

Enabling Social Innovation in Mozambique

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 Mozambique’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



Legal/Working Definition

- Mozambique has no official legal or working government definition of social innovation. Rather than a dedicated definition, the concept is implicitly embedded in broader frameworks addressing poverty reduction, social protection, and community development, such as the National Development Strategy (ENDE 2025–2044). ²

Government Body for Social Innovation



Dedicated Body

- Rather than a dedicated government body for social innovation, responsibility is distributed across multiple ministries. The Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education (MCTES) coordinates science and innovation policy broadly ⁴, while the Ministry of Labour, Gender and Social Action oversees social protection ²³, and the Secretariat of State for Youth and Employment (SEJE) manages entrepreneurship programmes. ⁸

Government Strategy for Social Innovation



Dedicated Strategy

- Mozambique has no specific government strategy for social innovation. Indirectly, the National STI Policy — developed with UNESCO and the Islamic Development Bank and approved by cabinet in May 2024 — provides a framework for science, technology and innovation aligned with broader societal goals. ⁵
- The National Development Strategy (ENDE 2025–2044) also frames inclusive innovation as part of sustainable economic and social development. ²

Policies, Laws & Regulations



Policies/Laws Specific to Social Innovation

- No government policies, laws, or regulations are specifically dedicated to social innovation.

Broader Enabling Policies & Regulations

- Cooperative Law (Law No. 23/2009): establishes the modern cooperative framework, enabling the legal formation and recognition of cooperatives and providing a 50% corporate income tax reduction for agricultural, craft, and cultural cooperatives. ³
- Associations Law (1991) and Foundation Law (2018): allow formation of non-profit associations and foundations with public utility status, which benefit from corporate income tax exemptions. ³
- NGO Law (1998): defines the legal framework for non-governmental organisations engaged in social development. ³
- Investment Law (Law No. 08/2023): requires qualifying investments to contribute to the sustainable economic and social development of Mozambique. ³

Official Statistics



Statistics on Social Innovation / Social Economy

- The government does not collect official statistics on social innovation. Some data on cooperatives exist through AMPCM's registrations (over 2,234 cooperatives and pre-cooperatives documented), but no formal national statistical framework for the social and solidarity economy or social enterprises has been established. ^{12 24}

Government Programs



Programs Supporting Social Innovation

- Agora Emprega (2022–2025): Government of Mozambique–World Bank business plan competition for youth entrepreneurs; provides grants of up to USD 23,400 and mentoring to 500 entrepreneurs nationally across all 11 provinces; implemented by SEJE/National Youth Institute; ~1,000 jobs created to date with 61% held by women. ^{7 8}
- Maluana Science and Technology Park / ENPCT (est. 2015): state-owned agency tasked with designing, constructing, and operating STI parks to foster scientific, technological and business innovation; linked to the new 2024 STI Policy. ⁶

ECOSYSTEM

Stakeholders



Non-governmental Bodies for Social Innovation

- Foundation for Community Development (FDC, est. 1994): the only social and economic development foundation in Mozambique; operates across 9 of 10 provinces; builds capacity of NGOs and community-based organisations as instruments of poverty eradication and social justice. ²
- Institute for Social and Economic Studies (IESE, est. 2007): independent Mozambican non-profit research organisation focused on social and economic development issues in Mozambique and Southern Africa; hosts biennial international academic conferences. ^{10 11}

Networks



Sectoral Networks

- AMPCM – Mozambican Association for the Promotion of Modern Cooperatives (est. 2010): national apex cooperative body; 300+ member organisations; 2,234 cooperatives; member of ICA and OCPLP; advocacy, legal support, education, and research on cooperatives. ^{12 24}
- UNAC – National Union of Peasants (União Nacional de Camponeses): national farmers' network advocating for food sovereignty and peasant farming rights; member of Via Campesina. ²

Support Organisations



Non-financial Support Organisations

- Incubators/accelerators: IdeiaLab (est. 2010, Maputo) — social enterprise and business incubator supporting start-ups and SMEs ¹⁴; Maputo Living Labs (est. 2011) — IT training and incubation; Standard Bank Incubator — private-sector incubator; Ideario Hub — innovation centre.
- Multilateral: UNDP Mozambique Accelerator Lab (est. 2021) — focuses on solid waste management and urban soil erosion using ethnographic and citizen science methodologies. ¹³
- Development finance: GAPI (Gestão de Activos, Participações e Investimentos) — national development finance institution promoting entrepreneurship, financial inclusion, and gender/youth financing; launched a national Microfinance Platform (2026). ^{15 16}
- Research: IESE and UNU-WIDER's Inclusive Growth in Mozambique (IGM) programme (est. 2015) embedded in the Ministry of Economy and Finance. ²⁵

Support Initiatives



Non-financial Support

- Capacity building, mentoring, and business incubation are the most common forms of non-financial support, delivered through IdeiaLab, Agora Emprega (mentoring component), and the Standard Bank Incubator. ^{7 14}
- The UNDP Accelerator Lab uses participatory mapping, citizen science, and ethnographic approaches to co-develop solutions to urban challenges with communities and local partners. ¹³

Collaboration

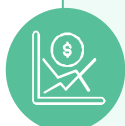


Partnerships Focused on Social Innovation

- In May 2025, the ILO and Mozambique's Ministry of Labour, Gender and Social Action held a national workshop on the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE), bringing together cooperatives, producer associations, and technical experts to discuss institutionalising SSE as part of inclusive development; a national diagnostic study was shared. ²
- UNESCO–IsDB–MCTES partnership (2021–2024): developed the new national STI policy through multi-stakeholder consultations and published the Mapping Research and Innovation report for Mozambique. ⁴
- UNIDO's MAMAP project (2025): supported the formation of three registered cooperatives for aquaculture producers in southern Mozambique, in partnership with AMPCM and IDEPA. ¹²

FINANCE

Financing Schemes



Overall Funding Estimate

- No aggregate estimate of total annual funding specifically directed to social innovation in Mozambique is publicly available, as no dedicated social innovation finance tracking exists.

Key Types of Financing



- Multilateral/ODA: The World Bank is the leading financier of entrepreneurship and social innovation-adjacent programmes (e.g. Agora Emprega, ~USD 2M); the ILO, UNDP, UNESCO, and USAID also provide significant technical assistance and grants. ^{1 2}
- Public grants/subsidies: Agora Emprega provides direct grants of up to USD 23,400 per youth entrepreneur; the government has committed to supporting over 70,000 young entrepreneurs through World Bank-funded programming in 2026. ⁷
- Development finance/microfinance: GAPI provides loans and equity to MSMEs and microfinance institutions; its new National Microfinance Platform (2026) targets USD 10M to capitalise 8–12 microfinance institutions serving ~7,000 businesses. ¹⁶
- Philanthropy: The Tony Elumelu Foundation funded 52 Mozambican entrepreneurs in 2024 (USD 260,000 total); FDC has mobilised USD 11M+ over its history for social development. ²
- Crowdfunding, social impact bonds, and dedicated social investment funds are largely absent; one development impact bond for malaria control was trialled. ¹⁷
- Mobile money: by end of 2023, mobile money accounts reached 93.2% of the adult population, providing an important infrastructure for financial inclusion. ¹⁷

Financing Inclusivity



Financing for social impact is explicitly targeted at youth (including via Agora Emprega, GAPI's youth entrepreneurship programmes, and the Tony Elumelu Foundation), women (61% of Agora Emprega job slots are held by women; GAPI tracks gender in its portfolio), and rural communities (microfinance and cooperative finance). ^{7 15}

Public Awareness of Social Innovation

Prevalence in Public Discourse

- Social innovation as a concept has limited presence in Mozambican public discourse; media coverage focuses primarily on humanitarian crises, poverty, and climate impacts. The concept is more present in NGO, multilateral, and academic circles, with broader framing around entrepreneurship, social enterprise, and cooperative development.

Research

Academic Research

- IESE (est. 2007) is the leading social and economic research institution in Mozambique, publishing the annual 'Desafios para Moçambique' book series and organising biennial international conferences; its research covers poverty, governance, economic policy, and social development. ^{10 11}
- UNU-WIDER supports the Inclusive Growth in Mozambique (IGM) programme (since 2015), embedded in the Ministry of Economy and Finance, producing working papers on poverty and social welfare. ²⁵
- Social innovation as an explicit research field is nascent; most relevant research covers the broader social economy, cooperatives, poverty reduction, and rural livelihoods. ⁶

Practitioner Research

- UNCTAD published a 2024 report on STI parks in Mozambique, assessing policy issues and the national innovation ecosystem. ⁶
- The ILO-led national diagnostic study on the Social and Solidarity Economy (presented May 2025) mapped cooperatives, associations, and community-based initiatives in agriculture, fisheries, and services. ²

Education & Human Capital

Education Programmes on Social Innovation

- No formal education programmes specifically labelled 'social innovation' exist at primary, secondary, or university level. Social entrepreneurship and business skills are embedded in TVET and university curricula, particularly through the Agora Emprega training components and the UNESCO-IsDB STI capacity building project at universities (2021–2024). ^{4 7}
- GAPI's INCUBOX project provides pre-incubation and incubation training for youth entrepreneurs in northern Mozambique, with a focus on digital literacy and business development. ¹⁵
- No estimate of the proportion of graduates with social innovation credentials is publicly available.

Entrepreneurship



Business Environment

Mozambique is not included in the EIU Business Environment Rankings, which covers 82 (primarily larger) economies. The World Bank Doing Business Index (last published 2019, rank 138/190) was discontinued in 2021. ³



Innovation Capacity

Mozambique ranked 128th out of 133 economies in the GII 2024 (score: 13.1), placing 22nd among 27 Sub-Saharan African economies and 6th among 10 low-income economies. ¹⁸

Global Innovation Index



Social entrepreneurship

Mozambique does not have an active GEM national team and is not included in recent GEM global reports. Limited data from COVID-era reporting (2020) indicates that no significant government steps had been taken to support entrepreneurs, and the entrepreneurship ecosystem faced severe constraints. ²¹

Social & Environmental Consciousness



Solidarity

(World Values Survey)

Mozambique has not participated in any wave of the World Values Survey. Afrobarometer (Round 9, 2022) provides the closest comparative data on civic attitudes, including measures of trust in neighbours, fellow citizens, and social participation.



Political participation

EIU Democracy Index 2024: Mozambique scored 3.38 overall (ranked 113th/167), classified as an 'Authoritarian' regime. Its political participation sub-score was 5.56/10. ²⁰

-.-%



population

Volunteering

Mozambique is included in the CAF World Giving Index 2024, which surveyed 142 countries. A country-specific ranking for Mozambique was not identified in the publicly available summary data; the report notes that Sub-Saharan Africa broadly demonstrates strong community solidarity, particularly in helping strangers. ²²

CAF World Giving Index 2024

132nd / 180



countries

Sustainability

EPI 2024 (Yale University): Mozambique ranked 132nd/180 overall (score: 39.0, a 10-year improvement of +3.8 points). On the Climate Change dimension specifically, Mozambique ranked 127th/180 (score: 35.7), with a notable 10-year improvement of +14.6 points, driven largely by low per-capita emissions and country-specific carbon targets. ¹⁹

Environmental Performance Index