

*Re:form/*

*A concept to reduce primary  
producers administrative  
burden*

*Design for Government 2015*

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# SUMMARY

The concept presented in this report is a solution to lessen the administrative burden of primary producers in Finland. By using design methods and ethnography, the design team is able to reframe the initial brief of creating better e-services to the task of facilitating the transition from paper to digital.

The concept proposes five additions to traditional paper-forms that better the usability and understanding of notifications and lessen the frustration related to bureaucracy. In addition, each form has its own web-page, where primary producers can comment and converse on the content of the forms and engage with civil servants to further develop processes. The low barrier web-site encourages primary producers to take easy steps towards digitalization.

The value brought by the reforms is the better aligning of understanding regarding the aims of the forms and the fact that it introduces light prototyping to government. In addition, it encourages coordination and synchronization between the different public actors and gives civil servants the tools to become changemakers through active engagement with users.

The team also identifies challenges the ministry might have related to implementing the concept, mainly the difficulty knowing how to integrate user-centricity with their own design activities and the lack of articulated leadership. It states that the proposed concept is a starting point for a bigger change within the system that begins with the right tools. The report ends with learnings and a call to put someone in charge of the implementation process, take small steps and start by tackling the forms.

# INTRODUCTION

How to make a change in the jungle of forms and bureaucracy that primary producers and civil servants in Finland are facing? This final report from the spring 2015 edition of the Design for Government course at Aalto University's School of Arts, Design and Architecture gives one answer to that question. In text and pictures, you can follow the story from the first brief about digital services for agricultural notifications to the final thoughts and reflections about applying design methods in policy making.

The project team consisted of four students at Aalto University: Panu Autio, Lee Herold, Richard Hylarstedt from the master program Creative Sustainability and Eevi Saarikoski from the master program Collaborative and Industrial Design. This team worked together during 14 weeks, with regular teamwork session at Aalto University's Arabia campus.

In the first chapter the original brief, the starting point of our project, is presented. Chapters 2 and 3 of the report go on to tell the story of the research we did and what we learned from it, giving the background to how our understanding of the problem has changed throughout the process. Then follows a more detailed description of how we rethought and reformulated the brief in chapter 4. In chapter 5 and 6 we turn to solutions, ideas and finally our outcome and proposal on how to tackle the new problem that we discovered. The last chapter closes with our reflection and discussion of the process.

All of us on the team, Panu, Lee, Richard and Eevi, would like to express our gratitude to those who have made our project and result possible: Päivi Virtanen at the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Seungho Lee and rest of the Design for Government teaching team, Juha Leppänen and his colleagues at Demos Helsinki, our fellow students on the course and last but not least all the warm and open-minded people who attended our workshops or let us interview them at home or at work.

# 1. BRIEF

This was the initial design brief we received from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry:

## **Primary Producer's Notifications**

Where are we now?

- The primary producers of food notify their activities to several authorities and registers within the administrative sector of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MMM). The producers have to notify much of the same information multiple times, and the information is recorded by the authorities in different information systems.
- There are many levels of legislation (EU, national, sector by sector) that govern which information is to be notified for food safety, animal health and welfare and agricultural subsidies.
- The notification happens both online and offline. Many forms are on paper and difficult to find, and there is a need to increase the use of electronic services. The forms and the language they contain are complicated.
- The utilisation of the data collected by authorities could be used more efficiently.

Where do we want to be?

- MMM wants to lessen the administrative burden of the producers and enhance the use of data in and between authorities. Understandable over nice-looking.
- MMM wants to have easily accessible e-services as well as a reduced number of paper versions with more efficiency.
- MMM, if possible, wants to combine separate notification processes.

How are we going to get there?

- By listening to, and observing the people potentially engaged with primary producers.
- By identifying and mapping out the gatekeepers.
- By co-creating with a wide variety of stakeholders.
- By producing different options and verifying them throughout the process.

How will we know we've arrived?

- The producers give their information through the common eservices only few times, and the information is available to all authorities concerned.
- The eservices are easily accessible, understandable and usable.

# 2. RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

## Atlas workshop

To get familiar with the problem we were confronted with, the project was launched with a gamified workshop. Six different stakeholders were invited to spend one afternoon together, exploring the field related to primary producers' notifications. The Atlas-game is a project planning game that helps cross-disciplinary teams to understand and solve challenges related to service co-creation ([www.atlas-research.fi](http://www.atlas-research.fi)). The basis of the game are cards titled "Motivation for co-creation", "Project defining", "Methodological choice", "Participants" and "Challenges". The chosen cards provide triggers on which the group then builds and discusses upon.

The game set the frame of the workshop and was amplified using IDEO method cards and persona cards. Clear roles were set for facilitation and documentation of the whole workshop with video and notes. While preparing the workshop, we decided to make small additions to the game, to match it better to the topic described in the brief.



"Now, most of the notification forms are on paper. In the future, most will be digital. Forget about the paper world and don't just copy the paper to the e-world, it limits us too much. Apply it and see the new potential."

- Employee, Evira

“We need a vision, a common vision. And revolutionary thinking.”

- Employee, Evira

“Over all, it should make life easier to make money from agriculture. [...]We need fresh ideas from an outsider. This has been on the table for too long.”

- Employee, Evira

“So far we have nobody who has the big picture. No one who’s holding the strings. You might have to create that person.”

- Employee, Maanmittauslaitos (MML)

Though the context was still largely unknown, the workshop provided an excellent starting point and brought good insights to kickstart the research process and get to know the different stakeholders.

## Interviews

Interviews were one of the main forms of inquiry. We went into the field to hear different voices and different experiences. The research included interviews with 8 civil servants, 3 farmers in their natural environment, such as their office or farm, 3 farmers at the Luomu-fair and 4 farmers via e-mail.

Asking the right questions is a crucial component of any interview. Questions were formulated together with the group and put in a useful order to create flow throughout the interview. Further tools were created to collect information on a different level. These included various interactive sheets for the interviewees to work on, and drawing maps and charts was facilitated during interview situations. Once we had drawn our own maps, those were brought along to let the next interviewee complement or correct the map.

Some examples of voices we heard:

“I get advice about notification systems by reading through the manual. But now, with the new situation, I was thinking of getting some consultancy. I don’t like reading on the computer, I prefer paper. My eyes always hurt.”

- Farmer, Majvik Farm

“We are building the ‘joint X-road’. An open source code national data platform where interfaces and databases can be plugged in.”

- National Service Architect

“To survive, farmers should follow more what happens globally. ... We used to be in a more closed system.”

- Employee, Messukeskus

“In a radius of 75-100 km around Helsinki (Uusimaa) almost all farmers have a second job, because there are opportunities to make more money. They go to an office during the day

and farm at night, because farming doesn't bring enough money. That is also the reason why small farms are merging into bigger ones."

- Employee, ELY-Keskus

"[Us] Luomu-farmers have scheduled annual inspections, so we have to keep our papers in order. The conventional farms have random inspections and then you can go for 15 years without an inspection, and of course you will mess up your papers."

- Farmer, Malmgard Estate

"From a farmer's point of view, it's a problem that every authority has their own limited role. The entrepreneurs don't have a grip on who does what."

- Farmer, Malmgard Estate

"The things that would make things better for farmers as I see it are that we should have fewer institutions. And that no unnecessary information is gathered."

- Farmer, Malmgard Estate

"The biggest problem for farmers is that their income is divided in two parts: product revenue and subsidies. The financial support system (subsidies) is very heavy to move through. It's like rowing in thick water."

- Farmer, Malmgard Estate

"The farmer is told, that he should do it [notifying] electronically, it's a good thing. But even if he's doing it electronically,, it's easier to come here and ask. He's concerned that if he doesn't understand what things on the form mean he might not get the money."

- Civil Servant, Municipal Authority Porvoo

"When you make a notification that goes straight into an archive, you easily get the feeling that it makes no difference what you write in there."

- Farmer, Farm in Kirkkonummi

"To know the status of the database migration, I would just pick up the phone and call the IT manager at Evira."

- Employee, Maa- ja metsätalousministeriö (MMM)

"ELMO was built from a laboratory point of view. They have the right information a few doors down but we do not get it."

- Employee, Evira

"I care about the farmers. I'm one myself."

- Employee, Evira

"I don't get it. How real is the need to notify the specific area where the sheep are grazing inside the farm? That's what the authorities wanted from us a few years ago."

- Organic WWOOF farmer, Komppa-Seppälä

"We live the kind of life that we choose to. Even the dream is quite far from this; growing food and just selling it directly with no hassle... paying taxes is fine, but all these other things... Anyways, everyone here thinks it's better to work 7 days a week than sit in an office, so it's ok even when we're tired."

-Biodynamic WWOOF farmer, Toivo

"I started 2011, and I've already given up being organic."

- WWOOF farmer, Lepokoti Eheyty

"The headache from the paperwork is maybe not worth of the money we get from the EU."

- WWOOF farmer, Pikkunuppu

Though a lot of the research included gaining understanding on the components of the system and the legalities of notifications, the empathic component was key for our further development. The interviews allowed us to gain a holistic picture of the different realities related to the problem, and better understand the behavioural component in making notifications.



## Re:Form Workshop

The second workshop focused on rough user testing and validating ideas. The Re:Form workshop was designed to test 7 different tools implemented on paper forms and too see how different end-users react to them. Further, these expert-users were aided to come up with more ideas about how to improve the existing forms.

Stakeholders were chosen strategically to have different areas of expertise covered. This workshop included civil servants, an information designer and two farmers with second jobs in administration and a farm lobby organisation. The stakeholder were both previous contacts and recruited by calling relevant organisations and asking human resources whom



would suit best as a participator in a workshop like this. This technique got us in touch with new people who contributed significantly to the workshop.

The workshop itself was divided into 4 blocks:

1. Homework: All participants were asked to think about two questions sent beforehand in the invitation. As a workshop opener, we discussed the answers over a cup of coffee and a croissant.
2. Our proposal: The participants were introduced to several print-outs of ideas on how to improve the forms. They were then asked to rate the form, give critique and possible propose improvements to the ideas. We then collectively discussed the outcomes.
3. Timeline: to better orient themselves to the different contexts around notifying, the participants collectively filled out a timeline, created on a wall, by noting the separate activities and perspectives throughout the forms' "life-cycle" (including creation of the form, filling in, submission and post-processing).
4. Working stations: The second part was comprised of 6 different workshop stations, the first one conducted together. The participants were then asked to split up into smaller groups that rotated around the stations. The stations included the following tasks:
  - a. Crafting: improving the existing form by cutting, gluing or drawing.
  - b. Someone's else's shoes: imagining yourself into a role and improving the form from their perspective.
  - c. Exchange: improving the form by simulating a situation of silent dialogue with another person.
  - d. Scenarios: sharing personal experience in one of four provided situations.
  - e. Instructions: discussing one of the forms and explaining to your partner how to fill it out.
5. Wrap up: The participants highlighted the outcome that was most interesting or most important to them. After a quick round of feedback, we took a group photo, which was then sent to all participants. This had the dual purpose of creating commitment to the process and giving the possibility to remember and keep in touch with other participants if wished.

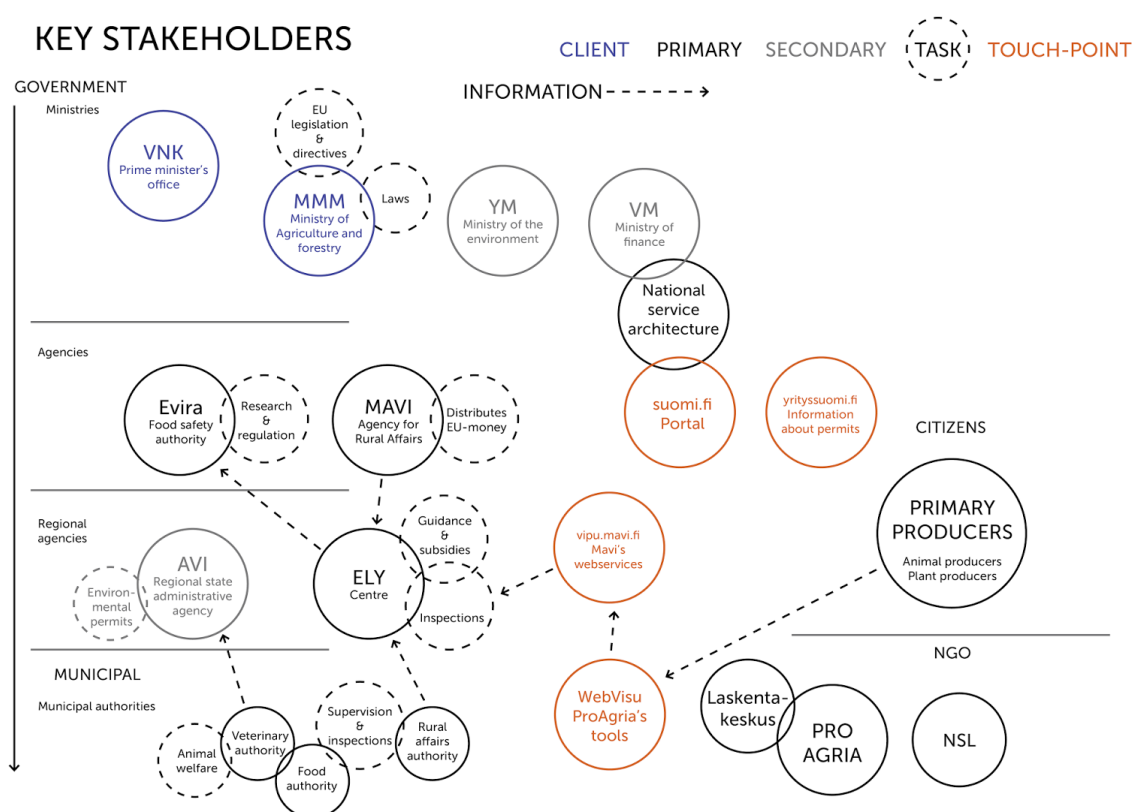




# 3. RESEARCH SYNTHESIS

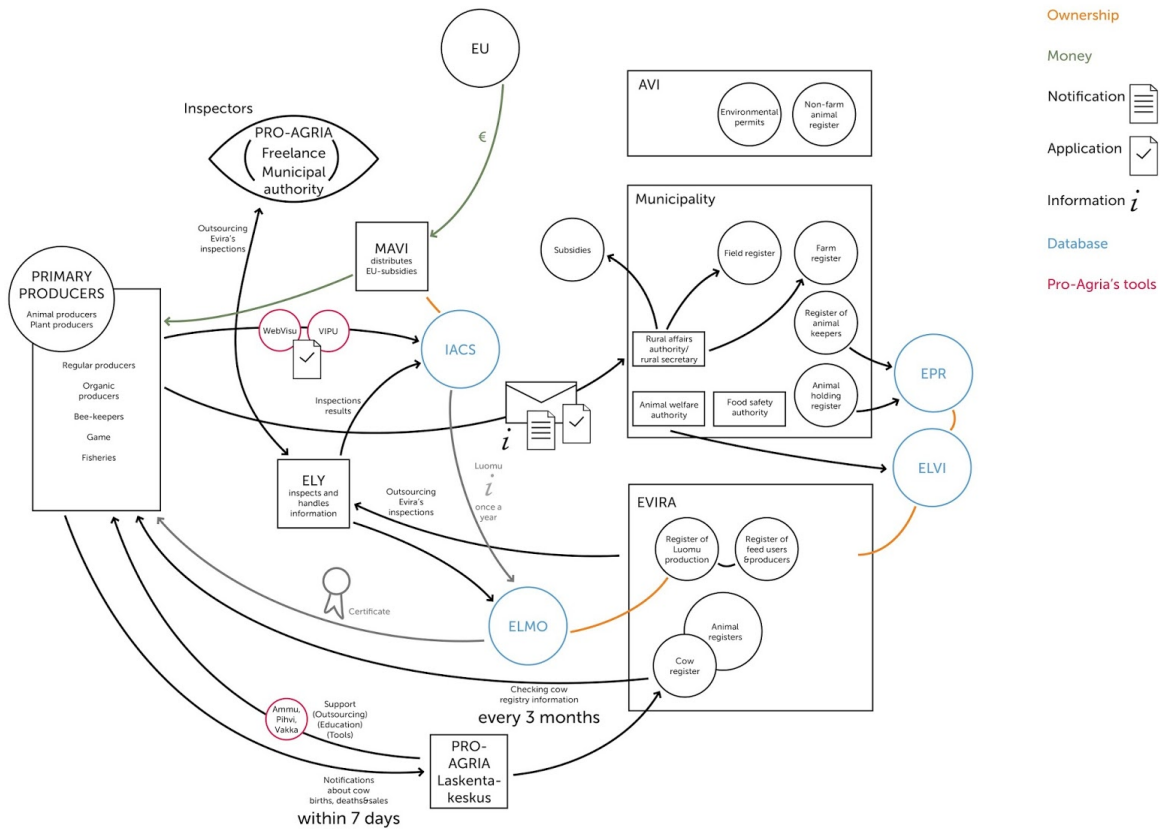
## Stakeholder map

The first tool created was a stakeholder map in order to get an overview of who's involved in the problem. The relationships between the stakeholders became much clearer through the visualized map. Over time, as the amount of insight grew, the map was updated and more detail added. The map also helped clarify gaps between stakeholder and thus highlight existing silos and missing actors.



## System map

The system map was a central tool to understand the processes of separate notifications. Surprisingly, no coherent model or map of the current system existed. When talking to different stakeholders and synthesizing separate bits of information, the map was hailed as a positive outcome of its own. It helped civil servants better understand both officials outside their own organisation and complex the system is from the point of view of a primary producer.



## Insights - P.O.I.N.T. analysis

When enough data was gathered to start processing, we began with a P.O.I.N.T-Analysis. The data was written down on Post-It's and tagged with either 'P' for problems, 'O' for opportunities, 'I' for insights, 'N' for needs people had or 'T' for themes that stood out. The writing process helped clarify the mass of data into coherent findings. Problems also stood out very clearly and this helped start re-formulating the brief.

## Affinity Diagrams

In a second step, the Post-It's from the P.O.I.N.T-Analysis were clustered. One person read out loud one of the Post-It's and stuck it to a spot on the wall. The next person added an adjacent Post-It or started a new cluster. Once all of the Post-It's hung on the wall, the clusters were adjusted and each cluster was named. Naming is an important step that helps define themes; each name had to be strong enough to stand on its own and sum up the cluster. This reclustering and renaming-process can be done several times. Everything was thoroughly documented between phases, so as to not loose interpretations.



The titles of the clusters helped define key areas that we're working with, for example:

- The human factor
- Outsourcing happens: should it really be that hard?
- Players are not communicating; does the system hinder feedback?
- Legacy silofication and ownership issues
- Big picture missing
- E-Opportunities
- No easy money
- Legislation as a blocker
- Resistance to e-service, but why?
- The snowball has stopped
- Who's the head honcho?
- More centralised action
- If not user-centric, then at least user-friendly
- Designers, a fresh outlook
- Purpose of activities unclear

## **Opportunity Questions**

With the data synthesized into knowledge, opportunity questions like “How can we..?”, “How might we..?” and “What if..?” helped inspire and broaden the horizon of possibilities. Some questions formulated here even accompanied us for the rest of the project.

The questions, as the name of the method lets on, opened up interesting opportunities. Some initial ideas for the final outcome were collected for later use.

The questions that arose could be split into two groups: questions concerning the primary producers and the authorities.

Some of the questions for authorities were:

*How might we...*

- ... rally people who are "infected by reality" around a purpose?
- ... raise an appetite for change?
- ... create an e-tool where primary producers and authority users meet?
- ... enable zero waste data usage?
- ... empower X to drive change?
- ... bridge silos?
- ... have overview across time?
- ... facilitate exchange of knowledge?
- ... enable public servants to let go of old ways?
- ... release an avalanche of initiatives?

*How can we...*

- ... make the baby theirs?
- ... make authorities genuinely user centric?
- ... create an accepted director of the orchestra?
- ... create a unified vision?
- ... create a connection between personal motivations and reporting results?

*What if...*

- ... we had zero budget?
- ... e-service were a meeting place?

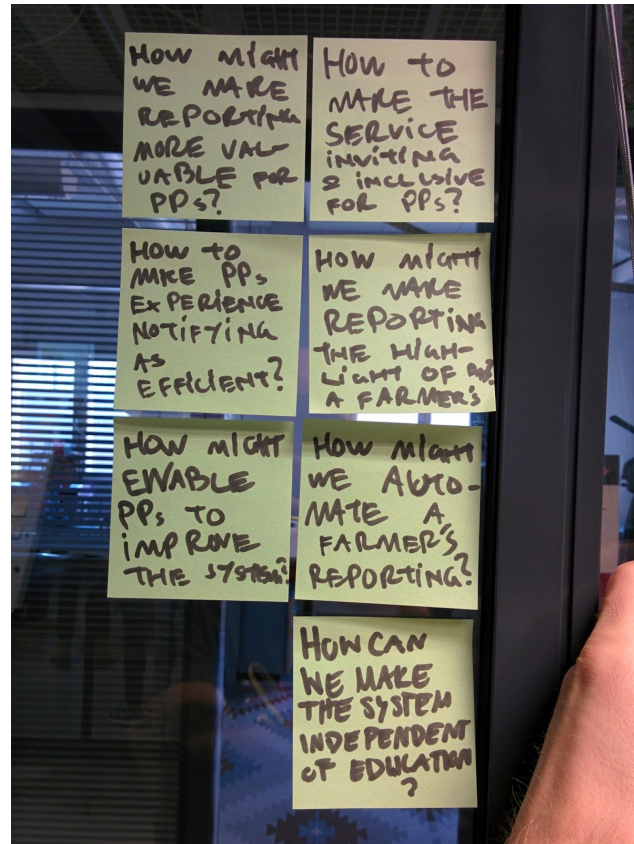
Some of the questions for primary producers were:

*How might we...*

- ... make reporting more valuable for primary producers?
- ... make reporting the highlight of their day?
- ... enable primary producers to improve the system?
- ... automate a farmer's reporting?

*How can we...*

- ... make the service inviting and inclusive for primary producers?
- ... make primary producers experience notifying as efficient?
- ... make the system independent of education?



## Personas

Personas, or archetypes of users, were built from the insights gained from research and interviews. Personas are aimed to utilize both seemingly insignificant information, like the most important moment of a person's day, together with big things, such as values, motivation and frustration, into one empathy inducing character. All the personas consisted of a full character description, including a personal view on things and diverse backgrounds.

Personas:

01: Small Scale Saara

Saara, 32, Biodynamic egg farmer, South Finland

"For us biodynamic farmers it's very difficult to do the papers work, since the system is not made for us, it's made for someone who grows 40 hectares of oats."

02: Advisor Antti

Antti, 35, ProAgria Advisor and Technology Supporter, South Finland

"Fundamentally, farms are run like any other business! Our primary mission is farm competitiveness."

03: Luomu Laura

Laura, 42, Evira Employee and Part-time Farmer, Uusimaa

"I think not all the data we ask from the farmers is needed. There's too much silo-thinking and not enough communication going on, which the farmers have to suffer for. I care about the farmers. I'm one myself."

04: Mainstream Mikko

Mikko, 59, Crop farmer with cows, Eastern Finland

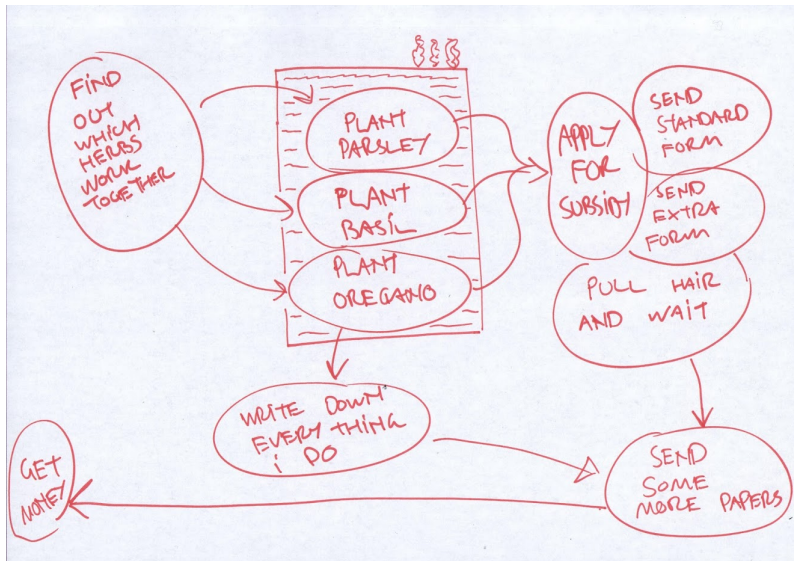
"Finnish regulations produce perfect flawless products... And then consumers go and buy cheap Danish meat."

Personas are tricky, as they can lead to simplification or assumptions, but this tool helped us remember that different farmers have different needs. The struggles vary between different categories, such as in the scale of the farm, the crops or animals farmed and in ways of farming such as organic or not. It also served as a reminder that civil servants are also a user-group.

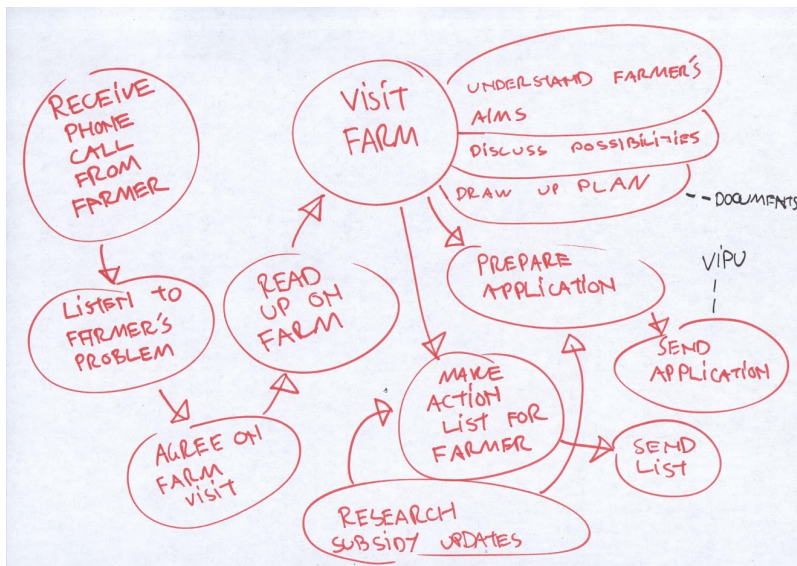
## **Soft Systems Modeling**

Soft systems modeling builds on personas and empathic understanding, to gain insight on the worldviews of different stakeholders. It was developed by Peter Checkland and others based on systems thinking and action research. Starting with the four personas we created and formulated one sentence that answered the questions of: *Who am I?*, *What am I trying to achieve?* and *How I am trying to achieve it?*

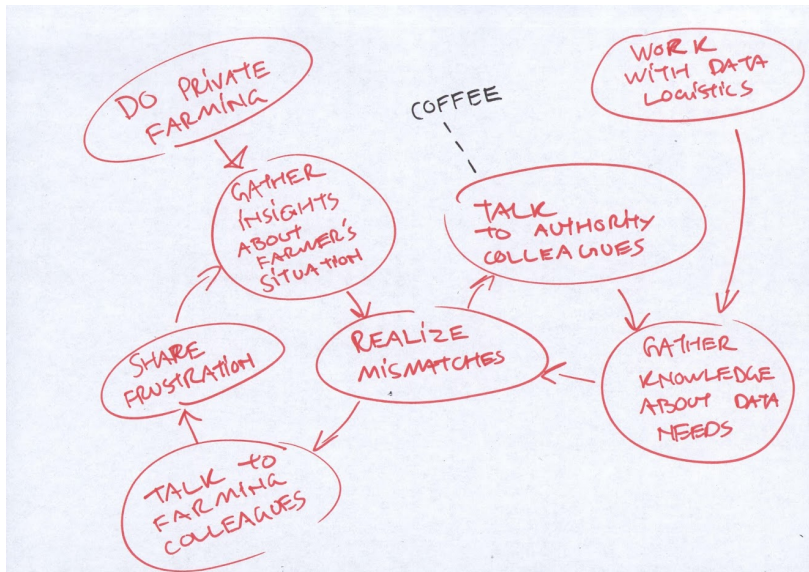




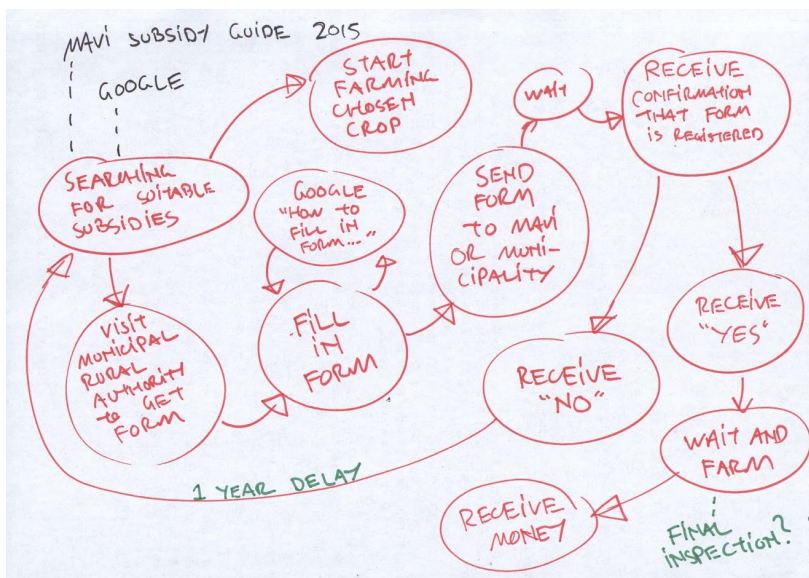
**Small Scale Saara** - A biodynamic small-scale farm system where business is in harmony with nature in order to raise a family and make a living.



**Advisor Antti** - An in-person application support system to get money to farmers through farm visits and electronic data management, in order to improve the competitiveness of Finnish farms.



**Luomu Laura** - A one-person experience-based change-making system where farmer experience is shared within a silo in order to reduce the burden for farmers and data collectors.



**Mainstream Mikko** - A system of running a farm with cows and crops by getting subsidies, selling products and keeping track of everything in order to earn a living.

Once this framework was in place, we moved on by forming loops with five to seven components, such as activities, elements or people. This exercise helped understand the steps of a process, such as giving a specific notification, from different perspectives.

This exercise contributes to the understanding of the different views that different stakeholders have of the big system and their activities within them. Generally, everyone involved only sees certain parts; no one has a perfect overview or a bird's perspective on the system. The relevance for the farmer for example, is not necessarily to see what happens at the very end on the civil servant's side, but how those activities are communicated. The

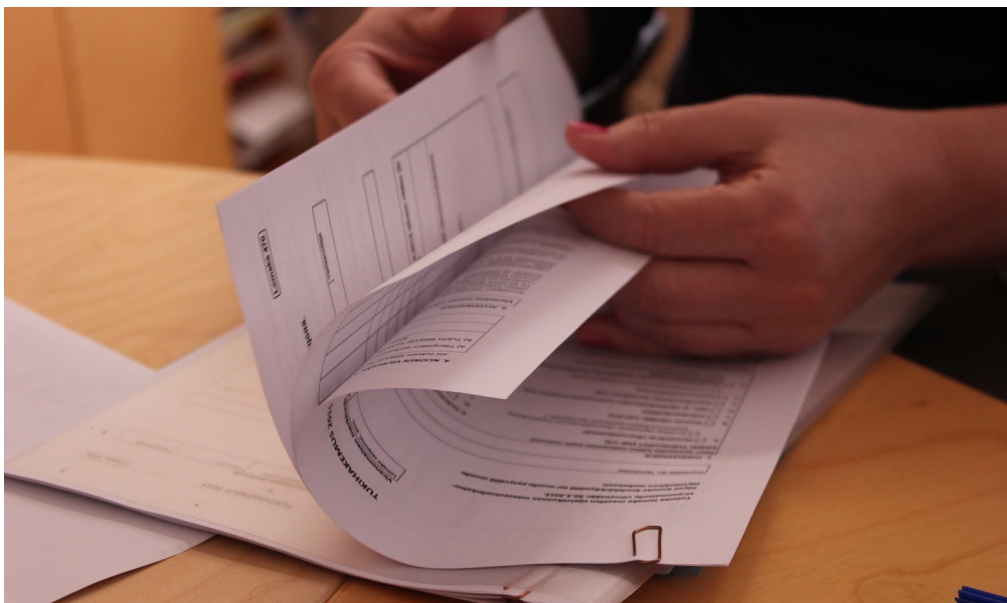
system is inevitably complex, but when participants lose sight of the aim of certain activities, it leads to frustration and unnecessary animosity.

## Concluding insights

To analyze and summarize all the synthesis outputs the following insight statements were formulated:

- The difficulty and high stakes of notifying makes primary producers fear mistakes, which in turn leads to outsourcing.
- Paperwork is not aligned with primary producers' ambitions and philosophies, which means that the default case for forms and notifications is not perceived as what they want to achieve.
- Because primary producers do not see the reason for much of the paperwork, they get mad at civil servants and do not see them as humans doing a job.
- Individual civil servants have little opportunity to influence the development of how notifying is done.
- The political ambition and vision for Finnish agriculture does not find its way into the everyday work of civil servants.
- Vertical hierarchies and horizontal compartments make it difficult for civil servants to coordinate and communicate.
- The bright spots of change within the authorities are poorly exposed and connected.
- Complex language leads to need for human interpretation.
- Being a farmer and being an entrepreneur is not the same thing.
- Notifications are so complicated that there is now a subsidy for getting support with subsidy applications.

Drawing on research findings and synthesized knowledge, our understanding of the problem and our formulation of the brief went through many iterations. The next chapter covers this process in detail.





# 4. REBRIEF

Our work to challenge and change the brief started already in the Atlas-workshop where we warmed up by asking the participants the simple question of: “What would you add to the brief?” Some of the most important additions were:

- The ideal case is a e-service that is one unified place where all primary producers give all their input and where all civil servants get their output.
- The e-service must offer an additional value for primary producers and civil servants compared to anything that exists today.
- The situation today is very one-directional, with the authorities ruling the life of farmers.
- A new solution in the area we are tackling has the potential to promote countryside enterprise.

The material we gathered and created during our empathy research and systems analysis, went into a simple framework of current reality versus desired reality, which was already a simplification of the format of the brief, leaving out for example the suggestions how to reach the goal. Our first version of the two realities looked as follows:

| Current reality   | Desired reality  |
|---|--|
| Farming is changing - big scale enterprise or niche lifestyle                 | PPs see notifying as a worthwhile activity                                 |
| Mix of electronic and paper notifications is so messy it leads to outsourcing | Authorities collaborate to provide unified and simple e-first service      |
| Authorities are contracting each other instead of communicating               | PPs, data users, implementors and legislators understand each other        |
| Extreme complicatedness   | The notification system contributes to Finnish agricultural sustainability |
| Lack of aligned ambition  |  |

It is worth noting that since we were deep in systems analysis at this point, this interpretation of the brief had its weight on technical and organizational aspects. The individual human experience was still relatively absent.

A later version of the same approach of two realities was devised, but split between civil servants and primary producers to make it less abstract:

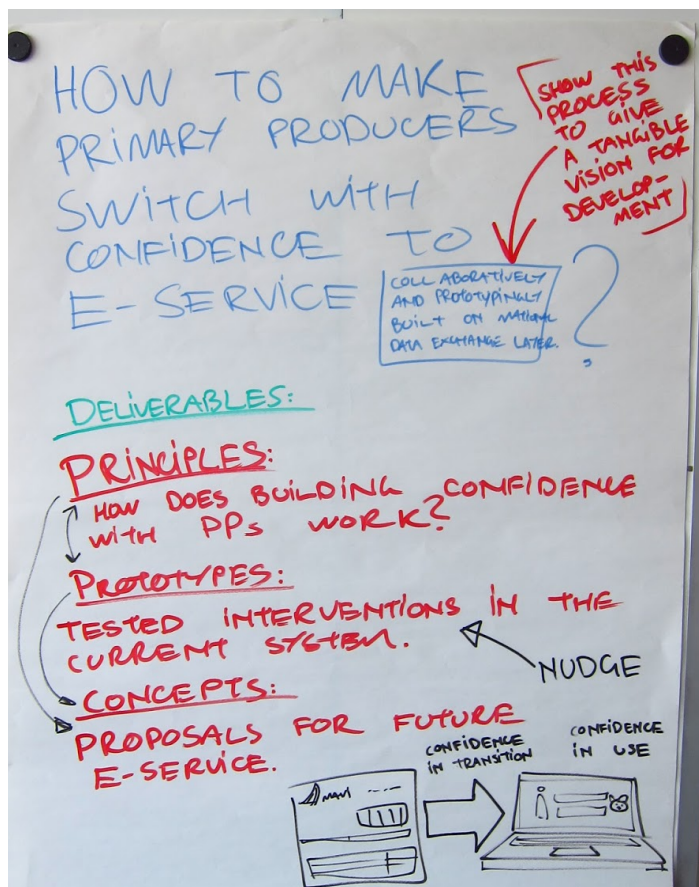
| Civil servants' current reality  | Civil servants' desired reality   |
|--|---|
| <p>Authorities make contracts between silos instead of collaborating and no-one has a grip on the whole situation. There are isolated spots of progress that go unnoticed.</p> | <p>Authorities work together to maintain and improve a notification system that supports sustainability in Finnish agriculture. Civil servants see the big picture and understand primary producers as their clients.</p> |

| Primary producers' current reality   | Primary producers' desired reality  |
|--|---|
| <p>Primary producers are fearful of making mistakes; it leads to outsourcing and desire for in-person approval.</p> <p>Frustratingly detailed paperwork peaks when you start, and every April from then on.</p> <p>Notifications don't fit with primary producers' ambitions and philosophies, which hurts their sense of dignity.</p> | <p>Primary producers experience giving notifications as useful and adding value for themselves and for society.</p> <p>Primary producers use one automatic data management system, that fits their farming, to track their work, apply for subsidies and notify.</p> <p>Primary producers confidently choose electronic service as their primary way of giving notifications.</p> |

These statements are already closer to the personal experience of notifications, at least for the primary producers. Fear, frustration and confidence stood out here as the themes that were not so present in the original brief, so we were curious to dig deeper into them. The poster shown here summarized the reframed problem.

With this poster, we shifted focus from the final e-service to how primary producers get into using them. To give ourselves room to maneuver and go forward, we "black-boxed" the final e-service, that is we assumed for the time being it would eventually be developed.

There were two issues with this problem formulation. First, it centered entirely on primary



producers and left out the civil servants. The second problem was that we were aiming too big and also rather abstract with our deliverables.

Very valuable at this stage was the distinction between being confident in switching to e-services and being confident in using them. These are different problems and the ways to solve them are very different. When moving into the final section of the project and deciding on a concept the problem we intended to solve was also clarified. Our final reformulation of the problem was simply summarized in the mission to:

- Facilitate the transition to digital services.

This applies to both primary producers and civil servants alike. The target was to make it easy, safe, comfortable and efficient to switch. At the same time, *facilitating* also means to accelerate the ongoing process of switching.

# 5. IDEAS AND CONCEPTS

## **Solution opportunities**

We collected our first thoughts about solutions with an emerging understanding of the problem in six “solution opportunities”, presented in at the mid term presentation held on 21.4.2015 at the House of Science and Letters. The six fields were the following:

*Facilitate cooperation around the national service architecture platform.* We identified a big potential to bring the poorly communicated KAPA-project (short for Kansallinen Palveluarkkitehtuuri, or national service architecture) out into the light and use it as starting point for collaboration between the authorities that are concerned with digitalization of notifications.

*Introduce tools that foster a culture of changemaking in service development.* We saw an opportunity to enable more civil servants to bring their innovative ideas to life by giving them simple and accessible tools and methods that slowly change the way things are done.

*Collaborate with power users close to primary producers to make e-service automated, personal and relevant.* When we discovered that organizations like ProAgria are the leading developers of e-services and that their consultants do a lot of administrative work that primary producers have outsourced to them, it seemed logical to involve them in improving the situation.

*Design a smooth and logical notification sequence for starting up, which leads into a service that is used throughout the year.* We wanted to pursue this direction to deal with the initial confusion that primary producers experience and change the situation where a lot of notification and administration deadlines are concentrated in April and May.

*Accommodate diverse activities among primary producers and promote desirable specializations, like organic farming.* We pointed out this direction for solutions to tackle the mismatch we had discovered between what primary producers are trying to achieve by running their business and what they perceive to be the purpose of notifications.

*Show what, when and how primary producers can expect a response to their sent notifications.* Not knowing what to expect was a big issue for primary producers and we found an opportunity to improve the situation by making much more transparent what comes back in return for a sent notification.

*Rebrand notifications to align with primary producers' ambitions and self identities.* There was a big gap between what primary producers thought that they were doing and what they

thought that notifications were for. By changing how the purpose of notifications are understood, we could close this gap and reduce frustration.

The feedback on these solution opportunities was quite vague. Because the fields were still broad and undefined it was difficult for mentors and stakeholders to give precise comments and express their preference.

## **Behavior change brainstorming**

A set of behavior change cards was used as triggers for concrete ideas, together with members of the colleague team also working on the challenge of primary producers' notifications. Each card holds a tactic for making small changes to the environment around a person in order to change their behavior. The cards were split between us and the tactics translated to our case. Some of the ideas that came out in response to these tactics were:

*Power of Norms* - To improve collaboration and connection between different authorities, the cafeterias in buildings where many civil servants could be designed to facilitate meeting people from outside of your normal circle. We thought about using the norm of how many people typically sit at one table and then increase the table size so that groups of people from the same authority would not form an isolated "island" around one table. Another idea that builds on the power of norms is to highlight successful primary producers who use digital notifications. The same type of communication can also be used on the local scale, for example with messages like: "These three farmers in your area are using e-services. Why don't you try it as well?"

*The Farmer Cap* - Each public organization that designs or handles parts of the notifications could have a set of typical farmer caps for the employees to wear. This might sound silly, but the idea is that civil servants methodically use these caps to assume the role of a primary producer, the end user of their work. With this kind of role play, colleagues can practice explaining what they are working on and what their work is about for an outsider to widen their perspective. This exercise would give civil servants the tools and opportunity to question their own work from the point of view of primary producers.

*Notification Bundling* - Another tactic from the cards was to combine many small losses into one big loss, and thereby reduce the overall negative experience. The idea we got from this was to bundle notifications so that when one is submitted you receive a suggestion for another one you could submit at the same time. This would reduce the pain of having to deal with administration seemingly every night.

*Transparent Marketing* - To call attention to e-services as the desired option it is not always necessary to talk more about them. The communication could be made more obvious by using for example screenshot images to advertise the digital services. This would make e-services more comparable to the current solutions that are well known and easy to visualize. Showing what it is like to use the e-service as a form of promotion would also help reduce the uncertainty about what the activity is like for primary producers.

## Solution principles

These ideas were very scattered, which was one of the reasons why we started looking again at the brief. This was the point where we decided to focus on how to make primary producers switch to e-service. Since we pointed out confidence as the key factor for making the switch, we went back to our research material. We wanted to summarize what we had learned about primary producers' confidence into operating principles that we could use as inspiration for ideas. After combining and filtering our insights, we arrived at four solution principles:

- Increase primary producers' confidence by...

...reducing the sense of risk related to notifying.

...increasing their understanding of what they are notifying and why they are doing it.

...emphasizing the human element in communication.

...involving diverse end-users in the reform process.

These principles were then turned into opportunity questions similar to the ones we had worked with many weeks earlier (e.g. How to reduce the sense of risk?). The new questions were much more deeply grounded in research and more pinpointed to the problem we had set out to solve.

## Switch to e-service brainstorming

Using our principles as brainstorm triggers new ideas and reinterpretations of old ideas emerged. Here are some of the more interesting ideas that did not make it into further development:

*IFTTT for notifications* - An idea inspired by the web service If This Then That, where primary producers could create their own digital shortcuts, like: "IF I share a picture of a newborn cow on twitter THEN send a notification to the animal register."

*E-service tokens* - Primary producers place stickers or small figures around their working environment. These tokens act as reminders to send notifications right where the information that needs to be notified can be found. When you scan one of the tokens with a mobile phone camera, they act as a link to the relevant online notification service. Primary producers could program their own links.

*Notification scanner* - A hardware device for submitting paper forms digitally. Primary producers simply fill out forms and run them through the scanner. The machine sends the form off to the right destination. A more advanced version of this idea would have text recognition integrated in the unit. This would allow for digitalizing the information on the form immediately, or give an immediate response if it is not readable.

*Intergenerational learning* - Older primary producers who are retiring from long days of physical work could re-school themselves to become e-service coaches and trainers for younger farmers too busy to learn on their own. Another option would be to let youth in the countryside take summer jobs as e-service trainers.

*Photo diary* - To add value to a digital interface it could have an option to upload photos from your own primary production. Having a timeline gallery of photos would provide another reason to visit the web service. If the photos are used as for example background images, they would of course make the interface more personal and interesting as time goes by.

*Siri for primary producers* - could basically call the database and have a conversation about their farm and the necessary information would be recorded, interpreted and entered into We imagined a solution where instead of forms and websites, notifying is built around a phone number where primary producers call in and speak to an artificial intelligence. With this technology, that is not too far into the future, the primary producers databases.



*New e-service = new tractor* - The web service would be designed as any other piece of agricultural equipment, straightforward with a possibility for the user to look under the hood to find out how it works and customizable. This kind of service could be advertised next to other equipment, digital and analog, at trade fairs and showcases.

*Peer-to-peer forum on social media* - We learned about unofficial groups on facebook where thousands of people related to agriculture gather to discuss about legislation, administration and countryside affairs in general. Building on this, the authorities could set up an official groups and pages to communicate and have conversations about the latest administrative updates. These online spaces would also be places where primary producers can educate each other and share information, with the possibility for civil servants to join the conversation and add clarifications.

*Go digital and kick bureaucracy* - This is another communication idea based on a story about how e-services enforce less bureaucracy and more efficiency on the civil servant side. Primary producers could be encouraged to use e-services by the promise that doing so will free them from being "at the mercy of the authorities". In the longer run the use of e-services

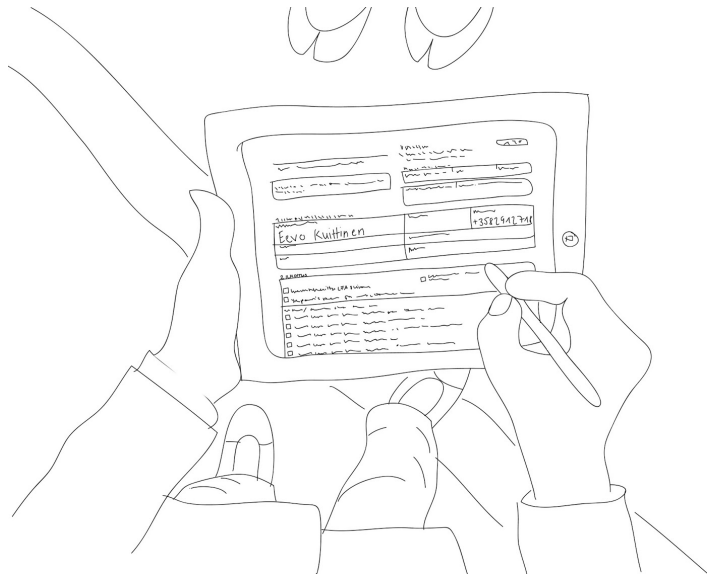
will also affect the introverted working style of the authorities that annoys primary producers today.

*Notification party* - Some primary producers enjoy the safety and support of having other people around when they submit their notifications. One way to address this would be to organize regional notification parties where producers come together to work on administration. This is certainly not for everyone but for a certain producers it makes sense. It is also a chance to take notifications out of everyday work so that there are only a few days per year when the pain of administration is really present in the mind of producers.

*Paper waste installation* - To give a visible symbol of much paper and resource the analog notifications consume, we thought of making some form of installation or artwork out the same amount of paper that is used in one year for the whole notification apparatus. This kind of visualization would show the scope and seriousness of the challenge for both primary producers and civil servants.

#### *Interactive inspection forms* -

Inspectors could be ambassadors for e-services with interactive documents that could fill out and send via tablet computers. This idea can be realized with existing technology and a small budget.



#### *E-service hackathon* -

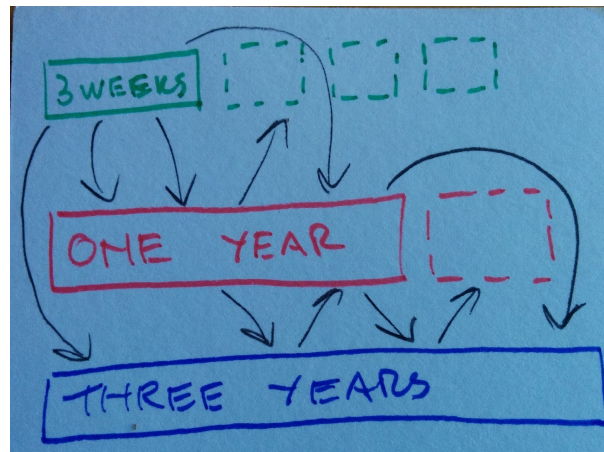
Digital developers and designer come together with civil servants, policy experts and primary producers to develop working prototypes for e-services over the course of just a few days. This kind of event would also serve very well to draw attention to digital notifications and foster collaboration between authorities.





## Initial concept framework

To manage all these ideas and put them into context with our findings and the possible ways of executing them, we developed a model with three different level outcomes. These initiatives would start simultaneously and feed into each other. They included a quick prototype executed within a three week time-frame, followed by more similar ones. On the next level we set a one year project concept that acts as a launchpad and experiment lab for more long term development in what would have been a longer three year digital service concept.



## Three ambitious concepts

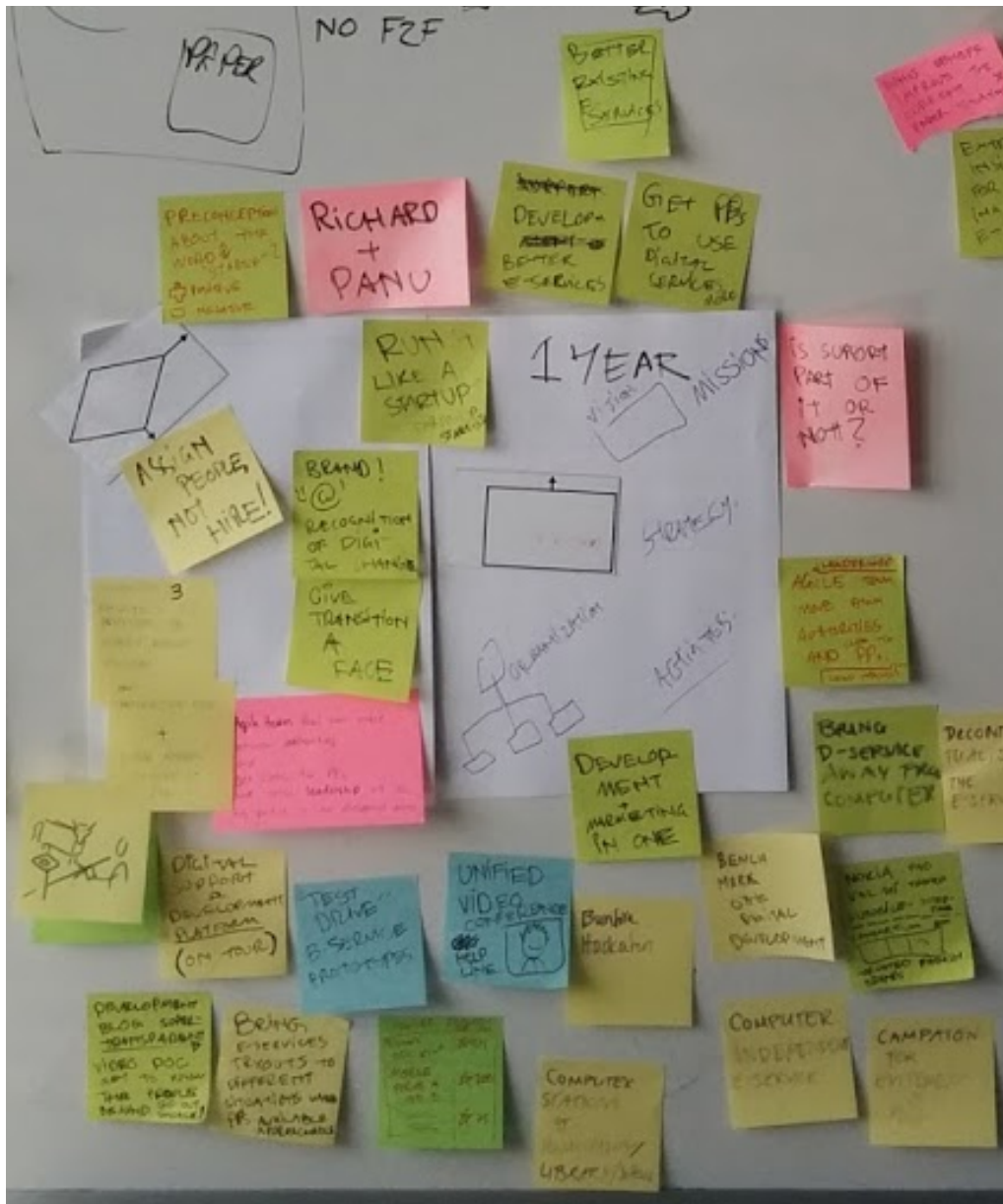
We mixed, matched and updated our strongest ideas to fit into this framework and came out with three separate but related concepts:

*The form workshop -*



When devising this idea we saw it as a research and development method not only for paper forms, but also as an opportunity to come up with new e-service ideas.

The e-service startup -



Ideas about rapid and user-driven e-service development were gathered under the headline “run it like a startup”. This concept proposed an internally recruited task force, aided by external expertise, that would work for one year with clear targets and success metrics:

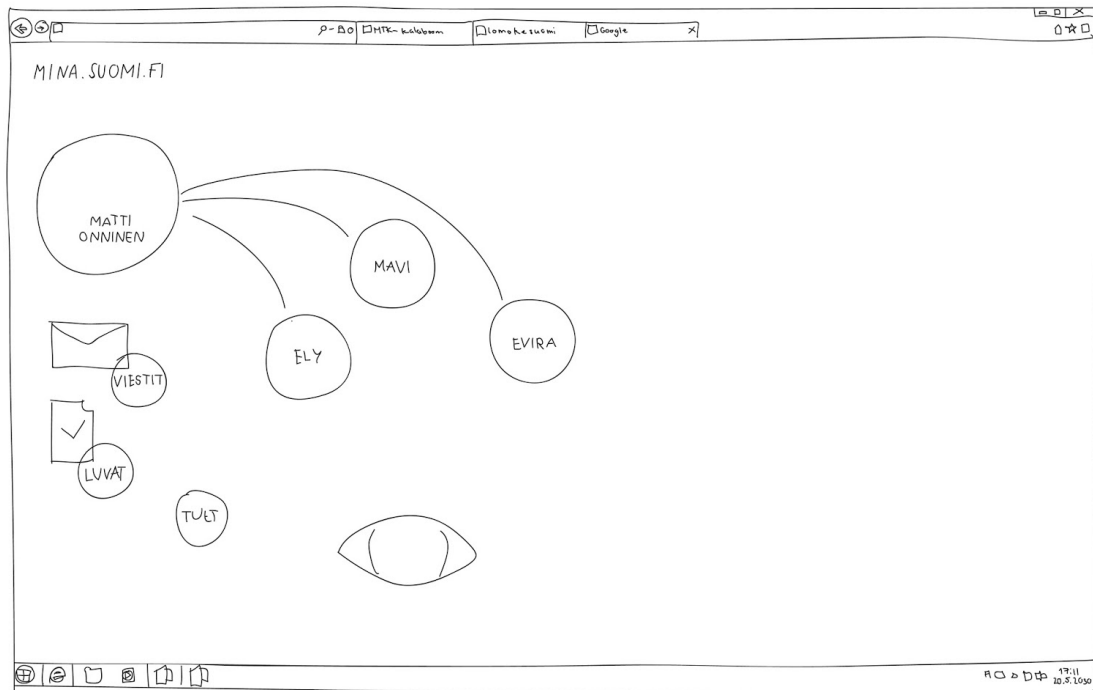
*“The number of primary producers who regularly use some form of digital notification has increased by 15 percentage units. The task force has launched four working prototypes that have been tested by 50 users each and have reached a total number of 1000 active users.”*

We also imagined a set of operating principles that would be essential for this internal startup to follow in order to fulfill its mission:

- Service development and marketing communication is one integrated activity.
- Every contact with potential users is an opportunity to learn with them and recruit them.
- Always push to test quick prototypes to break them, realize why they fail and make something better.
- Tell a story about the transition to digital services. Make both sides of the story, the development and the use cases, come alive.
- The software development should be agile and centered around involving end-users, both primary producers and civil servants.
- The task force works across authorities and has a mandate to visibly take the lead and do get things done.

### *The future e-service -*

For our three year concept we only made a vague sketch of what the future e-service might look and work like. An interface focused on an interactive map where the user could see and act on their interactions with the authorities.



The looks and functions of this vision for the future were not so important. What is important are the principles of what future e-services should achieve. That is what this vision represents:

- Bring notifying, communication, support, feedback and deadlines to one place
- Provide an overview that is personalized for each user and where that user can take action
- Encourage authorities to simplify and collaborate

## **Pivoting**

As we began to figure out the details of our concepts and how stakeholder could realize them, we quickly observed that what we were trying to create were detailed plans for an uncertain future. This three tier model would be too resource intensive and even with the three different time horizons we still lacked a clear “start here and go forward in this direction”-point. Getting an overview of what we wanted to achieve was too difficult, and the whole proposal ran the risk of being impossible to sell to implementors. We made a radical decision to focus entirely on the three week level and how to move forward from the form workshop.

That is how we arrived at our concept of a paper form with updated features and an accompanying web tool for feedback conversations about forms. The next chapter will explain this proposal in more detail.

# 6. CONCEPT

## Updated paper form

As mentioned above, radical changes to the proposal were made in the last days before the project concluded. We realised that the vision of the future e-service was not enough. The solution had to be something more tangible that would somehow facilitate the transition towards the “perfect e-service”. An idea often quoted, that of delivering “half-a-house” (a concept of designing a solution that would lead the users, through its use, to develop the system themselves) stuck with us. The final concept is composed of two parts: a set of additions implemented on the existing paper forms and a web-page for each form, where users can leave comments and suggestions that will help civil servants to develop notification processes.

We updated paper form with these additional features:

*An explanation in plain terms of what the form does.*

This update puts the form in context and gives it meaning. This feature increases primary producers understanding why the form exists. It also make the form more user friendly.

*Reduced filling in of personal details.* The farm ID number already carries information like address, contact information and bank details, so why to ask them again and again. This feature makes filling out the form a lot less frustrating and less time-consuming.

*A checkbox to indicate that the information has not changed since the last submission.* This is a feature that was requested by many producers. It will make filling out the form faster and less frustrating.

*Visual highlighting that points out the most important or tricky parts.* This makes it less intimidating to fill out the form. The highlights could also be placed where mistakes most often happen.

*A process map showing what happens to the form and the data that is in it.* The map explains what the data is eventually used for. In the relevant cases, the map can also show what feedback comes back to the sender and when. This feature helps producers know what’s going on and helps them to increase their systemic understanding.

*A web address at the top of the form.* Our concept continues online. This is a path to a sister page containing the same form.

”Tällä lomakkeella pidämme kirjaa Suomen maataloista.”

## Viranomaisen merkinnät

|                       |                 |               |
|-----------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Lomake saapunut, pvm. | Asiatunnus/Dnro | Vastaanottaja |
|-----------------------|-----------------|---------------|

Toimita lomake maatalan sijaintikunnan maaseutuelinkeinoveranomaiselle viimeistään 12.5.2015, jos maatalan esitetyt tietojen yhteenvedossa ilmoitettuihin tietoihin on tullut muutoksia tai jos tilalla on siipikarjaa tai hevosia.

Täytä lomake kuulakärkikynällä tai muulla pysyvällä tavalla täyttöohjeen mukaisesti.

## 1. MAATILAA KOSKEVAT PERUSTIEDOT

|  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| Maatalan yritys nimi   | Tilatunnus      |
| Tilalla harjoitetaan alkutuotannon tuotteiden suoramyyntiä<br><input type="checkbox"/> kyllä <input type="checkbox"/> ei | Juridinen muoto |
| Maatalan päätuotantosuunta   |                 |

## 2. TÄYDENTÄVIEN EHTOJEN TIETOJA

|   |
|---|
| Tilalla harjoitetaan automaattilypsyä ("lypsyrobotti") <input type="checkbox"/> kyllä <input type="checkbox"/> ei |
|---|

3. MAANKÄYTTÖLAJIEJEN PINTA-ALAT  Tiedot eivät ole muuttuneet

|                  |              |  |              |
|------------------|--------------|--|--------------|
| Maankäyttölaji   | 30.4.2015 ha | Maankäyttölaji   | 30.4.2015 ha |
| Metsämaa         |              | Tonttimaa (mukaan lukien rakennuspaikka)                                 |              |
| Tie- ja joutomaa |              | Muu käyttöalue (pois lukien pelto ja puutarha, luonnonlaidun ja -niitty) |              |

## 4. TILALLA 1.4.2015 OLLEET KOTIELÄIMET

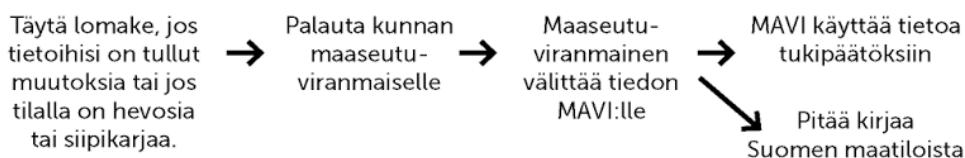
Ilmoita tässä maatalalla 1.4.2015 olleet kotieläimet. Merkitse mahdollinen tuotantotauko rastilla. Tällöin eläinten kohdalle ei tule lukumäärää.

| SIIPIKARJA     | Eläimiä 1.4. kpl. | Tuotantotauko            | HEVOSET | Eläimiä 1.4. kpl.                     |
|----------------|-------------------|--------------------------|---------|---------------------------------------|
| Kanat          | kanat             | <input type="checkbox"/> | Hevoset | yhteismäärä, kaikki rodut, ml. varsat |
|                | kananpoikaset     | <input type="checkbox"/> |         |                                       |
| Siitoskukot    |                   | <input type="checkbox"/> |         |                                       |
| Broilerit      | broileriemot      | <input type="checkbox"/> |         |                                       |
|                | broilerit         | <input type="checkbox"/> |         |                                       |
| Kalkkunat      | kaikki            | <input type="checkbox"/> |         |                                       |
| Muu siipikarja |                   | <input type="checkbox"/> |         |                                       |

## 5. ALLEKIRJOITUS

Vakuutan tällä lomakkeella olevat tiedot oikeiksi.

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| Paikka ja aika | Maatalouden viljelijätukiasiointiin valtuutetun allekirjoitus ja nimenselvennys tai maatalan kaikkien omistajien allekirjoitukset ja nimenselvennykset |
|----------------|--|



# Feedback webpage

In addition to the updated form we planned a website, where primary producers were able to give feedback, see civil servants comments, get instructions and even change to digital during their paperwork process. In our concept each form has their own, very simple web page. These sites can easily be built by a single programmer in little over a week, according to our web design colleagues at Aalto. The idea is that working with the form here would be like working with the form at your desk. The web page consist of four different tools that a primary producer can use.

*Kommentoi* is low-barrier commenting tool where you can give feedback on the form and process. This tool is open when you come to the page, because we want to minimize the steps required to give feedback.

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://www.merkkaa.fi/101A>. The main content area displays the 'MAATILALOMAKE 2015' form. The form includes sections for 'Viranomaisen merkinnät', '1. MAATILAA KOSKEVAT PERUSTIEDOT', '2. TÄYDENTÄÄ', '3. MAANKÄYTTÖ', and '4. TILALLA 1.4.2015 OLLEET KOTIELÄIMET'. A red box highlights a question in section 2: 'En ymmärrä, miksi kysytte metsämaata, kun se ei ole käytössä. Eikö riittäisi vaikkapa kategoria "muu maa, ei käytössä"?'.

The right sidebar contains the 'Kommentoi' tool. It features a red hand icon and the text 'Klikkaa lomakkeesta kohtaa, johon haluat kommentoida.' Below this is a text input field for the comment, followed by fields for 'Nimi (vapaaehtoinen):' and 'Sähköposti (vapaaehtoinen):'. A red 'SÄÄSTÄÄ' button is at the bottom of the sidebar. The sidebar also includes navigation links for 'Tarkastele', 'Ohjeet', and 'Täytä'.

The browser's taskbar at the bottom shows the date and time as 17:11 on 20.5.2015.

Tarkastele is a tool that gives an overview of all comments on the form. This kind of heat-map helps to see where most of the comments are, and thus where the issues are. Each comment can be discussed. This tool facilitates a direct conversation between primary producers and civil servants, something that hardly takes place today.

www.merkkaa.fi/101A

**MAATILALOMAKE 2015** Lomake 101A

**Viranomaisen merkinnät**

|                       |                  |               |
|-----------------------|------------------|---------------|
| Lomake saapunut, pvm. | Ailautunut/Diuro | Vastaanottaja |
|-----------------------|------------------|---------------|

“Tällä lomakkeella pidämme kirjaa Suomen maataloista.”

*En ymmärrä, miksi kysytte metsämaata, kun se ei ole käytössä. Eikö riittäisi vaikkapa kategoria ”muu maa, ei käytössä” ?*

**KATSO KOMMENTTEJA**

**LISÄÄ KOMMENTTEJA**

**1. MAATILAA KOSKEVAT PERUSTIEDOT**

Maatilan yritysnimi

Tällä harjoitetaan alkutuotannon tuotteiden suoramyyntiä

kyllä  ei

Maatilan päätuotantosuunta

**2. TÄYDENTÄVIEN EHTOJEN TIETOJA**

Tilalla harjoitetaan automaattiyöpsyä ("lypsyrobotti")  kyllä  ei

**3. MAANKÄYTTÖLAJEN PINTA-ALAT**  Tiedot eivät ole muuttuneet

|                  |              |  |              |
|------------------|--------------|--|--------------|
| Maankäyttölaji   | 30.4.2015 ha | Maankäyttölaji   | 30.4.2015 ha |
| Metsämaa         |              | Tonttimaa (mukaan lukien rakennuspaikka)                                 |              |
| Tie- ja joutomaa |              | Muu käyttöalue (pois lukien pelto ja puutarha, luonnonlaidun ja -niitty) |              |

**4. TILALLA 1.4.2015 OLLEET KOTIELÄIMET**

Ilmoita tässä maatilalla 1.4.2015 olleet kotieläimet. Merkitse mahdollinen tuotantotauko rastilla. Tällöin eläinten kohdalle ei tule lukumäärää.

| SIIPIKARJA     |               | Eläimiä 1.4. kpl | Tuotantotauko            | HEVOSET | Eläimiä 1.4. kpl                      |
|----------------|---------------|------------------|--------------------------|---------|---------------------------------------|
| Kanat          | kanat         |                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | Hevoset | yhteismäärä, kaikki rodut, ml. varsat |
|                | kananpoikaset |                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |         |                                       |
| Sitotuskukat   |               |                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |         |                                       |
| Broilerit      | broileriemot  |                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |         |                                       |
|                | broilerit     |                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |         |                                       |
| Kalkkunat      | kaikki        |                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |         |                                       |
| Muu siipikarja |               |                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |         |                                       |

**5. ALLEKIRJOITUS**

Vakuutan tällä lomakkeella olevat tiedot oikeiksi.

Päikka ja aika

Maatalouden viljelijätukiasioihin valtuutetun allekirjoitus ja nimenselvennys tai maatilan kaikkien omistajien allekirjoitukset ja nimenselvennykset

Valitse ja klikkaa muiden kommentteja, joita haluat lukea.

---

Käyttäjäkommentit (●):

Virkamiesten kommentit (○):

Vain viimeiset 12 kuukautta:

Vain viimeiset 3 kuukautta:

Ohjeet is an instruction tool. This is simply an online version of the instructions that come with the form. The added benefit is that you can see exactly which part of the form the instructions are related to.



Täytä is a tool where primary producers can actually fill the form digitally. The form is filled in like any interactive PDF-file. When the filling is done, instead of printing, signing by hand, scanning and e-mailing, the primary producer just logs in with their bank credentials and sends it off. The idea is not to replace systems like Vipu or other big e-service tools for agriculture that are already in place. This e-form makes it easier to notify digitally.

www.merkkaa.fi/101A

MAATILALOMAKE 2015 Lomake 101A

Viranomaisen merkinnät

|                        |                 |               |
|------------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Lomake säapönnut, pvm. | Asiatunnus/Dnro | Vastaanottaja |
|------------------------|-----------------|---------------|

Toimita lomake maatilän sijaintikunnan maaseutuelinkeinoviranomaiselle viimeistään 12.5.2015, jos maatilän esitetyt tietojen yhteenvedossa ilmoitettuihin tietoihin on tullut muutoksia tai jos tilalla on silpikarjaa tai hevosia.

Täytä lomake kuulakärkikynällä tai muulla pysyvällä tavalla täyttöohjeen mukaisesti.

1. MAATILAA KOSKEVAT PERUSTIEDOT

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Maatilän yritysnimi<br>Majvik ekologinen maaitatalo   | Tilatunnus<br>23 568                      |
| Tällä harjoitetaan alkutuotannon tuotteiden suoramyyntiä<br><input type="checkbox"/> kyllä <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ei | Juridinen muoto<br>Päätilän sijaintikylää |
| Maatilän päätuotantosuunta<br>Yhtiömuoto käy tavallisesti, ilmi yhtiön toiminimestäv  |   |

2. TÄYDENTÄVIEN EHTOJEN Tietoja

Tilalla harjoitetaan automaattilypsä ("lypsyrobotti")  kyllä  ei

3. MAANKÄYTTÖLAJEN PINTA-ALAT  Tiedot eivät ole muuttuneet

| Maankäyttölaji   | 30.4.2015 ha | Maankäyttölaji   | 30.4.2015 ha |
|------------------|--------------|--|--------------|
| Metsämaa         | 105          | Tonttimaa (mukaan lukien rakennuspaikka)                                 | 68           |
| Tie- ja joutomaa | 21           | Muu käyttöalue (pois lukien pelto ja puutarha, luonnonlaidun ja -niitty) |              |

4. TILALLA 1.4.2015 OLLEET KOTIELÄIMET

Ilmoita tässä maatilalla 1.4.2015 olleet kotieläimet. Merkitse mahdollinen tuotantotauko rastilla. Tällöin eläinten kohdalle ei tule lukumäärää.

| SIIPIKARJA     | Eläimiä 1.4.  |                          | HEVOSET                                       | Eläimiä 1.4. |  |
|----------------|---------------|--------------------------|---|--------------|--|
|                | kpl           | Tuotanto-tauko           |   | kpl          |  |
| Kanat          | kanat         | <input type="checkbox"/> | Hevoset yhteismäärä, kaikki rodut, ml. varsat |              |  |
|                | kananpoikaset | <input type="checkbox"/> |   |              |  |
| Siitoskukat    |               | <input type="checkbox"/> |   |              |  |
|                |               | <input type="checkbox"/> |   |              |  |
| Broilerit      | broileriemiot | <input type="checkbox"/> |   |              |  |
|                | broilerit     | <input type="checkbox"/> |   |              |  |
| Kalkkunat      | kaikki        | <input type="checkbox"/> |   |              |  |
|                |               | <input type="checkbox"/> |   |              |  |
| Muu silpikarja |               | <input type="checkbox"/> |   |              |  |

5. ALLEKIRJOITUS

Vakuutan täällä lomakkeella olevat tiedot oikeiksi.

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| Paikka ja aika | Maatalouden viljelijätukiasiointiin valtuutetun allekirjoitus ja nimenselvitys tai maatilän kaikkien omistajien allekirjoitukset ja nimenselvennykset |
|----------------|---|

SVE | ENG

Klikkaa lomake auki ja täytä se suoraan selaimessa.

Vastaanottaja:

MAVI  
Alvar Aallon katu 6  
60100 Seinäjoki

LISÄÄ LIITE

ALLEKIRJOITA JA LÄHETÄ

mm.fi Movi  
Evira Eläino- ja kasvatustieteiden tutkimuskeskus

17:11  
20.5.2015

## **Benefits of our concept**

Our concept brings benefits to primary producers, civil servants and for the government. Probably the most central thing is that it facilitates the transition by lowering barriers and increases co-operation between different stakeholders.

*For producers, our concept means:*

- A lower barrier to make digital notifications.
- More meaningful engagement with authorities, and therefore less frustration.
- Better understanding of the aims of notifications.

*For civil servants, our concept provides:*

- Relevant interaction directly with the users, on equal terms.
- Feedback that comes straight from situations when primary producers are working with their notifications.
- With this interaction, feedback and clear intentions civil servants are in a position to be changemakers.

*For the government our concept offers:*

- An example of prototyping service development.
- Coordination and synchronization between the different actors. Different institutions and offices have to collaborate to create of the tools, when using them and to respond to the feedback.
- A concrete starting point for coming together to reduce the complexity of primary producers' notifications.

# 7. DISCUSSION

## Competencies

There were a few key competences needed to be able to execute both the ethnographic research and the actual design to answer our brief. First, the social skills needed to connect with all the relevant people related to the brief. The relatively short time-frame of the project and the fact that it was set at the busiest time for both primary producers and civil servants meant that we needed to “practice what we preach” and make easily visible the value of engaging with this project. One link that held clear potential for saving resources and creating good outcomes was a possible collaboration with the KAPA-project. We highly advise looking into this possibility.

The second asset, linked to design, is the ability to visualize and translate information into an understandable, even desirable format. All examples and materials need to make stakeholders curious and be so readable, that only short attention would suffice to make an assessment about benefits. This is why we put effort into presentation, as they are a good tool for persuasive and powerful storytelling.

Third, a knowledge of participatory methods (collaborative design, co-creation, workshopping and user-centricity) was essential as we solutionized together with stakeholders, to ensure our outcome was relevant and truly beneficial. People are busy and everybody's time is valuable, so involving stakeholders can not be done carelessly. Recognizing the right time and the right amount of engagement with users and beneficiaries is crucial for meaningful interaction and results that will lead to further co-operation.

Lastly, we needed a steady hand at creating frameworks and contextualizing solutions, to best understand what would lead to practices that would create the most impact and would be easiest to scale up. This required a lot of exploration and iteration. Most of the work was about understanding the factors that drive change, grouping different solutions and exploring the directions they would lead to. Design methods were heavily utilized, as evidenced by the amount of post-its and diagrams created during the project. One of the most valuable tools was affinity diagramming and its many variations, which allowed us to thoroughly understand where different ideas and insights were positioned within the context.

## Challenges and learnings

We want to leave you with a few things to take into consideration. Content of notifications depends heavily on context, which makes it a tricky problem to work with. Even with the toolset we propose, there is still a lot of work, and more importantly co-operation, to be done until changes are implemented. It can be surprisingly difficult to believe that small steps can be the beginning of a big change. There are two main challenges we identified: the issue of *integrating design activities with expert knowledge* and the *lack of articulated leadership*. As we hand over the project the competencies listed in the previous chapter leave with us. It is not necessary to hire a designer in place, but whoever is tasked with facilitating the transition to e-services must be able to integrate the experts, that is to say the users, into the process of designing the new services. This person or people, be they from within a specific team or from within the ministry, must have clear leadership that is also vocalized to other organizations (such as Evira, ELY-centres, Mavi and municipalities). Ownership and leadership are not the same thing, and leadership needs to be clearly stated in order to be valid within the whole system.

Thankfully, we also have a few clear learnings that will help the process along:

*1. Select one aspect of the problem, define change drivers and start small, but impactful.*

As we learned from our process, selling a solution requiring high investment of resources can be challenging, even unwise. If the base for innovations is a small but powerful change, snowballing will happen on its own, and next steps will seem logical and easy.

*2. Co-develop solutions and tell the story of transition to digital services as one integrated activity.*

A lack of marketing is one of the pitfalls of public sector endeavours. Though its users are forced to use these services and no competing services will come, marketing is still essential. People will not use e-services, if they mistrust them, or are more comfortable with paper. Look at it this way: paper notifications are the competitors of e-service, but they can be used as a transitional tool before total digitalization.

*3. Involve people and learn together with them.*

This is underlining what was already brought up in the previous learnings, because it is the most important point. Co-development is particularly important to create a solution that will truly be appropriated by its users, to the extent that those users (be they civil servants or primary producers) are able to develop the solution even further. Thus that solution must be created together. It takes exceptional leadership or position for an individual to come into an organization and change existing practices and tools, and this is both an inefficient and undemocratic way of creating organizational changes. These learnings should be taken to

heart, if the revisions made are aimed at sustainable change that doesn't become stagnant after first efforts.

To summarise, what we propose is what some might call the “minimum viable product”. An MVP, for short, is defined as a product that “has just those core features that allow the product to be deployed, and no more.” In our case, this is not a minimum viable product in terms of functionality; the solution we propose could be implemented as is, though it is meant to be expanded and iterated. Tools shape attitudes and culture, and this is a minimum viable product for creating a cultural change. We suggest you start by putting someone in charge, taking small steps and starting with the forms.