ID DAY
A PRACTICAL GUIDE

2024 THEME: CELEBRATING THE RIGHT TO BE VISIBLE

BECAUSE EVERYONE DESERVES AN IDENTITY
IDENTITY DESERVES A DAY

ABOUT THE ID DAY PRACTICAL GUIDE

The Identity Day (ID Day) Practical Guide is a reference manual on how to conduct a successful ID Day commemoration/recognition campaign in your country. It also provides information about the history of the ID Day campaign, how and why to commemorate, and suggests activities as well as tips for advocating official adoption.

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ABOUT IDENTITY DAY

What is the IDENTITY DAY CAMPAIGN?

The Identity Day (ID Day) Campaign is the ongoing Call for government authorities in all countries worldwide to officially recognize 16 September as Identity Day.

Why IDENTITY DAY?

Having proof of one's identity is a fundamental human right, and a practical necessity, especially in the context of this modern digital age. Very few social constructs play as foundational a role in our lives as personal identity, yet the world does not commemorate it. Through a dedicated commemorative day, we hope to promote a responsible narrative about the most important human asset – our legal identity.

ID DAY TERMINOLOGY

1 *In this document, 'identity' and 'proof of identification' are used interchangeably.*

2 *The following terminology is encouraged when referring to 16 September: "ID Day", "Identity Day", "National Day of Identity" or "International Day of Identity", depending on the context of the country or the community. The formulation "National Identity Day" is not recommended, as it risks creating an association of the day with National Identity (NID) schemes or giving some nationalistic connotations. 16 September is a day to commemorate identity at a national level, which is different from a day to commemorate national identity. When several nations commemorate a National Day of Identity together on 16 September, it becomes "International Identity Day".*

Why 16 SEPTEMBER?

What is the significance of the date?

The choice of the date 16 September (16.9) is highly symbolic. It is in commemoration of the UN Sustainable Development Goal 16.9 which calls for the provision of legal identity for all by 2030, including birth registration.

What DO WE COMMEMORATE on ID Day?

Identity Day is a moment for us to pause and reflect on three (3) fundamentals in identity:

INCLUSION – ID Day sensitizes us to the plight of those who lack proof of identity (estimated at 850 million, with about half in Africa) and reaffirms our commitment to achieving total inclusion, so that no one is left behind.

PROTECTION – ID Day is a reminder, for those who have proof of identity, to verify that their identity is secured against theft and their privacy is protected. It reaffirms that protecting our most valuable asset is an ongoing concern.

EMPOWERMENT – ID Day is also the opportunity for those who possess identification, to assess whether they are reaping the highest returns on their identity by asking how well their identity can be used to empower them and facilitate various aspects of daily life. It is the ideal occasion to call on service providers to adopt identity-enabled service delivery.

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Why does
IDENTITY DAY MATTER?

Identity Day is an opportunity for the leadership of a country to mobilize the population, create dialogue and raise awareness about the importance of identity in general and the following three critical dimensions, specifically: **Inclusion, Protection, Empowerment.**

INCLUSION

It is estimated that several hundred million people in Africa continue to lack proof of identification[1]. In an increasingly digital world, where the ability to prove one's identity is essential for survival, these "invisibles" are among the most vulnerable. Without identification, they are unable to fully participate in society. Inclusion for these individuals is a crucial first step to gaining access to the formal economy and basic entitlements and services such as healthcare, formal education, and social benefits.

The benefits of inclusion extend beyond the individual to the country level. Comprehensive inclusion enables governments to design and implement more effective economic and social policies that increase efficiency and improve governance. ID Day serves as a call to achieve total inclusion, promoting both individual development and national growth.

PROTECTION

While invisibility is a serious problem most encountered in developing economies, it is not the only identity problem that requires urgent rectification. Equally pressing is the issue of identity theft, which, at this stage in time, predominantly affects individuals in developed economies. Identity theft occurs when a person's identity is stolen by malicious actors, leading to severe financial and emotional consequences. The statistics are alarming and the consequences are staggering[2].

There is an urgent need to remind the population to adopt cautious practices to protect their identity and to encourage government to put in place tools to facilitate the recovery and rehabilitation of identity for victims. Additionally, identity data must be secured and managed with robust consent-based controls to ensure individuals' privacy is protected from abuse by any actors, including government agencies. Individuals should feel confident that their identity serves them without fear of misuse by governments, other agencies, or individuals.

ID Day is an opportunity to highlight the critical issue of identity security and to remind everyone not to take their proof of identity for granted. ID Day reaffirms that protecting our most valuable asset is an ongoing concern, transcending specific economies or regions. It is a worldwide matter that requires collective awareness and action.

EMPOWERMENT

We recognize the power of identity when it simplifies our daily lives and enables us to do more. While inclusion is the first step towards full participation in a modern economy, it is not enough on its own. Identity-enabled services must be developed and be readily available to everyone who desires them. Additionally, individuals need to be educated and informed about how they can use identity to empower their daily lives.

ID Day is an opportunity for individuals to evaluate how effectively their identity empowers them. It is also a chance to advocate for greater adoption of secure and efficient identity-enabled service delivery by service providers. Identity is useful only if it is used.

Inclusion, Protection and Empowerment are not isolated but interconnected issues. ID Day seeks to encourage dialogue and action around these axes so that identity for all can become a reality, that identity does truly empower and is protected.

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[1] *See World Bank article: https://blogs.worldbank.org/en/digital-development/850-million-people-globally-dont-have-id-why-matters-and-what-we-can-do-about*

[2] *Approximately 15 million people in the United States fall victim to identity theft annually. Additionally, studies indicate that 33% of the U.S. population has experienced identity theft at some point, and one out of five people in the European Union have also been affected by this growing menace. Overall, it is estimated that identity theft has impacted a billion people worldwide. Studies demonstrate that in the USA alone, $50 Billion is lost annually to this type of identity problem. See https://fortunly.com/statistics/identity-theft-statistics/ (retrieved 20 June 2024), and the extensive references cited therein.*

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THE JOURNEY THUS FAR

When was **THE CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED?** Who launched it?

The Call for identity to have a day of observance was initiated by ID4Africa* at its 4th Annual Meeting of the ID4Africa Movement on 24 April 2018, in Abuja, Nigeria. The Call was enthusiastically received by the global identity stakeholder community, who saw in this initiative a rallying cry to actively acknowledge the importance of SDG 16.9 and to keep countries focused on its achievement.

**Learn more about ID4Africa at the end of this document*

Who else **IS SUPPORTING THE CALL?**

Nearly 250 international organizations, namely development agencies, government, non-profits and institutions of public interest, such as civil society organizations, support the call as **Coalition Partners**.

Becoming a Coalition Partner is not a legal commitment. It is an effective way for an organization to publicly declare its support and commitment to the Initiative calling for the recognition of 16 September as Identity Day.

CREATING AWARENESS TO DRIVE DEMAND

In many countries, identity coverage continues to be less than optimal partly because individuals are unaware of the transformative power of having access to identity. Identity Day is the perfect opportunity to create awareness that drives demand for identity, including digital.

Scan to watch an interview with Dr. Joseph Atick introducing the significance of Identity Day after its launch in 2018, Abuja, Nigeria. Or visit: www.youtu.be/gMxsYkLAZVM?t=29

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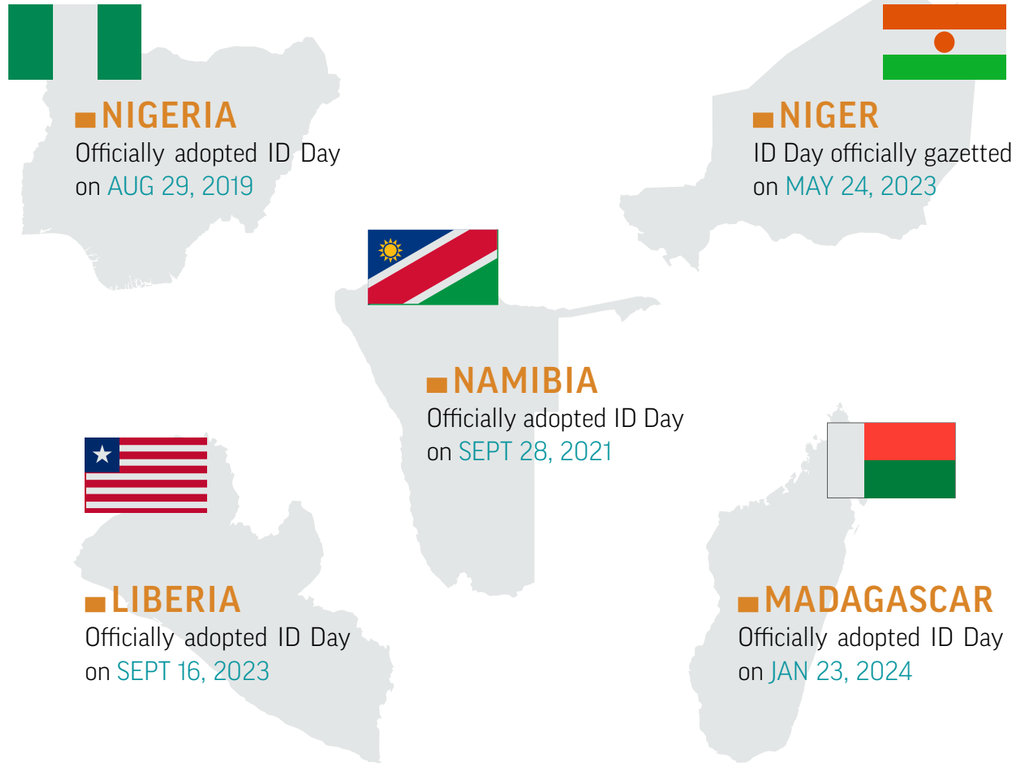
Have any countries **OFFICIALLY ADOPTED 16 SEPTEMBER AS IDENTITY DAY?**

Nigeria, Namibia, Niger, Liberia and Madagascar have officially declared 16 September as their National Day of Identity. Several other African countries are currently in the process of formally adopting the Day.

Will ID Day **BE BROUGHT FOR A VOTE** at the UN General Assembly?

Yes, while the ultimate objective is to secure a formal UN General Assembly resolution which formally designates 16 September as the globally recognized Identity Day, we are not actively pursuing a vote at this stage. The current goal is to inspire countries to officially adopt 16 September as ID Day, and to encourage these countries, along with the international community, to promote awareness and understanding of how identity can empower people and how it should be integrated within the constructs of a modern society respectful of human rights. We believe the journey towards ID Day adoption is arguably more important than the destination.



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RECOGNIZING IDENTITY DAY

KEY ACTORS

The journey towards advancing the Call of Identity Day may be different depending on the local context. Typically, however, this would involve the active engagement of various actors whose roles are described below:

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES*

**A detailed document speciafically designed to guide government agencies and line ministries in charge of identity in their campaign to seek official national recognition of the day in their country is available from ID4Africa. Please consult that document for more details. For a copy of this document, please send an e-mail to: contact@id4africa.com.*

DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES

- Encourage government authorities to officially recognize 16 September as ID Day
- Represent a source of evidence for the positive impact of identity in society
- Provide financial support to commemorate the Day
- Join the ID Day Coalition*

**Key development agencies are currently members of the ID Day Coalition and continue to support the Call.*

NGOS, CIVIL SOCIETY AND COMMERCIAL ENTITIES

- Promote the legal rights of persons to proof of identification and privacy
- Sensitize & educate constituents
- Support national ID Day efforts
- Campaign alongside governments to promote the message that identity matters
- Ensure that the interest of vulnerable populations is part of the national narrative
- Organize activities to celebrate the Day
- Join the ID Day Coalition

INDIVIDUALS

- Play an important role in influencing constituency representatives to support the Call for the recognition of Identity Day
- Actively join others and support ID Day celebrations whether physically or virtually, such as through social media
- Become a “Friend of the Coalition”

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COMMEMORATING ID DAY

While official recognition of ID Day is of paramount importance, it is essential to celebrate it even before it is officially proclaimed in your country. In 2023, over 28 countries commemorated the day through various awareness-building activities on or around 16 September despite not yet having formal recognition. See what took place in this exciting video: https://youtu.be/qNrNzrEVARE?si=hf8ilaUkd7gtOu-C.

Scan to watch ID Day 2023 highlights

What follows are helpful guidelines and suggested ideas we derived from the first 5 years of our advocacy for the Day.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES
for Organizing Successful ID Day Commemorations

When planning activities for Identity Day, we recommend keeping the following principles in mind in order to ensure your celebrations remain true to the spirit of the Day.

1 Establish a national steering committee for the Day. It is recommended to identify and invite representatives from diverse identity stakeholders in your country, including the private sector, NGOs, civil society, etc., to join the steering committee. This will give the commemorations and celebrations a more inclusive character, and with combined resources, can increase the impact and visibility of events.

2 Focus activities on building awareness about identity across all sectors of society – the important role it plays in society, and the importance of having it and protecting it.

3 Organize people-centric activities that highlight human and legal rights and that prioritize people's needs.

4 Be opportunistic in forging partnerships and collaborations with other agencies, civil society and NGOs.

5 Seek sponsorships from private sector and commercial entities. However, be careful to avoid giving the impression that ID Day is driven by commercial interests. Sponsors should accept that ID Day is about recognizing a human right and that it is not intended for commercial gains.

6 Focus on inclusivity across all sectors of society, gender groups, ages, income groups, special needs, etc. Ideally, we recommend that you make your content and events accessible through sign language, braille, local dialects, etc. Identity is universal as should be your efforts to bring everyone together.

7 Invite political leadership to your events, both government and opposition representatives. Emphasize the non-political nature of ID Day.

8 Engage the media. Prepare media kits and invite media outlet representatives to attend.

9 Seek visible participation and endorsement from social media influencers, sports figures, religious and community leaders, actors, musicians, and respected celebrities in general.

10 Be prepared to provide factual responses to inquiries about the identity gap in your country, the ongoing progress being made and the significance of identity in your nation's modernizing efforts.

11 Create incentives that would attract public participation (such as offering food, refreshments, entertainment, giveaways, raffles, etc.)

12 Maintain flexibility in terms of the nature and format of your celebration(s) but set the expectation that the country will commemorate ID Day annually.

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SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

Below are a few activities that have been conducted in various countries to commemorate ID Day. These examples are intended to show what can be done and help spark fresh new ideas. However, they should not be viewed as a standard one-size-fits-all template. It is expected that local constraints and contexts will determine the precise form of celebration(s) most appropriate for individual countries.

Please Note: Activities are not restricted to 16 September. They can be carried out before, on or even soon after the Day. Some countries even opt for organizing an entire week of activities.

1. MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

- Organize media interviews (TV, radio) to raise awareness
- Issue press releases to the media at least 1 day prior to 16 September inviting them to attend your festivities
- Prepare and share media kits and articles highlighting the positive impact of identity on people's lives
- Carry out social media campaigns (Live YouTube/ Facebook/ Instagram events, post commemorative messages, start a threads discussion or tweetstorm etc). Expect to start posting at least 2 weeks in advance with reminders and announcements of what will be expected on the Day
- Produce content (videos, public service announcements, adverts, flyers, posters etc.) for sharing in offices, schools, bulletin boards, television, radio, social media, etc.
- Produce podcasts focused on the importance of Identity and ID Day

2. PUBLIC EVENTS

- Official ceremonies (national level, ministry level, etc)
- Public speeches by local, regional, national and international leaders
- Special awards to recognize community champions of Identity
- Cultural performances that highlight the identity diversity of your country
- Concerts, fairs, music and film festivals
- Sporting events such as marathons, tournaments, etc.
- Parades and marches

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3. SPECIAL ALLOWANCES AND PRIVILEGES

- Deploy mobile registration teams to areas in need to boost enrollment and/or to strategic locations to boost awareness.
- Waive or lower fees for registration, replacement of lost or damaged ID cards, obtaining birth certificates, etc.
- Encourage private sector groups to offer ID Day sales on goods and services and promote the concept of these types of sales.
- Have mobile operators send out a mass text message to their subscribers wishing everyone a Happy Identity Day.

4. EDUCATIONAL EVENTS

- Have employees of identity stakeholders visit as many schools as possible throughout the country to educate students about identity, its role in society and the importance of registration and protecting identity.
- Organize key stakeholder gatherings.
- Organize workshops, seminars, public lectures to stimulate debate and dialogue around your nation's identification priorities.

5. CONTESTS

Organize creative contests to stimulate artistic expression about identity (writing, music, film, art, poetry, etc.). These events provide excellent opportunities to partner with private sector organizations willing to support through sponsorship. Assembling a panel of judges to select the winners will allow for dynamic engagement from various groups within society.

If you need guidance with organising your ID Day event, please contact us at: contact@id-day.org

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The ID Day Resources and Activities page on the Identity Day website (www.id-day.org) provides downloadable information and an archive of past activities conducted to commemorate 16 September as ID Day. As you celebrate ID Day, we invite you to share photos and videos of your activities with us. Your active contributions will not only help enrich the Activities page but inspire others to participate and do the same.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Scan the QR codes below or visit: www.id-day.org/

ID DAY RESOURCES

PRIOR ID DAY ACTIVITIES

TO SHARE YOUR ACTIVITIES WITH US

Please email: contact@id-day.org

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ABOUT ID4AFRICA

Founded in 2014, ID4Africa is an Identity-for-All Movement dedicated to helping African nations develop robust and responsible identity ecosystems for socio-economic and digital development, and humanitarian action. Our primary objective is to build and nurture the identity community in Africa by providing a trustworthy platform for knowledge exchange, strategic capacity-building and collaboration, to ultimately assist nations in making informed decisions while respecting their national sovereignty. To do so, we assess Africa's needs and priorities through ongoing engagements with our member countries; we source responsive expertise and experiences; and we curate these findings into trustworthy knowledge that is disseminated through our convening platforms (AGMs, LiveCasts, etc.).

ID4Africa serves as the voice of Africa on identity matters, ensuring that the Continent's needs and realities are well represented in the global discourse on development. Moreover, the Movement champions Identity-for-All, both as a legal right (consistent with SDG 16.9) and a practical necessity for empowering people in their daily lives. The Movement believes inclusive identity schemes built on the respect of human rights and privacy are crucial for economic growth and for digital development.

Currently, ID4Africa has 48 member countries, with membership open exclusively to African nations. While membership is free of charge, it requires an official commitment to the mission of the Movement through the establishment of an Ambassadors Bureau comprising of a number of representatives. The Bureaus act as liaisons between ID4Africa and their governments, and provide governance through the ID4Africa Council.

MORE INFORMATION AT

www.id4africa.com

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