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Further Information

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SPR Reading Guidance



Transitioning Towards a Nationally-Owned School Feeding and Health Programme in Sao Tome and Príncipe (2012-2016)
Standard Project Report 2016

World Food Programme in Sao Tome and Principe, Democratic Republic of (ST)



World Food Programme

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Country Context and WFP Objectives



Country Context

Sao Tome and Principe continues to experience financial and socio-economic difficulties despite reaching a gross domestic product (GDP) of 1,864 per capita in 2011. The economy is almost entirely based on cacao, but its annual output has decreased sharply in recent years. No cereals are cultivated on the island. Fishing activities are limited due to the lack of adequate resources including navigation and communication equipment. Consequently, the country suffers stock shortages, particularly for cereals. Food availability and market stability, specifically in the peak of the rainy season, are unpredictable due to limited infrastructure.

The country is heavily dependent on food imports, availability is unpredictable as there is no deep sea port and in bad weather, landing is difficult on the country's short airstrip. The country is prone to natural disasters such as floods and landslides, which affect crops and road access and destroy houses and household assets.

The country ranks 143 out of 188 in the 2015 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Index. The Second National Strategy for Poverty Reduction 2012-2016, reveals that 66 percent of the country's population, more than 160,000 people, are living in absolute poverty, of which 12 percent live in extreme poverty with limited access to education, health facilities, drinking water or basic sanitation. The poverty threshold is estimated at USD 611 per year, the equivalent of USD 1.70 per person, per day.

One out of eight children dies before the age of 5 and life expectancy is 66 years. Data from the last Demographic and Health Survey (2008/09) reveals that the chronic malnutrition rate among children aged 6 to 59 months is 29 percent, while the global acute malnutrition (GAM) rate is 10 percent, both considered "serious" levels of malnutrition according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

To encourage enrolment, education from 1st to 6th grade is free. The national enrolment rate is at 68 percent, and the system is yet to achieve global coverage. Adult literacy rate is at 89.6 percent in women and 87.5 percent in men.

Response of the Government and Strategic Coordination

Since the beginning of the school year 2015/16, the school meals programme targeting public kindergartens, primary and secondary schools has been managed by the Government, but continues to face critical funding gaps.

In 2016, the second component of the project, Capacity Development and Augmentation, focused on providing technical assistance to the Coordination Unit of the National School Feeding and Health Programme (PNASE), by gradually transferring all responsibility of school meals provision to the Government while simultaneously strengthening the capacity of government officials in school meals management.

With a view to enhance a national autonomous and sustainable school meals programme more focused on local production, WFP participated in a joint pilot project, the Home Grown School Feeding comprising four non-governmental organizations (2 national and 2 international), PNASE and the Ministry of Fishing, benefiting 9,631 schoolchildren. Funded by the European Union and co-funded by WFP, the main objectives of this initiative were to replace imported dry beans, important source of protein, with local product and to introduce fish caught locally in schools meals menus.

After recommendations from Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) in October 2016 and from the 2015 decentralised final evaluation were taken into consideration, a budget revision to extend operations through December 2017 was approved. Sao Tome country office will therefore continue the implementation of Home Grown School Feeding and other linkages between school meals and local agriculture in the context of social protection or the social safety nets projects of the Government.

In collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), WFP supported PNASE throughout the elaboration of the first draft of the National Strategy on Schools Meals.

Summary of WFP Operational Objectives

Development project 200295 focused on providing schoolchildren with school meals and supporting the Government with capacity development activities. The objective is for the Government to acquire sufficient capacity to manage a national school meals programme by gradually transferring responsibility.

During this gradual transfer, WFP continues to provide technical assistance to the Coordination Unit of the National School Feeding and Health Programme (PNASE) and the Government.

This project contributes to WFP Strategic Objective 4 “Reduce undernutrition and break the cycle of hunger”, and is in line with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2012–2016 and the Government's Poverty Reduction Policy Strategy. It aims to support the Government's efforts to increase access to basic education through food and nutrition assistance, provide food security analysis tools such as the Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis (CFSVA) and improve the gender balance. Additionally, WFP worked with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Government to improve hygiene and sanitation at schools and kindergartens, and to integrate nutrition aspects in the national nutrition policy.

Country Resources and Results

Resources for Results

In 2016, WFP operations continued to focus on capacity development and augmentation providing technical assistance to the Coordination Unit of the National School Feeding and Health Programme (PNASE) and gradually transferring the responsibility of school meals management to the Government.

The main challenge was to continue strengthening the capacity of and providing technical assistance to the Government in school meals management, monitoring and evaluation and warehouse management, with only 45 percent of the resources planned. WFP interrupted nutrition activities under field level agreement (FLA) with HELPO, a Portuguese non-governmental organization (NGO), and focused its efforts on the purchase and promotion of local products for school menus.

Achievements at Country Level

Through its five year transition strategy, Development project 200295 continued to provide school meals to all children in all public kindergartens and primary and secondary schools while strengthening the capacity of the Government in school meal management, resource mobilization and monitoring and evaluation (M&E).

Despite critical funding gaps, WFP continued to support the school meals programme and the Home Grown School Feeding initiative and successfully completed: i) a baseline survey on the food security situation of the target population (12 fishing communities of the pilot Project); ii) training on nutritional education to the target population; iii) training of cooks and the National School Feeding and Health Programme's (PNASE) staff on the handling and processing of fish; iv) formulation, testing and publication of a Nutrition Manual for schoolchildren; and v) design and elaboration of a Teaching Manual for schools.

WFP collaborated with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Brazilian Agency Corporation (ABC), to support PNASE for the elaboration of the School Meals National Strategy. Through its advocacy effort towards the Ministry of Education and National Assembly, WFP is expecting imminent approval.

In 2016, WFP trained 169 teachers and headmasters working in management of school meals in all districts of the country, including the Principe Autonomous Region, in M&E and warehouse management. Financial and technical support from the WFP Regional Bureau helped the country to achieve decentralised evaluation and Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) exercise to know the gaps, continue the hand-over process and prepare the new programme.

Supply Chain

As of September 2015, WFP ended commodity distribution and logistical management of the school meals programme, and transferred the responsibility to the Government who is now managing the supply chain with WFP support.

In 2016, WFP continued to provide technical assistance in logistical issues and provided training to the National School Feeding and Health Programme (PNASE) staff in food management and deliveries.

WFP, in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Agency of the United Nations (FAO), began a national survey in local purchase processes. A workshop was organised with all partners working in agriculture, the Ministry of Agriculture and local farmers with the objective to understand current processes and challenges in order to increase local purchases for school meals.

Implementation of Evaluation Recommendations and Lessons Learned

A Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) and a decentralised evaluation were carried out in 2016. Their recommendations led to the approval of one-year extension of the project.

In line with the ongoing strategy to transfer responsibilities to the Government and with a view to sustainability, recommendations of both evaluations focused on strengthening the financial, human and institutional capacity of the Government with an emphasis on resource mobilization, partnerships and coordination.

SABER deemed the school meals programme in Sao Tome and Principe at the “emerging stage”, with a stable education environment despite some weaknesses in Government capacity.

Due to lack of resources, Sao Tome country office could not put in place all the recommendations. However, WFP organised training for the staff of the National School Feeding and Health Programme (PNASE) in monitoring and evaluation and technical support in management and logistics. WFP actively participated in the elaboration of the school meals' National Strategic Plan promoting the introduction of local products as recommended in the decentralised evaluation.

Project Objectives and Results

Project Objectives

In line with WFP Strategic Objective 4, the Development Project 200295 aims to: i) maintain the high level of access to education and human capital development in assisted schools and kindergartens; ii) strengthen the capacity of government ministries, particularly the National School Feeding and Health Programme (PNASE), in school meals management, resource mobilization, monitoring and evaluation and other critical areas; and iii) transfer school meals management responsibilities from WFP to PNASE and provide continued technical assistance over the five-year project period (2012–2016) in order to lay the groundwork for a sustainable, nationally-owned school meal programme.

This project continues to focus on capacity development and augmentation, providing technical assistance to the PNASE coordination unit for a gradual transfer of responsibility.



Approved Budget for Project Duration (USD)

Cost Category	
Capacity Dev.t and Augmentation	602,805
Direct Support Costs	777,519
Food and Related Costs	3,957,714
Indirect Support Costs	373,662
Total	5,711,701

Project Activities

Development project 200295 continued to focus on the capacity development and augmentation component, providing technical, material and financial assistance to the Coordination Unit of the National School Feeding and Health Programme (PNASE) to enable the Government to implement a more efficient, effective and quality school meals programme in Sao Tome and Principe.

To contribute to a successful transition, WFP focused its operations on the training of school meals managers, teachers and headmasters in public schools and kindergartens, as well as staff in the Ministry of Education and local authorities. WFP provided advice and support to PNASE on commodities distribution and logistics operations.

For the sustainability of the programme, WFP continued its active involvement in the Home Grown School Feeding initiative promoting the use of local products in school meals.

Operational Partnerships

The Ministry of Education remains WFP's main operational partner.

A joint initiative funded by the European Union and co-financed by WFP including non-governmental organizations (NGOs): Sea, Environment and Craft Fishing (MARAPA), Local Initiatives Development (ZATONA–ADIL), Sea Technology Centre (CETMAR), and Institute of Hunger Studies, European Union and the General Department for Fisheries of the Ministry of Finance, Trade and the Blue Economy, enabled the set up of a pilot project promoting the use of local products in school meals. The focus on local production was further enhanced by an ongoing collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nation (FAO) and the Brazilian Cooperating Agency (ABC) to develop the School Meals National Strategic Plan for the period 2017–2019, with the objective to increase the use of local products from 20 percent to 80 percent, through enhanced participation of fishermen and

fishmongers and small farmers in the community.

Furthermore, working jointly with the Ministry of Education, WFP provided technical assistance and financial support for the second Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) school meals assessment in October 2016, with the participation of representatives from other ministries, United Nations Agencies, NGOs, as well as headmasters, school meals managers, parents, cooks, local authorities, food producers associations and cooperatives and other stakeholders.

Performance Monitoring

Both a decentralised evaluation and Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) identified monitoring and evaluation (M&E) as a critical area with room for improvement, particularly in the transition process to full management of the school meals programme under the responsibility of the Government.

With the monitoring of outcomes currently fully depending on the Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Communication providing performance data, most outcome indicators could not be reported on in 2016.

To complete the hand-over process successfully, WFP plans to help the National School Feeding and Health Programme (PNASE), with the financial and technical support from the WFP Regional Bureau, to create a database for an integrated system of M&E within the programme.

Results/Outcomes

In October 2016, the Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) was conducted by WFP, to assess strengths and weaknesses of the school meals policies, institutional arrangements and systems, in order to help plan improvement. The SABER assessment revealed that the overall National Capacity Index (NCI) in 2016 is at 2.5 (out of 5), the same value as 2014.

Indicators in the assessment measure progress towards achieving goals under five main pillars: Policy Framework, Financial Capacity, Institutional Capacity and Coordination, Design and Implementation, and Community Roles.

The policy framework was scored as 'established', as the National School Feeding and Health Programme (PNASE) is already in place. In spite of the formal set up, there is a need to disseminate information towards target groups and stakeholders. WFP is involved in a communication campaign promoting the national strategy through radio and television broadcast in partnership with the Ministry of Education.

Financial capacity, institutional capacity and coordination, community participation were scored as 'emerging'. The main concern remains financial capacity as funding has been a key challenge throughout the programme implementation. As stated in SABER's recommendations: i) it is priority to confer an exclusive budget, so that, the programme cannot have financial constraints; and ii) it should urgently have an administrative and financial autonomy. Therefore, the main objective of the one year project extension by WFP is to address and remedy the financial situation with a view to sustainability. To date, available resources are far from sufficient and the budget allocated by the Government cannot sustain the initiative.

In response to the 'latent' score for design and implementation, WFP provides technical assistance to the Coordination Unit in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and warehouse management.

The stable 2.5 NCI value since 2014 may be explained by the critical lack of funding that hampered several operations including regular monitoring of the logistics system, as well as some weaknesses identified in community participation due to low awareness of the programme. This is currently being addressed with a national communication campaign.

The status of the education system has globally improved as indicated in the 2015/16 report by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Communication, especially in terms of pass rate and retention rate. The positive results are linked to better learning conditions that motivated children to remain in school until the end of school year, trainings of teachers on students motivation organized in collaboration with the Brazilian and Portuguese governments, and the building of new schools and new classrooms.

Progress Towards Gender Equality

Ninety-five (95) percent of school meals are prepared by women selected among the most food-insecure households in the community. This is an opportunity for them to get a stable income from the Government.

WFP encouraged women to participate in school management committees in leadership positions, and their participation increased from 69 percent in 2015 to 73 percent in 2016.

The gender ratio remained stable at 1.04. The National School Feeding and Health Programme (PNASE) works closely with Parent-Teacher Associations to develop an action plan to improve girls attendance in school, and to encourage enrolment with the provision of a daily school meal, which in some cases is the only meal children get a day.

WFP provided training to PNASE on reporting and analysing disaggregated data by sex. During training within the framework of capacity development and augmentation, WFP informed participants that food assistance was to be provided under safe, reliable and dignified conditions and that beneficiaries were to be informed about the programme.

WFP was also engaged with the National Gender Equality and Promotion Institute in awareness campaigns on National Women's Days and Orange Campaign, "16 days of activism against gender-based violence" to promote gender equity at school and within the community.

Story Worth Telling

Semoa, a 45-year old woman, is a member of the Fishermen and Saleswomen Association of the small community of Morro Peixe in Lobata District, where 142 children from kindergarten to 6th grade benefit from school meals programme in Morro Peixe School.

From 2013 to 2016, WFP participated, with the European Union, non-governmental organizations and the Government of Sao Tome and Principe through the National School Feeding and Health Programme (PNASE) and the Ministry of Fishing, in the pilot experience benefiting 9,631 schoolchildren in 12 schools. The main objectives were to replace an imported dry beans, important source of protein, with local product, fish, and introduce fish in school menus.

Morro Peixe School was one of the 12 schools that benefited from the pilot project, but it did not have a freezer to conserve the fish that were supplied to the school meals.

Semoa has two children attending in this school. As a member of the Fishermen and Saleswomen Association, Semoa asked a meeting with school management and invited parents-teacher association and WFP, to announce a financial help of the association and also the participation of those present in the meeting to contribute to the purchase of a freezer for the school.

All participants in the meeting accepted the initiative done by Semoa.

Day after the meeting, WFP and other partners were invited by PNASE, to attend a small ceremony to deliver a freezer to conserve the fish that would be distributed to Morro Peixe School.

During the ceremony, WFP congratulated the community with this initiative, and the role of community to improve nutritional status of their children with the meals programme.

Figures and Indicators

Data Notes

Cover page photo © WFP/ Celestino Cardoso

Children of Batepa primary school take a lunch prepared with local products.

Project Indicators:

WFP Sao tome stopped all school meals activities in mid-2015. From then on, WFP focused exclusively on the capacity development of government counterparts.

There has been no food distribution in 2016 and for that reason only NCI indicator is showing in the table.

Project Indicators

Outcome Indicators

Outcome	Project End Target	Base Value	Previous Follow-up	Latest Follow-up
SO4 Reduce undernutrition and break the intergenerational cycle of hunger				
Increased equitable access to and utilization of education				
Retention rate in WFP-assisted primary schools				
<i>S.TOME AND PRINCIPE, Project End Target: 2016.12, Base value: 2012.01, Secondary data</i>	=85.00	81.00	-	-
Retention rate (girls) in WFP-assisted primary schools				
<i>S.TOME AND PRINCIPE, Project End Target: 2016.12, Base value: 2011.11, Secondary data</i>	=85.00	80.00	-	-
Retention rate (boys) in WFP-assisted primary schools				
<i>S.TOME AND PRINCIPE, Project End Target: 2016.12, Base value: 2011.11, Secondary data</i>	=85.00	81.00	-	-
Enrolment: Average annual rate of change in number of children enrolled in WFP-assisted primary schools				
<i>S.TOME AND PRINCIPE, Project End Target: 2016.12, Base value: 2012.11, Secondary data</i>	=6.00	3.60	-	-
Enrolment (girls): Average annual rate of change in number of girls enrolled in WFP-assisted primary schools				
<i>S.TOME AND PRINCIPE, Project End Target: 2016.12, Base value: 2011.11, Secondary data</i>	=6.00	3.60	-	-
Enrolment (boys): Average annual rate of change in number of boys enrolled in WFP-assisted primary schools				
<i>S.TOME AND PRINCIPE, Project End Target: 2016.12, Base value: 2011.11, Secondary data, MoE</i>	=6.00	3.40	-	-

Outcome	Project End Target	Base Value	Previous Follow-up	Latest Follow-up
Attendance rate (girls) in WFP-assisted primary schools				
<i>S.TOME AND PRINCIPE, Project End Target: 2016.12, Base value: 2012.01, Secondary data</i>	=90.00	80.00	-	-
Attendance rate (boys) in WFP-assisted primary schools				
<i>S.TOME AND PRINCIPE, Project End Target: 2016.12, Base value: 2012.01, Secondary data</i>	=90.00	82.00	-	-
Pass rate (girls) in WFP-assisted primary schools				
<i>S.TOME AND PRINCIPE, Project End Target: 2016.12, Base value: 2012.01, Secondary data</i>	=90.00	71.00	-	-
Pass rate (boys) in WFP-assisted primary schools				
<i>S.TOME AND PRINCIPE, Project End Target: 2016.12, Base value: 2012.01, Secondary data</i>	=90.00	71.00	-	-
Gender ratio: ratio of girls to boys enrolled in WFP-assisted primary schools				
<i>S.TOME AND PRINCIPE, Project End Target: 2016.12, Base value: 2011.11, Secondary data</i>	=1.00	0.95	-	-
Ownership and capacity strengthened to reduce undernutrition and increase access to education at regional, national and community levels				
NCI: School Feeding National Capacity Index				
<i>S.TOME AND PRINCIPE, Project End Target: 2016.12, Base value: 2011.04, WFP survey, Previous Follow-up: 2014.02, Joint survey, Joint workshop, WFP partners, Latest Follow-up: 2016.12, Joint survey, Joint workshop, WFP partners</i>	=3.40	2.20	2.50	2.50

Output Indicators

Output	Unit	Planned	Actual	% Actual vs. Planned
SO4: Capacity Development - Strengthening National Capacities				
Number of WFP-managed systems and tools handed over to the Government in current year	system/tool	2	1	50.0%
Number of female government/national partner staff receiving technical assistance and training	individual	80	123	153.8%
Number of government/national partner staff receiving technical assistance and training	individual	120	169	140.8%
Number of male government/national partner staff receiving technical assistance and training	individual	60	46	76.7%
Number of national programmes developed with WFP support (nutrition, school feeding, safety net)	national programme	1	1	100.0%
Number of technical assistance projects conducted by WFP to strengthen the national capacity	project	2	1	50.0%
WFP expenditures for technical assistance to strengthen national capacity	US\$	2,001	6,365	318.1%

Gender Indicators

Cross-cutting Indicators	Project End Target	Base Value	Previous Follow-up	Latest Follow-up
Proportion of women beneficiaries in leadership positions of project management committees				
<i>SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE, School Feeding, Project End Target: 2016.12, Base value: 2014.10, Previous Follow-up: 2015.12, Latest Follow-up: 2016.12</i>	=70.00	69.00	69.00	60.00
Proportion of women project management committee members trained on modalities of food, cash, or voucher distribution				
<i>SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE, School Feeding, Project End Target: 2016.12, Base value: 2014.10, Previous Follow-up: 2015.12, Latest Follow-up: 2016.12</i>	=70.00	45.00	65.00	57.00

Protection and Accountability to Affected Populations Indicators

Cross-cutting Indicators	Project End Target	Base Value	Previous Follow-up	Latest Follow-up
Proportion of assisted people (men) informed about the programme (who is included, what people will receive, where people can complain)				
<i>SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE, School Feeding, Project End Target: 2016.12</i>	=100.00	-	-	-
Proportion of assisted people (men) who do not experience safety problems travelling to, from and/or at WFP programme site				
<i>SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE, School Feeding, Project End Target: 2016.12</i>	=100.00	-	-	-
Proportion of assisted people (women) informed about the programme (who is included, what people will receive, where people can complain)				
<i>SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE, School Feeding, Project End Target: 2016.12</i>	=90.00	-	-	-
Proportion of assisted people (women) who do not experience safety problems travelling to, from and/or at WFP programme sites				
<i>SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE, School Feeding, Project End Target: 2016.12</i>	=100.00	-	-	-
Proportion of assisted people informed about the programme (who is included, what people will receive, where people can complain)				
<i>SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE, School Feeding, Project End Target: 2016.12</i>	=90.00	-	-	-
Proportion of assisted people who do not experience safety problems travelling to, from and/or at WFP programme site				
<i>SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE, School Feeding, Project End Target: 2016.12</i>	=100.00	-	-	-

Partnership Indicators

Cross-cutting Indicators	Project End Target	Latest Follow-up
Amount of complementary funds provided to the project by partners (including NGOs, civil society, private sector organizations, international financial institutions and regional development banks)		
<i>SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE, School Feeding, Project End Target: 2016.12, Latest Follow-up: 2016.12</i>	=267,070.00	0.00
Number of partner organizations that provide complementary inputs and services		
<i>SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE, School Feeding, Project End Target: 2016.12, Latest Follow-up: 2016.12</i>	=9.00	4.00

Cross-cutting Indicators	Project End Target	Latest Follow-up
Proportion of project activities implemented with the engagement of complementary partners		
SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE, School Feeding, Project End Target: 2016.12, Latest Follow-up: 2016.12	=100.00	100.00