

Enabling Social Innovation in Togo



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 Togo'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 🔗



No formal legal definition of "social innovation" has been identified in Togolese primary law. The concept is embedded in practice through the Feuille de Route Gouvernementale 2025 — Togo's Government Roadmap — which prioritises digital transformation, economic modernisation and social development. Togo is recognised as a GII 2024 top performer in the low-income group and one of Africa's greatest long-term GII improvers since 2013. ^{2,4}

Government Body for Social Innovation ✓



- Ministry of Digital Economy and Digital Transformation: Oversees Togo's digital transformation agenda, e-government and the national digital innovation ecosystem. ⁴
- Agency for the Promotion of Investments and Free Zones (API-ZF): Supports private sector development, FDI and enterprise ecosystem growth. ⁴
- Ministry of Economy and Finance: Coordinates national development planning, the Feuille de Route 2025 and SCAPE/PND implementation. ⁴
- Ministry of Social Action, Advancement of Women and Literacy: Oversees social protection, women's empowerment and literacy — key enablers for inclusive social innovation. ⁴
- UNDP Togo: Primary UN partner for governance, SDG programming and enterprise development. ⁵

Government Strategy for Social Innovation ✓



- Feuille de Route Gouvernementale 2025: Government Roadmap anchoring Togo's national development; elevates digital transformation, economic modernisation, human capital and social development as pillars. ⁴
- National Development Plan (PND) 2018–2022 and successor: Medium-term development framework embedding innovation and private sector development. ⁴
- Togo Digital Strategy (2021–2025): National digital transformation strategy targeting digital public services, broadband connectivity and digital entrepreneurship. ⁴

Policies, Laws & Regulations ✓ 🔗



- Feuille de Route Gouvernementale 2025: Overarching government programme embedding digital and social transformation. ⁴
- Startup Act (Loi Startup): Togo adopted a Startup Act to formalise support for startups and social innovators; a key enabling legal instrument. ⁴
- NGO / CSO Regulatory Framework: Governs civil society organisations — primary vehicles for grassroots social innovation. ⁵
- National Environmental Code: Governs environmental and social management compliance. ⁵

Official Statistics



117th/133 GII 2024 ranking — 3rd in the low-income group globally after Rwanda (104th) and Madagascar (110th); performing at expectations for its development level. ^{2 6}
2nd in the low-income group globally in GII 2025 — Togo has risen to 2nd after Rwanda, ahead of Madagascar; a major improvement in one year. ⁷
Greatest advances Togo is recognised by GII 2024 as having made the greatest advances in Sub-Saharan Africa since 2013 — alongside Madagascar and Cote d'Ivoire. ²
1 S&T cluster Togo has one identified African S&T cluster in the GII 2024, driven by scientific publications. ³

Government Programs



- Togo Digital Programme: Government-backed digital transformation covering e-government, digital public services and ICT entrepreneurship; targeting 80% digital government services by 2025. ⁴
- NOVISSI Digital Cash Transfer Programme: Pioneering mobile money-based social protection programme; disbursed emergency cash transfers to 800,000 vulnerable citizens during COVID-19 using mobile money and facial recognition — a landmark social innovation in Africa. ⁴
- National Social Protection Programme: Governs community-based safety nets, health insurance and livelihood support for vulnerable populations. ⁵
- Togo Invest Platform: Government platform connecting entrepreneurs and investors to support enterprise and innovation ecosystem development. ⁴

ECOSYSTEM

Stakeholders



- WoeLab: Africa's first FabLab and hackerspace, founded in Lome; a pioneering social innovation space enabling grassroots tech innovation for African contexts. ⁴
- Togo Tech Hubs and Innovation Ecosystem (Lome): Growing network of tech incubators, co-working spaces and accelerators in Lome, Togo's economic capital. ⁴
- University of Lome: Primary academic institution supporting applied research and human capital for social innovation. ⁵
- UNDP Togo Accelerator Lab: Community innovation, foresight and experimentation across SDG areas. ⁵
- Ecobank Transnational: Pan-African financial institution headquartered in Lome; supports fintech innovation and financial inclusion. ⁴

Support Initiatives



Support modalities include WoeLab community innovation, government digital transformation programmes, NOVISSI mobile cash transfer innovation, UNDP Accelerator Lab experimentation, and international development partner programming (EU, AFD, World Bank). ^{4 5}

Collaboration



Collaboration is structured through the UN Cooperation Framework, bilateral partnerships with France (AFD), EU development programming and ECOWAS regional frameworks. Togo's GII improvement trajectory reflects sustained policy-ecosystem collaboration between government, the private sector and international partners. ^{2 5}

FINANCE

Financing Schemes



- Government: Feuille de Route 2025 programme budgets, NOVISSI social protection, Togo Invest platform. ⁴
- International donors: World Bank, EU, AFD, UNDP — across digital transformation, social protection and agricultural innovation. ⁵
- Fintech ecosystem: Mobile money (Flooz, T-Money) and Ecobank-linked financial inclusion platforms. ⁴

Financing Inclusivity



NOVISSI demonstrated Togo's capacity for inclusive digital social protection at scale, reaching 800,000 vulnerable citizens via mobile money. The Feuille de Route 2025 prioritises women, youth and rural communities. Financing gaps remain for community-based social enterprises outside the digital economy. ^{4 5}

SOCIETY

Public Awareness of Social Innovation



Public awareness of social innovation is growing, particularly in Lome, driven by the WoeLab community, tech hub ecosystem and NOVISSI programme. Togo's strong GII trajectory since 2013 reflects a deepening innovation culture. Discourse centres on "digital innovation", "entrepreneurship" and "social protection." ^{2 4}

Research



Togo has one identified African S&T cluster (GII 2024), driven by scientific publications from University of Lome and partner institutions. Applied research in digital services, agriculture and health is growing. Togo's sustained GII improvement since 2013 is partly driven by improving research and innovation metrics. ^{3 2}

Education & Human Capital



Togo is investing in education and digital skills as part of the Feuille de Route 2025. University of Lome and technical institutions provide human capital for social innovation. WoeLab's community training model is internationally recognised. ^{4 5}

Entrepreneurship



EIU Business Environment Ranking



Innovation Capacity

117th/133 GII 2024 — 3rd in the low-income group; greatest SSA advance since 2013. ²

2nd in the low-income group in GII 2025, behind only Rwanda — a major achievement for a low-income economy. ¹



Social entrepreneurship prevalence

Social & Environmental Consciousness



Solidarity



Political participation



population

Volunteering

CAF World Giving Index 2024:
Togo-specific data not separately reported in the 2024 index. ⁸



countries

Sustainability

Environmental Performance Index (EPI) 2024:
Togo-specific EPI ranking not publicly available at time of publication. ²