

Enabling Social Innovation in Montserrat



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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 Montserrat'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 no official definition of social innovation has been identified in Montserrat's legal or policy framework, adjacent concepts are embedded in legislation governing non-profit organisations, cooperatives, and social welfare.

- Non-profit organisations are defined as entities established for "charitable, religious, cultural, educational or social purposes," indicating a public-benefit orientation. ²
- The Co-operative Societies Act emphasises socio-economic objectives and community benefit, including provisions for charitable contributions. ³

Government Body for Social Innovation



Rather than a dedicated entity, responsibilities related to social innovation are distributed across government functions.

- The Government of Montserrat leads national planning and development policy, including strategy design and stakeholder consultation. ⁴
- The Financial Services Commission regulates non-profit organisations and company registration, providing oversight of civil society actors. ²
- Public procurement institutions coordinate government contracting, shaping access for smaller and mission-driven organisations. ⁵

Government Strategy for Social Innovation



While no standalone strategy exists, social innovation-related priorities are embedded in broader development planning.

- The Sustainable Development Plan 2008–2020 outlines long-term economic and social development goals. ⁴
- The Economic Growth Strategy and Delivery Plan (2018) promotes enterprise development and innovation. ⁶
- Climate Change Policy aligns environmental sustainability and resilience with national development planning. ⁷
- SDG implementation frameworks highlight multi-stakeholder coordination and social outcomes. ⁸

Policies, Laws & Regulations

Although no social innovation-specific legislation exists, several frameworks provide enabling conditions.

- Non-profit regulation under the Proceeds of Crime Act establishes registration, oversight, and governance requirements.²
- The Co-operative Societies Act (2011) supports collective enterprise and community-oriented economic models.³
- The Development Finance and Marketing Corporation Act establishes a public development finance institution providing loans and investment support.²
- Public Procurement Act and Regulations (2025) define procurement processes, influencing participation of local and social actors.¹⁰
- Social Welfare Act provides a legal basis for social protection and support to vulnerable groups.¹¹

Official Statistics

Montserrat maintains official statistics relevant to the broader social and economic ecosystem.

- The Statistics Department publishes economic, social, and environmental data, including national accounts and demographic indicators.¹²
- Environmental ecosystem accounts provide valuation of natural capital and sustainability indicators.¹³
- While no statistics specifically track social innovation or social enterprises, administrative data exists through NPO registers and sectoral systems.²

Government Programs

Several public programmes indirectly support social innovation through enterprise and social development.

- Enterprise Development Scheme (2023): provides approximately EC\$1.1 million in grant funding for business innovation and private sector growth.¹⁴
- Small Business Relief Fund: offers grants of up to EC\$5,000 to local businesses.¹⁵
- COVID-19 support packages: targeted financial assistance to households and vulnerable groups.¹⁶
- SDG-related programming and donor-supported initiatives strengthen public services and community resilience.⁸

ECOSYSTEM

Stakeholders

Montserrat's ecosystem consists of a mix of public, civil society, and regional actors.

- Civil society organisations such as the Montserrat Red Cross provide community services and humanitarian support.¹⁷
- The Montserrat National Trust plays a statutory role in environmental and cultural preservation.¹⁸
- The Montserrat Volcano Observatory contributes applied research and disaster risk management.¹⁹
- Montserrat Community College and the University of the West Indies Global Campus provide education and research capacity.²⁰

Support Initiatives

Support structures exist but are not specifically labelled as social innovation initiatives.

- Enterprise grants and relief funds support early-stage and small businesses.¹⁴
- Youth and Sports Development Project includes entrepreneurship training and apprenticeships.²¹
- Continuing education and outreach programmes strengthen skills and capacity development.²⁰



Collaboration

Collaboration is primarily driven by government-led processes and development partnerships.

- National development planning processes include stakeholder consultations across sectors. ⁴
- SDG implementation involves coordination between government and non-government actors. ⁸
- Regional programmes such as the Caribbean Development Bank's Basic Needs Trust Fund support community-led development projects. ²²

FINANCE



Financing Schemes

Financing for social innovation is largely indirect and embedded in broader development finance.

- UK government budgetary support contributes significantly to public expenditure and service delivery. ²³
- Development Finance and Marketing Corporation provides loans and financial support for enterprise development. ²
- Enterprise Development Scheme and Small Business Relief Fund provide grant financing for businesses. ¹⁴
- Caribbean Development Bank programmes finance community infrastructure and social development. ²²



Financing Inclusivity

Financing mechanisms show elements of inclusivity, though not explicitly targeted at social innovation.

- Community-focused programmes (e.g. Basic Needs Trust Fund) prioritise underserved communities. ²²
- Social protection measures target households and vulnerable populations. ¹⁶
- Youth-focused initiatives support skills development and employment pathways. ²¹

SOCIETY



Public Awareness of Social Innovation

Public discourse focuses more broadly on social protection, development, and resilience rather than explicitly on social innovation.

- Policy agendas emphasise social welfare, sustainability, and SDG implementation. ¹¹
- Growing engagement with cross-sector collaboration suggests emerging awareness of innovation in addressing social challenges. ⁸



Research

Research activity exists in applied and sectoral domains relevant to social innovation.

- The University of the West Indies supports research, outreach, and continuing education. ²⁰
- The Montserrat Volcano Observatory contributes scientific research for disaster resilience. ¹⁹
- Environmental accounting initiatives demonstrate applied research in sustainability and natural capital. ¹³



Education & Human Capital

Education systems support entrepreneurship and skills development.

- Montserrat Community College offers programmes including entrepreneurship studies. ²⁰
- Government scholarship programmes support tertiary education. ²⁴
- Youth programmes integrate entrepreneurship training and work-based learning. ²¹

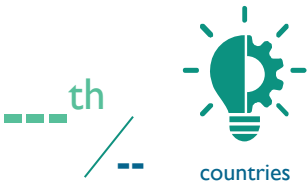
Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurial activity in Montserrat takes place within a small island economy where business development is shaped by limited market size, geographic isolation, and dependence on external financing. Nevertheless, government efforts to modernise business registration, improve investment conditions, and support small enterprises have strengthened the local entrepreneurial environment. ^{2 12}



Business Environment

While no recent international ease-of-doing-business ranking exists for Montserrat, the territory has implemented several measures to facilitate enterprise creation, including an online Companies and Intellectual Property Office (CIPO) registration platform and updated company legislation through the Companies Act 2023. These reforms aim to simplify registration procedures and improve transparency for businesses and non-profit entities. ^{2 12}



Innovation Capacity

Montserrat is not separately assessed in the Global Innovation Index and therefore does not receive an individual ranking or score. As a British Overseas Territory, it falls outside the list of economies evaluated by WIPO. ²⁵

Global Innovation Index 2024



Social entrepreneurship

No GEM survey data or entrepreneurship indicators specific to Montserrat were identified. Consequently, internationally comparable measures of entrepreneurial intentions, early-stage entrepreneurship, or social entrepreneurship are not currently available. ²⁶

Enterprise support:

Government initiatives such as the Enterprise Development Scheme and Small Business Relief Fund provide grants and financial assistance to entrepreneurs, particularly micro and small enterprises, helping to strengthen local business development and innovation capacity. ^{14 15}

Social & Environmental Consciousness

Montserrat demonstrates a strong commitment to community resilience, environmental stewardship, and civic participation, shaped in part by its experience with volcanic activity and climate-related vulnerabilities. Public policy frequently links sustainable development, disaster preparedness, and community wellbeing. ^{7 13}



Solidarity

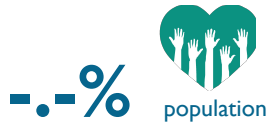
Environmental data and natural capital accounting:

Montserrat is one of the Caribbean territories that has developed ecosystem accounts to quantify the economic value of environmental assets and ecosystem services. This reflects an evidence-based approach to environmental governance and sustainable development planning. ¹³



Political participation

Civic engagement is monitored through official election statistics. The Statistics Department and Elections Office publish voter registration and turnout data, reflecting continued participation in democratic processes and local governance. ²⁷



Volunteering

While Montserrat is not separately covered in major international volunteerism datasets such as the CAF World Giving Index, community organisations—including the Montserrat Red Cross, faith-based groups, and local associations—play an important role in disaster response, social support, and community development, indicating a strong culture of mutual assistance. ^{17 29}



Sustainability

Environmental commitment: Environmental sustainability is embedded in national policy through the Climate Change Policy and the Conservation and Environmental Management Act. These frameworks support climate adaptation, biodiversity protection, disaster risk reduction, and sustainable resource management. ^{7 18}



EU Climate Action Progress

Climate resilience: Given its exposure to hurricanes, volcanic hazards, and climate change impacts, Montserrat places significant emphasis on resilience planning. Climate trends, projections, and risk information are publicly available through the World Bank Climate Change Knowledge Portal and inform national adaptation efforts. ²⁸