



Link
 Future link
 Aggregation PoP
 Edge PoP
 Global Exchange Point

From Connectivity to Trust

Identity as Foundational Infrastructure

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The Starting Point: Connectivity Connectivity

AfricaConnect Achievements

- Regional backbone across West & Central Africa
- Integration into global research & education networks
- Access to international services

But...

- Connectivity \neq collaboration
- Bandwidth \neq trust
- Infrastructure \neq usage

We solved access. We have not yet solved trust.

What We Learned

AfricaConnect revealed three structural gaps that connectivity alone could not solve.

Fragmented Identity

Identity systems are inconsistent or fragmented across institutions, each operating in isolation.

Local Authentication

Authentication remains local – not federated or interoperable across institutions.

Underutilised Services

Services exist but are underused, limiting collaboration and return on infrastructure investment.

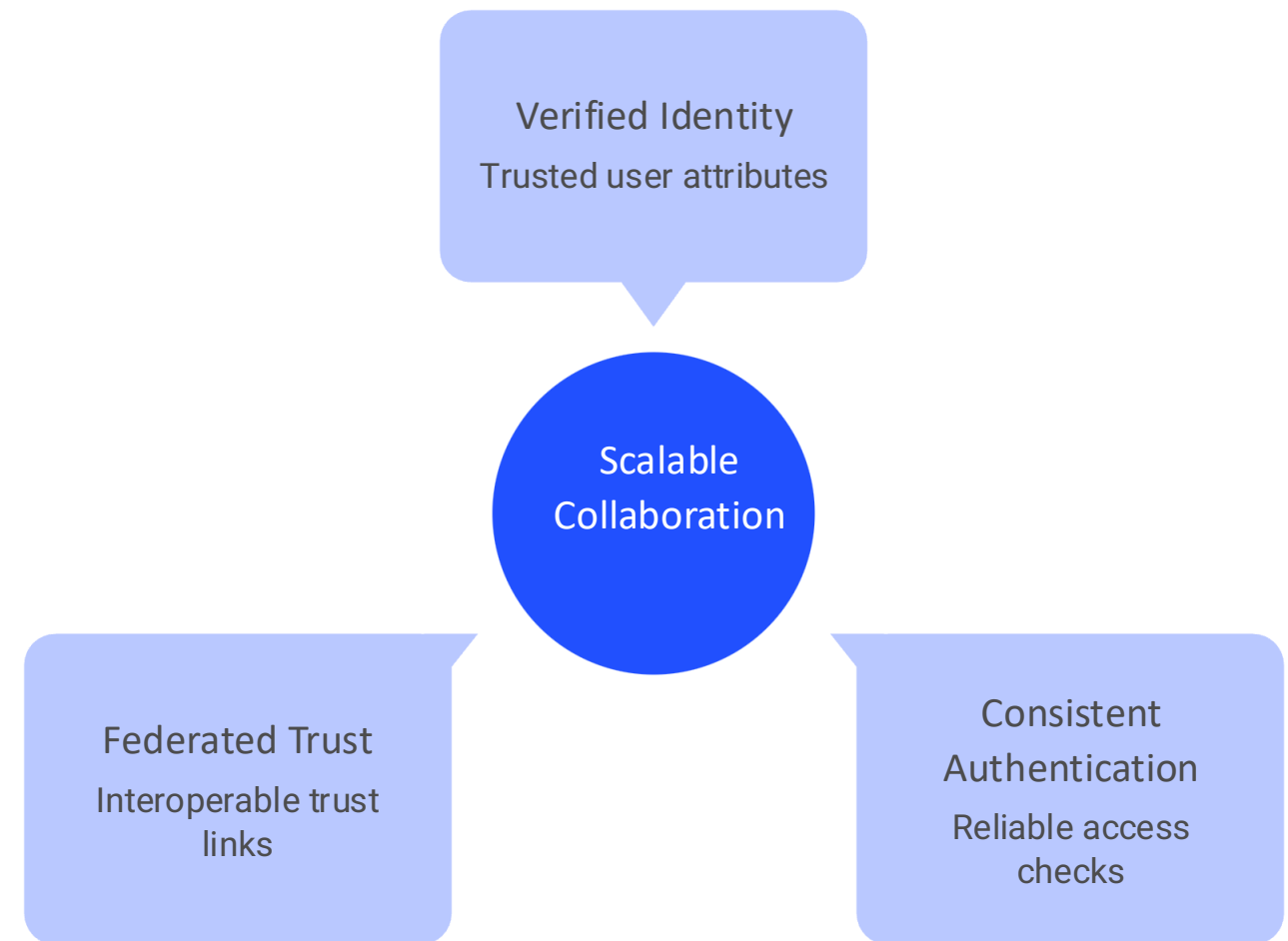
Limited collaboration · Barriers to access · Low return on infrastructure investment

The Missing Layer

Trust is the real infrastructure gap

Digital services require **verified identity**, **consistent authentication**, and **federated trust relationships**.

Without this, access remains siloed, systems do not interoperate, and collaboration cannot scale.



Identity as Infrastructure



Access

Who you are



Authorisation

What you can use



Trust

Who can rely on you



Analogy: Connectivity = roads · Identity = passports. No identity → no trusted movement.



What Federation Enables

Capabilities

- Single sign-on across institutions
- Access to global research platforms
- Seamless mobility for students, staff & researchers
- Secure collaboration environments

Digital Libraries

Research Platforms

Learning Systems

eduroam Access

The Nigerian Context & Why It Matters Now

Positioning

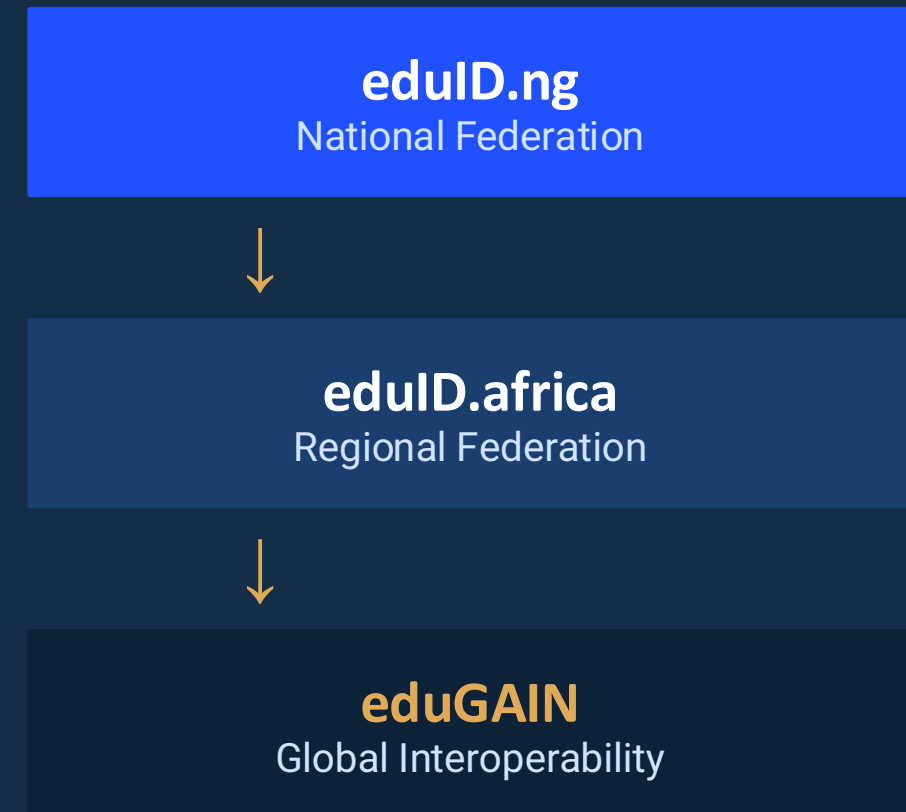
- eduID.ng → eduID.africa → eduGAIN
- National coordination, regional alignment, global interoperability

Why Now

- Rapid digitisation of education & research
- Growth of open science and repositories
- Increasing demand for secure, cross-institution access

Identity underpins all of these. It is already recognised as the backbone for eduroam, repositories, and publishing.

NIGERIA IN THE GLOBAL CHAIN



The Real Risk: Fragmentation

Isolated Development

Identity systems developing without coordination across institutions.

Duplication

Wasted effort and investment from parallel, incompatible systems.

Poor User Experience

Inconsistent access creates friction and erodes adoption.



⊗ A fragmented ecosystem cannot scale trust.

The Strategic Principle

What matters is not how many systems exist — but whether they participate in a single trust framework.

1

Interoperability

Over isolation

2

Coordination

Over duplication

3

Shared Trust

Over siloed access

The Shift — and Your Role



The Shift

From **connectivity** as the goal

To **trust** as the enabler, **identity** as infrastructure, **services** as the outcome

✔ Connectivity got us online. Identity makes it usable. Trust makes it valuable.

Your Role as Assembly Members

- Represent institutional interests
- Contribute to governance
- Enable adoption within your institutions

This only works if institutions participate.