

Enabling Social Innovation in Libya

Country Snapshot

Social innovation: "the processes and outcomes of developing novel approaches to address societal challenges facing people and planet." ¹

This snapshot represents a descriptive, non-exhaustive overview of key highlights from Libya’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

While Libya does not yet apply a single formal legal definition of social innovation, policy discussions increasingly frame it as the development of innovative solutions addressing societal challenges, aligning with the concept of social innovation defined as “the processes and outcomes of developing novel approaches to address societal challenges facing people and planet.” ¹ Government initiatives and international partnerships frequently integrate this approach into entrepreneurship, resilience, and civic-engagement programs, highlighting innovation as a tool for inclusive development and social impact. ²



Government Body for Social Innovation

Rather than a dedicated national agency exclusively focused on social innovation, responsibilities are shared across institutions involved in economic development, entrepreneurship, and digital transformation.

Key public actors include:

- **Ministry of Local Government** – supports entrepreneurship ecosystems and municipal innovation initiatives aimed at local economic development and job creation. ²
- **General Information Authority** – oversees national digital transformation initiatives and collaborative innovation platforms such as the Digital Lab. ³
- **Libya Development and Reconstruction Fund (2024)** – coordinates reconstruction and development projects while working with national and international expertise to support innovative urban and infrastructure planning. ⁴



Government Strategy for Social Innovation

Libya’s policy approach integrates social innovation within broader economic recovery, digital transformation, and local development strategies.

Examples include:

- **Local Economic Development and Entrepreneurship Initiatives** led by the Ministry of Local Government focusing on empowering municipalities, supporting micro-enterprises, and strengthening local innovation ecosystems. ²
- **Digital Transformation Initiatives** supported by the General Information Authority and international partners to promote innovation-driven economic development and knowledge-based sectors. ³

These initiatives highlight the role of innovation and entrepreneurship in supporting economic diversification, employment, and inclusive growth.

Policies, Laws & Regulations



Several policy frameworks contribute to enabling social innovation through entrepreneurship, local governance, and economic development.

Key examples include:

- **Law No. 59 on Local Administration** – provides the institutional framework for municipal governance and local economic development initiatives supporting entrepreneurship and community-led development.²
- **Libya Development and Reconstruction Fund Law (2024)** – establishes a national mechanism for reconstruction, urban planning, and development projects in collaboration with international expertise.⁴

Broader enabling frameworks include policies promoting entrepreneurship, SME development, and digital innovation, which indirectly support social innovation initiatives.

Official statistics



While official statistics dedicated specifically to social innovation are still emerging, national and international development programs regularly collect data on entrepreneurship, youth employment, civic engagement, and digital innovation initiatives.

Government institutions and development partners increasingly use these indicators to inform programs supporting innovation, SMEs, and community-based development initiatives.²

Government Programs



Several national and international initiatives support innovative solutions addressing social and economic challenges.

Examples include:

- **Deraya Entrepreneurship Initiative (2023–)** – a national program developed by the Ministry of Local Government and UNDP to support youth entrepreneurship through training, mentorship, and startup competitions across Libyan cities.²
- **Urban Innovation and Resilience Program (2025–)** – UNDP initiative supporting urban innovation, digital tools, and citizen-centered solutions to improve municipal services and sustainable urban planning.⁵
- **Youth Innovation Lab for Justice (2025)** – initiative empowering young leaders to develop innovative solutions strengthening justice systems and civic participation.⁶

ECOSYSTEM

Stakeholders



Libya's social innovation ecosystem includes civil society organisations, entrepreneurial networks, and international development actors supporting community-driven innovation.

Examples include:

- **National Entrepreneurship Council** – promotes entrepreneurship through partnerships, research initiatives, and programs supporting SMEs and youth entrepreneurs.⁷
- **Voice of Libyan Women (2011)** – civil society organisation advocating women's empowerment and leadership through community initiatives and awareness programs.⁸
- **Law Society of Libya (2022)** – civil society initiative focused on digitising and improving access to legal knowledge and public information.⁹

International partners such as UNDP, EU, and the African Development Bank also play a key role in strengthening Libya's innovation ecosystem.



Support initiatives

Common forms of non-financial support for social innovation include:

- Entrepreneurship incubators and accelerators linked to municipal programs and international initiatives.
- Innovation labs and digital hubs supporting digital transformation and civic innovation.
- Capacity-building initiatives for youth, civil society organisations, and entrepreneurs.

Examples include:

- **Municipal Business Incubators** supported through the Deraya initiative.²
- **Digital Lab Innovation Platform** connecting innovators, entrepreneurs, researchers, and investors across Libya.³



Collaboration

Collaborative initiatives between government institutions, civil society, and international organisations are increasingly common.

Examples include:

- Partnerships between the Ministry of Local Government, UNDP, EU, and the African Development Bank supporting entrepreneurship and innovation initiatives.²
- **Civic engagement platforms such as Ebraz**, bringing together civil society organisations and media actors to collaborate on development and peacebuilding initiatives.¹⁰

Innovation-focused workshops, startup weekends, and community engagement programs also serve as platforms for collaboration among entrepreneurs, municipalities, and development organisations.

FINANCE



Financing schemes

Precise national estimates for total annual investment specifically dedicated to social innovation are not yet available; however, funding for innovation-driven social initiatives is provided through a combination of public programs, international development finance, and private sector initiatives.

Key financing channels include:

- **International development funding** (UNDP, EU, African Development Bank) supporting entrepreneurship, youth innovation, and resilience programs.²
- **Public development funding** through reconstruction and development programs coordinated by national authorities.⁴
- **Corporate social responsibility initiatives**, including community investment programs implemented by major national companies such as the National Oil Corporation.¹¹

Many programs specifically target youth, women, and vulnerable communities, aiming to increase access to economic opportunities and entrepreneurship support.

SOCIETY



Public Awareness of social innovation

Innovation and entrepreneurship are increasingly present in public discourse in Libya, particularly in discussions around youth employment, economic diversification, and digital transformation. Government and international development programs often highlight innovation as a driver of resilience, economic recovery, and social inclusion.²



Research

Research capacity continues to strengthen through improved official statistics and regional academic partnerships. The Kiribati National Statistics Office's 2025 publication series provides an important evidence base, while USP Kiribati contributes through teaching and regional research networks

Education & Human Capital



Research on innovation and entrepreneurship in Libya is supported by partnerships between national institutions and international organisations.

Examples include:

- Research initiatives and partnerships coordinated by the National Entrepreneurship Council to support entrepreneurship and economic development strategies.¹
- Analytical work and program evaluations produced by international development partners such as UNDP on innovation-driven economic recovery and youth empowerment initiatives.²

Entrepreneurship



EIU Business Environment Ranking

Libya is not currently covered in the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor National Entrepreneurship Context Index.



Innovation Capacity

Libya is not ranked in the Global Innovation Index (2025) due to data availability constraints.



Social entrepreneurship prevalence

Despite limited national statistical coverage, entrepreneurship initiatives targeting youth and innovative startups are expanding through government and international programs.²

Social & Environmental Consciousness



Solidarity

Civic engagement initiatives and community platforms increasingly promote social cohesion and community participation in development initiatives.¹⁰



Political participation

Civic engagement and youth empowerment programs encourage participation in public life and governance processes.⁴



Volunteering

Civil society organisations and youth initiatives play an active role in community development and humanitarian efforts.



Sustainability

National companies and development programs integrate sustainability and community investment within their operations, including projects in education, health, infrastructure, and environmental protection.¹¹