



World Food Programme

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Sao Tome & Principe WFP Country Brief

April - June 2025

Operational Context

Sao Tome and Principe, an isolated lower-middle-income island nation, grapples with high trade costs and climate vulnerabilities. Despite these economic challenges, São Tomé and Príncipe graduated from the United Nations' Least Developed Countries (LDC) category in December 2024, becoming the eighth country to do so.

This milestone reflects improvements in education, health, and per capita income. However, the transition presents risks, including potential reductions in external financial support. Progress has been made in reducing child mortality, malnutrition, and improving maternal health over the past decade, yet food insecurity remains. Education challenges persist, affecting school enrolment and participation in the national school feeding programme. Of nearly 82,000 school-aged children, only 56 percent are enrolled and can benefit from school meals under the National School Meals and Health Programme (PNASE).

The country is one of the few in Africa with universal school feeding coverage. WFP in Sao Tome and Principe focuses on strengthening government capacities, assisting the most vulnerable schoolchildren, supporting small farmers, and promoting local food value chains. In 2024, WFP remained focused on supporting the Government to address the needs of the most vulnerable populations, particularly school-aged children, women, and smallholder farmers.



Income Level: **Lower middle**

Population: **215.056**

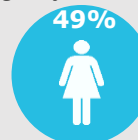
2023/2024 Human Development Report: **141 out of 193 countries**

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

In Numbers

US\$ 1.2 million six-month (July 2025 – December 2025) net funding requirements

50,000 children can receive food assistance in the event of crisis and emergency



Operational Updates

- In April, a WFP team accompanied the NGO ADAPPA in delivering local products to schools, as part of a joint effort to promote sustainable food value chains in the country. This is part of a project funded by the Brazilian Government, which aims to integrate small farmers into the school feeding system, strengthening the local economy and guaranteeing fresh, nutritious food for 6,626 students in 50 schools.
- In May, WFP met with the Minister of Agriculture to discuss the main agricultural projects supported by WFP emphasizing sustainable agriculture, school feeding and climate adaptation actions. WFP Country Director said that new initiatives are in line with WFP's Strategic Plan, prioritising local production and strengthening value chains. WFP is reaffirming its role as a strategic partner for inclusive and resilient development in STP.
- In May, the rehabilitated warehouse of the National School Feeding and Health Programme (PNASE) was inaugurated on Príncipe Island, reinforcing school feeding logistics in the region. The ceremony was attended by local authorities, WFP representatives and international partners and was funded by the United Kingdom and Portuguese Cooperation. WFP Country Director highlighted the strategic role of the warehouse for the programme's efficiency. The interventions emphasised the importance of the infrastructure for food security, directly benefiting the students and the local community.
- In May, WFP Country Director met with Prime Minister Américo Ramos to strengthen cooperation in sustainable food security and discussed the potential of Green Climate Fund funded projects to promote climate-resilience and green infrastructure. A proposal for the Project Preparation Facility was submitted in June. They also discussed the importance of reducing dependence on imports and promoting the consumption of local products in school canteens.
- In June, WFP met with the Ambassador of China to present WFP's main areas of activity, highlighting ongoing projects related to green energy and the supply of Food Preparation and Preservation Equipment (FPE). Emphasis was placed on expanding school coverage and infrastructures and exploring possible cooperation synergies, including links with various ministries in the context of projects under negotiation with the São Toméan Government.

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Photo credit: © Jorcilina Correia/WFP

Photo caption: WFP Director speaks at the inauguration ceremony of the PNASE warehouse in Príncipe

Country Strategic Plan (2024-2028)

Total Requirements (US\$)	Total Received (US\$)
15.3 million	2 million
2025 Requirements (US\$)	Six-Month (Jul-Dec) Net Funding Requirements (in US\$)
2.9 million	1.2 million

SDG target 1: Access to food

Strategic Outcome 1: Crisis-affected populations in Sao Tome and Principe are able to meet their food and other essential needs, before, during and in the aftermath of emergencies and disasters.

Focus area: *Crisis response.*

Activity 1: Provide assistance to affected populations before, during and after crisis to meet their essential needs.

SDG target 9: Capacity building

Strategic Outcome 2: By 2030, the Government has strengthened capacity to deliver a sustainable school feeding programme as part of strengthened social protection and resilient food systems.

Focus area: *Resilience building*

Activity 2: Provide capacity strengthening support to the Government and stakeholders with the aim of enabling them to deliver a nutrition-sensitive and gender-sensitive green and sustainable home-grown school feeding programme.

Activity 3: Provide technical assistance to the Government and stakeholders to support food system actors with the aim of enabling them to increase local nutritious, green, and sustainable food production and access to markets, including schools.

Activity 4: Provide capacity strengthening to the Government and stakeholders with the aim of enabling them to improve emergency preparedness and response, anticipatory action, early warning, and shock-responsive social protection systems, with a climate resilient and environmentally sustainable approach.

Donors

Donors to WFP's CSP include the Government of São Tomé and Príncipe, the Portugal cooperation and other member states, the UK Government, the SDG Joint Fund, the Private Sector, and other UN funds and agencies.

- In June, under the Presidency of São Tomé and Príncipe, the country hosted the 2nd CPLP International Forum on Cooperation in Education, bringing together representatives from member states and UN agencies to strengthen inclusive and sustainable education policies.
- WFP, represented by the Head of Office, presented the agency's contribution to the CPLP Strategic Plan for Cooperation in Education (2022-2026), highlighting school feeding as a tool for human development and social inclusion, sharing experiences such as strengthening PNASE, the CPLP Conference on good practices and projects in food value chains, and reaffirming its commitment to resilient food systems and the most vulnerable communities.
- In June, WFP celebrated the Day of the African Child by launching a video reminding us that feeding a child means guaranteeing dignity, health and opportunities and highlighting the partnership between WFP and the National School Feeding and Health Programme (PNASE). Every day, this programme feeds thousands of children in São Tomé and Príncipe strengthening their right to learn and grow with quality of life.
- In June, the United Nations Joint Project 'Promoting Local Food Value Chains and Equitable Employment Opportunities through a Sustainable Agri-Food Industry in São Tomé and Príncipe', financed by the SDG Fund, was concluded. This joint ILO, UNFPA, UN-HABITAT and WFP project, strengthened food security, created local jobs and empowered women and young people, culminating in the delivery of the Agri-Food Processing Unit in Uba Budo, an Irrigation System in CAMAVO and a Community Counselling Centre, leaving a legacy of multi-sectoral cooperation for more sustainable, inclusive and resilient rural development in the country.

Communication

- A PNASE warehouse was inaugurated in Príncipe with WFP's support. The event was covered by local and national media and highlighted WFP's strategic role as a Government partner to advance food security and nutrition in the country.



Figure 1 Rehabilitated PNASE warehouse

Joint Activities

During the months of April and May, coordination meetings were held for the Joint Green Infrastructure for Health and Education Project, where progress on the execution of activities, the possible extension of the project and the preparation of the Steering Committee scheduled for June were discussed. At the same time, meetings were held with the Engineering, Procurement and Compliance units, together with the company Enviroearth, to analyse the next steps and deal with payment issues.