

Inclusion for all

A STUDY ON THE COST OF NIN
ENROLMENT - SUMMARY REPORT

July 2022



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A multi-faceted advocacy programme that seeks to deepen the knowledge and understanding of the impact of exclusion on marginalised communities, and on Nigeria as a whole, while advocating for the barriers to their inclusion to be removed.

Marginalised communities are desperately in need of help and support but they are the most difficult groups to access in order to provide it. They are more likely to be women, young and to live in rural areas. We want everyone to have access to the support and services that give them the ability to enhance their lives.



List of acronyms



I4All - Inclusion for all

FEP - Frontend Enrolment Partner

ID4D - Identity for Development programme (World bank & NIMC)

Overview



Research conducted by the Inclusion for all programme suggests that rural and poor communities are considerably less likely to have ID than those in urban areas, with higher incomes.

This is believed to be the result of a number of demand and supply side barriers, which mean the ecosystem model developed by NIMC is not optimised to serve the populations identified as excluded.

In preliminary conversations with FEP partners, it was clear that a supply side challenge exists around the cost of enrolling Nigerians in rural communities, with partners indicating that the costs exceed the current incentive, and so restrict their ability to target these communities.

The overarching goal of this survey was to understand the true cost of NIN enrollment to the NIMC Frontend Enrolment Partners (FEPs), who are mandated to enrol Nigerians within specific geographic areas, and to assess an appropriate incentive structure that would increase enrolment operations in rural communities.

Therefore, this report is designed to provide an initial indication of FEP enrolment costs to NIMC, to guide the need for further studies and to support the evolution of an incentive structure that delivers the needed outcomes.

This is a significant prerequisite for NIMC's ID4D implementation readiness, if it is to fulfil its goal for all Nigerians to have digital ID irrespective of geographic location and socio-economic background.

Objectives of study



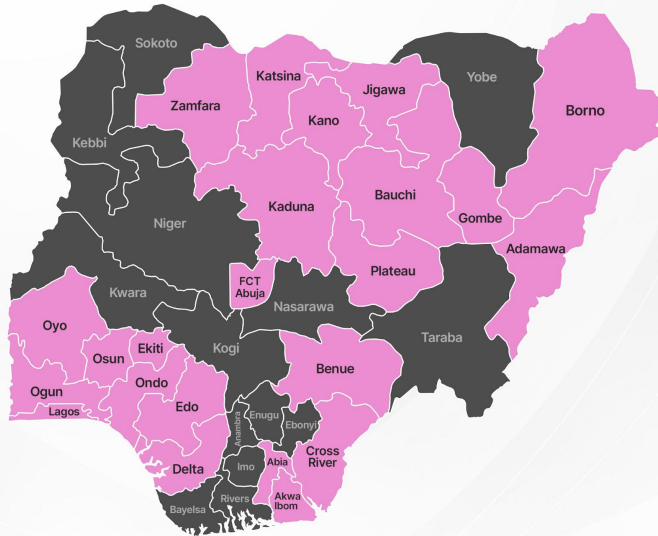
1. Understand the constituent costs involved in the enrolment process and the cost of enrolling the most marginalised populations.
2. Understand the existing compensation mechanism for the enrolment partners to enrol rural communities.
3. Understand if there are additional or specific incentives that need to be in place to drive enrolment of subgroups within marginalised communities like women and dependents.
4. Understand if there are areas they will not go to and why not.
5. Understand Frontend Enrolment Partners' (FEPs) experience with breeder documents, and their recommendations for improving the process, so that we can assess the most appropriate model for Nigeria.

Scope & methodology



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Map Of Nigeria



■ States where surveyed FEPs are active ■ States where surveyed FEPs are not active

The geographical spread of the FEPs we interviewed was critical, ensuring the findings are not skewed to a particular location and also representative of diverse locations and their peculiarities.

Of the 11 FEPs interviewed, 4 had a national licence and 7 had state licences.

1. Inclusion for all (I4All) obtained a list of the FEPs and their contact details from NIMC, as well as an introduction letter from the DG for the sake of legitimacy and to encourage participation.
2. I4All then reached out to the FEPs via email with the contact details provided and the introduction letter. We then followed up with additional phone calls and emails in an effort to secure interviews.
3. Of the 20 names on the NIMC list, we conducted 10 interviews, with an additional interview with the Murna Foundation who was not on the NIMC list but a verified NIN enrollment partner that was introduced by NIMC previously. This made for a total of 11 FEP interviews conducted

Of the 10 we did not interview:

- 4 were entirely unreachable by phone or email. (Emails bounced back, phone number was incorrect or disconnected.)
- 3 were reached via phone/email, but did not respond to further follow-ups to set up an interview.
- 2 were interview no-shows, and did not respond to further follow-ups to reschedule.
- 1 responded in the affirmative for an interview, but then did not respond to further follow-ups to set up a time.

Highlights



- **Cost of enrolment:** Our hypothesis about insufficient incentives to enrol rural populations was validated with the survey. FEPs noted an average cost of N611.00 to enrol in rural areas in contrast to the average cost of N408.00 in urban areas - both higher than the N350.00 fees per enrolment they are paid.
- **FEP contact details**
The fact that four of the partners were entirely unreachable due to incorrect contact information suggests a need to review and update partners records to aid effective monitoring by NIMC.
- **Documentation requirement inconsistencies**
While FEPs were very aware of the security issues relating to the enrollment process and ensuring they enroll only Nigerian residents, there appears to be inconsistencies in terms of the registering people without source documents. Some FEPs provide enrollment forms that the enrollees sign off to acknowledge that the information is accurate. While other FEPs stated that they had authorisation from NIMC to skip this process as long as they capture the individual's phone number, another group said that according to the NIMC guidelines for enrolment, no enrolment can be done for people without any verifiable valid document or guardian.
- **Women enrolment**
Our secondary research findings tell us that women are less likely to have ID than men at every level of the World Bank's Poverty Probability index, and that the gender gap widens as they get poorer. However, our assumption of women's NIN enrollment was challenged with four FEPs saying that in some areas they cover, more women enrol than men. Additionally, in some parts of the North, the socio-cultural norms that seem to exclude women from participating in such programmes are not present, and it's the men that encourage the women's participation because they don't have the time and don't think it's as important for them. As such, the gender dimension of NIN enrollment appears to be location-specific and further research is required
- **Set up of centres**
Setting up an enrollment centre is a time consuming process with a significant amount of red tape. According to one FEP, it takes more than three months to set up a single enrolment centre, which slows the whole process down and deters setting up more centres. It also costs an average of N1.5million Naira to set up.
- **Beneficiary turnout**
Contrary to our assumptions, two FEPs said they got higher participation numbers in rural rather than urban communities.
- **Population density**
In rural areas with dense populations, the higher numbers drive down costs and average things out. In areas with very few people, it becomes unprofitable.
- **Areas unlikely to be served**
Several of the issues raised about accessing hard-to-reach areas can sometimes lead to FEPs being reluctant or refusing to travel to a particular locations except there's a compelling incentive to do so.
- **Trust in Government**
The issue of trusting government was more prevalent from FEPs covering the South East and some South West regions, however it was never cited as an issue for the Northern regions. This could be linked to the strong sensitisation exercises for voting in the Northern regions, where they participate actively in the elections and are also direct beneficiaries of social welfare programmes
- **Delayed payments**
Almost 50% of the FEPs mentioned delayed payment from NIMC, which creates additional financial strain.

Key findings



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Key findings - cost of enrolment

Urban community	Rural community	Fair fee to cover enrollment
500	1,000	1,500
400	600	600
800	1,000	1,000
500	500	700
500	1,000	1,000
500	700	1,000
300	450	600
250	410	600
150	250	450
283	310	600
300	500	400
AVERAGE: 408.00	611.00	768.00

The table shows the average costs stated for enrolling one person in urban locations and rural locations and their suggestions for a fair fee:

Compared to the **N350.00** paid per enrolment, it costs each FEP an average of:

- **N408.00** to enrol one person in an urban location
- **N611.00** to enrol one person in a rural location
- **N768.00** is the recommended average fee per enrolment that makes the incentive structure profitable for FEPs

- **Set-up:** Firstly, there is the initial investment in purchasing all the required equipment: computers, fingerprint scanners, printers and the technocrat device. Each device also has to have a licence, which costs around 160 dollars. The cost of getting a single centre working was estimated at 1.5 million naira.
- **Accessing and operating in hard-to-reach locations:** The cost of enrolling people in rural or hard to reach communities is significantly higher due to the accessibility challenges highlighted by the FEPs. For instance, the cost of having to hire bikes or boats to access some communities, having to fuel generators in areas without electricity, travelling beyond enrollment locations to find connectivity within the 72-hour timeframe they have to ensure they don't lose beneficiary data collected for completing registration.
- **Administrative costs and statutory charges:** Tax, VAT and stamp duty also contribute to further reducing the net amount received for enrolment before operational costs are taken into account. For both urban and rural communities, the fee also has to cover the cost of printing the NIN slips.
- **Awareness/Sensitisation cost (Marching Ground):** There is also a cost for scepticism and mistrust, what some FEPs noted as “marching ground” in local parlance, to mean the fees they have to pay to community leaders or influential association leaders to gain community buy-in and trust.- Additionally, time and money is spent sensitising communities and creating awareness about why they need the NIN.
- **Macroeconomic factors:** The rising cost of commodities, inflation, unfavourable exchange rates are all factors that impact the profitability of enrolling people for NIN. The 350 Naira, which is reportedly the equivalent of 1.00 USD at the official rate at the time of designing the incentive structure no longer covers their costs as much as it once did. Indeed, a common point of discussion was that the payment structure needs to be reviewed and pegged to the current rate of the dollar - as opposed to the value of the dollar when the project was first launched.

Rural poor specific	Urban Poor specific	Rural & Urban poor
<p>Sensitisation/Awareness: Enrollment partners have to spend time and money raising awareness about the importance of having a NIN in villages in contrast to urban locations</p> <p>Lack of trust: Common in regions where they have been disenfranchised due to past negative experiences from government.</p> <p>Travel logistics/Transportation: unmotorable roads, terrain, long distance, availability and price of fuel. These factors significantly impact the cost of transportation and travel logistics.</p> <p>Network/Connectivity: Poor cellphone network and internet connectivity - or a lack thereof - presents a challenge for FEPs.</p> <p>Lack of electricity: The lack of electricity means that FEPs need to own or rent generators to power the required equipment for their enrolment centres</p> <p>Geo-mapping restrictions: Restriction to the 50-kilometre radius of their allocated geographical coverage reportedly hinders enrolling more people especially in hard-to-reach communities where limited centres are set-up .</p> <p>Buy-in from village heads/youth leaders: Sometimes they will demand compensation in return for accessing community members.</p>	<p>Lack of community verifier: Because poor people in urban communities are less likely to be embedded in close-knit communities which is more prevalent in rural areas, there is nobody who can verify their identity for them such as a relative or community leader.</p> <p>Double registrations: Enrolment partners also report the risk of duplicating enrolments as sometimes, enrollees who have previously registered show up to re-enrol for a myriad of reasons while the verification system is supposed to check this against an existing record of registered</p>	<p>Lack of trust: Many people have a general sense of distrust towards the government. There is also a lack of trust towards FEPs, whom people view as just there to make money.</p> <p>Server downtime and errors: The NIMC portal cannot handle much traffic and gives an error or fails to generate the NIN. The time it takes for the NIMC back end server and the FEP access server to synchronise leads to a delay in verifying the NIN. There is also a discrepancy regarding the number of NINs issued by FEPs vs NIMC's records</p> <p>Enrollment app issues: There are several versions of the app available, with different options on each. Sometimes bad updates are pushed through. The app also requires high bandwidth to deploy, which is inappropriate for use in areas with poor or no network connectivity.</p> <p>Language and literacy issues: Within the poorer and less educated communities, there can be a language barrier. Low literacy levels can also make it difficult when capturing information.</p> <p>Distance to enrollment centre: Travel to enrollment centres is an additional cost for poor people in both rural and urban areas.</p> <p>Fingerprint capturing: For people who do extensive manual labour such as farmers, it can be difficult to capture their fingerprints on the machine.</p>

In addition to the general challenges associated with rural communities, FEPs noted the following issues as making some areas “hard to reach” or non incentivised to go:

- **Accommodation:** When travelling to remote areas, FEPs need to organise safe accommodation for themselves and staff for the duration of the enrollment exercise.
- **Security:** Security issues specifically mentioned include banditry, insurgency, kidnappings, and community disagreements, as well as farmer and herder clashes.
- **Knowledge of the terrain:** If the provider needs to travel to places they have not been before, the lack of knowledge of the area in question can be an added difficulty.
- **Low Turnout:** In rural farming communities, for instance, farmers will only come out on a Sunday. This means that FEPs have to wait until then to enrol these people. With the 72-hour limit on the app, this becomes an issue.
- **Sparsely populated communities:** Smaller populations reduce the economies of scale of enrolling them. The fewer people there are in an area, the less likely they are to go, because the cost of getting to the location is not covered by the fees earned for enrolling them. This is made worse when such communities are far apart because it is not cost effective to move between them.

Suggestions from FEPs



While some respondents felt the NIN enrollment process was adequate, others had extensive input on how the overall process could be improved. We have summarised these in the table below

Documentation requirement	Process between FEP & Enrollees	Process between FEP and NIMC
<p>Sensitisation: NIMC should do sensitization campaigns to raise awareness around the importance of having source documents, and assist people in getting these.</p> <p>Free indigene certificates for IDPs: The cost of indigene certificates was cited as a deterrent for those who have already lost everything.</p> <p>Template for community leaders: There should be a form that can be taken to the community leader to sign and verify in order to standardise the process.</p> <p>Documentation app: Where the FEP can input the biodata as well as the NIN and name of the person's guarantor. This app can be monitored by the courts for security and verification purposes.</p> <p>Oath officers: Lawyers can be attached to enrolment centers, so that people without source documents can swear an oath.</p> <p>Birth certificates: Should be compulsory for school enrollment as an impetus for parents whose children were not born in a hospital.</p>	<p>Extending app out-of-network time: The 72 hour limit on the app is a hindrance. Extending this to a week would make it easier for FEPs to enrol more people and reduce the transport costs.</p> <p>Improving app/server performance: The issues of server downtime, invalid NINs, and NINs not being generated needs to be addressed by NIMC to improve the NIN enrollment process.</p> <p>Lifting the 50km radius restriction: FEPs reiterated that they understand the country's security issues, but that there were other ways to address the situation instead of limiting enrollment centres to a 50km radius.</p>	<p>Setting up a new enrollment centre: Reducing the amount of red tape and simplifying the process of setting up a new enrollment centre so that it can be done more quickly.</p> <p>Accurate and timely payments: 5 FEPs mentioned delays in receiving their payments from NIMC, creating cash flow difficulties. Records of NIN enrolment numbers between the FEP and NIMC also need to be harmonised.</p> <p>Increased payments: The payment for NIN enrollments needs to be increased. The payment system should be in dollars, and reflect the current exchange rate.</p> <p>Improved communication: For example, FEPs need to be kept in the loop regarding server downtime.</p>

Our recommendations



Our broad recommendation would be to conduct a more extensive survey with FEPs using a larger sample to validate our key findings and recommended areas to tackle:

Specific recommendations	Suggested approach
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent enrolment documentation requirements: It appears that there needs to be a clear reiteration of the process for FEPs in terms of enrolling people without source documents. (One that takes into account the issues people have in accessing these documents in the first place and facilitates the enrollment of these marginalised people. E.g., not just saying no enrollment without voters card/birth certificate. Facilitating these documents for people, or official form for third party verification, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design a robust and standardised introducer model to solve the documentation challenge cost-effectively. This can be tested within a few communities across geo-political zones community as a pilot and then rolled out at scale based on the pilot learnings and outcomes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised incentive structure: Adjusting the compensation mechanism to account for the rising overall costs, as well as the specific difficulties in accessing remote, rural and hard to reach areas. This will motivate FEPs, along with timely payment and regular communication as partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase incentive from USD1.00 to USD2.00 and aligned with the current official rate. • Provision of certain resources , e.g paper for slips, printers, internet etc to FEPs either free or subsidized to reduce their administrative costs • Waivers on statutory charges and prompt payment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodic details update: Ensuring NIMC has up to date contact details of all enrollment partners, and that all geographic regions are currently being serviced by NIN enrollment partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a digitised FEP data management system that prompts periodic request for up- to date information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimal solutions and processes: Taking on board some of the suggestions for improving the process of enrollment using the app - beta testing, bandwidth requirements, the 50km radius restriction and the 72-hour limit for data upload 	

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Africa Practice R&B LTD
Lagos, Nigeria
+234 (0)16320 479

westafrica@aficappractice.com

inclusionforall@aficappractice.com