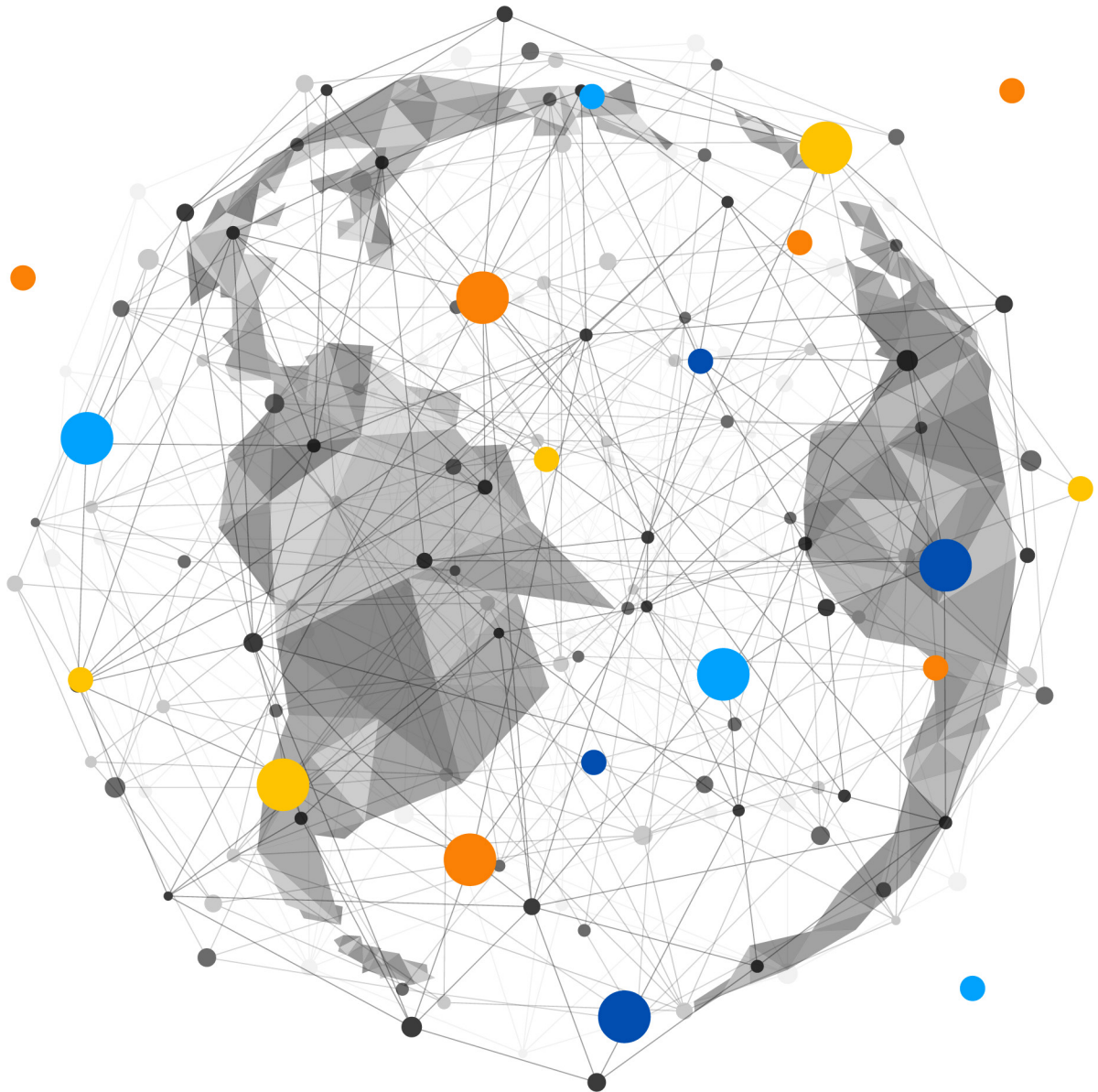




MOSIP



MOSIP Country Engagement Principles



The Importance of a Principles-Based Identity System

There has been growing recognition that legal identity forms the first step in securing a person's status before the law, their rights, and any consequent violation of these rights. Without a legal identity, you cannot prove who you are. You may be denied healthcare or education, access to jobs, or social safety nets. In recognition of the fact that around 850 million people globally lack formal identity, the UN Sustainable Development Goal 16.9 states, "By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration".

On the other hand, historically, governments have wielded significant power in issuing formal credentials – the power to define what qualities constitute proof of identity, and the power to accept or reject a person's identity claims. Now, this power has expanded to other institutions as well, including private companies and international organisations.

Because technology serves as an exceptional amplifier for both positive and harmful efforts, digital identity systems have the potential to significantly accelerate access to formal identity and enable more inclusive and equal participation in the digital economy. It can also work to concentrate power in the hands of identity issuers. It is critical, therefore, to ensure that 'good' ID is adopted by governments and service providers: **ID that empowers individuals to get the benefits of formal identity, while ensuring adequate safeguards against misuse.**



How we understand Good ID

MOSIP is a modular, open-source platform that countries and other ID-issuing organisations can adopt and customise to their requirements. MOSIP was envisaged to provide an open-source solution to tackle problems related to digital identity systems, particularly that of closed, proprietary technology and consequent vendor lock-in. It has been created as a core component of a nation's Digital Public Infrastructure – a base for foundational digital identity systems that enable the issuer to accelerate progress towards a digital economy where everyone can participate equally. To make this a reality, a few key enablers need to be in place:

- A legal and governance framework for digital ID that is designed to be inclusive and to prioritise users' control over their information
- Transparency and participation in the decision-making process
- A system that prioritises privacy and user control, is secure and uses open standards

Our understanding of these issues has come a long way in the past decade, and will continue to evolve, particularly with changing technologies. **This document sets out the current approach and framework principles under which MOSIP will operate, to contribute to the adoption of good ID to the best of its ability.**

While it is the government of a country that is the ultimate decision-maker on these aspects of an identity system, the MOSIP platform, designed as the core of foundational identity systems, fully supports, enables, and encourages the implementation of critical principles related to good ID.



As a starting point, MOSIP endorses, and works actively to implement the Principles on Identification for Sustainable Development, that set out a path to creating an inclusive, user-centric and secure identity system. These principles have been backed by a wide-ranging group of organisations, including the ADB, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Center for Global Development, Mastercard, Secure Identity Alliance, GSMA, UNHCR, UNDP, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, and the World Bank Group.

Principles

Inclusion Universal Coverage and Accessibility	Design Robust, Secure, Responsive, and Sustainable	Governance Building Trust by Protecting Privacy and User Rights
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring universal coverage for individuals from birth to death, free from discrimination. • Removing barriers to access and usage and disparities in the availability of information and technology. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing a robust, unique, secure, and accurate identity. • Creating a platform that is interoperable and responsive to the needs of various users. • Using open standards and ensuring vendor and technology neutrality. • Protecting user privacy and control through system design. • Planning for financial and operational sustainability without compromising accessibility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding data privacy, security, and user rights through a comprehensive legal and regulatory framework. • Establishing clear institutional mandates and accountability. • Enforcing legal and trust frameworks through independent oversight and adjudication of grievances.



How we implement Good ID

Inclusion

Specifically, MOSIP helps ensure universal coverage by making it easier to include people in difficult-to-access areas. It works both online and offline, reducing the burden of network requirements.

MOSIP has a range of options with regards to what information is required to enrol or authenticate; it enables a government to design for inclusion, keeping in mind the technological and informational challenges faced by its people.

The MOSIP platform not only has the ability to de-duplicate enrollments based on biometric capture, but also allows for traditional methods of offline authentication through a physical identity card with demographic information and photographs.

MOSIP's use is not intrinsically linked to any one form of identity verification, and the fundamental principle of keeping the individual in control of their identity should guide countries in making the best choices for their own domestic contexts. MOSIP has and will continue to create best practices and a knowledge bank on how the platform can be customised to ensure maximum coverage and non-discrimination.



Design

MOSIP addresses user privacy with a consent framework that lets the individual user choose what to share and when. It is transparent, lets the user know what they have shared and when, and also allows the user to lock authentication features that they wish to restrict. From a security perspective, all Personal Identifiable Information (PII) is encrypted both in flight and at rest, and is inaccessible to internal and external parties without user consent. All flow of such information is in trusted environments only.

MOSIP is an open-source platform, and embraces open standards, giving it the potential to develop in new directions and evolve to meet new challenges. In addition, competition is encouraged when a vendor-neutral, open platform is adopted as the core of an identity solution. This helps bring down country costs and addresses the question of financial sustainability.



Beyond Technology

The core technology powering the infrastructure is only one aspect of a good ID system. Strong governance frameworks and a policy-making approach that engenders trust are also critical elements, and the success of digital identity systems in countries that adopt MOSIP rests on getting these elements right.

A Strong Legal and Governance Framework

MOSIP strongly believes that any effective and long-lasting identity system puts the individual's rights and needs at the centre of the overall system and processes. In particular, privacy by design principles, and robust enforcement mechanisms should be incorporated not only in the technical system but in the rules governing every partner and public or private agency involved. The most challenging task for a country looking to adopt an effective and inclusive foundational identity system is to ensure that law and policy move in tandem with the technology.

In particular, governments and other ID issuers should take into consideration the following aspects:

- Robust data protection frameworks, including rules for limited data collection
- User control over data enshrined in the law, including opt-out mechanisms and notice requirements
- Inclusiveness, including user choice on whether to enrol or use digital ID
- Effective grievance redressal mechanisms



Adopting a Participatory Approach and Building Trust

Many developing countries have initiated digital identity programmes in the last decade, but in many of these attempts, adoption has been low (McKinsey Digital Identity Report, 2019). While reasons may vary, a recurring theme has been the lack of trust in a new ID system – an element that, when missing, poses the risk of derailing identity programmes entirely.

MOSIP encourages governments and other ID issuers to adopt a transparent and participatory approach when making decisions about their identity systems. Open-source solutions such as MOSIP carry with them an ethos of visibility into decision-making, receptiveness to criticism, and engagement with diverse voices that we hope will carry through to the implementation of MOSIP-based systems as well.

MOSIP will be used in a number of different countries and situations. Governments, international and regional organisations, civil society, open-source developers, and businesses will all play different roles in the implementation and use of MOSIP. MOSIP wants to work with countries to ensure that ID programmes are inclusive, safe, empowering to individuals, and set examples for the rest of the world.

MOSIP will adopt the approach outlined above both in the development of the platform as well as in our engagement with potential partners.

Wherever the MOSIP project engages in a partnership, we will assist, to the best of our ability, in technical matters related to the implementation of the Principles, such as the design of a robust and secure system. We encourage a participatory approach where the end-users' voices are heard and their concerns are addressed, and we will support such efforts wherever we engage.

