



Open Source Observatory Policy Factsheet

Nigeria

OSOR

1 General Information

Nigeria has initiated significant governmental reforms aimed at achieving the digital transformation of its society. This process relies on the broader coordination of technical standards at the continental level and requires national internal coordination of the policies of its 36 federated states. While the institutionalisation of open source software has not yet occurred in Nigeria, the country's economic standing places it at the forefront of digital innovation in West Africa. Nigeria boasts a significant open source community, led by two generations of developers who have spearheaded the local open source movement.

2 Actors

POLICY MAKERS

Ministry of Communications, Innovation, and Digital Economy: At the federal level, policies related to digital matters are set by this ministry. Created in 2011, it is notably responsible for the creation of the Nigeria E-Government Master Plan. The ministry hasn't yet put forward any policy on open source.

STRATEGIC PLAYER

Open Source Community Africa (OSCA): OSCA is one of the main African associations for open source developers and promotion of open source. Founded in 2018 in Nigeria, the association has promoted several projects in Nigeria and the neighbouring countries. One of the first regional centres of expertise for open source, its active community is constituted in chapters across several countries and organises a yearly festival.

3 Policy and Legal Framework

The EU-Nigeria digital economy package (2021-2024)

The EU, through its Global Gateway program, is investing €820 million between 2021 and 2024 in the digital economy of Nigeria with the objective of promoting an open internet and further digitalisation of the country's public services.

African Union Data Policy Framework

An implementation framework for the Digital Transformation Strategy, a union wide policy efforts that supports openness, this framework calls for the adoption of open standards and showcases successful open source project active in Nigeria as examples.



4 Open Source Software Initiatives

Masakhane, 2021

A grassroots organisation working on natural language processing (NLP), Masakhane uses and develops its own solutions as open source. This organisation takes on the complex task of mapping and cataloguing the large diversity of languages represented in the African continent which cannot be found in ICT systems.

OSCAfest, 2019

Organised by OSCA, this yearly festival is a community event aimed at supporting open source in the region. Following the first edition of the festival, other events such as Sustain Africa were organised at the same time, gathering more than 2000 attendees in 2023.

She Code Africa, 2019

An association that promotes the training and presence of women in tech in Africa, She Code Africa also developed the Women in Open Source Challenge (WOSCA) together with OSCA to support women to participate in open source development and contributions.

IDLELO 5, 2012

FOSSFA Africa hosted a series of yearly events held in a different country every year. Its fifth edition was organised in Nigeria's capital, Abuja, and focused on the use of FOSS in education and the creation of digital commons. Started in 2002 at the UNECA and constituted initially around the South African open source community, FOSSFA held its first IDLELO conference in 2004 in Cape Town, and the final one, IDLELO 7, in Uganda in 2016.