



# openIMIS

## openIMIS for Cash Transfer Schemes

### The challenge: Ensuring prompt and smooth distribution of cash to eligible beneficiaries

Cash transfers are a form of social assistance designed to provide people with quick, flexible help, particularly in emergency situations. During the COVID pandemic, some 1.3 billion people worldwide have benefitted from cash transfer schemes which aim to protect their lives and livelihoods. Cash transfers have also become increasingly favored by humanitarian aid agencies as a way to channel assistance to people and households in other types of crises, such as natural disasters. As such, they are an increasingly important instrument for reducing poverty and achieving Sustainable Development Goal 1.

As the use of cash transfers becomes more widespread, there is a need for simple, flexible digital solutions which can streamline the administration of such schemes. Beneficiaries require money quickly, without having to navigate complicated administrative procedures. Payment service providers and payers/scheme operators need to be able to distribute funds efficiently to the right people and to use data to adjust the operations of the scheme, for example by adjusting inclusion criteria to reach more beneficiaries. Paper-based systems are too slow and cumbersome to manage the complex flows of information required to determine beneficiaries' eligibility, enroll them in the scheme, calculate payments and manage the scheme's operations. Digitalisation can help to streamline these and other processes.

Interoperable digital solutions based on open source technology offer particular benefits for the administration of cash transfer schemes. They enable the seamless exchange of data between different information systems, such as those maintained by social security agencies and other social protection scheme operators. This helps to reduce fragmentation, particularly in countries where multiple social assistance schemes are run concurrently, sometimes by the same operator. Interoperable solutions can contribute to smoother, more efficient processes, while eliminating the need to develop expensive custom-made software from scratch.

### openIMIS: A versatile open source solution for administering cash transfer schemes

openIMIS is an open source software which supports the administration of social protection schemes. Designed in accordance with industry standards for interoperability, openIMIS offers a standardised but adaptable way to manage information flows related to cash transfer schemes by bringing together beneficiary, payment service provider and payer/scheme operator data into a single platform.

openIMIS supports the following core processes:

- **Registration of beneficiary households.** openIMIS facilitates data cleaning and the enrolment of beneficiaries. Information about beneficiary household and its members can



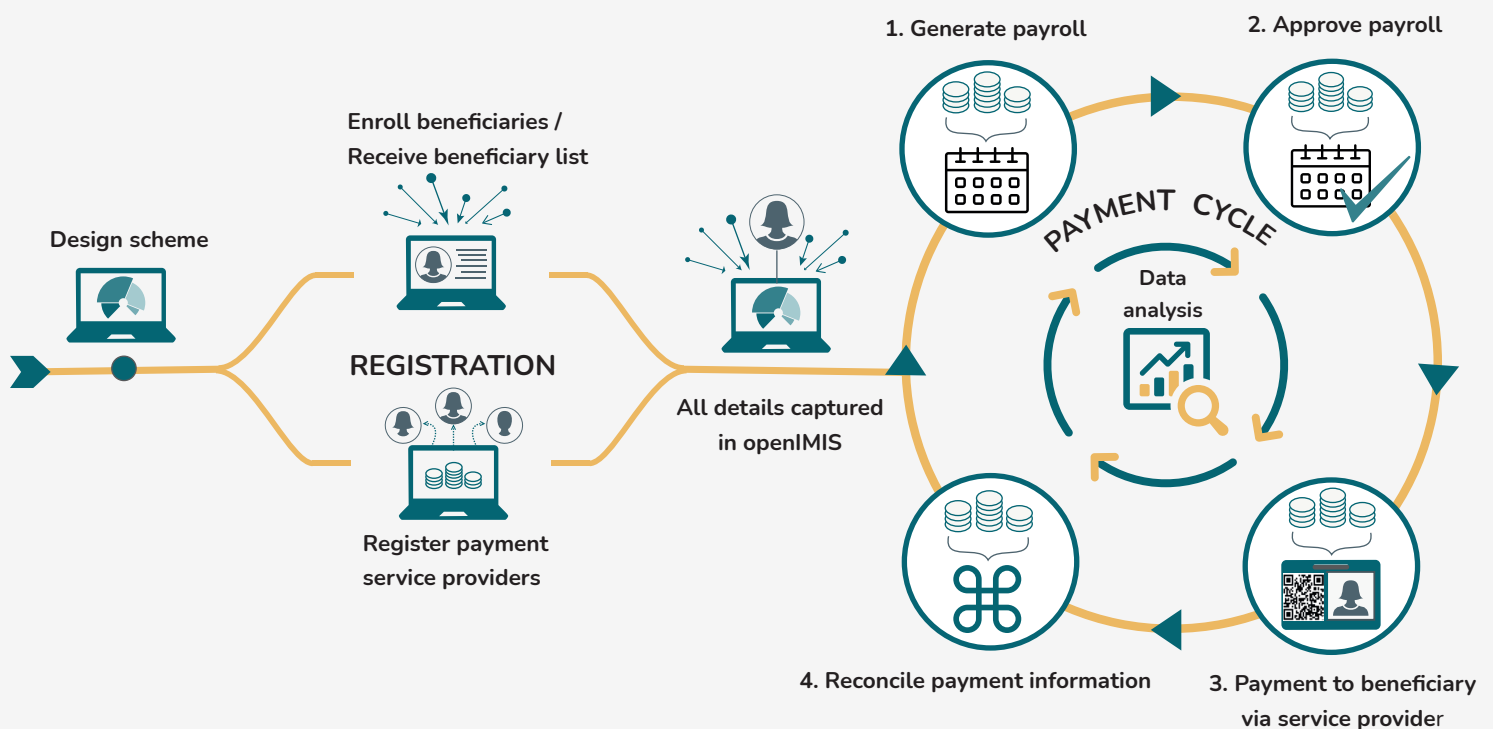
be captured directly in openIMIS, or imported into openIMIS from existing beneficiary management systems using shared interoperability standards (i.e. HL7 FHIR). Duplicate entries can be automatically flagged for review. openIMIS allows for beneficiaries to be linked to preferred pay points and payment mechanisms.

- **Registration of payment service providers.** Information about the payment service providers that provide the cash or mobile money payments to beneficiaries are captured in openIMIS. Disbursements are only made from the registered service providers.
- **Definition of payment criteria and generation of payroll.** The payer/scheme operator can define the criteria for cash transfers (e.g. inclusion criteria, payment amount, frequency)

in openIMIS. At specified intervals openIMIS automatically generates a payroll with the list of beneficiaries and the amounts to be disbursed in the given payment cycle.

- **Disbursement of payments to beneficiaries.** On the basis of the approved payroll, payment service providers disburse funds to beneficiaries. openIMIS allows for reconciliation of issued payments against payroll, with data received from payment service providers. Reasons for non-payment can be indicated. Unique payment transaction numbers can be generated for each payment, allowing them to be traced to individual households.
- **Data analysis.** The payer/scheme operator can use openIMIS to generate reports from the collected data and to analyse the reach and effectiveness of the cash transfer scheme.

## Example Workflow





For beneficiaries, openIMIS simplifies enrolment procedures, ensures the prompt receipt of cash, and allows payments to be tracked via unique payment numbers. For payment service providers it provides a one-stop solution for managing eligibility determination, enrolment, payment processes and reporting. For the payer/scheme operator it reduces operational costs, allows for better monitoring and analysis of the scheme's overall operations, and enables information to be shared between different social assistance schemes and operators.

## One element of an interoperable digital ecosystem

openIMIS can function on its own as a stand-alone piece of software, but because it uses common standards for information exchange (i.e. HL7 FHIR specifications), it works seamlessly with other systems. This means that it can readily exchange data with everything from widely used data analytics platforms such as DHIS2 to other existing beneficiary management systems, such as those maintained by social security agencies. openIMIS's status as a global good supported by active communities of developers and implementers means that the software is being continuously updated and improved with new functionalities. Users benefit from a top-quality product and expert support available through a vibrant community of practice.

## Learn more about openIMIS

The openIMIS Initiative welcomes development partners, implementers with expertise in digital health and social protection systems, scheme operators, developers and academic institutions to help openIMIS grow and improve.

To learn more about how openIMIS can support cash transfer schemes and poverty reduction, visit:

[www.openimis.org](http://www.openimis.org)

<https://wiki.openimis.org>

openIMIS: Health and social protection's digital backbone

openIMIS brings digital social benefits to the Gambia

Or contact the openIMIS Coordination Desk:

[contact@openimis.org](mailto:contact@openimis.org)

As at	June 2021
Text	Karen Birdsall
Design	Karsten van der Oord