



# PRESIDENT'S OFFICE, PUBLIC SERVICE MANAGEMENT AND GOOD GOVERNANCE e-GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY

#### **Document Title**

Institutional Data Dictionary Technical Standards and Guidelines

#### **Document Number**

eGA/EXT/IFA/002

APPROVAL	Name	Job Title/ Role	Signature	Date
Approved by	Dr. Laurean J. P. Ndumbaro	Board Chairman	For	06.67.2021

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**PREFACE** 

A data dictionary is a centralized metadata repository that contains a collection of

descriptions of the data objects or items in a data model for the benefit of

programmers and others who need to refer to them. Data dictionaries are often used

to provide detailed information about the contents of a dataset or database, such as

the names of measured variables, their data types or formats, and text descriptions

as well as a concise guide to understanding and using the data.

According to Regulation 54 (1) of e-Government General Regulations 2020, Public

Institutions are required to prepare institutional data dictionary in a manner specified

in the standards and guidelines issued by the Authority in collaboration with the

institution responsible for records and archive management.

In that regard, the Authority has prepared these standards and guidelines to provide

a guidance to public institutions in preparation of Institutional data dictionary as well

as being used as an instrument for assessing the conformance of data dictionary

requirements.

Dr. Laurean J. P. Ndumbaro

**BOARD CHAIRMAN** 

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

e-Government Authority also known as "e-GA" is a Government institution which was

established in September 2019 under the e-Government Act No. 10 of 2019. The

Authority is mandated to coordinate, oversee and promote e-Government initiatives

and enforce e-Government related policies, laws, regulations, standards and

guidelines in Public Institutions. The Act empowers the Authority to effectively

formulate, manage and enforce Public Institutions compliance with e-Government

standards and guidelines.

1.2 Rationale

The drive behind development of these standards and guidelines is to ensure data are

collected in a comprehensive and consistent way as well as maintain and promote

interoperability.

1.3 Purpose

This document describes standards and guidelines to be followed during the

preparation of institutional data dictionary in line with Regulation 54 of the e-

Government General Regulations 2020.

1.4 Scope

This document will be used by all Public Institutions during the preparation of

institutional data dictionary prior to collection or creation of electronic data.

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#### 2. DATA DICTIONARY TECHNICAL STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

Data dictionary is a set of information describing the contents, format and structure of a data and the relationship between its elements, used to standardize and control access to and manipulation of data.

#### 2.1 THE STANDARDS

#### 2.1.1 Metadata standards

Metadata is a set of data that describes and gives information about other data. The Public Institutions shall ensure that, the following are minimum information to be captured during the creation of data dictionary.

No.	Metadata Elements	Description
1.	Data Element Name	This is the name of the data element
2.	Reference Id	Unique code for data identification
3.	Variable Name	Name of the generic or custom data element to be used
		in the database
4.	Description	A simple and unambiguous definition of Generic or
		Custom Data Element
5.	Category	Generic or Custom
		Generic: A commonly used data element across
		different e-Government applications
		Custom: Used in a particular application only
6.	Data Type	Varchar/Character/Decimal (for real/floating
		number)/Integer (Whole number)/Date etc
7.	Data Format	Is the arrangement of data?
8.	Maximum Size	Maximum Size of the data element
9.	Validations	Generic validations for Generic Data and Specific
		Validations for custom data to be applied for
		acceptance of data
10.	Values	List of Acceptable Values
11.	Default Value	For any list of values, the default value to be used
		unless otherwise stated.

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12.	Owner	Name(s) of the public institution or departments who
		owns the data element/code directory and has the
		rights for updating
13.	Based on	Reference to document/standard on the basis of which
		the data element is standardized.
14.	Version	The version number of Data element
15.	Status	Current status of Standard (Draft or Accepted)
16.	Date Agreed	The date on which this version was accepted as Data
		Standard for Government
17.	Verification	Steps taken to establish the correctness of Generic or
		Custom Data Elements. Such steps taken for different
		level of verifications by departments will be detailed
		here.
18.	Comments	Additional Notes, if any (In English or Swahili)
19.	Date of Publishing	The date on which Standard is published or PDF
		version will be created.
20.	Example/Illustration	Suitable example of the data element to be given for
		clarity and ready reference.
21.	Dependences	Condition if a variable is only allowed to be used if
		another variable has a specific value.

#### 2.1.2 Naming standards for data elements

The Public Institutions shall:

- i. Minimize the use of abbreviations;
- ii. Ensure the name is relevant to the data field or variable represented;
- iii. Do not use spaces between words in a name;
- iv. Do not use special characters in names;
- v. Avoid use of uppercase letter for each word in the name. Use lowercase to Uppercase: "firstName".

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#### 2.1.3 Generic data entities used across Public Institutions

There are data entities that are generic across different public institution. The Public Institutions shall specify generic data entities as follows;

#### i. Person's Names

No.	Item	Value
1.	Data Element Name	Person's Names
2.	Reference Id	Defined by the Institution
3.	Variable Name	firstName, middleName, lastName
4.	Description	Each name field to be captured separately
5.	Category	Generic
6.	Data Type	Varchar
7.	Data format	First name Middle name last name
8.	Maximum Size	25
9.	Validations	Numbers are not accepted
10.	Values	Characters
11.	Default Value	Defined by the Institution
12.	Owner	Institution/Department
13.	Based on	Defined by the Institution
14.	Version	Defined by the Institution
15.	Status	Defined by the Institution (Draft or Approved)
16.	Date Agreed	Approved date
17.	Verification	Defined by the Institution
18.	Comments	If any (In Swahili or English)
19.	Date of Publishing	Approved date
20.	Example/Illustration	Irene
21.	Dependencies	Defined by the Institution

#### ii. National Identification Number

No	Item	Value
1.	Data Element Name	National Identification Number
2.	Reference Id	Defined by the Institution

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3.	Variable Name	nin
4.	Description	National ID
5.	Category	Generic
6.	Data Type	Varchar
7.	Data format	Defined by the Institution
8.	Maximum Size	20
9.	Validations	Accept positive number only
10.	Values	Numbers
11.	Default Value	Defined by the Institution
12.	Owner	NIDA
13.	Based on	Defined by the Institution
14.	Version	Defined by the Institution
15.	Status	Defined by the Institution (Draft or Approved)
16.	Date Agreed	Approved date
17.	Verification	Defined by the Institution
18.	Comments	If any (In Swahili or English)
19.	Date of Publishing	Approved date
20.	Example/Illustration	19880615111010000124
21.	Dependencies	Defined by the Institution

#### **Date of Birth** iii.

No.	Item	Value
1.	Data Element Name	Date of Birth
2.	Reference Id	Defined by the Institution
3.	Variable Name	birthDate
4.	Description	Date of Birth
5.	Category	Generic
6.	Data Type	DATE
7.	Data format	YYYY-MM-DD
8.	Maximum Size	10
9.	Validations	Generic
10.	Values	Character
11.	Default Value	N/A
12.	Owner	RITA

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13.	Based on	Defined by the Institution
14.	Version	Defined by the Institution
15.	Status	Defined by the Institution (Draft or Approved)
16.	Date Agreed	Approved date
17.	Verification	Defined by the Institution
18.	Comments	If any (In Swahili or English)
19.	Date of Publishing	Approved date
20.	Example/Illustration	1988-06-15
21.	Dependencies	Defined by the Institution

#### Gender iv.

No.	Item	Value
1.	Data Element Name	Gender
2.	Reference Id	Defined by the Institution
3.	Variable Name	gender
4.	Description	Gender
5.	Category	Generic
6.	Data Type	Character
7.	Data format	F or M
8.	Maximum Size	1
9.	Validations	Generic Validation
10.	Values	F or M
11.	Default Value	Defined by the Institution
12.	Owner	Defined by the Institution
13.	Based on	Defined by the Institution
14.	Version	Defined by the Institution
15.	Status	Defined by the Institution (Draft or Approved)
16.	Date Agreed	Approved date
17.	Verification	Defined by the Institution
18.	Comments	If any (In Swahili or English)
19.	Date of Publishing	Approved date
20.	Example/Illustration	F
21.	Dependencies	Defined by the Institution

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#### **Address** v.

No.	Item	Value
1.	Data Element Name	Address
2.	Reference Id	Defined by the Institution
3.	Variable Name	address
4.	Description	Address
5.	Category	Generic
6.	Data Type	Text
7.	Data format	Defined by the Institution
8.	Maximum Size	50
9.	Validations	Generic
10.	Values	Characters
11.	Default Value	Defined by the Institution
12.	Owner	Institution/Department
13.	Based on	Defined by the Institution
14.	Version	Defined by the Institution
15.	Status	Defined by the Institution (Draft or Approved)
16.	Date Agreed	Approved date
17.	Verification	Defined by the Institution
18.	Comments	If any (In Swahili or English)
19.	Date of Publishing	Approved date
20.	Example/Illustration	P.O.Box 10866,
		Dar es salaam
		11101
21.	Dependencies	Defined by the Institution
41.	Dependencies	Defined by the institution

#### **Email** vi.

No.	Item	Value
1.	Data Element Name	Email
2.	Reference Id	Defined by the Institution
3.	Variable Name	email
4.	Description	Email

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5.	Category	Generic		
6.	Data Type	varchar		
7.	Data format	user@domain.com		
8.	Maximum Size	50		
9.	Validations	Check that the user has in fact typed in an email		
		address. Validate by using patterns or other method		
10.	Values	user@domain.com		
11.	Default Value	Defined by the Institution		
12.	Owner	Institution/Department		
13.	Based on	Defined by the Institution		
14.	Version	Defined by the Institution		
15.	Status	Defined by the Institution (Draft or Approved)		
16.	Date Agreed	Approved date		
17.	Verification	Defined by the Institution		
18.	Comments	If any (In Swahili or English)		
19.	Date of Publishing	Approved date		
20.	Example/Illustration	first.last@domain.com		
21.	Dependencies	Defined by the Institution		

#### vii. **Phone Number**

No.	Item	Value
1.	Data Element Name	Phone Number
2.	Reference Id	Defined by the Institution
3.	Variable Name	phoneNumber
4.	Description	Phone Number
5.	Category	Generic
6.	Data Type	varchar
7.	Data format	Defined by the Institution
8.	Maximum Size	20
9.	Validations	Confirming that the phone number entered is correct
10.	Values	+ and numeric
11.	Default Value	Null
12.	Owner	Institution/Department
13.	Based on	Defined by the Institution

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14.	Version	Defined by the Institution
15.	Status	Defined by the Institution (Draft or Approved)
16.	Date Agreed	Approved date
17.	Verification	Defined by the Institution
18.	Comments	If any (In Swahili or English)
19.	Date of Publishing	Approved date
20.	Example/Illustration	+255767898989 or 0767898989
21.	Dependencies	Defined by the Institution

#### viii. **Control Number**

No.	Item	Value		
1.	Data Element Name	Control Number		
2.	Reference Id	Defined by the Institution		
3.	Variable Name	controlNo		
4.	Description	Control number is the number from GePG system that		
		is used in the payment process		
5.	Category	Generic		
6.	Data Type	varchar		
7.	Data format	Defined by the Institution		
8.	Maximum Size	15		
9.	Validations	Containing only numbers		
10.	Values	Numeric		
11.	Default Value	Null		
12.	Owner	Ministry of Finance and Planning - GePG		
13.	Based on	Defined by the Institution		
14.	Version	Defined by the Institution		
15.	Status	Defined by the Institution (Draft or Approved)		
16.	Date Agreed	Approved date		
17.	Verification	Defined by the Institution		
18.	Comments	If any (In Swahili or English)		
19.	Date of Publishing	Approved date		
20.	Example/Illustration	991174244405		
21.	Dependencies	Defined by the Institution		

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2.2 THE GUIDELINES

The following are technical guidelines for preparing Data Dictionary:

2.2.1 Defining variable names

In a data collection, a unique identifier for each of the individual items is required,

which is called a variable. The identifier is called a variable because the data it

contains (the data element) can vary depending on the individual record.

In Defining Variable name, a Public Institution should:

i. Ensure that, variable names are easy to use (as in typing) and easy to

remember, but still meaningful. For example, "Prfmc\_Msr\_1a" vs

"PerfMeasure1a." The variable "Prfmc\_Msr\_1a" is difficult to type and you

may have to remember that "Prfmc\_Msr" was an abbreviation for

Performance Measure.

ii. Use descriptive identifiers for variable names. The content of the variable

should be comprehensible without additional documentation

knowledge of the context.

iii. Use short and long names. The short name must be unique and is used as

a column name within the database. The long name describes the variable

more precisely and is usually used in forms as a description field or label.

In addition, help texts as well as detailed variable descriptions can be

presented.

iv. Use prefixes. Prefixes generally support the clarity and unambiguous

identification of a variable within the Data Dictionary. For example, a

variable with form prefix can be directly assigned to the source form, even if

multiple forms are used.

v. Use suffixes. Suffixes should be used when a plurality of descriptive

identifiers are needed for similar variables as part of an enumeration (e.g.,

risk factor\_1, risk factor\_2, etc.). Also, suffixes can be used as references to

data types or units.

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vi. Ensure that, the length of the variable name must be based on current

standards. Please keep in mind possible limitations of the database system

and the analysis software.

vii. Avoid upper case. To avoid problems with the processing of the collected

data across operating system boundaries, use only lower case. Use

lowercase to uppercase: "firstName".

Avoid reserved words. Databases and many other technical systems use

reserved words such as "begin", "date", "table", "system", "name", etc. If these

reserved words are used as variable names, unwanted side effects during

data processing as well as system errors may occur.

ix. Avoid blanks and special characters. Variable names, which contain spaces,

dots and or special characters (e. g. "-", "%", "\$", "\$", "\dagger", "(", ")","?"), already

complicate creating a database, since these characters may be invalid

depending on the database system, and cause system errors. However,

connecting words within a variable name using underscores ("\_") is possible.

x. Enable international dissemination. If possible, use English variable names

to support understanding and usefulness of the variables for international

analyses and publications.

2.2.2 Defining variable characteristics

2.2.2.1 Determining data types

Variables can store different types of information.

Every variable should be represented by basic/required data types: Below

are some of the common types followed by an example usage:

i. Text/String:

Variable: "firstName"

Variable Type: Text

Possible Data Element: "John"

ii. Numeric:

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Variable Name: "age"

Variable Type: Numeric

Possible Data Element(s): 1, 10, 100

#### iii. Date/Time:

Variable Name: "currentDate"

Variable Type: Date (Short)

Possible Data Element: 06/06/2020

#### iv. Boolean (True/False, Yes/No):

Variable Name: "married"

Variable Type: Yes/No

Possible Data Element: 1 = YES, 0 = NO

And etc.

#### 2.2.2.2 Defining ranges of values

Public Institution should:

- i. Ensure that, a valid range of values for each variable is defined to minimize the risk of using implausible values during data collection. The values range must include all realistic values and must not be too narrow.
- ii. If possible, specify the scale of measurement for future quality assurance and analysis.

#### 2.2.2.3 Coding valid values

i. A Public Institution should define coding values clearly and must be extensible and uniform, represent and mutually exclude all possible values. For this purpose, numerical and alphanumeric codes are used. Refer the table below.

objective	Valid values	Coding value
Standard questions	No, Yes	0, 1
Gender	Male, Female	M, F

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#### 2.2.2.4 Specifying units

All units of a variable must be specified unambiguously. Therefore, A Public Institution should consider the following aspects:

- i. Use common units: Measured values should be recorded in different units depending on the context of data. When specifying the unit of a variable, use units from common practice and standards, e.g. international SI units (in the current version as amended).
- ii. Ensure uniformity of the data: If possible, similar variables should be represented in the same units, e.g. size and length data should always be represented in "cm". Avoid varying information such as "%" and "percent".

#### 2.2.2.5 Define variable dependencies

i. A Public Institution should define clearly the dependencies and condition if a variable is only allowed to be used if another variable has a specific value, e.g. Refer the table below.

Variable A	Variable B		Dependencies				
frm1_admission_date	frm1_discha	arge_da	ite	The	discha	arge	date
(admission date)	(discharge	date	from	must	be the	same	or a
	hospital)			later	date	than	the
				admis	ssion da	ate.	

#### 3. IMPLEMENTATION, REVIEW AND ENFORCEMENT

This document shall:

- 3.1 Effective upon being signed by the e-Government Authority Board Chairman
- 3.2 Subjected to review at least once every three years or whenever necessary changes are needed.

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3.3 Any exceptions to compliance with this document should be approved in writing by Board Chairman of e-Government Authority.

#### 4. GLOSSARY AND ACRONYMS

#### 4.1 Glossary

None

#### **Acronyms** 4.2

Abbreviation **Explanation** 

e-GA e-Government Authority

**ICT** Information and Communication Technology

#### 5. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- e-Government Information Architecture Standards and Technical 5.1. guidelines (eGA/EXT/IRA/001).
- e-Government Guideline (PO-PSM, 2017). 5.2.

#### 6. DOCUMENT CONTROL

Version	Name	Comment	Date
Ver. 1.0	e-GA	Creation of Document	July 2021

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# **APPENDIX**

# **Data Dictionary Template**

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THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA		
Applicable Public Institution < <insert institution<="" name="" of="" th="" the=""><th>Document Title Data Dictionary</th></insert>	Document Title Data Dictionary	
<b>&gt;&gt;</b>	Document Number	
	< <insert code="" document="" own="" reference="" your="">&gt;</insert>	

PPROVAL	Name	Job Title/ Role	Signature	Date
Approved by	< <name ao="" of="">&gt;</name>	< <title ceo="" e.g.="">&gt;&lt;/td&gt;&lt;td&gt;&lt;&lt;Signature&gt;&gt;&lt;/td&gt;&lt;td&gt;&lt;&lt;Date&gt;&gt;&lt;/td&gt;&lt;/tr&gt;&lt;/tbody&gt;&lt;/table&gt;</title>		

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Owner: << Responsible Section>>

Number: <<Insert your own document reference code>>

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Overview

Data Dictionary is a collection of names, definitions, and attributes about data elements that are being used or captured in a database, information system, or part of a research project. It describes the meanings and purposes of data elements within the context of a project, and provides guidance on interpretation, accepted meanings and representation, as well as provides metadata about data elements. The metadata included in a Data Dictionary can assist in defining the scope and characteristics of data elements, as well the rules for their usage and application.

#### 1.2. Rationale

<< Include the name of the institution >> need to ensure consistency in the collection and use of data across multiple operations, make data easier to analyze and enforce the use of data standards. In this regard, it is evident that, << include the name of the institution >> required to develop and operationalize comprehensive data dictionary as a reference during the development and maintenance of a new database, so that they are all working using the same data formats when reading or writing data.

#### 1.3. **Purpose**

The main purpose of the data dictionary is to provide metadata, or information about data. Technically, it is a << include the name of the institution >> database about a database that provide a concise guide to understanding and using the data.

#### 1.4. Scope

This data dictionary will be applicable to all << include the name of the institution >> business operations and other Public Institutions that will require data sharing with << include the name of the institution >>.

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#### 2. DATA DICTIONARY

## 2.1. Category1 of information (e.g. Personal Information)

No.	Item	Value
1.	Data Element Name	
2.	Reference Id	
3.	Variable Name	
4.	Description	
5.	Category	
6.	Data Type	
7.	Data format	
8.	Maximum Size	
9.	Validations	
10.	Acceptable Values	
11.	Default Value	
12.	Owner	
13.	Based on	
14.	Version	
15.	Status	
16.	Date Agreed	
17.	Verification	
18.	Comments	
19.	Date of Publishing	
20.	Example/Illustration	
21.	Dependencies	

### 2.2. Category2 of information (e.g. Financial Information)

No.	Item	Value
1.	Data Element Name	
2.	Reference Id	
3.	Variable Name	
4.	Description	
5.	Category	
6.	Data Type	
7.	Data format	

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8.	Maximum Size	
9.	Validations	
10.	Acceptable Values	
11.	Default Value	
12.	Owner	
13.	Based on	
14.	Version	
15.	Status	
16.	Date Agreed	
17.	Verification	
18.	Comments	
19.	Date of Publishing	
20.	Example/Illustration	
21.	Dependencies	

#### 3. IMPLEMENTATION, REVIEWS AND ENFORCEMENT

#### 3.1. Implementation and Reviews

- 3.1.1. This document will become operational after being reviewed by << include the name of the institution >> management in official meeting and then signed for approval by << Acounting Officer >>. Any subsequent changes will be accommodated after being reviewed and agreed by management and approved by << Acounting Officer >>.
- 3.1.2. This document will be subjected to review at least once every year or whenever necessary changes are needed.

#### 3.2. Exceptions

3.2.1. In case of any exceptions to this data dictionary, it shall be thoroughly documented and follow through a proper channel of authorization using the same authority which approved this document.

#### 4. GROSSARY AND ACRONYMS

#### 4.1. Glossary

#### 4.2. Acronyms

#### **5. RELATED DOCUMENTS**

- Institutional Data Dictionary Standards and Guidelines (eGA/EXT/IFA/002). 5.1.
- e-Government Act No 10, of 2020. 5.2.

#### 6. DOCUMENT CONTROL

VERSION	NAME	COMMENT	DATE
Ver. 1.0	Responsible Section	< <what been="" done="" has="">&gt;</what>	< <date>&gt;</date>

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