

Government Resource Planning (GRP) Automation Brief

Situation

- Governments seek Public Financial Management (PFM) efficiency improvements through the use of Financial Management Information Systems (FMIS) to reduce costs, accelerate service delivery, and automate routine tasks
- Automation reduces routine and less important fiscal work enabling finance ministries to focus on planning, performance, and evaluation
- The FreeBalance Accountability Suite includes automation functionality across government budget cycles
- Not all governments leverage these capabilities to improve efficiency and effectiveness
- Narratives in Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) assessments often describe how automation and integration lead to good scores, while the lack of automation and integration lead to poor scores

Complication

Governments often experience:

- focus on acquisition requirements rather than available built-in good practices
- use of unnecessary manual processes
- limits to PFM and product human capacity to implement automation
- change resistance to automation because of distrust of computer software, job loss fears, and more perverse incentives
- legal reform barriers to automation, or perceived legal reform barriers
- institutional barriers, turf wars, and silos

Question

- How can finance ministries overcome resistance to automation to leverage built-in automation features of the FreeBalance Accountability Suite?

Solution

Governments leverage the configuration capabilities of the FreeBalance Accountability Suite to improve automation, and FreeBalance advisory and sustainable services for organizational change management.

FreeBalance Accountability Suite Automation Capabilities

The FreeBalance Accountability Suite includes no-code and low-code configuration automation functions:

- **Core Metadata:** multiple year Chart of Accounts, Chart of Goals, and domain definitions (including: assets, vendors, public servants, taxpayers, and bank accounts)
- **Business Rules:** parameters, increments, default, mandatory entry (including attachments), validation (including integrated applications and batch data uploads), custom fields and tables
- **Controls:** budget, commitment, obligation, approval, cash, and payments across all applications supporting segregation of duties, and multiple aggregate controls
- **Workflow:** multiple stage workflow, notifications, alerts, approvals, escalation
- **Simplicity:** account offsets (users do not need to know double-entry bookkeeping) valid code combinations, custom menus

Organizational Change Management

The FreeBalance A-i³+qM methodology, designed exclusively for governments, includes a set of tools and techniques to manage change resistance and automation activation. The selection and implementation of these tools follows the FreeBalance “coordination, communications, capacity building” approach. Key change management success factors include:

- Authorizing environment and political will
- Shared understanding of objectives and linkages to government goals
- Integral capacity building and communications
- Workshop engagement

Relevant A-i³+qM Change Management Tools

1. A-i ³ +qM Project Initiation Tools	
Tool	Description
1.1.16 communications plan	Determines project stakeholder communications methods and schedule. Can be augmented by marketing communications.
1.2.1 product opportunity canvas	Identifies opportunities to use built-in FreeBalance product features. Identifies low-value and poor-practice feature requests. Supports the development of requirements.
1.2.2 value proposition canvas	Leverages the Value Proposition Canvas guide from Strategyzer to uncover the value for any initiative to assist in decision-making, prioritization, and goal-setting. Also supports the development of requirements.
1.2.4 GRP and PFM project capacity maturity	Evaluates government PFM and GRP project capabilities and maturity. Identifies appropriate reform project sequencing.
1.2.5 value engineering	Leverages value analysis to identify alternatives and substitutes. Creates shared understanding of project value. Eliminates unnecessary code customization.
1.3.3 digital capacity canvas	Improves the application of digital technologies and transformation by assessing potential users' technology capabilities. Provides a digital capacity-building roadmap.
1.3.4 capacity mentoring	Provides just-in-time mentoring to build government talent beyond project teams to users and managers.
1.3.5 performance culture canvas	Determines civil service readiness to adopt performance appraisals and whether incentives are aligned for merit-based talent management. Integrates with talent management and theory of change.
1.3.6 talent activation management canvas	Assesses government talent to deliver capacity, career planning, performance appraisal, and succession management recommendations. Integrates with capability maturity planning. Supports theory of change.

1.3.7 knowledge sharing canvas	Identifies opportunities for knowledge sharing among project members, users and managers.
1.3.8 creativity canvas	Supports project, process, and product creativity by tapping into team member capabilities.
1.3.9 capability maturity canvas	Discovers organizational capabilities and develops capacity development plans using maturity model tools. Supports theory of change.
1.4.2 change readiness canvas	Identifies organizational people, process, resource, and structural change readiness for government reform.
1.4.3 practice change readiness guide	Discovers the extent to which practices are not compliant with established processes and legal framework. Supports theory of change.
1.4.4 authorizing environment canvas	Determines whether there is sufficient leadership authority and public service empowerment for reform projects and organizational change management.
1.4.5 change management canvas	Supports comprehensive change management operating at all times during projects. Change processes includes numerous planning and monitoring tools.
1.4.6 communications & marketing template	Brings marketing communications expertise to project and change management including branding, posters, collateral, events, newsletters, internal communications, and project briefing materials.
1.4.11 organizational change training	Improves organizational change through comprehensive government-specific training for project teams
1.4.12 modern ministry competency	Assesses PFM, project, IT, risk, and human capacity competencies for government ministries. Prioritizes capacity building. Identifies opportunities for automation and decentralization. Builds fiscal analysis of policy and cross-departmental planning capabilities.
1.4.13 collaboration and learning canvas	Assesses enabling conditions for projects including culture, processes, & resources. Evaluates project cycle collaboration including adapting & learning.

2. A-i³+qM Country Context Tools

Tool	Description
2.4.15 finance ministry modernization canvas	Diagnoses level of finance ministry modernization supporting process improvements to more high value deliverables to government. Provides institutional development and

	recommends organizational changes to align with government goals. Enables finance ministries to improve policy oversight.
2.4.16 PEFA update	Updates out-of-date PEFA assessments. Supports PFM reform recommendations.
2.4.19 fiscal decentralization	Develops plan for fiscal decentralization across line ministries, agencies and government tiers. Leveraged for finance ministry modernization.
2.4.20 civil service reform	Develops plans for public service reform including salary scales, benefits, performance, talent and succession management inline with country context.
2.4.21 Public Financial Management Component Map	Describes full PFM scope and using "business component mapping" . Identifies coverage for PFM processes, laws, and technology.

3. A-i³+qM Government Technology Context Tools

Tool	Description
3.3.1 GRP optimization guide	Optimizes current GRP investments in FreeBalance, non-FreeBalance COTS, and custom developed software. Supports GRP portfolio analysis. Identifies differences between commercial and public sector needs. Determines how to integrate budget controls across applications. Uses a risk-based approach for prioritization.
3.3.2 Fiscal Transparency	Identifies fiscal transparency options driven by back-office systems. Describes integration requirements. Calculates potential benefits.
3.3.3 metadata & controls guide	Assesses level of integration, integration capabilities, and value of integration by GRP system. Identifies opportunities to integrate systems for decision-making, transparency, commitment controls, government workflow, and segregation of duties.
3.3.4 national goals integration template	Evaluates the extent to which a national development plan or country vision is integrated to track spending, and outcomes. Identifies program budgeting, budget classifications, and performance management opportunities.
3.3.5 performance structures template	Integrates performance in government financial systems. Creates Chart of Accounts program budgeting, national plans, and Chart of Goals integration with output and outcome targets.

3.3.14 business process analysis	Identifies process improvements based on efficiency, automation, and removal of duplicated workflow. Risk-based approaches used to identify efficiency improvements.
3.2.3 open data guide	Identifies open data opportunities, value proposition, privacy policy, and deployment methods. Includes fiscal and non-fiscal open data. Supports fiscal portal designing.
3.2.4 citizen communications template	Enables governments to create consistent and effective citizen communications processes and methods through checklists. Supports media distribution.
3.2.5 shared services guide	Identifies methods to improve IT, GRP and GovTech costs through sharing of resources, IT infrastructure, and cloud computing. Supports hybrid cloud concepts combining public, community, and private cloud.
3.2.6 blockchain guide	Identifies whether and where blockchain and blockchain-like technologies can benefit governments based on the country context. Supports government digital transformation. Identifies differences between commercial and public sector needs.
3.2.7 machine learning guide	Identifies where machine learning, chatbots, cognitive computing, artificial intelligence, and deep learning technologies can benefit governments based on the country context. Supports government digital transformation. Identifies differences between commercial and public sector needs.
3.2.8 big data guide	Identifies where big data technologies can benefit governments based on the country context. Supports government digital transformation. Identifies differences between commercial and public sector needs.
3.2.9 participatory guide	Identifies whether and where participatory technologies can benefit governments based on the country context. Improves civil space. Enables social audit. Supports government digital transformation.
3.4.11 IT capability maturity canvas	Assesses government information technology maturity including hardware, operating systems, databases and middleware. Examines procedures and capabilities. Recommends improvements in technology infrastructure and systems procedures.

4. A-i³+qM Project Governance Tools

Tool	Description
4.1.2 stakeholder canvas	Identifies project stakeholders, stakeholder needs, and effective mechanisms for communications. Integrates with marketing and communications approach. Tracks changes in stakeholders during implementation.
4.2.1 customization avoidance guide	Identifies process and product gaps with analysis of whether code customization is justified. Evaluates software change requests based on value and whether software provides same outcomes in different ways. Adjusts scope, timing and costs during implementation through sign-offs
4.3.7 operating system canvas	Articulates structural changes. Designs better, simpler, and cleaner organizational models. Output from finance ministry modernization analysis.
4.3.10 process articulation	Standard method to articulate government processes. Supports low-code workflow configuration.

5. A-i³+qM Product Implementation Tools

Tool	Description
5.1.2 good practices blueprint	Benchmarks practices in place with appropriate practices for the current government situation. Identifies practice improvement opportunities.
5.1.3 GRP reference blueprint	Compares current implementation parameters with recommended good practices. Identifies configuration improvement opportunities in the FreeBalance Accountability Suite to match improved practices.
5.2.1 parameters	Configures business rules in the FreeBalance Accountability Suite. All government entities includes sets of adjustable parameters. Parameters include making information fields mandatory or not mandatory, with default data, and automatic numbering.
5.2.2 chart of accounts	Develops core Chart of Accounts (COA) including concepts and side concepts in the FreeBalance Accountability Suite. Supports multiple-year COA to support government reform and modernization. Integrates budget and accounting classifications. Supports reporting standards like COFOG, GFS, and IPSAS. Supports program budgeting. Enables valid code combinations and General Ledger offsets. Enables performance management. No logical limit to COA, segment, or hierarchy sizes.

5.2.3 organization chart	Develops personnel organizational chart aligned with the Chart of Accounts in the FreeBalance Accountability Suite. Builds data access security within the system based on organizational chart across multiple segments. Supports automatic approval escalations based on organizational chart. Enables asset responsibility and assignment
5.2.4 chart of goals	Develops output and outcome performance targets aligned with the Chart of Accounts in similar hierarchy in the FreeBalance Accountability Suite. Supports performance indicators, balanced scorecard logic maps, and OKRs (Objectives and Key Results). Aligns with program budgeting.
5.2.5 localization	Enables changing language and terminology in the FreeBalance Accountability Suite. Supports Unicode. Leverages single translation file for screen names, metadata, error messages. Supports unique organizational terminology. Enables terminology changes post-implementation.
5.2.8 workflow template	Designs workflow processes to be used in the FreeBalance Accountability Suite. Adds documentation to blueprints.
5.2.9 screens	Adjusts screen flow, including hiding non-mandatory but unnecessary fields within the FreeBalance Accountability Suite.
5.2.10 custom domains	Creates additional information tables and fields for government entities in the FreeBalance Accountability Suite. Supports full parameterization of tables and fields. No logical limit to numbers of tables and fields that can be added.

6. A-i³+qM Government Sustainability Tools

Tool	Description
6.3.1 refresher training	Builds civil service capacity through scheduled annual product, product upgrade, and practice training.
6.3.2 mentoring network	Enhances governance knowledge sharing through a collaborative environment for assisting public servants by leveraging a gated social network with peers from other countries and FreeBalance experts.
6.3.3 private to public mentoring	Educates public servants on modern and agile software development and project management methods in use in the private sector.

6.3.4 curriculum design canvas	Designs specialized curricula based on country context and government needs. Packages different forms of FreeBalance training.
6.3.5 product training	Customized training, recognizing the country context, for the FreeBalance Accountability Suite. Coordinates with needed PFM training.
6.3.6 change management training	Customized training, recognizing the country context, for organizational change management. Builds organizational change capabilities. Aligns with implementation change approaches.
6.3.7 project management training	Customized training, recognizing the country context, for project management. Improves project team capacity. Builds understanding of agile processes. Leverages full content of the PMBOK (Project Management Body of Knowledge).
6.3.8 PFM training	Customized training, recognizing the country context, for public financial management. Coordinates PFM and FreeBalance Accountability Suite training.
6.3.9 good governance training	Customized training, recognizing the country context, for good governance. Extends PFM domain training to audit, anti-corruption, transparency, internal control, accountability, and policy integration. Builds capacity in national development goals and performance integration.
6.3.10 leadership training	Customized training, recognizing the country context, for public service leadership skills. Covers persuasion, communications, and behavioural concepts. Supports the use of problem-driven approaches.
6.3.11 ICT training	Customized training, recognizing the country context, for information and communications technology, including support for the FreeBalance Accountability Platform. Covers the software stack necessary to support the FreeBalance Accountability Suite. Builds ICT policies and procedures capacity. Supports bi-modal approaches.
6.3.12 digital transformation training	Customized training, recognizing the country context, for government digital transformation. Builds SDGs, citizen wellbeing, Fourth Industrial Revolution, digital service delivery, and smart government analysis capacity.
6.3.13 social media training	Customized training, recognizing the country context, for engagement with social media. Builds capacity in leveraging social media tools for citizen engagement.

6.3.14 crisis communications	Development of crisis communications planning and training. Support for crisis communications during crisis.
6.3.15 additional custom manuals	Development of additional custom manuals to reflect progressive activation.
6.3.16 train the trainer	Development and implementation of specialized intense training and mentorship for government instructors.

Appendix: Supporting Material

FreeBalance blog entries

- [Good Practices in Chart of Accounts Design](#)
- [Customization vs Configuration in Digital PFM](#)
- [Configuration and Progressive Activation](#)
- [What Does FreeBalance Do Differently?](#)
- [FreeBalance Change Management Approach and Offering](#)
- [How to Sustain FreeBalance Implementations](#) (FreeBalance Lead-Assist-Guide (FLAG) Approach)