Transition Plan will align activities, resources and timelines across workstreams to provide a holistic view of the effort and interactions required to achieve identified outcomes. Having clear goals and objectives allows for consistent integration and inter-relationships between all workstreams (i.e. change management, knowledge transfer, release management and enhancements). This also provides visibility into dependencies that need to be managed. A rolling approach using six-month increments provides a clear framework for managing milestones, inputs, resources and goals throughout the transition.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transition goals are understood and communicated to all organizational groups. ▪ Major milestones and deliverables are articulated and clearly communicated to stakeholders. ▪ An integrated plan provides visibility on complexity, resource requirements and timing of events. ▪ An integrated plan provides a clear understanding of activities and actions required to achieve milestones. ▪ Provides a foundation for other more detailed plans (e.g. Integrated Change Plan). ▪ A rolling approach allows for the transition team to respond to changes and respond to emerging stakeholder feedback. ▪ Transition resources and stakeholders are working toward the same objectives. ▪ An enhanced change control process will support effective decision making and transparency around changes to the Integrated Transition Plan.

Considerations for implementation

The Integrated Transition Plan will create the foundation for executing transition activities effectively while understanding key constraints and interdependencies. As such, it should be a priority undertaking. Several considerations should be made with respect to the development and execution of the Integrated Transition Plan:

- Although the team has been working tirelessly to respond to issues since go-live, it is important for the Ministry to clearly articulate the ongoing goals and milestones of the transition to clearly articulate the roadmap that will move SAMS to a business-as-usual desired operating environment.
- The Integrated Transition Plan should lay out major phases, deliverables and milestones at the outset and, based on the dynamic environment of the transition, a lower level of detail can be developed as the Ministry moves through the transition and approaches milestones. For example, transition phases and outcomes could include:
 - April to September (6 months); by the end of September there will be (examples only):
 - Improvement in system predictability by resolving a defined percentage of outstanding defects (i.e. 80%)
 - Improvement in the level of user capabilities through integrated support tools and training (i.e. proficiency level: number of intakes completed per day)
 - A reduction in manual cheques (i.e. number of manual cheques issued per month)
 - October to December (9 months)
 - January to March 2016 (12 months)
- Each phase of the transition should include progress objectives that are measurable.
- Integrated Transition Plan workstreams for consideration include:
 - SAMS predictability and enhancements
 - release management
 - ticket resolution and analysis
 - SAMS enhancement planning
 - data cleansing
 - Business operational enhancements
 - Business processes and procedures enhancement
 - Business metrics and benefits management
 - Business support and capacity building
 - SAMS user materials and help desk/user support enhancement
 - Integrated change management and communication
 - Business impact assessment
 - Transition communications
 - Transition stakeholder management
 - Training enhancements and building user capabilities
 - Capacity building in support of SAMS business as usual
 - Transition to desired operating model in support of SAMS
 - Resource planning and knowledge transfer
- Resources within the plan should be specifically identified, which will highlight gaps in capacity to deliver the plan effectively.
- Deep cross-sectional involvement with staff during development, deployment and reinforcement of the new Integrated Transition Plan is required.
- The level of agility required for planning specific workstreams within the Integrated Transition Plan should be assessed based on the rate of change required for planning and impact to replanning (i.e. benefits realization should have more stabilization in planning than planning for technology, which should be more agile to respond to emerging issues).
- To accelerate the development of an integrated plan, we suggest that the Ministry consider organizing specific working sessions focused on planning to shape, discuss and agree on key transition milestone outcomes (6 months, 9 months and 12 months), workstream scope and key deliverables, and resource allocation.
- Developing an Integrated Transition Plan will highlight capacity and resource constraints that will need to be addressed. This may include the need to shift resources to priority areas or acquire additional resources to support ongoing transition requirements.

3. Confirm and communicate business acceptance criteria for the SAMS transition to business as usual. This will provide greater clarity to key stakeholders within the project and operations teams in terms of the ongoing operational responsibilities of SAMS. Business acceptance criteria are conditions that must be satisfied before moving to business as usual. These criteria will also provide greater insight into the prioritization and sustainability of decisions that are being made as the transition continues.

Recommendation: SAMS business acceptance criteria	
Confirm and communicate business acceptance criteria for SAMS to complete the transition to business as usual. Business acceptance criteria should be a formal statement of needs, rules, tests, requirements and standards that must be met for SAMS to move from the transition phase and be accepted into business-as-usual operations.	
Rationale	Benefits
<p>A clear understanding of when SAMS will transition to business as usual and the criteria that will support this transition is unclear. The Ministry has been focused on high-priority issues/defects and enhancements, all of which are critical to moving SAMS closer to business as usual. Leading practices in project management highlight the importance of setting out clear acceptance criteria in the development and execution of projects. Business acceptance criteria must be met before the project is formally accepted into business as usual. These criteria define specific circumstances where the transition can officially end and operations take ownership of SAMS through a measurable set of criteria and defined outcomes.</p> <p>In addition to being a key mechanism for operations to take ownership of SAMS, the business acceptance criteria can be used as a key input into the Integrated Transition Plan and the Integrated Change Plan, providing clear goals and objectives to be communicated throughout the transition period.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provides clarity and sets expectations around the transfer of ownership from the transition to business as usual. ▪ Avoids miscommunication with internal transition and operations stakeholders. ▪ Assists in prioritizing what ongoing transition resources should focus their efforts on during the transition period based on business priorities. ▪ By co-developing criteria, a stronger sense of ownership can be fostered with the operations team. ▪ Defining business acceptance criteria can also assist in bridging the gap between the transition and business as usual, with all stakeholders focused on key outcomes that need to be achieved.
Considerations for implementation	
<p>Business acceptance criteria are most effective when developed and agreed upon by operations functions that will own the ongoing operations and management of the system in a business-as-usual state, together with input from the existing transition team. Clear criteria build a well-defined understanding of user expectations and open communications to clarify any ambiguity. In developing business acceptance criteria for transition, the Ministry should consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Business acceptance criteria can be developed in conjunction with the development of the Integrated Transition Plan, as they often prescribe a set of deliverables and actions that must be achieved before the transition is complete. ▪ Business acceptance criteria should be driven by operations and key functioning areas that will own SAMS once the transition is complete. ▪ Development of business acceptance criteria should be conducted through a business acceptance criteria workshop with key business owners, representing a holistic view of critical requirements. Acceptance criteria can include functional and non-functional requirements, performance measures, essential conditions, etc. Examples of potential business acceptance criteria could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Zero severity 1 or severity 2 defects outstanding ○ Stabilization of the SAMS solution in terms of number of issued tickets logged as evidenced by a reduction of call volumes by a specified percentage or specified response times 	

- Transition to a quarterly release schedule run through a fully tested environment
- A Validation Workshop that includes members of the project team should be conducted to clearly articulate and determine agreed upon measures. This workshop should also consider the approval process for business acceptance criteria and identify the role of approver (the role responsible for evaluating and approving the criteria at the end of the transition).
- Business acceptance criteria should be documented and detailed (i.e. name of criteria, how criteria will be measured and who is responsible for measuring criteria).
- Business acceptance criteria should be signed off once agreed upon and approved by the appropriate governance body.
- Business acceptance criteria should be subject to change control processes and should be agreed upon and authorized by the appropriate governance body. Business acceptance criteria should also be subject to change control processes.

4. Support the Ministry’s decision to engage a Program Manager to own the Integrated Transition Plan (i.e. plan, manage, monitor and report on transition progress and outcomes).

Recommendation: Transition program manager

PwC supports the Ministry’s decision to engage a Program Manager to own and manage the Integrated Transition Plan and play a key role in the governance structure for the transition (see Governance recommendation).

- Engage a dedicated Program Manager to manage the transition plan moving forward.
- The Program Manager should drive the development, monitoring and reporting of the Integrated Transition Plan.

Rationale

Stakeholders are not clear on the Ministry’s current achievements with the transition plan. As noted under the Integrated Transition Plan recommendation, key milestones, activities, workstreams, roles and responsibilities are unclear, as is their understanding of how the plan impacts them directly.

Based on PwC experience and leading practices, a transition of the size and scale of SAMS requires a senior resource as the Program Manager to actively manage the transition plan, track status, escalate issues and course correct where necessary, among other tasks.

A single, dedicated Program Manager will be responsible for overseeing the entire Integrated Transition Plan (for both technology and business-related workstreams) and define the ongoing activities required to achieve business as usual. The Program Manager will be a communications conduit between the technical and business workstreams to ensure alignment throughout the ongoing transition, as well as support a more integrated approach to stakeholder engagement and communications.

Benefits

- Creates clear senior management ownership and leadership for transition outcomes.
- Creates a clear focus for ongoing decision making throughout the transition.
- Creates a single point of accountability.
- From a change management perspective, it emphasizes the Ministry’s focus on a transition to business as usual.

Considerations for implementation

A clear role description for the Program Manager should be developed. Implications related to the introduction of the Program Manager role should be addressed through the revised governance structure.

- The Program Manager should facilitate consensus building and issue resolution between the business and technology workstreams.
- Identifying the skills and capabilities of the Program Manager role is critical to ensuring that the most appropriate resource is selected. For example:
 - Program management experience
 - Capacity to build relationships at all organizational levels (front-line staff to executive level)
 - Experience with large-scale system implementation and transition
 - Experience with complex stakeholder environments
 - Proven track record of success as it relates to implementation and transition
- Understanding the broader stakeholder environment is critical for the Program Manager role. The Program Manager must be able to balance the needs of the business versus the realities of what the technology can achieve while focusing on achieving transition objectives.
- The Program Manager should drive consistent and coordinated management oversight for the

transition.

- The Program Manager should be accountable for the ongoing Integrated Transition Plan, which would involve the active management, monitoring and reporting of transition activities, achievements, risks and outcomes.
- The Program Manager will have oversight on a number of governance bodies and participate on a number of bodies. The Program Manager should be a part of the workshop to develop the governance structure.

- 5. Leverage current performance measures and metrics to develop a consolidated dashboard that measures and tracks metrics related to program benefits, system performance and usage.

Recommendation: Transition-specific metrics and measures	
<p>PwC supports the Ministry’s efforts to identify business recovery metrics and develop the benefits realization framework that can be shared across stakeholder groups to understand transition progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review proposed metrics identified to establish the rate of business recovery and identify metrics that align with the goals and objectives set out in the Integrated Transition Plan and business acceptance criteria. Validate whether existing metrics support the objectives and goals of the transition. • Track metrics and measures during the transition based on a balanced scorecard that considers both internal (SAMS-related) and external (staff and client service-related) performance and reflects people, process and technology. • Present metrics and measures as a dashboard for understanding, as the dashboard should be shared with a wider stakeholder audience to increase transparency around progress. • Clearly define targets aligned with the Integrated Transition Plan. • Work with municipal partners to leverage the work they have been doing to date to develop a collective set of metrics that supports ongoing recovery efforts. 	
Rationale	Benefits
<p>Stakeholders are not clear on the metrics and measures that the Ministry is using to track SAMS transition progress and business performance. Stakeholders are also unclear which metrics and measures are being tracked by the Ministry to determine when SAMS has transitioned to business as usual. Stakeholders and the Ministry need to be aligned on the metrics, measures and expectations around them. The Ministry has started to do this by engaging with stakeholders over the past four to six weeks to acknowledge this gap and discuss what is needed specific to key performance indicators. Having clearly defined and consistent measures and metrics will provide stakeholders with context and progress around transition. The Ministry will also be able to clearly demonstrate progress against objectives. As noted through the jurisdictional review, progress should be communicated to stakeholders in measures that are meaningful to them in the execution of their roles.</p> <p>One of the PwC Six Pillars of Project Success is “Benefits are Realized.” This pillar is key for projects, as it’s important to have a clearly defined measurement baseline to achieve objectives and communicate those benefits to both internal and external stakeholders. Continuously monitoring metrics and measures that have been identified will provide a foundation to drive corrective action.</p>	<p>Metrics and measures will enable the Ministry to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assess the status of the ongoing transition. ▪ Identify potential risks and proactively manage issues as they arise. ▪ Determine if specific transition activities are accomplishing objectives. ▪ Communicate progress to stakeholders using a standard approach. ▪ Increase transparency to stakeholders around continuous improvement efforts.
Considerations for implementation	
<p>A balanced scorecard approach leveraging a dashboard should be considered to translate components of the overall SAMS transition (benefits, system performance, usage, business acceptance criteria) into specific, quantifiable goals and status against those goals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Include key metrics for achieving business acceptance criteria. ▪ Include metrics to measure progress against goals and milestones that have been identified in the Integrated Transition Plan and the Integrated Change Plan. 	

- In the short term, focus on narrowing down metrics identified in transition documents by focusing on those metrics that are core to achieving the overall goals of the Integrated Transition Plan (e.g. KPIs).
- A number of proposed metrics have been identified in the existing transition to business-as-usual documentation; these should be reviewed using a balanced approach. To be appropriately balanced, the dashboard should consider:
 - Both result measures and process measures
 - (i.e. system and usage metrics)
 - Lagging and leading indicators
- In the short term, a focused approach to selecting metrics and measures should be taken so that progress is clear.
- In the medium to long term, include both internal and external measures, such as operational, client service, employee and technology.
- Include target and actual realization periods.
- Measures and metrics, along with reporting frequency, should be signed off by the appropriate governance body.
 - In order for KPIs to be effective, they must be widely accepted and understood and have clear accountability through the continued transition.
 - Any assumptions about metrics and measures should be clearly documented.
 - Actions for the non-achievement of metrics should be articulated.
- Identify audiences for distribution of metrics and dashboards.

6. Enhance the stakeholder management and engagement strategy with municipal delivery agents and other stakeholders to enable transition objectives and align outcome expectations.

Recommendation: Refine the partnership and engagement structure with OW offices

Planning and execution of planning across the Province is different for OW, ODSP and ACSD offices. As a result, the Ministry should continue to engage and work with municipalities to redefine the engagement and ongoing governance structures through the transition to enhance its partnership with municipal offices.

- Work with the municipalities to refine the strategy for the partnership between the Ministry and the municipalities.
- Identify an internal Ministry resource that would be responsible for owning the relationship.
- The Ministry should focus on using the partnership to gain insight, input and advice on decisions being undertaken as part of the continuing transition and identify leading practices from across the municipalities.
- The Ministry should focus on gaining feedback and understanding on how the municipalities would like to engage moving forward and identify how the Ministry may be able to continue to support their needs.

Rationale

Partnership between the Ministry and its stakeholders, particularly municipalities, has been observed as being an area that requires ongoing attention. Municipal stakeholders have indicated that they feel as though they have not been able to contribute meaningfully to the transition as much as they would like. There is recognition by stakeholders that it is the Ministry’s discretion as to the input they take from stakeholders, but justification for what input is and is not taken would be helpful. Through our consultations, there was also a sense that the Ministry does not fully understand the nuances of municipal service delivery and the impact that SAMS has had on them.

One of the jurisdictions, based on its experience, highlighted the importance for stakeholders to feel supported by leadership. Creating real partnerships to identify what will and will not work is a critical success factor for them. The partnerships should be used to not only communicate and inform but also problem-solve and identify solutions on how to deliver human services effectively across the jurisdictions.

“Stakeholders are committed” is one of PwC’s Six Pillars of Project Success. One of the key focus areas of this pillar is having effective project governance and stakeholder buy-in.

Benefits

- Enables a consistent way to engage with municipalities and share leading practices and processes.
- Provides municipalities with an opportunity to partner with the Ministry to understand key transition objectives and milestones while retaining their discretion at a municipal level.
- Provides further insight into key dependencies and projects that are occurring within the municipalities to proactively identify impacts and issues before they arise.
- Provides an opportunity for the Ministry to understand leading practice activities occurring within the municipalities.
- The Ministry will continue to build a greater understanding of the business requirements of municipal partners.
- Provides an open forum for collective problem solving and knowledge sharing.
- Leverages knowledge and experience from existing groups across the province (i.e. business recovery working group).
- Greater insight will support evidence-based decision making as the transition continues.

Considerations for implementation

An enhanced partnership approach with the municipalities should be designed.

- A formal engagement structure should be established, with clear terms of reference that outline:
 - The overarching purpose of the newly designed structure, which should focus on how and when municipalities will be involved in the decision-making process and how the relationship will align with transition planning and overall objectives
 - The frequency of meetings and reporting against progress

○ Membership and structure

- The development of this engagement structure should be aligned to the stakeholder engagement recommendation as part of Change Management and Stakeholder Engagement.
- The partnership should have clear executive-level sponsorship from the Ministry and municipalities.
- Ministry representation should include both a business representative and an IT representative to ensure that there is a clear understanding of requirements from both perspectives.
- Clear value drivers for the partnership should be identified and agreed upon.

Change management and stakeholder engagement

- Strengthen insight into SAMS-related changes and people-related impact by expanding the level of detail in the Organizational Impact Assessment. Insights should continue to be refined and validated with front-line staff on an ongoing basis.

Recommendation: Enhance organizational impact assessment

Continue to refine and reconfigure the Organization Impact Assessment to provide greater visibility at the activity/task level into how different functions within a job are impacted by SAMS for OW, ODSP and ACSD.

- This analysis should be performed through an end-to-end lens to ensure completeness.
- Existing fields in the Organization Impact Assessment Excel tool (e.g. current and future state description, impact, category, degree of impact, program) should be completed with accuracy (validation) and precision (task/activity level) to deepen the understanding of the end user experience. Completion of these fields should include clear delineation between how a task was performed in the past and how it is performed in SAMS. In addition to existing fields, “role / job impacted” should be added as well as “how to address”; the existing “Category” field should be re-purposed to define the category of change such as: skill, workload / effort, business relationship in order to inform the “how to address” column.
- Once impacts have been identified, validation workshops should be conducted with three discrete sample groups (OW, ODSP and ACSD) to validate findings and share insights in advance of addressing them.

Rationale

A detailed document review and extensive stakeholder consultation indicated that the information and level of detail provided in the baseline Organization Impact Assessment completed pre-go-live is insufficient to facilitate the required level of understanding to design and deliver an effective change program through the transition period. Moreover, the Organization Impact Assessment has not been updated to reflect the system and process-related changes that have emerged in the months since the original assessment was completed. The pre go-live approach has delivered only a high-level, and sometimes insufficiently detailed, (e.g. IT Support roles, investigations, finance) understanding of change impacts, making it difficult to adequately address unique stakeholder needs.

Continued change program effectiveness during the transition will ultimately be determined by the extent to which there is a clear, detailed and accurate understanding of changes and impacts to stakeholders. Rigorous development of this foundation provides the requisite insight to build a change and training program that is specifically tailored to the end user experience. Failure to establish a robust understanding of change impacts by job function significantly weakens the ability to tailor/modify change-related activities to unique stakeholder needs.

In our experience, leading practices and

Benefits

- A detailed understanding of the degree to which (category, assessment) stakeholders, including front-line staff, will be and/or have been impacted by SAMS.
- Provides input into the Stakeholder Assessment and Integrated Change and Communications Plan.
- Contributes to broader understanding of change impacts and renewed sense of transparency through Validation Workshops.
- Creates insight into non-system related impacts (e.g. baseline policy knowledge requirements).
- Mitigates the risk of “missing” stakeholder groups in the design and delivery of the change program.
- Encourages fact-based discussions.

observations from the jurisdictional review tell us that delivering a change program without tailored interventions heightens the risk of redundant activity (e.g. receiving the same communication several times), duplicated effort and overall change fatigue. Ultimately, this also threatens the effectiveness of the change program and its ability to mitigate people-related risk to achieve business benefits.

Considerations for implementation

The Organizational Impact Assessment builds the foundation for future change and training-related activities and should be treated as a priority activity. Several considerations should be made before and during this activity:

- The Organizational Impact Assessment should be led by the Change Management Lead, with support from technical, functional and process subject matter experts.
- The Organizational Impact Assessment is a significant level of effort and should be resourced accordingly. If resource constraints are a consideration, it is recommended that this exercise prioritize areas with most concern (e.g. highest impact, volume of issues, stakeholder type) and work from there.
- In addition to existing fields, “role/job impacted” should be added, as well as “how to address”; the existing “category” field should be repurposed to define the category of change (such as skill, workload/effort and business relationship) to inform the “how to address” column.
- Output from the Organizational Impact Assessment provides the foundation for the change and training program and should be prioritized for completion accordingly (Months 1 and 2).
- An end-to-end assessment of SDMT and SAMS should be conducted from a process, technology and data perspective to fully identify all impacted stakeholder groups, irrespective of category or degree of impact.
- System functionality and end-to-end business processes should be reviewed, when available, to identify specific impacts to people.
- All changes and impacts should be captured insofar as they affect how an individual performs his or her job function; this may include but is not limited to areas such as security access, reports, forms, addition of new activities, elimination of old activities and business process relationships.
- Once identified, change impact should continue to be organized into predetermined categories (e.g. skills, workload, business relationships) and assessed according to stakeholder impact. It is important to note that the assessment level may differ between stakeholder groups for the same change impact.
- Validation Workshops should be conducted with a representative sample of sites for OW and ODSP offices to validate the drafted Organizational Impact Assessment with end user groups.
- Validation Workshops should be scheduled over several days (dependent on volume of change impacts) with three discrete sample groups (OW, ODSP, ACSD).
- The Organizational Impact Assessment should focus on processes performed within SAMS. Where additional changes to process are required outside of SAMS at individual sites, each site should be required (SAMS lead) to create a plan (including timeline) to update and prepare staff for these changes.
- The Organizational Impact Assessment should undergo consistent review, refinement and validation as new data is made available (e.g. new releases) and according to a predetermined timeline (e.g. monthly).
- Validation Workshops can be multipurposed to engage with stakeholders and drive ownership of the changes at different sites.

8. Using the Organizational Impact Assessment as a foundational document, design and deliver an Integrated Change and Communications Plan with tailored change interventions (training, communication, engagement) to address specific stakeholder needs.

Recommendation: Integrated change and communications plan

Continue to refine and update the Integrated Change and Communications Plan to align with the Integrated Transition Plan and address unique stakeholder needs.

- The Organizational Impact Assessment should be used to inform tailored communications and engagement activities that mitigate specific people-related risk.
- In addition to the Integrated Transition Plan and Integrated Change and Communications Plan as inputs, an updated Stakeholder Analysis should be performed to further understand and segment stakeholders according to predefined criteria (e.g. breadth and depth of change, progress to date).
- The Integrated Change and Communications Plan should clearly outline the tailored activities, resources and timelines required to mitigate people-related risk associated throughout the transition period.
- Existing fields in the Integrated Change and Communications Plan should be populated, as well as activity objectives, key messages, target audience, material developer, material reviewer, material distributed, frequency, status, and implementation channel.
- Once complete, milestones should be extracted from the Integrated Change and Communications Plan and embedded in the Integrated Transition Plan with appropriate resource names and dates.

Rationale

Despite efforts in communications (e.g. newsletter) and some ongoing engagement (e.g. Regional Change Leads), an Integrated Change and Communications Plan has not been developed for the transition period. In the absence of a formal plan, communications and engagement activities have been broadcasted widely (e.g. same message to all audiences) and fragmented in delivery (e.g. one person receiving the same message multiple times) and have not always reached the full breadth of stakeholders impacted by the changes.

The Integrated Change and Communications Plan provides an established structure and timeline for the delivery of change-related activities. The data-driven nature of the plan allows for tailored change-related activities that directly address identified people-related risk. In addition to driving effectiveness, based on our experience, best practices and observations from the jurisdictional scan, rigorous planning will also reduce the duplication of work, allow for accurate resource forecasting and streamline interactions between MCSS and its stakeholders.

Benefits

- Reduced duplication of work.
- Audience-specific change activities.
- Clearer communication.
- Enhanced distribution of resources.
- Broader program reach.
- Broader transparency between MCSS and stakeholder groups.
- Enhanced training effectiveness.
- Clearer expectations between MCSS and stakeholder groups.

Considerations for implementation

The Integrated Change and Communications Plan is the platform by which people-related risk is mitigated. Transition effectiveness is driven by a number of factors, most notably the degree to which the MCSS transition team understands the full scope and scale of changes and impacts experienced by stakeholders, especially front-line staff. In particular, these considerations should be made as the Integrated Change and Communications Plan is developed:

- The development of the Integrated Change and Communications Plan, including Stakeholder Analysis, should be led by the Change Lead with support from the Change Team, as well as

subject matter experts in data, technology and process.

- The revised Integrated Change and Communications Plan should be presented for information and feedback to other workstream leads, after which a high-level overview of the plan should be shared with each site for reference.
- Existing communications/engagement activities and structures should be reviewed to assess effectiveness and relevance to the transition period, continue and/or refine those activities deemed effective and discontinue activities deemed ineffective or irrelevant.
- An updated Stakeholder Analysis should be conducted in parallel to the Organizational Impact Assessment, including segmentation, to clearly identify the stakeholder landscape and provide insight to the Change Team for planning.
- The Stakeholder Analysis should be validated with a representative sample of both OW and ODSP; it may be validated during the Validation Workshops.
- The Stakeholder Analysis and Organizational Impact Assessment provide a foundation for the Integrated Change and Communications Plan and promote the design of change activities that address specific stakeholder needs/gaps.
- The Integrated Change and Communications Plan should incorporate tailored (e.g. specific audience), as well as general change, activities (e.g. all audiences or all of a subgroup).
- The Integrated Change and Communications Plan should be closely aligned with not only the Integrated Transition Plan but also the technical and business process teams (e.g. need to understand release schedule and impact of releases).
- The Integrated Change and Communications Plan should incorporate ongoing, as well as milestone-specific, activities.
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9. Based on insights from the Organizational Impact Assessment, continue to refine the training approach, curriculum, audiences and materials, with a focus on both new and existing user needs.

Recommendation: Refine SAMS training approach and materials

- Refine and update the End User Training Strategy to reflect SAMS in a steady state, differentiating between new and existing staff.
 - This process should include a continuation of transition training activity to date (e.g. training material update for new employees and targeted training/clarification on specific issues), as well as a formal and end-to-end review of training audiences and needs, curriculum structure and content, training materials and delivery mechanisms.
 - Updates to training materials and delivery should reflect an end-to-end view of the system and incorporate scenario-based instruction and exercises.
 - The updated Organizational Impact Assessment should be leveraged to the fullest extent possible to validate identified training audiences and inform, in as much detail as possible, audience-specific training needs.
 - The End User Training Strategy should be updated to specifically consider the training requirements by job function to reduce the risk of training gaps and increase the effectiveness of delivery.
 - All knowledge transfer participants (e.g. process, technology) should be validated and knowledge transfer plans finalized (Month 1), including timelines and desired and baseline assessment levels.

Rationale

Despite some effort to respond to identified training gaps in the transition (e.g. either missed training needs or system-related changes), an end-to-end review of the training approach and supporting materials has not been conducted. This leaves outstanding training gaps (e.g. clerk training, policy/process training) and puts the success of the transition period at risk due to uneven user adoption.

The updated End User Training Strategy creates a platform from which to prepare front-line staff to perform confidently and competently in SAMS. Our experience and leading practice, as well as observations from the jurisdictional scan, indicate that the strongest strategies not only tailor design and delivery to unique end user training needs but also reflect adult learning theory and site-specific limitations (e.g. broadband, training space, caseload).

The development of an updated strategy will also address many of the training-related observations captured in the site visits (e.g. clerk training, broadband connectivity challenges, fragmented delivery). The client-facing nature of SAMS-related work heightens the importance of delivering training that builds confidence in front line staff and minimizes service disruption for clients.

Benefits

- Minimal service disruption.
- Restored confidence for front line managers and staff .Reduced strain on incident management resources/processes.
- Improved credibility in SAMS.
- Increased training effectiveness and accelerated adoption.
- Greater consistency across sites driven by stronger compliance to process and technology.

Considerations for implementation

Not unlike the Integrated Change Plan, training design and delivery is most effective when it is built on a strong understanding of the breadth and depth of the impact experienced by front-line staff. The more

specificity the SAMS training team is able to embed in design and delivery, the better prepared staff will be to perform their jobs confidently and competently during and after the transition period. For training during transition, it will be critical to consider the following:

- The Training Lead should lead the refinement and update of all training documentation, with support from relevant subject matter experts (e.g. process, technology, data).
- All formal updates to training should be focused on the desired stable state of SAMS; training timelines should be reflective of the overall transition plan and expected timeline to stability.
- All system changes during transition toward the stable state should be well communicated, with reference to specific changes required.
- Training delivery should reflect adult learning theory, which indicates that adults learn better through experiential learning (e.g. hands-on) than through lectures.
- Web-based training should continue to be leveraged for low complexity courses. Wherever possible, in-class training should be leveraged for higher-complexity courses.
- Expectations about baseline technology competency should be identified and considered as updates to curriculum and training mechanisms are made.
- Training curriculum should be organized by job function or role. For similar roles in OW and ODSP, specific differences should be extracted and embedded in training materials.
- Training curriculum should include general (e.g. process overview, general navigation) and specific courses.
- Exercises that require end-to-end knowledge should be leveraged to further strengthen knowledge transfer.
- Trainers should be prepared to train on both system and process. In instances where specialized policy knowledge is required to support delivery, resources should be allocated accordingly.
- The knowledge transfer strategy should be updated to reflect specific competency requirements, as well as baseline competency assessments.
- Knowledge transfer participants should be validated with considerations to capacity, geography and expected output/value in the selection of participants.
- Knowledge transfer plans should be developed, including specific competency requirements and baseline/desired competency levels.
- Knowledge transfer progress (against plan) should be reported to the Program Transition Office on a predetermined basis.
- Training materials should be updated by individual sites if unique site differences preclude standardized materials from being used.
- If materials are modified, a formal quality-assurance process, led by the Training Lead, should be leveraged to drive consistent messaging and delivery.
- Training evaluations should be continued to collect insight on opportunities for improvement and further refinement.

10. Review the knowledge transfer plan and incorporate it into the integrated project plan, recognizing the impact on resources if they are shadowing vendors and that they may not be able to perform other planned activities.

Recommendation – Knowledge transfer plan	
<p>Review and validate the knowledge transfer plan that will allow internal IT resources to assume the roles currently provided by external vendors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm that adequate resources with the right set of foundation skills are available during the knowledge transfer period. • Adjust the knowledge transfer plan as required to recognize that replacing external vendor resources may be a multi-year journey and identify long term resource and capacity requirements. 	
Rationale	Benefits
<p>The current plan is to complete knowledge transfer over a period of 3 to 12 months, depending on the complexity of the skill being transferred. However, shadowing the vendor may divert current key resources from being able to perform day to day activities, such as defect resolution or enhancements. As a result, the most effective ways to continue to build knowledge internally within the Ministry will need to be determined.</p> <p>Based on our understanding that resources are currently constrained, we question that the current plan is executable. The project recognizes that the required resources are specialized and replacing a vendor role with over ten years of experience in Cúram with an internal resource who has just completed Cúram training and job shadowing may be problematic.</p> <p>Knowledge transfer and capability was noted as a key challenge by a number of the jurisdictions interviewed. In some cases, new strategies were developed in order to ensure that the organization had the required knowledge to continue to support Cúram while trying to decrease reliance on external vendors. For continued effectiveness in supporting SAMS from a technology perspective, key resources must understand IT development as well as the Cúram application.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater opportunity for front-line staff to access skilled resources. • Greater capacity on the part of the SAMS team to support the front line. • Lower cost by using internal resources rather than vendor consultants. • Reduced dependency on external third-party consultants.
Considerations for implementation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm that the resources that will assume roles currently filled by external vendors have the knowledge required. Resources are required to perform a variety of solution architecture, interface development. If it is determined that existing resources will be challenged to replace vendor resources, even after formal training courses and knowledge transfer, then consider going to market to hire trained Cúram resources may be appropriate. • Consider the following stages when approaching on-going knowledge transfer activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ First, the cluster resources must confirm that current documentation exists. Given the rapid pace of change that has taken place since initial implementation, it appears that much of the current knowledge around customization software and interfaces resides with the vendor. ○ Then, internal resources should typically shadow vendor resources while they continue to perform within their specialty area. ○ Finally, the internal resource performs the tasks while the external vendor confirms that they are performing the task correctly. • When reviewing the knowledge transfer plan, it may be necessary to perform knowledge transfer to a primary and secondary resource – further impacting other day to day activities. These on-going capacity constraints require consideration in planning. • A hybrid model – i.e. a mix of vendor and internal resources may be a lower risk way to shifting away from 	

ongoing vendor support. Some external vendor models may provide for on-demand resources on an as-required basis as well. However, while the vendor may be willing to provide external resources on-demand, the available resources may not be knowledgeable on the specifics of the SAMS implementation, customization, interfaces, rules etc.

Technology

11. Continue to move to an ITIL-compliant industry-standard release management process for introducing change into the SAMS application. Differentiate between changes that are unit tested, changes that have been validated through some level of user acceptance test and changes that have been fully regression tested prior to implementation in production.

Recommendation: Release management process

Continue to move to quarterly release cycles, following Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) compliant release management processes, from the current practice of implementing emergency and weekly patches, and now monthly patches as of May.

- A review of the release management processes, ability to perform the requisite testing and validations, preparation of checklists with the required sign offs identified and incorporation of operational readiness criteria is recommended.

From a risk-management perspective, releases that have, by definition, been fully tested are the recommended approach to introducing change to the SAMS application.

Support the assignment of a release manager to oversee the release management process. Continue to support this resource in creating and maintaining the required artefacts (e.g. showing full traceability) and developing full visibility to what items are candidates for each release and their status with respect to unit and integration testing. To avoid confusion, refer to a “patch” as software that has only been unit tested, a “build” as software that has undergone limited user acceptance testing (UAT), and a “release” as software that has successfully executed a full set of regression-use cases. This approach to release management is consistent with the current approach that balances the need to address a large number of defects and introduce new capabilities with the ability (given resource and time constraints) to rigorously test each new software implementation.

Rationale

ITIL (Information Technology Infrastructure Library) is an industry recognized framework of best practice guidance for IT Service Management and is today the most widely accepted approach to IT Service Management in the world. Organizations that have deployed ITIL techniques and processes report a wide range of benefits, including:

- Increased front line staff satisfaction with IT services;
- Improved service availability;
- Financial savings from reduced rework, lost time and improved resource management and usage; and,
- Improved decision making and optimized risk.

Front-line staff are challenged with the current release schedule, which introduces a lot of change to an already challenging environment. There have also been challenges with new issues emerging as a result of releases—this has created confusion and frustration with front-line staff.

Leading practices have shown that the degree of success achieved in implementing new software is directly related to the degree of testing that has been performed. Referring to the implementation of software as a new release sets an expectation in the field that the new

Benefits

- Allows change to be introduced with the confidence that the existing functionality will continue to work in accordance with user experience.
- Building trust and confidence with front-line staff is a key benefit, and the recommended approach to release management will change the current perception of “one step forward, two steps back” to one of “continual improvement.”

software will improve on application functionality and predictability.

The goal of the release and deployment management process is to assemble and position all aspects of services into production and establish effective use of new or changed services. Effective release and deployment delivers significant business value by delivering changes at optimized speed, risk and cost and offering a consistent, appropriate and auditable implementation of usable and useful business services.

Considerations for implementation

With respect to the ITIL best practices framework, a release refers to one or more changes to an IT service that are built, tested and deployed together.

- Introduction of a new release should follow the release and deployment management process, which is responsible for planning, scheduling and controlling the build, test and deployment of releases.
- The key objective of release management is to deliver new functionality or correct defects that are identified by the business while protecting the integrity of the existing services.

Release management requires an understanding of the SAMS application holistically (i.e. how the system functions end to end and the potential impact of a change on either the SAMS kernel, customization code, interfaces or supporting batch runs that could impact the end user experience).

- The introduction of fully tested releases is intended to provide service validation and objective evidence that the new or changed service supports business requirements.
- The new release must be explicitly tested against the warranties as set out in the service design package (i.e. required business functionality, availability, continuity, security, usability and regression testing).

12. Continue to develop a complete set of automated use cases that exercise the application on an end-to-end basis and use this for regression testing. Components that do not successfully execute the regression test suite may not be promoted into the production environment.

Recommendation: Automated use cases	
<p>Continue efforts to develop a complete set of automated use cases that can be used for regression testing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each new enhancement should include additional use cases to validate that the new enhancement is functioning as designed. • Performance testing may be required to confirm that the planned change will not negatively impact the user experience. 	
Rationale	Benefits
<p>The ability to successfully introduce new software that resolves outstanding defects and/or introduces new functionality is dependent on thorough testing of at least the baseline functionality. Manual testing is time consuming and costly. The Ministry currently has 12 (of a planned 40) end-to-end business regression test scenarios automated. In addition, 25 (of a planned 40) automated scripts to test the most critical interfaces (e.g. payment and eligibility interfaces) have been developed.</p> <p>SAMS is a complex system with many components that have been implemented by a combination of cluster, ITS and vendor resources. Limited resources who have the skills and experience to anticipate how a change in one area of SAMS might impact another, seemingly unrelated component exist. As an example, introducing a fix to correct the amount on a cheque may result in the printing of an incorrect cheque stub or result in an overpayment that can't be actioned.</p> <p>Because SAMS is in a period of rapid change and given that implementation of a new release should only take place after full regression testing is completed, the ability to perform and validate the regression test cases using automated tools is essential to minimizing the time required between the introduction of new releases.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ability to introduce change in a non-disruptive and dependable manner is enhanced through the ability to successfully perform regression testing. • Defects caught during the test cycle are less costly to resolve than those that are found in production. • The use of automated use cases for testing can reduce the time to debug code and allow the programmer to identify logic and other issues faster than having to rely on manual or case testing alone.
Considerations for implementation	
<p>As part of release management, each change (defect resolution or introduction of new functionality) should follow a standard test cycle, beginning with unit testing, integration testing and regression testing. The scope of the regression tests should be sufficient to confirm that end-to-end scenarios are executed as intended and not be limited in scope to only testing one transaction or event.</p> <p>Each automated use case should have traceability back to business requirements and validate a life cycle scenario rather than a specific transaction type. In the case where business requirements have changed or been clarified after implementation, care must be exercised to ensure that the use cases accurately reflect the expected outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since use cases typically alter the database(s), the ability to create a regression test environment with initial starting data is critical. • Following execution of use cases, the data must be examined (or, ideally, compared electronically) to ensure that the expected results have been obtained. • Software validation tools, such as Fortify and Sonarqube, can be used to confirm that the new software meets quality standards and does not contain any security vulnerabilities. 	

13. Ensure that key environments are synchronized to the same level of code in a timely manner. Consider using advanced vendor cloning aids to assist in a refresh of key environments, with a target objective of having these environments synchronized within a one-week time frame.

Recommendation: Environment synchronization	
<p>Ensure that key environments (e.g. training, site readiness, UAT, performance testing) are synchronized with the production environment, where possible. Following industry-standard release management processes, once a release has been fully tested and promoted to production, other supporting environments should be upgraded to the same software release. This requires that the build process be architected so that multiple environments can be refreshed with minimal effort.</p>	
Rationale	Benefits
<p>In the past, users have been trained on versions of the software that behaved differently in the production environment, causing confusion in the field. To mitigate this challenge, the Ministry has leveraged the site readiness environment to support training, with this environment being more in sync with production than the training environment.</p> <p>The current process appears to require about a week per environment to implement a new build. This time may be significantly reduced by automating the build or cloning of the environment process. Also, when a defect is identified in production, it is essential that the resolution team be able to reproduce the problem. This may not be possible if these resources are working on an environment that contains a previous release of the software.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistency of behaviour in key environments allows seamless user migration from training to production and the ability to reproduce problems in all key environments, assisting predictability of outcome across environments. • Users who are on-boarded are trained on the same software release that is currently implemented in production. • Problems identified in the field can also be reproduced identically by support teams. • Workarounds can be developed in a development environment with greater certainty that the workaround will function correctly in production.
Considerations for implementation	
<p>Tailoring builds for implementation in a variety of environments can benefit from the use of scripting tools that can significantly reduce the effort of implementation. Ravello Systems and Jelastic are examples of vendors who provide cloning tools that can aid in accelerating the synchronization process. Nevertheless, additional resources are required to perform the synchronization/cloning work, and these resources must have the requisite skills with respect to software deployment. Consideration should be given for the Ministry's current approach to support training with the site readiness environment and determine what additional ongoing support and resources would be required to keep the site more in sync with production to meet business needs.</p>	

14. Repeat the capacity planning exercise based on feedback and metrics and confirm that the infrastructure (servers, storage, network) is adequate to support expected application performance.

Recommendation: Infrastructure planning	
<p>Repeat capacity planning exercise to ensure that SAMS is able to handle additional loads that are expected due to new planned enhancements, such as the online portal and pinpoint performance slowdowns that take place during peak periods.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm that all infrastructure components are fully vendor supported. 	
Rationale	Benefits
<p>The last capacity planning exercise took place almost a year ago and, since then, two web servers have already been added and two additional application servers will be added shortly. Furthermore, it appears that the amount of storage required for SAMS exceeds what was originally estimated and will continue to grow in the future. The jurisdictional review highlighted this consideration as a key challenge that needs to be proactively managed. Staying ahead of the curve with respect to providing needed capacity before it becomes an issue is considered to be standard industry practice.</p> <p>Although SAMS is a multi-tiered architecture and is expected to scale horizontally, there is no way to confirm that this expected behaviour will be exhibited without actual performance testing (i.e. comparing observed performance with modelled performance). Also, some components are shared with other applications, and their performance may be impacted by the load from shared applications.</p> <p>Sustainment of infrastructure is often overlooked until it becomes an issue (e.g. obtaining vendor support, firmware patches, reliability issues, etc.). Currently supported infrastructure is typically required to meet application availability SLAs (e.g. mean time to repair/recover from an outage). In extreme cases, vendors may no longer carry parts for infrastructure components and current software releases may not be supported on aging infrastructure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity planning helps ensure that infrastructure does not need to be ramped up in react mode. • Adding additional hardware may take several months to complete, so early visibility to capacity issues is essential to maintaining application performance. • Productivity can be positively impacted through appropriate capacity planning, as productivity can be degraded when application response time increases.
Considerations for implementation	
<p>There are many potential factors that must be assessed with respect to capacity, including hardware (some of which may be shared with other applications), wide area network and user workstation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly skilled infrastructure specialists are typically needed to perform the required analysis. Monitoring agents can be deployed to report on server utilization, memory usage, I/O rates, network utilization and other key metrics. • Trend analysis can be performed to identify the need for infrastructure augmentation in a timely manner. Because the hardware infrastructure (i.e. P Series is highly virtualized), the choice of parameters for each LPAR can also affect performance in a manner that may be difficult to predict under full load, when multiple applications are running on the same physical box. Similarly, SAN performance can vary based on the load from other applications, which are sharing adapters and interfaces. <p>Additional performance and stress testing can be used to confirm that the underlying assumptions with respect to component capacity are accurate. If possible, during performance testing, identify which components are most likely to fail under stress and what symptoms are displayed during such failure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replacement of aging infrastructure can be disruptive to production and require unplanned funding and resources. If an asset management database is available, this can be used to inform an infrastructure currency assessment. Also, in some cases, vendor support contracts may have lapsed. In this case, the infrastructure may still be vendor supported but the support contract may not be in effect. 	

15. Balance defect resolution with planned enhancements, as well as Cúram upgrades, based on value to the business and front line staff impact. The governance process supported by a clear prioritization framework should be followed to guide and confirm the prioritization of enhancements over defects.

Recommendation – Balance defects, enhancements and upgrades

At this time, resources are being deployed to both resolve priority issues and introduce new functionality as desired by the business owner. But sufficient resources do not appear to be available to resolve the large volume of incidents and the level of resources is further reduced when resources are allocated to implementation of enhancements. Business owner should carefully assess the balance between resources allocated to defect resolution and those allocated to new enhancements. As a general rule, enhancements should take a back seat to defect resolution unless it can be demonstrated that consistent progress is being made to reduce the number of open tickets and known incidents. If this is not practical, then adherence to a clear prioritization framework is recommended.

The Ministry should continue with their efforts to determine when and how the next release of Cúram will be implemented. For example, migrating to a current release of Dojo JavaScript will require a new release of Cúram. Also, given customization that has been implemented, an assessment should be performed to determine which functionality is now included in base Out-Of-The-Box (OOTB) features and those that need to be retained.

Rationale	Benefits
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A primary objective of the initial transition period is to achieve system predictability as observed by front line staff and mitigate risks associated with the need to stabilize the system following initial implementation. So long as rapid progress is being made to reduce the number of incidents, and the number of newly reported events is minimal, then sufficient resources may be diverted to implement enhancements. However, these enhancements may also introduce new defects into the ecosystem.

Jurisdictions, as part of the review, indicated they took a balanced approach to defects and upgrades, leveraging a clear prioritization framework, to address defects and enhancements to meet business needs. For system upgrades, jurisdictions indicated that system customization impacted maintenance and timeliness, and are an important consideration in planning upgrades.

New releases of Cúram may introduce significant changes. It may be prudent to consider timing a release to avoid the potential for significant rework, along with considerations for the change impact to front line staff.

- All available resources are deployed to resolve defects and provide the front line staff with a system that delivers on the expected functionality.
- Front line staff can then gain experience with the new system and productivity levels in the field can improve. Introducing new functionality too soon can have the opposite effect, i.e. adding additional complexity and the need to learn how to utilize the enhancements while still struggling with ongoing issues.
- Minimize potential rework as a result of a new Cúram release.
- Consider the timing of new releases in advance to help reduce the change impact to front line staff.
- Balance between defects and enhancements will enable the development of critical functionality required by front line staff.

Considerations for Implementation

Continue to ensure the governance process in place to manage decisions around defects and enhancements is effective and provides full transparency around decisions being made. Confirm that the governance process in place has the responsibility and authority to make business decisions based on resource deployment and the risk of introducing additional defects balanced against the need to introduce new capabilities into the system. The rationale behind these decisions should be documented and appropriate sign offs recorded.

Avoiding point to point integration (internal and external) is often a key to the ability to upgrade to new software releases in the future. The SAMS project is based on an architectural design that is several years old and since then IBM has made improvements to support service-based integration. It may be prudent to re-examine the current architectural approach and make changes intended to make release to release upgrades easier to implement. Also, IBM has a Cúram upgrade helper to provide upgrading assistance. The SAMS team should understand how this tool works, including the ability to provide information about database schema changes and the generation of SQL scripts if changes are required to the current database.

16. Develop an end user support strategy that is responsive, simplified and supported by a knowledge database that is accessible by end users. The user support strategy should provide for access, as appropriate, to experts who can support tickets that are escalated.

Recommendation: End user support strategy	
<p>Implement ITIL compliant processes (e.g. incident and problem) to respond to events.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide those responding to events with access to a knowledge database of previously reported events. • Build an enhanced level of understanding of business processes, with the first-level support team managing SAMS incident response and providing basic triage. • Consistent with ITIL processes, provide for escalation of tickets to expert resources that can provide tier 2 and tier 3 support, along with interfaces to software vendors if a vendor defect is suspected. 	
Rationale	Benefits
<p>In the immediate post go-live environment, the Ministry introduced a distributed support model to meet the support needs across the Province. As SAMS has stabilized, the Ministry is moving away from this model. The current approach to end user support currently relies on local “super users” to perform initial triage and determine if the issue is a user error, data error or other possible defect. However, these events are not logged and a ticket is not created unless local support determines that this is required.</p> <p>Local users may further connect via an informal network of super-users from other locations for assistance prior to opening a ticket. But there does not appear to be a common framework for issues identified by super-users to be reported centrally so that specific issues and incidents are not lost and the knowledge required to fix them is retained.</p> <p>In some cases, where the ticket is escalated to a specialized support group, the level of application knowledge does not appear to be adequate to resolve the issue. In some cases, tickets appear to have been closed on the assumption that the ticket is a duplicate of another ticket that has been resolved. The jurisdiction scan noted the importance of IT understanding the business (and vice versa) and there may be additional steps needed to increase this understanding to help resolve issues.</p> <p>Based on observations from the documentation review and stakeholder feedback, once a ticket is opened, the submitter does not have access to the status of the ticket and, in some cases, may not be informed when their issue has been resolved.</p> <p>The ITIL processes are optimized for event handling and, when event management determines that there is an incident, the process allows for repeatable resolution on a timely basis. There is a perception that the current support process is somewhat ad-hoc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimize rediscovery of existing problems, increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the end user support tools. • Access to a knowledge database allows the user or service desk to investigate the incident and determine if it is a known issue. • Enhancing the level of “business process” understanding from a user perspective may help build trust among users. • Enhancing the level of “business process” understanding from a user perspective may help support staff diagnose issues more quickly and effectively by removing terminology barriers, allowing them to get to the root cause of issues.
Considerations for implementation	
<p>Training service desk personnel to perform initial diagnostics and triage is a prerequisite. The user must have a documented set of procedures to follow so that they can determine if the application is working as designed, failing because of a data error (as a result of data conversion), attributable to a local workstation problem or indicated to</p>	

be a customization or base Cúram issue.

- Sufficient resources must also be available to support tier 2 and tier 3 escalation, and these resources must have deep knowledge in their subject area.
- Consider facilitating a “boot camp” for IT support staff to understand business processes and terminology from an end user perspective and help build a greater level of responsiveness and trust with support staff.
- Documentation must be maintained as part of the technology-related change management process so that support staff is aware of the contents of new builds and/or releases. Re-evaluate the current support model as a part of the knowledge transfer planning exercise and identify if the requisite skills and capacity are in place to support on-going support requirements from the field.

The incident management process should be closed loop (i.e. the event submitter should have access to ticket status and be informed when the event is resolved). After the incident has been investigated and diagnosed and the resolution has been tested, the service desk should ensure that the user is satisfied before the incident is closed.

Process

17. Develop an approach to catalogue and document workarounds in SAMS to reduce downstream risks and potential challenges with system validity.

Recommendation: Identify and document workarounds

To support day-to-day transactions within SAMS, both the Ministry and front-line staff have created workarounds in SAMS. To identify, track and manage the workarounds currently being used and those that will continue to be identified, it is recommended that the Ministry develop an approach to document, catalogue and track workarounds in SAMS.

Within the transition team, resources should be assigned responsibility for cataloguing and documenting workarounds, in addition to potentially identifying leading practices for working with SAMS. This work should be done with both the Ministry and local offices and should leverage the local Champions, as well as process and training efforts underway locally (e.g. business recovery working group, ODSP, SWAT teams).

Rationale

While workarounds created by the Ministry have generally been documented and tracked, interviews with stakeholders have noted that workarounds are also being developed on a site-by-site basis. Where local workarounds have been identified and shared through local Champions, they are more likely to be documented and tracked. Where workarounds are being completed at an individual level, they are not typically tracked, raising concerns across the Ministry and stakeholders that workarounds that are potentially not appropriate for particular tasks and processes will become the norm.

Stakeholders at both the Ministry and site level have also raised concerns that it will be difficult to measure and quantify the impact of workarounds, as they are not centrally managed or tracked. One of the jurisdictions interviewed noted that understanding the unintended consequences with respect to workarounds was important to managing process risk and controls. As workarounds have the potential to impact system and data validity, it is important to understand the potential risks and issues that can arise.

From a change management perspective, workarounds can also impact user adoption, as it can be challenging to “unlearn” a workaround once it becomes the norm.

Workarounds were commonly put in place by other jurisdictions to enable them to manage through defects and process changes. Based on lessons learned, jurisdictions encourage the need to identify workarounds as early as possible to create a focus on determining the unintended consequences and put the appropriate controls in place.

Benefits

- Improve system and data validity.
- Align system usage across all system users.
- Manage risks around known workarounds and put in place controls to manage.
- Identify areas requiring additional knowledge documents and/or training.
- Identify potential defects within the system that need to be addressed.
- Identify, document and broadly share leading practices around SAMS.

Considerations for implementation

- Identify a Ministry resource(s) as part of the transition team to focus on documenting and cataloguing workarounds, as well as potential leading practices.
- A strategy to address each workaround/leading practice should be put in place, including any required knowledge documents/training and a timeline to resolve the issue.
- Focus first on identifying, documenting and confirming Ministry-defined workarounds.
- Determine the right engagement model for the ODSP and ACSD to gather local workarounds. Consider the local SAMS champions, ODSP, SWAT teams and the Front Line Staff Working Group.
- Determine the right engagement model for the municipal partners offices. Consider leveraging the business recovery work group to gather local workarounds
- This work should tie into the stakeholder assessment recommendation, the recommendation around training and knowledge transfer for front-line staff and the business process documentation recommendation.

18. Leverage and expand on the business process documentation developed prior to go-live to continue to support front-line staff.

Recommendation: Business process documentation

Understanding the business processes that have been adopted since go-live across the ODSP, ACSD and OW offices is an important step leading into business as usual. Despite nuances that may exist, business processes should be approached from a provincial level to create a standardized baseline, where possible, and balance the nuances of the various programs.

Business processes should continue to be documented based on the current state so that continuous improvement opportunities can continue to be identified from a process, technology and organizational perspective.

- A business process workstream lead should be assigned as part of the transition to set the approach and methodology for documenting business processes.
- Front-line staff should be engaged in the development of process documentation (leverage existing working group membership as appropriate), with a focus on the current user experience.
- The Ministry should explore how to best support the ODSP, ACSD and OW offices in developing standardized business processes by providing baseline process documentation and offering additional process expertise where required.
- Develop an operations manual that can be shared using a common platform (ie. SAMO website) to support front-line staff working with SAMS.
- Continued engagement with front-line staff is key in identifying and documenting business processes.

Rationale

Understanding the impact of technology implementations on business processes was a key lesson learned from the jurisdiction scan. Many of the jurisdictions undertook detailed process mapping exercises both pre- and post-go-live, which contributed to a better understanding of technology impacts and business requirements. In addition, stakeholders gained a clearer understanding of the changes required. There are many ways to approach the documentation of business processes; one jurisdiction formed a working group, while another engaged a dedicated resource.

Stakeholders have been challenged to understand how SAMS has impacted the end-to-end processes further impacting their understanding of how SAMS is supposed to function. Through ongoing process mapping, the Ministry may be able to build a greater understanding of the end-to-end process and gain a better understanding of the various nuances at a site level.

Benefits

- Provides a common foundation for front-line staff to understand processes from an end-to-end perspective, using terminology that is familiar to staff across the province.
- Provides a platform for ongoing continuous process improvement.
- Business process documentation is a critical input into ongoing change management efforts.
- Builds an understanding of the current user experience.
- May help identify and resolve workarounds that are being used but no longer required.
- Provides an opportunity to identify existing process risk and develop mitigation strategies.
- Potential to build a better collective understanding between business and IT staff by engaging a cross-functional team to document processes.
- Recognize degree of variability at the municipal level while still supporting the municipalities in their process documentation efforts.

Considerations for implementation

Business process mapping

Documenting the business processes should be an area of focus for the transition. As SAMS transitions to business as usual, processes should be part of continuous improvement, given they will continue to evolve as SAMS evolves.

During the transition phase, the following is recommended:

- Select a business process lead as part of the transition team to focus on the business process

workstream.

- Document standardized processes where possible as a baseline for local offices.
- Leverage work already completed by the ODSP offices and municipal partners to inform the baseline.
- Develop a recommended approach, along with tools and templates, to support the local offices in documenting their processes.
- Local offices (ODSP, ACSD and OW) will need to be engaged to document their processes. The Ministry should consider ways to support the local office in allocating the necessary time and resources to this activity.
- Considerations in mapping the processes:
 - Prioritize business processes to be documented using a clear prioritization framework (i.e. impact of processes, complexity of processes, operational versus support processes). Leverage existing working groups to complete the prioritization.
 - Develop the business processes through a workshop approach that includes representatives from:
 - Front-line staff and management;
 - Technology;
 - Change management; and
 - Other functional representatives as appropriate (i.e. financial, fraud investigation, etc.).
 - Representatives should consider the following:
 - How the process is currently being done;
 - What works well;
 - What could be improved; and
 - Current risks with the process.
 - Business processes should consider the perspective of the client to understand implications on the client experience.
 - Capture and prioritize opportunities for process improvement to explore in business as usual.
- Documented processes should be shared with the Change Management Team to understand immediate implications from a people perspective that should be incorporated into the Integrated Change Plan.
- Business process mapping should be completed with a user experience lens. Front-line staff needs to be able to clearly relate to business processes and terminology used.
- Understanding any differences between OW, ACSD and ODSP will be important for the Ministry to consider when identifying how to disseminate business processes that have been baselined.

Operations manual

- An operations manual should be developed once processes are documented.
- The operations manual should be stored in a format that is easily accessible and searchable. In addition, clear version control is needed.
- The operations manual will be a key tool for front-line staff to reference when transacting in SAMS. The operations manual should be detailed enough to replace the job aids and user guides.
- The Ministry should engage front-line staff and management in the development of the operations manual to ensure that the manual will meet user needs. Consider leveraging the working groups that the Ministry has setup, as well as those set up by municipal partners.

- 19. Perform a data quality assessment and develop a plan to address identified gaps, focusing on areas that necessitate workarounds and require manual database cleanup.

Recommendation – Data quality assessment

- Resources should be focused, in the short term, to identify and resolve issues caused by data that has been loaded during the data conversion process.
- In the longer term, data quality metrics should be identified and reported to provide an indication of the progress being made to eliminate these data errors.

Rationale

Stakeholder consultations and the documentation review indicate that it appears that the majority of incidents are being caused by bad data. This data has been loaded through the data conversion process, but Cúram does not expect data in the format that was created through the data conversion process. Had the same case information been entered through Cúram, its filters, rules and edits would not have permitted the data to be created in the same way. As a result, it appears that brand new cases are not experiencing the same level. These data problems will not resolve themselves without an action plan focused on achieving high levels of data quality (i.e. 100%).

In most cases, the only way to resolve the issue is through some workaround or manual data cleansing exercise. It is also possible to identify some patterns with respect to the loaded data that may allow a batch script to be written to resolve similar instances of bad data. The skills and knowledge to perform data cleansing and repair activities is limited, and a team dedicated to this activity appears to be the best way to resolve data issues. Each change to the database must be logged for audit reasons, which provides further justification for centralizing the needed changes to the database.

Benefits

- Timely resolution of data defects.
- Elimination of workarounds that have been put in place to allow cases to be managed on an ongoing basis.
- Regain front-line staff confidence in the predictability of SAMS and their ability to perform the required case management activities as per the defined processes.
- Allow front-line staff to focus on case management rather than problem identification and workarounds.

Considerations for implementation

Using a dedicated team of experts who understand the SAMS conceptual data model and edit rules is a recommended approach to resolving issues with data quality. This SWAT team may begin by identifying data issues that pertain to multiple cases and can be resolved through an automated script run against the entire database. In other words, begin with high-impact data issues. Alternatively, to demonstrate progress across all locations, front-line staff could be asked to prioritize cases where they suspect data quality is the cause of an incident. The team could then focus on resolving these cases on a per-location basis so that each geography sees some progress as early as possible in the process. Many of the required data changes require a database administrator to perform “manual” changes to the database. There is always the possibility that user errors could result in unintended changes to the database. Multiple levels of approval and oversight are recommended in each case. Also, it is best that these changes be coordinated and validated with the local office that manages the case to confirm that the data modifications made actually resolve the problem and yield correct results.

Summary

The delivery of social services in Ontario is complex, as is the implementation of a new system to enable the delivery of those services. As evidenced by the jurisdictional scan, challenges implementing a case-management system of the size and scale of SAMS for social services are not unique to Ontario. The Ministry has an opportunity to leverage the lessons learned and leading practices from other jurisdictions, as well as the recommendations put forward in this report, to positively impact the ongoing SAMS transition to achieve business-as-usual stability in the near future.

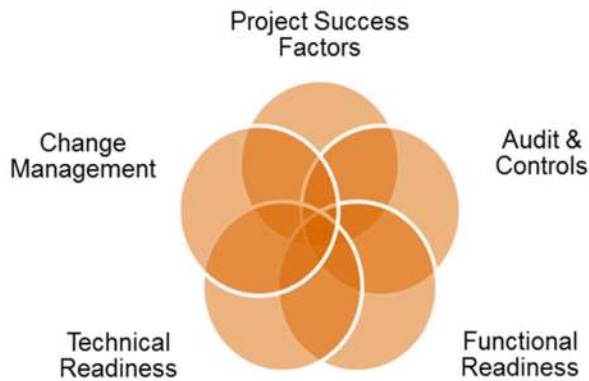
This report presents a summary of current challenges and observations with the transition to SAMS. These challenges and observations, as evidenced by stakeholders engaged through this review and a detailed documentation review, contributed to the recommendations put forward for the Ministry's consideration. The following recommendations included with this report should be prioritized by the Ministry, as they are critical for the transition in the short term and lay the foundation for other recommendations.

- Enhance the current transition plan to develop an **Integrated Transition Plan** to inform the transition going forward. The Integrated Transition Plan should be at a sufficient level of detail, including milestones, resources, timelines, dependencies, etc. (Recommendation #2)
- Identify and select a **Program Manager** to be accountable for the Integrated Transition Plan and all related streams of work, milestones and activities. (Recommendation #4)
- Support the adoption of a **governance structure** with consideration for transition, business as usual, the Integrated Transition Plan and the Program Manager. (Recommendation #1)
- Refine and reconfigure the current **Organizational Impact Assessment** to provide greater visibility at the activity/task level into how different functions within a job are impacted by SAMS for both OW, ODSP and ACSD. The Organizational Impact Assessment builds a foundation for future change and training-related activities. Further to this activity, the change, training and communications plan should be confirmed. (Recommendation #7)
- Develop an **end user support strategy** that is responsive, simplified and supported by a knowledge database which is accessible by end users. The user support strategy should provide for access, as appropriate, to experts who can support tickets that are escalated and provide more immediate support for front line staff. (Recommendation #16)
- Create a complete set of automated use cases that exercise the application on an end-to-end basis and use this for **regression testing**. (Recommendation #12)

To support the implementation of the recommendations in this report, current capacity and resources will need to be assessed. The Integrated Transition Plan will be a key input to this assessment, confirming the resources required by both the Ministry and Municipal Partners to achieve the outcomes detailed in the plan.

It is important to acknowledge that, throughout this review, we have observed a considerable amount of effort, passion and commitment displayed by stakeholders engaged in transition activities across the province including management and front line staff. The Ministry and its stakeholders are all working towards the same goal - enabling SAMS to support front line staff in delivering services to their clients. The recommendations put forward in this report are meant to support this goal and minimize the impact of the transition, as well as decrease the time it will take to reach a state of business operations. Engagement between the Ministry and front line staff is critical to the success of SAMS, and it's important that the Ministry continue to engage and listen to front line staff throughout this process.

Appendix A: Project Review Approach



Framework Elements	Project Focus – In Scope
Project Success Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project governance Project management & methodology Resource Utilization Benefits management Issue resolution
Audit & Controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not included
Functional Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not included
Technical Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not included
Change Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change vision and strategy Stakeholder engagement Workforce transition Knowledge transfer and training

PwC has identified the common characteristics for project failure and the drivers of success. We call these common project characteristics PwC’s “Six Pillars of Project Success.” The successful management of each pillar throughout the entire project life cycle will drive the achievement of project goals and, ultimately, deliver the planned business benefits.

These six pillars underpin our approach to project assurance and project reviews. The evaluation is evidence based, combining artifact review and key stakeholder interviews to undertake the assessment.

For each project success factor area, a series of questions will be developed to probe project governance, management and methodology, resource utilization, data migration and partner management. Sample areas to probe are outlined below:

Team Risk

- Project organization
- Resourcing skills and numbers
- Team mobilization & succession

Benefits Risk

- Business case and ownership
- Measurement, baseline and KPIs
- Cost tracking
- Benefits tracking and reporting

Schedule Risk

- Project and workstream planning
- Progress monitoring and reporting
- Project control processes
- Quality assurance process



Risk Management Process

- Risk identification, management and escalation procedures
- Documentation and audit trails
- Monitoring and reporting

Scope Risk

- Clear & agreed scope
- Scope change control
- Dependency management
- Implementation timing

Stakeholder Risk

- Project governance & stakeholder buy-in
- Supplier management
- Communication – internal and external
- Organisational change management

Appendix B: Jurisdiction Review

Overview

Research has suggested that there are challenges with managing large-scale information technology projects in the public sector, given the uncertainty in the environment, complex stakeholder environment with numerous partners and a politically sensitive landscape.

Human services projects add an additional level of complexity to delivering projects within the public service through the requirements not only for case workers to provide fair and equitable treatment to clients who are often in vulnerable positions but also to ensure that large amounts of information are stored and continue to serve clients effectively and provide transparency to track the distribution of public funds. The rules-based nature of most programs and the financial implications associated with human services add to the complexity of designing robust and comprehensive systems that continue to meet the evolving complexity of client needs.

Often, one of the benefits that is expected from a new system implementation within human services is the view that, through the comprehensive ability to collect data, behavioural insights can be derived about the interaction of clients with human services, which can inform future policy decisions in the long term.

It is important to note that, through our jurisdiction review and research, it appears that many of the challenges identified through the jurisdiction review are system agnostic and influenced by the complexity of the human services environment, project management and change management decisions and the balance of responding to stakeholder requirements while managing risk and project cost, scope and timing.

Summary of jurisdictions reviewed

North Carolina, Department of Health and Human Services (DHSS)

In 2008, the State of North Carolina (NC) selected Cúram as the software for its NC Fast Program. The human service programs within the scope of the NC FAST Program are administered by 100 county departments and impact approximately 6,200 users across the state. The DHSS and the county departments of social services require an integrated case-management solution, along with enhanced functionality to manage caseloads more effectively. There are 19 legacy systems that have been identified that currently support the impacted programs and, due to the disparate nature of the systems, they are not well suited to support the growing and changing demands of the department.

A number of program areas are impacted by the NC Fast Program, including economic benefits (child care, food and nutrition services, Medicaid, work first, energy assistance, special assistance and refugee assistance) and child welfare and adult and family services. The NC Fast Program has been divided into distinct projects (i.e. phased implementation), which include:

- Project 1: Case Management - Global Case Management and Food and Nutrition Services
- Project 2 & 6: Case Management - Eligibility Information Services (EIS)
- Project 3: Case Management - LIEAP, Child Care and CIP
- Project 4: Case Management – Child Services
- Project 5: Case Management – Aging and Adult Services

- Project 7: Case Management FFM Interoperability

Hamburg, Authority of Labour Social and Family Affairs

With a population of approximately 1.7 million, Hamburg Germany is a city state with seven departments and two regional service teams: one for youth and one for social welfare. In the spring of 2008, the decision was made to consolidate youth and social welfare, at which point Hamburg undertook a process to identify an appropriate technology solution to support both teams. The Cúram solution was selected, along with a systems integrator to support implementation.

Some initial challenges were identified that the Cúram project would need to address, including:

- Varying workflows in the departments and services;
- Separate legacy systems for case management/benefits for social and youth welfare;
- Limited support for an outdated IT system; and
- Insufficient transparency concerning outcome management.

The overall project was called the JUS-IT project, and it began in 2009. Hamburg made the decision to approach the implementation through three distinct phases.

Release 1: Go live for Release 1 was in May 2012 and impacted 800 users. The initial release included standards for the integrated solution (i.e. social and youth migration, privacy) and processes related to youth welfare, including intake, case management, benefits, accounting and provider management.

Release 2: Release 2 was planned for 2014 and impacted 350 users. This release included the replacement of an existing legacy solution and further addressed processes related to youth welfare, including alimony, custody, guardianship and juvenile court assistance.

Release 3: Release 3 is planned for 2015 and will impact a total of 2,100 users. This release also includes the replacement of an existing legacy system and is focused on processes related to social welfare and housing, including intake, case management, benefits and accounting. In addition, this release is planned to include additional capability surrounding e-government services for citizens.

New Zealand, Ministry of Social Development

In 2011, New Zealand introduced welfare reform, transforming its existing benefits system. Under the new system, three benefits were introduced to reduce existing benefit payments, and these changes were gradually implemented, using Cúram as the supporting IT system, over a number of years (implemented in 2013).

The Cúram implementation supporting the welfare reform project was completed in 22 months and impacted 150 sites in 11 regions, with approximately 500 system users.

The Ministry had the benefit of earlier projects with Cúram (2007) and was able to incorporate lessons learned into the welfare reform project.

South Australia, WorkCoverSA Corporation

WorkCoverSA (now ReturnToWorkSA) administers workers' rehabilitation and compensation in South Australia. In April 2010, after a three-year project, WorkCoverSA introduced Cúram as its claim management system to replace aging and increasingly customized legacy IT systems.

The Cúram implementation for WorkCoverSA was a single-wave implementation that supported levy collection from approximately 50,000 employers and the management of \$500 million in annual claims. WorkCoverSA undertook a significant data migration, with the transition of more than 20 years and 650 million records of client-related data.

In 2011, the WorkCoverSA project received an Excellence in eGovernment Award for Project Management in the Public Service from the Australian Government Information Management Office.

Alberta, Ministry of Human Services, Child and Family Services

The Ministry of Human Services is undertaking a large transformation project as the province works toward an integrated operating model of human services supporting four program areas (employment and training, income support, health benefits and child support services) and integrating services from five social services departments. The Citizen Centred Integrated Service Delivery project will impact approximately 1,900 current users and add approximate 200 users initially.

The project is a multiyear program of work, and Cúram is being used as the IT system to support the wider program and policy changes. Throughout the phases of the project, an additional 800 to 1,000 internal users and, potentially, a large number of contract agency workers could also be using the system.

Through the phased implementation, Alberta will be migrating two years of data from legacy systems and, in some cases, the concurrent running of existing legacy applications will be in place (requiring duplicate data entry in some cases). Some legacy systems will be retired over time. Alberta undertook a previous Cúram implementation in 2006 and a technical upgrade in 2009/2010 and, as a result, has the benefit of experience and lessons learned for their current project.