

# **Standardising humanitarian deduplication and adjudication processes in cash coordination**

DIGID Consortium & CCD Network presentation to the DRWG CCT

Ad hoc meeting, 19 September 2024

# What are we talking about?

- Background: DIGID & CCD interoperability initiatives with learnings in Ukraine & South Sudan.
- Objectives of the assignment:
  - **Share experience and document examples** of commonly used data models and rules for deduplication and adjudication, and
  - Understand the **need and process for agreeing on commonly used data models**, incl. potential pathways for uptake.
- Purpose: **Improve deduplication in cash coordination** by
  - 1) exploring **common data semantics / data models** for deduplication that are built on existing work, and
  - 2) listing **common business rules** for deduplication and adjudication.
- 20 key informant interviews with 4 humanitarian stakeholder groups of UN Agencies, technology/ service providers, NGOs and humanitarian coordination fora between June and August 2024.

# Why does this matter? What are the drivers?

- ...aiming at more **dignity, transparency and accountability** of providing cash assistance to affected people.
- ...supporting (cost) **efficiency and effectiveness** by improving collaboration through identifying duplicates, coordinating assistance packages, referring affected people to mandated organisations, and contributing to creating choice models for them.
- ...**building trustworthy traceability of assistance** provided by diverse humanitarian actors.
- ...responding to increasing requests on commonly agreed **data semantics / data models** for sharing data between humanitarian organisations and systems.
- ...**learning from other sectors** who are more advanced in the discussion on data semantics and standardised data models (e.g., Health, Social Protection - DCI).
- ...**shedding light on duplication levels** in the humanitarian cash system.
- ...**getting it right** by avoiding false (automated) decisions.

# Discussion points

- How do CCT members approach deduplication and adjudication in cash coordination? Do the insights reflect CCT members' own experience?
- What is the wider interest in taking the discussion forward? What could individual CCT members do? What are the next steps for DIGID and CCD? or others?
- What is your take on involving tech vendors/ service providers in the discussion about common data models? What is/ should be their role?

# What did we learn from the consultations?

## It's important to get the language and concepts right!

- **Deduplication** is understood as the (automated) process of detecting and removing (potential) duplicate data points of aid recipients by
  - a) agreeing on **data standards** for identifying and eliminating duplicates or redundant data, and
  - b) agreeing on relevant **processes and workflows**.
- Data standards are about
  - a) **data semantics** are standards that help applications establish a common vocabulary with similar enough definitions (e.g., same date formats, same groupings, same indicators)..
  - b) **data syntactic** are standards that help applications establish a common grammar with similar enough data formats (e.g., XLS, CSV, PNG, JPEG)
- **Adjudication** understood as the (manual) process for providing a decision and administration on each pair of potential duplicates.

# What did we learn from the consultations?

**Data standards for deduplication need to be defined as per its objective, purpose and context!**

- Deduplication objectives vary per context, purpose, use case/ variation and stakeholder group.
- Purposes and use cases/variations include
  - a) **Harmonisation of cash assistance**/ deduplication of cash assistance package
  - b) **Deduplication of registration or identities**
  - c) **Deduplication of cash recipients**/ for the purpose of cash assistance
  - d) **Referral of cash recipients**
- Data points (**semantics, formats**) for b) deduplication of identities was considered as straightforward while c) deduplication of cash recipients more complex (e.g., caseload, eligibility criteria, frequency, governance frameworks, users).
- **Several standards exist** but only few are currently used to inform deduplication processes in humanitarian cash coordination (e.g., UNCCS, CCD data standards, P-Codes, ISO).

# What did we learn from the consultations?

## Deduplication and adjudication rules are as important as common data models!

- The discussion about data standards goes hand-in-hand with **governance frameworks, processes and business rules**. Few examples for standardising deduplication processes and rules across the sector exist (e.g. Ukraine). Adjudication is less standardised and usually managed manually with the support of local actors.
- Key process steps include (amongst others):
  - Common cash assistance package (e.g., eligibility, transfer value, caseload).
  - Common definition of 'duplicate'.
  - Common data points at time of registration and for identifying potential duplicate(s).
  - Common data formats.
  - Min./ max. levels to classify potential duplicate(s) as unique and threshold for adjudication.
  - Process for retaining/ excluding data from registration and enrolment lists.
- Most organisations use bio data or a unique identifier (UID) for deduplication. The relevant technical solution usually depends on **organisational confidence and risk levels**.

# What did we learn from the consultations?

The discussion about global standards needs to go hand in hand with in-country discussions!

- Potential ways for uptake of data standards for deduplication included:
  - **Refer to best practices** and already existing/ operationalised data standards.
  - **Build the case** by getting more evidence and sharing use cases through for ex. CALP..
  - **Develop de/duplication indicators** for cash coordination (e.g., 4Ws, HNOs/ HRP).
  - **Work with champions** to identify best practices, case studies and more evidence.
  - **Use the momentum** and consider the latest funding cuts as an opportunity to reiterate the discussion about deduplication.
- Learn from examples such as HXL or Social Protection/ Digital Convergence Initiative (DCI):
  - Collect evidence to demonstrate the benefit to decision-makers.
  - Identify an owner of the problem and relevant experts.
  - Establish working groups/ steering committee incl. tech and programme teams.
  - Know your end users and follow a user-centric design
  - Regularly share learnings.



# What did interviewees recommend?

Recommendations to overcome key challenges

- ...**developing a data dictionary** that refers to commonly used semantics, formats, etc.
- ...regularly **enhancing available data models/ standards** while building on best practices.
- ...**identifying more case studies** to support common data models and deduplication rules.
- ...**clarifying challenges arising from diverse legal frameworks**.
- ...**investing in easy-to-use tools and open source solutions** that allow engaging, capacitating and guiding smaller organisations and local actors.
- ...**developing a tech inventory** to share insights and learnings.
- ...**involving tech/ service providers** in the process and/or discussion.
- ...**using the opportunity and momentum** to link the discussion about deduplication processes to sector-wide funding cuts.

# What are the next steps?

- ...continue collecting and documenting case studies, including examples of existing data models, rules and processes for deduplication and adjudication in cash coordination.
- ...continue engaging diverse stakeholders in the discussion (e.g., humanitarian actors and private sector/ technology providers).
- ...continue exploring pathways for commonly used data models, deduplication and adjudication rules.
- ...continue building the case by sharing insights with different stakeholders and interested fora.

# Discussion points

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- What is your take on involving tech vendors/ service providers in the discussion about common data models? What is/ should be their role?

# How can I support this initiative, share any feedback?

Please reach out to

- **DIGID Consortium** (focal points Joseph Oliveros - [joseph.oliveros@ifrc.org](mailto:joseph.oliveros@ifrc.org) - or Thomas Raffort - [Thomas.Raffort@ifrc.org](mailto:Thomas.Raffort@ifrc.org))
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or connect with Andrea Duechting ([andrea.duechting@gmail.com](mailto:andrea.duechting@gmail.com)) who facilitated the consultation process.

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