National Identity Policies: Bangladesh Experience

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Need Unique ID for Service Delivery, Especially Electronically

Unique Identification of Citizens

- Labor
- Police services
- Education
- Immigration
- Legal services
- Birth registration:
- Health
- Voter ID
- Taxes & VAT
- Loans
- Social safety nets
- Licenses
How Do You Identify Someone Uniquely?

NID problems

- No ID
- > 1 ID

Bigger problem because:
1. Strong multiple ownership of different citizens ID systems creates conflicts between organizations
2. Duplication of efforts in terms of data collection and maintenance by different organizations causes wastage of money and resources
3. Divergent systems make it difficult to share data and hence, the government doesn’t know who is getting what services
Bangladesh: Major Stakeholders of Citizens’ Databases

Birth Registration: 160 mil
Voter Registration: 100 mil
Poor Identification: 160 mil
Health Census (GR): 100 mil

Local Gov + Election + Statistics + Health = Lack of Coordination and sometimes Conflict

These 2 have strong IDs
... and Many Others

Need Coordination by PMO & Cabinet Division
Major Policy Considerations

1. Massive coordination from the Prime Minister's Office and Cabinet Division still retaining ownership control of the ministries

2. Effective linkages to service delivery from birth to death of a citizen so that incentives to use the standardized ID is built into the system, and information update is also as spontaneous as possible

3. Selection of strong biometrics that are feasible and cost effective in the socioeconomic context of a resource-strapped country like Bangladesh

4. Addressing of recently emerging information security and personal privacy issues
Utilizing Opportunities for Coordination

1. **Digital Bangladesh whole-of-government agenda**
   - Coordination by the PMO (political head) and Cabinet Division (bureaucratic head)
   - Alignment of the existing citizens databases

2. **Plain land facilitating rapid connectivity expansion**
   - Virtually 100% 2G coverage, and rapid 3G, WiMax and fibre expansion

3. **Organizational maturity and grassroots work-force**
   - Nearly 6,000 Local Government Institutions (urban and rural)
   - 75,000 Health workers and 13,000 Community Clinics

4. **Supportive policies**
   - NID Act, Birth and Death Act, Health Policy, Statistics Act
Linking to Life Events and Service Delivery

- Vital life events including but not limited to
  - Birth
  - Death
  - Immunization
  - Education
  - Marriage
  - Separation/divorce
  - Adoption
  - Migration
  - Tax

Local Government
Health
Education and Primary Education
Law
Home
Revenue
Selecting the Right Biometrics

1. **Biometrics necessary for unique ID**
   - Identification of otherwise unclaimed dead bodies
   - Falsification of identify for child marriage, jobs, migration

2. **Reducing duplication, wastage, inaccuracies, inconsistencies**

   Must be cost-effective, low-maintenance and usable by grass-roots workers with low ICT skills and low-speed connectivity
Addressing Info Security and Personal Privacy

- Information Security is an emerging field globally
  - Some security organizations from Army, Police, telecom regulator and academia
  - Weak local expertise against strong global threat
  - No comprehensive approach or expertise overall

- Personal privacy concerns being expressed at the highest levels of government and civil society
  - National ID online, Shared health records, Criminal databases, etc.
  - Need deep understanding of cultural and societal practices
  - Need adequate policy support
  - Need appropriate technical solutions

Need international advice for both issues
Thanks