



RÉPUBLIQUE TOGOLAISE



Novissi

Wednesday, 8 April 2020

## PRESS RELEASE

### *Togolese Government gives support to informal workers affected by its measures against COVID-19*

**Lomé (Togo), 8 April 2020** – The Togolese Government has launched "Novissi" a cash transfer scheme to provide financial aid to informal workers in the country affected by the measures taken as part of the national response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) in Togo.

"Novissi" (which means solidarity in the Ewe language) is a cash transfer programme that will enable the Government to provide grants to the West African nation's predominantly informal working population whose daily revenues have been seriously disrupted or lost amid the government's crackdown to enforce social distancing measures.

The programme is intended for all Togolese citizens resident in the country, who are at least 18 years of age, holders of a voter's card, and whose income have been seriously disrupted or lost as a result of the measures taken by the Government to contain the spread of COVID-19.

Togo recorded its first case of COVID-19 on 6th March 2020. As at 7th April 2020, the country has confirmed a total of 65 cases of which 39 are under treatment, 23 have recovered and 3 have died. In a televised address to the nation on 1st April 2020, President Faure Essozimna Gnassingbé declared a state of health emergency announcing additional restrictions on the movement of citizens, notably a daily curfew from 8pm to 6am in the country's major cities.

The launch of the "Novissi" programme follows the President's assurance in his address to the nation that, "We will launch a cash transfer programme to help our fellow citizens who will be most affected by the crisis and the measures announced."

Every month, for as long as the response measures against COVID-19 are in force, beneficiaries of the Novissi programme will receive cash transfers from the state worth at least 30% of the minimum wage via mobile money. Financial aid received by beneficiaries each month varies by gender and profession. However, in all cases, beneficiaries receive half of the total monthly amount every two weeks.

Interested citizens can apply to receive the Novissi transfer using their mobile phones by dialling the shortcode \*855# and following the prompts. The use of mobile money for disbursement eliminates the need for intermediaries ensuring quick and transparent transfer of funds to the beneficiaries.

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Funds received under the scheme are intended to help beneficiaries to afford basic daily necessities such as food, drinking water, electricity, sanitation, and communication. As an added measure to reduce the risk of physical contact, the government strongly advises the beneficiaries to prefer mobile money over cash when using their grant for payments.

It must be recalled that a similar cash transfer programme that supports more than 61,000 households has existed in Togo since April 2019. Novissi will enable the Government to support many more households especially in these challenging times.

The cash transfer scheme is also intended to make every citizen understand the seriousness of the crisis and help them comply with the critical measures taken in the country's battle against COVID-19.

The Government is once again urging the public to strictly comply with the measures taken under the state of health emergency in force in the country. It calls on every one's sense of duty and civil responsibility to help beat the coronavirus.

For more information: <http://www.novissi.gouv.tg>

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