

DCI Partnership Engagement Strategy

Executive summary

The [Digital Convergence Initiative \(DCI\) Partnership Engagement Strategy](#) provides a structured approach to engaging the diverse range of actors involved in advancing the digital transformation of social protection systems worldwide. It outlines the different partner categories and defines their roles, and shared values. It also sets out key mechanisms for joint work, such as partner forum and thematic working groups. In addition, it includes branding and communication guidelines to ensure consistent and transparent visibility across partners, as well as ensure alignment to manage differing expectations and maintain constructive collaboration. By fostering alignment, mutual accountability, and collective impact, the document serves as a foundation for effective, inclusive, and results-driven collaboration across the DCI community.

1. About DCI

The Digital Convergence Initiative (DCI) is the global initiative to support the digital transformation of social protection systems. Launched in 2021 as part of the USP2030 partnership, the DCI is an open and collaborative platform for governments, development partners, civil society organizations and the private sector united by a shared vision: expanding the coverage of social protection and enhancing its delivery through inclusive, interoperable digital systems.

2. DCI's action areas:

The DCI's activities are structured across four action areas:

1. Country implementation support

DCI [provides support to selected partner countries](#) to reap the benefits of digital transformation for the delivery of social protection benefits and services. The DCI supports a

wide range of measures, from integrating government systems and designing integrated beneficiary registries, to digitizing care pathways and facilitating interoperable interfaces between social protection programs/schemes.

2. Knowledge sharing

The DCI works to ensure that knowledge and experiences relevant for the digital transformation of social protection systems are well documented and shared widely. It maintains an open and continuously updated [digital knowledge base](#) comprising webinar recordings and related materials, as well as reports, publications and other knowledge products. It also facilitates in-person and virtual learning events including conferences, webinars and study tours.

These activities have fostered the development of a community of stakeholders from different backgrounds that participates in events and discussions and is directly involved in the creation of standards. As a result, DCI serves as a platform for continuous learning and knowledge sharing.

3. Global technical standards

Global efforts to harmonize [technical standards for interoperability](#) require coordination. The DCI facilitates transparent, multi-stakeholder, consensus-building processes to develop these [standards for social protection](#) in strategic areas. Several standards have already been released and endorsed by USP2030; others are under development in strategic areas.

The DCI maintains an open [repository of technical standards](#) and engages with open-source software solutions, proprietary solution providers and social protection stakeholders to promote the adoption of these standards by DPGs and countries.

4. Capacity development and training

The DCI supports capacity development and training for social protection policymakers, programme managers and practitioners [to drive impactful digital transformation](#) and design more inclusive, human-centered and interoperable solutions for social protection. DCI's training offer is modular, adaptable and grounded in practical application, tailored to country-specific contexts and implementation challenges. DCI also facilitates peer-to-peer learning and cross-country knowledge exchange, including study visits and collaborative dialogues that enable practitioners to learn directly from innovative practices and experiences around the world.

3. Why a strategic partnership engagement strategy is essential for DCI

DCI's core activities—facilitating knowledge exchange, building consensus on interoperability and data exchange standards, providing tailored country support, and capacity building—are inherently cross-cutting and demand diverse contributions from a range of stakeholders. Given the breadth of this agenda—and the need for alignment across key areas such as digital social protection delivery, investments in sector-specific Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) and Digital Public Goods (DPGs), and the responsible use of AI—a comprehensive partnership strategy is essential to engage partners working in the sector to ensure clarity, coordination, and complementarity among partners.

Such a strategy enables all DCI partners to collaborate more effectively, aligning contributions toward shared objectives and leveraging synergies across initiatives. It provides structured mechanisms for joint planning, learning, and accountability, enabling DCI to operate effectively as *the* global platform for digital transformation of social protection systems. By streamlining collaboration and maximizing the value of each partner's strengths, the strategy helps scale impact, reduce duplication, and maintain coherence across global, regional, and country-level activities.

4. DCI's diverse Community

DCI's work is powered by a broad coalition of institutions with distinct but complementary roles. This diversity reflects the cross-cutting nature of digital transformation in social protection and enables DCI to deliver technical depth, operational reach, and strategic influence. Each category of partners and collaborating institutions plays a vital role in advancing DCI's mission. The categories are not mutually exclusive:

1. Coordinating Partners

Coordinating partners are institutions responsible for orchestrating DCI's workstreams at global, regional, and country levels – executing or overseeing the implementation of the work. These organizations are deeply involved in the initiative's strategic direction and operational delivery—leading country engagements, developing knowledge products, co-creating technical standards, and convening learning platforms. As co-implementers of DCI's agenda, they ensure alignment with country needs, bring subject-matter expertise, and promote coherence across the initiative. Their on-the-ground engagement and ownership make them central to translating DCI's vision into action.

DCI is currently coordinated by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), Expertise France, Foundation for the Internationalization of Public Administrations (FIAP), the International Labour Organization (ILO), and the World Bank, in strategic partnership with the International Social Security Association (ISSA).

2. Funding Partners

Funding partners provide the financial resources that enable DCI to function as a long-term, sustainable platform. Their support covers core operations, innovation pilots, country technical assistance, and global public goods such as capacity building training, action research and developing interoperability standards. In addition to funding, many of these partners also contribute strategic insight, political visibility, and alignment with broader development priorities—ensuring that DCI remains relevant and well-resourced. The DCI currently receives funding from the European Commission and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

3. Country/Provincial Governments

Country/Provincial governments are at the center of DCI’s mission. They are both co-creators, knowledge contributors and primary beneficiaries of DCI’s support, driving national digital transformation agendas for social protection. Governments engage with DCI through technical assistance, policy advisory, capacity building, and piloting of standards. Their leadership ensures that solutions are grounded in local realities, politically feasible, and aligned with broader government strategies on digital governance and social protection reform. In addition, government experts actively participate in DCI’s interoperability standards committees, providing technical and policy insights. Through active participation in exchanges, events, and the development of knowledge platforms, governments both contribute valuable inputs to DCI’s knowledge products and draw on this content for their own learning and capacity development. Going forward, DCI will consider involving government partners in providing technical assistance to other countries and/or supporting training activities. This peer-to-peer model leverages expertise from member states while simultaneously offering those experts valuable exposure and learning opportunities.

4. Strategic Technical Collaborators (Deeper Engagement)

Strategic Technical Collaborators are organizations or institutions (including academia) that engage with DCI on a **recurring and sustained basis**, often contributing to co-creation, long-term knowledge partnerships, and standard-setting processes.

Key characteristics:

- Lead or co-lead thematic streams (e.g. Digital Public Infrastructure).
- Regularly contribute to DCI's knowledge products, standard committees, and events.
- Participate in strategic planning discussions to shape DCI's direction.
- May second technical experts or provide dedicated resources for joint deliverables.

5. Learning and Knowledge Contributors (Lighter Engagement)

These are organizations that **engage on a periodic or ad-hoc basis**, typically contributing to thematic discussions, webinars, or select knowledge outputs.

Key characteristics:

- Attend learning sessions and events to share or learn from peer experiences.
- May contribute to specific deliverables (e.g., blogs, case studies) without ongoing commitments.
- Participate in open knowledge exchanges or technical consultations.
- Engage primarily for mutual learning and visibility rather than co-creation.

6. Private Sector

Private sector contributes innovation, research, and implementation capacity to DCI. Technology providers support the development and deployment of digital tools aligned with DCI's principles of openness and interoperability. These actors help validate and improve DCI's products while benefitting from engagement with governments, real-world use cases, and access to a community of DCI partners.

5. DCI Partnership Values

- **Shared Vision for Universal Social Protection (USP 2030):**
All partners are aligned with the ultimate goal of achieving inclusive, shock-responsive, comprehensive, adequate and sustainable social protection systems that leave no one behind.
- **Commitment to a human-centred Digital Transformation for Equity, Effectiveness and Efficiency:**
Partners share a commitment to use the transformative power of digital tools and technologies to improve delivery, effectiveness, efficiency, and accessibility of social protection systems.



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- **Promotion of Innovation and Local Adaptation:**
DCI values partners who bring forward new ideas, technologies, and approaches while grounding them in local context and user needs.
- **Evidence-Driven and Learning-Oriented Collaboration:**
Partnerships are rooted in mutual learning, continuous improvement, and open sharing of experiences, successes, and failures to inform future efforts.
- **Focus on Systemic and Scalable Impact:**
Partnerships aim to create sustainable, system-level change rather than one-off interventions—prioritizing scale, replicability, and long-term results.
- **Principles of Interoperability and Openness:**
DCI and its partners uphold principles of open source, transparency, and data sovereignty, ensuring solutions can interconnect and evolve over time.
- **Respect for Country Ownership and Demand-Driven Support:**
DCI works in alignment with national priorities and ensures that countries drive their own digital transformation agendas with tailored support.
- **Trust, Transparency, Participation and Accountability:**
Collaboration is built on open communication, shared responsibility, and joint stewardship of resources, data, and results.
- **Data privacy:**
DCI and its partners share the commitment to protect personal data, build trust and uphold the dignity and rights of beneficiaries

6. Ways of Working Together

To ensure structured, inclusive, and results-oriented collaboration, DCI offers multiple channels and formats for partners to work together. These mechanisms foster collective ownership, facilitate cross-pollination of ideas, and ensure that technical progress is linked to practical, country-level impact. Below are key modalities of engagement:

a. DCI partner forum

Purpose: Foster ongoing learning, peer exchange, and collective problem-solving.

The DCI partner forum brings together representatives from implementing partners, technical collaborators, governments, and other stakeholders. The forum serves as a platform to gauge partner interest across themes and topics, allowing members to self-select into working groups aligned with their expertise and priorities.

The partner forum will function as a broad engagement platform that facilitates structured exchanges, peer reviews, and case study discussions, while also providing visibility into



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ongoing work programs and upcoming initiatives in digital social protection. It will help bridge global outputs with country-level experiences, ensuring lessons learned in one context can inform solutions elsewhere.

The DCI partner forum convenes on a quarterly basis to take stock, share progress across working groups, and realign priorities as needed. Additional meetings may be organised on demand. The partner forum will be informed about DCI activities throughout the year via the DCI mailing list. In addition, the partner forum will be informed about all DCI events and upcoming engagement opportunities on an ad-hoc basis. All partners can share inputs and announcements with the partner forum. The DCI Secretariat will manage coordination — overseeing membership, meeting logistics, setting agendas in consultation with members, facilitating discussions, and ensuring outputs and action points are captured and disseminated.

b. Thematic working groups

Purpose: Deep-dive into priority topics and co-create technical products.

Institutions based on their interest and expertise can establish temporary working groups focused on high-priority and emerging areas relevant to the digital transformation of social protection systems. These working groups will be co-led by institutions with recognized thematic expertise and will operate with a clear, output-driven mandate. Deliverables may include guidance notes, technical standards, policy briefs, toolkits, or other actionable resources. working groups may also organize webinars, workshops, or pilot projects to test and refine their outputs in real-world contexts. Participation in these Working Groups will remain open and voluntary, allowing partners to engage in areas where they can provide the most value while benefiting from collective knowledge creation and collaboration.

c. Country learning community

Purpose: Coordinate partner inputs and provide integrated support to governments.

The DCI **country learning community** is a platform for governments currently receiving support to exchange knowledge, lessons, and innovations in digital transformation of social protection. Initially, the learning community will be composed of countries actively receiving support from DCI coordinating partners. Over time, participation can expand to other interested countries, creating a broader ecosystem for mutual learning.

The community may convene through regular virtual dialogues, thematic workshops, and country roundtables, complemented by curated knowledge products, case studies, and

practical toolkits. Countries can showcase reforms, share technical and political economy challenges, and collectively explore solutions.

d. Joint advocacy and policy dialogue

Purpose: Align messaging, influence policy, and shape global norms.

Partners can collaborate on joint advocacy efforts, including the development of policy papers, joint op-eds, or presentations at global forums such as the G20, UN bodies, or the Global Summits/Conferences. DCI also engages partners in shaping the global narrative around inclusive digital transformation for SP systems.

7. Branding and Communication Principles for Partners

To maintain trust, ensure transparency, and honor the spirit of collaboration, clear and consistent branding and communication principles are critical. These principles aim to guide how DCI and its partners represent joint work, co-create content, and communicate impact across platforms and audiences.

- **Co-Branding of Joint Outputs:** Reports, toolkits, diagnostics, and standards developed collaboratively will include the logos of all contributing institutions if desired. Co-branded outputs will follow a neutral DCI visual identity that signals partnership and unity of purpose. Outputs that have been endorsed by the DCI management team and are following the DCI quality assurance protocols can use the DCI visual identity.
- **Partners Logo Placement and Attribution:** The logos of all collaborating institutions will feature on DCI website (except Learning and Knowledge Contributors). Clear and consistent logo placement will be used across products and platforms, with contributors acknowledged both visually (logos) and textually (in prefaces, footnotes, or annexes as relevant). Attribution will reflect the nature and depth of contributions.
- **Advance Coordination on Communications:** In the case of major announcements, product launches, or joint events, partners will follow DCI quality assurance



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protocols and coordinate in advance on press releases, social media content, and speaking points to ensure message consistency.

- Respect for Institutional Protocols: DCI respects partner-specific communication and branding guidelines and will seek alignment through mutual review processes before finalizing public-facing materials.
- Truthfulness and Clarity: Communications will be accurate, transparent about limitations, and careful not to overstate impact or ownership.



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