



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Sao Tome and Principe Country Brief August 2021



Operational Context

In 2019, the estimated GDP per capita in São Tomé and Príncipe (STP) amounted to approximately USD 2,001. Recent World Bank estimates show that about one third of the population lives on less than USD 1.9 per day and more than two thirds of the population is poor, using a poverty line of USD 3.2 per day.

In the past decade, the country has made considerable progress in reducing child mortality and malnutrition, and in improving maternal health. However, in 2014, it was estimated that 17.2 percent of children aged 6-59 months were stunted, 8.8 percent were underweight, and 4 percent were suffering from wasting.

The 2019 Human Development Index value of 0.625 puts the country in the medium human development category, ranking 135 out of 189 countries and above the Sub-Saharan Africa average.

With Sao Tome heavily dependent on food imports, food availability is unpredictable: there is no deep-sea port, and, in bad weather, landing is difficult on the country's single short airstrip. In addition, no cereals are cultivated on the island. The country is prone to natural hazards such as floods and landslides, which negatively affect crop development and road access as well as destroy houses and household assets.

WFP assistance is focused on strengthening capacities of the Government to implement the national sustainable home-grown school feeding programme, which reaches over 50,000 children attending schools (around 25 percent of total population) and facilitating smallholder farmers' access to markets.

Sao Tome and Principe confirmed its first case of COVID-19 on 6 April 2020.

WFP has been present in Sao Tome and Principe since 1976.



Population: **215,056**

2019 Human Development Index: **135 out of 189**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

Chronic malnutrition: **17.2% of children between 6-59 months**

In Numbers

USD 1 m six months (September 2021 – February 2022) net funding requirements.

Operational Updates (August – 2021)

- Since 1976, WFP is supporting the implementation of school feeding in São Tomé and Príncipe either by direct implementation until 2015, or through capacity strengthening for the National School Feeding and Health Programme (PNASE) created in 2012. With the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, many borders were closed creating a serious food security problem in the country, especially in the most vulnerable families. To mitigate the COVID-19 impact on the lives of these families, WFP provided direct food assistance to 5,000 vulnerable girls and boys, and their parents, in 209 schools in six districts, and for the Autonomous Region of Príncipe. On 2 August WFP carried out a monitoring visit to assess the conditions of food warehousing, to ensure food safety and quality. The delivery and distribution of food is underway and is aligned with WFP's food quality standards and COVID-19 prevention measures.
- Along with one of its main partners in STP, Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) ADDAPA, WFP is piloting the implementation of school gardens in two districts of São Tomé: Caué and Lembá. The gardens will serve these communities' schools with fresh vegetables and fruits. It will operate as suppliers of the food staples to smaller schools nearby. With ADAPPA employee's assistance, gardeners hired by the Ministry of Education are the principal caretakers of these gardens in the backyard of schools. On 3 August, a WFP team visited the Diogo Vaz and Neves schools in the district of Lembá, where gardeners have already set up the space and sowed the seeds of crops that will supply the meals already in the beginning of the school year.
- Jointly with other UN agencies, namely, ILO, UNFPA and UN-HABITAT, WFP STP submitted a funding proposal to the SDG FUND on 27 August. The joint initiative will help the Government of Sao Tome and Principe to promote sustainable local food value chains, rural development, and resilience through investment in an environmentally friendly agri-food industry and job creation for vulnerable women and female workers. The project is aligned with the UN COVID-19 socio-economic recovery plan (SERP), national development programmes and strategies – including the Zero Hunger Strategic Review.

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Main photo: Credit: WFP/Jorcilina Correia

Caption: Children having their school meals after the school reopening in April 2021

Country Strategic Plan (2019-2024)

2021 Total Requirement (in USD)	2021 Available Contributions (in USD)	Six Month (Jul- Dec) Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
1.6 m	1.2 m	1 m

*Six-month net funding requirements as of 14 July 2021.

Strategic Result 5: Developing countries have strengthened capacities to implement SDGs

Strategic Outcome 1: The Government of Sao Tome and Principe has strengthened capacity to implement an environmentally and socially sustainable, gender-transformative and smallholder-friendly home-grown school meals (HGSM) programme and related food security and nutrition policies and programmes nationwide by 2030.

Focus area: Root Causes

Activities:

- Provide capacity strengthening (including through SSC) to the Government in the design, management and coordination of an environmentally and socially sustainable, gender-transformative and nutrition-sensitive HGSM programme and related FS&N policies and programmes.
- Provide capacity strengthening and coordination support to the Government in providing incentives for sustainable and equitable local food value chains and stimulating smallholder agricultural markets.

Strategic Result 2: Access to food

Strategic Outcome 2: Crisis-affected populations including school children in targeted areas are able to meet their basic food and nutrition needs during and in the aftermath of crisis.

Focus area: Crisis Response

Activities:

- Provide food and nutrition assistance to crisis-affected populations through in-kind transfers

Challenges

- Programme implementation during the COVID-19 pandemic continues to represent one of the major WFP challenges in Sao Tome and Principe in 2021. Some of the containment measures declared by the Government which affected the implementation of activities and WFP's capacity to organize in-person meetings with government counterparts, stakeholders and donors were eased but not completely lifted. Schools are in holidays and on-site activities for school feeding will resume in September when schools reopen.
- The funding environment continues to be challenging and is another concern for WFP in STP that might affect the implementation of an innovative home-grown school feeding programme linked to smallholder farmers' market.

Partnerships

- PNASSE, the National Council for Food Security and Nutrition (CONSAN) and the National Centre for Supporting Smallholder Farmers (CADR) remain WFP main partners in STP.

Communication

- As part of the celebration of World Breastfeeding Day, WFP STP prepared some multimedia content for dissemination on WFP's internal and external channels platforms at global and regional level and in the national media.
- On 23 August, public media outlets, Sao Tomean Television (TVS), Sao Tome and Principe National Radio (RNSTP), and private online media [Tela Non](#) published the same story, drafted by the WFP STP. It reported on a joint WFP/ (São and Tomé and Príncipe Agronomic and Technological Research Centre (CIAT) inspection and monitoring mission, to assess the safety and quality conditions of food at the warehouse of locally contracted company SOMEX. This food will supply the national school feeding and health programme.

Donors

Donors to WFP Sao Tome and Principe in 2021 include the UN COVID-19 Multi-Partner Trust Fund and the Global Partnership for Education Fund.