SCENARIO 1

Imagine you are in a country where the national social protection strategy has recently been developed and approved, with a strong focus on integration within the social protection sector and across social sectors. Specifically, social protection is defined as 'encompassing policies and actions that help tackle life-cycle risks faced by individuals and households, including unemployment, precarious jobs, bad health and low levels of education'. National legislation is currently being adapted to respond to this recent shift in policy, and a 'Supreme Decree' is being drafted by a wide range of government stakeholders stating that:

"Government institutions should exchange data with the objective of assigning and rationalising social benefits distributed by the State, so as to promote a more equitable targeting of resources and the inclusive incorporation of the poorest and most vulnerable in existing social assistance programmes. Such data exchange should be based on the needs of those who administer such benefits and should provide essential information for managing, planning, designing and researching current and future policies, plans and programs".

How would you set up a system that enables the achievement of these objectives, given the following constraints and opportunities in your country?

- **Programmes/services:**
    - You run 4 main social assistance programmes, each of which currently has its own data collection approach (which you do not particularly trust in terms of quality), database and programme MIS.
    - You also run several other smaller social assistance programmes, without any electronic data management system (all paper based).
    - You have a sound system for social insurance in the formal sector, but no social insurance provision for the informal sector

- **Broad e-governance context:**
    - You have a solid system for national identification (covers over 90% of population)
    - Other social sector Ministries have already invested in strong MIS systems
    - The legislation on data privacy and security is relatively strong (and you abide by international standards)

- **Implementation capacity:**
    - You have a highly trained network of social assistants at community level who work out of social welfare departments that are widely distributed across the country
    - At central level, there is the possibility of creating an ad-hoc unit focused on data integration

- **Infrastructure and budget:**
    - Broadband network is available across the country, including in remote locations
    - All social welfare departments have working computers/hardware
    - Given the strong government endorsement, you have been given considerable budget allocations to back the policy vision

QUESTIONS

1. Do you think that Information Integration would be the right approach in this context?

2. If so, then which approach to information integration would work best – developing a social registry, integrated beneficiary registry or virtual registry. State your reasons for choosing a particular approach.

3. If not, then why not?

SCENARIO 2

Imagine you are in a country where the national social protection strategy is currently in the process of being developed, with government and different donors not agreeing on the overall set-up and objectives of the system. Elections are due in a year and the President has decided to base part of his campaign on the expansion of existing social assistance programmes, while wanting to reassure citizens' money is not being wasted on corruption and fraud. You work within the 'Social Welfare Ministry' and have been asked to develop a system that helps to facilitate oversight of multiple social assistance schemes and monitor payments, so as to keep track of who receives what and tackle the risk of ghost recipients. If there is a chance for it, you have also been asked to identify whether there are opportunities to integrate payment systems across programmes, to make some efficiency savings.

How would you set up a system that enables the achievement of these objectives, given the following constraints and opportunities in your country?

- **Programmes/services:**
  - You run 4 main social protection programmes, each of which currently has its own data collection approach (which is relatively sound, though not coordinated), database and programme MIS.
  - You also run several other smaller programmes, without any electronic data management system (all paper based).
  - You have a fragmented system for social insurance in the formal sector, and no social insurance provision for the informal sector

- **Broad e-governance context:**
  - You have a system for national identification, but it excludes some of the poorest and most vulnerable households that are targeted by your social assistance programmes
  - Other social sector Ministries have MIS systems to run their services, but you do not trust their quality
  - The national legislation on data privacy and security is relatively strong

- **Implementation capacity:**
  - You have no network of social assistants at community level and only one social welfare department per district across the country
  - At central level, there is the possibility of creating an ad-hoc unit focused on data integration

- **Infrastructure and budget:**
  - Broadband network is available across the country, but not in remote locations
  - Most social welfare departments have working computers/ hardware
  - Given the president's endorsement, you have been given some budget allocations to set up the system desired

QUESTIONS

1. Do you think that Information Integration would be the right approach in this context?

2. If so, then which approach to information integration would work best – developing a social registry, integrated beneficiary registry or virtual registry. State your reasons for choosing a particular approach.

3. If not, then why not?

SCENARIO 3

Imagine you are in a country where the Prime Minister has been pushing for the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to improve the activities of public sector organisations (E-Government). Specifically, within the Social Protection sector, your Ministry has been commissioned to 'improve the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery' by using web-based services to the extent possible.

How would you set up a system that enables the achievement of these objectives, given the following constraints and opportunities in your country?

- **Programmes/services:**
    - You run 3 main social assistance programmes, each of which currently has its own data collection approach (which you do not particularly trust in terms of quality), database and programme MIS.
    - You have a sound system for social insurance in the formal sector, but no social insurance provision for the informal sector

- **Broad e-governance context:**
    - You have a solid system for national identification, including smart ID cards containing biometric information
    - Other social sector Ministries have already invested in strong databases and MIS systems
    - The legislation on data privacy and security is very strong (and you abide by international standards)
    - The broader legislative and institutional framework for e-governance is already in place
    - High penetration of internet use/smart-phones etc

- **Implementation capacity:**
    - You have a highly trained network of social assistants at community level who work out of social welfare departments that are widely distributed across the country
    - At central level, there is the possibility of creating an ad-hoc unit focused on data integration, including staff versatile in ICT and programming

- **Infrastructure and budget:**
    - Broadband network is available across the country, including in remote locations
    - All social welfare departments have working computers/hardware
    - Given the strong government endorsement, you have been given considerable budget allocations to back the policy vision

QUESTIONS

1. Do you think that Information Integration would be the right approach in this context?

2. If so, then which approach to information integration would work best – developing a social registry, integrated beneficiary registry or virtual registry. State your reasons for choosing a particular approach.

3. If not, then why not?

SCENARIO 4

Imagine you are in a country where no national social protection strategy is yet in place. Your 'Social Welfare Ministry' has recently scaled-up national flagship cash transfer programme, but you have not yet developed a programme MIS that fully responds to your management needs. One of the key challenges you are facing is authenticating your beneficiaries, as this is required by the bank that you wish to contract for the cash transfer's new payment system (because of Know Your Customer regulations). The other key challenge is monitoring payments. Other social assistance programmes in the country are run by other ministries, and you are not fully aware of their data and information management systems – every time you ask for any data on their beneficiaries you never get an answer. You would like to have a better overview of who receives what, but your first priority is running your new programme effectively.

How would you set up a system that enables the achievement of these objectives, given the following constraints and opportunities in your country?

- **Programmes/services:**
  - You run 1 flagship cash transfer programme, which still does not have an adequate MIS (half of your management is done on paper and there is no good automatic reporting system)
  - Other programme are run through other Ministries

- **Broad e-governance context:**
  - You have a system for national identification, but it excludes some of the poorest and most vulnerable households that are targeted by your social assistance programmes
  - Other social assistance and social insurance programmes are run through other Ministries and coordinating with them or getting access to their data is very difficult (power struggles)
  - The national legislation on data privacy and security is not yet developed to high standards

- **Implementation capacity:**
  - You have no network of social assistants at community level and only one social welfare department per district across the country
  - At central level, your unit within the 'Ministry of Social Welfare' includes 5 people, none of whom have a strong understanding of information systems

- **Infrastructure and budget:**
  - Broadband network is not available across the country
  - Many social welfare departments do not have working computers/hardware
  - You have very limited additional budget, but you are planning on approaching a donor for support

QUESTIONS

1. Do you think that Information Integration would be the right approach in this context?

2. If so, then which approach to information integration would work best – developing a social registry, integrated beneficiary registry or virtual registry. State your reasons for choosing a particular approach.

3. If not, then why not?