



Designing Effective Digital IDs: Lessons from India's Aadhaar

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J-PAL and DigiFI: What do we do?

- Research organisation.
- Support government and other implementer to inform policy with scientific evidence to improve lives.
- Fund impact evaluation studies.
- Use the results to help design policies.
- DigiFI focuses on digital IDs across Africa.

J-PAL's Nobel Laureates 2019:

Abhijit Banerjee, Esther Duflo, Michael Kremer



The Great Digital ID Debate

Digital IDs have cost people their privacy - and their lives.

Digital IDs saved over Rs 2 lakh crore by eliminating fake IDs

Digital IDs and food security: Pain without gain?

Digital IDs is one of the measures to tackle corruption, black money

Digital IDs verdict: Why privacy still remains a central challenge.



Digital IDs - a huge success story

The Value-Add of Impact Evaluations



What is actually happening on the ground?
Measuring causal impact. E.g. ID enabled verification saved \$XX million for government.



Big picture impact. Winners and losers. Magnitudes.
Efficacy of massive investments.



What design features can maximise benefits and
minimise negative effects.

7 Lessons from India's Experience integrating Aadhaar into welfare programs

Integrating Biometric Authentication in India's Welfare Programs: Lessons from a Decade of Reforms



Karthik Muralidharan
University of
California San Diego



Paul Niehaus
University of
California San Diego



Sandip Sukhtankar
University of Virginia

Lesson 1. Ask 3 questions to assess the need for linking digital IDs

- A. Are there substantial issues that digital IDs are well-suited to solve?
- B. What is the severity of the risk to the population being served?
- C. What mechanisms are in place to mitigate these risks?

2. Focus on the consumer, savings will follow.

3. Build fallback options.

- Frequency
- Burden of deletion

4. Invest in building trust between the government and civil society.

- Acknowledgement
- Transparent data collection and reporting

5. Adapt: Build in measures to evaluate beneficiary experiences, and adapt to the findings.

6. Differentiate between “teething problems” and design flaws.

7. Speak a common language: Match survey and admin data to differentiate between exclusion and leakages, and for political economy reasons.

From India to Africa

Liberia

- Ministry of Gender, Children & Social Protection
- How best to enroll beneficiaries of digital IDs with biometrics to reduce exclusion?



Uganda

- The National Identification & Registration Authority
- How to increase take-up of the national ID?
- What are the best ways to increase birth registrations?



Research Funding Opportunities

Proposal Development

Up to \$15,000

Exploratory work related to preliminary research ideas

Pilot & monitoring systems

Up to \$75,000

Clear research question, but design and implementation requires further testing

Full randomised evaluation

Up to \$400,000

Policy Outreach Grants

Up to \$10,000

Disseminate research results to policymakers & study participants

Thank you!

Our team is here, we would love to engage!



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