

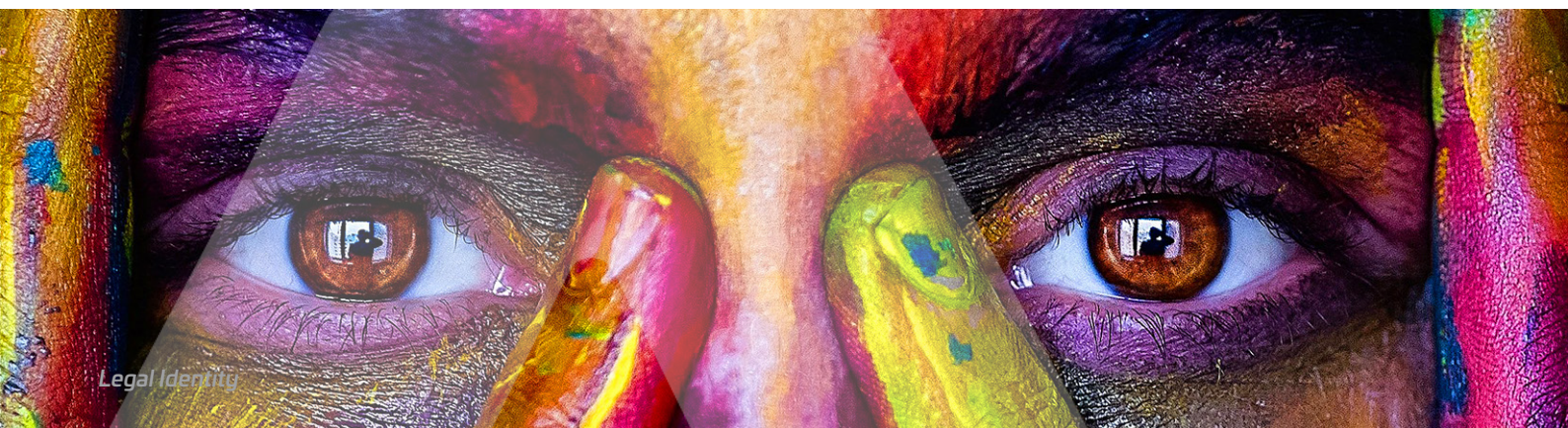
Win the support of the population

For a single legal identity system to be relevant, the whole population needs to be registered. People do not always endorse the initiative and tend not to take the necessary steps to get a new identity. This is one of the first obstacles to overcome.

A lack of interest explained by different reasons

- 1. The registration process is not properly understood.** This means communication to the public around the benefits of registration is insufficient, inadequate or ineffective. In Cameroon, a misunderstanding hindered birth registration: young mothers thought the birth certificate issued by the doctor was the baby's identity document. They did not think necessary to declare their babies to the Civil Registry ¹.
- 2. Tangible benefits of registration are not perceived.** The communication was only focused on the fact that registration was compulsory. It failed to provide details about the advantages and services a single identity entails for citizens.
- 3. There was no direct incentives to register.** The process of registering has a cost for individuals: they have to travel, interrupt their work... If not compensated by immediate benefits (tied or not to registration), it will be shunned by the poor.
- 4. Registering is not cost effective enough.** The Project communication must enhance the advantages of registration, and these must be specific and real (access to financial bonuses, to medical services, to education or even banking services, easier travels, etc.). In a report on «The States of Identification Systems in Africa», the World Bank expresses the view that «Costs to the user are the most consistently observed barrier to civil registration and identification». This is true whether considering direct costs (most notably the cost of late birth registration, or request of a duplicate identity document) or indirect costs (absence from work, travel, etc.).
- 5. The document people receive at the end of the single legal identity registration (whether digital or material) is of no immediate use:** the services it entitles bearer to access have not been deployed yet, or they can be accessed without the document.

¹This misunderstanding was spotted by Thales during an official mission in Cameroon, aimed at measuring obstacles hindering registration.



Thales' vision

Single legal identity raises issues that citizens have to make their own. People must reap **both instant and long-term benefits** from it. Owning the document delivered to certify this identity has to be essential for all citizens in the short term.

These issues are human and material in nature; they're not technical. The solutions aimed at tackling them must be devised on a human and organisational level. This is not about coercing people into adopting the new standard. This is about showing every individual the benefits they can expect from it (access to social services, healthcare, education, banking services, less fraud and corruption, etc.) in order to win their support.

Use cases and good practices

- In 2018, an «International Identity Day», or ID-Day, was created, to be celebrated every September 16 (in reference to the UN's Sustainable Development Goal 16.9, aiming at providing legal identity for all by 2030). International Identity Day helps raise awareness and assert the importance of legal identity issues. Many countries, organisations and companies have joined the movement. **But Nigeria was the first country to name September 16 «National Identity Day», with events organised on that day to raise citizen's awareness.**
- **India's Aadhaar program**, launched in 2010, aims at assigning each citizen a single identification number linked with biometric data (fingerprints, retinal scan, photography). The process was mandatory to access medical care, social assistance and banking services. **In the course of six years, more than 1.1 billion digital identities have been created.** An impressively fast process which produced results (in 2010, of the 60 billion dollars distributed each year to the poorest, 80 % were diverted), but still raised data protection concerns.
- In some countries, in order to incentivise young mothers to register their children, the registration process is coupled with the distribution of infant formula or soap.
- **The World Bank's «#EveryID has a Story» campaign provides a concrete illustration of what legal identity actually means for people.** However, its exclusive broadcast on YouTube limits its impact.

To know more

Sheet # 2: Non-accessibility and exclusion

Sheet # 3: The lack of a favourable and reassuring ecosystem

Statement Paper: The benefits of a Unique Legal Identity for Nations and Populations: a vision from Thales

<https://www.thalesgroup.com/en/markets/digital-identity-and-security/government/inspired/legal-identity>

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