



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Sao Tome and Principe Country Brief February 2022



Operational Context

Recent World Bank estimates show that about one third of the population of Sao Tome and Principe lives on less than USD 1.9 per day, while more than two thirds of the population live below the World Bank's 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, it is estimated that 12 percent of children under 5 years of age were stunted, while 4 percent were affected by wasting.

The 2019 Human Development Index 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 2020 Human Development Report, Sao Tome and Principe has a Gender Inequality Index (GII) value of 0.537, ranking it 133rd 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.

Population: **215,056**

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

Income level: **lower middle**

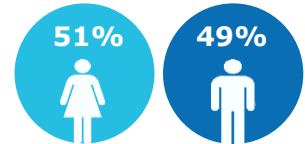
Chronic malnutrition: **17.2 percent of children aged 6-59 months**

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 February 2022



Operational Updates

- In February 2022, through the National School Feeding and Health Programme (PNASE), WFP assisted 20,000 school-aged children with on-site school meals in four districts in Sao Tome and in the Autonomous Region of Principe. Funded by the Chellaram Foundation, WFP's school feeding activity supports 20,000 schoolchildren, representing 40 percent of the 50,000 schoolchildren that PNASE assists with daily hot meals in schools across the country. WFP continued its fundraising efforts to ensure the availability of funds for the next school year.
- WFP visited 12 schools and government warehouses to assess schools' needs in terms of access to energy, water, sanitation and hygiene. This assessment was part of WFP's ongoing efforts to ensure that school canteens serve hot meals to children in proper sanitary conditions and have access to sustainable and affordable energy sources.
- WFP and the National Health and School Feeding Programme (PNASE) provided a refresher training on warehouse management and reporting to PNASE field staff and implementing partners.
- On 2 February, WFP met with representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development to discuss the recent floods and identify how WFP can support the Government's response. The Ministry requested urgent technical and financial support to address the immediate needs of the most affected populations, including smallholder farmers and fishermen whose livelihoods were completely disrupted after losing their production, materials and houses during the 28-29 December torrential rains and flash floods.

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Photo credit: © WFP/Milton Machel

Photo caption: Farm fields completely washed away by rain and floods.

Country Strategic Plan (2017-2021)

2022 Total Requirements (in USD)	2022 Available Contributions (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
1.7 m	0.8 m	1.6 m

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

Monitoring, Assessments and Communications

- On 16 February, following the post-floods multisectoral humanitarian assessment led by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the REACH Initiative in January, WFP provided its analysis on food security and livelihoods to the UN Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO). Requested by the Government to assess the damage caused by the torrential rains and floods, the report also offers key recommendations for recovery plans and projects.
- On 16 February, WFP disseminated through Santomean and Lusophone media channels a news release on the Sahel food crisis. According to the release, the number

of people on the brink of extreme hunger across the Sahel has increased nearly tenfold in the past three years, while the number of internally displaced persons by nearly 400 percent as the region grapples with a severe food crisis. Translated into Portuguese, the news release generated news stories in at least 13 Portuguese-speaking media outlets from Sao Tome, Guinea-Bissau, Portugal, Brazil, and Angola.

Challenges

On 28 February, most of the island of São Tomé was left without access to electricity for more than 24 hours. This was due to the damaged bridge which connects the country's fuel hub to the capital city, thereby preventing the passage of tanker trucks that supply fuel for energy production. The bridge was severely weakened after the rains of late December and became impassable after additional heavy rains in mid-February. The power outage and fuel shortages in the city of Sao Tome for about three days affected WFP's operations such as the transport and storage of products intended for school meals. This crisis demonstrates the devastating impact of extreme weather events in the country which are becoming increasingly unpredictable and severe.

- In the aftermath of the December 2021 torrential rains and floods, the Government requested WFP to urgently provide a short- and medium-term support to affected populations whose livelihoods were completely destroyed, and also support recovery efforts aimed at restoring local food systems and disrupted value chains. WFP urgently requires USD 300,000 to address these needs.
- WFP's funding situation continues to be challenging. The six-month net funding requirements for WFP's various activities amount to USD 1.6 million, including the implementation of the innovative home-grown school feeding programme over the next four months.

Donors

Donors to WFP's CSP include the Government of Sao Tome and Principe, the Chellaram Foundation and UN other funds and agencies.