



UNITED NATIONS  
SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE  
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# UN ANNUAL RESULTS REPORT 2024

SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE

ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2024







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## FOREWORD

The 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda is our North star that guides our actions, with only 5 years to go to achieve the 17 SDGs. Therefore, the acceleration in attaining the SDGs has been at the core of our activities, in line with the national priorities of the country. I am proud that the country has put its trust in the UN to accompany the country in the key transitions that the country requires to improve the living conditions of the people, develop its human capital and the most promising sectors of economic growth:

- Climate Action to preserve the rich biodiversity of the country and protect it against the adverse effects of climate change impacting this small island state;
- Energy Transition to renewable energy sources and decarbonization that will reduce the reliance on fossil fuels and constitute one of the main accelerators of development;
- Sustainable Food Systems to increase local production, food processing and reduce dependence on high food imports;
- Transformative Education to offer digital learning modules and market-based skills to the new generation of young people .

This report provides an overview of the key results in 2024. Thanks to our close partnership with the Government, civil society, private sector and the development partners who continued their strong support to the country and to the UN, in pursuit of our common goals. This publication also shows progress to leave no one behind, a promise made by the UN member states in 2015 when adopting the Agenda 2030. Thanks to the partnership with the Peace Building Commission, I am glad that justice and security reform has been at the top of the country's priorities as part of its conflict prevention strategy.

I look forward to continuing our journey for an inclusive and sustainable development of the country in 2025 and would like to thank you for the support and the trust that we have enjoyed during 2024.

Eric Overvest  
United Nations Resident Coordinator  
Sao Tome and Principe





## UN COUNTRY TEAM IN SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE

The UN in Sao Tome and Principe is committed to supporting the country's national development priorities and progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in an integrated manner, with a strong emphasis on leaving no one behind. The new United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (CF) has been strategically designed around this principle, mobilizing the collective UN expertise to accelerate SDG progress around key transformative transitions through an integrated approach. Thanks to an enhanced Coordination System involving both resident and non-resident agencies, the UN efforts aim to address the country's unique development challenges from a holistic perspective. By leveraging its presence and recognized role as a key development actor, the UN facilitates partnerships, upholds international norms and standards, gender transformative approaches and advocates for the principles of leaving no one behind.

The UN House hosts all United Nations agencies operating in the country, alongside the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the World Bank, co-signatories of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2023–2027.

IN-COUNTRY PRESENCE



NON-COUNTRY PRESENCE

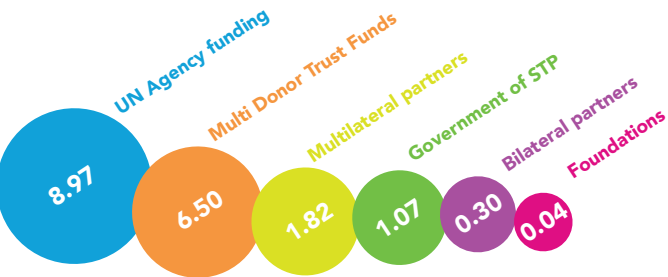




# KEY DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS OF THE UN IN SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE

The UN places partnership at the center of all aspects of its work. During 2024, we worked closely with the Government of Sao Tome and Principe, local authorities, international organizations, private sector, and civil society to support the key transitions towards accelerating the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda. These partnerships are essential for leveraging resources and knowledge for sustainable development. Thanks to the generous support from the international community, the UN has been able to support the priority needs of the country. The internal resources of UN agencies constitute a substantial portion of the funds spent in 2024, followed by the global funds (GEF, Global Fund to fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and GAVI). Detailed information regarding contributions by partner can be found below

## Source of Funding of the UN STP in 2024



TOTAL 18,663,390.00





# SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE AT A GLANCE

SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE IS KNOWN FOR

The second smallest country in Africa in terms of surface area

TOTAL SURFACE  
1001 km<sup>2</sup>

209,607  
Inhabitants  
(INE, Dec 2024)



Hosts a remarkable number of endemic species, making them a hotspot for unique wildlife found nowhere else on Earth

Known as the "Chocolate Islands" for their rich history in cocoa production and world class chocolate

"Leve-leve" is the local motto meaning "take it easy," reflecting the islands' relaxed and stress-free lifestyle.



1.3%

Average population growth  
2021-2024  
INE POPULATION CENSUS 2024

18.6 years

Population median age  
2017  
INE IOF 2017



89.9%

Net Frequency Rate  
Basic Education  
VNR 2022

29.9%

Net Frequency Rate  
Second Cycle/ Secondary  
Education  
VNR 2022



66.7%

Poverty Index  
2017  
INE IOF 2017

40.7

GINI coefficient  
2017  
WDI 2022



14.5%

of women in the National  
Assembly  
25.4% in 2018



128%

Debt to GDP ratio  
2022  
IMF Data 2022



21.9%

of houses connected to  
potable water supply  
2017  
INE IOF 2017



10.9%

Inflation estimate  
2024  
BCSTP 2025

40%

of ministries are women  
25% in 2018

3%

Foreign direct investment,  
net inflows (% of GDP)  
2023  
WDI 2022

45%

of population using open  
defecation  
VNR 2022

6,150

GNI per capita, PPP  
(current international \$)  
2023  
data.worldbank.org





# COUNTRY CONTEXT

Overall, São Tomé and Príncipe's socioeconomic development in 2024 was hampered by low economic growth, estimated at below 1%. A delayed agreement with the IMF constrained external financing and GDP expansion. However, a new Extended Credit Facility (ECF) was approved in December 2024 to help restore macro-economic stability, essential to re-establish strong growth patterns and support the country's sustainable development trajectory. The public deficit remains high but is largely concessional, with a debt service of around 3% in 2023.

Persistently low economic growth and high - though decreasing - inflation over the last post-Covid years eroded the purchasing power of citizens, while limited foreign reserves hampered the country's capacity to finance imports. The trade imbalance remains stark, with imports mainly fuel and food, outpacing exports at a 9:1 ratio. Migration flows, primarily to Portugal, remained high, and have been made easier thanks to the 2022 mobility pact among Portuguese-speaking countries. According to the Portuguese Embassy, 35,000 visas were issued to Santomeans in 2023–2024, representing about 15% of the population.

Social indicators remained relatively strong, with high enrolment and health coverage maintained. Nonetheless, low wages and persistent shortages of medical supplies led to several strikes in 2024. São Tomé and Príncipe continues to hold one of Africa's highest vaccination rates.

Official Development Aid (ODA) remained the principal development funding source, financing 98% of the national investment budget. Private sector investment was minimal, stagnating at 3% of GDP in 2023. Despite economic challenges, key indicators such as GDP per capita (over USD 3,000) and GNI per capita (over USD 6,000 at PPP) showed growth. The population reached approximately 210,000 by the end of 2024.

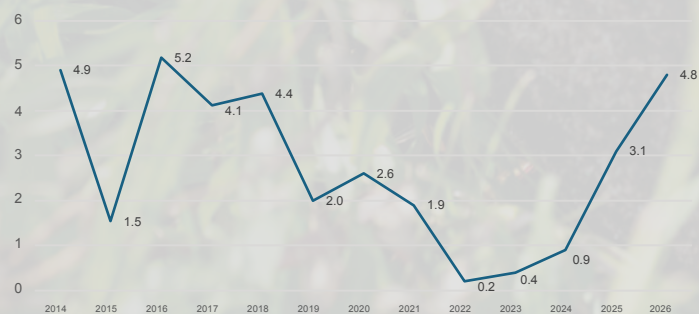
In December 2024, São Tomé and Príncipe graduated from the Least Developed Countries (LDC) category. Nevertheless, development constraints persist, notably high transport costs and a limited domestic market characteristic of small island states.

The country is also highly vulnerable to climate change impacts, including sea-level rise, coastal erosion, and extreme weather events, which threaten both biodiversity and livelihoods. The heavy reliance on external aid and concessional financing limits the fiscal space for climate adaptation and environmental protection. The stagnation in private investment further restricts opportunities for green innovation. As tourism continues to be a key economic pillar, with current number of visitors of around 35 000 put likely to grow in upcoming years, the pressure to sustainably manage natural resources, particularly marine and forest ecosystems is increasing. Strengthening environmental governance, expanding renewable energy, and promoting sustainable agriculture and fisheries are essential for São Tomé and Príncipe to balance economic recovery with environmental sustainability. Estimated economic growth figures for 2025-6 are showing a steady recovery from the last years of slow growth.

Cumulative inflation rate per year



Real GDP Growth (%/year)





# The Path to a Sustainable Future with Innovative Financing for Biodiversity

In March 2024, Sao Tome and Principe reaffirmed its leadership in environmental sustainability by hosting the first International Conference on Innovative Financing for Biodiversity Conservation, organized by the UN in STP and the African Development Bank, with participation from practitioners, high level decision makers of African countries and international partners, including the Office of the Special Advisor of the SG of the UN for Africa and the UN Joint SDG Fund. The UN was able to mobilize a wide array of experts thanks to the Opportunity Issue Based Coalition of the UN on Climate, that made the conference a success.

Held on the pristine island of Príncipe, the world's first UNESCO biosphere reserve, the event was a bold statement to the world: small island nations can lead the way in protecting nature while pursuing economic resilience.

The conference gathered policymakers, international financial institutions, and conservation experts with a shared mission, to explore sustainable and innovative financing mechanisms that would secure the future of biodiversity. More than 150 participants, including government officials, environmentalists, and private sector leaders, engaged in dynamic discussions and shared best practices on carbon credits, debt for nature swaps, conservation trust funds and impact investment strategies.

"The time to act is now. Sao Tome and Principe may be small, but our commitment to biodiversity conservation is immense. We must find innovative ways to fund and protect our natural heritage for future generations," said the Minister of Environment Nilda da Mata in a powerful call to action.

The conference was not just about discussions, it led to concrete commitments that will shape the country's environmental and economic future. The United Nations pledged to support Sao Tome and Principe in mobilizing climate financing and climate expertise, ensuring that vital resources reach those at the forefront of conservation. The AfDB announced a feasibility study on blue and green bonds, opening new pathways for innovative financing. Additionally, a national task force was established to seek long term financing solutions tailored to the country's unique environmental landscape. During the General Assembly of the UN, the President of the Republic announced the setting up of a Conservation Trust Fund to fund the land and marine protected areas of the country, covering 30% of the nation's geography.

With over 75% of its land covered in lush forests, Príncipe stands as a beacon of conservation driven development. The outcomes of this conference strengthened São Tomé and Príncipe's environmental stewardship but also served as a blueprint for other Small Island Developing States (SIDS) seeking to harmonize biodiversity protection with economic growth.

In the heart of the Gulf of Guinea, a small island nation is proving that size is no barrier to ambition. Through innovation, collaboration, and unwavering commitment, Sao Tome and Principe is charting a new course, one where nature and prosperity go hand in hand, inspiring the world to follow. The conference kickstarted the strong focus of the UN on Climate Financing, which is now at the core of its new Cooperation Framework.







## UN SUPPORT TO NATIONAL PRIORITIES

The Cooperation Framework is the UN's five-year plan that guides and directs the collaboration between the Government of Sao Tome and Principe and the United Nations in order to accelerate progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Agenda 2063 of the African Union.

This framework has been aligned with the priorities of the Government of Sao Tome and Principe and its plan for the period 2022–2026. The UN is focusing on 4 key priority areas to which all agencies contribute in a coherent and coordinated way. Each of the priority areas is linked to the pillars of the 2030 Agenda: People, Planet, Prosperity and Partnerships. Each of the priority areas has a strategic result to which the UN as a whole contributes and works together to bring about the transformational change that is required to reduce inequalities, create jobs and invests in a sustainable environment in which no one is left behind.

In alignment with the UN Secretary-General's call for a rescue plan for the SDGs, the Cooperation Framework also contributes to the six key transitions identified to accelerate progress: food systems, energy access, digital connectivity, education, decent jobs and social protection, and climate change. These transitions represent integrated areas where focused investment and policy reforms can yield high impact results across multiple goals.

By integrating these transitions into the Cooperation Framework, the UN in Sao Tome and Principe is reinforcing its commitment to transformative and inclusive development, ensuring that national efforts are not only aligned with global priorities but are also responsive to the most urgent needs of people and the planet.





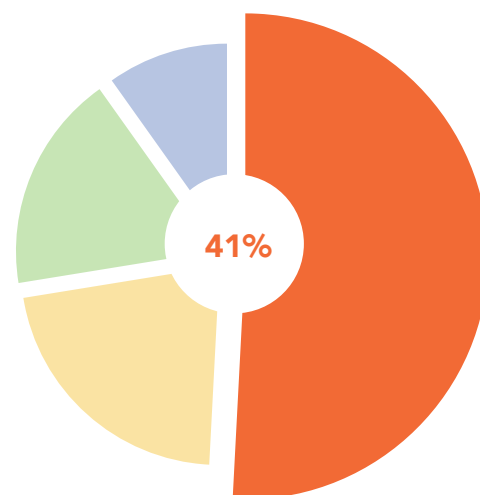
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OUTCOME

## Inclusive Social Systems

By 2027, people in STP, in particular the people left behind and most vulnerable, benefit from quality and inclusive social systems and have access to integrated social protection.



USD \$7.579.682

Contributing agencies:



40%

efficiency increase in health data collection and analysis by migrating DHIS2 to a national server and enhancing user capacity



25%

stock-out reduction and 30% data accuracy improvement in medicine management through mSupply, SIS unit creation, and quarterly field visits



Zero

HIV Mother-to-Child Transmission maintained by training 50 youth associations, educating 9,000+ adolescents, and promoting vaccination awareness



696

health professionals trained in disease preparedness (401 in dengue, 120 in smallpox, 150 in surveillance, 26 in sample transport); 2,000 dengue rapid tests distributed



20,604

adolescents sensitized on gender-based violence, risky behaviors, and vaccination



1,557

trained in life and digital skills



For outcome 1, the UN has focused on 4 priorities:

- **Quality health system for universal health coverage**
- **Quality learning results**
- **Integrated social protection**
- **Prevention of and response to violence, especially women and children**

#### Quality health system for universal health coverage

In 2024, significant advancements were made in strengthening São Tomé and Príncipe's health system, enhancing data management, medicine availability, infrastructure, and disease prevention. The migration of the DHIS2 system to a national server and capacity-building efforts resulted in a 40% improvement in health data collection and analysis efficiency. Medicine stock-outs decreased by 25%, while data accuracy improved by 30% following the implementation of mSupply, the creation of a SIS unit, and quarterly field visits. HPV vaccination coverage surged from 27% in 2023 to 95% in 2024, while DTP HepB-Hib3 declined slightly to 87%, achieved through community engagement, training, and outreach to over 9,000 adolescents. Infrastructure developments included the construction of a national medicine warehouse, a bacteriology/microbiology laboratory, an oxygen plant, and biosafety installations. Water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) improvements were made through Monfort incinerators, waste management training for 11 professionals, and improved sanitation benefiting 305 individuals. Capacity-building efforts trained 696 health professionals in communicable disease preparedness, with 2,000 rapid dengue tests distributed. Additionally, two strategic health financing documents were finalized, and analytical tools were applied to strengthen national health budgeting and human resource planning, ensuring sustainability in health sector investments.

#### Quality learning results

In 2024, UN agencies played a pivotal role in improving education quality, increasing access, and fostering inclusive learning environments in São Tomé and Príncipe. Boys and Girls Clubs expanded to 75 active groups in 15 schools, engaging 1,500 students with an 88% attendance rate. Educational and vocational fairs benefited 1,672 students, while media campaigns reached 4,800 people, promoting comprehensive sexuality education. Digital learning programs, including Akelius and Learning Passport, supported 2,339 students across 15 pilot schools. Despite national challenges such as teacher shortages and strikes, school dropout rates fell from 11% in 2023 to 7%. Preschool enrollment reached 95% for children aged 4-5 years, with child-centered teaching innovations introduced in 111 kindergartens. The school management empowerment program enhanced participatory governance in 30 schools, impacting 13,911 children. Social and behavior change (SBC) interventions promoted disability inclusion, digital learning, and violence prevention, engaging 850 educators. Additionally, life skills training supported 1,502 adolescents, particularly girls, fostering youth empowerment. Multisectoral procedures for violence against children were advanced, with a knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP) study on school violence set for 2025 completion, reinforcing the country's commitment to SDG 4 and equitable education for all.

#### Integrated social protection system

In 2024, UN agencies strengthened São Tomé and Príncipe's social protection system, enhancing data integration and expanding service access for vulnerable populations. Efforts to link the vulnerable persons database with DHIS2 improved monitoring of healthcare access, enabling more effective social service coordination. Awareness campaigns led to increased registrations with the National Security Institute, broadening the contributory base and improving financial sustainability. To support children and persons with disabilities, the UN facilitated the development of a Case Management Protocol, ensuring streamlined care and improved service quality. Capacity-building efforts trained social protection technicians in positive parenting and early disability identification, equipping them to deliver higher-quality services. Nationwide parental education initiatives raised awareness among families, reinforcing inclusive social protection policies. These advancements align with the commitment to SDG 1 (No Poverty) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), ensuring that social safety nets are strengthened for the most vulnerable groups. By reinforcing interoperability between databases, expanding technical expertise, and enhancing community outreach, the UN is fostering a more resilient and inclusive social protection system in São Tomé and Príncipe.

#### Prevention of and response to violence, especially against women and children

In 2024, UN agencies advanced child protection and gender-based violence (GBV) prevention efforts, strengthening the country's capacity to address violence against women and children. The dissemination of Multisectoral Procedures for Violence Against Children (VAC) enhanced case management and referral processes, benefiting 340 children, including 208 affected by sexual and gender-based violence. Critical infrastructure improvements were made, including equipping courtrooms for child victims, modernizing birth registration in maternity hospitals, and supporting the public attorney's office in evidence preservation. The UN trained 284 professionals across multiple sectors, bolstering national and local responses to VAC. Strategic advocacy resulted in the formalization of the "REDE VIDA" coordination mechanism for GBV prevention and response, now awaiting presidential approval. Awareness campaigns reached 248 community members, while gender and development training engaged 20 trainers from Uba Budo. Additionally, 116 professionals—including healthcare workers, police officers, and educators—received specialized training in victim care. The UN also prioritized youth empowerment, training 950 adolescents in life skills and digital competencies to reduce school dropouts and prevent violence. These efforts contribute to SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions), reinforcing São Tomé and Príncipe's commitment to protecting human rights and ensuring inclusive, responsive social systems.





## Protecting the Future, One Vaccine at a Time

Dulce adjusted the strap of her backpack and took a deep breath. The sun was still rising over the blue waters of Santa Catarina, casting golden reflections on the fishing boats rocking gently in the bay. She had grown up here, in this quiet village where the scent of salt and woodsmoke lingered in the air. But today, she was not just Dulce, the fisherman's daughter. She was Nurse Dulce, and she had a mission.

For years, cervical cancer had silently claimed the lives of women in her community, mothers, sisters, friends. Too often, these deaths were accepted as fate, an unavoidable tragedy.

But Dulce knew better now. Since joining the national HPV vaccination campaign, she had seen firsthand how one small intervention could change everything. She walked purposefully toward the village square, where young girls and their mothers gathered. Some were hesitant. Others whispered about myths they had heard that the vaccine would make their daughters infertile or that it was unnecessary. Dulce understood their fears. She had heard them before.

"Tia Maria," she called gently to an older woman standing at the edge of the group, her granddaughter clinging to her skirt. "You remember when I was a little girl, running through the streets with scraped knees? You took care of me like I was your own. Let me do the same for your granddaughter. This vaccine will protect her. It will give her a future where she won't have to fear this disease."

Tia Maria studied her for a long moment before nodding. "If you say it's good, Dulce, then we will do it." That was all it took. One by one, the girls lined up. The hesitant whispers faded, replaced by quiet determination. Each vaccination was a victory. A life potentially saved.

By the end of the day, Dulce had vaccinated dozens of girls. She felt a deep sense of pride, not just in herself, but in the power of knowledge, of community, of resilience. But behind every vaccination, there is a girl who now has a better chance at life, a mother who could rest a little easier, a future that was just a little brighter.

As the sun set over Santa Catarina, Dulce knew her work was far from over. But for today, she had made a difference. And that was enough.

*In 2024, the HVP vaccination rate for girls increased from 75% in 2023 to an impressive **95%** coverage.*





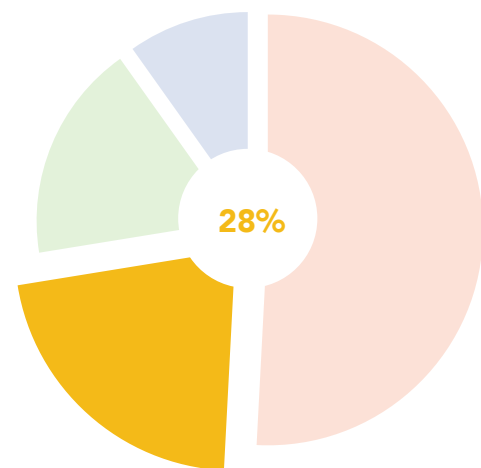
# 02



## OUTCOME

# Climate Action

By 2027, institutions integrate climate change adaptation, low carbon and renewable energies into policies and programmatic implementation.



USD \$5.212.343

Contributing agencies:



2,215.48

hectares of forest were restored, benefiting 3,541 people, including 1,494 women across both islands



25

rural community members were trained in forest restoration for better natural resource management



200

fishermen and fishmongers received training in associationism and cooperative management practices



50

professionals gained internships in high conservation zones, locally and abroad, improving conservation capacity



One

international conference on biodiversity financing was held in Príncipe, showcasing best practices and national capacity building



Solar

rooftop systems were installed on key public buildings, with ongoing support to expand Santo Amaro Solar



For outcome 2, the UN has focused on 3 priorities:

- **Measuring and integrating Climate Change into policies and programs**
- **Protect, fund and manage land and marine biodiversity**
- **Renewable energy and energy efficiency**

#### Measuring and integrating climate change into policies and programs

Through continuous advocacy, technical support, and global exposure, UN Agencies have played a pivotal role in integrating climate change, disaster risk management, and low-carbon policies into national development programs. Key contributions include institutional and legislative analyses for establishing a National Environmental Agency, modernization of environmental laws, and strengthening the Directorate of Environment and Climate Action. UN support also facilitated the development of the Fisheries Management Plan and the National Strategic Plan for Fisheries and Aquaculture (PENPA) and enhanced the regulation of exotic species trade. To advance innovative financing, the Agencies co-organized an International Conference on Innovative Environmental Financing, introducing the country's first Debt for Nature Swap feasibility study and initiating carbon credit trading. The Agencies further supported local adaptation by training district stakeholders, mapping climate risks, and developing community-driven resilience plans. Institutional capacity building efforts included funding postgraduate studies for five public administration technicians and improving fisheries data systems. Additionally, the Agencies empowered communities through training in forest restoration, sustainable fisheries, and the construction of three modern vessels. UN-led resource mobilization secured funding for climate resilience projects, leading to the reforestation of 2,215 hectares, benefiting over 3,500 people, including 1,494 women.

#### Protect, fund and manage the land and marine biodiversity

In 2024, UN Agencies advanced biodiversity protection through research on sustainable construction materials, promoting alternatives to counter resource depletion. A key milestone was the establishment of the Conservation Trust Fund, which expanded to include climate finance, securing high-level political commitment, as reflected in the President's address at the UN Summit of the Future. Capacity-building efforts benefited over 50 professionals through internships in

conservation zones and targeted training for private sector personnel operating in ecologically sensitive areas. The Agencies introduced SMART monitoring software to enhance conservation in national parks and finalized the five-year management plan for the Príncipe Natural Park. High-conservation-value areas in coastal regions and park buffer zones were recognized, strengthening protected area governance. To combat deforestation, a sustainable charcoal platform was launched, promoting improved kilns and reducing reliance on unsustainable practices. Gender balance remained central, with 40% female participation in decision-making and capacity-building initiatives, fostering inclusivity. These combined efforts have reinforced national ownership, strengthened conservation policies, and promoted sustainable livelihoods, positioning biodiversity protection as a key pillar of São Tomé and Príncipe's environmental sustainability agenda.

#### Renewable energy and energy efficiency

UN Agencies continue to support São Tomé and Príncipe's transition to just and affordable energy solutions, prioritizing renewable energy in public services. In 2024, solar energy projects were initiated in six district health centers, 16 schools, and the Príncipe regional hospital to ensure reliable power for essential services. Efforts also advanced the expansion of the Santo Amaro Solar Plant, aligning with national sustainability goals. The signing of the "African Minigrids" project marked a significant step towards regulatory frameworks that incentivize private-sector investments in clean energy. Additionally, the Agencies finalized national roadmaps for transport fuel economy and electric mobility, addressing emissions from the second-largest GHG-emitting sector and reducing national debt linked to fuel imports. The National Action Plan for Clean Cooking (PANECLM) was completed, promoting high-efficiency biomass stoves, LPG, and electricity as sustainable alternatives. A baseline assessment and regulation for commercial electricity losses were conducted, alongside the initiation of a National Sustainable Energy Investment Plan to attract climate finance. The Agencies also strengthened local expertise through training on energy policy, project finance, and smart grid technologies. These initiatives position the country for an equitable energy transition, enhancing resilience and sustainability in the long term.





## Youth Leading Climate Action in Sao Tome and Principe

In 2024, young people in Sao Tome and Principe took decisive action in the fight against climate change. Through a UN-supported initiative, seven District Youth Committees for Climate Action were formed, mobilizing over 500 young activists in environmental protection efforts across the country.

The United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Children's Fund played a pivotal role in strengthening these committees. Between November and December, they organized intensive training sessions twice a week. These sessions prepared 70 young participants with essential knowledge on topics such as the Conference of the Parties (COP), responsible consumption, natural park management, digital tools for climate action, sustainable energy, and storytelling for environmental advocacy.

This initiative stems from the recommendations of the 2023 "Youth Workshop on Climate Change," which guided the formation of these youth committees in every district and in the Autonomous Region of Principe. Their mission is clear: to implement school and community activities that promote climate adaptation and mitigation, reinforcing the country's commitment to sustainable environmental practices.

These young leaders quickly turned their training into action. They organized beach clean-ups, tree-planting campaigns, and community awareness programs, fostering a culture of environmental responsibility. Among them, Maria de Sousa, a 17-year-old student from Mé-Zóchi, emerged as a leading advocate for integrating climate education into her school's curriculum.

"We are the generation that must act," Maria stated at a youth forum. "If we don't take responsibility for protecting our environment today, future generations will have nothing left."

The results of these efforts are tangible. Over 1,200 trees have been planted across the island, contributing to reforestation and biodiversity conservation. Three schools have successfully introduced climate literacy into their curriculum, ensuring that climate education becomes a core part of student learning. New partnerships have been established with local businesses to promote sustainable waste management, creating a more responsible and eco-friendly economy. Additionally, young people have been trained in using digital tools such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to map environmental risks, enhancing local capacity for data-driven climate action.

By amplifying youth voices and equipping them with the necessary skills, Sao Tome and Principe is ensuring that the next generation leads the fight against climate change with knowledge, innovation, and commitment. Through partnerships with the UN and local stakeholders, young people are proving that they are not just the leaders of tomorrow—they are the change-makers of today.



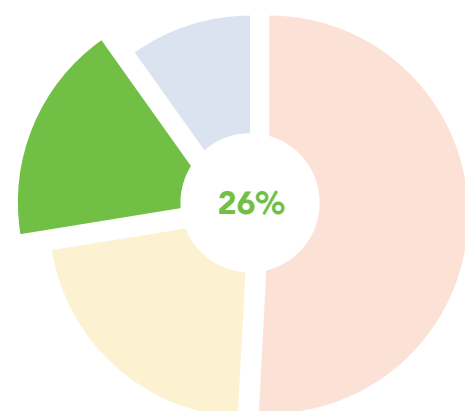


# 03

## OUTCOME

# Green and Blue Growth

By 2027, national stakeholders generate substantially more decent jobs in an environmentally friendly blue and green economy.



USD \$4.850.467

Contributing agencies:



166

farmers (40 women, 126 men) trained in finance, cooperatives, and associations to boost productivity



50

small farmers received organic products, increasing income and supplying 47 school canteens serving 6,603 students



700

entrepreneurs, including 45% women, supported through REINA with tailored business services



One national strategy

was developed to improve market access for small producers and boost local product consumption



One roadmap

created to formalize informal urban transport, with reforms in taxation and social protection



One digital platform

launched via South-South cooperation to connect job seekers and promote digital employment





For outcome 3, the UN has focused on 2 priorities:

- Increased productivity and commercialization of green and blue economy local products
- Access of entrepreneurs to financial and non-financial business services

Increased productivity and commercialization of green and blue economy local products

In 2024, UN Agencies played a pivotal role in strengthening the productivity and market integration of small farmers in São Tomé and Príncipe. A total of 166 farmers (126 men and 40 women) enhanced their productive capacities through targeted training in financial management, cooperative organization, and entrepreneurship, ensuring sustainable income growth. To support market access, a comprehensive strategy was developed, fostering local consumption and enhancing value chain efficiency. Additionally, the distribution of organic products to schools in three districts continued, reaching 6,603 children across 47 schools. This initiative not only improved school nutrition but also boosted the incomes of approximately 50 small farmers by securing consistent demand for their produce. By promoting sustainable agricultural practices and facilitating direct market linkages, these interventions contribute to food security, economic diversification, and climate resilience. The focus on integrating small-scale producers into the local economy underscores the UN's commitment to strengthening São Tomé and Príncipe's green and blue economies, ensuring long-term sustainability and inclusive growth.

Access of entrepreneurs to financial and non-financial business services

In 2024, UN Agencies advanced inclusive economic transformation by strengthening financial and business services for entrepreneurs in São Tomé and Príncipe. Efforts prioritized transitioning informal businesses into the formal sector, particularly in urban transport, through the development of a strategic roadmap. This roadmap outlined five key action areas, including enhanced access to social protection and taxation reforms. To expand market access, the National Network of Business Incubators and Accelerators (REINA) supported over 700 entrepreneurs, with women comprising more than 45% of beneficiaries. Tailored Business Development Services (BDS) were provided, focusing on youth, women, and persons with disabilities. Additionally, the operationalization of the Trade Portal facilitated compliance with WTO standards, streamlining import-export procedures and increasing institutional transparency. UN-backed South-South cooperation fostered a partnership between São Tomé and Príncipe and Bangladesh, supporting the implementation of a digital employment platform aimed at bridging employer-employee information gaps. These comprehensive initiatives have strengthened institutional frameworks, promoted financial inclusion, and enhanced market opportunities, laying the foundation for resilient and gender-sensitive economic growth.





# Cultivating a Sustainable Future

In 2024, Sao Tome and Principe launched an ambitious plan to become 100% organic by 2030. With UN support, the government introduced policies promoting agroecological practices, organic certification, and training programs for farmers. This transition was particularly transformative for cocoa farmers, whose agroforestry systems were recognized as Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System, enhancing their access to premium markets and boosting the country's agricultural sector.

Amid this national movement, Edgar Coelho's pioneering work with Composto Orgânico-STP stands as a key contributor to sustainable farming. Four years ago, he embarked on a bold journey to reshape São Tomé and Príncipe's agricultural landscape by founding a social entrepreneurship initiative dedicated to transforming organic waste into high quality biological fertilizer. His vision was to create a circular economy where agricultural byproducts such as banana peels, coffee husks, cocoa shells, and snail shells could be repurposed into nutrient-rich compost, reducing waste while improving soil fertility.

Coelho's initiative quickly gained recognition for its innovative approach. Supported by UNDP in partnership with the Ministry of Youth, Sports, and Entrepreneurship, as well as the municipal councils of Água-Grande and Mé-Zóchi, Composto Orgânico-STP became a national success story.

The project provided a sustainable alternative to chemical fertilizers, promoting healthier crops and more resilient farming practices. In recognition of his outstanding contributions, Edgar Coelho received the prestigious Global Goal Jam award, underscoring his role as a pioneer in environmental sustainability.

"Organic farming is not just a trend, it is the future," said Manuel Pinto, a cocoa farmer in Neves. With the adoption of composting techniques pioneered by projects like Composto Orgânico-STP, farmers could reduce their dependency on chemical fertilizers while increasing their yields and soil health. The economic benefits were substantial, with expectations of a 40% income rise due to higher market prices for organic produce.

Looking ahead, Edgar Coelho's work intersects with the Hand in Hand initiative, which seeks to integrate local sustainable practices into a broader global strategy for resilient food systems. As Sao Tome and Principe strides toward its organic agriculture vision, the contributions of social entrepreneurs like Coelho serve as crucial building blocks in this transformation. By championing waste conversion into agricultural wealth, Composto Orgânico-STP is not just changing farming, it is redefining the country's future, one compost pile at a time.



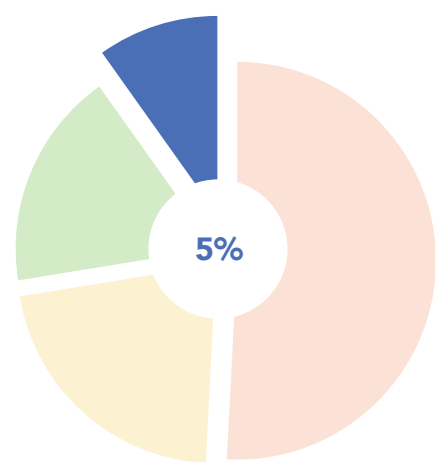


# 04

## OUTCOME

# Transparent & Accountable Institutions

By 2027, people benefit from transparent, responsive and gender-sensitive institutions.



USD \$1.018.898

Contributing agencies:



**2.5** million USD were mobilized from the Peacebuilding Fund to support justice reform and national peacebuilding priorities



**One** unified strategy enhanced social protection through better data, coordination, monitoring, and child-focused financial advocacy



**Two** data centers were established to modernize governance, one national and one for the National Assembly



2024 Census data collection was completed, and the STPDADOS database launched to improve transparency and access to statistics



**One** specialized courtroom for child-related cases was established, alongside legal reforms to prevent revictimization and implement CRC recommendations



A new legal framework on maritime crime and piracy was adopted, with training, SOPs, and new enforcement equipment



For outcome 4, the UN has focused on 2 priorities:

- Access to Justice and Security
- Transparency, Accountability and Control mechanisms

#### Access to Justice and Security

In 2024, the UN strengthened São Tomé and Príncipe's justice and security systems by enhancing institutional capacity, digital governance, and maritime law enforcement. Key achievements included support for the Human Rights Office in monitoring the implementation of CRC recommendations, the establishment of a specialized courtroom for children, and the publication of the "testimony for future memory" law to prevent revictimization. A digital system was provided to improve evidence collection in sexual violence investigations, advancing SDG 16.

The UN also contributed to digital transformation by supporting the National Data Center and facilitating the creation of a dedicated data center for the National Assembly. Additionally, efforts to modernize governance included the development of a treaty database for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and a digital job marketplace.

To reinforce maritime security, the UN helped Sao Tome and Principe align its legal framework with international standards on piracy and maritime crime, supporting the implementation of UNODC legal recommendations. A Harmonized Standard Operating Procedure (HSOP) was established for law enforcement agencies, and new equipment was provided to maritime law enforcement entities, enhancing their operational capacity. These comprehensive efforts have strengthened governance, security, and justice sector resilience.



#### Transparency, Accountability and Control mechanisms

In 2024, the UN advanced transparency and accountability in Sao Tome and Principe by strengthening statistical systems, fiscal oversight, and social protection mechanisms. The Open and Participatory Budget Index study was conducted and disseminated, promoting best practices across the budget cycle. A structured tracking matrix was implemented to monitor the ICPD 25 recommendations, the African Union Roadmap, and the UPR commitments, ensuring effective policy alignment.

The 2024 Census data collection phase was successfully completed, enhancing the country's statistical capacity. The national online database "STPDADOS" was launched to provide open access to key socio-economic data. Additionally, results from the 2022 UNFPA Supplies survey were disseminated to 25 managers and health service providers, supporting data-driven decision-making in the health sector.

In social protection, the UN supported administrative data improvements, strengthened coordination for CRC recommendations, and facilitated multi-sectoral dialogue on implementing the Social Protection Strategy. Advocacy efforts promoted child-friendly financing, while training programs on positive parenting and disability inclusion enhanced service delivery. These initiatives reinforced governance, improved policy implementation, and advanced evidence-based decision-making for sustainable development.







TRIBUNAL DA REGIÃO AUTÓNOMA  
DO PRÍNCIPE

# Transforming Access to Justice in Principe Island

On the remote island of Príncipe, a long-awaited transformation was finally becoming a reality. For years, access to legal services had been limited, forcing many to travel to Sao Tome for court proceedings. Justice often felt distant, especially for women and vulnerable groups who faced additional barriers in seeking legal support. But that changed with the opening of the first court of justice in Principe Island, marking a major step toward bringing justice closer to the people.

The building is more than just a courthouse, it is a symbol of inclusion and progress. With its establishment, legal aid services expanded, enabling more residents to seek legal counsel without the burden of costly travel. For the first time, legal assistance was within reach for those who had long been excluded from the system.

Training programs for judges and legal professionals ensured that the justice system was not only more accessible but also more responsive to the needs of all citizens. Special emphasis was placed on human rights and gender equality, equipping professionals with the knowledge and tools to handle cases fairly and sensitively. Survivors of gender-based violence, who previously had little recourse, now had clearer pathways to seek protection and legal support.

The establishment of the tribunal was part of a broader initiative to strengthen São Tomé and Príncipe's justice sector. A \$2.5 million UN project under the UN Peacebuilding Fund provided crucial support to these efforts, focusing on judicial modernization, alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, capacity building of judicial police and increased transparency in legal

processes. The joint project, bringing together UNDP, UNODC and OHCHR, reinforces the commitment of both the government and the international community to making justice more efficient and equitable.

The impact of these changes was already being felt. Cases that had once been delayed due to logistical constraints were now being resolved more swiftly. Community members, once hesitant to engage with the legal system, were stepping forward to claim their rights. Trust in the justice system was growing as people saw it working for them in ways it never had before.

As Sao Tome and Principe continued its path toward a more just and inclusive society, the Príncipe court house stands as a testament to the power of

collaboration and commitment. Through the combined efforts of local institutions, civil society, and international partners, justice was no longer a distant concept, it was a tangible reality, shaping a fairer future for all.



# UNITED IN ACTION FOR THE SDGs – DRIVING TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACHES

The Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO) has played a pivotal role in driving coordinated efforts and data-driven transformative approaches towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in São Tomé and Príncipe. By strengthening leadership, promoting strategic partnerships, and supporting evidence-based policymaking, the RCO has helped align development actions, mobilize resources, and ensure greater efficiency and coherence.



## Key Transition: Social Protection

The contributory and non-contributory social protection system not only compensates for the socio-economic vulnerabilities of the population, it also creates the incentives for reducing the dependency on handouts with targeted interventions in education and health, fostering a productive population. The UN supported the development of the national strategy for enhanced social protection and the Single Social Registry, as well as capacity building and data generation. The succinct analysis and data on social protection with key policy recommendations is captured in the Advocacy Note, a series of policy notes prepared by the RC office.



## Key Transition: Renewable Energies

The energy transition is considered to be one of the main development accelerators in achieving the SDGs, not only by reducing the fossil fuel imports which power 95% of the current energy production, but by bringing equitable access to energy at affordable cost to citizens. Together with the WB and the AfDB, the UN supported the Government leadership in coordination of the sector and in supporting a conducive environment for increased public and private investment in renewable energy. In addition, the UN developed with the Government the key analysis, data and messages for public policy makers in the Advocacy Note, a series of policy notes prepared by the RC office.



## Key Transition: Biodiversity Conservation

Sustainable development of the lush green and stunningly beautiful islands - which harbor one of the highest numbers of endemic species in the world - requires innovative financing models for conservation. Sao Tome and Principe has put biodiversity conservation at the heart of its national development plan and its sectors of growth for the future: ecotourism, 100% organic agriculture and sustainable fisheries. The conclusions of the international conference on innovative financing and best practices in Biodiversity Conservation are captured in the Conference Report, prepared by the RC office.



## Key transition: Justice and Security Sector reform as Conflict Prevention

Preventive diplomacy efforts by the UN has put justice and security reform on top of the conflict prevention strategy of the country. Several attempted coup d'états in the past have put development gains seriously at risk and the country reached out to the Peace Building Commission of the UN to which it presented the predicament of a Small island State in a volatile region of the Gulf of Guinea that has followed the path of democracy but still has major development needs to prevent conflict in future. The RC office played an instrumental role in mobilizing the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), that aims at enhancing access to justice in particular for the most vulnerable and in mobilizing high level UN expertise for the country's Security Sector Review. With the visit of the Chair of the PBC to STP in May 2024 and the ongoing dialogue with PBC, which foresees another presentation to the PBC on the implementation of its conflict prevention strategy in 2025, the country has increased its visibility and strengthened international diplomacy.



## Leaving No One Behind approach – inclusion of people with disabilities

The RC office leveraged regional and global networks to boost LNOB inclusion in SDG financing. It facilitated access to key global funds such as the UN Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD) to develop an in-depth situation analysis on disabilities in Sao Tome and Principe and a strategy with action plan that has put the rights of People with Disabilities at the centre of the debate on inclusiveness of public policies. By identifying service delivery and protection gaps, the RCO ensured that future strategies are more inclusive and responsive to the needs of vulnerable populations. The UN Disabilities working group also promoted inclusion at the UN office, not just access for wheelchair holders but also looking at digital inclusion and participation.



## Gender transformative approach

Gender inclusion accelerates development and the SDGs. The country adopted its Parity Law in 2022, following extensive advocacy by the UN team, and a key data fact sheet was developed by the RC office and the UN gender group, the National Institute for Gender Equality and the Santomean Network of Female Parliamentarians to take stock of the achievements and to advocate for greater gender inclusion.



## Promoting Data-Driven Development and Results

The RCO co-led the "Dialogue on the Potential of Tourism and the Importance of Quality Data" which brought together stakeholders to explore tourism's role in sustainable growth. The dialogue emphasized the importance of high-quality data in guiding investment and policy decisions and showcased how coordinated UN support has enhanced resource mobilization through evidence-based approaches.

Similarly, a workshop on monitoring the Sendai Framework brought together multiple UN agencies and national partners to enhance Disaster Risk Management. The initiative helped reduce thematic overlap, improve coordination, and strengthen the country's preparedness for climate-related risks.

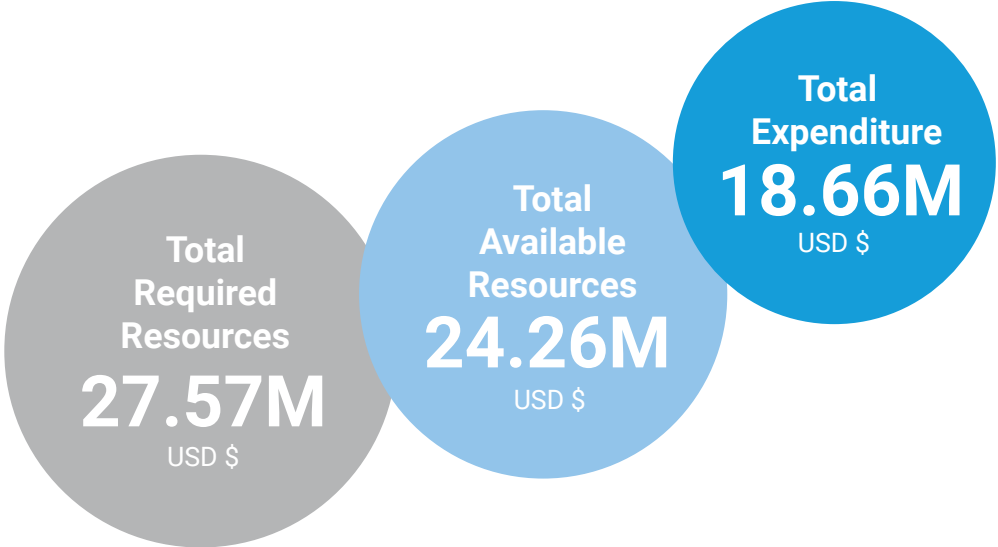


Six monthly newsletters of the UN results were widely shared with our partners, highlighting concrete initiatives to advance the SDGs



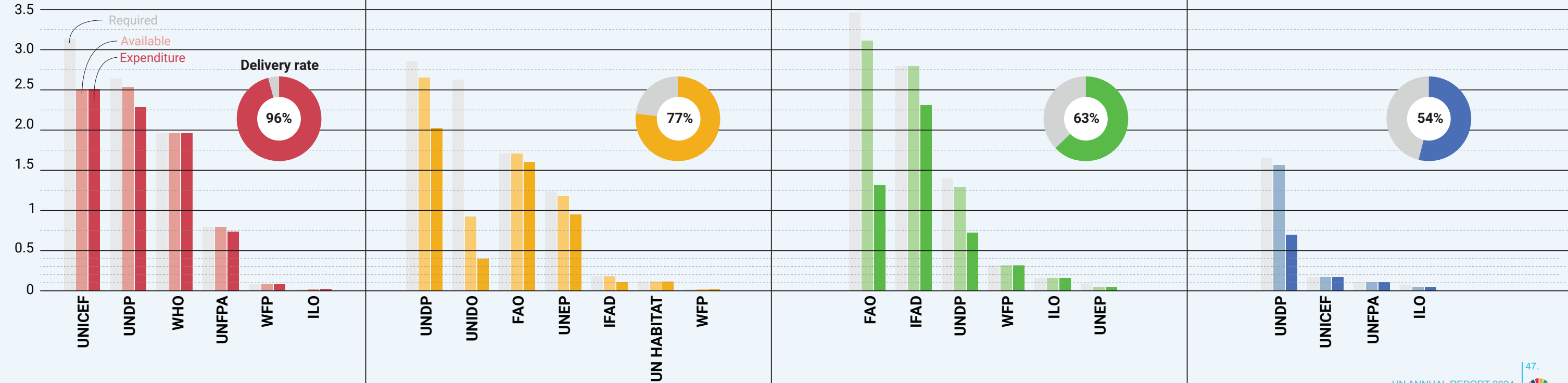


FINANCIAL OVERVIEW AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION



	2024 Total Required Resources	2024 Total Available Resources	2024 Total Expenditure
FAO	5,168,061.00	4,818,061.00	2,911,093.00
IFAD	2,971,477.00	2,971,477.00	2,415,000.00
ILO	254,190.00	220,190.00	220,190.00
UN-HABITAT	112,000.00	112,000.00	112,000.00
UNDP	8,529,279.00	8,039,944.00	5,726,154.00
UNEP	1,323,294.00	1,211,821.00	988,279.00
UNFPA	903,000.00	903,000.00	836,000.00
UNICEF	3,310,771.00	2,679,998.00	2,679,998.00
UNIDO	2,623,800.00	923,800.00	395,000.00
WFP	421,276.00	421,276.00	421,276.00
WHO	1,958,400.00	1,958,400.00	1,958,400.00
TOTAL	27,575,548.00	24,259,967.00	18,663,390.00

USD \$







## SHAPING TOMORROW: UNCT's Focus for the Coming Year

São Tomé and Príncipe's graduation from LDC status marks a new chapter in its development journey. In 2025, the UN will focus on education, energy, and food systems, key sectors for reducing poverty and building resilience. Through inclusive, sustainable approaches and strong partnerships, the UN aims to accelerate SDG progress and ensure no one is left behind.

In 2025, the UNCT will focus on supporting key national transitions that accelerate SDG implementation and are reflected in São Tomé and Príncipe's new Government Plan. These priorities were reaffirmed during the UNCT planning retreat, which was enriched by the active participation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and his team—demonstrating strong national ownership and alignment.

For the first time, Annual Work Plans aligned with available resources have been developed collaboratively with 8 of the 10 line ministries. These plans, jointly signed by the Government and the UN, represent a major step forward in transparency, accountability, and country ownership—ensuring that all UN-supported activities directly contribute to national objectives.

Environmental sustainability remains a core pillar. Alongside ongoing efforts in biodiversity conservation, greater emphasis will be placed on climate change adaptation and the development of sustainable food systems. The finalization of key policy frameworks, such as the National Adaptation Plan and the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) 3.0, as well as the lead-up to COP30 in Brazil, create momentum to scale

up transformative climate action. The UN will continue expanding pilot initiatives in climate-resilient agriculture, local food production, and value chain development, while also supporting the mobilization of climate financing.

The UN will further support the country's energy transition by promoting a more inclusive, sustainable, and resilient energy sector. Digital transformation will also be a central focus, especially in education and public sector reform. Key initiatives will include expanding digital learning tools and ensuring accessibility for children with disabilities.

In the realm of peace and governance, the UN will facilitate renewed engagement with the Peacebuilding Commission, particularly around justice and security

reform and conflict prevention—critical as the country approaches its next electoral cycle.

Finally, the UN will continue supporting São Tomé and Príncipe's long-term National Development Plan and Financing Framework, including the organization of an Investor Conference to present high-impact structural projects in areas such as energy, climate, transport, and tourism.

At every step, the UNCT remains steadfast in its commitment to leaving no one behind, advancing equity, inclusion, and strong partnerships across society to build a resilient and prosperous future for all.



<b>AIDS</b>	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
<b>AFDB</b>	African Development Bank
<b>CF</b>	Cooperation Framework of the UN
<b>CLTS</b>	Community-Led Total Sanitation
<b>COMPRAN</b>	Project on Commercialization, Agricultural productivity and nutrition
<b>CRC</b>	Convention on the Rights of the Children
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organization
<b>DHIS</b>	District Health Information Software
<b>FAO</b>	The Food and Agriculture Organization
<b>GAVI</b>	Global Alliance for Vaccine and Immunization
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>GNI</b>	Gross National Income
<b>HIV</b>	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
<b>HDR</b>	Human Development Report
<b>HPV</b>	Human Papilloma Virus
<b>ICPD</b>	International Conference on Population and Development
<b>ILO</b>	International Labor organization
<b>INE</b>	National Institute of Statistics
<b>IMF</b>	International Monetary Fund
<b>IWMP</b>	Integrated Water Management Program
<b>MICS</b>	Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys
<b>MPTF</b>	Multi-Partner Trust Fund
<b>MRV</b>	Measuring, Reporting, Verification
<b>NDC</b>	Nationally Determined Contributions
<b>NFMS</b>	National Forest Monitoring System
<b>NWFP</b>	Non-wood Forest Products
<b>OHCHR</b>	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
<b>RCO</b>	United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office
<b>SDG</b>	Sustainable Development Goal
<b>STP</b>	Sao Tome and Principe
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNCT</b>	United Nations Country Team
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Program
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Fund for Population
<b>UN-HABITAT</b>	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
<b>UNIDO</b>	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
<b>UNV</b>	United Nations Volunteers Programme
<b>WASH</b>	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
<b>WB</b>	World Bank
<b>WFP</b>	World Food Program
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization Programme





**UNITED NATIONS**  
SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE

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