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. According to the same Human Development Report 2020, Sao Tome and Principe has a Gender Inequality Index (GII) value of 0.537, ranking it 133 out of 162 countries in the 2019 index.

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.

Since 1976, WFP is supporting the implementation of school feeding in São Tomé and Principe, either by direct implementation during emergency periods, upon request by the Government – or through capacity strengthening for the National School Feeding and Health Programme (PNASE) created in 2012.

Operational Updates

- In January 2022, WFP delivered food commodities to government warehouses that enabled the National School Feeding and Health Programme (PNASE) to assist 20,000 school-aged children in January and for the following four months. PNASE provides on-site school meals to 50,000 schoolchildren across the country. WFP’s school feeding activity, funded by the Chellaram Foundation, supports 20,000 (40 percent) of the schoolchildren targeted by the PNASE.

- In January, WFP procured 41 metric tons (mt) of additional food commodities including rice, pasta, dried beans, and sugar. These commodities complement the 354 mt of previously purchased food for on-site school feeding - reaching a total of 395 mt of food delivered to the Government’s warehouses for distribution to schools. Contributing to the containment of the COVID-19 pandemic, WFP completed the procurement of hygiene kits (face masks and soaps) for 20,000 schoolchildren. These items will be distributed in February 2022.

- A joint SDG Fund proposal was submitted by WFP, UN-Habitat, the United Nations Population Fund, and the International Labour Organization. The submitted project aims to promote local food value chains and equitable job opportunities through a sustainable agri-food industry in the country. The final decision on the proposal is expected in February.

- WFP carried out a field mission to assess schools’ needs in terms of access to energy, water, sanitation and hygiene. The mission included various meetings with potential private sector donors, other UN agencies and the Government, in the framework of an initiative to ensure that hot meals are served to children at the school’s canteens in proper sanitary conditions.

In Numbers

- **40 mt** of food assistance distributed
- USD **1.6 m** six-month (February-July 2022) net funding requirements
- **20,000 people assisted** in January 2022

**Operational Updates**

- In January 2022, WFP delivered food commodities to government warehouses that enabled the National School Feeding and Health Programme (PNASE) to assist 20,000 school-aged children in January and for the following four months. PNASE provides on-site school meals to 50,000 schoolchildren across the country. WFP’s school feeding activity, funded by the Chellaram Foundation, supports 20,000 (40 percent) of the schoolchildren targeted by the PNASE.

- In January, WFP procured 41 metric tons (mt) of additional food commodities including rice, pasta, dried beans, and sugar. These commodities complement the 354 mt of previously purchased food for on-site school feeding - reaching a total of 395 mt of food delivered to the Government’s warehouses for distribution to schools. Contributing to the containment of the COVID-19 pandemic, WFP completed the procurement of hygiene kits (face masks and soaps) for 20,000 schoolchildren. These items will be distributed in February 2022.

- A joint SDG Fund proposal was submitted by WFP, UN-Habitat, the United Nations Population Fund, and the International Labour Organization. The submitted project aims to promote local food value chains and equitable job opportunities through a sustainable agri-food industry in the country. The final decision on the proposal is expected in February.

- WFP carried out a field mission to assess schools’ needs in terms of access to energy, water, sanitation and hygiene. The mission included various meetings with potential private sector donors, other UN agencies and the Government, in the framework of an initiative to ensure that hot meals are served to children at the school’s canteens in proper sanitary conditions.

**Country Brief**

January 2022

**Population:** 215,056

**Income level:** lower middle

**Chronic malnutrition:** 17.2 percent of children aged 6-59 months

**2020 Human Development Index ranking:** 135 out of 189 countries

**Contact info:** Edna Peres (edna.peres@wfp.org)

**Country Director:** Wanja Kaaria

**Further information:** https://www.wfp.org/countries/sao-tome-and-principe

**Photo credit:** © WFP/Jorcilina Correia

**Photo caption:** School meals contribute to gender equality in education.
WFP Country Strategy

Country Strategic Plan (2017-2021)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2022 Total Requirements (in USD)</th>
<th>2022 Available Contributions (in USD)</th>
<th>Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.7 m</td>
<td>0.8 m</td>
<td>1.6 m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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-aged 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

- On 13 and 17 January, WFP oversaw the resumption of on-site school meals in Lobata District, where daily meals are provided to 536 children in the Adao de Deus primary school in Santo Amaro locality. The school kitchen, warehouse and canteen implement appropriate hygiene measures to meet food safety and quality standards, as well as COVID-19 sanitary protocols. WFP continues to coordinate with PNASE to ensure the good functioning of the school canteens.
- On 20 January, WFP conducted a field visit to Lembá District to assess the food security situation in the disaster-affected communities in the aftermath of the 28 and 29 December torrential rains and temporary floods. A report was produced to support resource mobilisation for emergency assistance. The mission established that most of the population of the district, estimated at around 18,000 inhabitants, have no access to drinking water due to the destruction of its water treatment and distribution plant. At least 48 farming families have lost their crops and adopted unsustainable coping mechanisms to meet their food needs. Four communities whose livelihoods depend on agriculture and livestock are currently isolated in a remote area of the country, and are prevented from transporting their crops due to a collapsed bridge.

- On 29 and 30 January, WFP joined an assessment mission led by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and REACH initiative for a post-flood humanitarian assessment in the six districts of the main island of Sao Tome and Principe: Água Grande, Mé-Zóchi, Caué, Lembá, Lobata and Cantagalo. The mission assessed the cross-sectoral impact of the floods, notably on food security and livelihoods; water and sanitation; health; education; protection; and infrastructure. Preliminary results show that over 7,000 agricultural plants were destroyed, over 90 farmers were affected; and twelve fishermen lost their boats and tools. In Mé-Zóchi district, the PNASE could not deliver food commodities to three primary schools in the most affected communities due to road breaks and landslides.

- The December torrential rains and twelve temporary floods caused significant destruction across the country. Considered by local authorities as the most intense rainfall in 24 hours over the last 30 years in the country, it destroyed three bridges and cut several roads as a result of landslides. Most of the population of the district of Lembá, estimated at around 18,000 inhabitants, have no access to drinking water since these events destroyed the water treatment and distribution systems.

- The Government declared a 15-day state of calamity in the country, effective from 30 December 2021. It was extended until the first week of February due to the combined effects of the disaster and the worsening COVID-19 pandemic. On December 30, the Government requested the United Nations system to assist in addressing the urgent needs of the most affected populations (smallholder farmers and fishermen) whose livelihoods were destroyed by the floods.

- WFP’s funding situation continues to be challenging with USD 1.6 million urgently needed to ensure the implementation of the innovative home-grown school feeding programme in next five months.

Donors

Donors to WFP STP in 2022 include the Government of Sao Tome and Principe and the Chellaram Foundation.