Governance and Participation
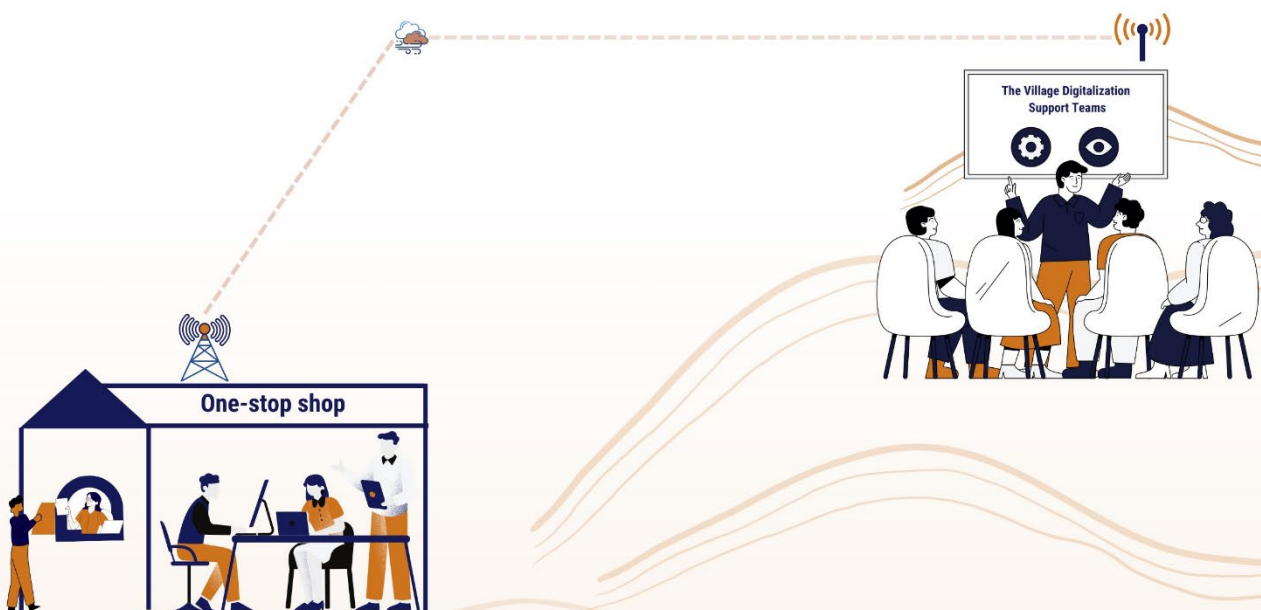
A Series of Policy Discussion Papers

Advisory Report on Improving the Provision of Online Public Administrative Services in Dien Bien Province

Towards leaving no one behind in the process of developing e-government and digital government in provinces with large ethnic minority populations

Two public administrative services under study

(1) Issuance of marriage status confirmation certificates

(2) The "3-in-1" administrative service for a birth certificate, a health insurance card, permanent residency registration, and an identity number for children under 6 years old

The Village Digitalization Support Teams

One-stop shop

Ha Noi, October 2023

The series of Governance and Participation Policy Discussion Papers is commissioned by the Governance and Participation Team at UNDP in Viet Nam.

The series aims to analyse trends in Viet Nam regarding the implementation processes and options in specific public administration reform areas. In order to confront the social, economic, political and environmental challenges facing Viet Nam, policymakers need to adopt evidence-based decision-making. These policy papers aim to contribute to current policy debate by providing discussion inputs on policy reforms – thereby helping to improve Viet Nam's development efforts.

Three principles guide the production of the policy discussion papers: (i) evidence-based research, (ii) academic rigour and independence of analysis, and (iii) social legitimacy and a participatory process. This involves a substantive research approach with a rigorous and systematic identification of policy options on key public administration reform and anti-corruption issues.

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ABBREVIATIONS

GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GSO	General Statistics Office of Vietnam
OPAS	Online Public Administration Service
PAPI	The Viet Nam Provincial Governance and Public Administration Performance Index
PCI	Provincial Competitiveness Index
UNDP	United Nations Development Program

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I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Overview of Dien Bien

Dien Bien is a mountainous border province in the Northwest region of the country, with a natural area of 9,539.93 km2, 504 km west of Hanoi capital, bordering Son La province to the east and northeast. The North borders Lai Chau province, the Northwest borders Yunnan province (China), the West and Southwest borders Lao PDR. It is the only province that shares a border with two countries, Laos and China, more than 455 km, of which the border with Laos is 414,712 km; with China is 40.86 km. There are roads to Northern Laos and Yunnan provinces of China, and air routes from Dien Bien Phu to Hanoi and Hai Phong city[1].

The terrain is mainly steep, rugged, and divided hills and mountains. It is composed of mountain ranges running in the Northwest - Southeast direction with altitudes varying from 200m to more than 1,800m. The terrain gradually lowers from North to South and tilts from West to East, interspersed with high mountain ranges, narrow and steep valleys, rivers and streams.

Administrative map of Dien Bien province
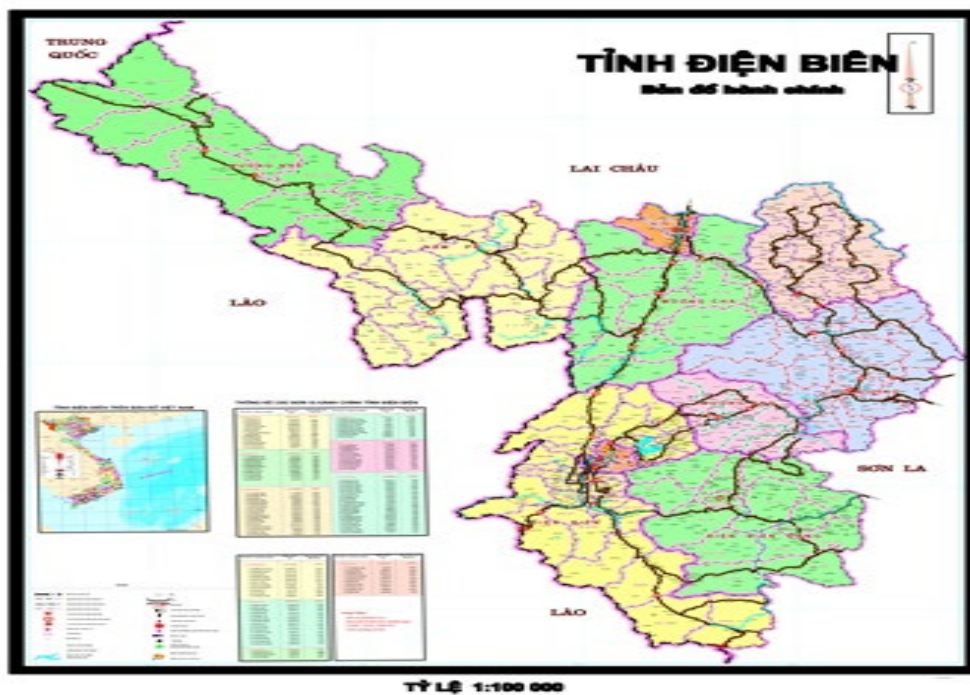
Source: Dien Bien province electronic information portal

Dien Bien province includes 1 city, 1 town and 8 districts. As of April 1, 2021, the population of Dien Bien province is 625,089 people, average population density is 65.52 people/km². The natural population growth rate of Dien Bien from 2009 to 2019 is 2 ‰. Dien Bien is the convergence of 19 ethnic groups (Thai; Mong; Kinh; Dao; Kho Mu; Ha Nhi; Lao; Hoa (Han); Khang; Muong; Cong; Xi Mun;

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[1]Dien Bien province electronic information portal. Overview of Dien Bien.http://dienbien.gov.vn/portal/Pages/Tong-quan-ve-Dien-Bien.

Si La; Nung; Phu La; Tho; Tay; San Chay and other ethnic groups[2]). Of which, the H'Mong ethnic group accounts for 38.12%, the Thai ethnic group accounts for 35.69%, the Kinh ethnic group accounts for 17.38%, and the remainder are other ethnic minorities, such as: Kho Mu, Dao, Khang. , Laos, Ha Nhi[3]...Each ethnic group has its own unique features in language, customs, culture... creating a colorful picture for Dien Bien culture.

The index score of 'E-Governance' in Dien Bien province in 2022 reached 2.4510 points, of which the component indexes 'Using the local government's electronic information portal' reached 0.4178 points; 'Access and use of the internet locally' reached 1.5409 points, and 'Response via electronic information portal' reached 0.4924 points[4]. Dien Bien is classified in the group with low scores[5], in the same group as some neighboring provinces such as Son La, Hoa Binh, Ha Giang, Cao Bang; scores are lower than other provinces in the region with low average scores such as Lai Chau, Lao Cai, Yen Bai, Bac Kan, Lang Son, neighboring provinces with high average scores in this content such as Tuyen Quang and the group of provinces with high scores are Phu Tho, Vinh Phuc, Thai Nguyen, Bac Giang...

Regarding the change in score in content index 8 'Electronic Governance' over the 2 years 2021-2022, Dien Bien is a province with a positive change, an increase of about 22% compared to 2021, the 3rd highest increase nationwide, and is one of three provinces with an increase of over 20%, only lower than Soc Trang and Ninh Thuan provinces[6]. In the trend of some provinces having low increases and decreases, the province's increase is very impressive.

1.2. Purpose and scope of the report

1.2.1. Purpose

The study focuses on assessing the current facts and determinants affecting the provision of partial and complete public services under the authority of commune-level authorities as well as the ability to access and use public services of people, especially ethnic minorities in Dien Bien province through an in-depth study of two administrative procedures: (1) issuing a certificate of marital status, and (2) connecting procedures for birth registration, permanent residence and issuance of health insurance cards medical care for children under 6 years old (connected "3 in 1" procedure). From there, we suggest some solutions and recommendations to relevant agencies from commune to central level.

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[2]Official names of ethnic minorities:https://thuvienphapluat.vn/cong-van/Van-hoa-Xa-hoi/Cong-van-1831-UBDT-CSDT-2020-quy-dinh-thong-nhat-cach-viet-ten-dan-toc- Mong-460912.aspx.

[3]See: Border Guard. In 2022, Dien Bien province has 1,246 prestigious people in the ethnic minority community.https://www.bienphong.com.vn/nam-2022-tinh-dien-bien-co-1246-nguoi-co -trust-in-cong-dong-cac-dan-toc-thieu-so-post456275.html

[4]PAPI (2022). Table 3.8: Component scores of the "E-Governance" Content Index. Page 95.

[5]PAPI (2022). Map 3.8: Component scores of the 'E-Governance' Content Index in 2022. Page 93.

[6]PAPI (2022). Figure 3.8: Score change in Content Index 8: E-governance (2021 - 2022). Page 94.

1.2.2. Research Scope

Research area:

- Working with the People's Committee of Dien Bien province and representatives of relevant provincial departments and branches (Office of the People's Committee, Department of Home Affairs, Department of Information and Communications, Department of Justice, Social Insurance, and Public Security...).

- Working with leaders of the People's Committee and specialized agencies of Dien Bien Dong district, Muong Ang district and representatives of relevant professional agencies of these districts. After that, the research team worked and surveyed the field at the People's Committee of Dien Bien Dong town, Na Son commune, Dien Bien Dong district and Ang Cang commune, Muong Ang town, Muong Ang district.

The above-mentioned communes ensure a number of socio-economic characteristics suitable for research purposes: diverse levels of socio-economic development,), urban and rural communes, population density, ethnic minorities structure, religion structure, management capacity, results of providing public services...

Research content:

This study analyzes the current status of provision and people's ability to access and use public services at commune level through an overview of survey results and in-depth assessment of two typical administrative procedures including: (1) issuance of marital status certificates and (2) connected administrative procedures for birth registration, permanent residence registration and issuance of health insurance cards for children under 6 years old (connected "3 in 1") in the direct and online form. These procedures that are used by many people, are essential, have an impact on their lives and are strongly influenced by the process of collecting and building a national database (on the population related to original information of people regarding residence, civil status, health insurance, social insurance...)[7] [8]; at the same time, it also ensures that the criteria are prioritized for implementation in the electronic environment[9].

1.3. Research Methods

1.3.1. Collect and analyze secondary documents

The research team used secondary data including legal documents of the central government and Dien Bien province such as Documents of the provincial party congress for the 2020 - 2025 term, the provincial party committee's website, and Dien Bien electronic information the portal, the most recently published provincial statistical yearbook, and official reports of local authorities serve the

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[7]Prime Minister (2015), Decision No. 714/QD-TTg dated May 22, 2015 of the Prime Minister on promulgating a list of national databases that need to be prioritized for implementation to create a foundation for government development electronics, Hanoi.

[8]Government Office (2023), Official Dispatch No. 2084/VPCP-KSTT dated March 30, 2023 on implementing the electronic communication process for 02 groups of essential administrative procedures in Project 06, Hanoi.

[9]Government (2020), Decree No. 45/2020/ND-CP of the Government on implementing administrative procedures in the electronic environment (Article 21), Hanoi.

delegation to learn about socio-economic characteristics, legal regulations, political determination, policies and current status of providing as well as the ability to access and use public administrative services and public services for people at the entire province, district and commune levels. In addition, the research team also consulted the statistics of the General Statistics Office and the results of PAPI, PAR-INDEX, SIPAS, ICT Index, and DTI at the provincial level of Dien Bien.

1.3.2. Discussion and interviewing methods

- Discuss directly and interviews with officials including the standing People's Committee, public security agencies, districts' insurance agencies and leading representatives of affiliated specialized agencies; standing people's committees of communes and towns and especially civil servants at the department of receiving and returning results (hereinafter referred to as the "One-Stop" shop) such as one-stop civil servants, judicial and civil status civil servants, who are responsible for guiding and providing public administration services. The purpose is to understand the needs, aspirations and difficulties of these target groups when providing this procedure to people in both face-to-face and online forms.

- In-depth interviews with residents coming to handle public administrative procedures at the people's committee headquarters of communes and towns selected for research. The purpose is to find out whether people have used online public services? If they haven't used it, it's because they don't know or they know but don't care to use it; difficulties (device, Internet, language, technical factors, interface,...)? What are the inappropriate, unnecessary and bottlenecks in the process of providing online public services through the national and provincial public service portals?

- Directly observe the process of providing online public services (including issuing certificates of marital status and inter-connecting "3 in 1" procedures); process of interconnection within the one-stop shop, with the police agency, and the social insurance agency. Research team members also pretended to be residents, trying to access the provincial online information services portal at https://dichvucong.dienbien.gov.vn/vi/ to learn how to implement the two groups of procedures in the electronic environment, and evaluate the pros and cons of interface design and utilities on the portal as a customer/user experience.

- Consult with interdisciplinary experts to provide assessments, comments and suggest appropriate solutions and policy recommendations to improve the quality of provision and accessibility of two selected online public administrative procedures. The research team had an in-depth working session and discussion with leaders of the department of Information and Communications and affiliated department heads to provide preliminary information and advice from the group's research results; listen to the sharing, exchange, and initial feedback of this agency before developing an official consulting report for the locality. Along with that, the research team coordinated with the People's Committee of Dien Bien province to organize a scientific conference on the topic "Solutions to improve the efficiency of online public services implementation in Dien Bien province in the process of digital transformation". Through this, the research team received many opinions, shares and consultations from experts, scientists and managers on this topic.

1.3.3. Limitations of the study

This report will be more complete and profound if the research team has more time and can work more with communes, towns, wards, districts other than the 04 communes and towns of Dien Bien Dong and Muong Ang districts. In particular, despite their wishes, the research team has not had many opportunities to meet and discuss to more people, especially ethnic minorities due to their practice of working in the fields, come to complete administrative procedures very early and shy when being interviewed. All voices and feelings of officials and civil servants at all levels, residents and social groups are important for the analysis, consultation and development of recommendations in this report. However, this gap is also an opportunity for the research team to continue to fill the gap with further research on this topic in Dien Bien province in the coming time.

II. KEY FINDINGS

2.1. Situation of online public service provision in Dien Bien province

2.1.1. Information technology infrastructure

According to a report from Dien Bien province, the province is one of the first 9 provinces to connect to the national population database, and has basically completed the connection with central ministries. Results of assessing the digital transformation index (DTI) of provinces and centrally run cities in 2021 announced by the Ministry of Information and Communications on August 8, 2022 for the digital infrastructure index group, Dien Bien province Bien scored 47.81 points, ranked 30/63 provinces and cities. Compared to provinces in the region such as Yen Bai (21/63), Hoa Binh (54/63), Lai Chau (61/63), Son La (62/63)... and the whole country, the province's technology infrastructure information has basically been invested in and built to meet the requirements of developing the province's digital government.

The ratio of computers/civil servants in state agencies at all levels reached 100%. All state agencies at all levels have internal networks (LANs) connecting to broadband internet and specialized data transmission lines of party and state agencies.

The province's data center fully meets the criteria and technical norms as prescribed, providing a centralized management infrastructure platform to ensure synchronization, uniformity, information safety and security, and serving operations for the province's shared software.

The Provincial Data Sharing and Integration Platform (LGSP) was built to ensure connection with the National Data Sharing and Integration Platform (NDXP) to exploit databases. The information system has the ability to connect at scale and scope from central to local levels. Up to now (July 2023), 100% of the province's shared data applications are connected and used through the LGSP axis, over 70% of the data services available on NDXP have been put into use by the province.

The province has built a Cyber Security and Safety Operations and Supervision Center (SOC) to ensure information security according to a 4-layer model. At the same time the center also connects, shares information, and monitors information security, monitor information security with the national cyberspace security monitoring center. The province has also implemented a centralized anti-malware solution across the province according to the Prime Minister's directive No. 14/CT-TTg dated May 25, 2018 to provincial shared information system for over 3,600 computers of civil servants in the province.

2.1.2. Applying information technology services to provide public services to serve people and businesses

Results of evaluating the index of serving people and businesses in carrying out administrative procedures and providing public services on the national public service portal, Dien Bien province is currently ranked 11/63 provinces/cities, with 71 ,33/100 points, including:

- The publictity and transparency index group reached 13.2/18 points (national average score 10.4 points).

- The task progress index group reached 19.3/20 points (national average score 17.3 points).

- Online public service index group 6.8/12 points (national average score 5.5 points).

- Online payment index group 4.4/10 points (national average score 3.6 points).

- Satisfaction index group 17.8 points (national average score 17 points).

- Dossier digitization index group 9.8/22 points (national average score 9.9 points).

Currently, the province is providing 1,789 administrative procedures that are synchronized data from the national database on administrative procedures, in which 100% administrative procedures are eligible according to the guidance of the government office, is provided as a full-course online public service on the provincial system. The system is also integrated and provided on the national public service portal to create favorable conditions for organizations and individuals when handling work, increasing publicity and transparency. All of administrative procedure dossiers received and resolved by specialized from commune to provincial level are carried out through the system (except for administrative procedures and online public services being used in systems and software of ministries and central branches).

Statistics on the provincial system and national public service portal in 2022, the rate of online public services generating dossiers from specialized agencies at all government levels reaches 80%; the rate of online applications reached 53%; the rate of administrative procedures paid by online transactions reached 38.89%; the rate of online payment dossiers reached 3.74%; the rate of digitization of dossiers and results of administrative procedures reached 55.24%; the rate of dossiers with electronic results is 12.71%. In the first 6 months of 2023, the rate of online public service documents generating dossiers reached 93%; the rate of online applications reached over 70%; the rate of administrative procedures involving online payment transactions reached 59.35%; the rate of online payment dossiers reached 20.87%; the rate of digitized dossiers and administrative procedure resolution results reached 80.38%; the rate of dossiers with electronic results reached 28.63%. The number of dossiers received through online public service has increased steadily over time, contributing to reforming administrative procedures, improving the quality and efficiency of state agencies' operations towards publicity and transparency, ensuring better service to people and businesses.

Implementing government's 06 project on "Developing application of population data, electronic identification and authentication to serve national digital transformation in the period 2022 - 2025, vision to 2030", Dien Bien province has acquired over 315,000 level 2 electronic identity accounts, reaching nearly 70% of the yearly plan, in which over 200,000 accounts were successfully activated. Dien Bien aims to activate level 1 and 2 electronic identification for 400,000 accounts by the end of October 2023[10].

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[10]See more at https://dienbientv.vn/tin-tuc-su-kien/xa-hoi/202307/dien-bien-kich-hoat-tren-200000-tai-khoan-dinh-danh-dien-tu-5805705/

2.2. Issue certificate of marital status

According to the report of the provincial people's committee, the procedure for issuing a certificate of marital status is carried out according to the provisions of section 3, the government's decree no. 123/2015/ND-CP dated November 15, 2015. According to a report of the People's Committee of Dien Bien province, from January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022, the commune-level people's committee issued certificates of marital status to 4,476 cases, of which 4,455 cases were for marriage, other purposes 21 cases. From January 1, 2023 to June 30, 2023, there are 2,400 cases, in which 2,352 cases are for marriage and 48 cases are for other purposes. According to the provisions of the Residence Law, from January 1, 2023, paper household registration books and temporary residence books are no longer valid. Data from the report assessing the current status of online public administrative reform in Dien Bien province does not separate these procedures according to direct or online form. However, when working with the people's committees of communes and towns in Dien Bien Dong and Muong Ang districts, justice and vivil status officers said that citizens applying for certificates of marital status online are very low, commune officials mainly support and work for them online.

2.2.1. Experience and evaluation of the research team

To make a more realistic and objective assessment of this content, the research team directly accessed and tested Dien Bien's public administrative portal, which is at https://dichvucong.dienbien.gov.vn/vi/home-dbn:

- At the province's public administrative portal, in the search bar for administrative procedures, the research team submitted a request for confirmation of marital status; the results show that the procedure for issuing certificates of marital status belongs to the field of civil status, implemented by agency at the commune/ward/town level and this is partly public service. The interface design and the way to search for procedures on the information services portal of Dien Bien province are still complicated for users, especially those who are not familiar with technology. When searching for procedures for issuing a certificate of marital status, you must type the correct keywords in the search field.

The research team typed in the keyword "confirmation of marital status" and the search results returned 131 results, in which the procedure for issuing a certificate of marital status was fully guided. This is a partial online public service in the field of civil status, with implementation methods including direct, online and through postal services. Profile components are also fully listed. The online application process will lead to a page requiring login to the national public service portal with three forms of login: (1) account issued by the national public service portal; (2) electronic identification account issued by the Ministry of Public Security; (3) account issued by Vietnam post (not for public employees of state agencies). Thus, to continue carrying out online procedures, residents are required to have one of the three types of accounts mentioned above.

After logging, user will be asked to choose which commune to implement; next, a screen will appear to issue a certificate of marital status according to the level of partial public service. The person performing the procedure follows instructions directly online. A notable point is that currently, online applicants (those who log in with an account) can submit applications for others.

This is an important point in accelerating the process of increasing the rate of records generated online.

During the procedure, a chatbot box appears to support service providers by answering common questions about administrative procedures. However, when faced with a question that requires consulting, the chatbot gives an inappropriate answer, asking the user to visit Kon Tum province's website .

Observing at the one-stop shop in two districts with 4 communes/towns, the research team found that the information technology infrastructure serving operations is basically good. Computers and accompanying equipments such as printers, scanners... are modernly equipped and operate well. According to reports from civil servants working in this department, computers previously equipped since the 2000s ran very slowly and did not have scanners. Recently, along with the province's digital transformation process, information technology infrastructure has been invested and basically operates well. However, when problems occur or if it is needed to make repairs, additional purchases must be made through a centralized procurement process (twice a year through the department of Information and Communications), so it is sometimes inadequate.

When asked to perform operations on issuing certificates of marital status and marriage registration, justice and civil status officials reflected on some data inadequacies. For example, when Thai women get married, they change to her husband's surname. As a result, it do not match the information for herself and her children. The province is standardizing to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the data.

In the case of issuing certificates of marital status to people with many different places of residence, commune-level justice and civil status officers have no basis to send verification documents according to clause 2, article 22, decree. no. 123/2015/ND-CP because citizen data and information fields on the province's administrative information system do not fully reflect the previous places of residence of citizens in cases of residents having many registered permanent places and the time of permanent residence registration in each locality. In particular, there are some cases that residents have not been changed information about their marital status on the national population database but having a decision and extract from the competent authority. Verification is mainly based on citizens' declarations, which can lead to incomplete and inaccurate verification, affecting the confirmation of citizens' information about marital status and other legal consequences.

2.2.2. Perspective of officials and civil servants

When discussing with officials and civil servants at all levels of Dien Bien province, especially at the commune level, some difficult issues in transacting online public services were reflected.

*First, difficulties related to technical infrastructure issues.*Some villages and hamlets in the province do not have the national electricity grid, many places are in areas with "zero" phone signals, many people do not have smartphones, computers, must register with the owner's SIM card... Therefore, residents cannot implement online administrative services and propaganda to use online public services is not effective. In Dien Bien Dong district, a poor district of the province, there are 26 villages without national electricity grid, 30% of areas have no phone signal. The district tries to bring

electricity to the villages by 2025. In addition, the budget revenue of the Dien Bien Dong district is about 20 billion VND/year, mainly depending on the central and provincial budgets, so the district has no funding to invest in digital transformation. In addition, according to district leaders, the implementation of Project 06 is still difficult in the stages of mobilizing people to implement. People have not used their phone SIM cards for a long time and cannot keep their numbers, fearing being tracked or buying junk SIM cards. Although 100% of communes can meet online, online public services have not yet come into practice and substance. In Muong Ang district, 5/118 villages have no electricity, 6 villages do not have 4G coverage, people live scattered, the terrain is complex, 5 villages have not been able to travel in 4 seasons, so it is difficult to invest in technical infrastructure and BTS stations. In many places, investors do not want to invest in broadcasting stations because there is no electricity and it is difficult to to make profit. Regarding investment in technical infrastructure for the one-stop shop, basic equipment such as computers, printers, and scanners have been invested and provided by the district. However, the regulation on centralized purchasing causes difficulties, affecting the process of upgrading and replacing old and broken equipment and machinery.

*Second, data and information issues.*In the previous period, people had many documents with unclear and inconsistent content such as age, date of birth, and full name, causing conflicts in information and data, time loss in checking, tracking and synchronizing information. The educational level of many people in the province is still limited, especially in remote areas. People face many difficulties in accessing and implementing basic document declaration and procedures in the electronic environment. In addition, data from the Justice and Police sectors do not match, affecting the ability to synchronize data between software systems. In fact, there are many cases where information about ethnic composition is incorrect. When registered as Tay, Nung, or Dao ethnic people, when received, they are ethnic Chinese. As a result, people have to go through procedures to request information correction. Besides, changing network operators (VNPT switched to Mobifone) also affected the quality of the Internet network.

Third, the problems come from the residents. In the research area, the majority of residents are ethnic minorities, with uneven educational levels. People still have the habit of doing administrative procedures directly, are afraid of contacting technology, and are not familiar with online public services. Many families do not have smartphones, and there are few administrative procedures, so if there are instructions on online public services, they do not remember or care. Most people are not familiar with computers and phones, so they are still confused when carrying out procedures and manipulating information services. For many people, despite being propagated and mobilized by officials, online public service is something far away and complicated for them due to having to carry out many stages, many steps with many requests for information that are yet to be clearly useful. Many people are illiterate, and do not know Vietnamese, especially the elderly, so they do not need to use online public services.

*Fourth, i*ssues of work pressure for commune-level civil servants. Recently, due to the pressure to complete citizen identification and personal identification account activation in a short time, some public security officers have been overloaded with work. The data information is not consistent, civil servants spend time for data cleaning and standardize the data. Commune-level justice and civil

status officers carry out many documents and regulations for one thing at the same time while many documents are overlapping. Some new documents are applied but they do not yet understand the content and have not been trained, make them confused; manipulating and entering data at the same time on multiple software and systems (not connected) causes the workload to not decrease but even increase a lot. Being imposed with targets for implementing online public services puts a lot of pressure on grassroots officials.

2.2.3. Residents' perspectives through interviews

Many residents interviewed in one-stop shops of communes/towns and districts in the research area have not heard or known about 'online public services'. There is a distinction between young and older people. While some young people have heard of online public service, some older people have never heard of this type of service. Among those who know about online public service, the level of use and practice is very different. Many of them have heard or know about online public service but have not practiced it. Differences in level of practice also vary by occupation and place of residence. Accordingly, teachers and civil servants have a higher level of proficiency when they are highly educated and have exposure and work that requires understanding and using certain types of online public services. On the contrary, people who work in the fields and do activities less related to technology rarely use it and are not proficient. They were given instructions but do not remember or know how to do it. People in towns hear and be exposed to online public services more than in disadvantaged communes. Most people want to go to the people's committee at the commune or district level, depending on the administrative procedures they transact and they will be guided directly by officials, so they can feel secure.

"I went to the commune people's committee to do birth registration procedures directly. When I arrived, the officials did it for me. I brought the birth paper, the officials made the birth certificate, and it took 30 minutes to get it. I don't know information about online public services, I don't know about training courses on online public services. I have a VneID account with integrated documents but I don't have the genuin phone number so I can't activate it yet. I use Zalo and Facebook but do not join the group because I rarely use it. I bought some goods through Facebook and buy clothes conveniently. Elderly people are illiterate and do not have smartphones, so they do not know how to use online public services. There are many good staff, but there are also staff who scold me for being late" (Male, Mong ethnic group, 27 years old, Phu Sua village, Ang Cang commune, 9th grade education, works in the fields, poor household).

"I went to the town's people's committee to complete online land procedures and request a judicial certificate. Procedures are quick and staff are enthusiastically supported and guided. I think that digital transformation and implementation of online public services for officials, civil servants, and young people are very convenient, and the process is also easy to implement because of specific instructions. However, it is very difficult for the elderly and ethnic minorities who are illiterate and do not have the conditions to have smartphones. Another specific shortcoming is the payment of allowances to students through accounts. Many students do not have account numbers. If they pay, they will have to withdraw money, and then problems with card management and card maitainment fee. It can be seen that digitalization also has shortcomings. Kinh people are easier to approach than

ethnic minorities. The current staff also has the qualifications to ensure good implementation of digital transformation content and handling of online public administrative procedures" (Female, Kinh, 43 years old, residential group 3, Muong Ang town, teacher).

2.3. Inter-connecting administrative procedures for birth registration, permanent residence registration and issuance of health insurance cards for children under 6 years old

Inter-connected administrative procedures for birth registration, permanent residence registration and issuance of health insurance cards for children under 6 years old (also known as 3-in-1 inter-connection) are implemented online according to official dispatch no. 2084/ VPCP-KSTT on March 30, 2023. The government office requested the implementation of an electronic inter-connected process for 02 groups of essential administrative procedures in Project 06. Accordingly, the "3 in 1" inter-connected process is described by diagram 2.1.

Diagram 2.1: "3 in 1" inter-connected process
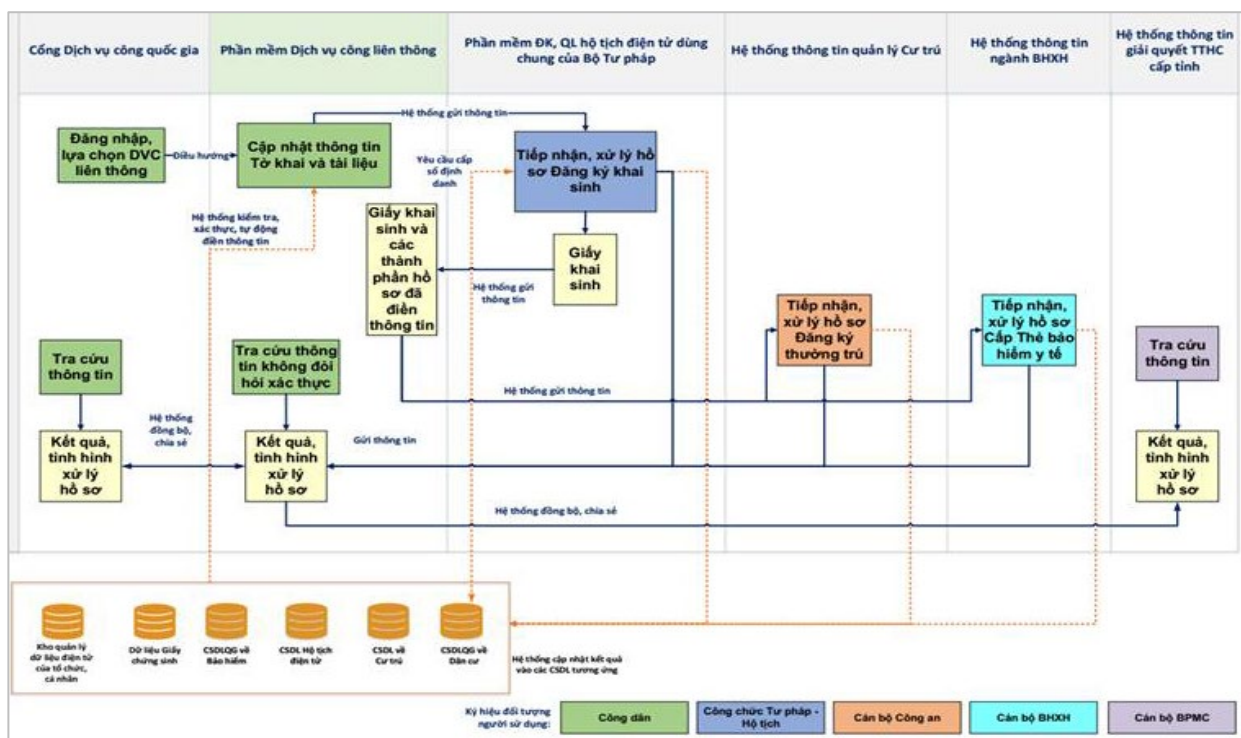
Source: Official Dispatch No. 2084/VPCP-KSTT dated March 30, 2023 of the Government Office.

According to the report of the provincial people's committee, to implement 2 groups of interconnected administrative procedures "birth registration - permanent residence registration - issuance of health insurance cards for children under 6 years old" and "death registration - deletion of permanent residence registration - funeral expenses allowance" has been connected online to district and commune points so that all relevant civil servants and officers can attend the professional training conference organized by the government office.

From July 10, 2023, the interconnected public service software system (https://lienthong.dichvucong.gov.vn) developed by the Ministry of Public Security in coordination with relevant ministries will be officially put into operation. The province's information system for administrative procedures has completed integration with the interconnected public service software system from June 19, 2023 to synchronize the processing status and return dossier processing results and aim at searching and statistics.

Because the start of implementation is less than 1 month, throughout Dien Bien province, the online 2-in-1 procedure has only been widely disseminated for two administrative procedures: birth registration and issuance of health insurance cards for children under 6 years old. Previously, the data connection between the civil status database and the insurance software was implemented. In 129/129 communes, wards and towns in the province, 02 administrative procedures have bên implemented 2-in-1 inter-registration for birth registration and issuance of health insurance cards for children under 6 years old.

- Number of communes that have provided levels 2 and 3/partly: 129 communes, wards and towns.

- Number of communes that have provided level 4/full: 0 communes, wards and towns.

- Number of communes that have fully connected 3 in 1: 129 communes, wards and towns (from July 10, 2023).

- Number of communes connected 2 in 1: 129 communes, wards and towns.

- Number of communes not yet connected: 0 communes, wards, and towns.

2.3.1. Experience and evaluation of the research team

The research team directly operated a 3-in-1 interconnected procedure on the provincial online service portal (https://dichvucong.dienbien.gov.vn/vi/padsvc). When requesting to search for administrative procedures for birth registration, permanent residence registration and issuance of health insurance cards for children under 6 years old, no results were obtained. The research team switched to searching for commune-level administrative procedures and also showed no results. However, when entering the commune-level procedures section in the field of civil status, two interconnected procedures appear: the administrative procedures for birth registration, permanent residence registration and issuance of health insurance cards for children under 6 years old (3 in 1, full progressing service) and interconnecting administrative procedures on birth registration and issuance of health insurance cards for children under 6 years old (2 in 1). When clicking on the 'view details' button, instructions on the order of implementation appear, the implementation method is 'direct', the application components but do not have the 'submit online application' section as procedure of certificate of marital status. For 2-in-1 inter-connection, the results are similar. Thus, it can be seen that, on the online public service page of Dien Bien province, inter-connected administrative procedures for birth registration, permanent residence registration and issuance of health insurance cards for children under 6 years old (3 in 1) and 2-in-1 have not been shown to be online public services but are still considered direct public services with some stages that can be performed online. Observating in one-stop shop, there are many inadequate procedures in receiving

and returning results. This hinders the progress and efficiency of the process of completing online public service provision.

- Repeat the process of filling in and entering information. The same information content is in the declaration, but civil servants at the one-stop shop must do it many times (at least 2 times). After people handwrite the necessary information into the declaration form or the civil servants of this department write it for them, they must re-enter this information into the civil status database on the ward/commune electronic information portal which is integrated on the provincial public service portal, while the information in the declaration and information fields on the portal are not too different to print the dossier receipt and appointment for result return. If citizens declare and do it online, this job civil servants do not have to do with too many repetitive operations and it is not necessary to print an appointment paper. This causes the civil servants' workload increase significantly, not counting other tasks that one-stop civil servants must undertake; causing waste of stationery (printing paper, ink and computer wear and tear) while it is possible to verify electronic copies in the form of pdf files or screenshots if done online. From 2020, birth, death, marriage, and communication registration will be performed on level 2 and 3 information services/partially but not level 4/full process due to software error, level 4 must have an account, phone number. Smart phones, if you have to pay online, people don't do it.

- *Many steps are done manually*. Even though it is done online, civil servants still have to do it manually, on the software they also have to do 4-5 steps, still print out and sign on paper and scan to send it to the Ministry of Justice, still have to enter the civil status book. The judicial sector is still applying many software such as civil status software, electronic authentication, and administrative violations. Electronic certification software still has many procedures. Submiting to the Ministry of Justice for a birth certificate and transfering it to the Ministry of Public Security to obtain personal identification. Electronic authentication, people come to declare (but officials do it for them), there is no scanning, digital signature of authentication of leaders, the system always reports errors. Signing one document for one person sometimes takes half a day, so people are hesitant to do it online.

- *Software error of the governing ministry*. The implementation of Project 06 is very urgent while the ministry of justice software is not yet interconneted. The department of Justice has its own software, digitized locally. However, the software of the department of justice still has errors, the commune's justice civil servants do not understand the time it takes to review documents from the department of justice as well as the time it takes to process documents from the department of justice to the ministry of justice.

2.3.2. Perspectives of officials and civil servants

Evaluating online public services, Mr. Hang A Thai, a judicial and civil status officer of Dien Bien Dong district, said: "*This service is not user-friendly, many people are illiterate and do not know how do it online, most officers at the one-stop shop do it for residents. People who don't have smartphones can't do it. This puts a lot of pressure on commune-level civil servants, they have to work for the people, for themselves in many systems*". This civil servant recommended combining multiple software into one system (there are two separate systems for people with meritorious services to the revolution and those under social protection).

Judicial and civil status officials of Dien Bien Dong town reflected: "*commune-level civil servants have been overloaded for 2 years, working on Saturdays and Sundays. Done online but still do it manually, on software also take 4-5 steps, still print out the for manual signature, then scan and send to the Ministry of Justice, still have to enter the civil status book. Judicial officers like me have to implement on many softwares: civil status, electronic authentication, administrative violations. Electronic authentication software still has many procedures. Submit to the ministry of justice for a birth certificate and then transfer to the ministry of public security to obtain a personal identification number. Some new guidelines, policies and job requirements that we have not been trained, making it difficult and confusing to handle work. Many cases of declaring information that do not match or make mistakes cannot be corrected*"

Many civil servants reflected some characteristics of people that make it difficult to implement online public services, such as when needed, they apply for birth certificates. Many young people in working age work in other provinces/cities. For example, there are about 9,000 /51,000 people in Muong Ang working away from home, leaving only the elderly and children at home. When they need legal documents, they return to their hometown to transact. Information declaration is often inaccurate and inconsistent, making it very difficult for officials to verify and standardize information.

Implementing online public services at the district level, which are more specialized, each functional department has a specialist to receive documents, so they understand the procedures and processes more clearly. At the commune level, at the one-stop shop, in addition to specific fields such as land and justice, other civil servants have to synthesize many fields, so they do not understand the procedures clearly, and sometimes do not know whether the documents are complete or missing, making the process take more time. Requiring online payment is also a barrier that makes people afraid of transacting online public services. Online payments require having a bank account, e-wallet, while payments from banks, payments via post, SMS messages have not been accepted. Meanwhile, people have to pay fee for openning e-wallet like MOMO. In addition, when people pay money in advance, but if the application cannot be resolved, civil servants have not been instructed on how to refund.

2.3.3. Residents' perspectives in interviews

Through interviews with a number of people who came to do administrative procedures in the research areas, some said they had not heard of public service, some knew but did not know how to do the "3 in 1" procedure online. ".

"*I work all the time, rarely stay at home, and haven't listened to online public services. I just heard my mother-in-law about installing and doing online public service, but it's unclear*" (Female, 29 years old, Ang Cang commune, works at a private environmental company). She has a smart phone, uses social networks Zalo, Facebook, sometimes purchases products on Facebook, but has not purchased products on Shopee, Tiki, Lazada.

"*I have not heard of the online public services and do not have a smartphone. I am used to going to the commune to transact public services directly. Electronic identification provided by the commune police. I have never shopped online before. My son was born in 1998 and is more technologically savvy*" (Male, 45 years old, Na Son commune, Thai ethnicity, peasant, came to apply for a marriage

certificate).

"*Doing online administrative procedures takes a while because the network is slow and I don't have a computer or phone at home. I have heard commune officials and residential groups propagandize about online public services. If residents do that, it will be more convenient. My parents don't know how to use the smartphone, don't know this type of service, all their children and grandchildren work for them* " (Male, 31 years old, Thai ethnicity, Muong Ang town, family business, came to register his child's birth).

"*I have heard and know about online public service,I have a smartphone but haven't used that service yet so I don't know. I haven't heard about the community digital transformation team, haven't bought anything online, only my sister sells clothes at the market or buys things online. The direct administrative procedures are convenient, the officials are enthusiastic*" (Male, 22 years old, education level 9/12, Ang Cang commune, Thai ethnicity).

Even members of the town's community digital transformation team could not perform operations on the online public service portal despite going to propagate online public service, with the reason of old age.

"*The community digital transformation team mainly propagate, with no support. Digital transformation applications should only be for young people. Transacting online take more time than direct one. I let my 2 children do it because they are police officers. I mainly use the smartphone to make calls, surfing Facebook, Zalo and receiving information from residential groups. I rarely buy goods online, only bought once via Facebook advertising. Digital transformation approaches are also different between population groups. Online administrative procedures are only for those who are proficient in technology. The level of proficiency in online public services among members of the community digital transformation team is also different, but many people are still busy making a living, so the effectiveness of this team is not good. 100% of civil servants and teachers can use it proficiently. I think in the future, when society has popularized online services and digital transformation, it will be very good*" (Male, 64 years old, group 9, Kinh, deputy secretary of the party cell, head of the local street 9, Muong Ang town).

2.4. Some basic causes

Based on direct surveys in the area, discussions with authorities, as well as research on various reports and statistical data, it is possible to point out some main causes: (1) general conditions of Dien Bien province; (2) technical infrastructure and technology for online public services; (3) factors belonging to the grassroot civil servants and residents; (4) process for implementing online public administrative procedures; (5) policies and general mechanisms.

2.4.1. General socio-economic conditions of the province

Dien Bien is a mountainous province, the terrain is mainly steep, rugged and fragmented hills and mountains, and the population is sparse (average population density is 65.52 people/km2). The province's budget is very low. Many areas in the province do not have national electricity, many places do not have mobile coverage and internet connection, making telecommunications infrastructure investment expensive, while economic efficiency is not high. The province has a low

socio-economic starting point, still receives budget support from the central government, so the investment budget for public services is still tight. Dien Bien is a province with a large number of ethnic minorities, uneven educational levels, many people of working age in the province work far away, so it is difficult for economic development. People's access to information technology applications is limited, many people do not have smartphones or internet-connected devices. Mobilizing and propagating for people to use online public services across the province is very difficult.

2.4.2. Technical infrastructure and technology serving online public services

Many areas in the province do not have national electricity, which is the first difficulty affecting the dissemination and implementation of online public services. According to data from the electricity regulatory authority, ministry of Industry and Trade, by 2023, Dien Bien has 7% of households that do not have access to the national electricity. In addition to difficulties with electricity, Dien Bien still has many villages and hamlets that not being covered mobile signal, mainly places in places having less than 50 households. In addition, many people in remote communes donot have smart devices connected to the internet, do not have electronic payment accounts, and do not have the skills to use smart devices or pay via electronic payment accounts.

Equipment and infrastructure to serve the dossier digitization and results of handling administrative procedures, especially at the commune level in some localities, are lacking and have not met the requirements. The province's information system for handling administrative procedures does not have an application on smartphones; the virtual assistant function to guide and answer users' questions is in the testing phase. The machines are basically equipped with a scanner. Centralized procurement causes difficulties and affects the process of implementing online information services.

The online service portal interface on the province's public service portal is not user-friendly although the province has tried to improve it. Some basic information is still not clearly shown, making it convenient to search information.

The province's budget is still difficult, so it has not been proactive in investing in technology infrastructure, and activities serving digital transformation and implementing online information services (software investment, training, and staff support).

2.4.3.The factors belong to officials, civil servants and residents

Residents' awareness, psychology and habits of handling administrative procedures. Online public service is a relatively new field, so most people still have the habit of performing administrative procedures directly. Efforts to propagate and mobilize people to perform online public services have not been as effective as expected because people go to work in the fields early, the area is large, the population is sparse, and they rarely meet each other to propagate. Another important point is that people have not really seen the superiority and advantages of online public service compared to doing it directly. In the early stages, due to software errors, transmission lines, and slow computers, transacting online sometimes takes longer than doing directly. For example, if residents transact a 3-in-1 procedure directly, they may receive the results in a day, but when they do it online, they have

to wait longer. If people do it directly, they only need to fill in the declaration and submit complete documents, then the officials can return in a day, but when people do it online, they have to open an account, scan the documents and send it to one stop shop, after receiving and processing, and it is returned to the people. In fact, some procedures done in person are more convenient than online. Online transactions have many advantages but have not been proven in practice, so people are not really enthusiastic in beeing accepted. Online public services are very convenient and positive, but some procedures have not been standardized. Difficulties in infrastructure and technical conditions are barriers in implementing online public services in the near future.

For many ethnic people, going to the people's committee at the commune and district level to carry out administrative procedures is not simply to handle paperwork but also has the need to communicate, exchange, answer questions and receive guidance from staff. In fact, many administrative procedures are complicated. If people are not familiar with the process, they will not know how to do it, what documents to prepare, how to submit them, and what steps they take to do so correctly. It is advisable to ask officials to ensure the correct and safe implementation of procedures.

Community digital transformation teams were established in many communes in Dien Bien province but have not yet been effective. It takes time to review and evaluate the activities of this team in the future. The community digital transformation team in Dien Bien province has the participation of many components such as party cell secretaries, village heads, village heads, women's union, youth union, of which the main force are youth union members, teachers. People who are proficient in technology can guide residents. However, because many people in this group work part-time, support costs are low, there is not enough expenses, while operating in a large area, sparsely populated, and expensive to travel. As a result, community digital transformation teams 's activities heve not been effective. In the coming time, it is necessary to review the performance of this team to make more appropriate adjustments.

Since the government's policy to implement digital transformation, the workload of commune-level civil servants has been overloaded and under pressure, especially for judiciary civil servants and commune-level police. These difficulties and obstacles come from many reasons: new and many problems, and short implementation time, causing them to find out how to do it. At the beginning of implementation, there was a lot of work to be done while the technical infrastructure still had many shortcomings, causing many commune civil servants to be overloaded with work, having to work day, night, and all days off, affecting their health. Some people's family happiness is affected by working constantly and rarely coming home. Some common difficulties and inadequacies include poor connection, old and lacking computers, low configuration, inconsistent information fields, and having to input the same information into multiple software at the same time. Although digital transformation is carried out, regulations on paper record keeping still apply and many operations must be performed..

The next problem for commune-level civil servants is that they are regulated by many written policies and regulations, while many policies of ministries and branches are not unified, there are discrepancies. Furthermore, some policies and regulations change so quickly that many communal-

level civil servants cannot keep up. Commune-level civil servants work concurrently at the one-stop shop, so many things are not professional, so it takes time to learn. In conditions where provincial and district budgets are still tight, training regimes for commune-level officials and civil servants, especially Justice and Civil Status civil servants, are not satisfactory, causing them to lose motivation to work.

The issue of updating knowledge and training for commune-level officials and civil servants needs to be fully considered in both quantity and quality of training sessions. In the early stages, officials and civil servants are not yet proficient so it is difficult to guide people. Many officials reflected that some new documents and regulations were required to be implemented without instructions or training, and the time was very tight, making them confused and not knowing how to implement. Next, the quality of training is not good. After training, many officials are still confused and do not understand the problem when they return to handle their work. Therefore, it is necessary to pay attention to practical needs: what training content, what methods, what time duration and the effectiveness of the training sessions is reflected in the level of professional proficiency and expertise of the trainees. number of officers after training is the most important measure, instead of statistics on the number of training classes.

2.4.4.Process of implementing online public administrative procedures

Some processes and procedures for implementing online public services are still complicated, many steps, making people discouraged from trying to carry out these transactions. Many procedures are not frequently used by people, so even if they are instructed, they may forget if it have not done in a long time. Some online processes and procedures even cause difficulties for the implementation staff themselves, when the instructions are not clear, doing it online but still having to do it in person.

Regarding the coordination mechanism between relevant agencies, there are still some problems and inadequacies. Judicial data between communes are not interconnected, and there is no right to access and exploit information between communes. Digital signatures are not interconnected and cannot be shared because the ministry of justice's software has not been upgraded. Regarding the issuance of certificates of marital status with many different places of residence, the information system for handling administrative procedures of the province does not fully show the previous place of residence of citizens. In some cases, citizens have not been able to change information about their marital status on the national population database, but in fact there has been a decision and extract from a competent authority on marital status. Verification is mainly based on citizens' declarations, which can lead to incomplete and inaccurate verification, affecting the confirmation of citizens' information about marital status and consequences. The poor coordination and information exchange mechanism make it very difficult for commune-level civil servants to handle their work, and they are under pressure from residents and superior officials in evaluating completed job targets. Some errors, due to time delays, were reacted by residents, superiors judged the level of target completion. Many objective errors such as technical problems, software, transmission errors or coordination untimely between agencies related to administrative processes and procedures attributed to the fault of commune-level officials and civil servants.

2.4.5. The unconsistent and unsynchronized data system

The province's data system has not synchronized with systems of ministries and branches, leading to difficulties in management. Standardizing, cleaning and connecting data in Dien Bien province when implementing online public services is very time-consuming. Due to the previous lax management process, many residents declared inconsistent information, causing conflicts and data distortions. Therefore, officials and civil servants waste time verifying information. According to local reports, many ethnic minorities do not declare when new information arises. Only when carrying out administrative procedures do they declare information. Some habits and customs of ethnic minorities in the province, such as Mong people who often travel back and forth to Laos and Myanmar to visit relatives, or Thai ethnic women who get married and change to their husband's surname, also make authentication and management of citizen data is difficult. The above issues also make digital transformation and the provision of online public services in Dien Bien province face many challenges.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1. Recommendations for Dien Bien province

To improve the effectiveness of online public services and serve the people, especially ethnic minorities in the province, it is necessary to carry out some of the following tasks.

3.1.1. Investment in basic infrastructure development

Dien Bien needs to take advantage of all resources to invest in developing technical infrastructure. One of the important contents is to bring electricity to all communes and wifi and 3G/4G coverage throughout the province. At the same time, the province needs to pay attention to upgrading equipment to serve digital transformation and implement online public services throughout the province.

The focus of infrastructure development, including information technology infrastructure, should be based on the actual needs of agencies, organizations. Modernizing technical infrastructure to serve public administration is one of the key tasks of administrative reform that needs to be focused on and directed by the province, because this is an important stepping stone to building a new e-government, digital government. Therefore, it is necessary to focus on completing and expanding the telecommunications transmission system, promoting the application of technology software, building data platforms. Interconnect database systems and software of state management agencies from commune to central level. Build integrated, shared data platforms, gradually building digital government infrastructure. Proactively investing in, upgrading technological infrastructure, and building user-friendly e-government to attract people to use public administrative services in the electronic environment.

3.1.2. Developing a roadmap to deploy online public services for residents

The implementation of online public services is a process that is specific to each locality according to the direction and general goals of the central government. Accordingly, the province needs to choose strengths to focus on investment and development first, in which it is necessary to clearly define the roadmap, goals, and specific steps in digital transformation and provision of online public services. During implementation, it is necessary to study the actual access and use of residents, especially ethnic minorities (paying attention to the habits and living characteristics of Thai, Mong and other ethnic groups in the province), people in remote areas, poor people, people with low education levels, people with disabilities, people not fluent in Vietnamese... From that, finding a flexible, proactive and creative way to deploy process of providing online public services. Authenticating electronic identity accounts; disseminating digital signatures to officials, civil servants, and residents.

The development of a roadmap and developmental orientation of online public services in the province also needs to refer to new ways of doing things in provinces with similar ethnic, topographical, economic, cultural and social characteristics, and provinces and cities that have creative implementation throughout the country.

Combining the implementation of direct and online public services to ensure all people have

convenient access to services. Prioritizing the application of online public services for a number of essential administrative procedures, focusing on simplifying the process, reducing operational steps, reducing time to fill out forms, reducing costs. The application of online public services should only be encouraged rather than mandatory for rarely used administrative procedures.

3.1.3. Strengthening resources and improving information technology infrastructure

It is neccesary to remove difficulties and obstacles in the progress of approving the current list of procurement and centralized bidding for urgent cases. Priority is given to difficult, underdeveloped areas, remote areas, and areas with many ethnic minorities. Regularly maintain and maintain information technology systems to serve administrative management and provide online public services throughout the province.

Integrating policies, make the most of resources from different policies and programs, especially national target programs, to increase resources for developing online public services in difficult communes in the province.

Mobilizing socialized sources to equip departments to implement online public services and bring equipment such as smartphones and computers to remote villages, step by step to help people become familiar with modern equipment, serving the implementation of online public services. Mobilizing young people after being instructed, so they can continue to disseminate and instruct their relatives how to use online public services.

Clearly identifying the necessary components when formulating and implementing investment plans, improving and upgrading the province's infrastructure in a synchronous, systematic and seamless manner with the national infrastructure system in the coming time. Appling information technology and move towards digitalization of public administrative services, focusing on 4 important infrastructure groups including: (i) database infrastructure; (ii) application infrastructure; (iii) connection infrastructure and (iv) equipment infrastructure.

Arranging organizations, and job positions in the direction of increasing personnel capable of digital transformation and information technology to support the commune level in modernizing the administrative system and improving people's ability to access and use online public services. While waiting for arrangement, the province needs to have a flexible mechanism such as allowing hiring and signing consulting contracts with businesses and experts to support commune-level authorities.

Providing material (such as increased allowances) and mental support and encouragement for civil servants with high work intensity related to providing online public services. Focus on the practical effectiveness of on-site training, coaching and fostering for civil servants at one stop shop on digital transformation knowledge and skills, information technology application and online public services. .

Focusing resources on training and guiding each residential cluster and each family to have at least one person proficient in online public services. These individuals are important cores that help expand the network of people who are proficient in online public service.

3.1.4. Improving the effectiveness of propaganda, advocacy, training and skills development

In front of administrative headquarters at all levels, it is necessary to publicize online public services, installing additional slogans, instruction boards, and scanning QR codes linking to necessary information portals and websites, supporting residents in implementing online public services when needed.

Because it is a province with a large number of ethnic minorities, including two densely populated ethnic groups, the Thai and the Mong, propaganda work needs to closely follow their customs, habits and lifestyle. In addition to propaganda through channels such as newspapers, radio, and social networks (mainly aimed at young people), attention needs to be paid to propaganda by images. The information must be simple, easy to understand, vivid, and aimed at each specific target group (for example, propaganda for the Thai will be different from propaganda for the Mong people).

Review and re-evaluate the performance of the community digital transformation team in the province, paying attention to its substance. Pilot the community digital transformation team model with the participation of teachers, border guards, and cultural and information officers for one year, then evaluate and consider replicating the model.

3.1.5. User-friendly technology

Redesigning the interface of the province's information services portal to be simple and user-friendly at all levels so that people can easily operate and perform online public services when needed. When guiding people to implement online public services, officials and civil servants need to pay attention to the areas and steps that are still problematic to make statistics and request interface adjustments, or gather into a set of questions and answers with possible answers available for people to look up and refer to.

Timely updating information and instructions on the online public service portal about the status and level of public administrative procedures according to the classification of partial or full online public service. Reviewing and standardizing chatbot's consulting content to suit Dien Bien's residents.

In the future, if the province has a policy of building a "smart citizen" or "digital citizen" application, in addition to the function of receiving and reflecting people's information, it is necessary to ensure the ability to integrate and connect with other information systems, especially the information system for handling administrative procedures of the province so that people can carry out administrative procedures in a simple way (function of implementing essential public administrative procedures according to the requirements and objectives in Project 06).

Along with the consulting and support of officials and civil servants, considering the mechanism of signing labor contracts, consulting services, support upgrading and improving the application of online public services for commune-level authorities contracts instead of recruiting personnel.

Each commune should stipulate a fixed day in the week to deploy and support the implementation of online public services for people, and widely notify them so that people can know and be guided to become familiar with this type of online service.

3.2. Policy recommendations to central agencies

3.2.1. For Congress

Researching and amending relevant provisions in the law on civil status and related legal documents such as decree no. 87/2020/ND-CP dated July 28, 2020 on electronic civil status database, online civil status registration in the direction of narrowing the scope of civil status procedures requiring presence directly and increase the use of personal identification numbers (VNeID) to avoid inconvenience and repeated travel for people and create favorable conditions to promote online public services.

3.2.2. For the Government

It is recommended that the government should base on the actual situation in localities such as economic and social development conditions, level of infrastructure investment, intellectual level, and ethnic characteristics to classify people into groups and assign targets for implementing online public services appropriate to the capacity and conditions of each locality. Imposing targets should be consistent with the capabilities and conditions of each locality, avoiding the situation where commune-level officials are overloaded with work and carry out online administrative procedures on behalf of the people, which does not bring substantive results.

The government needs to invest in covering the national electricity and eliminating mobile signal "hole" areas in Dien Bien province before the 70th anniversary of the Dien Bien Phu victory. This is an important condition to help the province achieve the targets for implementing online public services.

The government review policies and regulations from ministries and branches to ensure unity, synchronization, simplicity, effectiveness, avoid overlapping policies, and eliminate old regulations that are no longer appropriate. In particular, it is necessary to study amending the storage law or promulgating the data law; electronic storage law to simplify procedures, authentication and record storage, and promote digital transformation for online public service.

The government needs to promote the integration of software systems and national database systems, especially the national population database. At the same time, research and supplement

timely and updated population movement data to ensure the accuracy and completeness of population data when connecting data nationwide.

The government office upgraded the online payment system to simplify the online payment process on the national public service portal; Adding more payment intermediary banks and payment methods to promote people and businesses using online public services. Quickly support units when encountering electronic payment errors on the national public service portal. Ensuring stable operation of the national public service portal, minimizing cases where people cannot register an account due to system errors.

The government needs to ensure the system's technical infrastructure and synchronize records to avoid connection errors during service use. It is necessary to ensure the principle that when doing public services, it must be simpler, more convenient, and lower costs for people, businesses and civil servants than doing it directly. Only then will the implementation of online public services truly attract people and officials to participate and support. At the same time, the government directs the optimization of software, interoperability, and data sharing between ministries, branches, and localities, as a basis for implementing online public services, exploiting information in general, and issuing status marital status certificates in particular.

The government needs to request sectors related to each group of public administrative procedures and online public services to urgently build synchronous, interconnected software or shared platforms; Take the personal identification code as the base of the user profile; Take the electronic signature associated with the ID code of the civil servant in the main responsible role as a basis for confidence in approving the dossier (electronic authentication). Minimizing the use of both paper and electronic copies that have the same information.

In fact, there are many administrative services that do not generate online transactions in a year. Therefore, it is needed to be adjusted or eliminated to avoid unnecessary pressure on localities. The government should only regulate online public service for procedures that have proven the superiority of online compared to face-to-face. The remaining procedures should only be encouraged, or have a longer roadmap, avoiding imposition of procedures that are not really necessary, causing grassroots officials and civil servants to be overloaded. Restructuring these procedures to implement them in a digital environment, then guide local authorities to implement them consistently.

Until August 2023, 5 out of 8 national digital data targets still have not reached 50% of the requirements[11], national digital transformation committee and the ministry of Information and Communications should promote the completion of all 8 digital data targets in the national 2023 digital data year. In particular, Pay special attention to the target of deploying electronic data warehouses of organizations and individuals on the information system to handle administrative procedures at the ministerial and provincial levels so that people and businesses only have to provide information once when performing online public services.

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[11]See more at: https://chuyendoiso.laocai.gov.vn/tin-trong-nuoc/5-chi-tieu-ve-du-lieu-so-van-chua-dat-50-yeu-cau-1202939

3.2.3. For the Ministry of Information and Communications

Reviewing and upgrading the technical infrastructure and interface of the national public service portal to ensure quick and successful application submission. Simplifying account registration, application submission and online payment of fees and charges (if any) on the the national public service portal so that citizens can easily access, use and contribute part of improving the efficiency of public service delivery for people nationwide in general and localities in particular.

Pursuant to decree no. 42/2022/ND-CP dated June 24, 2022, the ministry of Information and Communications needs to develop and issue guiding documents on minimum standards for interface design of online public service portals at the provincial level, ensuring standards that are user-centered, user-friendly, accessible, and easy to use, taking into account specific user groups (for example, ethnic minorities in provinces with a large population) such as ethnic minorities, the elderly, people with disabilities); at the same time, regularly review the compliance of local authorities at all levels.

The ministry needs to direct network operators to promote programs that provide free personal digital signatures to people when performing administrative procedures in the electronic environment.

It is necessary to emphasize practicality and avoid setting quantitative targets that are not suitable to reality. The implementation of online public services is a process, there needs to be a roadmap for each step and consideration of the economic and social characteristics of each locality to assign online public service targets appropriately and effectively. Avoiding "achievement disease" in doing online public service, need to pay attention to the actual effectiveness and feasibility at each time.

3.2.4. For the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Public Security in implementing the "3 in 1" procedure.

Completing the mechanism for sharing the national population database between the ministry of public security and ministries and branches, including the ministry of justice with the electronic civil status database, according to prime minister's decision 06/QD-TTg on the project to develop application of population data, electronic identification and authentication to serve national digital transformation in the period 2022 - 2025, with a vision to 2030.

Technically researching and designing to ensure the integration of similar information fields in forms including birth registration declaration, participation declaration, and adjustment of social insurance, health insurance information, or "digital" birth registration books for children based on effective exploitation of the national population database that has been connected nationwide; minimize operations in the electronic environment for "3 in 1" procedural interoperability.

The two ministries need to upgrade and complete towards interoperability, decentralization of access, and reasonable exploitation of information in the national population database to serve the fastest and most convenient settlement of online public services, avoiding technical problems. that must be directly intervened in the "3 in 1" procedure for children in the near future, especially the stage of obtaining automatic inter-sectoral personal identification codes.

The ministry of public security needs to update population movement data to ensure the accuracy and completeness, creating consistency and completeness. At the same time, automate some processes related to "3 in 1" procedures such as granting health insurance and social insurance without needing people to declare multiple times on multiple systems. Quickly overcome the problem of slow issuance of personal identification numbers when carrying out joint birth registration procedures; the civil status software is slow and has one-way interaction due to communication with the support switchboard without a support listener. In connection with the ministry of public security to issue identification numbers for newborns, the software system is slow and often fails.

For the ministry of justice, according to current regulations, civil status books and civil status registration documents are preserved and archived permanently and digitized. The current direct and permanent storage and preservation of these types of dossiers and the combination of digitization at the commune level are pushing great pressure and challenges on officials and civil servants. Therefore, the ministry of justice needs to have more detailed and specific specialized guidance documents so that local authorities, especially commune-level authorities, can proactively digitize and store civil status books and other dossiers. Civil status registration is both consistent and suitable for the context of handling this procedure directly and in the electronic environment.

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