



# DEFINING AADHAAR: BENEFITS, FEATURES AND ENROLMENT PROCESS

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## WHAT IS AADHAAR?

Aadhaar is a 12-digit unique number which will be issued by the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) to all residents of the country. It's a step towards putting India in the club of more than 50 countries around the world that have some form of national identity cards. These include most of continental Europe (not the UK), China, Brazil, Japan, Iran, Israel and Indonesia. The number will be stored in a centralized database and linked to the basic demographics and biometric information photograph, ten fingerprints and iris of each individual. The number will be unique and would be available for online and offline verification and, hence, will rule out the possibility of duplicate and fake identities from government as well as various private databases.

## BENEFITS OF BIOMETRICS

Apart from easy availability, the project will also rule out frauds by employing biometric techniques. Biometrics comprises methods for uniquely recognizing humans based upon intrinsic physiological or behavioural traits. So far, it is primarily used in computer science for access control. In some form, the method is also used for identifying individuals in groups who are under surveillance. Generally, biometric characteristics are divided into two main classes: physiological or those based on fingerprints, face, DNA, palm prints, iris recognition; and behavioural, which can include anything from gait or voice to typing rhythm. Aadhaar will use physiological traits — fingerprints and iris — to issue the unique identities. The iris recognition is included because the project is aimed at encompassing every resident, which includes children for whom fingerprints might not be a reliable identification and people working at places like fireworks factories and some plantations who have got their fingerprints rubbed off.

What will be the benefits of the unique identification number?

One of the key challenges faced by people in India is difficulty in establishing identity. People have multiple identity documents, each serving a different purpose. The most important characteristic of Aadhaar is its universality and it is assumed that the biometric card with the

number will be gradually accepted across the country as the identification number by all service providers and government agencies. It is assumed by the UIDAI that the card will increase the trust between private and public agencies and reduce the denial of services to people who have no identification. The number will also hopefully reduce the hassle of repeatedly proving identity by various documents to avail services like opening a bank account and obtaining passport or driving licence and so on. For the people living below the poverty line and the ones who are entitled to various government-run welfare programmes, the number and the biometric data will help in identifying the beneficiaries.

### Is it mandatory or voluntary?

Considering privacy concerns, UIDAI has kept provision of voluntary registration at enrolment camps to obtain the number. Critics, however, argue that once the programme gets linked to welfare programmes, the PDS system and availing of various services, it will lose its true voluntary nature. Hence, it's also important to have stringent laws to prevent denial of service in such situations.

## **FEATURES OF AADHAAR**

### Uniqueness

This is achieved through the process of demographic and biometric de-duplication. The de-duplication process compares the resident's demographic and biometric information, collected during the process of enrolment, with the records in the UIDAI database to verify if the resident is already in the database or not. An individual needs to enrol for Aadhaar only once and after de-duplication only one Aadhaar shall be generated. In case, the resident enrolls more than once, the subsequent enrolments will be rejected.

### Portability

Aadhaar gives nationwide portability as it can be authenticated anywhere on-line. This is critical as millions of Indians migrate from one state to another or from rural area to urban centres etc.

### Random Number

Aadhaar number is a random number devoid of any intelligence. Person willing to enrol has to provide minimal demographic along with biometric information during the enrolment process. The Aadhaar enrolment process does not capture details like caste, religion, income, health, geography, etc.

### Scalable Technology Architecture

The UID architecture is open and scalable. Resident's data is stored centrally and authentication can be done online from anywhere in the country. Aadhaar Authentication service is built to handle 100 million authentications a day.

### Open Source Technologies

Open source architecture precludes dependence on specific computer hardware, specific storage, specific OS, specific database vendor, or any specific vendor technologies

to scale. Such applications are built using open source or open technologies and structured to address scalability in a vendor neutral manner and allow co-existence of heterogeneous hardware within same application.

## **AADHAAR ENROLMENT PROCESS**

The Aadhaar enrolment process includes visiting Enrolment Centre, filling the enrolment form, getting demographic and biometric data captured, submitting proof of Identity and address documents, before collecting acknowledgement slip containing Enrolment ID.

### **The highlights of Aadhaar enrolment are:**

- Aadhaar enrolment is free of cost.
- Citizens can go to any authorized Aadhaar enrolment centre anywhere in India with your proof of identity and proof of address documents
- UIDAI process accepts a set of PoI (Proof of Identity) and PoA (Proof of Address) documents. Common proofs of identity and address are election photo ID card, Ration card, passport and driving license. Photo ID cards like PAN card and Govt ID cards are permissible for identity proof. Address proof documents also include water - electricity - Landline telephone bills for the last three months.
- In case of non availability of above common proofs, Certificate of identity having photo issued by Gazetted Officer/Tehsildar on letterhead is also accepted as PoI. Certificate of Address having photo issued by MP or MLA /Gazetted Officer/Tehsildar on letterhead or by Village Panchayat head or its equivalent authority (for rural areas) is accepted as valid PoA.
- Even if someone in a family does not have individual valid documents, the resident can still enrol if his/her name exists in family entitlement document. In this case the Head of Family in entitlement document needs to be enrolled first with valid PoI & PoA document. The head of the Family can then introduce other members in the family while they are enrolling. UIDAI accepts many document types as Proof of Relationship. To summarise, there are three approaches for enrolment:

I - DOCUMENT BASED - Submission of one valid Proof of Identity (PoI) document and one valid Proof of Address (PoA) document

II - HEAD OF FAMILY (HoF)-BASED - Head of family (HoF) may introduce family members by means of documents, which establish the Proof of Relationship (PoR).

III - INTRODUCER-BASED - In the absence of valid Proof of Identity (PoI) document and valid Proof of Address (PoA) document, an introducer's service can be leveraged. An introducer is a person appointed by the Registrar and should have a valid Aadhaar number.

At the enrolment Centre, personal details are collected using the Enrolment Form. Photo, finger-prints and iris scan are also taken as a part of the enrolment. Review the details provided and corrections can be made during enrolment itself. An acknowledgment slip with an enrolment number and other details captured during enrolment is given. Any correction in the enrolment data can be done within 96 hours of enrolment by visiting the enrolment centre with the acknowledgement slip.

## AADHAAR IN KERALA

The Kerala UID project was initiated in February 2011 at Thiruvananthapuram. As a pilot enrollment was started in Thiruvananthapuram and Alappuzha districts and subsequently rolled out across all districts. The state IT department is the Registrar for the project and Kerala State IT Mission (KSITM) is the nodal agency for project implementation. The two agencies under KSITM for carrying out enrolling process for the citizens are Akshaya and Keltron. As on date enrollment has been completed for more than 95% of the population and UID number has been generated for about 289 lakhs (more than 87%) of citizens. There are about 700 enrolment stations and enrolling machines (for both Akshaya centres and Keltron) spread over Kerala. The public can utilize the toll free number which has been set up exclusively to cater to clarifications regarding Aadhaar and UID enrolment. The details of UID enrolment and all other clarifications can also be obtained from the Citizen Call Centre, Govt. of Kerala.

Discussions regarding setting up of permanent enrollment centres and updation centres all over Kerala is going on for those who have already received Aadhaar numbers and for those who are still to enroll for Aadhaar. Enrollment of bedridden is on its pilot in Ernakulam district. It is soon to be rolled out to all the districts of Kerala. The enrolling team will visit the houses of the bedridden and will enroll them to Aadhaar.

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