



## CONCEPT NOTE

# Roots to Togo — Concept Note

*The Founding 100: a diaspora heritage journey to Togo*

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**DNA → DISCOVERY → TOGO → RECONNECTION**

Draft v1.0 — October 2026

An initiative of CYWEP — Children, Youth and Women Empowerment Program

Designed and delivered with AFROAC (African Affairs Communications LLC)

## The idea in one paragraph

Roots to Togo invites a founding cohort of **100 African Americans and other members of the African diaspora** on a premium six-day heritage journey to Togo. Many participants will already hold consumer DNA results that point to the region of present-day Togo and neighbouring West African communities. The journey turns that discovery into an encounter with the history, culture and people of Togo, captured in an international documentary and designed to grow into an annual platform for genealogy, education, youth exchange, investment and diaspora tourism.

*DNA → Discovery → Togo → Reconnection*

The program is owned and coordinated by **Hemnia Djimagani** for CYWEP. **AFROAC** (African Affairs Communications LLC, Washington, D.C.) is the program design, operations and delivery partner: it creates and runs the program and handles the details, from itinerary design and suppliers to operations on the ground and participant management.

## Why it matters

- **For participants:** a respectful, well-guided homecoming that goes beyond sightseeing, with genealogy story circles, community encounters and a personal legacy commitment.
- **For Togo:** measurable spending with hotels, guides, artisans, restaurants, transport providers and performers, plus international visibility through Togolese and U.S. media.
- **For communities:** paid, consent-based cultural participation and a concrete legacy project in youth, education, cultural preservation or entrepreneurship.
- **For partners:** association with a high-profile, purpose-driven initiative and a documentary asset with long-form distribution potential.

## The experience

| Day | Theme                                | Highlights                                                                                           |
|-----|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1   | Arrival & Welcome Home               | VIP airport welcome, welcome kits, press moment, welcome dinner and introduction to Togo             |
| 2   | Lomé: Memory & Identity              | Historical orientation, artisans and fabrics, food tasting, genealogy story circle, cultural evening |
| 3   | Togoville, Lake Togo, Aného & Glidji | Lake experience, Togoville heritage, Aného/Glidji history, community lunch                           |
| 4   | Kpalimé & Kloto                      | Waterfalls and landscapes, batik and artisans, coffee/cocoa or agriculture, cultural dinner          |
| 5   | Reconnection & Impact                | Youth/community activity, business and creative roundtable, diaspora–Togo networking                 |
| 6   | Legacy & Closing                     | Reflection, artisan marketplace, personal commitments, Roots to Togo gala                            |

Optional 2–3 day northern extension to Kara and Koutammakou (UNESCO World Heritage).

## Key facts

| Item                | Plan                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Cohort              | 100 diaspora participants, 4–5 high-profile personalities (to be confirmed), production team, staff and Togolese guests; ~110–120 people at peak                                         |
| Timing              | Primary window late Jan – early Feb 2027; alternative early Sept 2027. Final dates announced only once hotels, institutions, production and anchor personalities are secured             |
| Base                | Lomé, with day programs to Togoville/Lake Togo, Aného/Glidji and Kpalimé/Kloto                                                                                                           |
| Land-program budget | \$231,000 – \$410,000 planning range for 100 participants (excludes international airfare)                                                                                               |
| Funding             | First phase: a USD 50,000 grant requested from the Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Arts, in two tranches of USD 25,000. Then sponsorship (cash and in-kind) and participant contributions |
| Media               | 20–30 minute documentary, 3–5 minute partner film, daily short-form content, photo archive                                                                                               |
| Governance          | CYWEP as project vehicle, with AFROAC as design, operations and delivery partner; local advisory council; ethics and safeguarding protocol                                               |

### ASSUMPTION TO CONFIRM

The recommended funding model is a hybrid: participants pay their own airfare plus a land contribution of about \$1,950, and sponsors cover the rest. The contribution amount is an assumption to confirm.

## Promoting Togo and changing the narrative

The Government of Togo is promoting the country as a destination for tourism and investment. Roots to Togo is designed to serve that effort directly. Every participant, film, photograph and press moment is an opportunity to show Togo as it is: welcoming, rich in heritage, culture and nature, safe to visit and easy to reach from Lomé. The aim is to replace outdated or one-dimensional images with accurate, first-hand stories, and to correct misconceptions with facts rather than slogans.

### A clear Togo story

- **One consistent message:** welcome, heritage, nature, culture, safety and accessibility from Lomé, built around the journey “DNA → Discovery → Togo → Reconnection”.
- **Aligned with national messaging:** key messages, visuals and timing agreed in advance with the Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Arts and Togo Tourisme, so the program amplifies the national destination brand rather than competing with it.
- **Consistent visual identity and co-branding rules:** clear rules on how the Roots to Togo, CYWEP, Ministry, Togo Tourisme and partner marks appear together, with official approval before anything is published.

## Told by Togolese voices

- **Togolese hosts first:** historians, cultural custodians, guides, artisans, performers and young people tell their own stories, on camera and in their own words, with consent and fair compensation.
- **Documentary and “100 Stories” archive:** a 20–30 minute documentary for Togolese and international audiences, and a recorded archive of why each participant came to Togo and what they found.
- **Earned media and press trips:** Togolese national media and U.S. and diaspora outlets are invited to cover the journey; journalists travel with a clear brief, accurate facts and access to Togolese spokespeople.
- **Creators and participants:** guidelines for content creators and participants on respectful, accurate storytelling, including what may not be filmed at sacred sites, and a shared hashtag so user-generated content builds one visible story.

## Digital marketing and a shared calendar

A content calendar runs before, during and after the journey: the application campaign, daily short-form content from Togo, the documentary premiere and anniversary moments. Content is shared with Togo Tourisme for use on national channels, optimised for search and social discovery, and measured (see “How success is measured”).

### KEY POINT

Roots to Togo speaks only about Togo: its people, places and heritage. It does not position Togo against any other destination.

## Responsible and sustainable tourism

Heritage travel only works when host communities benefit and cultural sites are respected. Roots to Togo follows recognised responsible-tourism practice and will set out these commitments in its ethics and safeguarding protocol, reviewed by the local advisory council.

| Principle                         | What Roots to Togo commits to                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Community benefit                 | Community-based activities designed with host communities; fair, agreed payment for every community, performer and host; a share of program value directed to a concrete legacy project in Togo                |
| Local procurement                 | Togolese hotels, guides, drivers, caterers, artisans and performers first; artisan purchases made directly from makers at the marketplace; suppliers paid on time and on agreed terms                          |
| Cultural and sacred-site protocol | Guidance from traditional authorities and cultural custodians; ceremonies attended only by invitation; clear rules on dress, behaviour, photography and filming; no access to sacred spaces without permission |
| Consent and privacy               | Written consent for filming and interviews; appearance releases; voluntary sharing of DNA or genealogy information; no promise of a precise Togolese ethnic or family match                                    |

| Principle                      | What Roots to Togo commits to                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Child safeguarding             | A safeguarding policy for all youth activities, trained staff, no unsupervised contact with minors, and consent from parents or guardians for any image of a child                                                             |
| Environment                    | Reduced single-use plastics (refillable water), proper waste handling at every site, and efficient group transport                                                                                                             |
| Heritage protection            | Respect for site rules and capacity at Koutammakou (UNESCO World Heritage), Togoville and Aného/Glidji; small groups at sensitive sites; visits planned with site managers                                                     |
| Visitor experience and quality | Safety and security plan, medical cover, help with visas (e-visa) and health requirements, a dedicated airport welcome, trained and accredited guides, accessibility needs met, and feedback surveys during and after the trip |

## What Togo gains

The figures below are planning estimates from the program's financial plan. They are assumptions to confirm, not results, and will be replaced by actual figures in the impact report after each edition.

| Benefit                                             | Estimate (Edition 1 unless stated)                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Direct spending in Togo                             | About \$296,400 (mid case), around 5.9 times the Ministry's USD 50,000 grant                                          |
| Revenue back to the State in year one               | \$26,000 – \$36,000 from VAT and visa fees                                                                            |
| Total economic activity                             | \$450,000 – \$600,000 once Togolese suppliers re-spend locally                                                        |
| Over three editions (100, 150 and 200 participants) | About \$1.2 million spent in Togo                                                                                     |
| Not quantified                                      | International visibility, the documentary and photo archive, diaspora goodwill, repeat visits and investment interest |

For context, World Bank data put Togo's international tourism receipts at about \$264 million in 2019, and foreign direct investment net inflows at \$79.7 million in 2023 and \$83.8 million in 2024. Edition 1 is small next to these totals; its value lies in starting an annual diaspora-tourism brand and a new channel of diaspora investment interest.

### ASSUMPTION TO CONFIRM

Estimates assume about 80% of the land budget is spent in Togo plus about \$400 of personal spending per participant, 18% VAT and visa fees, and three editions of 100, 150 and 200 participants. All are assumptions to confirm.

## Investment and the diaspora pipeline

Roots to Togo is built so that one journey leads to a lasting relationship with Togo: return visits, word of mouth, and business and investment interest.

- **Business and creative roundtable (Day 5):** participants meet Togolese entrepreneurs, business leaders and institutions; every lead is recorded and followed up after the trip.
- **Links to Togo's investment promotion bodies:** with the Ministry's guidance, interested participants are introduced to the relevant national institutions, without any claim of a specific investment amount.
- **Ambassador programme:** returning participants become Roots to Togo ambassadors who share their story and recruit the next cohort.
- **Annual edition calendar:** Edition 2 targets 150 participants and adds the northern circuit; later editions target an annual platform (targets only, to confirm).
- **Year-round products:** genealogy research trips, education and school exchanges, and festival visits, including longer stays that extend to Kara and the north.
- **Public-private partnership:** hotels, airlines, telecoms, banks, Togo Tourisme, local authorities and traditional leaders each have a defined role, announced only after written agreement.

## How success is measured

Results are measured against indicators agreed with the Ministry, independently verified where possible, and reported in an impact report after each edition. Targets will be set with the Ministry before launch.

| Area                  | Indicator                                                                                     | How it is measured                                        |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| Visibility            | Reach, earned media coverage and estimated earned media value; documentary audiences          | Media monitoring, platform analytics, broadcaster data    |
| Narrative             | Sentiment of coverage and social content about Togo; share of stories told by Togolese voices | Media and social listening, content review                |
| Arrivals and spending | Participants and guests in Togo; spending with Togolese suppliers; artisan sales              | Registration data, supplier invoices, marketplace records |
| Visitor experience    | Satisfaction and Net Promoter Score; intent to return and to recommend Togo                   | Surveys during and after the trip                         |
| Community benefit     | Payments to communities, performers and artisans; legacy project delivered                    | Payment records, partner reports                          |
| Investment            | Business and investment leads generated and followed up                                       | Roundtable records, follow-up log                         |

## What we are looking for

- **Government:** a first-phase grant of USD 50,000 (two tranches of USD 25,000) and official support from the Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Arts and Togo Tourisme, site coordination, guides, cultural programming and destination visibility. The grant is a required part of the funding plan: without it, the edition would need 96 of its 100 places filled to break even, instead of 70.
- **Traditional authorities and cultural custodians:** guidance on protocol, consent, ceremonies and filming permissions.
- **Private partners:** anchor/presenting partner, air and mobility, hotel, connectivity, banking/fintech, heritage and media/production partners.

- **Participants:** applications for the Founding 100 will open once dates and the flagship hotel are confirmed.

**NOTE**

Organisations and personalities are referred to as prospects only. No partner or ambassador will be announced before a written agreement is in place.

## Roles and governance

| Role                                            | Who                                                                                                                 | Responsibilities                                                                                                                                  |
|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Program Owner & Lead Coordinator                | Hemnia Djimaghi, CYWEP                                                                                              | Owns the program and leads all coordination, alongside AFROAC; main contact for the Ministry and partners; signs on behalf of CYWEP               |
| Program design, operations and delivery partner | AFROAC (African Affairs Communications LLC), Washington, D.C.                                                       | Creates and runs the program and handles the details: itinerary design, logistics, suppliers, operations on the ground and participant management |
| Budget and finance                              | Feteh Tebeje, CEO, AFROAC                                                                                           | Budget, financial plan, payment schedules and financial reporting to the Ministry and partners                                                    |
| Togo coordinator                                | [To be confirmed]                                                                                                   | On-the-ground coordination with sites, suppliers, communities and local authorities                                                               |
| Government counterpart (proposed)               | Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Arts and Togo Tourisme                                                               | Official support, site coordination, destination messaging, a named counterpart and a seat on the advisory council                                |
| Local advisory council                          | Historian, cultural custodian, tourism professional, youth representative, production lead, diaspora representative | Guides content, protocol and ethics; reviews the safeguarding protocol and the impact report                                                      |

## Contact

Roots to Togo — an initiative of CYWEP, designed and delivered with AFROAC

| Role                                    | Contact                                                                                                  |
|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Program Owner & Lead Coordinator        | <b>Hemnia Djimaghi</b> , CYWEP<br>Email: hemniadjimaghi@gmail.com<br>Phone / WhatsApp: +1 (240) 401-1628 |
| Program design, operations and delivery | <b>AFROAC</b> (African Affairs Communications LLC), Washington, D.C.<br>Web: afroac.org                  |
| Budget and finance                      | <b>Feteh Tebeje</b> , CEO, AFROAC<br>Email: ceo@afroac.org • Web: afroac.org                             |
| Togo coordinator                        | [To be confirmed]                                                                                        |