

Enabling Social Innovation in Turkmenistan

Country Snapshot

Social innovation: "the processes and outcomes of developing novel approaches to address societal challenges facing people and planet." ↓

This snapshot represents a descriptive, non-exhaustive overview of key highlights from Turkmenistan's social innovation ecosystem.

✓ Direct focus on social innovation 🔗 Connected but indirect focus on social innovation ✗ No focus on social innovation

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

Official Definition of Social Innovation 🔗

Public evidence of an official, government-adopted definition of "social innovation" was not identified in the reviewed legal and policy sources.

However, related policy language exists across adjacent domains:

- Innovation policy is formalized through national legislation, though without a specific social dimension.
- Social services legislation defines state responsibilities toward vulnerable groups.
- Volunteering and civic participation are legally recognized and supported.

Government Body for Social Innovation ✓

While no dedicated institutional lead for social innovation is publicly designated, enabling functions are distributed across government entities:

- **Legislative oversight:** The Mejlis provides the legal framework for social services, volunteering, associations, and innovation.
- **Social policy leadership:** Ministries (including Labour and Social Protection) lead reforms in social services, particularly through internationally supported programmes.
- **Human capital development:** Education reforms include the development of social work training systems aligned with service delivery reforms.

Government Strategy for Social Innovation ✓

Although no standalone strategy exists, elements relevant to social innovation appear across sectoral strategies:

- **Innovation development programme (2015–2020):** Focused on strengthening national innovation systems.
- **Social services reform pathway:** A multi-year effort to pilot and institutionalize inclusive, community-based services.
- **Education reform agenda (2022):** National consultations emphasize inclusion, system efficiency, and long-term skills development.

Policies, Laws & Regulations

No dedicated legal framework for social innovation or social enterprises was identified. However, key enabling legislation includes:

- Law on Social Services.
- Law on Volunteering.
- Law on Public Associations.
- Law on Innovation Activity.
- Law on the National Red Crescent Society.
- State Youth Policy framework promoting civic engagement and volunteerism.

These laws collectively establish the institutional and legal environment for civic participation, service delivery, and innovation activity.

Official Statistics

No official statistical systems specifically tracking social innovation, social enterprises, or the social and solidarity economy were identified.

However:

- Public associations are formally registered and regulated.
- Programme-level monitoring data exists for social services reform (e.g., beneficiary reach, pilot outcomes).

Government Programs

Key programmes supporting enabling conditions include:

- **Inclusive community-based social services reform (2020–2022):**
 - Focus on piloting service models and professionalizing social work.
 - Includes workforce development and budget allocation for new roles.
- **Innovation activity programme (2015–2020):**
 - National framework for promoting innovation capacity.

ECOSYSTEM

Stakeholders

The ecosystem is primarily shaped by formal public organizations and international development actors:

- Public associations and NGOs operating under national law.
- National Red Crescent Society as a key humanitarian actor.
- UN agencies (UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC) supporting service innovation and capacity building.
- Government institutions leading sectoral reforms.

Support Initiatives

While no dedicated social innovation incubators or accelerators were identified, support structures exist in adjacent forms:

- Pilot programmes for social services innovation and scaling.
- Capacity-building initiatives, including training for social workers and institutional strengthening.
- Education system reform processes contributing to long-term human capital development.

Collaboration

Collaboration occurs primarily through structured partnerships:

- Government–UN joint programming for social services reform.
- Policy dialogue platforms addressing civil society effectiveness and financing models.

FINANCE

Financing Schemes

The most clearly documented financing comes through international development cooperation:

- **Joint SDG Fund programme:**

- Total budget approximately USD 2.35 million (including co-financing).

No evidence was found of:

- Dedicated national funding schemes for social innovation
- Social investment instruments (e.g., impact bonds)
- Tax incentives targeting social enterprises

Financing Inclusivity

Available funding demonstrates strong targeting of vulnerable populations, including:

- Children at risk or without parental care
- Persons with disabilities
- Youth at risk
- Women affected by gender-based violence
- Elderly populations requiring care support

SOCIETY

Public Awareness of Social Innovation

The term “social innovation” is not widely used in official discourse; however, related themes are visible:

- Volunteering is legally recognized and promoted.
- Youth policy emphasizes civic engagement and social responsibility.
- Public discussions (e.g., UN platforms) address civil society effectiveness and service delivery.

Research

No dedicated academic research ecosystem explicitly focused on social innovation was identified. However:

- Applied learning and knowledge development occur through programme implementation, particularly in social services reform and workforce development.

Education & Human Capital

- Development of a social work degree programme aligned with service system reforms.
- Broader education reforms emphasize inclusion, financing, and system performance improvements.

Entrepreneurship



Business Environment

World Bank B-READY profile provides insights into business environment conditions.



Innovation Capacity

Innovation activity is supported through national legal and policy frameworks.



Social entrepreneurship prevalence

No country-specific GEM data identified.

No confirmed publicly accessible GII ranking identified in reviewed materials.

Social & Environmental Consciousness



National climate commitments under the Paris Agreement.



Political participation



Volunteering

Volunteering supported through legal frameworks.



Sustainability

rank 120th (score 40.6)



CO₂ emissions

approx. **10.9 t CO₂e** per capita (2024).

125th

ND-GAIN Index

(vulnerability/readiness profile).

