

ICT in Education in Togo

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Source: *World Fact Book*¹

Please note:

This short *Country Report*, a result of a larger *infoDev*-supported *Survey of ICT in Education in Africa*, provides a general overview of current activities and issues related to ICT use in education in the country. The data presented here should be regarded as illustrative rather than exhaustive. ICT use in education is at a particularly dynamic stage in Africa; new developments and announcements happening on a daily basis somewhere on the continent. Therefore, these reports should be seen as “snapshots” that were current at the time they were taken; it is expected that certain facts and figures presented may become dated very quickly.

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Overview

Although Togo has no ICT policy in place, a revision to the education policy in 2003 makes reference to the need provide ICT orientation and training for students. However, the lack of resources is constraining government efforts to take significant action. NGOs are active in terms of obtaining computers for a few schools and some private schools are able to maintain computer labs by charging extra fees – a practice that is not affordable for most students in the public system. The Agence Universitaire de La Francophonie (AUF) actively working with several higher education institutions to provide access to computer facilities with high speed Internet connectivity. Television has also been used to train teachers in pedagogy.

Country Profile

The Republic of Togo is located between Benin and Ghana in West Africa and borders the Bight of Benin in the south. The country consists primarily of two savannah regions separated by a southwest-northwest range of hills (la Chaîne du Togo).

Togo is commonly divided into six geographic regions. In the south are the low-lying sandy beaches. The coastal region is narrow, and there are a number of lakes, the largest of which is Lake Togo. The three major languages are Ewe, Kabye, and Mina.^{1,2}

The main export of Togo is phosphate, which accounts for 40% of export revenue. Eighty percent of the population is agrarian.³

Table 1 provides some selected socio-economic indicators for the country.^{4,5,6}

Table 1: Socio-economic Indicators: Togo

Indicator	
Population (2006 est.)	5.5 million
Growth rate (2006 est.)	2.72%
GNP (US dollars) (2004 est.)	\$8.684 billion
GNP per capita (US dollars)	\$352
Human Development Index	147 (out of 177 countries)

Education System

Togo operates on a system of six years of primary, four years of junior secondary, three years of senior secondary, and two to four years of tertiary education. There are two

ministries responsible for the administration and management of education in the country: the National Ministry for Education and Research (MENR) and the Ministry for Vocational and Professional Training (METFP).

Six designated regional headquarters, each with defined district education structures, oversee the routine and local management of the education system and treat all issues related to research, school inspections, teaching and training.

Table 2 provides a quantitative perspective of some selected system indicators.⁷

Table 2: Selected Education Data

School Enrolment	2000	2004
Primary completion rate, total (% of relevant age group)	61.0	66.3
School enrolment, primary (% gross)*	103.7	101.1
School enrolment, secondary (% gross)*	30.4	38.9
School enrolment, tertiary (% gross)*	3.1	
Ratio of girls to boys in primary and secondary education (%)**	68.8	72.7
Literacy rate, adult total (% of people ages 15 and above)		53.2

*Percent of gross is the number enrolled as a percentage of the number in the eligible age group.

**Ratio of girls to boys is the percentage of girls to boys enrolled at primary and secondary levels in public and private schools.

Despite the regional and district structures implemented to help decentralise the management of education, the system still suffers from a heavy centralised management control.⁸

Some ministries also organise specific vocational and professional training for their future employees. For example, the Ministry of Health organises training for medical auxiliaries, the Ministry of Youth and Sports for physical training instructors, the Civil Service for administrators and officers of the customs and revenue services, and the Ministry of Rural Development for agricultural extension officers.

With the exception of the training and educational programmes organised by the Civil Service which may involve university graduates, the rest are pre-university academic or professional programmes which include in-service training.

Some NGOs are also involved in literacy and professional training activities. The Council for Higher Education and Training (CSEF) is in charge of all such programmes that do not fall under the two main educational ministries. Nonetheless, each ministry organises its own training programmes.

The education sector is allocated 21% of the country's budgetary resources. The two

public universities of Lome and Kara receive subvention from government that caters for 96% of their resources.

Between 1990 and 2002, the gap between boys' and girls' school enrolment dropped by 30%; however, the quality of teaching deteriorated as the number of qualified teachers fell drastically, as Table 3 below reveals.

Table 3: Teacher Qualifications

Year	Qualified Teachers (%)		Non-qualified teachers (%)	
	Teachers	Assistants	Trainees	Monitors
1990	28.7	47.6		23.7
2002	16.8	16.1	55.3	11.8

Educational television was an effective tool that helped the government to train and run refresher courses for thousands of teachers. However, television was curtailed in the 1990s due to the socio-political situation which led to the suspension of international co-operation and donor intervention in the sector. Currently, community FM radios transmit programmes that have an impact on public order and human rights, health and political education, gender sensitisation and equality.⁹

ICT Policies

Togo has no ICT policy.

The 1975 education reforms focused on education as it relates to the people and family life. The government revised the policy because of its limited expression and impact on intellectual and general development.

The 2003 revised policy emphasises the following priority actions in the education sector:

- Use of competence as the yardstick for reviewing teaching and training programmes
- Adoption of educational policies that take into account ongoing innovations in education, notably:
 - Initiation of students into ICT culture, productive work, and revenue-generating activities
 - Civic and moral education
 - Road safety
 - Health reproduction, STDs, and HIV/AIDS
 - Human rights education and peace
 - Education and the environment

These actions indicate a cautious admission of the need and prime concern of the government to integrate ICT into the curriculum. Meanwhile the country's budgetary constraints have crippled government initiative in the sector. Thus, the proposed actions do not delineate concrete perspectives for implementation approaches.

Notwithstanding this challenge, the private sector has carried the torch of Internet communication to most cities in Togo. A typical example is the computer services and sales company, CIB-INTA, which has sales outlets and cyber cafés in major cities in all six regions of the country.

Infrastructure

Telephone

The telephone infrastructure extends from Lome, the capital city in the south, to Dapaong, the northernmost city in Togo. The main operator, Togo Telecom, operates cellular services in addition to the fixed-line service, which is among the best in West Africa.¹⁰

There are two cellular operators in Togo (Togo Cellulaire of Togo Telecom and Moov, formerly Telecel)¹¹ and three major ISPs. Mobile telephone services cover most of the urban and semi-urban areas.^{12,13} Telephone density is about 9%, inclusive of mobile phones.

Table 4 provides a snapshot of Togo's telecommunications infrastructure implementation and usage statistics.

Table 4: Telecommunications in Togo

Type of Telecommunications	
Telephones – main lines in use	58,600 (2005)
Telephones – mobile cellular	443,600 (2005)
Radio broadcast stations	AM 2, FM 9, shortwave 4 (1998)
Television broadcast stations	3 (plus 2 repeaters) (1997)
Internet hosts	520 (2006)
Internet users	300,000 (2005)

Electrification

Togo has an installed capacity of 42 MW of electricity on a 5,640 kilometre electrification network with 872 distribution sites that provide power to 4,200 public installations (street lights, etc.) and cover 13% of the national territory.

The availability of electric power is negligible in the rural areas, with only 2% of the population having access.¹⁴ The country's energy problems may be traced to its lack of hydro and financial resources, not excluding the mismanagement of its electric power company, Compagnie Electrique du Togo (CET).¹⁵

Ghana provides Togo with 380GW/h, but this volume has plummeted recently owing to the challenges Ghana is currently facing with the low level of water in its hydro-electric dam at Akosombo – a recurring phenomenon every few years.¹⁶ Togo also receives some

electricity from the Nangbeto Dam, which is on the border with Benin and is shared by the two countries.¹⁷ Further, Togo, Benin, and Nigeria have signed an agreement for the supply of electricity from Nigeria to both countries.

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), with private sector participation, has nearly completed the West Africa Gas Pipeline (WAGP) through Benin and Togo. WAGP is part of the region's energy supply system and is to supply natural gas to the three countries.¹⁸ ECOWAS, through its West Africa Power Pool Project (WAPP), is also in the process of constructing an interconnecting electric power grid for the region that will transport power from countries with excess supply to those with low-energy levels.¹⁹

Current ICT Initiatives and Projects

Primary-level initiatives

An NGO, Mosaïque du Monde, donated five computers to a public primary school, École Publique Primaire Bohn. That facility has been used to train about 98 teachers including 15 school inspectors and pupils. This initiative, though recognised by the government, receives only FCFA5,000 (approximately USD\$10) as a contribution towards payment of monthly Internet connection fees. The Internet café has a dysfunctional air-conditioning system. Presently the facility has no Internet connection.

Mosaïque du Monde provided courses on CDs covering several subject areas that the pupils use as study material. The facility, in Lomé, is the only one of its kind in a public school. The NGO has plans to establish another similar facility in Kara.

Some private elementary schools (e.g., École Française and the American School of Lomé) have computer laboratories, but the school fee is not within the reach of the average Togolese family. Public schools charge FCFA7,000 (USD\$14) per annum, but the lowest private school fees are in excess of USD\$1400.

Secondary-level initiatives

Public secondary schools in Lomé suffer from the same problems as the elementary schools. Some private secondary schools have computer laboratories for their students, especially those schools that operate the French system of education and sit the external French examinations (e.g., École Alpha and École La Lumière), but only about 5% of Togolese youth know how to use computers.²⁰

Tertiary-level initiatives

Campus Numérique Francophonie de Lomé is an initiative of the Agence Universitaire de La Francophonie (AUF). It was created in 1996 for use by the four tertiary institutions in Lomé including Université de Lomé.²¹

The centre boasts 50 computers and a high-speed Internet service. AUF pays for Internet connectivity charges, and students are provided an access code at a subscription rate of FCFA2,000 per month (approximately USD\$4).

The facility provides opportunity to students to pursue academic programmes via e-learning with universities in the francophone world. Student applications are vetted for listed programmes and, when successful, students receive scholarships that permit them to pay about 10% to 15% of the course fee. Students are not restricted to the on-campus facility and may use their own Internet connection to pursue their programmes.²²

Resafad-Togo, the Réseau Africain de Formation à Distance, closed its doors two years ago. The project, which employed ICT, was located on the Université de Lome campus and saw the training of several head teachers of primary schools nationwide. The trained teachers were to pass on the skills acquired to teachers under their supervision.²³

The Computer Centre (Centre de Calcul) and the Distance Learning Centre (Centre pour la formation à Distance) of the Université de Lome are developing educational programmes to be launched using ICT.²⁴

Implementing ICT in Education: What Helps and What Hinders?

Table 5 below lists the core factors of the enabling, constraining, and risk factors in various sectors.^{26, 27}

Table 5: Factors Influencing ICT Adoption

Sectors	Enabling Factors	Constraining and Risk Factors
<i>ICT deployment</i>	<p>High-speed Internet connection because of recent connection to SAT3.</p> <p>Private-sector involvement in deployment of Internet services and facilities aiding access to ICT in the general population, especially in urban areas.</p>	<p><i>Constraints:</i></p> <p>Universities financially constrained from extending the facilities on campuses.</p> <p>Private sector ISPs emphasise commercial service against community service.</p> <p>Low levels of ICT literacy in the general and teaching population</p> <p><i>Risks:</i></p> <p>Possibility of failure of government or universities to renew or maintain installed facilities.</p> <p>Inability of government to extend ICT infrastructure due to financial and budgetary constraints.</p>
<i>Non-formal education</i>	<p>Community school enrolment accounts for 9% of all primary and secondary school enrolment since 1999 and continues to increase.</p> <p>NGOs create literacy and vocational programmes specifically for girls and school dropouts</p>	<p><i>Constraints:</i></p> <p>Government budgets are insufficient and do not permit meaningful assistance to initiatives.</p> <p><i>Risks:</i></p> <p>Possibility of the parent/teacher associations in the communities and the NGOs not</p>

		maintaining standards set by the ministries.
Gender balance	The ratio of girls to boys is gradually converging at the lower educational levels.	<p><i>Constraints:</i> Traditional daily household demands still take priority over girls' education.</p> <p><i>Risks:</i> No priority policy for girls; meanwhile girls make up only 20% of the tertiary-level population.</p>
Vocational and professional education	NGOs create vocational centres specifically for girls and school dropouts.	<p><i>Constraints:</i> Government unable to build more schools as required due to budgetary constraints.</p> <p><i>Risks:</i> Suspension of international co-operation due to Togo's political unrest may continue to plague the economy.</p>
ICT policy and implementation	The university and some institutions establish computer laboratories with scarce resources.	<p><i>Constraints:</i> The absence of policy impedes implementation of ICT in the education sector.</p> <p><i>Risks:</i> The suspension of international co-operation and the withdrawal of assistance affect ICT development in the education and other vital sectors.</p>

Notes

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