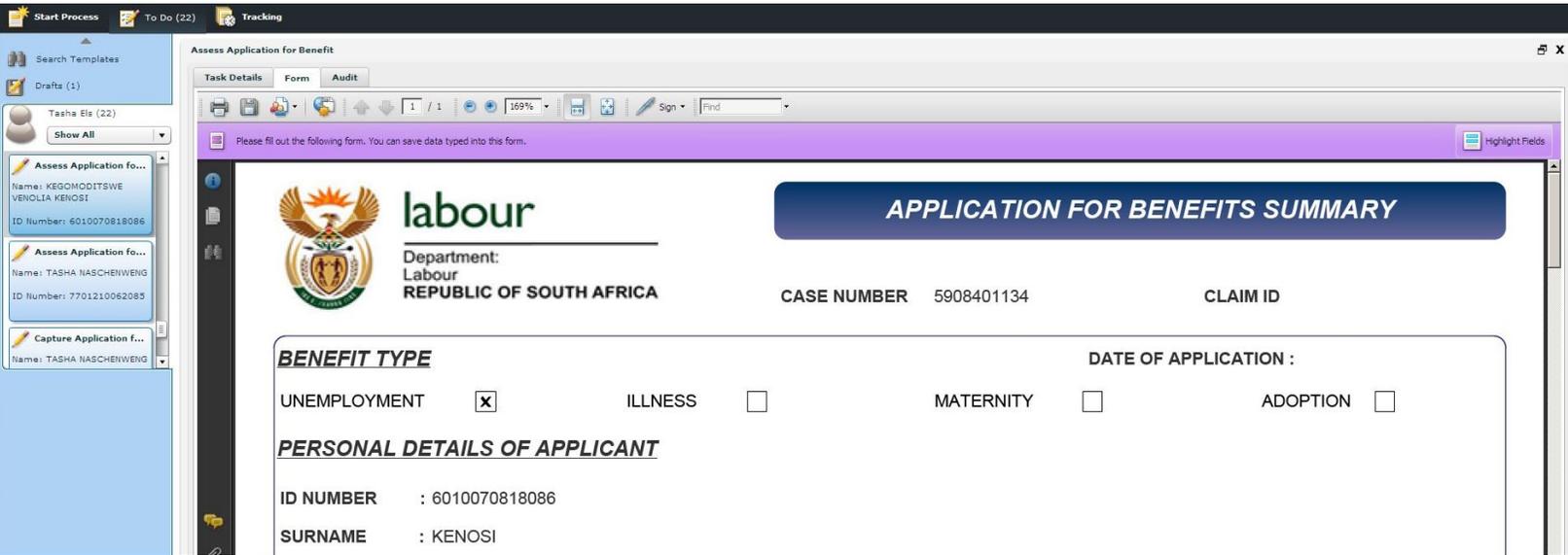




Republic of South Africa, Department of Labor, Unemployment Insurance Fund Government service, reinvented



**Republic of South Africa,
Department of Labor,
Unemployment Insurance Fund**
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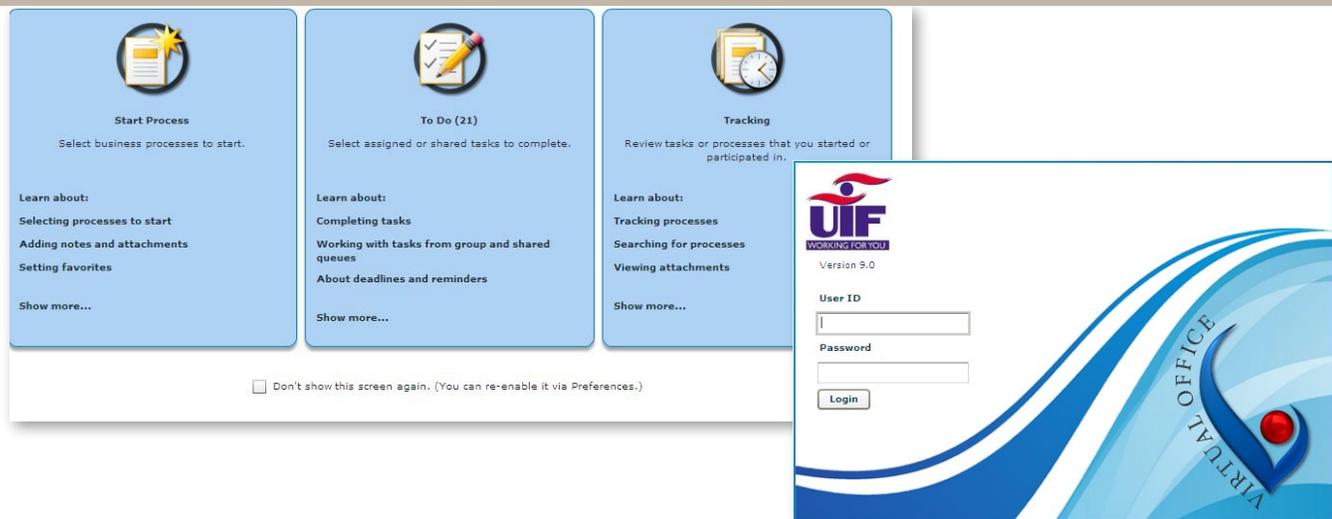
South Africa's Unemployment Insurance Fund automates claims processing using Adobe® LiveCycle® Enterprise Suite software, while increasing business efficiencies and reducing costs

In South Africa, approximately 7.5 million workers contribute to the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF), managed by the Republic's Department of Labor. The fund provides income support to workers who are laid off, experience a long-term illness, require maternity leave, or undergo other life events that prevent them from earning their salaries.

In the past, claims—approximately 700,000 annually—involved 18 paper forms and could take an average of five weeks to process. Initiating a claim was complex, involving time-intensive efforts on behalf of third parties such as physicians who needed to verify via signed paper documents that an employee was unable to work. In some cases, eligible citizens did not claim their benefits because the effort involved was perceived as being too time consuming.

"The UIF plays a critical role in providing income support to unemployed workers, so turn-around time is important," says Sagren Govender, acting chief information officer for the UIF. "Until recently, our processes were almost entirely paper-based and every transaction involved face-to-face interactions at a local center. Clients had no way to serve themselves and there could be long wait times to deal with all the paperwork."

UIF created a dynamic online system to accelerate initiating and processing citizens' unemployment claims. In many cases, claims processing time dropped by 80%, while data integrity and process controls also improved dramatically.



Challenge

- Decrease claims processing time
- Reduce costs and paper use
- Improve constituent convenience
- Streamline compliance

Solution

Use Adobe LiveCycle Enterprise Suite and Adobe Flash® Builder® software to create intuitive, automated, PDF forms-driven claims processes

Benefits

- Reduced claims processing from five weeks to one week through process automation
- Reduced required forms from 18 to 6
- Helped ensure regulatory compliance through process standardization and enforcement
- Automated claims processing and improved data accuracy
- Streamlined interaction for claimants
- Increased usage of entitled, paid-for benefits

Toolkit

Adobe LiveCycle Enterprise Suite software. Modules include:

- Adobe LiveCycle Forms ES
 - Adobe LiveCycle Output ES
 - Adobe LiveCycle Process Management ES
 - Adobe LiveCycle Reader Extensions ES
 - Adobe LiveCycle Workspace ES
- Adobe Flash Builder

When control and compliance are crucial

Adding to the challenge, tracking the status and progress of claims for both the agency and for unemployed workers was a trying endeavor due to the use of paper forms. The UIF's manual processes increased the potential for data entry errors and omissions, boosting risks for the organization and making it more difficult to meet strict compliance requirements.

The manual processes also increased the chances of fraud. Because each claim was handled at a local office with the same claim originator, assessor, and payment clerk, the chances of collusion in processing claims was higher than it would be if cases were assigned randomly to different centers for processing.

"We are a compliance-driven organization," explains Govender. "When we tried to apply rules-based processes manually, on paper, there were inevitable gaps. It was challenging to segment out and properly assign duties, track each UIF employee's actions and steps completed, and ensure information integrity. We needed structured, automated engagement with our citizens and a standard way to automate processes and validate data."

Putting business processes first

To tackle the most pressing issues—the need to pay benefits to individuals expeditiously, more easily comply with regulations, and mitigate the risk of errors—the UIF contacted Christopher Belford, chief technology officer at information technology and services company Interfile. In conjunction with UIF, Belford and the Interfile team began by analyzing UIF's business processes.

"The most obvious issue was that every engagement with the UIF was unstructured and had to occur face-to-face. Claims originators would bring a multitude of paper documents to a Department of Labor Center. Employees there would need to take several manual steps to verify and process the information in order to pay the claim," says Belford.

With Interfile's assistance, UIF saw an immediate benefit in creating an online system to serve as the primary interface for UIF employees to initiate unemployment claims for citizens, as well as for citizens to initiate requests on their own. The online, electronic forms-driven solution would not only control and automate process flows, but also help improve data integrity through electronic PDF forms capable of validating data up-front through integration with information and process rules contained within back-end legacy databases. Customers could go online and complete the necessary paperwork at their convenience, alleviating the need to stand in line.

The UIF decided to use Adobe LiveCycle Enterprise Suite software to bring order and efficiency to the UIF's claims process. In particular, UIF was interested in business activity monitoring capabilities within Adobe software to continuously spot areas for improvement.

“Using Adobe LiveCycle ES software, we can distribute benefits faster and more effectively.”

Sagren Govender

Acting chief information officer,

Republic of South Africa, Department of Labor, Unemployment Insurance Fund

Powerful functionality, intuitive interface

Using Adobe software, a comprehensive system was developed to automate claims processing from start to finish; the system links to multiple back-end legacy databases for two-way information synchronization. Using Adobe Flash Builder and Adobe LiveCycle Workspace ES, the team created an easy-to-use interface with wizards that capture data from back-end systems. Forms are prepopulated with information as soon as claimants start entering information such as their ID numbers, making it easy to quickly and accurately fill out the necessary forms. The PDF forms are barcoded as well, so if claimants decide to print and return their forms, UIF employees can simply scan the barcode on the printed form and instantly capture all details entered by the claimant.

Adobe LiveCycle Reader[®] Extensions ES allow claimants to easily access and complete forms using Adobe Reader software, extending the agency's business processes while eliminating the need for workers to download specialized software. When claimants enter data into the barcoded forms, the information is automatically transferred directly into the organization's back-end systems, streamlining business processes, improving data accuracy, and reducing processing costs and errors.

Using Adobe LiveCycle Process Management ES, UIF has automated its processes and provided visibility and transparency into the status of each claim to improve operational efficiency and streamline compliance. As documents move through the process, they are routed automatically to the next appropriate UIF professional for processing.

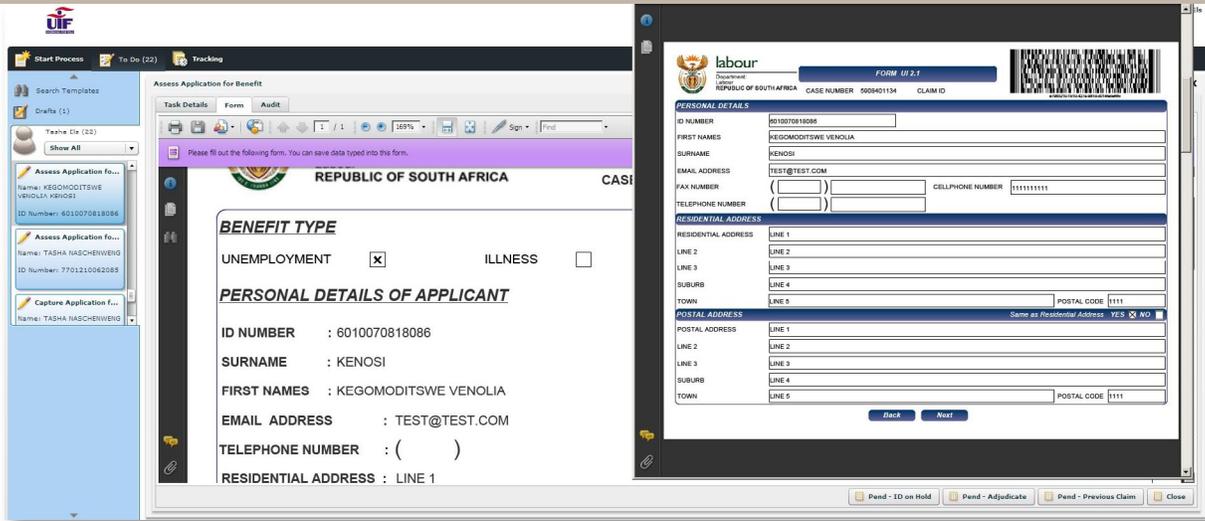
Adobe LiveCycle ES software also provides a content repository for electronic document storage that reduces paper use. The repository is integrated with outside systems so that information provided by third parties, such as physicians, and data can be captured automatically to move claims forward with greater ease and speed. Finally, Adobe LiveCycle Output ES accelerates generating comprehensive account statements so that unemployment recipients can track their benefits. The statements can be e-mailed in PDF, printed if necessary, or faxed.

All along the way, UIF decision makers use Adobe LiveCycle ES software to identify process bottlenecks that need improvement and view summary and detailed process information. The result is the ability to continually increase efficiency and provide better service to constituents.

Fewer forms, faster processing

For the UIF, there are many benefits of adopting a solution based on Adobe LiveCycle ES software. Turn-around time for processing claims has been reduced from five weeks to one. The ultimate goal is to resolve claims within 48 hours—a realistic aim considering the improvements that have already been achieved using Adobe software.

Intuitive interfaces streamline the capture of information from users, guiding people efficiently through the form-completion process. At the same time, integration of digital forms with back-end systems supports automated population of data in form fields as soon as claimants enter their ID numbers.



“With Adobe software, we can provide more convenient customer-facing services—while reducing costs.”

Sagren Govender
Acting chief information officer, Republic of South Africa, Department of Labor, Unemployment Insurance Fund

Submissions are now easily tracked through the new system, so both claimants and UIF employees know exactly where each case stands to more easily expedite processing. This not only contributes to constituent satisfaction, but also to easier compliance with regulations. Fraud instances are lower, because case documents are more closely tracked and managed. In addition, cases can be assigned randomly to different centers once requests are submitted online. An added benefit of this approach is that UIF can distribute the workload more evenly among Department of Labor centers.

By automating form completion and submission, the number of documents required to process a claim has been reduced from 18 to 6—a 67% decrease. “When I arrived at UIF, the main center was literally full of paper, with forms stacked to the ceiling,” says Belford. “Simply in terms of storage and paper management, Adobe solutions will provide a massive cost reduction.”

Saving money, enhancing citizen service

Process automation has further reduced costs, streamlined compliance, and made it easier for constituents to work with the agency. Executives and others can analyze trends and continually improve process flows. UIF call center agents are fully informed and have a single view into each claimant’s status based on information from back-end legacy systems as well as data provided by the claimant within PDF forms, resulting in lower support costs for the agency.

Perhaps most important of all, citizens now have easier, streamlined access to critical government services. “Citizens have to pay into unemployment benefits when they are working, so of course we want them to use our support when they need it,” says Govender. “Using Adobe LiveCycle ES software, we can distribute benefits faster and more effectively. With Adobe software, we can provide more convenient customer-facing services—while reducing costs.”

For more information
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