

Ministry of Social Development and Family  
Services

**2nd REPORT OF THE JOINT SELECT  
COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SERVICES AND  
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION ON AN  
EXAMINATION OF UNEMPLOYMENT  
DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND  
THE STATE'S CAPACITY TO PROVIDE  
SUPPORT TO PERSONS WHO BECAME  
UNEMPLOYED AS A RESULT OF THE  
PANDEMIC.**

June, 2022

**2ND REPORT OF THE JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SERVICES AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION ON AN EXAMINATION OF UNEMPLOYMENT DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND THE STATE'S CAPACITY TO PROVIDE SUPPORT TO PERSONS WHO BECAME UNEMPLOYED AS A RESULT OF THE PANDEMIC.**

<b>Recommendation Ref</b>	<b>Report Recommendation</b>	<b>MSDFS Response</b>
A.	The Ministry of Social Development and Family Services and the Ministry of Finance should collaborate with the Ministry of Digital Transformation to improve their application processes. During an inquiry into Work from Home arrangements in the public service during the pandemic, the Committee became aware of the project works to be executed to effect digitization and digitalization in the public service 2022. We recommend that the digitalization of the manual application process should be prioritised among these projects.	<p>The Ministry of Social Development and Family Services (MSDFS) is currently working with representatives from the Ministry of Digital Transformation (MDT). This collaboration is in the form of the establishment of an Inter-ministerial team such as the Transformation and Change Management Project Office (TCMPO), which is predominantly staffed by MDT representatives. The TCMPO reports to both Permanent Secretaries of the MSDFS and MDT.</p> <p>The TCMPO has been mandated to have oversight over MSDFS's social protection projects/programmes. Some of the technological projects under the umbrella of the Ministry's Social Protection program are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SharePoint – Document Management and Workflow of Administrative Records.</li> <li>• Integrated Social Enterprise Management System for Client and Case Management</li> <li>• Digitization Project - Digitization of Administrative and Clients' Records</li> <li>• Wide Area Network – the channels to facilitate the additional traffic. Also, the new network will facilitate remote access for members of staff to work remotely.</li> </ul>
B.	The Ministry of Social Development and Family Services should conduct an assessment of the effectiveness of its communication and feedback strategies inclusive of public views to improve its information dissemination systems and processes. Efforts should be made to complete by the end of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2022.	The MSDFS is currently conducting an Impact Assessment Study on its COVID-19 relief efforts. This assessment will consider any gaps that existed in the Ministry's communication strategies pertaining to its COVID-19 relief. The findings of this study will be used to guide the Ministry's policy review and decision-making

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		<p>processes related to its information dissemination system and processes.</p> <p>The Ministry's Communications Unit having received feedback at both the Ministry's Call Centre, and on social media pages sought to achieve the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Change the format of its messaging</li> <li>2. Issue prompt responses</li> <li>3. Use more networks to disseminate information</li> <li>4. Collate testimonials from recipients with support from the Ministry of Communications for television, print and radio media</li> <li>5. Address claims made in the media</li> </ol> <p>Notwithstanding the above, the MSDFS's Communication Unit and the Monitoring and Evaluation Division will work assiduously to refine the feedback mechanisms by the end of the 2nd quarter of 2022, as recommended.</p>
C.	As part of its Ministerial Response to this report, the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services should provide the Committee with an update on outstanding payments owed to eligible citizens who applied for assistance and the status of communication with citizens.	As at June 7 <sup>th</sup> , 2022, there are currently 3,139 Phase I applicants and 140 Phase II applicants awaiting outstanding payments, the details of which are highlighted in the following Table.

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Recommendation Ref	Report Recommendation	MSDFS Response												
		<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: center;">Phase</th> <th style="text-align: center;">No. of Applicants</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Expenditure to be effected</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Phase I</td> <td>3,139 applicants comprising:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2,383 (Food and Income)</li> <li>• 341 (Food Only)</li> <li>• 415 (Income Only)</li> </ul> </td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$12,561,720.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Phase II</td> <td style="text-align: center;">140</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$363,000.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>Total</b></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>3,279</b></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>\$12,924,720.00</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The Ministry, in an effort to promote greater transparency and accountability, reconciled all applications received for revalidation. At the end of the process, the above-mentioned total number of applicants and expenditure sums to be effected were determined. Consequently, the Ministry will seek Cabinet approval for the additional funding to meet the outstanding expenditure.</p>	Phase	No. of Applicants	Expenditure to be effected	Phase I	3,139 applicants comprising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2,383 (Food and Income)</li> <li>• 341 (Food Only)</li> <li>• 415 (Income Only)</li> </ul>	\$12,561,720.00	Phase II	140	\$363,000.00	<b>Total</b>	<b>3,279</b>	<b>\$12,924,720.00</b>
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