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Sao Tome and Principe country strategic plan (2019–2024)

Duration	1 July 2019–30 June 2024
Total cost to WFP	USD 1,588,903
Gender and age marker*	3

* <http://gender.manuals.wfp.org/en/gender-toolkit/gender-in-programming/gender-and-age-marker/>

Executive summary

Sao Tome and Principe made significant progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, however, remains one of the country's biggest challenges.

The WFP country strategic plan for Sao Tome and Principe for 2019–2024 seeks to address some of the major food security and nutrition challenges and gaps identified by the national zero hunger strategic review and through consultations with the Government and other partners regarding food security, nutrition, school meals and smallholder agriculture.

As set out in the country's development strategy, "Sao Tome and Principe Transformation Agenda 2030: The country we need to build", the Government aims to implement sustainable food security and nutrition programmes and policies autonomously by 2030 and has requested technical assistance from WFP in this endeavour. While school meals remain the central entry point for WFP, the country strategic plan is fully geared towards capacity strengthening – a strategic shift away from WFP's operational role in past years.

The implementation of an innovative home-grown school meals programme in Sao Tome and Principe is expected to increase demand for locally produced nutritious foods and consequently stimulate national food value chains while minimizing environmental impact and facilitating equitable access to sustainable markets for smallholder farmers. Under this country strategic plan,

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WFP's activities will indirectly contribute to reducing malnutrition rates, empowering women and making progress towards gender equality.

The country strategic plan is designed to achieve the following strategic outcome:

- 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 programme and related food security and nutrition policies and programmes nationwide by 2030.

The strategic outcome will be achieved through two activities:

- Activity 1: Provide capacity strengthening (including through South-South cooperation) to the Government in the design, management and coordination of an environmentally and socially sustainable, gender-transformative and nutrition-sensitive home-grown school meals programme and related food security and nutrition policies and programmes.
- Activity 2: 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.

WFP is the Government's partner of choice in its commitment to consolidate and improve the national school meals and health programme (*Programa nacional de alimentação e saúde escolar*), providing technical assistance and facilitating knowledge exchange for various aspects of the programme. WFP's strategic position reflects its recognized experience and comparative advantage in the design of home-grown school meals approaches and smallholder agricultural market support programmes, such as Purchase for Progress and Purchase from Africans for Africa, knowledge exchange through South-South cooperation and its leadership in operationalizing these programmes.

This country strategic plan will be implemented in partnership with the Government of Sao Tome and Principe; United Nations agencies such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Health Organization and the United Nations Development Programme; the African Development Bank; Brazil; China; non-government organizations; and the National Institute for Gender Equality and Equity.

The country strategic plan is fully aligned with the recommendations of the zero hunger strategic review and with the Transformation Agenda 2030; the latter is also reflected in the United Nations development assistance framework for Sao Tome and Principe for 2017–2021. The plan contributes to WFP's Strategic Goal 2, Strategic Objective 4 and Strategic Result 5.

Draft decision*

The Board approves the Sao Tome and Principe country strategic plan (2019–2024) (WFP/EB.A/2019/8-A/9) at a total cost to WFP of USD 1,588,903.

* This is a draft decision. For the final decision adopted by the Board, please refer to the decisions and recommendations document issued at the end of the session.

1. Country analysis

1.1 Country context

1. Located in the Gulf of Guinea, Sao Tome and Principe comprises two islands and several mostly uninhabited islets. It covers 1,000 km² and is home to 197,700 people (97,988 males and 99,712 females).¹ It is a lower-middle-income country, with a gross national income per capita of USD 1,730 in 2016.² Its population is predominantly young: 20.1 percent are aged between 15 and 24, and 57.8 percent are aged between 15 and 64.³
2. In the past decades, the country has made considerable progress in reducing child mortality and malnutrition and improving maternal health.⁴ In 2017, it ranked 143rd of 189 countries in the Human Development Index, with a value of 0.589,⁵ which puts it in the medium human development category and above the sub-Saharan Africa average. Nevertheless, the country faces serious challenges in eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, with little progress since 2000. In 2012, it was estimated that almost two thirds of the population lived below the poverty line, with women at greater risk of poverty than men.⁶ More recent assessments indicate that little progress in reducing poverty has been achieved since 2000.⁷ Poverty is more prevalent in urban centres than rural areas because of limited employment opportunities, notably for young people and women. Almost 50 per cent of people active in the labour market are employed in the informal sector, earning below decent wages. The unemployment rate in the country is approximately 13.6 per cent (19.7 per cent for women, 9.3 per cent for men and 23 per cent for young people).⁸
3. Sao Tome and Principe ranked 131st of 160 countries in the Gender Inequality Index 2018 (falling from 122nd in 2015),⁹ highlighting the substantial challenges facing the country with regard to gender equality and equitable development gains for women and men, boys and girls.¹⁰

¹ Population estimates for 2017 from the São Tome and Principe National Institute of Statistics (Instituto Nacional de Estatística). Available at <https://www.ine.st/>.

² World Bank Group. 2018. Country overview of São Tomé and Príncipe (available at <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/saotome/overview>). No sex-disaggregated data available.

³ Sao Tome and Principe National Institute of Statistics (Instituto nacional de Estatística). Available at <https://www.ine.st/>. No sex-disaggregated data are available.

⁴ Since 1995, the child mortality rate has been falling by an average 30 percent over each five-year period.

⁵ United Nations Development Programme. *Human Development Reports: Human Development Indicators* (<http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/STP>).

⁶ Around 71 percent of women live below the poverty line, compared with 63 percent of men. Ministry of Planning and Development. 2012. *Second National Poverty Reduction Strategy (2012–2016) (Estratégia Nacional de Redução da Pobreza II (2012–2016))*. Available (in Portuguese) at <https://info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/STP/ENRP%20II%202012%20-2016B.pdf>.

⁷ Ministry of Planning and Development. 2012. *Second National Poverty Reduction Strategy (2012–2016) (Estratégia Nacional de Redução da Pobreza II (2012–2016))*. Available (in Portuguese) at <https://info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/STP/ENRP%20II%202012%20-2016B.pdf>.

⁸ United Nations Children's Fund. 2013. *UNICEF Annual Report 2013 – Sao Tome and Principe*. Available at https://www.unicef.org/about/annualreport/files/Sao_Tome_and_Principe_COAR_2013.pdf.

⁹ United Nations Development Programme. 2018. *Human Development Reports: Table 5: Gender Inequality Index* (<http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/GII>).

¹⁰ United Nations Development Programme. 2018. *Human development Indices and Indicators: 2018 Statistical Update: Sao Tome and Principe*. Available at http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/STP.pdf.

1.2 Progress Towards SDG 2

Targets

4. Despite making important progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, Sao Tome and Principe has not reached the goal of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger. The Government has integrated the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into an updated national development strategy entitled “Sao Tome and Principe Transformation Agenda 2030: The country we need to build”.¹¹ To localize the SDGs further, the country undertook a zero hunger strategic review from October 2017 to April 2018 with technical and financial support from WFP, resulting in a clearly defined road map for achieving zero hunger by 2030.
5. *Access to food.* In 2009, around 24 percent of households were estimated to be food-insecure.¹² Poverty, as a principal cause of hunger, remains high, with about one third of the population living on less than USD 1.90 per day. Two thirds of the population fall poverty line of USD 3.20 per day.¹³
6. High unemployment rates and weak agriculture, fishing and livestock sectors, compounded by the impact of recurring natural hazards such as floods, landslides and environmental degradation, prevent national food production from meeting the needs of the population. Food availability (especially for the poorest households and differentially by gender and age) and market stability are unpredictable due to limited infrastructure and poor market access, particularly at the peak of the rainy season. Sao Tome and Principe’s heavy reliance on food imports (cereals, beans, oil, meat, dairy and other animal products) exposes the country to fluctuating food prices and affects the livelihoods of households, especially for women, children, the elderly and people living with HIV.
7. *End malnutrition.* Reducing malnutrition has been a top priority for the Government over the past decades. However, as highlighted by the zero hunger strategic review (ZHSR), the country registered only a modest reduction in the prevalence of undernourishment, which fell from 18.1 percent in 1999–2001 to 13.5 percent in 2014–2016.¹⁴ In 2014, it was estimated that 17.2 percent of children under 5 were stunted; rates of stunting were higher among boys than girls (20.5 percent of boys and 13.9 percent of girls). Around 8.8 percent were underweight (10.6 percent of boys and 6.9 percent of girls) and 4 percent were wasted (4.7 percent of boys and 3.3 percent of girls).¹⁵

¹¹ Government of Sao Tome and Principe. 2015. *Sao Tome and Principe 2030 Transformation Agenda*. Available at http://www.st.undp.org/content/dam/sao_tome_and_principe/docs/Centre%20de%20press/undp_st_GLAagenda_En.pdf.

¹² WFP. 2009. *Global analysis of food security and vulnerability: Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe (Analyse globale de l'analyse de la sécurité alimentaire et de la vulnérabilité: République Démocratique de Sao Tomé et Principe)*. Available (in French) at https://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/ena/wfp196154.pdf?_ga=2.77634898.71981868.1551180781-705018806.1541431919. No food security assessments have been conducted recently in Sao Tome and Principe and no sex or age-disaggregated data are available for the indicator provided.

¹³ World Bank Group. 2018. *The World Bank in Sao Tome and Principe* (<http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/saotome/overview>).

¹⁴ See data on undernourishment at Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations – Statistics Division. *Sao Tome and Principe: Country indicators* (<http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#country/193>). No sex or age-disaggregated data are available.

¹⁵ Sao Tome and Principe National Institute of Statistics and others. 2016. *Sao Tome and Principe Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2014, Final Report*. Available at https://mics-surveys-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/MICS5/West%20and%20Central%20Africa/Sao%20Tome%20and%20Principe/2014/Final/Sao%20Tome%20and%20Principe%202014%20MICS_English.pdf. Sex-disaggregated data are unavailable.

8. Micronutrient deficiencies are alarming: the available data¹⁶ suggest that 96 percent of preschool-aged children and 18 percent of pregnant women and girls are deficient in vitamin A,¹⁷ while rates of anaemia among children under 5 are as high as 67.5 percent (69.5 percent for boys and 65.5 percent for girls). In addition, close to two thirds of households do not consume iodized salt and 37 percent of the population has insufficient zinc intake,¹⁸ as noted by the ZHSR.
9. There are many direct causes of chronic undernutrition, including poor infant feeding practices, high food prices and a high disease burden. Indirect causes such as gender inequalities, inadequate services and an unhealthy environment also contribute to malnutrition.¹⁹ Unfavourable factors include poor quality health services (including sexual and reproductive health services), poor water and sanitation facilities, substandard hygiene practices and inadequate food preparation, all of which contribute to disease. In 2015, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) reported that only 35 percent of the population had access to improved sanitation facilities.²⁰
10. *Smallholder productivity and incomes.* Historically, agriculture has been one of the strongest-performing sectors, with exports of cocoa, coffee and palm oil increasing in recent years. However, the relative success of export-focused cash crop production has not translated into profitable local food production.
11. Sao Tome and Principe does not have a long history of smallholder farming. The agriculture sector was mainly characterized by cash crops such as coffee, cocoa, sugar cane and pepper, produced by companies that engaged labourers (more men than women); most food for household consumption was imported. The nationalization of the cocoa plantations in the 1980s and agricultural privatization in the 1990s led to the creation of small- and medium-sized agricultural enterprises.²¹ Nonetheless, a lack of market access and the technical and financial support required to sustain smallholder production induced the abandonment of many farms and migration from rural areas to urban centres.²² This in turn had a negative effect on agricultural production and consequently on food security.²³ The resulting demographic pressure on existing settlements has led to the deterioration of living standards. Assessments to map and characterize the profile of subsistence agriculture in the country are being undertaken with the support of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP).²⁴ These assessments will help to clarify the gender, age and other fundamental characteristics

¹⁶ World Bank Group. 2015. *Nutrition at a Glance: São Tomé and Príncipe*. Available at <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/601731468105842725/pdf/771930BRI0Box00C00Sao0TP0April02011.pdf>.

¹⁷ No age-disaggregated data are available, so the figure for adolescent girls is not known.

¹⁸ United Nations Children's Fund. 2009. *Tracking Progress on Child and Maternal Nutrition*. Available at https://www.unicef.org/publications/files/Tracking_Progress_on_Child_and_Maternal_Nutrition_EN_110309.pdf.

¹⁹ Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation. 2016. *São Tomé e Príncipe* (<http://www.healthdata.org/sao-tome-and-principe>).

²⁰ United Nations Children's Fund/World Health Organization Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene. 2015. Available at https://www.unicef.org/about/annualreport/files/Sao_Tome_and_Principe_2015_COAR.pdf.

²¹ Ministry of Agriculture. No sex-disaggregated data on the workforce composition of plantations and agricultural enterprises are available.

²² Ministry of Agriculture. No sex or age-disaggregated information is available on the migration from rural areas to urban centres.

²³ Sao Tome and Principe National Institute of Statistics and others. 2016. *Sao Tome and Principe Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2014, Final Report*. Available at https://mics-surveys-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/MICS5/West%20and%20Central%20Africa/Sao%20Tome%20and%20Principe/2014/Final/Sao%20Tome%20and%20Principe%202014%20MICS_English.pdf.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

of smallholder farmers. They will examine their access to resources and services and identify who is labouring, who has access to markets, who is migrating, who is staying in rural areas and who is responsible for agricultural production.

12. In Sao Tome and Principe, 52 percent of economically active people (57 percent of economically active men and 42 percent of economically active women) work in agriculture.²⁵ Access to land remains an important challenge due to the country's small size, irregular topography and degraded soil. Half of rural people have acquired deeds to their land; only one third of them are women.²⁶ Rural producers are not involved in discussions on agricultural and rural development policies.²⁷
13. *Sustainable food systems.* The domestic food production system in Sao Tome and Principe consists mainly of subsistence agriculture and is considered fragile due to weak infrastructure and lack of public support services and coordination. Hence, the country is forced to import a large proportion of its food.²⁸ The agriculture sector focuses mainly on cash crops destined for export such as cocoa, coffee and pepper. Efforts to diversify food production for domestic consumption have increased smallholder production of banana, cassava and maize but volumes remain below the levels required to meet domestic needs.²⁹ Women make a significant contribution to food security through small-scale subsistence agriculture, including transformation and conservation processes, along with unpaid domestic work. The latter, largely unseen and undervalued, takes up large amounts of time, especially in rural areas where gender inequality is particularly marked.

Macroeconomic environment

14. Gross domestic product (GDP) grew at an average rate of 4.5 percent between 2009 and 2016, with a mild deceleration from 2014 onwards. The service sector accounts for two thirds of GDP,³⁰ while the primary and secondary sectors share the remaining third. Although agricultural production has declined since independence in 1975, agricultural goods, especially cocoa, still constitute most of the country's exports.³¹
15. The limited number of qualified workers in Sao Tome and Principe is an obstacle to the production of goods and services on the scale needed to meet market demand. Export costs are high due to the country's insularity. Land and workers are limited,³² preventing economic diversification and rendering the country vulnerable to terms-of-trade shocks.

²⁵ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. 2012. *Sao Tome and Principe 2014–2017 Country Programming Framework*. Annex 8. Available at <http://www.fao.org/3/a-bp637f.pdf> (there are no data regarding differences between cash crops and subsistence agriculture).

²⁶ World Bank. 2004. *Sao Tome and Principe - Country Gender Assessment*. Available at <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/122741468777890991/Sao-Tome-and-Principe-Country-Gender-Assessment>.

²⁷ No sex-disaggregated data available.

²⁸ Sao Tome and Principe National Institute of Statistics and others. 2016. *Sao Tome and Principe Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2014, Final Report*. Available at https://mics-surveys-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/MICS5/West%20and%20Central%20Africa/Sao%20Tome%20and%20Principe/2014/Final/Sao%20Tome%20and%20Principe%202014%20MICS_English.pdf.

²⁹ The extent to which women and men smallholder farmers have profited from this increase is not known.

³⁰ The service sector employs 58.8 percent of men and 84 percent of women (information available at <http://datatopics.worldbank.org/gender/country/sao-tome-and-principe>).

³¹ World Bank Group. 2018. *Country webpage on Sao Tome and Principe* (available at: <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/saotome/overview>).

³² Data from the International Labour Organization (ILO) suggest that the low rate of women's labour force participation could be as much a contributor to the lack of economic diversification as the "limited workforce".

Key cross-sectoral linkages

16. Sao Tome and Principe faces significant challenges due to its insularity, remoteness and small size. Its soil, topography and weather patterns make it vulnerable to small-scale natural hazards and climate change. Natural hazards affect agriculture, including food production, limit road access and destroy houses and household assets, differentially affecting the lives and resilience of women, men, girls and boys.
17. The literacy rate in Sao Tome and Principe is high: 88 percent for adults,³³ 96.3 percent for young women and 97.1 for young men (the 15–24 age group).³⁴ However, the repetition rate in 2016/2017 was 12 percent of students (38 percent of whom were girls and 62 percent boys),³⁵ and many teachers have no professional training.³⁶
18. Data from a 2014 multiple indicator cluster survey showed a high rate of pregnancy among girls. Sixteen percent of girls aged 15–19 years had already given birth, 5 percent were pregnant with their first child and nearly 1 percent had had a live birth before age 15. The latter cases were almost exclusively seen among the poorest 40 percent of girls. In addition, 27 percent of women aged 20–24 years had had a live birth before age 18. Here again, the poorest women and girls were found to be more affected (35 percent) than the wealthiest (12 percent).³⁷
19. Girl marriage is another manifestation of gender inequalities that undermine the rights of women and girls and hamper sustainable development. An estimated 32.2 percent of women are married before the age of 18.³⁸ This affects girls' access to education and employment because most girls abandon their studies once they have children and domestic responsibilities.
20. Gender inequalities restrict women's leadership opportunities and access to decision making positions. As an example, only 14.5 percent of national parliamentarians are women.³⁹
21. Just under 75 percent of households have access to health services, including sexual and reproductive health services.⁴⁰ For the past five years, HIV prevalence has stood at 0.5 percent of the population. Of those living with HIV aged 15–24, 51.8 percent are women and 48.2 percent are men. Around 88 percent of health centres provide free HIV medical

³³ Sao Tome and Principe National Institute of Statistics and UNICEF. 2015. *MICS 2014*.

³⁴ United Nations Development Programme. Sao Tome and Principe Gender Development Index. 2017 Report, page 20. The same report shows that the literacy rate of men and women decreases with age.

³⁵ Minister of Education, Culture, Science and Communication. *Statistics report for 2016–2017*, pp. 59–60. Available (in Portuguese) from <https://mecc.gov.st/index.php/publicacoes/>.

³⁶ According to statistics from the Ministry of Education for 2016 and 2017, 94 percent of kindergarten teachers are women and 52 percent of these teachers do not have any training. In primary schools, 54 percent of teachers are women and 20 percent of teachers do not have any training.

³⁷ United Nations Children's Fund. 2017. *UNICEF Annual Report 2017: Sao Tome and Principe*. Available at https://www.unicef.org/about/annualreport/files/Sao_Tome_and_Principe_2017_COAR.pdf.

³⁸ Sao Tome and Principe National Institute of Statistics and others. 2016. Sao Tome and Principe Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2014, Final Report. Available at https://mics-surveys-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/MICS5/West%20and%20Central%20Africa/Sao%20Tome%20and%20Principe/2014/Final/Sao%20Tome%20and%20Principe%202014%20MICS_English.pdf.

³⁹ Inter-Parliamentary Union. *Women in national parliaments* (<http://archive.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>).

⁴⁰ According to Sao Tome and Principe Gender Development Index Report, almost 99 percent of women of reproductive age are informed about and have access to contraceptive methods.

advice and diagnosis tests.⁴¹ Life expectancy is 64 years for men and 71 years for women.⁴² The mortality rate of children under 5 remains high, at 32.4 per 1,000 live births.⁴³

1.3 Hunger gaps and challenges

22. The ZHSR identified challenges, inefficiencies and gaps at various levels (legal, strategic, policy framework and operational). These were further corroborated during the consultations undertaken by the country office with the Government and other key partners and are summarized below. Gender inequalities have been identified as a cause of hunger that cuts across all the elements listed below, namely, access to food, school meals, nutrition, smallholder productivity and information systems.
23. *Access to food:* Food and nutrition insecurity in Sao Tome and Principe are the result of factors such as high unemployment rates and the weak performance of the agriculture, fishing and livestock sectors. These lead to limited food production and access to basic services; heavy reliance on food imports, which exposes the country to fluctuating food prices, affecting principally the livelihoods of the poor; and lack of access to education, employment, financial services and means of production (including land and agricultural resources), which differentially affects women and men throughout their lives.
24. *School meals:* Challenges related to school meals include a lack of a national school meals strategy; inadequate consideration of school meals in national priorities and budgets; limited government capacity to manage school meals operations effectively and equitably; inadequate funding mechanisms; logistical challenges hindering food deliveries at schools; the inability to determine accurately the cost of a school meals programme and the extent and inclusiveness of community participation; weak civil society mobilization to support a transition towards national ownership, including community contributions and parents' associations;⁴⁴ and heavy reliance on a food basket composed of imported foods such as rice, beans, salt and vegetable oil. There is a need to develop a full-fledged home-grown school meals (HGSM) approach that is gender-transformative and has a strong focus on the direct procurement of locally produced nutritious food.
25. *Nutrition:* Factors contributing to nutrition insecurity in Sao Tome and Principe include the insufficient number of nutritionists in the country; the need for gender-aware communication strategies to promote infant and young child feeding and maternal nutrition practices; the need to reinforce nutrition education for adolescents (as future parents and in a gender-transformative manner); insufficient commitment to prioritizing the first 1,000 days of life (i.e., from conception to age 2); and insufficient emphasis on food fortification programmes.
26. *Smallholder productivity:* Smallholder productivity is hindered by underdeveloped and poorly integrated agriculture markets; the lack of a gender-equitable policy to protect and provide incentives to farmers and fishers; disorganized, inefficient and unrepresentative smallholder farmer associations (particularly for women); the need to improve infrastructure to connect production sites and markets; a critical lack of reliable agriculture

⁴¹ Sao Tome and Principe Gender Development Index Report 2017, pages 21–22.

⁴² Sao Tome and Principe National Institute of Statistics. *Country Indicators (in Portuguese)* (<https://www.ine.st/index.php/0-pais/indicadores>).

⁴³ World Bank Group. *Mortality rate, under-5 (per 1,000 live births)* (<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.DYN.MORT?contextual=region&end=2017&locations=mz&start=2017&view=bar>).

⁴⁴ WFP. 2015. *Operation evaluation of São Tomé and Príncipe development project 2002 95: Transitioning towards a national school feeding and health programme in São Tomé and Príncipe: Final Report*, para. 13. Available (in French) at <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/00eeb77443984c4dbf7d6f5daa7c46e7/download/>.

data; an insufficient workforce and limited technical capacity;⁴⁵ and the lack of a value chain for nutritious food. As highlighted by the ZHSR, the low levels of agricultural productivity are caused by poor infrastructure, insufficient buy-in from the Government, grossly inadequate scientific research and too few small-scale farmers. There are just 8,955 small-scale farmers (30 percent of whom are women),⁴⁶ and they are excluded from discussions concerning agriculture and rural development policies.

27. *Coordination*: Challenges related to coordination include the limited coordination capacities and resources of the national Council for Food and Nutrition Security (*Conselho de Segurança Alimentar e Nutricional* or *CONSAN*); the limited technical and financial capacity of the Government to implement existing programmes; and a lack of sustained, evidence-based advocacy to enhance awareness of food and nutrition security issues.
28. *Information systems*: Information systems are hindered by a lack of periodic food security and nutrition data for the country, mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating progress in food security and nutrition until 2030, a production and commercialization pricing system, and data and analysis disaggregated by gender and age.

1.4 Key country priorities

Government

29. The Transformation Agenda 2030 is aligned with the second national strategy for poverty reduction,⁴⁷ which aims to achieve annual GDP growth of at least 6 percent, to reduce poverty by 10 percent through income-generating initiatives and employment creation and to ensure that all people have access to basic social services. The Transformation Agenda 2030 identifies gender equality as a top priority to be addressed and aims to “guarantee effective gender equality and equity in all public policies”. The impact of gender inequalities is also corroborated in the findings and recommendations of the ZHSR.
30. In 2017 the Government approved a national development plan for 2017–2021, which is linked with the Transformation Agenda 2030 and has two pillars. Pillar 1 (accelerated and sustainable growth) has four axes: diversification of the economy and expansion of its productive base; improved strategic management of development and management of public finances; modernization of the economic and social infrastructure; and improved land management and environmental preservation. Pillar 2 aims to improve social cohesion and external credibility by strengthening human capital and governance; promoting young people, strengthening the family and protecting vulnerable groups; fostering appreciation of the national culture, supporting development and including the diaspora; strengthening local development centres and promoting decentralization; and consolidating international cooperation and preserving national sovereignty.
31. To increase food security and reduce malnutrition rates, the Government has adopted a national food security and nutrition programme for 2012–2023 and a national nutrition programme, which lay out the country’s priorities for food security and nutrition until 2030. The food security and nutrition programme aims to increase basic food production and improve the marketing system by limiting food imports and promoting a profitable subsistence economy that increases the incomes of smallholder farmers and consequently reduces poverty.

⁴⁵ There are no agricultural college or agriculture-related courses in Sao Tome and Principe and structural discrimination hinders women’s engagement.

⁴⁶ Figures estimated by the Ministry of Agriculture.

⁴⁷ Ministry of Planning and Development. 2012. *Second National Poverty Reduction Strategy (2012–2016) (Estratégia Nacional de Redução da Pobreza II (2012–2016))*. Available (in Portuguese) at <https://info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/STP/ENRP%20II%202012%20-2016B.pdf>.

32. In parallel, the national nutrition programme aims to ensure that all citizens, especially the poorest, have sustainable access to sufficient quantities of good quality food, thereby significantly reducing mortality and morbidity linked to malnutrition. The programme seeks to promote adequate nutrition habits through behaviour change to ensure that people (in their diversity) reach their full physical and cognitive potential, including with regard to resistance to disease.
33. With the establishment in 2016 of CONSAN, which is linked to the CPLP regional strategy for food security and nutrition, the Government took important steps towards promoting national multisectoral coordination on food security and nutrition. The founding of CONSAN helped to mobilize government decision makers at the highest level: the Prime Minister and the Minister of Agriculture serve as Chair and Vice-Chair of the council, whose 20 other members include representatives of line ministries, the president of the Autonomous Region of Principe and representatives of the national school meals and health programme (*Programa nacional de alimentação e saúde escolar or PNASE*), the national nutrition programme and civil society organizations.
34. Still with respect to food security and nutrition, the Government adopted a national agricultural investment programme for food security and nutrition (*Programa Nacional de Investimento Agrícola para a Segurança Alimentar e Nutricional or PNIASAN*) for 2016–2020, aiming to ensure sustainable agricultural growth of at least 6 percent until 2020. The PNIASAN has six main objectives: sustainable intensification and diversification of agricultural and livestock production; sustainable development of fisheries and promotion of aquaculture; sustainable management of natural resources; access to markets and finance; better nutritional status for the population and improved vulnerability management; and stronger institutional capacity.
35. The International Food Policy Research Institute has recommended that Sao Tome and Principe adopt a national investment plan for agriculture, food security and nutrition as a means of working towards agricultural development and poverty reduction. The country has not yet adopted such a plan.
36. PNASE was developed by the Ministry of Education in 2012 with the goal of guaranteeing primary schoolchildren access to a healthy and balanced diet based on local products, improving the nutritional status of children and indirectly contributing to the sustainable development of Sao Tome and Principe. Currently, the programme is the country's main safety net, providing daily hot school meals to 46,766 students in all public primary schools and kindergartens. PNASE is managed entirely by the Government, which has reiterated its commitment to financing PNASE and developing the HGSM approach. The Government also considers budget allocations for buying food from smallholders to be a priority as a means of reducing food imports and fighting food insecurity and malnutrition.

United Nations and other partners

37. The United Nations development assistance framework for Sao Tome and Principe for 2017-2021 (UNDAF) is fully aligned with the national development plan and is based on the comparative advantages of the various United Nations agencies working in the country. There are three priority areas under the UNDAF: support for social cohesion through access to good quality basic services; reinforcement of the country's internal and external credibility; and the promotion of sustainable, inclusive and resilient growth. The country strategic plan (2019–2024) (CSP) will be aligned with all three areas. The United Nations country team has recognized the value of the ZHSR and will take its findings into consideration during the mid-term review of the UNDAF.

2. Strategic implications for WFP

2.1 WFP's experience and lessons learned

38. WFP's presence in Sao Tome and Principe dates back to 1976, just one year after the country's independence. Over the years, WFP operations have changed from providing direct food assistance to enabling activities that aim to strengthen the capacity of the Government to implement its own nutrition-focused safety nets, in particular through PNASE.
39. WFP has collaborated with the National Institute for Gender Equality and Equity on the implementation of an inclusive and gender-responsive school meals programme by promoting, together with PNASE, the participation of girls in school activities⁴⁸ and the equal inclusion of mothers and fathers in parents' associations. WFP also engages in joint activities with other United Nations agencies to fight against gender-based violence.⁴⁹
40. In coordination with the Government, WFP withdrew from the direct implementation of the school meals programme in 2015 and the Government assumed its management. A 2016 operation evaluation of WFP's development project 200295, however, indicated that the Government still lacked the capacity to manage the school meals programme autonomously. The report recommended that a new WFP operation be formulated with the objective of reinforcing the human resources and institutional capacity of the Government to manage PNASE sustainably on its own.⁵⁰
41. The recommendations outlined by the 2016 evaluation and the 2017 synthesis of operation evaluations from the West and Central Africa region (2013–2016), led by the WFP Office of Evaluation, concur with the findings of the ZHSR⁵¹ and the consultations carried out by the country office with various stakeholders in 2016, 2017 and 2018. During the formulation of the CSP, the country office also considered the findings from an evaluation of WFP's policy on capacity development as applicable to Sao Tome and Principe. These reviews, evaluations and consultations identified the areas for improvement discussed in the following paragraphs.
42. *Developing a national gender-transformative school meals approach:* Notwithstanding the approval of a national law on school meals in 2012 and the creation of PNASE, Sao Tome and Principe lacks a strategic document that outlines the country's vision for school meals in the short, medium and long term sets realistic objectives and defines the roles of the various institutions, stakeholders and coordination mechanisms involved, including WFP and the supportive role that it plays. The Government has reiterated its commitment to investing in the expansion and improvement of PNASE.
43. *Reinforcing local purchase mechanisms for PNASE:* WFP should support government efforts to strengthen local purchase mechanisms to allow food imports to be gradually replaced by local products from family farms. This support should build on good practices, leveraging WFP's experience with the Purchase for Progress (P4P) and Purchase from Africans for Africa (PAA) initiatives, which could be piloted in the most productive districts of the country. Accordingly, the PNASE budget and monitoring mechanisms should also allow for purchases

⁴⁸ These activities have helped raise awareness about the importance of promoting school activities for boys and girls in an equitable manner.

⁴⁹ For example, in 2017, WFP led the mobilization of United Nations agencies to support activities against gender-based violence organized by the National Institute for Gender Equality and Equity.

⁵⁰ WFP. 2015. *Operation evaluation of São Tomé and Príncipe development project DEV 2002 95: Transitioning towards a national school feeding and health programme in São Tomé and Príncipe: Final Report*, Para. 13. Available (in French) at <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/00eeb77443984c4dbf7d6f5daa7c46e7/download/>.

⁵¹ Government of Sao Tome and Principe. 2018. Zero hunger strategic review, April 2018 (available (in Portuguese) at <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000070152/download/>).

from local producers, with a focus on the economic empowerment of women smallholders. The development of local purchase mechanisms should be accompanied by analyses of the costs and trade-offs of such arrangements, food quality issues, the capacity of smallholder farmers, possible risks associated with local purchase and strategies for mitigating those risks.

44. *Generating evidence to improve the design and implementation of PNASE:* WFP should support the Government in carrying out a study of current school meal modalities and a gender-informed cost-benefit analysis, including the design of the most suitable food basket and budget adjustments according to the number of schoolchildren.
45. *Reinforcing partnerships and multisectoral coordination:* WFP will strengthen strategic partnerships with government actors such as the ministries of education, health and agriculture; the National Institute for Gender Equality and Parity; and other international development partners such as FAO, the African Development Bank and civil society stakeholders to improve coordination across various sectors.
46. *Strengthening South-South cooperation:* The sharing of experiences with other developing countries has been a valuable tool for improving the school meals programme in Sao Tome and Principe. Collaboration with the Brazilian Cooperation Agency enabled the country to create an institutional and legal environment that has facilitated the transfer of responsibility for the management of the school meals programme to the Government, while discussions with the Government of Cape Verde have provided insights on areas that require further technical support from development partners, such as monitoring and evaluation systems.⁵²
47. *Improving resource mobilization:* WFP should also support the Government in the implementation of a resource mobilization strategy for PNASE, including the creation of a separate line in the national budget (ZHSR R5.2, CV mission R2) and the mobilization of bilateral and multilateral donors and the private sector. WFP headquarters and the Regional Bureau in Dakar should be more closely engaged in resource mobilization for WFP's capacity-strengthening activities because the isolation of Sao Tome and Principe and the low number of donors present in the country limit the opportunities for resource mobilization.
48. *Improving targeting and monitoring information management systems:* WFP should work with the Government to improve information management systems for targeting and monitoring, particularly to ensure the availability and reliability of sex- and age-disaggregated data on food security and nutrition, data on food prices and coordination between targeting databases for various safety nets such as PNASE and the Government's nascent cash transfer initiative.⁵³

2.2 Opportunities for WFP

49. Based on these lessons, the outcomes of the ZHSR and subsequent consultations with the Government and partners, WFP has identified a number of opportunities, with a strong focus on the promotion of gender equality as a cross-cutting element.
50. *School meals:* WFP is well positioned to continue to work as one of the Government's key partners to deliver on the commitments to consolidate and improve the national school meals programme, providing capacity strengthening and facilitating knowledge exchange.

⁵² Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Communications. 2017. *National School Feeding and Health Programme. 2017. Mission report: information exchange between Sao Tome and Principe and Cabo Verde regarding school feeding (Relatório da missão de intercâmbio de conhecimento no contexto de Alimentação Escolar entre Sao Tome a Príncipe e Cabo Verde)*, p.6 (not available online).

⁵³ Mothers in need (*mães carenciadas*) programme, implemented by the Ministry of Social Welfare and supported by the World Bank.

This work will include strengthening the policy and strategic framework, fostering sustainable funding mechanisms, improving modalities and implementation arrangements, looking at nutrition education in schools, facilitating a cost-benefit analysis and integrating a gender-transformative, environmentally and socially sustainable approach across the school meals programme. WFP is also well positioned to support a new round of Systems Approach for Better Education Results assessments (as well as to provide inputs and advice for Government-led evaluations of school feeding and other food security and nutrition matters) and to carry out analyses of how to optimize inclusive community participation, in line with the consultations held with the Government (including PNASE and CONSAN representatives) and community members (including representatives of parents' associations and farmer associations). Activities will build on ongoing initiatives in collaboration with the Brazilian Cooperation Agency and the WFP Centre of Excellence against Hunger in Brazil.

51. *Nutrition:* WFP has the opportunity to support national nutrition initiatives by raising awareness of nutrition issues, particularly among adolescents, pregnant and lactating women and girls, health workers, teachers and male community leaders, in order to increase the acceptance and consumption of local products, improve nutritional practices and reduce micronutrient deficiencies, including through a gender-transformative social behaviour change communication strategy.⁵⁴
52. *Smallholder capacity:* WFP can support the Government in strengthening the capacities of smallholder associations and communities, with the equitable inclusion of women and men to improve local food value chains, particularly focusing on storage, conservation and market access. This will be done in coordination with ongoing initiatives by China (agriculture technical cooperation with the Government), FAO (in line with its recently launched country programming framework for 2018–2022) and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (such as Alisei), leveraging WFP's experience with the P4P and PAA programmes.
53. *Multisectoral coordination for food security and nutrition:* WFP is well positioned to support CONSAN in promoting effective, inclusive and equitable coordination of all stakeholders in their efforts to achieve SDG 2, as highlighted by recommendation 24.2 of the ZHSR and during consultations with the Government. This includes the integration of gender-transformative initiatives with ongoing food security and nutrition programmes, particularly PNASE, and WFP advocacy for the inclusion of the National Institute for Gender Equality and Equity as a member of CONSAN.
54. In December 2017, members of PNASE directorate and other government departments took part in a WFP-supported joint study visit to Cape Verde, another Portuguese-speaking island country, where the Government has successfully assumed complete management of its national school meals programme. Based on lessons learned from the visit, the mission members produced recommendations on improving PNASE by reinforcing the PNASE institutional framework; establishing a solid, continuous and sustainable funding mechanism for school feeding; and developing school meal monitoring systems.⁵⁵ The lessons learned were presented to the 22 members of CONSAN and to development partners in July 2018.

⁵⁴ Government of Sao Tome and Principe. 2018. Zero hunger strategic review, April 2018. Available (in Portuguese) at <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000070152/download/>.

⁵⁵ Sao Tome and Principe Ministry of Culture, Science and Communications National School Feeding and Health Programme. 2017. *Mission report: information exchange between Sao Tome and Principe and Cabo Verde regarding school feeding (Relatório da missão de intercâmbio de conhecimento no contexto de Alimentação Escolar entre Sao Tome a Príncipe e Cabo Verde)*, page 6 (not available online).

55. The Government has requested WFP's in-country presence and has endorsed the concept note for the CSP. It has also committed to contributing USD 1 million over five years for activity 1.

2.3 Strategic changes

56. WFP will capitalize on the momentum generated by the inclusive ZHSR and leverage its experience and comparative advantages to play a vital role in Sao Tome and Principe as an advisor, a convener and an enabler supporting the Government in achieving targets under the Transformation Agenda 2030 and the ZHSR. During the implementation of the CSP, WFP will support the Government and national stakeholders in the design and implementation of a gender-transformative HGSM initiative, building on the P4P, smallholder agricultural market support, PAA and food systems approaches. The country office will act as an interface for South-South cooperation, connecting national stakeholders with the WFP centres of excellence in Brazil, China and Côte d'Ivoire to help operationalize national food security and nutrition programmes.
57. WFP will enhance inclusive coordination and collaboration with all stakeholders, including central and district governments, communities, development partners, NGOs and community-based organizations, in order to maximize the results and impact of the CSP.
58. WFP will support the Government in taking an integrated gender-transformative approach to promoting food security and nutrition, whereby women, men, girls and boys equitably benefit from the activities. This will also contribute to the success of the HGSM approach and the improvement of local food value chains.

3. WFP strategic orientation

3.1 Direction, focus and intended impacts

59. In line with national priorities and consultation findings and recommendations, the CSP will enhance national capacities to manage a sustainable, gender-transformative national school meals programme. It will seek to reinforce the linkages between the food security, nutrition, smallholder agriculture and education sectors. By approaching hunger-related challenges (SDG 2) via multisectoral platforms and through enhanced coordination efforts (SDG 17), WFP's work will help Sao Tome and Principe to make progress on a number of other SDGs as well, namely, SDG 1 (no poverty), SDG 3 (good health), SDG 4 (quality education) and SDG 5 (gender equality and women's empowerment).
60. School meals will remain WFP's central entry point and the main area of focus for capacity strengthening (activity 1). In line with the Government's commitments in this area and the various ZHSR recommendations regarding WFP's engagement, WFP will work with the Government to strengthen its capacity to implement PNASE, including through legal and policy frameworks, gender-transformative approaches and sustainable funding in order to achieve the Government's vision of a nationally owned school meal programme by 2030. WFP will highlight the value of timely budgeting and allocation of resources for purchasing food commodities from smallholder farmers for PNASE.
61. PNASE currently serves 46,766 children in primary schools and kindergartens, corresponding to over a quarter of the total population. Given its size, the demand for local food production generated by school meals could have a significant effect on food value chains and smallholder farmer access to markets. Through the HGSM approach under activity 2, WFP will support the development of a Government-owned local purchase mechanism and provide technical and coordination support to the Government in order to strengthen the capacities of smallholder associations and communities to improve local food value chains and smallholder agricultural markets. The focus will be on strengthening capacities for the transformation, storage and conservation of locally produced food, in

coordination with initiatives of other development partners, with particular attention to gender equality and the empowerment of women smallholder farmers and their associations.

62. In both CSP activities, WFP will build on the instruments, platforms and coordination mechanisms of the national nutrition programme to facilitate the rollout of nutrition-sensitive approaches, leveraging the scale of PNASE and the engagement of smallholder farmers as entry points for the reduction of malnutrition, supporting the Government in integrating nutrition education into PNASE and using gender-equality informed social and behaviour change communication strategies to stimulate the production and use of local nutritious foods.
63. WFP will support the Government in working to ensure that the design and implementation of the Government's activities are gender-transformative and address the particular needs and interests of the elderly, people with disabilities and people living with HIV.

3.2 Strategic outcomes, focus areas, expected outputs and key activities

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 programme and related food security and nutrition policies and programmes nationwide by 2030

64. This strategic outcome aims to strengthen national capacity – through various ministries, PNASE, CONSAN, the national nutrition programme and other relevant national institutions⁵⁶ – to implement a sustainable national school meals programme and related food security and nutrition policies and programmes, leveraging the HGSM approach in order to stimulate national food value chains and equitable access to markets for women and men smallholders.
65. This CSP reflects recommendations from the 2016 operation evaluation and regional operation evaluations for 2013–2016, together with the ZHSR and consultations with various stakeholders and ensures that WFP will continue to be the Government's strategic partner for implementing the national development plans and achieving zero hunger by 2030.

Focus area

66. Strategic outcome 1 focuses on root causes.

Expected outputs

67. This strategic outcome will be achieved through the following four outputs:
- Primary school children (tier 3) benefit from an improved national home-grown school meals framework to increase their access to nutritious food (Strategic Results 1 and 2), improve health (SDG 3) and achieve better education results (SDG 4).
 - The people of Sao Tome and Principe (tier 3) benefit from well-coordinated, equitable smallholder agricultural market support and local food value chains that facilitate the home-grown school meals initiative and increase their overall food security (Strategic Result 1).
 - The people of Sao Tome and Principe (tier 3) benefit from strengthened national capacities to operate gender-transformative social and behaviour change communication programmes on nutritional practices that improve their nutritional status (Strategic Result 2).

⁵⁶ This includes the National Institute for Gender Equality and Parity.

- Food-insecure populations (tier 3) benefit from the strengthened capacity of the CONSAN to coordinate equitable and inclusive food security and nutrition policies and programmes to enhance their food and nutrition security (Strategic Results 1 and 2).

Key activities

Activity 1: Provide capacity strengthening (including through South–South cooperation) to the Government in the design, management and coordination of an environmentally and socially sustainable, gender-transformative and nutrition-sensitive home-grown school meals programme and related food security and nutrition policies and programmes

68. WFP will work with the Government to strengthen its capacity to review and improve the school meal strategy and the efficiency, equity and effectiveness of PNASE, including through the finalization of legal instruments, the development of a resource mobilization strategy, gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation, and programme design. This technical assistance will be institutional, financial, organizational, legal and operational, and it will strengthen capacities at various levels of the Government (central and decentralized) and at the community level and enhance capacity to implement the HGSM approach. All activities will comply with WFP environmental and social standards.
69. WFP will also assist the Government in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of intersectoral coordination platforms for promoting HGSM. Each ministry involved (agriculture, health, finance and education) will need to define its role and budgetary allocations within the PNASE framework.
70. In line with the recommendations from the ZHSR, WFP will also use HGSM capacity support as an entry point for the reinforcement of national nutrition initiatives, aiming to sensitize the population (particularly adolescents, pregnant and lactating women and girls, health workers, teachers and male community leaders) to increase the consumption and acceptability of local products, improve nutritional practices and reduce micronutrient deficiencies, including through a gender-transformative social behaviour change communication strategy. Working through PNASE and the national nutrition programme, WFP will support the Government in promoting the use of fresh and processed local nutritious products in school menus, replacing certain imported products to improve schoolchildren's nutrition status and ability to learn. WFP will also engage in sensitization campaigns about the importance of antenatal consultations and the consumption of iron-rich foods by pregnant and lactating women and girls, in partnership with other stakeholders.
71. Gender will be integrated into all these capacity-strengthening activities, which will be financed by the Government and implemented in partnership with the ministries of education, health (through the national nutrition programme), and agriculture and rural development; other United Nations agencies, particularly UNICEF; the World Health Organization (WHO); NGOs; and civil society organizations committed to and competent in gender-transformative approaches.

Activity 2: 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

72. WFP will strengthen government capacity to facilitate and coordinate demand-side actors (especially PNASE) through an established legal framework. Furthermore, WFP will provide technical advice to the Government on the design of an inclusive and equitable pro-smallholder procurement system. WFP will assist the Government in evaluating how prices are fixed and how costs can be reduced by establishing a guaranteed, predictable and stable volume of demand for smallholder produce; using contracts that allow fair and open negotiation between farmers and buyers based on agreed price information sources;

enhancing the Government's capacity to facilitate the provision of supply chain-related services such as training, access to inputs, access to credit and market information; and exploring partnerships in order to improve payment mechanisms.

73. Under this activity, WFP will promote the introduction and development of a nutritious food value chain, including the food transformation stage, and provide technical assistance to the Government in the coordination of partners' work in support of crop production. Through a joint programme with FAO and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), WFP will assist the Ministry of Agriculture in organizing the production of nutritious food and fostering an equitable horticulture value chain, while also partnering with the United Nations Development Programme on climate change issues. WFP will advise the Government on scaling up food processing plants in order to increase the consumption of locally processed food and will organize related awareness campaigns with the Government and other development partners and public demonstrations of new products. Training and workshop sessions targeted at particular population groups will help the Government achieve better results. All aspects of activity 2 will comply with the WFP 2017 Environmental Policy.
74. Agriculture has always employed more men than women, both in the production of cash crops and in subsistence agriculture. WFP will work with the Government to strengthen its capacity to provide incentives for the inclusion of women in this sector and stimulate equitable access to markets through awareness-raising campaigns and the exchange of experience through South-South cooperation.

3.3 Transition and exit strategies

75. The Government, supported by WFP and other development partners, will prepare a phased transition strategy, setting out milestones in capacity strengthening for the five years of the CSP. This strategy will be aligned with the ZHSR road map and the Government's vision of achieving autonomous management of the school meal programme by 2024. WFP will adjust its exit strategy for beyond 2024 based on the evidence gathered from assessments carried out during the CSP regarding national capacity to manage PNASE (including the integration of gender-transformative approaches to the HGSM initiative and progress towards gender equality).

4. Implementation arrangements

4.1 Beneficiary analysis

76. As under the transitional interim CSP, no beneficiaries will be directly reached by WFP interventions under this CSP. Since WFP's activities will focus on strengthening national capacities for the HGSM approach and smallholder farmer support, the beneficiaries targeted by these initiatives will be supported indirectly.
77. Under activity 1, an estimated 47,000 girls and boys⁵⁷ between the ages of 3 and 12 attending primary schools and kindergartens each year will indirectly benefit from WFP's support for the strengthening of the Government's capacity to efficiently provide nutritious meals linked to local production through PNASE, with the aim of improving their nutrition status and health, and consequently their school performance.

⁵⁷ This is a rounded estimate for the number of indirect beneficiaries (yearly average), based on the number of children who benefitted from the national school meal programme in 2018 as reported by the Ministry of Education (46,766 children, comprising 22,928 girls and 23,838 boys).

78. The HGSM approach will improve market access for smallholder farmers, who will have the opportunity to increase their income by supplying PNASE with nutritious local products. As an advisor, convener and enabler, WFP will support the Government and other partners under activity 2 in coordinating gender-transformative food security and nutrition programmes, seeking to promote equitable access to markets for around 9,000 small-scale food producers⁵⁸ and sustainably expanding local food value chains on a larger scale while addressing structural and socio-cultural gender inequalities.
79. WFP's work to enhance the capacity of government institutions to stimulate sustainable local food value chains will indirectly benefit schoolchildren, smallholder farmers, key stakeholders in the food value chain (retailers, processors, storage facilities, agricultural extension officers, farmer associations, cooperatives and consumer communities) and the population of Sao Tome and Principe at large (women, men, girls and boys equitably).

4.2 Transfers

Capacity strengthening including South-South cooperation

80. Through the CSP, WFP will invest in capacity strengthening, with a focus on gender equality, at various government levels:
- Capacity strengthening at the national level: WFP will provide technical assistance to various ministries in various areas, including legal and institutional frameworks, coordination, resource mobilization, evaluation capacities, gender-transformative programme design and human resources.
 - Capacity strengthening at the district level: WFP will support programme implementation at the district level, enhancing gender-responsive monitoring and reporting capacities and coordination arrangements, as well as financial management, gender equality, record keeping, nutrition, hygiene and sanitation.
 - Capacity strengthening at the community level: WFP will support PNASE in promoting the equitable and inclusive participation of local communities and caregivers in programme management.
81. In addition, WFP will deepen and enhance South-South partnerships to strengthen the capacities of PNASE and CONSAN, focusing on collaboration with Brazil, Cape Verde and other Portuguese-speaking countries through CPLP and the centres of excellence in Brazil, Côte d'Ivoire and China.
82. This South-South cooperation will be essential for WFP to build on the experiences of other Portuguese-speaking countries in order to enhance government capacity to coordinate and implement programmes and policies in an efficient, gender-transformative way and to formulate a common approach to the HGSM initiative.⁵⁹

4.3 Supply chain

83. Currently, PNASE has limited logistics and distribution capacity. WFP will provide continuous capacity support to PNASE, school committees and schools on supply chain management, including the potential expansion of the food basket to include fresh food and seafood. PNASE requires support in conducting a cost-benefit analysis and improving the modalities,

⁵⁸ This is a rounded estimate for the number of indirect beneficiaries (yearly average), based on the estimates of the Ministry of Agriculture and FAO for the total number of smallholder farmers in the country (approximately 8,955, of whom 30 percent are women and 70 percent are men). WFP's support seeks to address gender inequalities in the agriculture sector.

⁵⁹ In one WFP-instigated and sponsored example of South-South cooperation, a team of five Sao Tome and Principe nationals from the Ministry of Education, PNASE and CONSAN undertook a study visit to Cape Verde from 17 to 23 December 2017 in order to learn from Cape Verde's experience with the HGSM approach.

design and implementation of the HGSM model. WFP will help strengthen local purchase mechanisms and processes, leveraging its P4P and PAA experience.

84. The supply chain challenges limiting smallholder farmer access to markets include a lack of information, insufficient capacity to meet traditional tendering requirements and a lack of supply, storage and transport capacity, coupled with structural and socio-cultural gender inequalities. WFP will assist the Government and its partners in coordinating capacity-strengthening initiatives in this domain, with a focus on food storage, conservation and transformation, and quality and safety management.

4.4 Country office capacity and profile

85. WFP has an important role to play in Sao Tome and Principe as a partner supporting the Government's efforts to develop an alternative, gender-transformative school meals strategy as described above. This will be accomplished with a relatively small team of qualified national staff, as currently is the case for other United Nations offices in Sao Tome and Principe such as FAO, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme. This small team will carry out administrative functions, engage with partners and manage consultants providing technical support. They will receive technical support from the WFP regional bureau and headquarters, particularly during the first years of the CSP, to ensure that implementation is dynamic and responds to the needs and requirements of the Government and WFP's partners.
86. Technical assistance may be provided directly at the offices of government counterparts, such as through the secondment of WFP staff to ministries. The country office is planning a staffing review in preparation for CSP implementation to determine the skills and profiles required to implement the CSP⁶⁰ and will design a new office structure accordingly. The potential to share more office space and back office functions with other agencies will be explored, building on the already strong inter-agency support and Delivering as One structure in Sao Tome and Principe, where all agencies except FAO are already housed in the same building and share maintenance and overhead costs.

4.5 Partnerships

87. The strategic outcome of this CSP is articulated around strong partnerships between various stakeholders and civil society. WFP's main government counterparts for the implementation of the CSP are the ministries of education, health, and agriculture and rural development. Together and individually, these ministries will benefit from WFP's assistance to strengthen their capacities in various areas related to the successful implementation of an HGSM programme. In coordination with FAO and IFAD, China, Brazil and NGOs such as Helpo, Quatela and Alisei, WFP will support the Ministry of Agriculture in organizing the food value chain and addressing the challenges and gaps identified in the CSP.
88. In collaboration with the United Nations country team, particularly FAO, IFAD, UNICEF and WHO, WFP will support the effective national coordination of food security and nutrition activities through CONSAN, leveraging the Delivering as One principle to raise funds for the implementation of the activities.
89. Partnerships with the National Institute for Gender Equality and Parity, NGOs and civil society organizations will be vital to running campaigns to raise awareness of the importance of women's and men's equitable roles, responsibilities and access to resources in the agriculture sector and the equitable access of men and women to markets. These partnerships will be key to developing and implementing a gender-transformative

⁶⁰ The staffing skills and profile evaluation will include competencies for corporate cross-cutting commitments, such as gender equality, along with gender parity in line with the sustainable goals strategy and WFP's gender action plan.

HGSM programme that includes the use of fresh local products in school meals. Partner organizations for this work will include MARAPA,⁶¹ Quatela, Alisei, Helpo and Zatona.

90. WFP will help to address fragmentation among partners and support the operationalization of an integrated, inclusive multi-stakeholder HGSM programme. The HGSM approach will be a catalyst for the aggregation of partners. Since the number of partners in the country is relatively small, there is scope for improving coordination between WFP, the Government, United Nations agencies, NGOs and donors and for promoting integrated approaches.

5. Performance management and evaluation

5.1 Monitoring and evaluation arrangements

91. The CSP results monitoring and evaluation system will be aligned with WFP's revised Corporate Results Framework (2017–2021) and its subsequent updates, as well as with national efforts to track SDG progress.
92. Gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation plans will be established, clearly laying out the systems and processes to be set up to ensure adequate tracking of results for accountability and decision making purposes. Monitoring the results of the CSP by age group will be another WFP priority.
93. Indicators, including those related to gender equality, will be reported on in the annual country report. Performance measurement systems will be improved to enhance evaluability. As the portfolio of capacity-strengthening activities is extensive, the country office will go beyond the indicators of the Corporate Results Framework and will develop country-specific indicators, relying on the support of experts in monitoring capacity-strengthening activities in respect of HGSM, smallholder farmers' support, gender and nutrition. WFP and the United Nations monitoring and evaluation team will assist the Government in monitoring the national SDG indicators, ensuring regular follow up.
94. WFP will support PNASE monitoring and reporting capacities, including through advocacy for adequate financial resources and required materials and equipment to allow the Minister of Education and PNASE technicians to implement the programme at the district level, monitoring smallholder associations' activities and school meals management and reporting at the national level.
95. The PNASE government steering committee (composed of representatives of various ministries and national public institutions) will need to be reconvened to monitor PNASE activities, including those that promote gender equality, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education.
96. The country office's CSP review and evaluation plan will include the following assessments:
- A Systems Approach for Better Education Results exercise in 2021;
 - A country office-led decentralized evaluation of the smallholder farmer support activity in 2021, to be carried out in collaboration with the Government in order to measure the progress of work under activity 2, including with regard to gender integration;
 - An inclusive mid-term review in 2022; and
 - A CSP evaluation in 2022–2023, led by the WFP Office of Evaluation. This evaluation will meet accountability needs regarding WFP's overall country portfolio performance and results and will inform the direction of future strategies and programmes.

⁶¹ MARAPA (*Mar Ambiente e Pesca Artesanal*) is a national NGO working matters affecting the seas, the environment and artisanal fisheries.

5.2 Risk management

Strategic risks

97. *Insufficient funding:* Donor fatigue and limited presence in the country and Sao Tome and Principe's graduation from low-income to lower-middle-income status may result in insufficient funding for the CSP. To mitigate this risk, WFP will seek government and non-traditional donor contributions and will improve its resource mobilization strategy, including by highlighting gender-transformative approaches in the CSP, given that gender equality is a shared donor priority.
98. *External relationship:* A lack of coordination among WFP and other United Nations agencies, the Government and partners could lead to misalignment of activities, resulting in coverage gaps, duplication or overlap. To mitigate this risk, WFP will reinforce partnerships, promote joint programmes, engage on cross-cutting issues and adjust the CSP as necessary following any changes in government plans and programmes.
99. *Business model:* WFP may be perceived as only a humanitarian partner rather than a strategic development partner by the Government, other United Nations agencies and donors. This risk will be mitigated by the integrated approach used to deliver WFP assistance during the term of the CSP as well as enhanced inclusive coordination at the national and decentralized levels, which will help reinforce WFP's image as a facilitator of development activities. WFP will also work with the Government to enhance its capacity to develop an innovative, gender-transformative strategy for the school meals programme.
100. *External relationship:* The risk of limited national capacities and coordination and external resistance to the pursuit of a gender-transformative approach to the HGSM initiative would hinder the timely and effective implementation of the CSP. To mitigate this risk, WFP will strengthen government capacities and urge national stakeholders to adopt innovative and inclusive programmes and policies that benefit men, women, girls and boys equitably.

6. Resources for results

6.1 Country portfolio budget

COUNTRY PORTFOLIO BUDGET (USD)							
Strategic outcome 1	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Total
	178 132	241 782	383 950	201 300	377 046	206 693	1 588 903
Total	178 132	241 782	383 950	201 300	377 046	206 693	1 588 903

101. The total cost of achieving the strategic outcome is USD 1,588,903. The cost reflects the investment in national capacity development to manage the HGSM approach, improve the local food value chain and increase smallholder farmer access to markets. WFP will allocate adequate resources to activities that advance gender equality and nutrition sensitivity.

6.2 Resourcing outlook

102. The Government of Sao Tome and Principe has committed to providing USD 1 million over five years (USD 200,000 per year) for activity 1.
103. New funding opportunities will be explored with potential traditional and non-traditional donors. The CSP should be attractive to donors as it contributes to addressing some of the major challenges and gaps identified through the ZHSR and the consultations with the Government and other stakeholders, including development partners.

6.3 Resource mobilization strategy

104. As Sao Tome and Principe is a lower-middle-income country, resource mobilization will be a critical component of the CSP. Collaboration with FAO will build on complementarity to achieve greater results, in line with the Delivering as One principles of geographic focus and programmatic convergence. Accordingly, WFP will follow up on discussions and arrangements initiated with partners during the ZHSR process and will reinforce partnerships with non-traditional donors, especially with regard to activity 2 and the importance of increasing women's participation in the smallholder farmers' support component.

ANNEX I

LOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN

Strategic Goal 2: Partner to support implementation of the SDGs

Strategic Objective 4: Support SDG implementation

Strategic Result 5: Countries have strengthened capacity to implement the 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

Outcome category: Nutrition sensitive
 Enhanced capacities of public- and private-sector institutions and systems, including local responders, to identify, target and assist food-insecure and nutritionally vulnerable populations
 Focus area: Root causes

Assumptions

The government is able to autonomously implement HGSM programme and related food security and nutrition policies and programmes

Outcome indicators

National Capacity Index (School meals)

Number of national food security and nutrition policies, programmes and system components enhanced as a result of WFP capacity strengthening (new)

Number of national programmes enhanced as a result of WFP-facilitated South-South and triangular cooperation support (new)

Resources mobilized (USD value) for national food security and nutrition systems as a result of WFP capacity strengthening (new)

Activities and outputs

2. 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 (SMS: Smallholder agricultural market support activities)

The people of Sao Tome and Principe (tier 3) benefit from well-coordinated, equitable smallholder agricultural market support and local food value chains that facilitate the HGSM initiative and increase their overall food security (C: Capacity development and technical support provided)

The people of Sao Tome and Principe (tier 3) benefit from well-coordinated, equitable smallholder agricultural market support and local food value chains that facilitate the home-grown school meals initiative and increase their overall food security (M: National coordination mechanisms supported)

Food-insecure populations (tier 3) benefit from the strengthened capacity of the Food Security and Nutrition Council to coordinate equitable and inclusive food security and nutrition policies and programmes to enhance their food and nutrition security (C: Capacity development and technical support provided)

Food-insecure populations (tier 3) benefit from the strengthened capacity of the Food Security and Nutrition Council to coordinate equitable and inclusive food security and nutrition policies and programmes to enhance their food and nutrition security (I: Policy engagement strategies developed/implemented)

Food-insecure populations (tier 3) benefit from the strengthened capacity of the Food Security and Nutrition Council to coordinate equitable and inclusive food security and nutrition policies and programmes to enhance their food and nutrition security (K: Partnerships supported)

1. Provide capacity strengthening (including through South–South cooperation) to the Government in the design, management and coordination of an environmentally and socially sustainable, gender-transformative and nutrition-sensitive HGSM programme and related food security and nutrition policies and programmes (SMP: School meal activities)

The people of Sao Tome and Principe (tier 3) benefit from strengthened national capacities to operate gender-transformative social and behaviour change communication programmes on nutritional practices that improve their nutritional status (C: Capacity development and technical support provided)

Primary school children (tier 3) benefit from an improved national home-grown school meals framework to increase their access to nutritious food, improve health and achieve better education results (C: Capacity development and technical support provided)

Primary school children (tier 3) benefit from an improved national home-grown school meals framework to increase their access to nutritious food, improve health and achieve better education results (M: National coordination mechanisms supported)

ANNEX II

INDICATIVE COST BREAKDOWN ALONG STRATEGIC OUTCOMES (USD)		
	Strategic Result 5/ SDG Target 17.9	Total
	Strategic outcome 1	
Focus area	Root causes	
Transfer	1 024 860	1 024 860
Implementation	195 020	195 020
Total transfer and implementation costs (direct operating costs)	1 219 880	1 219 880
Adjusted direct support cost	272 048	272 048
Total WFP direct costs	1 491 928	1 491 928
Indirect support costs	96 975	96 975
Total WFP Costs	1 588 903	1 588 903

Acronyms used in the document

CONSAN	Council for Food and Nutrition Security (<i>Conselho de Segurança Alimentar e Nutricional</i>)
CPLP	Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries
CSP	country strategic plan
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GDP	gross domestic product
HGSM	home-grown school meals
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
NGO	non-governmental organization
PAA	Purchase from Africans for Africa
P4P	Purchase for Progress
PNASE	national school meals and health programme (<i>Programa nacional de alimentação e saúde escolar</i>)
PNIASAN	national agricultural investment programme for food security and nutrition (<i>Programa Nacional de Investimento Agrícola para a Segurança Alimentar e Nutricional</i>)
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UNDAF	United Nations development assistance framework for 2017–2021
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
WHO	World Health Organization
ZHSR	zero hunger strategic review