

Digital ID: A key to inclusive growth

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Talking Points

- *Definition
- *The Mobile Advantage
- *Enhancing Trust 4D
- *Enabling smart living
- *Advancing Digital Economy
- *Promoting financial and social inclusivity
- *Recommendations

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Definition

DI (Digital ID) is the aggregate of online data held by a 3rd party about an entity...

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The Mobile Advantage

GSMA predicts that Africa will have 120 million new mobile subscribers by 2025, taking the total number of subscribers to 615 million (50% of the region's population). It is currently around 46%.

The growth will be made possible by maturing youths. DI would enable an inclusive economic gain.

Leading mobile user countries in Africa with active DI regimes like Nigeria, South Africa, Egypt and Kenya among others have the potential to boost their GDP by up to 8% according to the UNECA CD4IR report 2022.

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Enhancing Trust 4D

When Government services are built around a sound Institutional framework for DI, trust is enhanced and the result is the reduction in the cost of enrolment of new citizens thereby boosting economic growth as hitherto unproductive resources are released for productive use.

Such development also reduces risks - which at times could be fatal to citizens continuous economic participation.

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Enabling smart living

Currently, 54% of the world live in cities and it is projected to rise to 66% by 2050. For accelerated use of public utilities (e.g. transportation), eCommerce purchases and delivery services DI would be imperative just as much in the city as in the rural areas.

A good DI regime could foster a slow-down in the rural-urban drift as entity engagement become seamless.

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*Advancing Digital Economy

The digital economy powered by increasing Internet penetration is the backbone of DI regime. DI drives inclusive growth considering that about 1.7 billion people worldwide are financially disenfranchised due to lack of provable identity. Imagine if that number is drastically reduced, the value on the digital economy would be higher.

So, providing access to DI would enhance digital engagement between government / service providers and the citizens thereby advancing digital economy.

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Promoting financial and social inclusivity

Financial institutions (e.g. Banks) and private institutions would not risk lending or engaging with people who could not digitally prove who they are. Meaning such people would be excluded from opportunities in the society.

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Recommendations

African countries need to focus on Digital ID portability to enhance trade across the AfCFTA. Such DI coded in QR code from trusted entities and carried by people could go along way to fasttrack inclusivity within countries and across Africa.

DI promotes efficient G2C, C2G, B2B, B2C & C2B, B2G & G2B interaction thereby promoting data driven research for increased economic productivity that help not just the government but enterprises as well with the potential for the creation of millions of more jobs.

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Recommendations

UNECA report 2022 on Cybersecurity for Development in the 4th Industrial Revolution (CD4IR) showed the cross-cutting nature of cybersecurity and its connection to GDP growth. Pls see www.cd4ir for details.

As such, assuring the security of personal data is of critical essence and signing and implementing the Malabo Convention is a positive demonstration of commitment to the security/protection of citizen's personal data.

The background is a dark blue digital space. On the left, a large white fingerprint is centered within a circular interface that has a glowing white ring and a segmented outer border. To the right of the fingerprint, there are several layers of digital elements: a green waveform, a grid of small squares, and lines of binary code (0s and 1s). The overall aesthetic is high-tech and data-oriented.

Thank you for listening...