

Voluntary National Review 2022

Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in
Sao Tome and Principe

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AAAA - Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development

AGER - General Authority for Regulation

IDA - International Development Association

ODA - Official Development Assistance

BADEA - Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa

BCSTP - Central Bank of Sao Tome and Principe

WB - World Bank

CACVD - Domestic Violence Counselling Centre

CLTS - Community Led Total Sanitation

CNMC - Climate Change Committee

CONSAN - National Food and Nutritional Security Council

CPADR - Agricultural Policy Charter for Rural Development

CPLP - Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries

CST - Companhia Santomense de Telecomunicações

DGA - Directorate-General of the Environment

DNP - National Planning Directorate

DPSS - Social Protection and Solidarity Directorate

STD - Sexually Transmitted Diseases

EMAE - Water and Electricity Company

ENAPORT - National Company for Port Administration

NSDS - National Strategy for the Development of Statistics

ENPAB - National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan

ENRP - National Poverty Reduction Strategy

ENSSA - National Food and Sanitary Security Strategy

ERSAN - Regional Strategy for Food and Nutritional Security

EUR - Euro

FAO - Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

IMF - International Monetary Fund

FONG - Federation of Non-Governmental Organizations

HLPF - High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

IAEG-SDGs - Inter-Agency Expert Group on SDG indicators (IAEG-SDGs)

IDA - International Development Association

FDI - Foreign Direct Investment

IDH - Human Development Index

IDS - Demographic Health Survey

INE - National Institute of Statistics

INPIEG - National Institute for the Promotion of Gender Equality and Equity

IOF - Family Budget Survey
STI - Sexually Transmitted Infections
VAT - Value Added Tax
MAPDR - Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development
ME - Ministry of Education
MICS - Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys
MNEC - Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Communities
MPFEA - Ministry of Planning, Finance and the Blue Economy
MS - Ministry of Health
NDC - Nationally Determined Contribution
NU - United Nations
MDGs - Millennium Development Goals
SDGs - Sustainable Development Goals
GSB - General State Budget
ILO - International Labor Organization
WHO - World Health Organization
NGO - Non-Governmental Organization
CSO - Civil Society Organization
WFP - World Food Program
CSP - Strategic Cooperation Program
SIDS - Small Island Developing States
GDP - Gross Domestic Product
PJ - Judiciary Police
PN - National Police
PNASE - National School Feeding and Health Program
PND - National Development Plan
PNDS - National Sustainable Development Plan
PNIASAN - National Agricultural Investment Program for Food and Nutritional Security
PNLP - National Program to Fight Malaria
PNPC - National Child Protection Policy
PNSAN - National Program for Food Security and Nutrition
PNUD - United Nations Development Program
TFP - Technical and Financial Partners
ARP - Autonomous Region of Príncipe
DRSTP - Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe
RIA - Rapid Integrated Assessment
GNI - Gross National Income
VNR - Voluntary National Review
SAFE - State Financial Administration System

SAN - Food and Nutritional Security
NSS - National Statistical System
AIDS - Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
SIDSAM - Small Island Developing States and Madagascar
SIS - Health Information System
SNPCB - National Civil Protection and Firefighting Service
UNS - United Nations System
STD - Dobras (STP currency)
STP - Sao Tome and Principe
ICT - Information and Communication Technology
EU - European Union
UN-Habitat - United Nations Human Settlements Program
UNDESA - United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs
UNECOSOC - United Nations Economic and Social Council
UNDAF - United Nations Framework Plan for Development Assistance
UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA - United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF - United Nations Children's Fund
UNSC - United Nations Statistical Commission
USD - United States dollar
GBV - Gender Based Violence
HIV - Human Immunodeficiency Virus
EEZ - Exclusive Economic Zone

OPENING STATEMENT

Minister of Planning, Finance and Blue Economy of Sao Tome and Principe

Like the other members of the United Nations (UN), Sao Tome and Principe (STP) has engaged in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted in September 2015, and has architected their implementation through the different planning and programming instruments of the country's socio-economic development process.

In order to share with the international community the level of achievement of the SDGs by the country, as well as the practices and methods adopted by STP and in progress on the subject, and in harmony with the best international practices, STP has prepared its first Voluntary National Review (VNR) on progress in the implementation of the SDGs, which will be presented at the High Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development (HLPF), under the theme "Rebuilding Better COVID-19, while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda".

The HLPF, promotes debate and exchange of experiences among peers, including successes, challenges and lessons learned, with a view to accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the global level and in particular at the individual country level. Furthermore, it aims to strengthen governments' policies and institutions and mobilize stakeholder support and partnerships for the implementation of the SDGs. For the first time, after the launch of the United Nations 2030 Program, STP presents in July 2022 the degree of implementation of the SDGs in the country within the HLPF for promotion, exchange, sharing of experiences, analysis of solutions and presentation of actions to accelerate the achievement of SDGs. It is certain that this forum will be the occasion to reaffirm the engagement of leaders from all over the world in favor of international cooperation and to create the necessary conditions for peace, progress and the longed-for sustainable development.

This High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in July 2022 will be an opportunity for STP to reaffirm, at the highest level of the State, its commitment to the implementation of the SDGs based on the progress made on the 17 goals and consequently their targets, despite the fact that the country has prioritized only 7 of these goals, namely: i) Poverty Eradication; ii) Decent Work and Economic Growth; iii) Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure; iv) Climate Action; v) Protect Marine Life; vi) Protect Land Life; vii) Peace Justice and Effective Institutions.

This report takes stock of the achievement of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and indicates the progress in domestication of the development goals and their achievements, as well as the results of socio-economic transformation within the implementation of the SDGs in STP, with emphasis on the progress made in the areas of health, education and access to clean water.

The process of drafting this report was based on the principle of transparency, inclusion and participation, and allowed the assessment of the policy options, their coherence, the synergies, the monitoring and evaluation process of the actions at the level of the different sectors of activities. Different workshops were organized with the participation of all stakeholders (national, regional and local actors, civil society and private sector).

We also express our sincere gratitude to all the collaborators and members of the process of drafting this report, for the efforts made, the competence demonstrated, and the engagement evidenced throughout this process. The Government of STP is grateful to them for their professionalism and dedication, without which the writing of this report would not have been possible.

In short, this report is the result of the excellent collaboration between the Government of STP and the United Nations, hence our sincere acknowledgements.

Minister for Planning, Finance and Blue Economy

Engrácio Graça

United Nations Resident Coordinator in Sao Tome and Principe

On behalf of the United Nations (UN) in São Tomé and Príncipe (STP), I am pleased to congratulate Sao Tome and Principe for taking on the voluntary preparation of its first progress report on the implementation of the SDGs. The report describes the progress achieved to date in terms of the implementation of the SDGs, contributing to the sharing of experiences, identification of challenges, and lessons that will help the country in the adoption of policies, measures, and actions conducive to accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The report is the result of an extensive and participatory consultation process, with technical support from the United Nations and led by the Ministry of Planning, Finance, and the Blue Economy, involving civil society organizations, the private sector, and United Nations agencies.

As a small developing state, STP faces huge social, economic, and environmental challenges. These challenges have been exacerbated by the impacts of climate change and the resulting vulnerabilities, both to internal and external shocks. In addition, geographic insularity, small size and consequently limited economy of scale, and high transaction costs limit the country's competitiveness, which requires investments to achieve the SDGs, one of the highest in per capita terms. Despite these structural constraints, and with support from the international community, STP has made encouraging progress on some SDG indicators, particularly in the Education and Health sectors.

However, despite this progress, there is still a long way to go to reach the SDGs by 2030. Strengthening good governance and justice reform, fighting poverty, and reducing inequalities represent tasks of crucial importance for the country in this process. The graduation of STP from the LDC category, in 2024, is an opportunity to accelerate reforms, in collaboration with development partners that should continue to accompany the country in this challenging process, before and after graduation.

The result of this first voluntary assessment of the SDGs in STP demonstrates the need for the country to intensify efforts to promote socio-economic transformation, through investments in key areas such as basic social services, digital transformation, infrastructure, energy transition, economic diversification, and human capital. Indeed, the country needs to build a resilient economy, capable of ensuring sustainable and inclusive growth and overcoming some of its vulnerabilities, namely external dependence, unemployment, poverty, and inequality.

The country's determination and the participation of all are key elements for the materialization of this desideratum in the 2030 horizon. On the part of the United Nations in São Tomé and Príncipe, I reiterate the commitment and partnership to continue to support the country in the implementation of the Agenda for 2030 towards Sustainable Development, always guided by the protection of human rights and in the spirit of “leaving no one behind”.

United Nations Resident Coordinator in Sao Tome and Principe

Eric Overvest

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe (RDSTP) is a signatory to the Sustainable Development Program for the 2030 horizon (2030 Agenda), which includes the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The 2030 Agenda encourages its signatories to carry out assessments on a volunteer base about the Implementation of the SDGs, which is the basis for regular evaluations at the *High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development – HLPF*).

Thus, Sao Tome and Principe (STP), under the principle of transparency and mutual accountability, presents its first Voluntary National Report (VNR) in order to, on the one hand, inform its citizens, and national and international institutions about the actions taken, progress and constraints in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and, on the other hand, share with its peers, within the scope of the HLPF, its experience and learn about others that will enable the country to improve and accelerate the national implementation process of the 2030 Agenda, particularly the SDGs.

The compilation of this report resulted from a participatory and inclusive process of the stakeholders. The methodology adopted for its drafting took place in two phases: (1) collection of information and data; and (2) systematization, consultation, and validation of the RNV.

The context of SDG implementation in the country has been punctuated by the elaboration of the main strategic planning instruments for national development in recent years, namely: the STP Transformation Agenda 2030, the National Development Plan (NDP) 2017-2021, and the National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP) of STP 2020-2024. In addition to these instruments, several sectoral plans and strategies have been developed, in line with SDGs.

STP has chosen 7 SDGs as a benchmark in the definition and implementation of development policies and strategies, namely: SDG 1 - Eradicate poverty; SDG 8 - Decent work and economic growth; SDG 9 - Industry, innovation, and infrastructure; SDG 13 - Climate action; SDG 14 – Protect life below water; SDG 15 - Protect life on land; SDG 16 - Peace, justice and strong institutions.

The RDSTP Constitution, while not explicitly mentioning the concept of sustainable development, contains provisions with reference to key elements of sustainable development. In addition, the country's infra-constitutional legislation and international commitments in favor of the environment and sustainable development are significant.

Although there have been actions aimed at the national adoption of the SDGs, the process needs to be strengthened among development actors and the population in general. On the other hand, despite the alignment of some planning instruments with the SDGs, the degree and consistency of this alignment require an objective analysis using the tools and methodologies available for this purpose. Furthermore, STP did not initially prioritize SDG targets and for this reason did not establish a national framework of indicators based on global indicators, which made it difficult to assess progress according to national development priorities.

Another weakness in the implementation of the SDGs in STP so far was the non-functioning of an institutional governance mechanism (coordination, monitoring and evaluation) of the process, a situation to be corrected in the very short term within the scope of the next steps for the improvement and acceleration of the process.

Regarding the progress of the SDGs, since there was no initial prioritization of global goals for the national context, this first national evaluation focused on the country's situation and trends towards achieving them, using available data and information that respond to the SDG global goal indicators. Thus, as the main results of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the following stand out:

- There were significant improvements in poverty reduction (defined as \$1.90 per day) between 2010 and 2017, from 35.6% to 25.9%, a reduction of about 10 percentage points.
- A significant percentage of Santomean household (97.5%), in 2019, used improved sources of water for domestic consumption, an increase of around 7 percentage points compared to 2014.
- The prevalence of stunting (moderate and severe), measured by the height-to-age ratio, in children under 5 improved, from 17.2% in 2014 to 11.7% in 2019. The same cannot be said for the prevalence of malnutrition (overweight), where the situation has worsened, from 2.4% in 2014 to 4.5% in 2019.

- There have also been gains in terms of infant mortality, with the rate reduced from 24.0 per 1,000 live births in 2016 to 22.4 per 1,000 live births in 2020. The proportion of births assisted by a health professional reached 96.8%, in 2019 and the prenatal care coverage rate at the first visit was set at 98.1%. In that same year, about 98% of women aged 15 to 49 received prenatal care at least once from qualified health personnel.
- There has been a consistent decrease in maternal mortality in STP, from 100 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2009 to 74 in 2014. In terms of maternal and neonatal mortality, the country is close to achieving the global target.
- Communicable Diseases are no longer a major public health concern in STP. In 2019, the country recorded only 41 new cases of HIV, which corresponds to a rate of 0.2 per 1,000 inhabitants, a decrease of about 29% compared to the previous year. Tuberculosis recorded, between 2016 and 2020, a decrease of around 27%, from 162 cases per 100,000 inhabitants to 118 cases. Malaria is no longer the leading cause of morbidity and mortality in the country. In 2020 only 1944 cases were registered, a decrease of about 21% compared to the previous year, and an aspect to highlight is that during these two years no deaths from this disease were registered. Therefore, the goal of eliminating this disease in the country by 2025 is feasible.
- Non-communicable Diseases are currently the main causes of mortality in the country, especially cardiovascular diseases.
- The country has experienced an improvement in the use of contraceptive methods by women aged 15-49 who are currently married or in a consensual union, rising from 34.4% in 2014 to 49.7% in 2019.
- In 2019, about 94% of children aged 12 to 23 months received all recommended immunizations before their first/second birthday, against diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis (DTP), and 93% for pneumococcal (conjugate) immunization.
- At the education level, the Early Childhood Development rate, experienced remarkable progress, going from 54.5% of children between 36 and 59 months in 2014 who are on track for development in at least three of the four areas (reading-calculation, physical, socio-emotional, learning) to 62.9% in 2019. Additionally, in 2019, the adjusted net attendance rate for elementary school was set at 90%; for junior high school at 55%, and for high school was 30%. Furthermore, the participation rate in organized learning (1 year before the age of entry into primary school) was 74% in 2019 and the attendance rate of the population aged 4 to 7 years increased from 86% in 2015 to 90.8% in 2020. In that same period, the higher education enrollment rate of the population aged 19-23 increased from 35.4% to 43.5%.
- At the gender level, the improvement of the legal and institutional framework stands out, with the creation of the Interinstitutional Commission responsible for implementing the "Comprehensive Public Policy for a Decent Life for Women." As for parity in education, the country is close to reaching its goal of eliminating the gender gap. There is parity at the basic education level for adjusted TLEs, regardless of household economic well-being levels, as evidenced by the 2019 Gender Parity Index (GPI), which was 1.02. Regarding the other levels, the situation is the opposite.
- STP reports positive results in terms of access to clean water. In 2020, about 85% of the population had access to improved water sources and 62.5% had access to basic sanitation. In 2019, about 98% of household members used an improved drinking water source located on-premises, available for when needed, an increase of 4 percentage points from 2014 data.
- Regarding electricity, the access rate has evolved from 69% in 2014 to 83% in 2019. The country is investing in the transition from fossil fuels to clean energy (hydropower) and is increasing the production capacity of the Contador River Plant from 1.4 MW to 3 MW.
- The economy of STP is highly vulnerable, not very diversified, the market is small, and the level of economic growth has been insufficient for the needs of its development, especially in terms of job creation. The country's competitiveness is low and the annual rate of change in GDP per employed person has been declining since 2017. Informality is high, especially in the primary sector. The formal sector employs less than a third (31.7%) of the working population, meaning that most of STP's population works in the informal sector.
- There have been improvements in the country's unemployment rate, having reduced from 13.6%, according to the 2012 Population Census, to 8.9% in 2017.

- Tourism is considered a strategic sector for the development of STP, despite having a very residual contribution to the national economy, of only 4.6% in 2018.
- In terms of ICT, progress has also been made. In 2020, the percentage of the population covered by a mobile network was 93%, and 191,178 thousand people are covered with the 3G network, which represents an increase of about 4% compared to 2017.
- STP, due to its location in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, on the Equator, is a very vulnerable country from an environmental point of view, affected by rising sea levels, floods, droughts, with serious implications, especially at the level of coastal areas.
- The country is very rich in dense forests, with disparate climates depending on the region, relief and altitude. It has several forest ecosystems. Unfortunately, there has been some degradation of forests in recent years, especially those located at lower altitudes. Between 2015 and 2020, the proportion of illegal deforestation was reduced by 10.7 p.p., from 64.6% in 2015 to 53.9% in 2020. Currently, the country has 4 important sites for mountain biodiversity covered by protected areas. Due to the richness of the country in terms of biodiversity, with unique species, in 2012 the Island of Príncipe was classified by UNESCO, as a World Biosphere Reserve and the country has been striving to maintain this classification.
- In terms of violence, in 2017 the country recorded the highest levels, with 1,278 cases of bodily offenses, 746 of domestic violence, and 58 of child sexual abuse. Compared to 2016, there was an evolution of about 13%, 38%, and 76%, respectively. The country has been confronted by the practice of GBV and the number of victims has been increasing, mostly women/girls.

It is noted that estimates of SDG financing in STP up to 2030 are not available, as the prioritization of global SDG targets according to national sustainable development priorities was not initially done, followed by the respective budgeting. The mobilization of resources for the financing of planning instruments that contribute to the achievement of the SDGs is done through three main categories of financing, namely domestic resources, external resources and alternative financing. In 2017, international remittances to STP totaled an amount of about USD 19.6 million, representing about 6.3% of GDP. In 2020, due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the reduction was much more expressive, with the country receiving only USD 6.85 million, about two-thirds less than the 2015 figure, representing 1.82% of GDP.

The next steps that STP intends to take to improve progress in SDG implementation by 2030 are as follows: (a) Creating and operationalizing an institutional mechanism to coordinate SDG implementation; (b) Strengthening national ownership of SDGs; (c) Building capacity on SDGs; (d) Analyzing the degree of alignment and integration of SDGs in the national planning framework; (e) Prioritizing and integrating SDG targets in national planning instruments; (f) Promoting localization of SDGs at the level of the Autonomous Region of Príncipe (RAP) and the Districts; (g) Budgeting for SDGs and priority targets and the development of a strategy to mobilize new partnerships and resources for their financing; (h) Establishing a national framework of SDG monitoring and evaluation indicators; (i) Capacity building of the National Statistical System (SEN); (j) Dissemination of SDG data.

INTRODUCTION

The RDSTP is a signatory to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Agenda 2030), adopted by Resolution A/RES/70/1 of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly during the Summit on Sustainable Development held in New York on September 26-27, 2015. The 2030 Agenda is an action plan of the International Community for people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnerships. It establishes a comprehensive set of 17 SDGs and 169 goals, universal in nature, that are ambitious, people-centered, and a catalyst for collective change.

In adopting the 2030 Agenda, UN member states considered that the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest challenge facing humanity, and that it is a precondition for sustainable development. They thus committed themselves to achieve sustainable development in its three dimensions - economic, social, and environmental - in a balanced and integrated way.

The 2030 Agenda, which promises to leave no one behind, aims fundamentally to: eradicate poverty and hunger worldwide by 2030; combat inequalities within countries and across countries; build peaceful and just societies where everyone has a place; protect human rights and promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and sustainably protect the planet and its natural resources.

Thus, the 2030 Agenda poses immense challenges in its implementation. To this end, it requires revitalized global partnerships supported by coherent public policies, reformed governance mechanisms at all levels, greater resource mobilization, a revolution in statistical data, as well as respect for the principle of mutual accountability. Likewise, it requires ongoing collaboration between all the entities involved: government, local authorities, private sector, civil society, technical and financial partners (TFP), national and local elected officials, as well as other stakeholders.

Unlike the Millennium Declaration (2000) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the 2030 Agenda, given its level of ambition and demand, recommends national ownership of its 17 SDGs and their respective targets, in order to ensure effective and adequate implementation in the context and specificities of each country.

STP assumes the 2030 Agenda as the fundamental basis on which its development policy is based. The national commitment is to achieve the SDGs and targets, to enable Santomeans to have a better future, in balance with their ecosystem. As part of its follow-up and evaluation mechanisms, the 2030 Agenda encourages member states to conduct regular, inclusive assessments of progress at the national and sub-national levels, led and conducted by the country. These national assessments serve as the basis for the regular assessments at the HLPF and should be voluntary, state-led, and undertaken by developed and developing countries.

It is in this context that, six years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, STP decided to conduct its first evaluation on the implementation of the SDGs, in order to identify the actions taken and progress achieved so far and to make the necessary adjustments so that the country can achieve, in 2030, the expected goals. To this end, STP presents its first VNR, aiming, on the one hand, to inform its citizens and national and international institutions on the actions taken, progress, and constraints in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and, on the other hand, to share with peers its experience and learn about others that will enable it to improve and accelerate the national implementation process of the 2030 Agenda, particularly the SDGs.

This report, in addition to the executive summary and introduction, is structured around 6 chapters: (1) National Context of SDG Implementation in STP; (2) Methodology and Process of Preparation of the VNR; (3) Policy and Enabling Environment for SDG Implementation in STP; (4) Progress Towards SDGs, (5) Means of Implementation; and (6) Conclusion and Next Steps.

1. NATIONAL CONTEXT

1.1 Characterization and sociodemographic situation

The RDSTP is a small island state, located in the Gulf of Guinea 300 km west of Gabon and 240 km from Central Africa. The country consists of two main islands, São Tomé Island and Príncipe Island, and several islets, of volcanic origin and rugged relief, occupying a total land area of 1,001 km², of which 859 km² for São Tomé Island and 142 km² for Príncipe Island, and crossed by the Equator. Near the southern tip of São Tomé Island is the Ilhéu das Rolas, where there is a marker that marks the location of the Equator Line.

STP is considered one of the smallest states in the world and the second smallest African country in the territory, after Seychelles. The country has two natural parks with a total surface area of 295 km², which represents about 30% of the archipelago's surface area. It has a coastal zone of about 260 km in length. Most of the coast is rocky, with very rugged relief, but numerous sandy bays form a whole system of beaches along the coast. The Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) is 160,000 km². STP has an abundant forest, whose characteristics vary depending on several factors, including relief, altitude, and, consequently, the characteristic microclimate of each region. The main forest ecosystems found on the islands of STP are divided into forest ecosystems of the low altitude region, which comprises mangroves, shrub, and herbaceous savannah, shade forest, and secondary forest, and forest ecosystems of the high altitude region, which comprises the high altitude forest between 1,000 and 1,800 m, the high altitude forest between 1,800 and 2,000 m, and the fog forest (above 1,800 m). In hydrological terms, the total capacity of the country is estimated at 2.1 million m³ of water per km², which is equivalent to 10,000 m³ per year, per inhabitant (Hidroconseil, 2011). The country has a humid tropical climate (with rainfall varying between 800-900 mm per year) that is divided into a rainy season (September-May) and a dry season, called Gravana, which extends from June to August. The average annual temperature is around 25°C, with a maximum of around 29°C and a minimum of around 21°C.

One of the five former Portuguese colonies, STP gained independence on July 12, 1975. In addition to the UN and the African Union (AU), STP is a member of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP). The official language is Portuguese, although Creole dialects such as Forro, Angolar Príncipe (linguiê), and Cape Verdean are widely used by the population. The country's currency is the Dobra (STD).

According to the 2012 Population Census, the population of STP was 178,739, with little gender difference (49.7% men and 50.3% women), with 67% of the total population living in urban areas and 33% in rural areas, and with a population density of 178.7 hab/km². The population growth rate is 2%, and the demographic projections of the National Institute of Statistics (INE) indicate a population of 219,078 in 2022 and about 258,184 inhabitants in 2030. The average life expectancy at birth in STP has been increasing as a direct result of the decrease in the mortality rate and currently stands at 70.4 years.

1.2 Political-administrative situation

The RDSTP is a parliamentary democracy, with a semi-presidential government regime, in which executive power is exercised by the Prime Minister, who heads the Government (composed of the Prime Minister, Ministers, and Secretaries of State), and the President of the Republic, as the highest magistrate of the Nation, is responsible for representing the State in international relations and for sharing some competencies in matters of diplomacy and national defense. The President of the Republic is elected for a 5-year term and can be reelected only once. Legislative power is exercised by the National Assembly, composed of 55 members, elected by universal suffrage for a 4-year term. The Prime Minister is proposed by the majority party and appointed by the President of the Republic. The last legislative (election of Deputies to the National Assembly) and presidential elections took place in 2018 and 2021, respectively. The Courts are also sovereign bodies (alongside the President of the Republic, the National Assembly, and the Government), and are responsible for ensuring the defense of the legally protected rights and interests of citizens, settling conflicts of public and private interests, and repressing violations of the laws.

At the administrative level, STP is divided into two territorial administrations, corresponding to the two main islands: the Island of São Tomé and the Island of Príncipe. The Island of Sao Tome is divided into six Districts (Caué, Lembá, Lobata, Mé-Zóchi, Água Grande, and Cantagalo) and has 171,415 inhabitants, representing more than 90% of the total population of the country. Príncipe Island, holding the status of an Autonomous Region, has a population of 7,324, which corresponds to less than 10% of the total population of STP (INE, 2012 Census). Consisting of a single District (Pagué), the RAP has an Assembly and a Regional Government.

1.3 Socioeconomic context

STP's economy, like that of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), is strongly threatened by the country's fragmented insularity, fragility, natural resource scarcity, and weak absorptive capacity. The country is strongly vulnerable to exogenous shocks and dependent on ODA, which finances more than 90% of public investment spending (on average 93.6% over 2012-2016). The economic sector is still vulnerable and not very diversified, and consists mainly of tourism, cocoa production, and export, which represents about 90% of total export revenues, thus constituting the main source of foreign exchange for the country. The services sector is the most dynamic and the one that generates the most employment, although insufficient to meet the growing demand for jobs. According to official data, the commerce sector is the one with the greatest weight in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and it is also in this sector that the private sector has the greatest expression. Tourism is the main component of service exports and, currently, its contribution as a source of foreign exchange is higher than that of product exports. However, tourism's contribution to the GDP is still small, despite the country's natural potential and cultural diversity.

According to the World Bank (WB, 2020), the Santomean GDP grew at an average rate of 4.5% between 2010 and 2018, but this growth has been decelerating since 2014. Economic growth was further affected in 2018 and 2019 because of fuel and energy shortages, delayed government payments to local suppliers, and shrinking domestic financing. The negative shocks that began in 2018 continued to affect the performance of the economy in 2019. The real GDP growth rate is estimated to have slowed to 2.4% in 2019, down from 2.7% in 2018. Agriculture and fisheries have been affected by weather shocks, agricultural pests, and fuel and energy shortages. STP is expected to suffer a severe economic crisis as a result of the drop in tourism due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to this pandemic, the country's GDP contracted by 9.5% in 2020, STP's first recession since 1990. However, the outlook is encouraging, as evidenced by the latest Outlook on the World Economy (IMF, 2021), which forecasts a 2.9% growth of the Santomean economy in 2022. STP ranks 135th out of 189 countries and territories in the 2020 Human Development Index (HDI), with its HDI having risen from 0.452 in 1990 to 0.625 in 2019. In terms of the business environment, STP ranked 170th out of 190 countries, with a score of 45.0, according to the Doing Business 2020 Index (WB).

Although STP has made some progress on human development indicators, its vulnerability to external shocks, heavy dependence on ODA, and the structural weakness of its economic fabric pose serious threats to its status as a middle-income country. To take steps to address these risks to the country's development, in 2014 the Santomean government joined the g7+, an association of, so-called, "fragile states" and transitioning to the next stage of development. The association approved a "New Deal for Engagement in the Fragile States," aimed at building a peaceful nation and ending poverty.

1.4 Environmental context

The environment has been a concern of the successive governments of the country, since the first years of its independence to date. STP has a very rich flora and fauna and occupies a prominent place in the sub-region in terms of the number of endemic species of fauna and flora. However, vulnerability to climate change, reduced rainfall and consequent reduction of river flows, coastal erosion and flooding, loss of biodiversity, pollution of rivers, streams and springs by chemicals, and increased coastal erosion are problems that concern the national authorities. The disorderly expansion of urban areas, deforestation and forest degradation, the use of areas with agricultural potential for other purposes and the consequent degradation of the soil are also part of this list of problems. Although almost 60% of the country's land area still contains relatively dense forest, illegal logging for fuel and for housing construction, and the demand for new farmland for agriculture and horticulture are potential threats to the forests. Firewood and charcoal are the main sources of fuel used for cooking by most of the San Tomean population, especially in rural communities..

Deforestation, associated with the significant use of firewood and coal as a source of energy, translates into a reduction in the capacity to absorb CO₂, as well as the loss of biodiversity, and contributes to the deregulation of the rainfall regime, thus accentuating the phenomenon of global warming. This warming, which has given rise to the phenomenon of climate change, has accelerated the country's vulnerability to natural phenomena, which can endanger the lives of the population and the social, economic, and development infrastructure in general.

The sea-level rise is already a reality in STP and some natural phenomena already endanger the communities living in coastal areas, having registered the destruction of houses, flooding of some communities, caused by intense rainfall, and the turbulence of sea waters, having destroyed several work materials of fishermen, including their boats. The aggression toward the environment continues in some parts of the country.

2. METHODOLOGY AND PROCESS FOR PREPARING THE VOLUNTEER NATIONAL REPORT

The preparation of the voluntary national assessment and the drafting of this first VNR was a participatory and inclusive process, coordinated by the Ministry of Planning, Finance and Blue Economy (MPFEA), through the National Directorate of Planning (DNP), in close technical collaboration with INE. To carry out the activities of the process, a Working Group was created, composed of representatives from various sectoral public institutions and other stakeholders. The Group had the permanent support of the United Nations System (UNS) Resident Coordination in the country and the technical assistance of an international consultant, who facilitated the process of preparing and drafting this VNR.

The exercise started with two launching workshops, the first directed to representatives of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and the second, which was co-chaired by the Minister of Planning, Finance and Blue Economy and the UNS Resident Coordinator in the country, had the participation of representatives of public institutions, the National Assembly, the private sector and other stakeholders.

The methodology adopted for the elaboration of the RNV took place in two phases: (1st) information and data collection; and (2nd) systematization, consultation, drafting, and validation of the RNV.

In the first phase, the following actions were carried out: (a) a review of available reference planning instruments, namely the Program of the XVII Constitutional Government (2018-2022) of the RDSTP, the Vision document "São Tomé Príncipe 2030 - the Country we want to build", the STP Transformation Agenda for horizon - 2030, the NDP 2017-2021, the STP PND 2020-2024, sectoral plans and strategies, evaluation reports, statistical reports, relevant legislation, TFP documents, and other existing relevant official documentation; (b) conducting an online survey targeting stakeholders (state and non-state entities) in the SDG implementation process in the country; (c) conducting interviews/meetings with key personnel from stakeholders, including PTF. The purpose of the interviews/meetings was to know, as comprehensively as possible, about the level of integration of the SDGs in the country's development programs and strategies, the dissemination of the SDGs among the population, the SDG implementation strategy adopted, including the mobilization and provision of necessary resources, the current status of SDG implementation (status of indicators), the institutional mechanism adopted for the coordination of SDG implementation, identify barriers or challenges in its implementation, and the next steps to accelerate the process.

In the second phase, the information and data collected were analyzed, processed, and systematized. Based on the UNDESA's Manual for the Preparation of Voluntary National Reviews, the draft of the VNR was drafted, which was the object of a first socialization to the interested parties, including the UNS Agencies in the country, which took place on February 14, 2022, a second socialization on March 24, involving all the sectors, and a third socialization that took place at the RAP, on April 21, where, on both occasions, observations, suggestions for improvement, and recommendations were made. The contributions received were analyzed and incorporated into a revised version of the RNV, which was submitted to the Government for approval.

3. POLICY AND ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SDGs IN STP

3.1 Legal framework for sustainable development

The Constitution of the RDSTP (approved in 1990 and revised in 2003), although it does not expressly mention the concept of sustainable development, contains provisions concerning key elements of sustainable development, namely: the preservation of the harmonious balance of nature and the environment, as one of the primary objectives of the State (Article 10(d)); the right to work (Article 42); the right to social protection; the right to health protection.

At the infra-constitutional level, the Environment Framework Law (Law no. 10/99, of April 15) established the legal framework for the protection of the environment and natural resources in STP. This law defined the bases of the environmental policy for the sustainable development of STP. The national legal framework also includes the following legislation: the Law on the Conservation of Fauna, Flora and Protected Areas - Law No. 11/99; the Forestry Law - Law No. 5/2001; the Laws on the creation of the Obô Natural Park of São Tomé and the National Park of Príncipe - Laws Nos. 6 and 7 of 2006; the Law on Fisheries and Fishery Resources - Law No. 9/2001; the Regulation on Environmental Impact Assessment - Decree-Law n° 37/99; the Law on the Extraction of Inerts in Coastal Areas and Rivers - Decree-Law n° 35/99; the Law on Hunting - Decree-Law n° 01/2016; among others, which create a legal framework for the sustainable management of the environment, both terrestrial and maritime.

At the international level, STP has ratified most of the UN conventions on the environment and related areas, namely: the three Rio conventions (the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change; the Convention on Biodiversity; and the Nations Convention to combat desertification in countries affected by severe drought); the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants; the Kyoto Protocol; the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety; the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer; the Montreal Protocol and its Amendments; the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora; the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat; the Convention establishing the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and its Resources; the Bonn Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals; the Basel Convention on the Transboundary Movement of Chemicals and Hazardous Products and their Disposal; the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure.

The Santomean state is also a signatory to the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 and its successor, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030), and the Paris Agreement (2015).

Therefore, STP's national legislation and international commitments in favor of the environment and sustainable development are significant, which demonstrates the concern of the San Tomean state with safeguarding the environment, the health of citizens, and sustainable development, in general.

3.2 Adoption of the SDGs

3.2.1 Political engagement, communication, and awareness

The RDSTP actively participated in the international dialogue on post-2015 global development and adhered to the decisions taken by the International Community in recent decades, under the auspices of the UN, which culminated with the adoption, in September 2015, of the 2030 Agenda. In this context, the country adopted: Agenda 21, at the UN Conference on Environment and Development, held in June 1992, in Rio de Janeiro; the Millennium Declaration, at the Millennium Summit, in September 2000, at UN headquarters, in New York; the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and Plan of Implementation, at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, in 2002; the "The Future We Want" document at the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in Rio de Janeiro in June 2012, in which Member States decided, among others, to launch a process to develop a set of SDGs to build on the MDGs and establish the HLPF on Sustainable Development; the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030; and the Addis Ababa Programme of Action.

Immediately after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, national ownership of the SDGs began with STP participating in international events and carrying out several national actions, most notably:

- STP's participation in the Conference of Small Island Developing African States and Madagascar (SIDSAM), held in December 2016 in Praia, Cape Verde, was attended by ministerial delegations from all other African SIDS: Cape Verde, Comoros, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Mauritius and Seychelles. At this conference, the SIDSAM Group was created, a platform for consultation, discussion of issues of common interest, promotion of ways and means to overcome barriers, and making effective the existing recommendations and commitments, at regional and global levels, with the island countries;
- STP's participation in the 4th World Forum on Local Development, under the theme "Local Economic Development as a means to achieve equality, equity, and cohesion within the framework of the SDGs", held in October 2017 in Praia City, Cape Verde;
- Presentation on the transition from MDGs to SDGs, promoted by the SNU in STP, in September 2015;
- Elaboration, through a consultation process with Santomeans, of the Vision "São Tomé and Príncipe 2030 - the Country we Want to Build", the Transformation Agenda on the Horizon - 2030 (in October 2015) and the NDP 2017-2021, which are aligned with the SDGs;
- Presentation sessions of the SDGs, promoted by the SNU in collaboration with national partners (University of São Tomé, Victor Sá Machado Health Institute, Federation of Non-Governmental Organizations - FONG of STP), in May 2016;
- Holding the Conference "The participation of Civil Society in the advocacy and implementation of the SDGs", in June 2016, promoted by SNU, in partnership with FONG of STP, and chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Communities of STP;
- Holding a Workshop to present the SDGs, in March 2018, with the participation of UN Agencies (UNFPA, UNICEF) and sectoral public institutions;
- Holding of the "Joint sensitization workshop for the production of the national SDG indicators and identification of the origins and fragility factors that condition the effectiveness of the development plans and the achievement of the SDGs", promoted by DNP and INE, in September 2018;
- Performance by INE, in 2018, of a diagnosis of the national indicators of the SDGs. The work allowed the survey of existing data in INE and other sectoral public institutions in the country; preparation, in 2019, of a Follow-up Plan of the SDG level II indicators, which allowed clarifying the methodology for calculating these indicators; in 2020, preparation of a Statistical Follow-up Report, where some SDG level I indicators were updated; in 2021, preparation of the Statistical Report on SDG level II indicators.

However, despite the various actions taken, there is a need to strengthen national ownership of the SDGs through the development and implementation of a communication and awareness-raising strategy extended to all government departments, institutions and public services (at all levels) and the general population.

3.2.2 Contextualization and adoption

National adoption of the SDGs also involves analyzing their degree of alignment with existing development planning documents. As an initial part of the SDG implementation process, several countries, with the support of UNDP, carried out this analysis, which allowed them to certify the level of coherence/degree of alignment of the SDGs with all existing planning documents, followed by the prioritization of SDG targets and their integration into the main planning documents. The analysis was done using the RIA tool, developed by UNDP. This tool has the advantage of revealing the strengths and weaknesses of strategic planning documents to identify their level of alignment with the SDGs, the strengths to be maintained when revising or updating these documents, and the gaps to be filled. Such analysis has not been done by STP, even though the main planning instruments are aligned with the SDGs. However, it is the country's intention to carry out such an analysis in order to objectively understand the level of alignment, for which it will rely on UNDP support.

Another key element in the national ownership of the 2030 Agenda is the prioritization of SDG targets for the national context. The prioritization exercise essentially aims at choosing the SDG targets and indicators that intersect with the national priorities and specificities of each UN member state.

The requirement that countries prioritize the SDGs and their targets find its foundation in the UN General Assembly Resolution (Resolution A/RES/70/1) that adopted the 2030 Agenda. Paragraph 55 of that Resolution states that: *"Sustainable development goals and targets are integrated and inseparable; they are by essence global and universally applicable, taking into account the realities, capacities and levels of development of different countries and with respect for national priorities and policies. **If the ideal goals are defined on a global scale, it is up to each State to define its own goals at the national level to meet global ambitions, taking into account its specificities. It is also up to each state to decide how these aspirations and goals should be taken into account by national planning mechanisms and national policies and strategies. It is important not to ignore the link that exists between sustainable development and other ongoing economic, social and environmental processes**".*

Thus, unlike the MDGs, one of the innovations introduced in the 2030 Agenda is that each country will choose, for each SDG, the priority targets, taking into account its context, capable of enabling it to achieve that goal, and on the basis of which the country will be evaluated. This approach is based on the differentiations between the signatory countries of the 2030 Agenda and the strong willingness of states to contextualize each goal, taking into account national priorities. In addition, it should be noted that the prioritization does not fall on the SDGs themselves, but rather on their targets.

In general, out of the 169 SDG goals, countries will only have to choose which goals to prioritize in the so-called "to prioritize" goals. The implementation targets that accompany each SDG, and those in SDG 17 on partnerships, are not subject to prioritization and are applicable as such. Moreover, the choice of goals as priorities is not made arbitrarily, and the various countries that have done so have used the prioritization methodology (prioritization matrix) developed by the UNDP.

As far as STP is concerned, of the 169 targets of the 17 SDGs, only 105 targets could be considered in the prioritization exercise, taking into account the 43 targets related to the means of implementation, the 19 targets related to partnerships, and the two targets (14.6 and 14.7) that do not apply to developing countries. The prioritized targets are then integrated into national development planning documents.

However, during the preparation of this national assessment, it was found that, unlike other UN member states that have done so, STP did not proceed to an effective prioritization of SDG targets, as recommended, having chosen 7 SDGs as a priority, but without the effective prioritization of corresponding targets. In this sense, one of STP's next steps, in the short term, in the SDG implementation process is to carry out an effective prioritization of SDG targets for the national context, in order to facilitate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the country and the preparation of the next national assessment.

3.3 Integration of the SDGs into national frameworks for planning

The international context in 2015 was marked by the adoption of the African Union (AU) Agenda 2063 and the UN Agenda 2030. On the other hand, the national context was characterized by the completion 2016 of the implementation of the II National Poverty Reduction Strategy (ENRP) 2012-2016 and the elaboration of the main strategic planning instruments for the development of STP in recent years, namely: the Transformation Agenda on the Horizon - 2030 (elaborated in October 2015); the NDP 2017-2021; and the NDPS of STP 2020-2024. In addition to these instruments, several sectoral and regional plans and strategies have been developed.

The Transformation Agenda on the Horizon - 2030 is underpinned by the Vision "Sao Tome and Principe 2030: the Country we want to build", through which the Government expressed the purpose and ambition to change the paradigm for a new development strategy and make STP a modern middle-income state capable of offering its citizens better-living conditions and dignified existence. This Agenda is aligned with the SDGs, with the prioritization of 7 SDGs, namely:

- SDG 1 – Eradicate poverty
- SDG 8 – Decent work and economic growth
- SDG 9 – Industry, innovation, and infrastructure
- SDG 13 - Action climate

- SDG 14 – Protect life below water
- SDG 15 – Protect life on land
- SDG 16 – Peace, justice, and strong institutions

The NDP, which replaced the ENRP, is the first five-year strategic plan for the implementation of STP's Transformation Agenda on Horizon 2030 for the period 2017 - 2021, and contributing toward the implementation of the SDGs in STP. It is also the first plan prepared under the Basic Law of the National Planning System (NPS), published in March 2017, which established the typology of planning instruments in STP (long-term strategies, plans, and complimentary planning instruments). Under this Law, the NDP is the highest hierarchical level plan of the NPS, directly binding all sectoral, regional, or complementary plans.

The NDP 2017 - 2021 has as its main objective "accelerated economic growth, reducing poverty and protecting the environment". Its specific objectives are as follows:

- Reduce poverty, in rural and coastal areas;
- Promote youth employment, through education and training;
- Strengthen the health system;
- Strengthen the public and administrative management tools;
- Promote transparency and accountability, regarding the delivery of the Public Administration;
- Strengthen internal security, public safety, and coastal security;
- Simplify legislation and improve the business environment;
- Implement infrastructure programs to support growth, and
- Ensure environmental protection and operator control.

The STP NDPS 2020-2024 was drafted in 2019, following the 2018 legislative elections, and is presented as the first operational plan for harmonizing, integrating, and implementing the STP Vision 2030, the STP 2030 Transformation Agenda, Agenda 2030, the Samoa Way and Agenda 2063 - "The Africa we want". It is structured around four strategic axes of intervention, namely:

1. Deepening the democratic rule of law;
2. Robust economic growth and accelerated job creation
3. Improved quality of health and social protection;
4. Foreign policy at the service of development.

After analyzing the degree of alignment of the SDGs with existing planning instruments and the prioritization of SDG targets according to national priorities, STP will mainstream them by revising existing planning instruments and developing new ones for the coming years until 2030.

3.4 Integration of the sustainable development dimensions (economic, social, and environmental)

The implementation of the 17 SDGs requires the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development in the design, planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of national planning instruments that contribute to the achievement of these SDGs. The NDP 2017-2021 and the STP NDP 2020-2024 have ensured the integration of these three dimensions.

The NDP 2017-2021 incorporated the three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social, and environmental) in three of its strategic objectives: "Strategic Objective 1: Economic domain - Improve the exploitation of the country's development potential, accelerate economic growth and strengthen integration into the regional and global economy", taking into account the economic dimension; the "Strategic Objective 2: Social domain - Accelerate and deepen reforms to significantly improve the human development index of Santomeans and make substantial progress towards achieving the SDGs", taking into

consideration of the social dimension; and the "Strategic Objective 5: Environment domain - Improve land management and environmental preservation", absorbing the environmental dimension.

In the economic domain, STP was committed, until 2021, to diversifying the economy and broadening its productive base, increasing production and diversification of food culture and expanding export culture, optimizing the exploitation of fishery resources, promoting the development of tourism and small manufacturing industries, and developing the services sector. In the social domain, the priorities are the strengthening of human capital and governance, the strengthening of the national health system, the promotion of youth, family consolidation and protection of vulnerable groups and in the valorization of national culture, support for the development of sports and inclusion of the diaspora. In the environmental field, the Government's ambition is to promote a healthy environment, the rational use of natural resources, and to protect the country from the risks of climate change.

The NDPS of STP 2020-2024 incorporated the economic and environmental dimensions in Strategic Objective 2 - Promote Inclusive Economic Growth and Environmental Sustainability; and the social dimension is assimilated by Strategic Objective 3 - Ensure Social Inclusion and Protection, Reduce Social Inequalities and Regional Asymmetries.

3.5 Leave no one behind

With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, UN member states have committed to ensuring that no one is left behind and to making efforts to reach those currently left behind first.

In recent years, STP has made remarkable progress in terms of human capital development, particularly in health and education indicators. However, despite the efforts that successive governments have made since independence, STP remains a country with deep social inequalities, especially in the most vulnerable, disadvantaged, or at-risk social strata.

The implementation of the SDGs in the country is an opportunity that cannot be postponed, as the government sees it, to prevent the people who have been left behind from being left behind but also to prevent new social groups from being left in this situation. To this end, the country has increased its efforts, through the adoption of legislative and policy measures to "leave no one behind".

The Constitution of the RDSTP states in article 44, number 1, that *"The State guarantees to every citizen, through the social security system, the right to protection in illness, disability, old age, widowhood, orphanhood and in other cases provided by law."* In 2004, the Social Protection Framework Law was published, which reorganized the social protection system in STP, having created three social security regimes, which constitute the permanent social protection device: (i) Citizenship Social Protection; (ii) Compulsory Social Protection; and (iii) Complementary Social Protection. Of these regimes, it is important to highlight the Social Protection of Citizenship, which covers the resident population that is in a situation of lack or reduction of subsistence means and cannot fully assume its protection, namely:

- People or families in extreme poverty;
- Women in disadvantaged situations; children and adolescents with special needs or at risk;
- Elderly people in a situation of physical or economic dependence and isolation;
- People with disabilities, at-risk or in a situation of social exclusion;
- Unemployed people in marginalized situations.

The Social Protection of Citizenship, which was regulated in 2018 by Decree-Law No. 16/2018, of November 30, takes effect through the provision of (i) risk benefits; (ii) social support benefits; and (iii) solidarity benefits. This scheme is administered by the ministry that oversees the sector (currently, the Ministry of Labor, Solidarity, Family, and Vocational Training), as well as other ministries, local authorities, and NGOs dedicated to social service. Being a non-contributory regime, the Social Protection of Citizenship is mainly funded by the State but also counts on donations from international cooperation.

As part of the implementation of the II ENRP 2012-2016, STP designed and executed the National Social Protection Policy and Strategy (2014), currently the main social protection program for Santomeans, especially for vulnerable social groups. Strategic Objective #1 of this Policy and Strategy is to *"Eliminate extreme poverty in São Tomé and Príncipe through conditional cash transfers for families in extreme poverty and actions that facilitate the formation of their human capital and their access to basic services, giving priority to families in extreme poverty with disabled or orphaned members and single-parent families with children, through a harmonized system of interventions of the social protection regime of citizenship"*. In this context, the

Directorate of Social Protection, Solidarity and Family of the Ministry of Labor, Solidarity, Family and Vocational Training, has been implementing with funding from the General State Budget (OGE) and partners, several projects targeted the most vulnerable social groups, including Support for the Social Integration of the Most Deprived Groups; Social Protection; Social Kitchen - Supply of a Hot Dish/Day to the most deprived elderly; Support for people with disabilities; Construction of social houses.

Concerning gender equality, STP has already elaborated, since 2007, three National Strategy for Gender Equality and Equity (ENIEG), the first for the period 2007-2012, the second for the period 2013-2017, and the third for the period 2019-2026. The III ENIEG, aligned with SDG 5, provides continuity to the vision established in the I and II ENIEG, which is to "Build with all development actors, a society where social justice, solidarity, equality, equity and respect for the rights of all citizens prevail, and are authentic values, deep and shared by men and women. The general objective of the III ENIEG is to "Guide in an integrated way the main lines of intervention for the promotion of gender equality and equity and respect for human rights." It establishes nine strategic axes of intervention, namely: Axis 1: Legislation and Policies; Axis 2: Leadership and Visibility: Women's Participation in Decision-making Positions; Axis 3: Education and Training; Axis 4: Economy: Productive Resources, Reproductive and Employment; Axis 5: Sexual and Reproductive Health and Reproductive Rights; Axis 6: Gender-Based Violence; Axis 7: Media and Information Technology; Axis 8: Environment and Climate Change; Axis 9: Institutional Strengthening for Gender Mainstreaming in Public Policies. The III INIEG addresses, in its specific objectives, issues of equal representation and gender violence, among others.

Regarding child protection, STP has, since 2016, a National Child Protection Policy (PNPC). It is an instrument of government action that aims to materialize international commitments made by the RDSTP, such as the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international instruments. It has as its general objective "to define the framework to carry out organized and concerted actions capable of preventing all forms of violence against children and considerably reducing its various manifestations." This Policy is structured around four axes: Axis 1 - Prevention; Axis 2

- Care of victims; Axis 3 - Judicial protection; and Axis 4 - Functionality of the National Child Protection System. The coordination of the PNPC is in charge of the National Commission for the Coordination of the Execution of the Child Protection Policy, created in 2018, and which integrates representatives from the legislative power, the judiciary, the ministries of security, justice, social action, education, the media, and NGOs.

3.6 National mechanisms

3.6.1 Institutional arrangement for coordinating the implementation of the SDGs

The successful implementation of the SDGs in the national context depends crucially on the existence and functioning of a strong and inclusive institutional governance arrangement.

The NDP 2017-2021, as the main national planning instrument and the first operational plan of the STP 2030 Transformation Agenda, established an institutional implementation mechanism, composed of several committees, namely: (i) an inter-ministerial follow-up committee; (ii) a consultation committee; (iii) a central technical follow-up committee, (iv) sectoral technical committees, and (v) local follow-up committees in the RAP and the Districts of Água Grande, Cantagalo, Cauê, Lembá, Lobata and Mé-Zóchi. However, in an audit of the state of preparation of the implementation of the SDGs, conducted in 2019, the Court of Auditors found that this institutional device has not been functioning, which is why the implementation of the NDP will not itself have been subject to effective monitoring and evaluation.

The functionality of the NDP institutional device or the existence of a specific institutional mechanism for the coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the SDGs enables the creation of a panoramic vision and facilitates the effective involvement and synergy of all stakeholders. In this sense, for the SDG implementation process to be effective and accelerated in the coming years, the Government of STP will create and operationalize, in the very short term, an institutional mechanism for the SDG implementation process, coordinated at the high political level.

At the country level, the UN Framework Plan for Development Assistance (UNDAF) for STP 2017-2021 provides for a Steering and Coordinating Committee, co-chaired by the Government of the RDSTP through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Communities (MNEC) and the Resident Coordinator of the UNS, and composed, on the national side, of Directors-General of key Ministries and representatives from civil society and the private sector. In addition, the UNDAF makes its monitoring and evaluation dependent mainly on the national systems that are under the purview of the MNEC and the DNP, through the Department of Monitoring and Evaluation, and the INE.

The UNDAF 2017-2021 is an expression of the UNS Country Team's commitment to support the people of STP in meeting the development aspirations set out in the STP 2030 Vision. This Framework Plan aligns SNU's development work with the national priorities set out in the Government Program (2014-2018) and the STP 2030 Transformation Agenda, while ensuring alignment with the country's prioritized SDGs. It provides for SNU support in 3 strategic areas for STP's development: (1) Strengthening Social Cohesion, through access to quality basic social services, aiming to reduce inequality and disparity among citizens and communities; (2) Strengthening the country's internal and external credibility; and (3) Promoting sustainable, inclusive and resilient growth.

United Nations Resident Coordinator in Sao Tome and Principe

On behalf of the United Nations (UN) in São Tomé and Príncipe (STP), I am pleased to congratulate Sao Tome and Principe for taking on the voluntary preparation of its first progress report on the implementation of the SDGs. The report describes the progress achieved to date in terms of the implementation of the SDGs, contributing to the sharing of experiences, identification of challenges, and lessons that will help the country in the adoption of policies, measures, and actions conducive to accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The report is the result of an extensive and participatory consultation process, with technical support from the United Nations and led by the Ministry of Planning, Finance, and the Blue Economy, involving civil society organizations, the private sector, and United Nations agencies.

As a small developing state, STP faces huge social, economic, and environmental challenges. These challenges have been exacerbated by the impacts of climate change and the resulting vulnerabilities, both to internal and external shocks. In addition, geographic insularity, small size and consequently limited economy of scale, and high transaction costs limit the country's competitiveness, which requires investments to achieve the SDGs, one of the highest in per capita terms. Despite these structural constraints, and with support from the international community, STP has made encouraging progress on some SDG indicators, particularly in the Education and Health sectors.

However, despite this progress, there is still a long way to go to reach the SDGs by 2030. Strengthening good governance and justice reform, fighting poverty, and reducing inequalities represent tasks of crucial importance for the country in this process. The graduation of STP from the LDC category, in 2024, is an opportunity to accelerate reforms, in collaboration with development partners that should continue to accompany the country in this challenging process, before and after graduation.

The result of this first voluntary assessment of the SDGs in STP demonstrates the need for the country to intensify efforts to promote socio-economic transformation, through investments in key areas such as basic social services, digital transformation, infrastructure, energy transition, economic diversification, and human capital. Indeed, the country needs to build a resilient economy, capable of ensuring sustainable and inclusive growth and overcoming some of its vulnerabilities, namely external dependence, unemployment, poverty, and inequality.

The country's determination and the participation of all are key elements for the materialization of this desideratum in the 2030 horizon. On the part of the United Nations in São Tomé and Príncipe, I reiterate the commitment and partnership to continue to support the country in the implementation of the Agenda for 2030 towards Sustainable Development, always guided by the protection of human rights and in the spirit of "leaving no one behind".

United Nations Resident Coordinator in Sao Tome and Principe

Eric Overvest

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe (RDSTP) is a signatory to the Sustainable Development Program for the 2030 horizon (2030 Agenda), which includes the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The 2030 Agenda encourages its signatories to carry out assessments on a volunteer base about the Implementation of the SDGs, which is the basis for regular evaluations at the *High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development – HLPF*).

Thus, Sao Tome and Principe (STP), under the principle of transparency and mutual accountability, presents its first Voluntary National Report (VNR) in order to, on the one hand, inform its citizens, and national and international institutions about the actions taken, progress and constraints in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and, on the other hand, share with its peers, within the scope of the HLPF, its experience and learn about others that will enable the country to improve and accelerate the national implementation process of the 2030 Agenda, particularly the SDGs.

The compilation of this report resulted from a participatory and inclusive process of the stakeholders. The methodology adopted for its drafting took place in two phases: (1) collection of information and data; and (2) systematization, consultation, and validation of the RNV.

The context of SDG implementation in the country has been punctuated by the elaboration of the main strategic planning instruments for national development in recent years, namely: the STP Transformation Agenda 2030, the National Development Plan (NDP) 2017-2021, and the National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP) of STP 2020-2024. In addition to these instruments, several sectoral plans and strategies have been developed, in line with SDGs.

STP has chosen 7 SDGs as a benchmark in the definition and implementation of development policies and strategies, namely: SDG 1 - Eradicate poverty; SDG 8 - Decent work and economic growth; SDG 9 - Industry, innovation, and infrastructure; SDG 13 - Climate action; SDG 14 – Protect life below water; SDG 15 - Protect life on land; SDG 16 - Peace, justice and strong institutions.

The RDSTP Constitution, while not explicitly mentioning the concept of sustainable development, contains provisions with reference to key elements of sustainable development. In addition, the country's infra-constitutional legislation and international commitments in favor of the environment and sustainable development are significant.

Although there have been actions aimed at the national adoption of the SDGs, the process needs to be strengthened among development actors and the population in general. On the other hand, despite the alignment of some planning instruments with the SDGs, the degree and consistency of this alignment require an objective analysis using the tools and methodologies available for this purpose. Furthermore, STP did not initially prioritize SDG targets and for this reason did not establish a national framework of indicators based on global indicators, which made it difficult to assess progress according to national development priorities.

Another weakness in the implementation of the SDGs in STP so far was the non-functioning of an institutional governance mechanism (coordination, monitoring and evaluation) of the process, a situation to be corrected in the very short term within the scope of the next steps for the improvement and acceleration of the process.

Regarding the progress of the SDGs, since there was no initial prioritization of global goals for the national context, this first national evaluation focused on the country's situation and trends towards achieving them, using available data and information that respond to the SDG global goal indicators. Thus, as the main results of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the following stand out:

- There were significant improvements in poverty reduction (defined as \$1.90 per day) between 2010 and 2017, from 35.6% to 25.9%, a reduction of about 10 percentage points.
- A significant percentage of Santomean household (97.5%), in 2019, used improved sources of water for domestic consumption, an increase of around 7 percentage points compared to 2014.
- The prevalence of stunting (moderate and severe), measured by the height-to-age ratio, in children under 5 improved, from 17.2% in 2014 to 11.7% in 2019. The same cannot be said for the prevalence of malnutrition (overweight), where the situation has worsened, from 2.4% in 2014 to 4.5% in 2019.

- There have also been gains in terms of infant mortality, with the rate reduced from 24.0 per 1,000 live births in 2016 to 22.4 per 1,000 live births in 2020. The proportion of births assisted by a health professional reached 96.8%, in 2019 and the prenatal care coverage rate at the first visit was set at 98.1%. In that same year, about 98% of women aged 15 to 49 received prenatal care at least once from qualified health personnel.
- There has been a consistent decrease in maternal mortality in STP, from 100 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2009 to 74 in 2014. In terms of maternal and neonatal mortality, the country is close to achieving the global target.
- Communicable Diseases are no longer a major public health concern in STP. In 2019, the country recorded only 41 new cases of HIV, which corresponds to a rate of 0.2 per 1,000 inhabitants, a decrease of about 29% compared to the previous year. Tuberculosis recorded, between 2016 and 2020, a decrease of around 27%, from 162 cases per 100,000 inhabitants to 118 cases. Malaria is no longer the leading cause of morbidity and mortality in the country. In 2020 only 1944 cases were registered, a decrease of about 21% compared to the previous year, and an aspect to highlight is that during these two years no deaths from this disease were registered. Therefore, the goal of eliminating this disease in the country by 2025 is feasible.
- Non-communicable Diseases are currently the main causes of mortality in the country, especially cardiovascular diseases.
- The country has experienced an improvement in the use of contraceptive methods by women aged 15-49 who are currently married or in a consensual union, rising from 34.4% in 2014 to 49.7% in 2019.
- In 2019, about 94% of children aged 12 to 23 months received all recommended immunizations before their first/second birthday, against diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis (DTP), and 93% for pneumococcal (conjugate) immunization.
- At the education level, the Early Childhood Development rate, experienced remarkable progress, going from 54.5% of children between 36 and 59 months in 2014 who are on track for development in at least three of the four areas (reading-calculation, physical, socio-emotional, learning) to 62.9% in 2019. Additionally, in 2019, the adjusted net attendance rate for elementary school was set at 90%; for junior high school at 55%, and for high school was 30%. Furthermore, the participation rate in organized learning (1 year before the age of entry into primary school) was 74% in 2019 and the attendance rate of the population aged 4 to 7 years increased from 86% in 2015 to 90.8% in 2020. In that same period, the higher education enrollment rate of the population aged 19-23 increased from 35.4% to 43.5%.
- At the gender level, the improvement of the legal and institutional framework stands out, with the creation of the Interinstitutional Commission responsible for implementing the "Comprehensive Public Policy for a Decent Life for Women." As for parity in education, the country is close to reaching its goal of eliminating the gender gap. There is parity at the basic education level for adjusted TLEs, regardless of household economic well-being levels, as evidenced by the 2019 Gender Parity Index (GPI), which was 1.02. Regarding the other levels, the situation is the opposite.
- STP reports positive results in terms of access to clean water. In 2020, about 85% of the population had access to improved water sources and 62.5% had access to basic sanitation. In 2019, about 98% of household members used an improved drinking water source located on-premises, available for when needed, an increase of 4 percentage points from 2014 data.
- Regarding electricity, the access rate has evolved from 69% in 2014 to 83% in 2019. The country is investing in the transition from fossil fuels to clean energy (hydropower) and is increasing the production capacity of the Contador River Plant from 1.4 MW to 3 MW.
- The economy of STP is highly vulnerable, not very diversified, the market is small, and the level of economic growth has been insufficient for the needs of its development, especially in terms of job creation. The country's competitiveness is low and the annual rate of change in GDP per employed person has been declining since 2017. Informality is high, especially in the primary sector. The formal sector employs less than a third (31.7%) of the working population, meaning that most of STP's population works in the informal sector.
- There have been improvements in the country's unemployment rate, having reduced from 13.6%, according to the 2012 Population Census, to 8.9% in 2017.

- Tourism is considered a strategic sector for the development of STP, despite having a very residual contribution to the national economy, of only 4.6% in 2018.
- In terms of ICT, progress has also been made. In 2020, the percentage of the population covered by a mobile network was 93%, and 191,178 thousand people are covered with the 3G network, which represents an increase of about 4% compared to 2017.
- STP, due to its location in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, on the Equator, is a very vulnerable country from an environmental point of view, affected by rising sea levels, floods, droughts, with serious implications, especially at the level of coastal areas.
- The country is very rich in dense forests, with disparate climates depending on the region, relief and altitude. It has several forest ecosystems. Unfortunately, there has been some degradation of forests in recent years, especially those located at lower altitudes. Between 2015 and 2020, the proportion of illegal deforestation was reduced by 10.7 p.p., from 64.6% in 2015 to 53.9% in 2020. Currently, the country has 4 important sites for mountain biodiversity covered by protected areas. Due to the richness of the country in terms of biodiversity, with unique species, in 2012 the Island of Príncipe was classified by UNESCO, as a World Biosphere Reserve and the country has been striving to maintain this classification.
- In terms of violence, in 2017 the country recorded the highest levels, with 1,278 cases of bodily offenses, 746 of domestic violence, and 58 of child sexual abuse. Compared to 2016, there was an evolution of about 13%, 38%, and 76%, respectively. The country has been confronted by the practice of GBV and the number of victims has been increasing, mostly women/girls.

It is noted that estimates of SDG financing in STP up to 2030 are not available, as the prioritization of global SDG targets according to national sustainable development priorities was not initially done, followed by the respective budgeting. The mobilization of resources for the financing of planning instruments that contribute to the achievement of the SDGs is done through three main categories of financing, namely domestic resources, external resources and alternative financing. In 2017, international remittances to STP totaled an amount of about USD 19.6 million, representing about 6.3% of GDP. In 2020, due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the reduction was much more expressive, with the country receiving only USD 6.85 million, about two-thirds less than the 2015 figure, representing 1.82% of GDP.

The next steps that STP intends to take to improve progress in SDG implementation by 2030 are as follows: (a) Creating and operationalizing an institutional mechanism to coordinate SDG implementation; (b) Strengthening national ownership of SDGs; (c) Building capacity on SDGs; (d) Analyzing the degree of alignment and integration of SDGs in the national planning framework; (e) Prioritizing and integrating SDG targets in national planning instruments; (f) Promoting localization of SDGs at the level of the Autonomous Region of Príncipe (RAP) and the Districts; (g) Budgeting for SDGs and priority targets and the development of a strategy to mobilize new partnerships and resources for their financing; (h) Establishing a national framework of SDG monitoring and evaluation indicators; (i) Capacity building of the National Statistical System (SEN); (j) Dissemination of SDG data.

INTRODUCTION

The RDSTP is a signatory to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Agenda 2030), adopted by Resolution A/RES/70/1 of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly during the Summit on Sustainable Development held in New York on September 26-27, 2015. The 2030 Agenda is an action plan of the International Community for people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnerships. It establishes a comprehensive set of 17 SDGs and 169 goals, universal in nature, that are ambitious, people-centered, and a catalyst for collective change.

In adopting the 2030 Agenda, UN member states considered that the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest challenge facing humanity, and that it is a precondition for sustainable development. They thus committed themselves to achieve sustainable development in its three dimensions - economic, social, and environmental - in a balanced and integrated way.

The 2030 Agenda, which promises to leave no one behind, aims fundamentally to: eradicate poverty and hunger worldwide by 2030; combat inequalities within countries and across countries; build peaceful and just societies where everyone has a place; protect human rights and promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and sustainably protect the planet and its natural resources.

Thus, the 2030 Agenda poses immense challenges in its implementation. To this end, it requires revitalized global partnerships supported by coherent public policies, reformed governance mechanisms at all levels, greater resource mobilization, a revolution in statistical data, as well as respect for the principle of mutual accountability. Likewise, it requires ongoing collaboration between all the entities involved: government, local authorities, private sector, civil society, technical and financial partners (TFP), national and local elected officials, as well as other stakeholders.

Unlike the Millennium Declaration (2000) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the 2030 Agenda, given its level of ambition and demand, recommends national ownership of its 17 SDGs and their respective targets, in order to ensure effective and adequate implementation in the context and specificities of each country.

STP assumes the 2030 Agenda as the fundamental basis on which its development policy is based. The national commitment is to achieve the SDGs and targets, to enable Santomeans to have a better future, in balance with their ecosystem. As part of its follow-up and evaluation mechanisms, the 2030 Agenda encourages member states to conduct regular, inclusive assessments of progress at the national and sub-national levels, led and conducted by the country. These national assessments serve as the basis for the regular assessments at the HLPF and should be voluntary, state-led, and undertaken by developed and developing countries.

It is in this context that, six years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, STP decided to conduct its first evaluation on the implementation of the SDGs, in order to identify the actions taken and progress achieved so far and to make the necessary adjustments so that the country can achieve, in 2030, the expected goals. To this end, STP presents its first VNR, aiming, on the one hand, to inform its citizens and national and international institutions on the actions taken, progress, and constraints in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and, on the other hand, to share with peers its experience and learn about others that will enable it to improve and accelerate the national implementation process of the 2030 Agenda, particularly the SDGs.

This report, in addition to the executive summary and introduction, is structured around 6 chapters: (1) National Context of SDG Implementation in STP; (2) Methodology and Process of Preparation of the VNR; (3) Policy and Enabling Environment for SDG Implementation in STP; (4) Progress Towards SDGs, (5) Means of Implementation; and (6) Conclusion and Next Steps.

4. NATIONAL CONTEXT

4.1 Characterization and sociodemographic situation

The RDSTP is a small island state, located in the Gulf of Guinea 300 km west of Gabon and 240 km from Central Africa. The country consists of two main islands, São Tomé Island and Príncipe Island, and several islets, of volcanic origin and rugged relief, occupying a total land area of 1,001 km², of which 859 km² for São Tomé Island and 142 km² for Príncipe Island, and crossed by the Equator. Near the southern tip of São Tomé Island is the Ilhéu das Rolas, where there is a marker that marks the location of the Equator Line.

STP is considered one of the smallest states in the world and the second smallest African country in the territory, after Seychelles. The country has two natural parks with a total surface area of 295 km², which represents about 30% of the archipelago's surface area. It has a coastal zone of about 260 km in length. Most of the coast is rocky, with very rugged relief, but numerous sandy bays form a whole system of beaches along the coast. The Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) is 160,000 km². STP has an abundant forest, whose characteristics vary depending on several factors, including relief, altitude, and, consequently, the characteristic microclimate of each region. The main forest ecosystems found on the islands of STP are divided into forest ecosystems of the low altitude region, which comprises mangroves, shrub, and herbaceous savannah, shade forest, and secondary forest, and forest ecosystems of the high altitude region, which comprises the high altitude forest between 1,000 and 1,800 m, the high altitude forest between 1,800 and 2,000 m, and the fog forest (above 1,800 m). In hydrological terms, the total capacity of the country is estimated at 2.1 million m³ of water per km², which is equivalent to 10,000 m³ per year, per inhabitant (Hidroconseil, 2011). The country has a humid tropical climate (with rainfall varying between 800-900 mm per year) that is divided into a rainy season (September-May) and a dry season, called Gravana, which extends from June to August. The average annual temperature is around 25°C, with a maximum of around 29°C and a minimum of around 21°C.

One of the five former Portuguese colonies, STP gained independence on July 12, 1975. In addition to the UN and the African Union (AU), STP is a member of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP). The official language is Portuguese, although Creole dialects such as Forro, Angolar Príncipe (linguiê), and Cape Verdean are widely used by the population. The country's currency is the Dobra (STD).

According to the 2012 Population Census, the population of STP was 178,739, with little gender difference (49.7% men and 50.3% women), with 67% of the total population living in urban areas and 33% in rural areas, and with a population density of 178.7 hab/km². The population growth rate is 2%, and the demographic projections of the National Institute of Statistics (INE) indicate a population of 219,078 in 2022 and about 258,184 inhabitants in 2030. The average life expectancy at birth in STP has been increasing as a direct result of the decrease in the mortality rate and currently stands at 70.4 years.

4.2 Political-administrative situation

The RDSTP is a parliamentary democracy, with a semi-presidential government regime, in which executive power is exercised by the Prime Minister, who heads the Government (composed of the Prime Minister, Ministers, and Secretaries of State), and the President of the Republic, as the highest magistrate of the Nation, is responsible for representing the State in international relations and for sharing some competencies in matters of diplomacy and national defense. The President of the Republic is elected for a 5-year term and can be reelected only once. Legislative power is exercised by the National Assembly, composed of 55 members, elected by universal suffrage for a 4-year term. The Prime Minister is proposed by the majority party and appointed by the President of the Republic. The last legislative (election of Deputies to the National Assembly) and presidential elections took place in 2018 and 2021, respectively. The Courts are also sovereign bodies (alongside the President of the Republic, the National Assembly, and the Government), and are responsible for ensuring the defense of the legally protected rights and interests of citizens, settling conflicts of public and private interests, and repressing violations of the laws.

At the administrative level, STP is divided into two territorial administrations, corresponding to the two main islands: the Island of São Tomé and the Island of Príncipe. The Island of Sao Tome is divided into six Districts (Caué, Lembá, Lobata, Mé-Zóchi, Água Grande, and Cantagalo) and has 171,415 inhabitants, representing more than 90% of the total population of the country. Príncipe Island, holding the status of an Autonomous Region, has a population of 7,324, which corresponds to less than 10% of the total population of STP (INE, 2012 Census). Consisting of a single District (Pagué), the RAP has an Assembly and a Regional Government.

4.3 Socioeconomic context

STP's economy, like that of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), is strongly threatened by the country's fragmented insularity, fragility, natural resource scarcity, and weak absorptive capacity. The country is strongly vulnerable to exogenous shocks and dependent on ODA, which finances more than 90% of public investment spending (on average 93.6% over 2012-2016). The economic sector is still vulnerable and not very diversified, and consists mainly of tourism, cocoa production, and export, which represents about 90% of total export revenues, thus constituting the main source of foreign exchange for the country. The services sector is the most dynamic and the one that generates the most employment, although insufficient to meet the growing demand for jobs. According to official data, the commerce sector is the one with the greatest weight in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and it is also in this sector that the private sector has the greatest expression. Tourism is the main component of service exports and, currently, its contribution as a source of foreign exchange is higher than that of product exports. However, tourism's contribution to the GDP is still small, despite the country's natural potential and cultural diversity.

According to the World Bank (WB, 2020), the Santomean GDP grew at an average rate of 4.5% between 2010 and 2018, but this growth has been decelerating since 2014. Economic growth was further affected in 2018 and 2019 because of fuel and energy shortages, delayed government payments to local suppliers, and shrinking domestic financing. The negative shocks that began in 2018 continued to affect the performance of the economy in 2019. The real GDP growth rate is estimated to have slowed to 2.4% in 2019, down from 2.7% in 2018. Agriculture and fisheries have been affected by weather shocks, agricultural pests, and fuel and energy shortages. STP is expected to suffer a severe economic crisis as a result of the drop in tourism due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to this pandemic, the country's GDP contracted by 9.5% in 2020, STP's first recession since 1990. However, the outlook is encouraging, as evidenced by the latest Outlook on the World Economy (IMF, 2021), which forecasts a 2.9% growth of the Santomean economy in 2022. STP ranks 135th out of 189 countries and territories in the 2020 Human Development Index (HDI), with its HDI having risen from 0.452 in 1990 to 0.625 in 2019. In terms of the business environment, STP ranked 170th out of 190 countries, with a score of 45.0, according to the Doing Business 2020 Index (WB).

Although STP has made some progress on human development indicators, its vulnerability to external shocks, heavy dependence on ODA, and the structural weakness of its economic fabric pose serious threats to its status as a middle-income country. To take steps to address these risks to the country's development, in 2014 the Santomean government joined the g7+, an association of, so-called, "fragile states" and transitioning to the next stage of development. The association approved a "New Deal for Engagement in the Fragile States," aimed at building a peaceful nation and ending poverty.

4.4 Environmental context

The environment has been a concern of the successive governments of the country, since the first years of its independence to date. STP has a very rich flora and fauna and occupies a prominent place in the sub-region in terms of the number of endemic species of fauna and flora. However, vulnerability to climate change, reduced rainfall and consequent reduction of river flows, coastal erosion and flooding, loss of biodiversity, pollution of rivers, streams and springs by chemicals, and increased coastal erosion are problems that concern the national authorities. The disorderly expansion of urban areas, deforestation and forest degradation, the use of areas with agricultural potential for other purposes and the consequent degradation of the soil are also part of this list of problems. Although almost 60% of the country's land area still contains relatively dense forest, illegal logging for fuel and for housing construction, and the demand for new farmland for agriculture and horticulture are potential threats to the forests. Firewood and charcoal are the main sources of fuel used for cooking by most of the San Tomean population, especially in rural communities..

Deforestation, associated with the significant use of firewood and coal as a source of energy, translates into a reduction in the capacity to absorb CO₂, as well as the loss of biodiversity, and contributes to the deregulation of the rainfall regime, thus accentuating the phenomenon of global warming. This warming, which has given rise to the phenomenon of climate change, has accelerated the country's vulnerability to natural phenomena, which can endanger the lives of the population and the social, economic, and development infrastructure in general.

The sea-level rise is already a reality in STP and some natural phenomena already endanger the communities living in coastal areas, having registered the destruction of houses, flooding of some communities, caused by intense rainfall, and the turbulence of sea waters, having destroyed several work materials of fishermen, including their boats. The aggression toward the environment continues in some parts of the country.

5. METHODOLOGY AND PROCESS FOR PREPARING THE VOLUNTEER NATIONAL REPORT

The preparation of the voluntary national assessment and the drafting of this first VNR was a participatory and inclusive process, coordinated by the Ministry of Planning, Finance and Blue Economy (MPFEA), through the National Directorate of Planning (DNP), in close technical collaboration with INE. To carry out the activities of the process, a Working Group was created, composed of representatives from various sectoral public institutions and other stakeholders. The Group had the permanent support of the United Nations System (UNS) Resident Coordination in the country and the technical assistance of an international consultant, who facilitated the process of preparing and drafting this VNR.

The exercise started with two launching workshops, the first directed to representatives of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and the second, which was co-chaired by the Minister of Planning, Finance and Blue Economy and the UNS Resident Coordinator in the country, had the participation of representatives of public institutions, the National Assembly, the private sector and other stakeholders.

The methodology adopted for the elaboration of the RNV took place in two phases: (1st) information and data collection; and (2nd) systematization, consultation, drafting, and validation of the RNV.

In the first phase, the following actions were carried out: (a) a review of available reference planning instruments, namely the Program of the XVII Constitutional Government (2018-2022) of the RDSTP, the Vision document "São Tomé Príncipe 2030 - the Country we want to build", the STP Transformation Agenda for horizon - 2030, the NDP 2017-2021, the STP PND 2020-2024, sectoral plans and strategies, evaluation reports, statistical reports, relevant legislation, TFP documents, and other existing relevant official documentation; (b) conducting an online survey targeting stakeholders (state and non-state entities) in the SDG implementation process in the country; (c) conducting interviews/meetings with key personnel from stakeholders, including PTF. The purpose of the interviews/meetings was to know, as comprehensively as possible, about the level of integration of the SDGs in the country's development programs and strategies, the dissemination of the SDGs among the population, the SDG implementation strategy adopted, including the mobilization and provision of necessary resources, the current status of SDG implementation (status of indicators), the institutional mechanism adopted for the coordination of SDG implementation, identify barriers or challenges in its implementation, and the next steps to accelerate the process.

In the second phase, the information and data collected were analyzed, processed, and systematized. Based on the UNDESA's Manual for the Preparation of Voluntary National Reviews, the draft of the VNR was drafted, which was the object of a first socialization to the interested parties, including the UNS Agencies in the country, which took place on February 14, 2022, a second socialization on March 24, involving all the sectors, and a third socialization that took place at the RAP, on April 21, where, on both occasions, observations, suggestions for improvement, and recommendations were made. The contributions received were analyzed and incorporated into a revised version of the RNV, which was submitted to the Government for approval.

6. POLICY AND ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SDGs IN STP

6.1 Legal framework for sustainable development

The Constitution of the RDSTP (approved in 1990 and revised in 2003), although it does not expressly mention the concept of sustainable development, contains provisions concerning key elements of sustainable development, namely: the preservation of the harmonious balance of nature and the environment, as one of the primary objectives of the State (Article 10(d)); the right to work (Article 42); the right to social protection; the right to health protection.

At the infra-constitutional level, the Environment Framework Law (Law no. 10/99, of April 15) established the legal framework for the protection of the environment and natural resources in STP. This law defined the bases of the environmental policy for the sustainable development of STP. The national legal framework also includes the following legislation: the Law on the Conservation of Fauna, Flora and Protected Areas - Law No. 11/99; the Forestry Law - Law No. 5/2001; the Laws on the creation of the Obô Natural Park of São Tomé and the National Park of Príncipe - Laws Nos. 6 and 7 of 2006; the Law on Fisheries and Fishery Resources - Law No. 9/2001; the Regulation on Environmental Impact Assessment - Decree-Law n° 37/99; the Law on the Extraction of Inerts in Coastal Areas and Rivers - Decree-Law n° 35/99; the Law on Hunting - Decree-Law n° 01/2016; among others, which create a legal framework for the sustainable management of the environment, both terrestrial and maritime.

At the international level, STP has ratified most of the UN conventions on the environment and related areas, namely: the three Rio conventions (the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change; the Convention on Biodiversity; and the Nations Convention to combat desertification in countries affected by severe drought); the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants; the Kyoto Protocol; the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety; the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer; the Montreal Protocol and its Amendments; the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora; the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat; the Convention establishing the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and its Resources; the Bonn Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals; the Basel Convention on the Transboundary Movement of Chemicals and Hazardous Products and their Disposal; the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure.

The Santomean state is also a signatory to the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 and its successor, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030), and the Paris Agreement (2015).

Therefore, STP's national legislation and international commitments in favor of the environment and sustainable development are significant, which demonstrates the concern of the San Tomean state with safeguarding the environment, the health of citizens, and sustainable development, in general.

6.2 Adoption of the SDGs

6.2.1 Political engagement, communication, and awareness

The RDSTP actively participated in the international dialogue on post-2015 global development and adhered to the decisions taken by the International Community in recent decades, under the auspices of the UN, which culminated with the adoption, in September 2015, of the 2030 Agenda. In this context, the country adopted: Agenda 21, at the UN Conference on Environment and Development, held in June 1992, in Rio de Janeiro; the Millennium Declaration, at the Millennium Summit, in September 2000, at UN headquarters, in New York; the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and Plan of Implementation, at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, in 2002; the "The Future We Want" document at the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in Rio de Janeiro in June 2012, in which Member States decided, among others, to launch a process to develop a set of SDGs to build on the MDGs and establish the HLPF on Sustainable Development; the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030; and the Addis Ababa Programme of Action.

Immediately after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, national ownership of the SDGs began with STP participating in international events and carrying out several national actions, most notably:

- STP's participation in the Conference of Small Island Developing African States and Madagascar (SIDSAM), held in December 2016 in Praia, Cape Verde, was attended by ministerial delegations from all other African SIDS: Cape Verde, Comoros, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Mauritius and Seychelles. At this conference, the SIDSAM Group was created, a platform for consultation, discussion of issues of common interest, promotion of ways and means to overcome barriers, and making effective the existing recommendations and commitments, at regional and global levels, with the island countries;
- STP's participation in the 4th World Forum on Local Development, under the theme "Local Economic Development as a means to achieve equality, equity, and cohesion within the framework of the SDGs", held in October 2017 in Praia City, Cape Verde;
- Presentation on the transition from MDGs to SDGs, promoted by the SNU in STP, in September 2015;
- Elaboration, through a consultation process with Santomeans, of the Vision "São Tomé and Príncipe 2030 - the Country we Want to Build", the Transformation Agenda on the Horizon - 2030 (in October 2015) and the NDP 2017-2021, which are aligned with the SDGs;
- Presentation sessions of the SDGs, promoted by the SNU in collaboration with national partners (University of São Tomé, Victor Sá Machado Health Institute, Federation of Non-Governmental Organizations - FONG of STP), in May 2016;
- Holding the Conference "The participation of Civil Society in the advocacy and implementation of the SDGs", in June 2016, promoted by SNU, in partnership with FONG of STP, and chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Communities of STP;
- Holding a Workshop to present the SDGs, in March 2018, with the participation of UN Agencies (UNFPA, UNICEF) and sectoral public institutions;
- Holding of the "Joint sensitization workshop for the production of the national SDG indicators and identification of the origins and fragility factors that condition the effectiveness of the development plans and the achievement of the SDGs", promoted by DNP and INE, in September 2018;
- Performance by INE, in 2018, of a diagnosis of the national indicators of the SDGs. The work allowed the survey of existing data in INE and other sectoral public institutions in the country; preparation, in 2019, of a Follow-up Plan of the SDG level II indicators, which allowed clarifying the methodology for calculating these indicators; in 2020, preparation of a Statistical Follow-up Report, where some SDG level I indicators were updated; in 2021, preparation of the Statistical Report on SDG level II indicators.

However, despite the various actions taken, there is a need to strengthen national ownership of the SDGs through the development and implementation of a communication and awareness-raising strategy extended to all government departments, institutions and public services (at all levels) and the general population.

6.2.2 Contextualization and adoption

National adoption of the SDGs also involves analyzing their degree of alignment with existing development planning documents. As an initial part of the SDG implementation process, several countries, with the support of UNDP, carried out this analysis, which allowed them to certify the level of coherence/degree of alignment of the SDGs with all existing planning documents, followed by the prioritization of SDG targets and their integration into the main planning documents. The analysis was done using the RIA tool, developed by UNDP. This tool has the advantage of revealing the strengths and weaknesses of strategic planning documents to identify their level of alignment with the SDGs, the strengths to be maintained when revising or updating these documents, and the gaps to be filled. Such analysis has not been done by STP, even though the main planning instruments are aligned with the SDGs. However, it is the country's intention to carry out such an analysis in order to objectively understand the level of alignment, for which it will rely on UNDP support.

Another key element in the national ownership of the 2030 Agenda is the prioritization of SDG targets for the national context. The prioritization exercise essentially aims at choosing the SDG targets and indicators that intersect with the national priorities and specificities of each UN member state.

The requirement that countries prioritize the SDGs and their targets find its foundation in the UN General Assembly Resolution (Resolution A/RES/70/1) that adopted the 2030 Agenda. Paragraph 55 of that Resolution states that: *"Sustainable development goals and targets are integrated and inseparable; they are by essence global and universally applicable, taking into account the realities, capacities and levels of development of different countries and with respect for national priorities and policies. **If the ideal goals are defined on a global scale, it is up to each State to define its own goals at the national level to meet global ambitions, taking into account its specificities. It is also up to each state to decide how these aspirations and goals should be taken into account by national planning mechanisms and national policies and strategies. It is important not to ignore the link that exists between sustainable development and other ongoing economic, social and environmental processes**".*

Thus, unlike the MDGs, one of the innovations introduced in the 2030 Agenda is that each country will choose, for each SDG, the priority targets, taking into account its context, capable of enabling it to achieve that goal, and on the basis of which the country will be evaluated. This approach is based on the differentiations between the signatory countries of the 2030 Agenda and the strong willingness of states to contextualize each goal, taking into account national priorities. In addition, it should be noted that the prioritization does not fall on the SDGs themselves, but rather on their targets.

In general, out of the 169 SDG goals, countries will only have to choose which goals to prioritize in the so-called "to prioritize" goals. The implementation targets that accompany each SDG, and those in SDG 17 on partnerships, are not subject to prioritization and are applicable as such. Moreover, the choice of goals as priorities is not made arbitrarily, and the various countries that have done so have used the prioritization methodology (prioritization matrix) developed by the UNDP.

As far as STP is concerned, of the 169 targets of the 17 SDGs, only 105 targets could be considered in the prioritization exercise, taking into account the 43 targets related to the means of implementation, the 19 targets related to partnerships, and the two targets (14.6 and 14.7) that do not apply to developing countries. The prioritized targets are then integrated into national development planning documents.

However, during the preparation of this national assessment, it was found that, unlike other UN member states that have done so, STP did not proceed to an effective prioritization of SDG targets, as recommended, having chosen 7 SDGs as a priority, but without the effective prioritization of corresponding targets. In this sense, one of STP's next steps, in the short term, in the SDG implementation process is to carry out an effective prioritization of SDG targets for the national context, in order to facilitate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the country and the preparation of the next national assessment.

6.3 Integration of the SDGs into national frameworks for planning

The international context in 2015 was marked by the adoption of the African Union (AU) Agenda 2063 and the UN Agenda 2030. On the other hand, the national context was characterized by the completion 2016 of the implementation of the II National Poverty Reduction Strategy (ENRP) 2012-2016 and the elaboration of the main strategic planning instruments for the development of STP in recent years, namely: the Transformation Agenda on the Horizon - 2030 (elaborated in October 2015); the NDP 2017-2021; and the NDPS of STP 2020-2024. In addition to these instruments, several sectoral and regional plans and strategies have been developed.

The Transformation Agenda on the Horizon - 2030 is underpinned by the Vision "Sao Tome and Principe 2030: the Country we want to build", through which the Government expressed the purpose and ambition to change the paradigm for a new development strategy and make STP a modern middle-income state capable of offering its citizens better-living conditions and dignified existence. This Agenda is aligned with the SDGs, with the prioritization of 7 SDGs, namely:

- SDG 1 – Eradicate poverty
- SDG 8 – Decent work and economic growth
- SDG 9 – Industry, innovation, and infrastructure
- SDG 13 - Action climate

- SDG 14 – Protect life below water
- SDG 15 – Protect life on land
- SDG 16 – Peace, justice, and strong institutions

The NDP, which replaced the ENRP, is the first five-year strategic plan for the implementation of STP's Transformation Agenda on Horizon 2030 for the period 2017 - 2021, and contributing toward the implementation of the SDGs in STP. It is also the first plan prepared under the Basic Law of the National Planning System (NPS), published in March 2017, which established the typology of planning instruments in STP (long-term strategies, plans, and complimentary planning instruments). Under this Law, the NDP is the highest hierarchical level plan of the NPS, directly binding all sectoral, regional, or complementary plans.

The NDP 2017 - 2021 has as its main objective "accelerated economic growth, reducing poverty and protecting the environment". Its specific objectives are as follows:

- Reduce poverty, in rural and coastal areas;
- Promote youth employment, through education and training;
- Strengthen the health system;
- Strengthen the public and administrative management tools;
- Promote transparency and accountability, regarding the delivery of the Public Administration;
- Strengthen internal security, public safety, and coastal security;
- Simplify legislation and improve the business environment;
- Implement infrastructure programs to support growth, and
- Ensure environmental protection and operator control.

The STP NDPS 2020-2024 was drafted in 2019, following the 2018 legislative elections, and is presented as the first operational plan for harmonizing, integrating, and implementing the STP Vision 2030, the STP 2030 Transformation Agenda, Agenda 2030, the Samoa Way and Agenda 2063 - "The Africa we want". It is structured around four strategic axes of intervention, namely:

1. Deepening the democratic rule of law;
2. Robust economic growth and accelerated job creation
3. Improved quality of health and social protection;
4. Foreign policy at the service of development.

After analyzing the degree of alignment of the SDGs with existing planning instruments and the prioritization of SDG targets according to national priorities, STP will mainstream them by revising existing planning instruments and developing new ones for the coming years until 2030.

6.4 Integration of the sustainable development dimensions (economic, social, and environmental)

The implementation of the 17 SDGs requires the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development in the design, planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of national planning instruments that contribute to the achievement of these SDGs. The NDP 2017-2021 and the STP NDP 2020-2024 have ensured the integration of these three dimensions.

The NDP 2017-2021 incorporated the three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social, and environmental) in three of its strategic objectives: "Strategic Objective 1: Economic domain - Improve the exploitation of the country's development potential, accelerate economic growth and strengthen integration into the regional and global economy", taking into account the economic dimension; the "Strategic Objective 2: Social domain - Accelerate and deepen reforms to significantly improve the human development index of Santomeans and make substantial progress towards achieving the SDGs", taking into

consideration of the social dimension; and the "Strategic Objective 5: Environment domain - Improve land management and environmental preservation", absorbing the environmental dimension.

In the economic domain, STP was committed, until 2021, to diversifying the economy and broadening its productive base, increasing production and diversification of food culture and expanding export culture, optimizing the exploitation of fishery resources, promoting the development of tourism and small manufacturing industries, and developing the services sector. In the social domain, the priorities are the strengthening of human capital and governance, the strengthening of the national health system, the promotion of youth, family consolidation and protection of vulnerable groups and in the valorization of national culture, support for the development of sports and inclusion of the diaspora. In the environmental field, the Government's ambition is to promote a healthy environment, the rational use of natural resources, and to protect the country from the risks of climate change.

The NDPS of STP 2020-2024 incorporated the economic and environmental dimensions in Strategic Objective 2 - Promote Inclusive Economic Growth and Environmental Sustainability; and the social dimension is assimilated by Strategic Objective 3 - Ensure Social Inclusion and Protection, Reduce Social Inequalities and Regional Asymmetries.

6.5 Leave no one behind

With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, UN member states have committed to ensuring that no one is left behind and to making efforts to reach those currently left behind first.

In recent years, STP has made remarkable progress in terms of human capital development, particularly in health and education indicators. However, despite the efforts that successive governments have made since independence, STP remains a country with deep social inequalities, especially in the most vulnerable, disadvantaged, or at-risk social strata.

The implementation of the SDGs in the country is an opportunity that cannot be postponed, as the government sees it, to prevent the people who have been left behind from being left behind but also to prevent new social groups from being left in this situation. To this end, the country has increased its efforts, through the adoption of legislative and policy measures to "leave no one behind".

The Constitution of the RDSTP states in article 44, number 1, that *"The State guarantees to every citizen, through the social security system, the right to protection in illness, disability, old age, widowhood, orphanhood and in other cases provided by law."* In 2004, the Social Protection Framework Law was published, which reorganized the social protection system in STP, having created three social security regimes, which constitute the permanent social protection device: (i) Citizenship Social Protection; (ii) Compulsory Social Protection; and (iii) Complementary Social Protection. Of these regimes, it is important to highlight the Social Protection of Citizenship, which covers the resident population that is in a situation of lack or reduction of subsistence means and cannot fully assume its protection, namely:

- People or families in extreme poverty;
- Women in disadvantaged situations; children and adolescents with special needs or at risk;
- Elderly people in a situation of physical or economic dependence and isolation;
- People with disabilities, at-risk or in a situation of social exclusion;
- Unemployed people in marginalized situations.

The Social Protection of Citizenship, which was regulated in 2018 by Decree-Law No. 16/2018, of November 30, takes effect through the provision of (i) risk benefits; (ii) social support benefits; and (iii) solidarity benefits. This scheme is administered by the ministry that oversees the sector (currently, the Ministry of Labor, Solidarity, Family, and Vocational Training), as well as other ministries, local authorities, and NGOs dedicated to social service. Being a non-contributory regime, the Social Protection of Citizenship is mainly funded by the State but also counts on donations from international cooperation.

As part of the implementation of the II ENRP 2012-2016, STP designed and executed the National Social Protection Policy and Strategy (2014), currently the main social protection program for Santomeans, especially for vulnerable social groups. Strategic Objective #1 of this Policy and Strategy is to *"Eliminate extreme poverty in São Tomé and Príncipe through conditional cash transfers for families in extreme poverty and actions that facilitate the formation of their human capital and their access to basic services, giving priority to families in extreme poverty with disabled or orphaned members and single-parent families with children, through a harmonized system of interventions of the social protection regime of citizenship"*. In this context, the

Directorate of Social Protection, Solidarity and Family of the Ministry of Labor, Solidarity, Family and Vocational Training, has been implementing with funding from the General State Budget (OGE) and partners, several projects targeted the most vulnerable social groups, including Support for the Social Integration of the Most Deprived Groups; Social Protection; Social Kitchen - Supply of a Hot Dish/Day to the most deprived elderly; Support for people with disabilities; Construction of social houses.

Concerning gender equality, STP has already elaborated, since 2007, three National Strategy for Gender Equality and Equity (ENIEG), the first for the period 2007-2012, the second for the period 2013-2017, and the third for the period 2019-2026. The III ENIEG, aligned with SDG 5, provides continuity to the vision established in the I and II ENIEG, which is to "Build with all development actors, a society where social justice, solidarity, equality, equity and respect for the rights of all citizens prevail, and are authentic values, deep and shared by men and women. The general objective of the III ENIEG is to "Guide in an integrated way the main lines of intervention for the promotion of gender equality and equity and respect for human rights." It establishes nine strategic axes of intervention, namely: Axis 1: Legislation and Policies; Axis 2: Leadership and Visibility: Women's Participation in Decision-making Positions; Axis 3: Education and Training; Axis 4: Economy: Productive Resources, Reproductive and Employment; Axis 5: Sexual and Reproductive Health and Reproductive Rights; Axis 6: Gender-Based Violence; Axis 7: Media and Information Technology; Axis 8: Environment and Climate Change; Axis 9: Institutional Strengthening for Gender Mainstreaming in Public Policies. The III INIEG addresses, in its specific objectives, issues of equal representation and gender violence, among others.

Regarding child protection, STP has, since 2016, a National Child Protection Policy (PNPC). It is an instrument of government action that aims to materialize international commitments made by the RDSTP, such as the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international instruments. It has as its general objective "to define the framework to carry out organized and concerted actions capable of preventing all forms of violence against children and considerably reducing its various manifestations." This Policy is structured around four axes: Axis 1 - Prevention; Axis 2

- Care of victims; Axis 3 - Judicial protection; and Axis 4 - Functionality of the National Child Protection System. The coordination of the PNPC is in charge of the National Commission for the Coordination of the Execution of the Child Protection Policy, created in 2018, and which integrates representatives from the legislative power, the judiciary, the ministries of security, justice, social action, education, the media, and NGOs.

6.6 National mechanisms

6.6.1 Institutional arrangement for coordinating the implementation of the SDGs

The successful implementation of the SDGs in the national context depends crucially on the existence and functioning of a strong and inclusive institutional governance arrangement.

The NDP 2017-2021, as the main national planning instrument and the first operational plan of the STP 2030 Transformation Agenda, established an institutional implementation mechanism, composed of several committees, namely: (i) an inter-ministerial follow-up committee; (ii) a consultation committee; (iii) a central technical follow-up committee, (iv) sectoral technical committees, and (v) local follow-up committees in the RAP and the Districts of Água Grande, Cantagalo, Cauê, Lembá, Lobata and Mé-Zóchi. However, in an audit of the state of preparation of the implementation of the SDGs, conducted in 2019, the Court of Auditors found that this institutional device has not been functioning, which is why the implementation of the NDP will not itself have been subject to effective monitoring and evaluation.

The functionality of the NDP institutional device or the existence of a specific institutional mechanism for the coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the SDGs enables the creation of a panoramic vision and facilitates the effective involvement and synergy of all stakeholders. In this sense, for the SDG implementation process to be effective and accelerated in the coming years, the Government of STP will create and operationalize, in the very short term, an institutional mechanism for the SDG implementation process, coordinated at the high political level.

At the country level, the UN Framework Plan for Development Assistance (UNDAF) for STP 2017-2021 provides for a Steering and Coordinating Committee, co-chaired by the Government of the RDSTP through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Communities (MNEC) and the Resident Coordinator of the UNS, and composed, on the national side, of Directors-General of key Ministries and representatives from civil society and the private sector. In addition, the UNDAF makes its monitoring and evaluation dependent mainly on the national systems that are under the purview of the MNEC and the DNP, through the Department of Monitoring and Evaluation, and the INE.

The UNDAF 2017-2021 is an expression of the UNS Country Team's commitment to support the people of STP in meeting the development aspirations set out in the STP 2030 Vision. This Framework Plan aligns SNU's development work with the national priorities set out in the Government Program (2014-2018) and the STP 2030 Transformation Agenda, while ensuring alignment with the country's prioritized SDGs. It provides for SNU support in 3 strategic areas for STP's development: (1) Strengthening Social Cohesion, through access to quality basic social services, aiming to reduce inequality and disparity among citizens and communities; (2) Strengthening the country's internal and external credibility; and (3) Promoting sustainable, inclusive and resilient growth.

6.6.2 Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms

The 2030 Agenda requires a wealth of accessible, reliable, and disaggregated data and statistics to track its effective implementation, with a view to achieving the ultimate purpose of 'leaving no one behind'. It encourages UN Member States to disaggregate data in order to help determine who benefits from public policies and which social groups are not covered, which in turn may require targeted policies and programs.

A list of global indicators to measure the degree of achievement of the SDG targets was adopted by the 48th Session of the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) in March 2017, following thorough preparation led by the Inter-Agency Expert Group on SDG indicators (IAEG-SDGs). This list was adopted in July of the same year by the UN General Assembly, which recognized the importance of having robust statistical frameworks for monitoring the SDGs and ensuring the central role of NSAs in the statistical monitoring of the 2030 Agenda. The global list of indicators is not binding, and it is therefore up to each country to adopt it or, alternatively, to identify a narrower or more comprehensive set of indicators suitable for monitoring the targets considered relevant at national level (priority targets).

The SDG progress tracking framework currently comprises 247 global indicators (231 unique)¹, categorized into *tiers according to data availability and level of methodological development*. According to the most recent *tiers* classification, dated 29 March 2021, there are 130 *tier I* indicators, 97 *tier II* indicators and 4 indicators of multiple *tiers*. The current number of indicators differs from the initial framework (244 indicators, 231 unique)² as a result of subsequent annual reviews (the most recent one approved by the 52nd Session of the UNSC), as well as the adoption by the 51st Session of the UNSC in March 2020 of the first comprehensive revision of the list of SDG indicators proposed by the IAEG-SDGs, according to which there are no longer any *tier III* indicators (no methodology and no data available). The second comprehensive review is planned for 2025.

In 2018, INE, as the main national statistical authority, made a diagnosis of national SDG indicators. In a universe of 239 global indicators (initial list), 115 indicators were being produced by INE and sectoral institutions. Of these, 42 were produced by INE, which corresponds to 18% of the global indicators, and the remaining 73 were produced by other national entities. Of these 115 indicators produced, 38% are at level I and 12% at level II. In 2019 an update was made, using information from the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS, 2019), the Household Budget Survey (IOF, 2017) and administrative data produced by INE and some sectoral institutions, which resulted in the availability of 139 indicators, of which 77 were level I and 62 level II. INE, also, produced two statistical reports, one concerning the availability of level I indicators (2020) and another of level II indicators (2021).

For the elaboration of this VNR, of the total of 247 global indicators, national data is available to measure 120, which corresponds to 48.6% of the total. The following Figure illustrates the degree (%) of implementation of the SDGs by STP. For more details, see Table 17.3 and annex which contains the list of indicators produced and not available for each SDG.

¹ https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/Global%20Indicator%20Framework%20after%202021%20refinement_Eng.pdf

² <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/indicators-list/>

Figure 1: Diagram - Degree of implementation of SDGs by STP by 2020



However, for effective monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the SDGs in accordance with national priorities, STP will establish a national framework of indicators to measure the priority targets, and which will be considered (domestication) in the statistical production chain of the NSS. To this end, the NSS needs to be strengthened in terms of human, financial and material resources.

In this regard, it should be noted that STP has developed a National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) for the period 2018-2021, which adopted as a Vision for the development of the NSS in the horizon 2021 "To build a national statistical system capable of producing and disseminating reliable statistics to meet the needs of users and policy, and national development programs". The NSDS has established four priority strategic axes, namely: Axis 1: Improving the institutional and organizational framework of the NSS; Axis 2: Strengthening human, material, and financial resources; Axis 3: Improving statistical production; and Axis 4: Promoting dissemination, archiving, communication, and use of statistics. The total budget of NSDS is about €6.973 million, with 18% financed by the Santomean state, 63.3% by PTFs and 18.3% to be mobilized (NSDS, 2018-2021). This is in line with the UN recommendation on capacity building and technical assistance, especially for African countries, least developed countries, developing countries, non-coastal countries, SIDS, countries in conflict or post-conflict situations and other particular situations, so that states are able to provide necessary data. Continued capacity building of the NSS, through the development and implementation of a new NSDS, in the medium term, is aimed at ensuring that the NSS faces the dual challenge of (1) strengthen statistical production focused on SDGs, in terms of quantity, quality, frequency, disaggregation, dissemination and accessibility, and (2) create a national statistical platform on SDGs, as a unique source of statistical information on sustainable development in the country.

6.7 Structural issues and challenges of STP in the context of sustainable development

STP, like other SIDS, faces structural issues that have conditioned its development in all dimensions (economic, social, environmental), so the implementation of the SDGs has been, and will continue to be, a major challenge for all development actors, particularly the Government. In STP, the vulnerabilities, caused mainly by insularity, are the smallness of the territory, the increase in population, limited natural resources, external economic and financial shocks, excessive dependence on import trade of various products and equipment, high costs of communication, energy and transport, all aggravated by the country's difficulties in creating economies of scale.

Regarding the relationship between insularity and climate change, although it accounts for less than 1% of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, STP is one of the most vulnerable to its adverse effects.³

In the NDP 2017-2021 the main obstacles constraining the development of STP have been identified:

- *The first significant obstacle lies in the limited productive base of the country's economy.* This results in the country facing diseconomies of scale, which leads to high import costs. Since the majority of goods (such as basic necessities) are imported, this problem has consequences for the cost of living of Santomeans and thus for the achievement of SDG 1.
- *The second obstacle is due to the weak capacities of the Santomean public administration, which influences the quality of economic and social development policy-making, slows down its pace of implementation and does not allow for its monitoring and evaluation; it also affects the business environment.*
- *Insufficient infrastructure to support growth (energy, roads, ports, airports, water), due to the low volume of investment, is a third significant obstacle. It also increases the cost of production factors, harms public finances, businesses and households and deters potential investors.*
- *Weak capital stock accumulation is another significant barrier to the development of the economy, investment in own resources is almost non-existent, while external financing is increasingly limited by the international economic crisis and the multiplication of instability in the world. As a result, classic ODA is very low in view of the emergency situation. Moreover, the predominance of the largely informal and poorly capitalized services sector exacerbates this weak capital accumulation.*

The weakness of the private sector in Sao Tome and Principe is another structural issue that makes the implementation of the SDGs almost entirely government-led. To reverse this scenario, the business environment in STP should be subject to profound improvement in order to allow the sector to grow and improve its contribution to the implementation of the SDGs in the country.

As for challenges, in assessment to STP's public finance management (PEFA, 2019), the following (economic) challenges of the Government were identified, namely:

- *Strong imbalances and slower growth of the economy;*
- *Need and extensive structural reforms in the energy and tourism sectors to stimulate growth potential;*
- *Finalization of discussions on economic policies and reforms that could be supported by a new agreement with the IMF;*
- *Decline in the price of cocoa and its production;*
- *Slowdown in the growth of tourism;*
- *Decrease in donations and external credits/loans;*
- *Energy crisis that impacted economic growth;*
- *Decrease in external debt, offset by internal debt (internal loans and arrears);*
- *Macroeconomic instability, accentuated by current account deficits and trade deficits.*

³ STP MPFEA. *Sao Tome and Principe Country Program for the Green Climate Fund.* October 2019.

4. PROGRESS AGAINST THE SDG

This chapter presents the situation and trends of STP to achieve the SDGs. As the SDG targets were not subject of prioritization for the national context, which would result in the establishment of a national framework of indicators for measuring these targets, the analysis on each SDG, in this first VNR, was made using the available statistical data that respond to the SDG target indicators. We used, essentially, national statistical data produced after the adoption of the Agenda, but when these were not available, we also used previous data for a better perspective of analysis. And, in the absence of national data, global databases and other sources recognized and endorsed by the country were used.



SDG 1



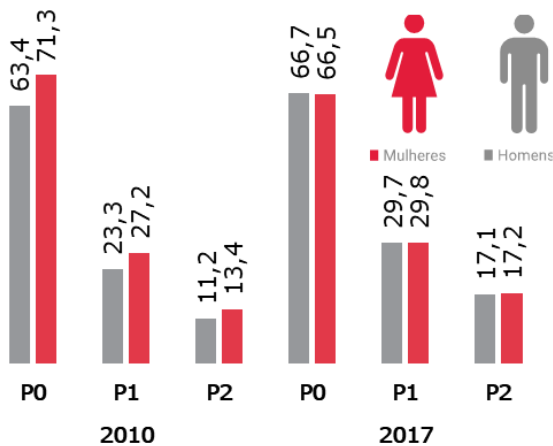
ACABAR COM A POBREZA EM TODAS A SUAS FORMAS, EM TODOS OS LUGARES

The eradication of poverty in STP is part of the agenda of its successive governments, through the implementation of programs and actions to improve household access to income. The most recent data on poverty (INE, IOF 2017), with reference to US\$ 1.90 day, which is the line used for international comparability purposes, proves that there have been improvements in this indicator, compared to 2010 data. In this period, the poverty level in STP, measured by the proportion of the population whose equivalent income is below the international poverty line (defined as US\$1.90 per day), reduced from 35.6% to 25.9%, with no significant differences by gender, despite a slight incidence in the female layer (WB Estimates and INE 2021).

However, despite this reduction, about a quarter of the country's population still lives on less than USD 1.90 per day, which shows that the level of economic growth has not been sufficient to generate employment and well-being for the majority of the population. Families with more children are the most affected by poverty. In 2017, about 30% of children, under the age of 15, lived in families with less than USD 1.90 per person /day and almost half (46%) were in the poorest 40% of the population. In STP, poverty affects more the population living in urban areas (26.8%) than those living in rural areas (24.4%).

In terms of the national dimensions for calculating poverty, that is, the cost of basic necessities, according to official data (INE, IOF 2010), in 2010, two thirds of the country's population (66.2%) was poor (Graph 1.1), that is, they had an annual per capita expenditure of 10,975,730 Dobras, which represented less than 30 Dobras per capita/day. In 2017, the incidence of poverty (66.7%) practically did not change in relation to 2010, notwithstanding a registered increase in annual per capita expenditure (19,017,000 Dobras), of about 52.10 Dobras per capita/day. With regard to gender, the data show that in 2017 poverty affected men and women in almost the same proportion, a situation very different from that registered in 2010, in which poverty had a greater incidence among women (71% against 63% of men).

Graph 1.1: Poverty index (P0, P1, P2), by gender 2010 - 2017



Fonte: IOF 2010 e 2017

Poverty affects mainly extended families, single parent households, both nuclear and extended, consisting mostly of women, children and the elderly. Poverty is also influenced by employment status, i.e., the highest levels of poverty in the country are found in the categories of discouraged unemployed (72.9%) and inactive (68.50%) (Table 1.1, in annex). It is also noted that poverty also varies according to socio-economic groups, with the poorest concentrated in the private agricultural sector (69.8%). The poverty *gap* for 20% of the poorest families worsened between 2010 and 2017, i.e., it almost doubled, from 62% to 76.1% and from 40.2% to 50.3%, for the 40% poorest families. Extreme poverty affects 47% of the country's population, which raises concern on food security issues in the country.

As already mentioned, people experiencing poverty live mostly in large families and are therefore associated with high

situations of dependency⁴, which puts great pressure on the productive population. Poor families have, on average, 1.97 children between the ages of 0 and 14 under their dependency, a much higher level than non-poor families (1.07 children) (Table 1.2, in the annex).

In order to minimize the effects of poverty, which still affects a large section of the population, the Government adopted, as a policy measure, the social protection system, and, through the Social Protection of Citizenship scheme, benefits 2,500 households with poor elderly people, 5,000 poor households with members of working age, and a public works program. However, it is recognized that this system has little coverage in terms of beneficiaries, given the needs of the country, despite the efforts that have been made in terms of public resources, with expenditure for the social protection sector increasing from 0.65% of GDP in 2018 to 1.3% of GDP in 2020.

Social transfers or benefits are still low in the country. According to the MICS 2019 data, they were received by only 7% of members living in households. On the other hand, in 2017, only 4,269 individuals benefited from social security, with the highest levels of coverage found in Água Grande (25.6% %) and Mé-Zochi Districts (17.4%) and, at the opposite end, in Caué District, with only 6.6% (DPSS).

There is some improvement at the level of the comfort goods of the Santomean population, especially with regard to access to water. According to INE (MICS, 2019), about 89% of Santomean families used basic improved water services, being 39.8% on site and 49.4% travelling up to 30 minutes to access this precious liquid (Table 1.3, in annex). However, almost half of the families use fountains as the main source of water for consumption (48.9%) (Table 1.4, in annex). Hygiene is an important requirement for health, especially for children, as it prevents many diseases, such as diarrhea.

This is an area in which the country needs improvement, as only about half of households (53.9%) had handwashing facilities with the availability of water and soap, 57% in urban areas and 47% in rural areas (INE, MICS 2019).

In terms of sanitation, only half of the country's population used an improved sanitation facility⁵, with 16.5% connected to an improved ventilated latrine. The situation is slightly better in urban areas (52.6%). Regarding the regions, the best levels, in terms of existence of improved sanitation facilities, were found in the district of Água Grande and the ARP, with 63% and 58.3%, respectively. In opposite direction is found the Northwest and Southeast Regions with 38.5% and 40.8%.

Another important aspect in terms of sanitation, which the authorities have worked to eradicate, is the problem of open defecation. Still, 45.5 per cent of the country's population still adopts this practice, which has greater incidence in rural areas (51.1 per cent). The Northwest and Southeast regions are the most affected by this practice, which jeopardizes the quality of the environment and public health (Table 1.5, in annex).

Other important dimensions also contribute to the level of comfort of families, such as electricity, fuel, and internet, among others. Around one fifth of the families do not have electricity at home; the overwhelming majority of the households (95%) use polluting fuels to prepare the food (other fuels). More than half of the households (55.5%) do not have access to the internet, (Table 1.6, in annex).

As for the number of people killed, missing persons and those directly affected by disasters, there has been a positive evolution, rising from 0.18 per 1,000 inhabitants in 2017 to 0.28 in 2019, according to data from the National Civil Protection and Fire Service (SNPCB).

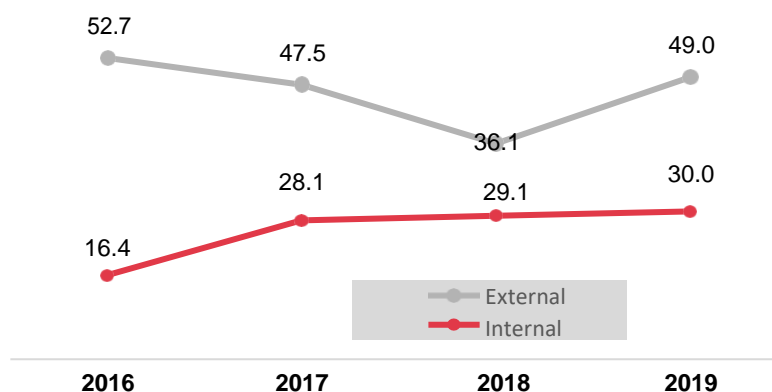
In order to increase the resilience of the poorest and most vulnerable and reduce their exposure and vulnerabilities to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social, and environmental shocks and disasters (see SDG 13), STP has adopted and implemented its disaster risk reduction strategy, aligned with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. The Government of the ARP has also drafted the Sustainable Development Plan - "Princípio 2030", which includes actions aimed at climate change resilience.

The Government of STP is very sensitive to the problem of poverty in the country, precisely because of this, it has paid attention to poverty reduction programs, having allocated to them, in 2016, more than half of the external resources (53%) and about 16% of the internal resources (GSB and SAFE). Internal resources have been increasing and reached their maximum value in 2019. The trajectory of resources from external sources has been in the opposite direction, having reversed the trend in 2018, reaching the maximum value (49%) in 2019, as illustrated in the following graph.

⁴ Ratio of those who are not in the labour force, i.e., children up to age 14 and aged 65 and older) to those who are usually in the labour force (15 and 64).

⁵ Facility that hygienically separates human excreta from human contact. Improved sanitation facilities include flushing or emptying water into a piped sewer system, septic tanks or pit latrines; ventilated improved pit latrines, pit latrines with slabs and composting toilets.

Graph 1.2: Percentage of resources allocated by the Government through the GBS to anti-poverty programs, 2016 - 2019



Source: SAFE and GSB

As for the proportion of executed expenditure, allocated to essential services with impacts on poverty levels (education, health and social protection), the GSB data show that most of the current expenditure has been on the education sector, absorbing about a quarter (26%) in 2015, having decreased to a fifth in 2018. This is followed by the health sector with 14% in 2015, maintaining practically the same level in 2018. In terms of current expenditure on social protection, it is not very significant, as illustrated in the following table. The same trend is maintained with regard to capital expenditure, with health and education being the sectors that received the largest amounts. The proportion of expenditure allocated to social protection was small, reaching 0,06% of current expenditure and 1,56% of capital expenditure in 2018.

Table 1.7: Proportion (%) of executed expenditure, allocated to essential services (education, health and social protection): Current Expenditure and Capital Expenditure, 2015 - 2020

Expenditure	Services	2015	2016	2017	2018
Current Expenditure	Social protection	0,73	0,59	0,66	0,06
	Education	25,7	27,19	29,1	20,6
	Health	13,59	14,51	16,88	13,64
Capital expenditure	Social protection	2,39	2,51	1,28	1,56
	Education	8,81	14,9	5,26	7,72
	Health	12,89	12,34	8,94	10,56

Source: SAFE and GSB

Despite the still existing levels of poverty, the country has strategically invested in education and health, increasing the standard of living of its population, which has contributed to remarkable human development. In 2010, STP was classified as a middle-income country, and according to the HDI it has increased from 0.452 in 1990 to 0.625 in 2019, with life expectancy increasing by 12,2 years over this period.

SDG 2



ACABAR COM A FOME, ALCANÇAR A SEGURANÇA ALIMENTAR E MELHORIA DA NUTRIÇÃO E PROMOVER A AGRICULTURA SUSTENTÁVEL

Food and nutritional security, that is, regular and permanent access to quality food in sufficient quantity without compromising access to other essential needs, is fundamental to the health and well-being of the population, and is a basic human right, according to FAO.

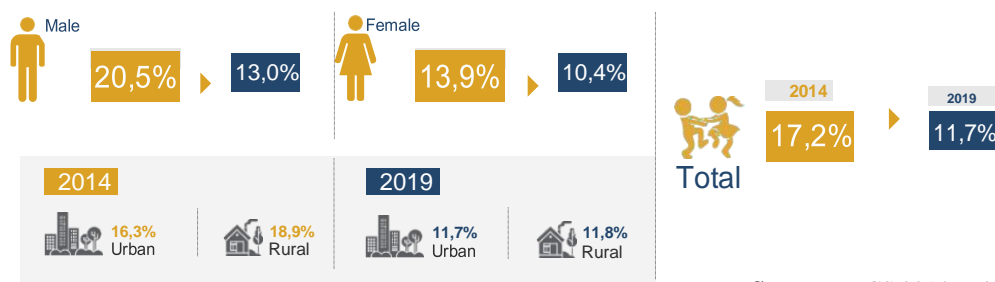
According to the Third National Communication on Climate Change, 2018, about 36,000 people were food insecure in the country, of which 16,000 (10.2% of households) have low food consumption and 20,000 people have limited food consumption⁶. The country has made progress in terms of child nutrition (children under 5), but recent data shows that there are still considerable challenges. Precisely because of this, the Government has been working with its partners to ensure that Santomeans have access to essential foods, so that there is no hunger and food insecurity and there are better levels of nutrition by 2030. To this end, various strategies and programs have been implemented to improve the increase in sustainable agricultural production and access to food diversity, with emphasis on:

- Regional Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition / Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries;
- Agricultural Policy Charter for Rural Development;
- National Program for Food Security and Nutrition 2012-2023;
- National Food Health Security Strategy 2017-2022;
- National Social Protection Policy and Strategy, 2014.

Regarding the goal of increasing sustainable agricultural production, aimed at improving the food and nutritional security of the population, the document entitled, Strategic Review "Zero Hunger" - Horizon 2030, with the support of the World Food Program (WFP), was prepared with a view to assessing and defining actions to accelerate the implementation of this SDG, which proposes as a strategic guideline "End hunger, ensure food security, improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture."

Nutritional security is assessed through anthropometric measures and food consumption, in which the occurrence of malnutrition in childhood is diagnosed based on stunting. In 2014, the prevalence of stunting (moderate and severe), which is measured by the height-for-age ratio, in children under 5 years of age was 17.2% at the country level, with 20.5% in male children and 13.9% in female children.

Figure 2.1: Percentage of children under 5 years, by nutritional status, according to the prevalence of stunting (moderate and severe), by means of residence and sex, 2014 - 2019



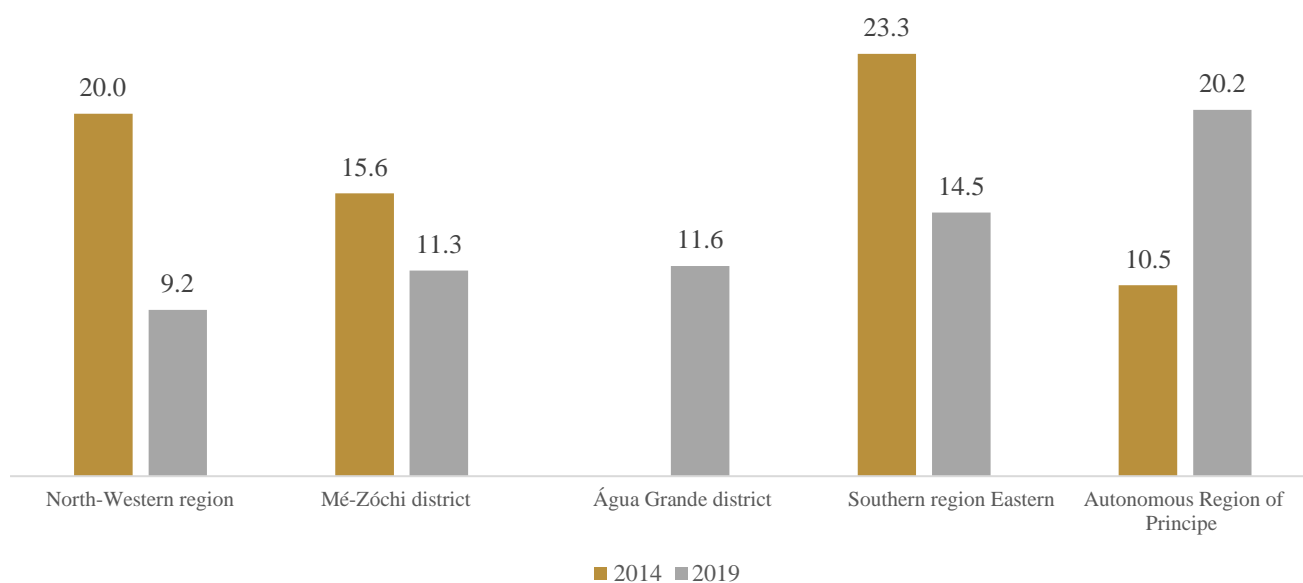
Source: MICS 2014 and 2019

⁶ Third National Communication on Climate Change, 2018.

In 2019, there were considerable improvements in this indicator, setting it at 11.7%, with a higher incidence in male children (13%, against 10.4% in females). Regarding regional location, the country also achieved important gains from 2014 to 2019, being more accentuated in rural areas, as shown in the following Graph.

At the level of regions, there is a decrease in levels of undernutrition in all regions, with the exception of ARP, where there was a doubling of levels between 2014 and 2019 (MICS, 2014 and 2019).

Figure 2.2: Percentage of children under 5 years of age, by nutritional status according to the prevalence of stunting (moderate and severe), by region, 2014 - 2019

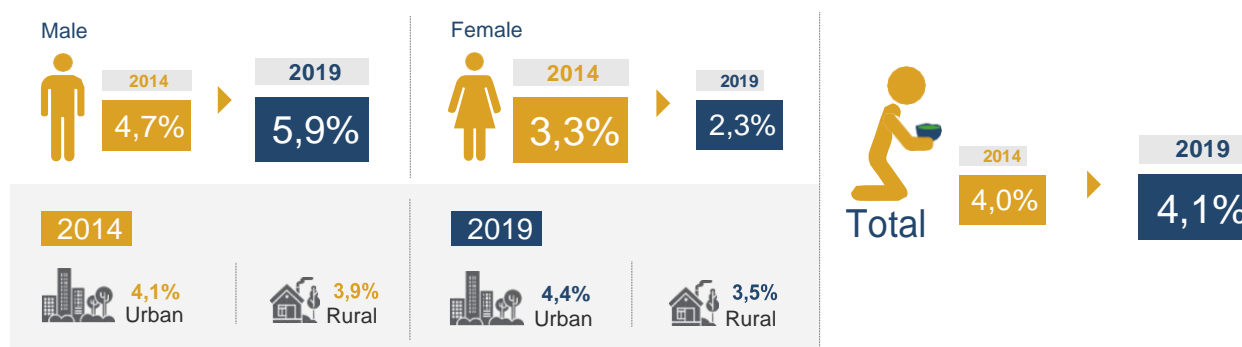


Source: MICS 2014 and 2019

The MICS data shows that the prevalence of undernutrition is conditioned by the level of well-being, i.e. the poorer the household, the higher the prevalence of stunting.

As for the nutritional situation, it is relatively good and the Santomean State has been making efforts to improve it further. The MICS 2019 presents two indicators related to weight-for-height: (1) **Prevalence of weight loss (moderate and severe) in children under 5 years of age**, which remained at about 4% between 2014 and 2019. In contrast to girls (2.3%), the prevalence of weight loss in boys worsened in 2019, reaching a rate of 5.9%, slightly higher in urban settings.

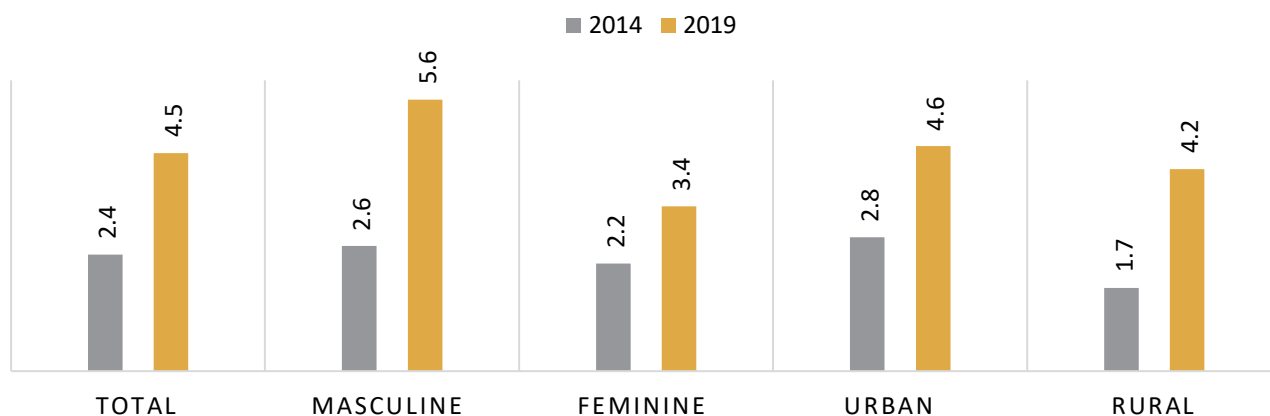
Graph 2.3: Prevalence (%) of weight loss (moderate and severe), 2014 - 2019



Source: MICS 2014 and 2019

(1) **Overweight in children under 5 years of age** - although levels are not worrying, there has been a worsening of prevalence in 2019 compared to 2014, rising from 2.4% to 4.5%. Boys are most affected by obesity in 2019, with higher prevalence in families with higher comfort levels.

Graph 2.4: Overweight prevalence (%) %, 2014 - 2019



Source: MICS 2014 and 2019

As for the prevalence of anemia in women aged 15-49 years, according to World Health Organization (WHO) data⁷, the situation is worrying in STP. The proportion of women aged 15 to 49 with anemia has shifted from 45% in 2015 to 44.2% in 2019. According to the same source, the prevalence of anemia remained almost at the same level, averaging 44% per year, and increased to about 51% for pregnant women between 2015 and 2019.

With regard to the prevalence of underweight (weight-for-age) in children under 5 years of age, there were improvements between 2014 and 2019, with the prevalence of underweight (moderate and severe) increasing from 8.8% to about 5%.

In order to contribute to the good physical and intellectual development of students, the Santomean Government, through the National School Food and Health Program, took responsibility in 2016 for feeding children in the country's public schools, with a view to supplementing the nutritional needs of students and improving healthy eating habits during their stay at school.

The country does not have all the data to quantify the proportion of agricultural area where productive and sustainable agriculture is practiced. However, aware of the problem of nutrition in the country, the successive governments of STP have been implementing policies that contribute to the availability of food of adequate nutritional quality, based on sustainable agricultural production, as shown in Table 2.1. According to the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development, between 2017 and 2021, STP increased the national agricultural area and the national agricultural area in which agriculture is sustainable by 68.6% and 37%, respectively. The proportion of agricultural area where productive and sustainable agriculture is practiced represented 44% in 2017 and decreased to 36% in 2021.

Table 2.1: Agricultural area and proportion in which productive and sustainable agriculture is practiced, 2017 - 2021

Agricultural area (ha)	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
National Agricultural Area	14302	15952,8	17166,6	20343,9	24109,3
National agricultural area where agriculture is sustainable	6336,3	6531,7	6455,7	7486,1	8681
Proportion of agricultural area where it is practiced productive agriculture is sustainable	44,0%	41,0%	38,0%	37,0%	36,0%

Source: Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development, 2021

As noted above, agriculture is an important sector for STP, as is evident from the share of its value added in GDP which between 2015 and 2019 averaged 11% (Table 2.2.). As for the levels of agricultural production oriented for government spending, they have been small, at around 0.4%, and the share of agriculture in government expenditure averaged around 4% in the same period.

⁷ <https://www.who.int/data/gho/>

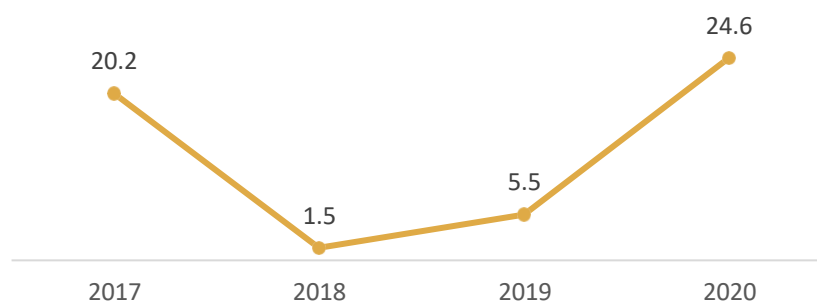
Table 2.2: Agricultural targeting index for public expenditure, 2015 - 2019

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Agriculture added value in the GDP (%)	12,0	11,4	10,9	11,1	12,22
Index of agricultural orientation to government spending	0,4	0,35	0,4	0,4	0,36
Agriculture's share of government expenditure (%)	4,3	4,02	4,6	4,2	4,45

Source: Global SDG Database: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/UNSDG/countryprofiles>

Furthermore, the agricultural sector has played an important role in the Government's strategy to combat poverty and ensure food security, for which it has received important support from various partners. According to the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development (MAPDR), the total official flows (ODA and other flows) to the agricultural sector evolved from 20.2 million Euros in 2017 to 24.6 million in 2020. This is a significant increase if we take into account the levels recorded in 2018, graph, below.

Chart 2.5: Total official flows to the agricultural sector (in Millions of Euros), 2017 - 2020



Source: MAPDR, 2021

As for the prices of food products, the Government has been working to control their volatility, considering the pressure they exert on the budgets of families, especially the most vulnerable. As can be seen from the Food Price Anomalies Indicator (IFPA), per the Consumer Food Price Index, there have been improvements, with this indicator having evolved from an abnormal situation in 2015, with an IFPA ≥ 1 , concretely 1.2, to moderately high in 2019, with an IFPA equal to 0.6⁸.

⁸ FAOSTAT Data / Consumer Price Indices: <http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/CP>

SDG 3



ASSEGURAR UMA VIDA SAUDÁVEL E PROMOVER O BEM-ESTAR PARA TODOS, EM TODAS AS IDADES

Health is a fundamental human right for the development of societal capabilities. It is influenced by the environment and the conditions in which people live, from food to education, employment and income, housing, among others.

According to the Constitution of the DRSTP, all Santomeans have the right to health protection and have the duty to defend it. The State is responsible for promoting Public Health, which has as its objective the physical and mental well-being of the populations and their balanced insertion in the socio-ecological environment in which they live, as evidenced by the National Health System (article 50). In order to comply with the constitutional mandate, the Government approved legislation (Basic Health Law - Law no. 09/2018, June 6) to regulate the health sector, through which it established the National Health Service (SNS) - "*an ordered and hierarchical set of all the organizational structures of the public health sector that contribute to the provision of health care, operating under the supervision or tutelage of the Minister responsible for the health sector*". The SNS is characterized by: (a) being universal in terms of the population covered; (b) providing, in an integrated manner, global care or guaranteeing its provision; (c) being partially free of charge for users, taking into account the economic and social conditions of citizens; (d) guaranteeing equity of access for users, in order to mitigate the effects of economic, geographical and any other inequalities in access to care; (e) being organized by district and region and having a decentralized and participated management.

To implement the policy for the sector, the Government approved the National Health Development Plan 2017-2021, aligned with this SDG, under the slogan "More health and more wealth". Its implementation was aimed at "*improving the state of health in Sao Tome and Principe, with equitable national coverage, making it the reference for excellence in the sub-region of the Gulf of Guinea in the 2030 target*".

STP has made remarkable gains in health. For example, it has excellent coverage in antenatal care, which has led to a decrease in maternal mortality rates in the country. The proportion of births assisted by a health professional increased from 92.5% in 2014 to 96.8% in 2019 (Table 3.1, in annex). In the same period, the prenatal care coverage rate at the first consultation increased from 97.5% to 98.1%. In 2019, about 98% of women aged 15-49 years received antenatal care at least once from qualified health personnel.

Data from statistical operations conducted in the country (IDS 2009, MICS 2014), as well as administrative data, show a consistent decrease in maternal mortality in STP, which went from 100 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2009 to 74 in 2014 (Table 3.2, annexed). These gains are the result of policy measures undertaken by successive governments, namely the provision of services and measures to strengthen the health system, increase in the number of assisted deliveries, audits of maternal deaths, improvement of the referral chain up to the community level. Also, functional emergency obstetric care facilities have been created and various campaigns have been conducted to sensitize women to go to the health centers nearest their area of residence for follow-up. In addition, there has been a strong focus on raising women's awareness so as to encourage them to have their deliveries in a health facility, and that they are assisted by a qualified health professional.

Despite these good results obtained in maternal and neonatal mortality, where the country is close to achieving the global target, efforts continue to be made to maximize gains by improving health conditions, such as infrastructure, equipment and the expansion in terms of access, improving quality, including the services and human resources provided, and increasing the number of qualified professionals. Human resources in the health sector are the most important assets for a functional health system and as such, the country has implemented policy measures to improve them (human resources) and thus ensure the health well-being of the population. One of these measures was the creation of the Higher School of Nursing, which has contributed to training nurses to meet the needs in terms of national coverage. As for doctors, the country has essentially resorted to foreign universities, with which it has cooperation, to train health professionals. However, many of these professionals, after their academic training, do not return to the country, preferring to work abroad, where the conditions are more attractive. Therefore, the Government intends to create mechanisms and incentives so that young professionals return to the country after their training, in order to give their contribution to this important sector.

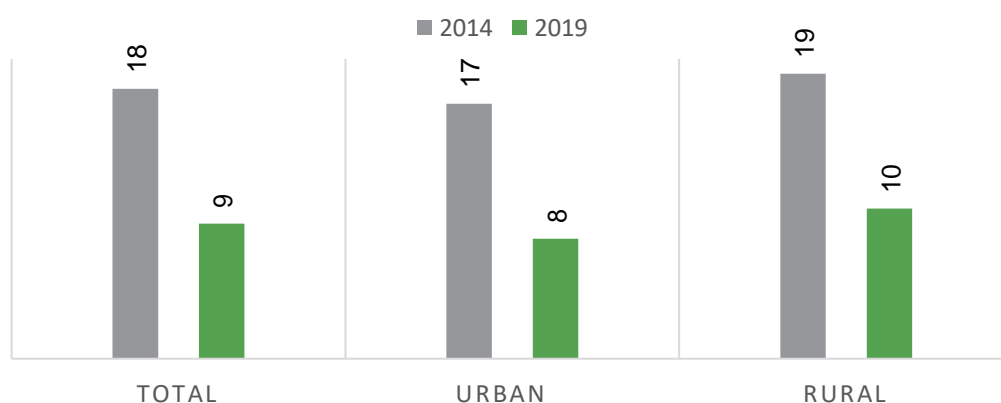
It is noteworthy that in 2019, only about 3% of deliveries in STP were not attended by a skilled health worker (INE, MICS 2014 and 2019), thus exceeding the target set by WHO (World Health Report, 2006) that *achieving 80% coverage of skilled care requires a threshold of 2.28 skilled medical personnel (doctors, nurses and midwives) per 1,000 population*. Increasing the proportion of births that are attended in health facilities is an important factor in reducing health risks for mother and child. Adequate medical

attention and hygienic conditions during childbirth can reduce the risks of complications and infections, which can cause morbidity and mortality for the mother or the baby. In 2014, about 91% of births in STP were carried out in a health structure, having evolved to 95% in 2019. In terms of regions, the evolution recorded in the Southeast Region stands out, having increased from 76.8% in 2014 to 94.8% in 2019.

Age and level of education are the factors that influence women to seek a health structure for delivery. In 2014, the lowest levels of births made in a health structure were found in the most advanced ages (35 to 49 years), with about 85.9%, rising to 94.2% in 2019, an increase of about 10 percentage points, which may be a result of the awareness-raising work being done (Table 3.3, in annex).

The neonatal mortality rates in STP have reduced significantly in recent years, thanks to the increased coverage of maternal and child services. According to data from the MoH, 97.2% of pregnant women attended at least one antenatal care consultation. As a consequence, the neonatal mortality rate has halved in the period between 2014 and 2019, from 18 per 1,000 live births to 9 per 1,000.

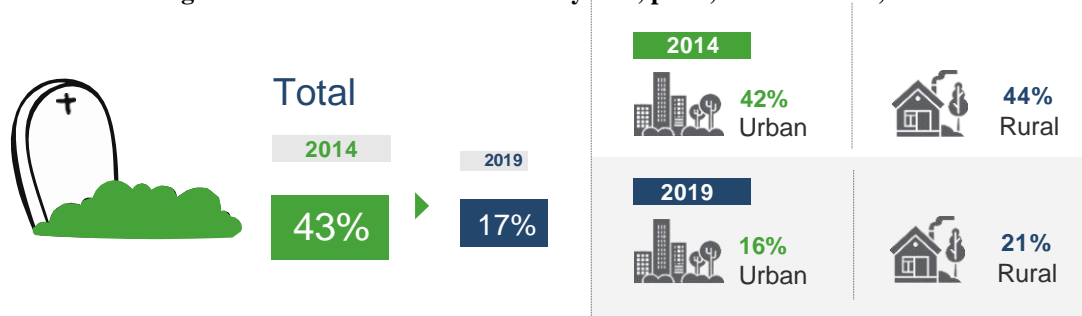
Graph 3.1: Neonatal mortality rate, per 1,000 live births, 2014 - 2019



Source: MICS 2014 and 2019

In the same period, infant and youth mortality fell from 43 per 1,000 to 17 per 1,000 (MICS 2014 and 2019). This reduction confirms the trajectory that the country has been on since 2000. STP has practically already achieved target 3.2 of this SDG (*By 2030, end preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years, with all countries committed to reducing neonatal mortality to at least 12 per 1,000 live births and mortality of children under 5 years to at least 25 per 1,000 live births*), which is a source of great satisfaction for the Santomean State, which remains committed to maintain and improve the gains.

Figure 3.2: Infant and child mortality rate, per 1,000 live births, 2014 - 2019



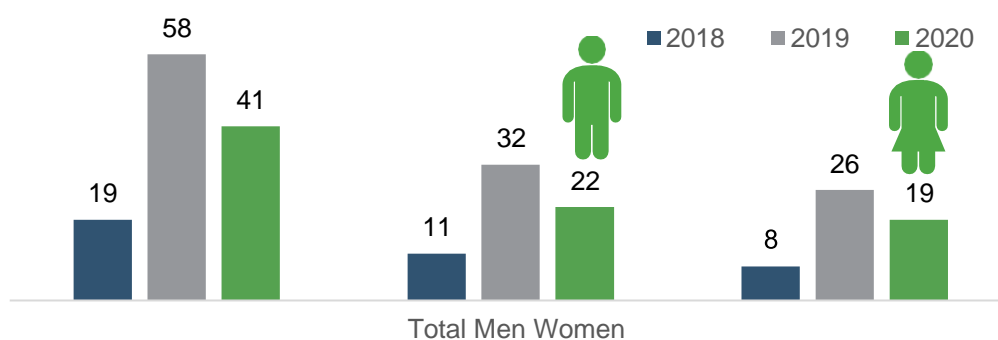
Source: MICS 2014 and 2019

. In terms of Communicable Diseases, the indices are relatively low in STP, as a result of the efforts that have been undertaken by successive governments, particularly with preventive actions and measures to raise awareness among the population. With important support, particularly from the Global Fund, it has been possible for the country to guarantee free treatment for communicable diseases such as malaria, AIDS and tuberculosis. The country also already has some laboratory capacity to carry out tests to detect these diseases, although it is necessary to invest in the qualification of human and technological resources, particularly in terms of equipment maintenance. In addition, other important actions have been implemented, which contribute to reducing the levels of transmissibility and improving the quality of life of those infected:

- Installation of treatment centers in all Health Districts;
- Providing a free medical-medication service to patients;
- Existence of the HIV STP network for voluntary testing;
- Integration of SRH services in STI/HIV/AIDS control;
- Availability of viral load.

The level of knowledge of the population regarding **HIV** is 99%, which is extremely positive. The situation in the country regarding this disease has been improving, as shown by data from the MS's Health Information System (SIS) (2021). In 2019, the country registered 41 new cases of HIV, which corresponds to a rate of 0.2 per 1,000 inhabitants, and a decrease of about 29% compared to the previous year, as shown in the following Graphs. The vast majority of the new cases notified in 2019 were in the 30-69 age group, with men being the most affected.

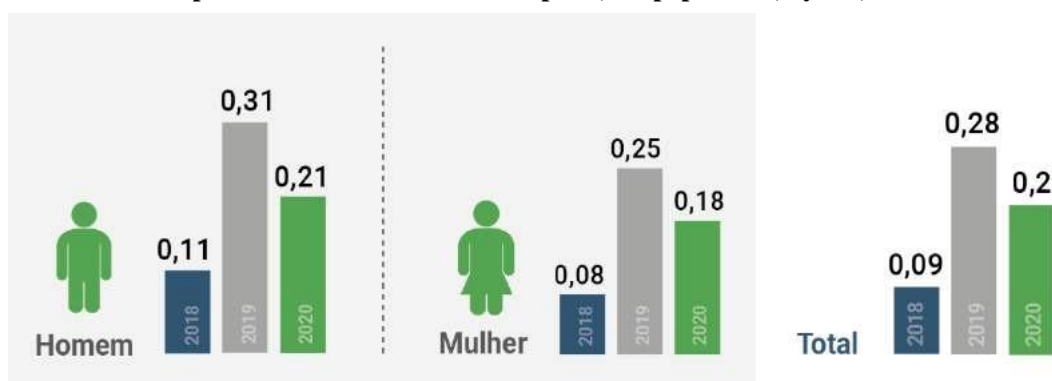
Figure 3.3: Number of new HIV infections per 1000 population, by sex, 2018 - 2020



Source: MS (SIS), 2021

As for the prevalence of HIV, by sex and age, according to data from the Report of the National AIDS Program (PNLS), in 2017 it was higher in women than in men (0.84/1000 against 0.08/1000). Regarding age groups, HIV affects more the adult population, that is, aged 25-49 years and over 50 years, with 2.1/1000 and 2.2/1000, respectively.

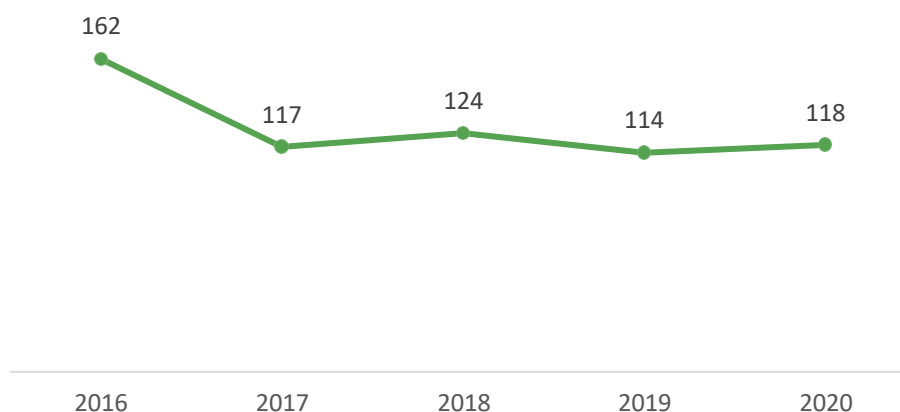
Graph 3.4: Rate of new HIV cases per 1,000 population, by sex, 2018 - 2019



Source: MS (SIS), 2021

Tuberculosis is another communicable disease in which the country has been making progress in its fight. In 2016, STP recorded a total of 162 cases per 100,000 inhabitants, falling to 118 cases in 2020, a decrease in the order of 27%. Men have been the most affected by tuberculosis.

Figure 3.5: Tuberculosis incidence rate per 100,000 population, 2016 - 2020



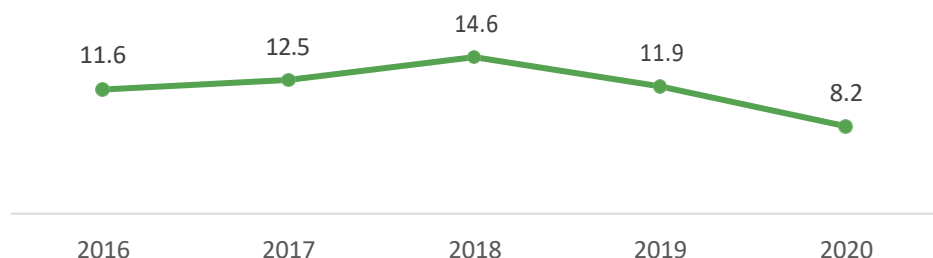
Source: Global SDG Database: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/UNSDG/countryprofiles>

STP, due to its geographical location, is very affected by **malaria**, also called malaria, which is a parasitic disease transmitted by mosquitoes and is potentially deadly if not treated in time. For this reason, as early as 1996 the fight against malaria was recognized as an absolute priority of the national health system, and the country defined the strategy for action, the National Malaria Control Program (PNLP). Within the scope of the PNL, the country has worked mainly in terms of information, awareness-raising and prevention of mosquito bites, through the use of repellents, appropriate clothing and mosquito nets, but also through the taking of medication.

There has been a substantial reduction in the incidence of malaria in the country, thanks to the integrated intensification of malaria control activities, such as provision of free services for all malaria control measures, namely anti-malarial drugs (simple and severe malaria), biological diagnosis (RDT and microscopy), intra-household spraying, distribution of long lasting insecticide impregnated nets (LLINs) and anti-larval control. Currently, malaria is no longer the leading cause of morbidity and mortality in STP. Only 1944 malaria cases were reported in 2020, a decrease of about 21% compared to 2019 and no deaths were reported during those two years.

Regarding malaria incidence in STP, it was 11.6, per 1000 population in 2016 and set at 8.2, per 1000 population in 2020, according to data from the Malaria Program Report HBS Study, 2017.

Graph 3.6: Malaria incidence rate /1,000 population, 2016 - 2020



Source: Malaria Program Report HBS Study, 2017

Água Grande and Lembá districts are the most affected by malaria, with incidences of 17% and 20%, respectively. In the other districts, malaria incidence is below the national average of 11.9% (Chart 3.7 in annex). However, with the Covid-19 pandemic, there were increases in malaria cases in the country, which led the PNLP, with the support of China, UNICEF and WHO, to draw up 3 emergency plans, in order to eliminate the foci in the Districts where they were considered epidemic (Lembá, Mé-Zochi, and Lobata including Água Grande). Therefore, overall, STP has made remarkable progress in the fight against malaria, and the goal of eliminating this disease by 2025 is attainable.

In terms of **Hepatitis B**, the incidence per 100 000 inhabitants has been low, from 1.36 in 2015 to 1.31 in 2020 (Chart 3.8, in annex). However, efforts have been made to further reduce the incidence, such as strengthening the control and prevention of recommended vaccination, especially for children.

Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs), namely cardiovascular diseases, cancer, diabetes and chronic respiratory diseases, have also merited great attention from the country's health authorities. Many of these diseases are the result of environmental, hereditary and behavioral factors, so the focus on promoting improved health, combating inappropriate habits, improving food safety and encouraging physical activity is part of the national authorities' strategy. Currently, among NCDs, **cardiovascular diseases** are the leading causes of mortality in STP, with an incidence rate in 2020 of 0.37 per 1,000 inhabitants, the same level recorded in 2017. Women are the main victims of these diseases. Next appear deaths caused by **cancer**, with a rate of 0.18 per 1.00 inhabitants in 2020, a rate higher than that recorded in 2017, which was 0.13 per 1,000 inhabitants, with men being the most affected. Immediately following appear deaths from **respiratory diseases**, responsible 0.09 per 1,000 inhabitants in 2020, and, lastly, deaths caused by diabetes, whose levels are extremely residual (Table 3.4, in annex).

The **suicide** mortality rate by sex (deaths per 100,000 population) is extremely residual and on a downward trend. According to WHO estimates, STP had 2.1 deaths per 100,000 population in 2015, reducing to 1.5 in 2019.

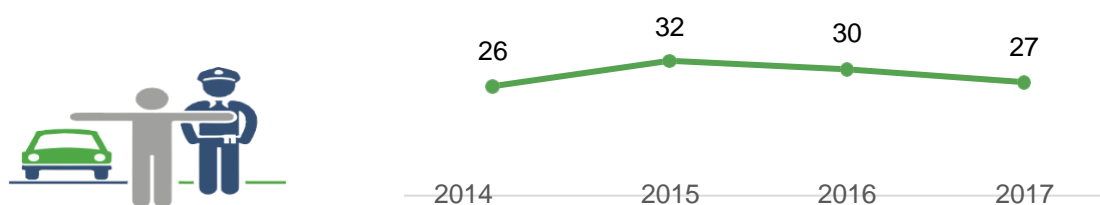
The **consumption of substances harmful** to health has been a concern in STP, especially the **consumption of alcohol**, due to the levels it has been reaching. For this reason, the national authorities have been working on a strategy to address the situation, namely the approval of a law to regulate the sale and consumption of alcohol. Harmful alcohol consumption, with reference to the national threshold defined for the consumption of liters of pure alcohol per capita (persons aged 15 and over), was 5.9 liters in 2018.⁹

According to MICS 2019 data, more than half of women of reproductive age (52%) have ever consumed alcohol, with the highest incidence at ages above 24. In men, this percentage reaches about two-thirds (62%) (Table 3.5 in the annex).

In terms of **traffic**, many accidents have occurred in STP, with loss of human lives. According to PN data, in 2014 the country recorded 26 deaths by traffic accident, increasing to 27 in 2017 and without the highest number (32) occurred in 2015. The main causes relate to poor road signs, drunk driving, speeding, driving without a license and without helmets.

⁹ <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/UNSDG/countryprofiles>

Graph 3.9: Number of deaths by traffic accident, 2014 - 2017



Source: National Police of STP

However, as a result of the hard work being done by the police authorities, especially in terms of driver awareness, the levels of traffic fatalities are starting to decrease.

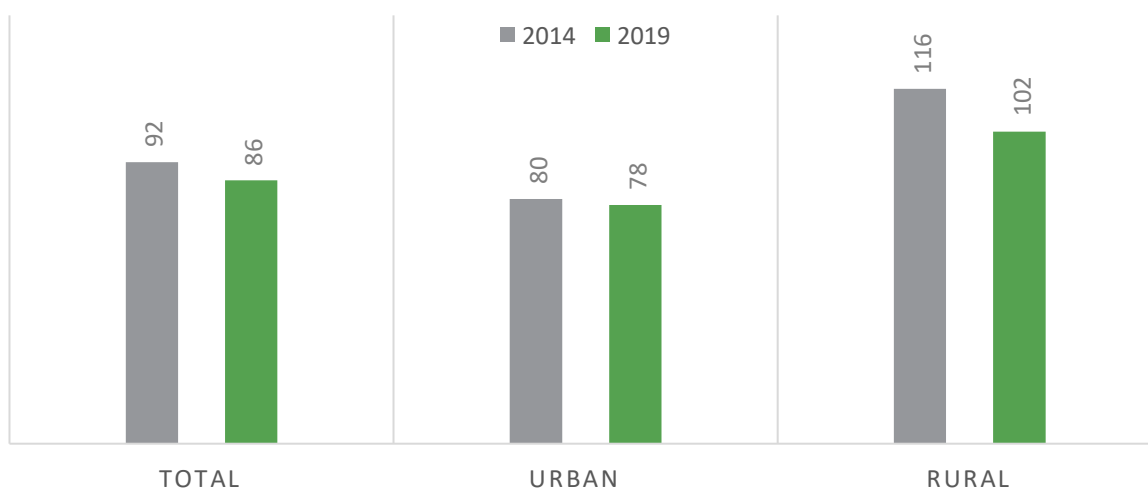
Family planning, using modern contraceptive methods, is important to monitor progress towards the goal of ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health services, including information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programs.

In STP, the percentage of women of reproductive age (15-49 years) who had their family planning needs met with modern contraceptive methods was 60% in 2019, a positive development compared to 2014. Regarding the means of residence, in this period, there were improvements in the urban environment, (Table 3.4, in annex). The Northwest and Southeast regions have the highest levels of use of modern contraceptive methods by women aged 15-49, married or in a consensual union (INE, MICS 2019).

In order to improve levels of contraceptive use by women aged 15-49 years, as part of the strategy for reproductive health, STP has been focusing on raising awareness of appropriate sexual behaviors, in order to reduce the risk of transmission of diseases such as HIV. According to the available data, there has been a positive evolution in the use of contraceptive methods by women aged 15 to 49, currently married or in a consensual union, rising from 37.4% in 2014 to 49.7% in 2019. The pill and injections are the most commonly used methods of contraception. However, condom use in the country is still extremely low (INE, MICS 2014 and 2019) (Table 3.7, in annex).

Prevention of early pregnancy in adolescents is a country priority under the policy on contraceptive use. Age-specific fertility rates, expressed as the number of births per 1,000 women in a given age group, show the pattern of fertility by age. With regard to adolescent fertility (15 and 19 years old), there were 92 births for every 1,000 adolescents aged 15 to 19 in 2014, a decrease of about 7% compared to 2019. The highest numbers were recorded in rural areas, with 116 births (compared to 80 in urban areas) in 2014, and 102 (compared to 78 in urban areas) in 2019 (INE, MICS 2014 and 2019).

Figure 3.10: Adolescent birth rate (age-specific fertility rate for women aged 15-19), by means of residence, 2014 - 2019



Source: MICS 2014 and 2019

It is found that in 2019, about 16% of women aged 15-19 had already started their sex life, 12.3% had a live birth and 3.4% were pregnant with their first child. About a quarter of women had children before the age of 18, with levels being higher in rural areas, with 28.2% (compared to 23% in urban areas) in 2014 and 29.2% (compared to 28.2% in urban areas) in 2019 (INE, MICS 2014 and 2019) (Chart 3.11, in annex). With regard to the Synthetic Fertility Index (SFI), i.e. the number of live births a woman would have if she were subject to the current age-specific fertility rates in her childbearing years (15-49 years), it increased from 4.4 in 2014 to 3.8 in 2019 (Chart 3.12, in annex).

In STP, primary health care coverage has increased from 58% in 2015 to 60% in 2019, according to WHO data (2021)¹⁰. On the other hand, to health insurance coverage, including financial risk protection, the situation in STP inspires special attention. In 2019, the percentage of women aged 15-49 years covered by health insurance was only 0.8%, with 0.3% for children aged 5-17 years and 1.4% for children under 5 years, (MICS 2019). In absolute terms, only 1,395 men and 3,115 women had health insurance coverage in 2019.

The mortality rate attributed to **unintentional poisonings** by sex (deaths per 100,000 population) is residual in STP, standing at about 0.7 deaths per 100,000 population in 2019, with 0.1 female and 1.2 male. These levels are virtually the same as recorded in 2015, according to WHO (2021).¹¹

As for **tobacco consumption**, although the situation is not worrying, there has been some increase. In 2019, the percentage of women aged 15 to 49 who smoked cigarettes or used tobacco for smoking was only 1.3%, with half already smoking before the age of 15. The highest percentages of smokers are in rural areas. In men, the percentage of smokers is almost five times higher. Príncipe Island is the region of the country with the highest percentage of smokers in 2019, at about 15% (INE, MICS 2019).

At **vaccine** level, the National Immunization Program in STP includes all the vaccines marked in the national vaccine calendar, with doses of BCG, polio and Hepatitis B vaccine (within 24 hours of birth), three doses of pentavalent vaccine containing DTP, hepatitis B and Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib) antigens. It also contains three doses of polio vaccine, three doses of pneumococcal vaccine (conjugate), three doses of rotavirus vaccine, two doses of measles and rubella (MMR) vaccine and one dose of yellow fever vaccine. All vaccines should be received in the child's first year of life, except the second dose of SR which is given at 18 months. According to MICS6 2019 data, the percentage of children aged 12 to 23 months who received all recommended immunizations before their first/second birthday was 94% against diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis (DTP), and 93% for pneumococcal (conjugate) immunization. Vaccination levels were higher in girls, and the highest vaccination rates were recorded in urban areas (Chart 3.13, in annex).

In terms of total net ODA to medical research and basic health sectors between 2015 and 2019, STP benefited from about USD 20 million, with the highest share received in 2017, about USD 6.4 million, and the lowest in 2019, about USD 2.5 million (OECD).

One of the necessary conditions for the provision of a good health service is the financial sustainability of the health system and the availability of qualified personnel to meet the challenges of the sector. At the level of human resources for health, according to the *World Health Report 2006, to achieve 80% coverage of qualified care requires a threshold of 2.28 qualified medical personnel (doctors, nurses and midwives) per 1,000 inhabitants*. STP has achieved signature progress at this level, with the country having 87 doctors per 100,000 population and 413 nurses per 100,000 population in 2017, while the world average was 146 doctors per 100,000 population and 334 nurses per 100,000 population, respectively (Statistical Yearbook of Health 2020). In 2019, the country had 749 health workers for a population of 205,965 inhabitants, distributed across the different Districts.

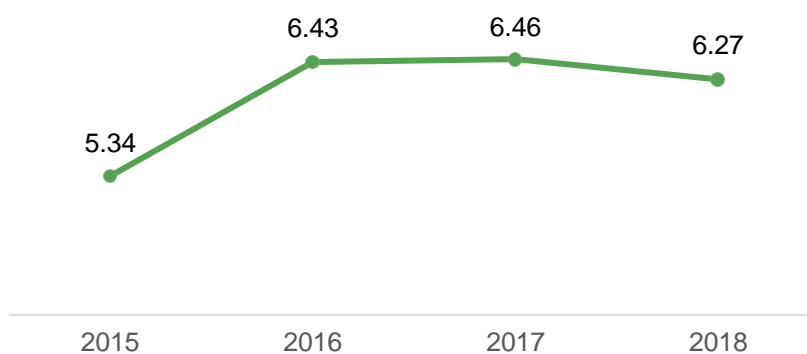
The ARP has the highest rate of coverage of health professionals, with 1.28%. At the other extreme is Água Grande and Mé-Zóchi Districts, (Table 3.8, in annex).

¹⁰ <https://www.who.int/data/monitoring-universal-health-coverage>

¹¹ <https://www.who.int/data/monitoring-universal-health-coverage>

With regard to health expenditure, in 2018, the Government allocated amounts corresponding to 6.3% of GDP to the health sector, an increase of 17.3% compared to 2015.

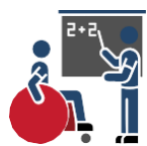
Graph 3.14: Current health expenditure (% of GDP), 2015 - 2018



Source: The WB: https://pt.theglobaleconomy.com/Sao-Tome-and-Principe/Health_spending_as_percent_of_GDP/

The Government is working towards the achievement of all the goals of this SDG and the country has been making important progress, thanks to the creation of legal and institutional conditions, the investments made, especially at the level of human capital, and, as a result, has achieved remarkable results, even reaching, in 2019, an HDI of 0.625, occupying the 135th position, out of 189 countries and territories.

SDG 4



ASSEGURAR A EDUCAÇÃO INCLUSIVA E EQUITATIVA E DE QUALIDADE, PROMOVER OPORTUNIDADES DE APRENDIZAGEM AO LONGO DA VIDA PARA TODOS

Ensuring inclusive, equitable and quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all, regardless of gender and living conditions, are challenges faced by the State of São Tomé. For the Government, it is fundamental that there are conditions so that all girls and boys have access to pre-school and basic education and successfully complete secondary, middle and higher education, as well as vocational, technical and technological education. Likewise, ensure the literacy and literacy skills of the population, improve educational facilities and increase the number of qualified teachers.

In this sense, in 2003 the Framework Law on the Education System (Law no. 2/2003, of 2 June) was approved and published to regulate the educational activity in the country. The national education system comprises pre-school education, school education and extra-school education. **Pre-school education**, in its formative aspect, is complementary and/or supplementary to the educational action of the family, with which it establishes close cooperation and is aimed at children under 7 years of age (3 to 6 years). **School education** comprises basic, secondary and higher education, integrates special modalities and includes leisure time activities:

- (i) **Basic Education** - is universal, compulsory, free of charge and is organized in two study cycles: 1st cycle, lasting four years of schooling (1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th grades) and the 2nd cycle, of two years (5th and 6th grades);
- (ii) **Secondary Education** - is also made up of two cycles, each lasting 3 years of schooling: 1st cycle (7th, 8th and 9th grades) and 2nd cycle (10th, 11th and 12th grades);
- (iii) **Higher education** - comprises university education and polytechnic education.

On the other hand, extracurricular education encompasses literacy, improvement activities, cultural and scientific updating and professional initiation, reconversion and improvement, and is carried out within an open framework of multiple initiatives, of a formal and non-formal nature.

According to data from the Ministry of Education (MoE) Statistical Bulletin 2019/2020, the gross enrolment rate increased from 115% in the 2016/17 school year to 120% in the 2019/20 school year. The pass rate reached 88.3% in the 2019/2020 school year and the dropout rate reduced from 1.5%, in the 2016/17 school year to 0.1% in the 2019/2020 school year.

In 2014, about 36% of children aged 36-59 months attended an organized early childhood education program, down by about 2 percentage points from 2019. School attendance was higher in girls, having reversed the scenario in 2019 and is affected by poverty and the education level of mothers, i.e. as wealth levels and education level increase, preschool attendance rates increase (INE, MICS 2019).

The (adjusted) net enrolment rate for children attending basic education is around 90%, with little variation according to gender. The highest rates are found in the urban areas. With regard to attendance at the 1st cycle of secondary education, the net rate of schooling is reduced to around half, with a higher incidence on girls. In the second cycle of secondary education, the net rate of attendance is more critical, with only 29.9% in 2019.

Literacy in the early years of primary school is crucial for a child's good future, especially at the reading and calculation levels. With regard to reading skills, in 2019 the percentage of children aged 7 to 14 who successfully completed three basic reading exercises was 38.4%, with a higher incidence in girls (42%). Levels increase with age and educational attainment. The highest levels are found in the Districts of Água Grande (42.9%), Mé-Zóchi (47.8%) and ARP (47.1%), as illustrated in Table 4.1, attached, (INE, MICS 2019).

With regard to numerical skills in children aged 7 to 14 years when successfully completing three basic numerical tasks¹², in 2019 about 36% demonstrate basic numerical skills, with little oscillation with respect to gender and levels increase with age and years of study. Children in rural areas showed the highest numerical skills and relative to regions, the Districts of Água Grande and Mé-Zóchi show the highest levels. At the opposite extreme is the Northwest Region, with only 27% (INE, MICS6 2019) (Table 4.2, in annex).

The inclusion of early years girls and boys in school education has been one of the country's priorities. When analyzing the data

¹² ([A] Age 7-14; [B] Age for primary class 2/3 and [C] Frequency of primary class age 2/3)

on the **Early Childhood Development Index Score** for the period between 2014 and 2019, it is concluded that STP has made remarkable progress on this indicator, with the percentage of children aged 36 to 59 months who are on track for development in at least three of the four areas (reading-calculation, physical, socio-emotional, learning) having evolved from 54.5% in 2014 to 62.9% in 2019. The highest levels were found in female children, both in 2014 and 2019, and, with regard to the means of residence, the situation is better in children living in rural areas.

Table 4.3: Percentage of 3-4 year old children who are on track in literacy - numeracy, physical, social-emotional, and learning domains, and the early childhood development index score, 2014 - 2019

	2014	2019
Total	54,5	62,9
Male	53,7	59,1
Female	55,4	66,5
Urban	53,5	61,2
Rural	56,6	66,2

Source: INE, MICS 2014 and 2019

In 2019, the percentage of children in the relevant age group (one year before the official age of entry into primary education) attending an education program and an early childhood education or basic education program (adjusted net attendance rate) was 74.1% nationally, about 16 p.p. above 2014 levels. Regarding gender, in 2019 the highest incidence was found in female children (78.2%), with little fluctuation regarding the means of residence. It is noted that, in terms of distribution, in 2019 about 64% of children participated in an early childhood education program, 10% attended basic education and about a quarter (26%) did not participate in an early childhood education or basic education program (INE, MICS6 2019) (Table 4.4, in annex).

Regarding the net primary school admission rate, that is, the percentage of children of primary school entry age who are enrolled in the first year, it was 63.5% (INE, MICS 2019). The effective transition rate to secondary school, that is, the percentage of children attending the last year of primary school in the previous school year and attending the first year of secondary school in the current school year, was 96.8%. The highest adjusted net attendance rate was found in basic education (90%) and, at the opposite end, with 30% in the 2nd cycle of secondary education.

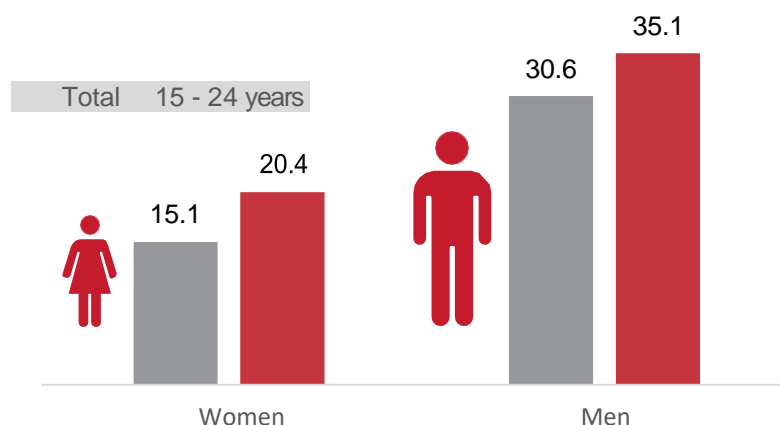
Table 4.5: Adjusted net enrolment rate (percentage of children attending different levels of education), 2019

	School attendance at basic level	School attendance in the 1st cycle of secondary school	Attendance at secondary school
Total	89,8	55,3	29,9
Male	89,1	50,3	25,4
Female	90,6	60,5	34,4
Urban	90,8	57,8	32,2
Rural	87,7	50,8	25,6

Source: INE, MICS 2019

Access to and use of ICTs is one of the important requirements for development and progress. In 2016, the UN Human Rights Council considered Internet access as a human right (Resolution (A/HRC/C/L.20)¹³. STP, aware of the importance of ICT in the country's development, has been working to make access to this important tool a reality, and despite the low levels that still exist, it has been of great use, especially during the critical phase of the COVID-19 pandemic, with the use of telework. The most recent official data (INE, MICS 2019) show that in 2019, only 15% of women carried out activities using a computer. In men, the percentage almost doubles. It is in the young layer (population aged 15 to 24 years) that the most expressive levels of use were found, being 20% in women and rises to 35% in men, as attested by the Graph, below.

Graph 4.1: Percentage of women and men aged 15-49 who in the past 3 months have undertaken computer-related activities, 2019



Source: INE: MICS 2019

Quality education for all is a right enshrined in the DRSTP Constitution. The Santomean State has been working towards this and has achieved progress. In 2019, the (adjusted) net enrolment rate in basic education (NER) was about 90.6% nationally, with little fluctuation with respect to gender and means of residence, and increases with the economic well-being index. The country has already achieved gender parity at the basic education level (IPG) for adjusted TLE, irrespective of household economic well-being levels, as evidenced by the 2019 Gender Parity Index, which was 1.02 (Table 4.6).

However, the same is not true for secondary education 1st cycle (IPG) for adjusted EER and secondary education 2nd cycle (IPG), where the gender parity Indices were 1.2 and 1.35, which shows that there are more women than men. At these levels, gender inequality decreases with increasing economic well-being, until it reaches parity in the richest households, (INE, MICS6 2019).

Table 4.6: Gender parity index in primary, secondary education (1st and 2nd cycles), for adjusted net enrolment rates, between girls and boys, according to the index of economic well-being (IPG), 2019

	Total	Poorest	According to	Medium	Room	The richest
Primary education gender parity index (GEM) for the adjusted ELTs	1,02	1,04	0,99	1,00	1,03	1,04
Secondary school gender parity index 1st cycle (IPG) for the adjusted TLE	1,2	1,48	1,23	1,42	1,09	1
Secondary education 2nd cycle gender parity index (GEM) for adjusted TLEs	1,35	1,69	1,07	1,37	1,47	1,22

Source: INE, MICS 2019

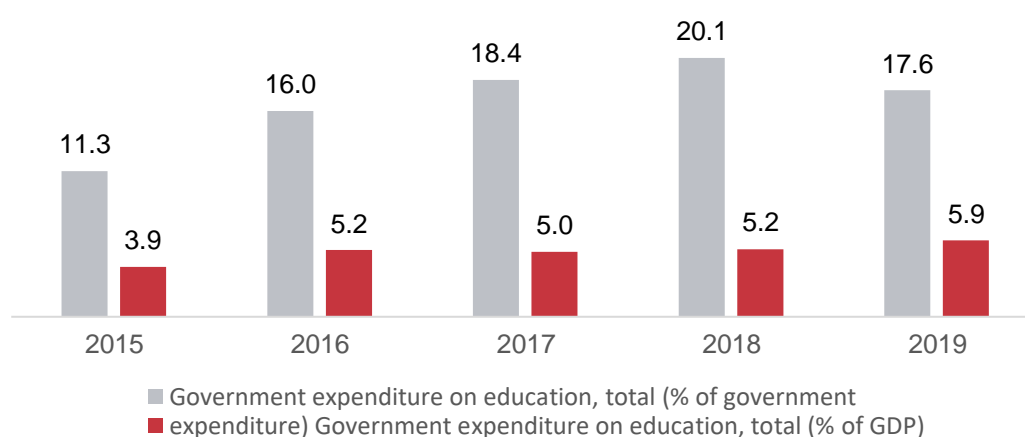
¹³ <https://undocs.org/fr/A/HRC/32/L.20>

STP has been accompanied and supported by partners in their efforts to equip the country with school infrastructure and equipment. In 2017, about 94% of schools had access to drinking water, 88.5% had access to toilets/Latrines and 88% had access to infrastructures with electricity (ME and DGP - SDG Matrix) (Chart 4.2, in annex). According to the same source, in 2017 about 19% of teachers in pre-school education, 26% in primary education and 44% in secondary education received at least the basic teacher training (pedagogical training) required to teach, before or during the exercise of their profession (Graph 4.3, in annex). The School for Teacher and Educator Training, created for this purpose, has played an important role in training primary school teachers and educators. The Government will continue to work with its partners in order to strengthen teacher training and qualification which is an important valence in the area of quality and which will have positive impacts at the level of employability and poverty reduction.

As for the volume of ODA flows to grants by sector and type of program, STP received between 2015 and 2019 about USD 3.4 million, with the last three years at USD 0.8 million each (OECD, 2021).

In terms of public expenditure/investment, the education sector has been a priority in the State Budget. Of total expenditure, State expenditure on education has increased from 11.3% (3.86% of GDP) in 2015 to 17.59% (5.92% of GDP) in 2019.

Graph 4.4: Share of government expenditure on education and in relation to GDP, 2015 - 2019



Source: State Budget, 2020

This State investment in human capital has translated into concrete results for the sector, with positive reflections at the level of the country's classification in the category of medium human development, reaching, in 2019, an HDI of 0.625¹⁴, occupying the 135th position, out of 189 countries and territories. It is noted that the composition of the HDI takes into account indicators such as life expectancy at birth, which increased in this period by 12.2 years, average years of schooling, which increased by 3.6 years, and expected years of schooling, which increased by 4.5 years. In order for the gains to be more substantial, the Government has been working on the implementation of the guidelines of the STP Education Policy Charter (Vision 2022).

¹⁴ http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr2020_pt.pdf

SDG 5



ALCANÇAR A IGUALDADE DE GÊNERO E EMPODERAR TODAS A MULHERES E MANINAS

Gender equality is considered a fundamental human right and is cross-cutting to all other SDGs. According to the Constitution of the DRSTP, all citizens are equal before the law, and no distinction is made on the basis of "social origin or economic situation, race, sex, religion, political or ideological convictions and social condition, as well as the full exercise by all citizens of fundamental freedoms". In this sense, the country has been promoting the principle of equality and non-discrimination as essential elements in all its gender-related policies, in order to ensure that all human rights are respected and that there is full and effective participation by all, both men and women, in the country's development.

To this end, the country has been working at the legislative level to enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of gender. To this end, it has revised some laws and adopted some penal frameworks in order to ensure the human rights and fundamental freedoms of women and girls:

- Approval of the Law on Strengthening the Legal Protection Mechanisms for the Victims of Crimes of Domestic Violence, Law n. 12/2008, which requires the construction of a Reception Centre for Victims of Violence;
- Approval of the Criminal Code, Law No. 6/2012, which served to reinforce the fight against GBV;
- Approval of new Civil Service Statute, Law No. 2/2018, which ensures harmonization with International Labor Organization (ILO) Convention 183 on maternity;
- Regulation of Law No. 7/2004 on Social Protection, through Decree-Law No. 25/2014, on Mandatory Social Protection, and Decree-Law No. 16/2018, on Social Protection of Citizenship;
- Adoption of new Family Code, Law No. 19/2018, which now allows legal marriage only from the age of 18 (majority), for both sexes.

At institutional level, the National Institute for the Promotion of Gender Equality and Equity (INPIEG) was created as the public entity responsible for the execution of gender policies.

In terms of public policy for gender equality and equity, STP has in execution the III National Strategy for Gender Equality and Equity (ENIEG) 2019-2026, aligned with this SDG, and which provides continuity to the vision established in the I and II INIEG, which is to "Build with all development actors, a society where social justice, solidarity, equality, equity and respect for the rights of all citizens prevail, and are authentic, deep values shared by men and women. This Strategy establishes the following principles that should guide the sector's policies, namely:

1. Equality and equity between women and men in all spheres (principle of equality);
2. Respect for diversity and combating all forms of discrimination;
3. Search for women's autonomy in all dimensions of life (Women's Empowerment);
4. Principle of social justice;
5. Transversality, integration and articulation;
6. Participation;
7. Gender sensitive planning and budgeting;
8. Principle of commitment, responsibility and accountability;
9. Principle of cooperation.

The general objective of the III ENIEG is to "*Guide, in an integrated manner, the main lines of intervention for the promotion of gender equality and equity and respect for human rights*". It establishes nine strategic axes of intervention,

namely: Axis 1: Legislation and Policies; Axis 2: Leadership and Visibility: Participation of Women in Decision Making Positions; Axis 3: Education and Training; Axis 4: Economy: Productive Resources, Reproductive and Employment; Axis 5: Sexual and Reproductive Health and Reproductive Rights; Axis 6: Gender Based Violence; Axis 7: Media and Information Technology; Axis 8: Environment and Climate Change; Axis 9: Institutional Strengthening for Gender Mainstreaming in Public Policies.

Despite the legal, institutional and political framework favorable to gender equality and equity, in practice, there are still situations of discrimination, to the detriment of women, fundamentally due to the deficient application and compliance with the applicable legislation. For example, access to the labor market is not equal for men and women. Similarly, and particularly in rural areas, many women do not enjoy the same rights, access to resources and opportunities as men. However, there are improvements, for example in primary education, where STP has already achieved the goal of eliminating the disparity between genders and at other levels of education, there is still a slight predominance of girls in the education system.

According to data from the Global SDG Database, in STP, the proportion of women and girls with any partner who experienced physical and/or sexual violence by a current or previous intimate partner in the last 12 months, was 18.1% in 2018. On the other hand, data from the Domestic Violence Account Counselling Centre (CACVD, 2021) confirms that the country is faced with cases of Gender-Based Violence (GBV), where about 53% of women and girls aged 15 years and above had experienced sexual violence by a current or former intimate partner in 2017, about 46% physical violence and 1% psychological violence. By 2020, there has been a decrease in sexual violence, in contrast to an increasing trend for physical violence and psychological violence, as illustrated in the following Figure.

Table 5.1: Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older who experienced physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the past 12 months, by form of violence, 2017 - 2021

Forms of violence	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Physical violence	46,15	48,70	56,02	64,29	52,70
Psychological violence	1,03	0,24	1,31	1,84	2,36
Sexual violence	52,82	51,06	42,67	33,87	44,93

Source: CACVD, 2021

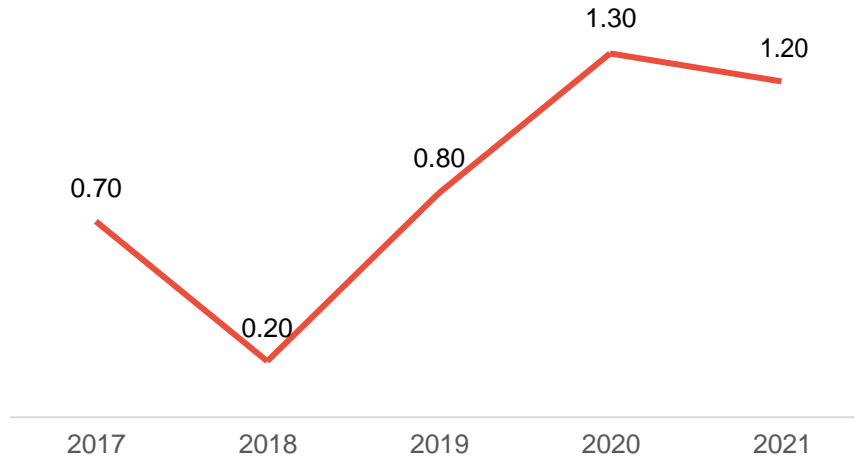
As regards age, in 2021 the situation is more worrying in the 20-24 and 25-29 age groups, where around 21% and 19%, respectively, were victims of these practices. Taking into account the dimension of these phenomena, several actions have been developed, especially in the areas of advocacy, awareness-raising and training, in order to empower women and put an end to these practices. Among the actions, the following stand out:

- Implementation of information and awareness programs, through the media, aimed at young people and adolescents (girls/boys), women/men, on gender issues and the role of women in society and development;
- Implementation of a training and awareness-raising program for women leaders of agricultural associations/cooperatives on Gender and Development, aimed at strengthening their leadership capacity, which encouraged the creation of the first Association of United Women Farmers, with technical support from the National Federation of Small Farmers;
- Door to door awareness raising campaigns on GBV for women and men, boys and girls, in all districts of Sao Tome and Principe, with financial support from the European Union (EU);
- Implementation of the REDE VIDA action plan in order to guarantee the protection and safety of the victim;
- Training for police officers, health technicians and judicial magistrates on how to assist victims of domestic violence;
- Creation of a free legal aid office by the Association of Women Lawyers for the victims of GBV;
- Creation of an Office for professional guidance and active search for employment for victims of GBV, in vulnerable situations;

- Creation, installation and equipping of a Shelter for victims of domestic violence.

According to the CACVD, the situation of sexual violence is more worrying in the Districts of Água Grande and Mé-Zochi. Although the country does not measure the proportion of women and girls aged 15 and over who have experienced sexual violence perpetrated by someone other than an intimate partner, by age groups, the administrative data, presented below, gives an idea about the situation in the country. It can be seen that, although levels are low, sexual violence almost doubles between 2017 and 2020, from 0.7% to 1.3%.

Figure 5.1: National proportion of Sexual Violence, 2017 - 2021



Source: CACVD, 2021

There is a tendency for violence to worsen in young people aged 15 to 24 years and in the opposite direction in young people aged 25 to 29 years (Table 5.2, in the annex).

In Mé-Zochi District, there was an uneven development in the proportion of women and girls aged 15-19 years who experienced sexual violence, inflicted by someone other than an intimate partner, which was 1.3% in 2020, almost double that recorded in 2017 (Graph 5.2, in annex).

According to the same source, domestic violence shows an upward trend, rising from 0.68% in 2017 to 1.28% in 2021 (Graph 5.3, in annex).

Early marriage is a phenomenon still present in São Tomeans society and the authorities have been working to eliminate this practice. To this end, in 2018, the Government approved a Family Code, through Law no. 19/2018, which establishes that legal marriage is only allowed from the age of 18 (majority), for both sexes. This is an important step, although it does not prevent the prohibition of other forms of unions that still exist in the country. In 2014, about 6% of girls aged between 20 and 24 were married before the age of 15, more than a third of these girls (32.2%) were married before their 18th birthday. There has been progress in 2019, having recorded a decrease in these levels (Table 5.3, in annex). With regard to the means of residence, in 2014, the highest percentage of marriages before the age of 18 (43.1%) was found in urban areas, a situation that was reversed in 2019. The APR, in both periods, has the highest levels of women aged 20-24 who married before age 15 (9.3% in 2014 and 6.4% in 2019 and before age 18, 43.1% and 45%, respectively). Early marriage levels decrease as wealth levels increase (INE, MICS 2014, 2019).

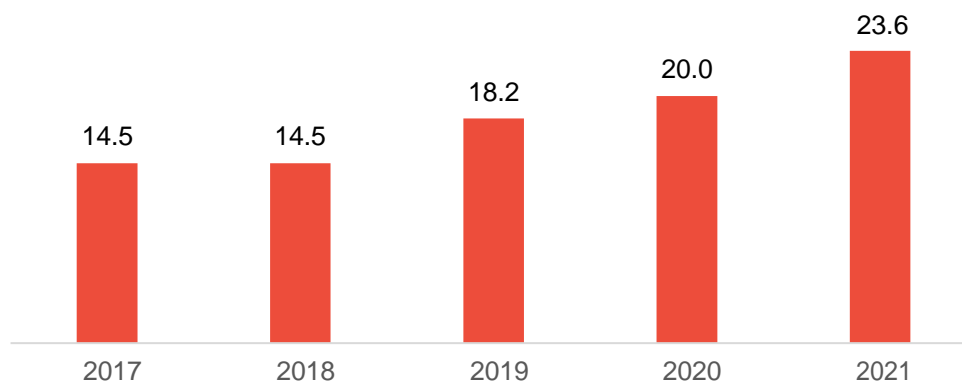
Another aspect worth highlighting has to do with the practice of polygamy in the country. According to official data, more than a fifth of women aged between 15 and 49 were living in polygamy in 2019.

STP has not yet managed to measure the time that is spent on unpaid work and caregiving. To this end, it is necessary to conduct the Time Use Survey to enable the country to quantify the burden of unpaid reproductive work that people undertake to live under current conditions, and which is not accounted for in the national economy.

On the other hand, it is a way of finding out how domestic work and the care of children or dependents is divided up among the members of the household, by sex, age and marital status.

Regarding political participation, although the majority of the population of STP is slightly female, there is still a low participation of women in political activity, which continues to be dominated by men in all spheres of power. According to the results of the last legislative elections, held in 2018, out of a total of 55 national deputies, only 4 women were elected to Parliament, which represents 13.8%. This is a retreat from the previous legislature, where women represented 18.1%, according to INPIEG.

Figure 5.4: Proportion of seats held by women in Parliament, 2017 - 2021



Source: National Assembly, 2021

The low rate of women's participation in political activity has to do with "skepticism and lack of confidence in women's ability to lead, stereotypes and prejudices about their role in society and their lack of aptitude to execute the role of leadership and decision-making, associated, above all, with the burden of reproductive work¹⁵". At the level of local governments (Districts), in 2014 one woman was elected as mayor in a total of six district municipalities, representing 16.6% of the total, while in the 2018 elections no woman was elected.

In order to reverse this picture, several actions are planned and underway, namely, to:

- Approve the law on parity in the National Sovereign Organs;
- Promote the drafting/review/approval of legislative and regulatory measures aimed at parity in women's political participation (parity law, law on political parties, electoral code and its regulations);
- Advocate for the revision of discriminatory texts that remain in national legislation;
- To advocate before judicial and administrative authorities so that the rights of men and women are not violated or nullified by any provisions, cultural practices that affect them in a differentiated or discriminatory manner;
- Define and implement public policies, aimed at eliminating social and cultural practices that are harmful to the exercise of women's human rights and make them subject to appropriate and dissuasive sanctions;
- Adopt, disseminate and implement legislation and measures to protect men and women with disabilities, older persons, among other key groups, taking into account their specific vulnerabilities.

An aspect worthy of note is that the Law on Political Parties, in force, establishes the Principle of Gender Balance, according to which "in the absence of specific legislation on gender parity, political parties should, when drawing up their respective lists for participation in elections to organs of political power, observe the principle of gender equity in eligible seats, it being the Constitutional Court's responsibility to verify compliance", and a quota of 30% should be guaranteed in favor of either gender in eligible seats.

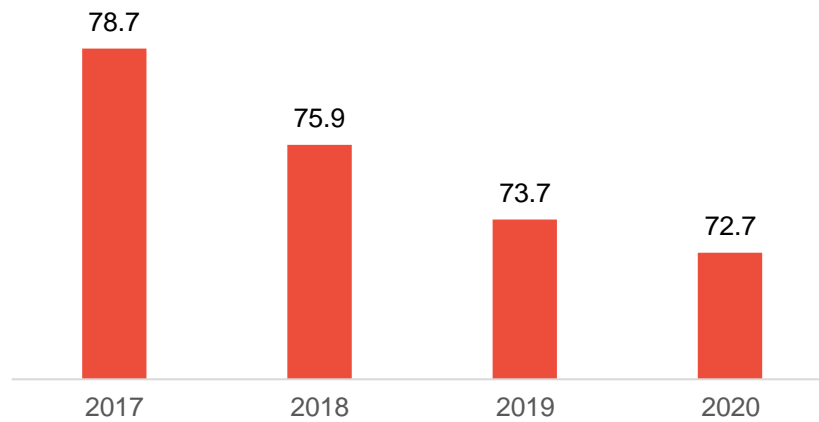
As mentioned above, STP has legislation and regulations that guarantee full and equal access by women and men aged 15 and above to sexual and reproductive health information, education and care.

According to data from Companhia Santomense de Telecomunicações (CST), overall, there has been a decrease in the proportion

¹⁵ Assessment and Update of the National Strategy for Gender Equality and Equity, 2019.

of people using mobile phones in STP, from 78.7% in 2017 to 72.7% in 2020. With regard to the proportion of people with mobile phone availability, by gender', the percentage of women aged 15-49 owning a mobile phone was 67% in 2019 and 60% for men. The highest levels of possession of this important instrument were found in urban areas.

Graph 5.5: Proportion of people using mobile phones in STP, 2017 - 2020



Source: CST) 2021

In order to empower women and have a better gender balance, additional efforts will be undertaken for a culture of non-violence against women and children, improving the fight against GBV, the representativeness of women in politics, through various awareness and information actions, the approval of the parity law and in the multiplication of information campaigns, awareness raising and combating practices of conscience buying, the so-called "bathing", so that rights are equal, for all, men and women.

SDG 6



GARANTIR DISPONIBILIDADE E MANEJO SUSTENTÁVEL DA ÁGUA E SANEAMENTO PARA TODOS

Water is a precious commodity and considered a human right¹⁶, since no one can survive without its use. Precisely because of this, it has been a priority of the successive governments of STP to guarantee the population's access to this precious liquid for domestic consumption, in sufficient quantity and quality, which is crucial for the health, well-being and productivity of the populations.

STP has evolved positively regarding access to essential goods such as safe drinking water and is on track to meet some targets of this SDG, thanks to the various investments being made in the water and sanitation sector. In 2019, about 98% of household members used an improved drinking water source located on premises, available for when needed, an increase of 4 percentage points from 2014 data. The highest rates were found in urban areas, although the percentage of household members using an improved drinking water source located on the premises, available when needed, was already 94.4% in rural areas in 2019, up from 85.8% in 2014.

Relative to regions, the districts of Água Grande and Northwest Region were found to have higher percentages of household members using an improved drinking water source located on premises, available when needed (99% each). At the opposite extreme is the ARP whose levels increased from about 74% in 2014 to 83.5% in 2019. These rates increase in line with household wealth (INE, MICS 2014 and 2019) (Table 6.1, in annex).

According to administrative data from the Water and Electricity Company (EMAE), in 2017, about 90% of the population used drinking water supply services, of which 61.4% was through the fountains/fountains and 21.9% through household connections (Graph 6.1, in annex). However, when it comes to access to improved water for consumption on the premises, the picture is quite different, that is, more than half of the household members did not have improved water for consumption on their premises, and the situation is more worrying in rural areas (68%). According to the same source, the situation is due to the fact that its area of greater performance is the urban environment, where the water supplied by it has more quality. The population in rural areas uses non-potable water, which comes from rivers, fountains or the laundries in the communities. The situation is aggravated by the problem of open defecation. The national authorities are aware of this challenge and efforts are underway to improve the situation by 2030.

A basic hygiene service refers to the availability of a handwashing facility with soap and water. In terms of sanitation, STP faces many problems. The use of contaminated water by a considerable part of the population persists, which is a public health problem. According to official data, in 2019, only about half (54%) of household members had hand washing facilities where water and soap are present. Although there has been a positive evolution of about 13 p.p. compared to 2014, there is still much work to be done in this area. The situation is more critical in rural areas, where less than half of the household members have handwashing facilities where soap and water are present. The percentage of the population that had handwashing facilities where water and soap are present increases with the education of the household head and with the economic well-being index.

The Government, aware of the challenges faced by the country in terms of water and sanitation, has worked with various partners to overcome the situation. Among this list of partners, we highlight UNICEF and the World Bank, which have been intervening in schools, health centers and communities free from open defecation, through the WASH Project, and with strong community involvement. Also noteworthy is the WASH School Project, implemented by UNICEF, which aimed to create several handwashing points in schools and supported the Government in creating the best conditions for the return of students to classes, within the scope of the COVID-19 pandemic.

With regard to improved sanitation facilities, the situation also needs special attention. Between 2014 and 2019, less than half of the population (45%) used improved sanitation facilities that are not shared with other households. Users in rural areas are the most affected, despite the positive evolution during the period under review. At the level of regions, the worst rates were found in the Northwest Region, with only one third of the population having improved sanitation facilities in 2019 (34.5%) (INE, MICS, 2014 and 2019) (Table 6.2 in annex).

In terms of management of excreta from on-site household sanitation facilities, it is found that with regard to the use of on-site

¹⁶The human rights to water and sanitation were recognised by the UN General Assembly and the Human Rights Council in 2010 and 2015 respectively

improved sanitation systems (including shared), in 2019, one-third of household members (31.1%) used safe disposal in situation of excreta from on-site sanitation facilities, 1.1% used unsafe disposal of excreta from on-site sanitation facilities and 1.4% used the practice of removing excreta for treatment from on-site sanitation facilities. In addition, 17% was connected to sewerage system, 4.3% used unimproved sanitation facilities and 45.5% practiced open defecation. In 2019, about 92.7% of the household members had septic tanks and latrines improved by emptying and removal method (safe disposal in situation of excreta from on-site sanitation facilities), with ARP having the highest percentage (97.3%). At the opposite extreme, and below the national average, is the District of Água Grande, with 90%. (INE, MICS, 2014 and 2019).

As for waste management, it is regulated by Decree No. 36/1999 and in the sector the District Councils and the General Directorate of Environment (DGA) intervene, although the responsibility of each stakeholder was not very clear. In order to clarify the issue, in 2018 the Government defined the national policy for environmental sanitation, accompanied by a strategy and action plan to implement this policy. The objective is to create and operationalize the coordination mechanism between the sectors, especially in environmental sanitation, behavioral change, waste management and climate change.

The DGA has carried out actions to improve the environmental conditions in the country. However, they are insufficient to reverse the situation, in which about 46% of the population defecates in the open, the 3rd highest rate in sub-Saharan Africa. The situation is more worrying in rural areas, in the Northwest, Southeast and in the District of Mé-Zóchi, with more than half the population using nature for their physiological needs. This is a situation that concerns the national authorities, since it has negative impacts on public health, but also on the development of tourism. In this sense, awareness and communication work is being done among the population, with a new approach, called Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS), which has the support of UNICEF. The objective is to avoid total dependence on the State in the construction of latrines and to involve communities. The prospect is that CLTS will enable a change in mentality and get people to build their own sanitation facilities. The work under CLTS is being done in 11 communities, three of which have already been declared free of open defecation.

With regard to the level of water stress, that is, the proportion of freshwater discharges in the total available freshwater resources, it has been very low, having remained around 1.8 per cent per year in the period 2015 to 2018, according to FAO information.

The degree of implementation of integrated water resource management is measured by combining several indicators, as shown in Table 6.3. It can be seen that from 2017 to 2020, the degree of implementation of integrated water resource management has evolved by 10 percentage points. In the same period, the Degree of implementation of integrated water resources management, enabling environment, increased by 14 percentage points. As for the degree of implementation of integrated water resources management, financing, remained at 20%, and the degree of implementation, institutions and participation of integrated water resources management rose from 22% to 38%.

Also, in this period, there was an increase in the level of implementation of integrated management of water resources, management instruments, in the order of 10 percentage points.

Table 6.3: Degree of implementation of integrated water resources management (%), 2017 - 2020

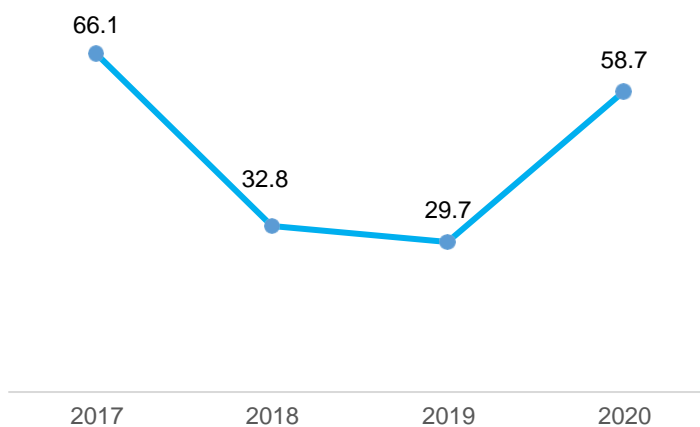
	2017	2020
Degree of implementation of integrated water resources management (%)	23	33
Degree of implementation of integrated water resources management, enabling environment (%)	24	38
Degree of implementation of integrated water resources management, financing (%)	20	20
Degree of implementation, institutions and participation of integrated resource management water (%)	22	38
Degree of implementation of integrated water resources management, management instruments (%)	25	35

Source: IWRM Data Portal, UNEP, 2021

In terms of ODA to the water and sanitation sector, 2017 was the year in which STP obtained the highest amount, 66,071,335

Dobras, which is equivalent to about USD 3 million¹⁷. In 2018, there was a reduction of the amount by about half and in 2020 it was fixed at about 58.7 million Dobras.

Graph 6.2: Amount of ODA in the area of water and sanitation, within a government spending plan (Million Doubles), 2017 - 2020



Source: INE - SDG Framework 2010-2021

¹⁷ At the exchange rate on 20/12/2021: 1 STN = 0.0461178 USD

SDG 7

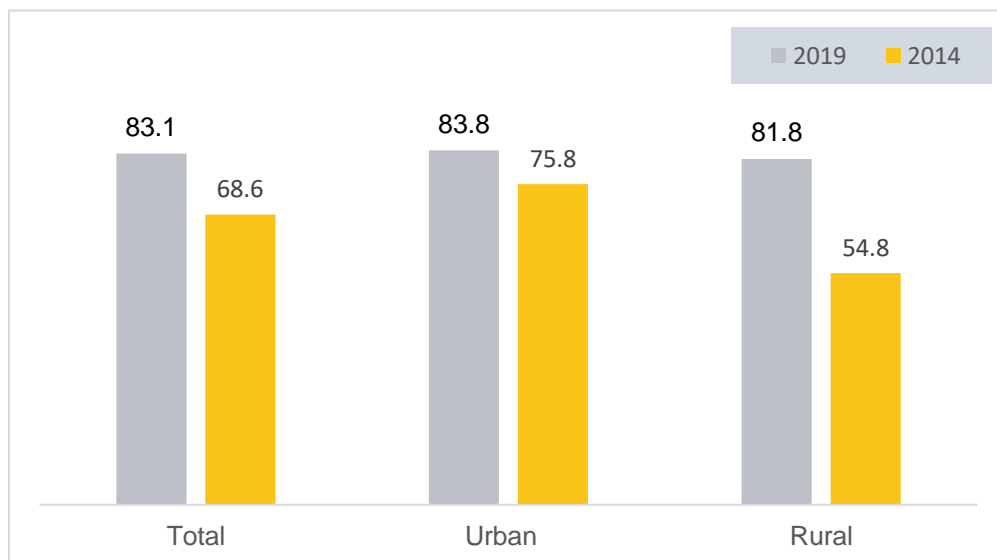


GARANTIR ACESSO À ENERGIA BARATA, CONFIÁVEL, SUSTENTÁVEL E RENOVÁVEL PARA TODOS

STP has been facing, in recent years, a major energy crisis, with frequent power cuts that have negatively impacted the economy and the well-being of the populations. Consequently, the production and distribution of water and energy has been carried out in a very adverse environment. The public water and electricity company (EMAE) has faced many difficulties, especially in terms of the distribution network, with thefts of energy, the existence of customers who consume and do not pay, people who have difficulty accessing the public network. On the other hand, energy production is low and expensive, because diesel is used, which is imported, aggravated by the fact that the generators are obsolete. Most of the population has access to electricity, through a single rate, without, however, having a meter. Therefore, there is a deficit of quality in the production of energy and the revenues do not cover the production costs, and are not even sufficient for the purchase of diesel. For the maintenance service, the Government has been injecting financial resources into the company, with the last injection, in the amount of USD 2 million, occurring in October 2021.

The energy sector is still a state monopoly, and the production area has been liberalized, but marketing and distribution still belong to the state-owned company (EMAE). Regulation is recent, having started in 2017, and the country is still working on the legal framework for the sector. Despite the constraints pointed out, the country has made some progress, such as in terms of access to electricity, where the percentage of the population with access to this precious commodity has risen from 69% in 2014 to 83% in 2019. The situation is much better in urban areas, where three quarters of households (76%) had access to electricity in 2014, rising to 84% in 2019.

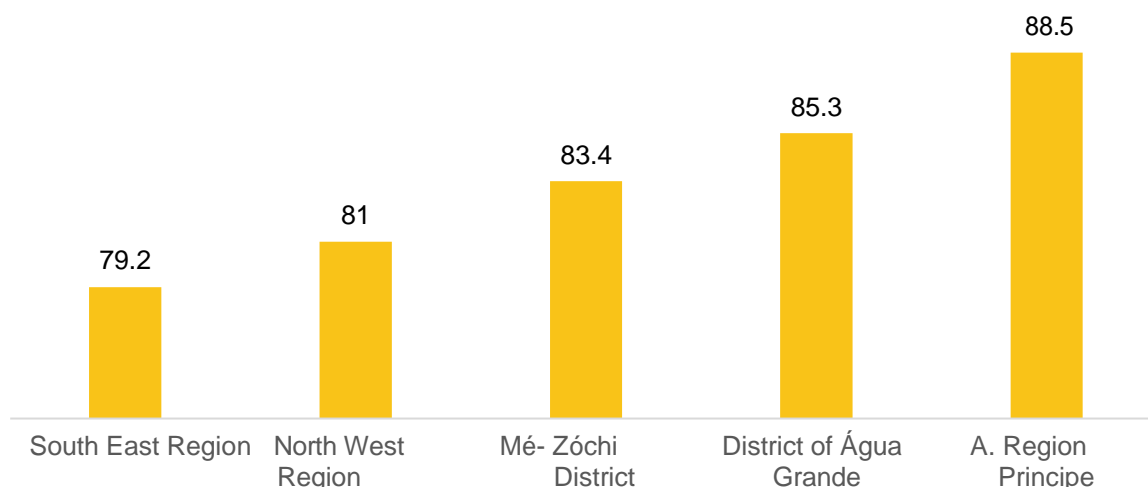
Figure 7.1: Percentage of household members with access to electricity, by means of residence, 2014 and 2019



Source: INE, MICS 2014 and 2019

There have also been improvements in access to electricity by rural populations, having evolved from 55% to 82% in the same period. The ARP and the District of Água Grande have the highest rates of households with access to electricity in 2019, with 88.5% and 85.3%, respectively. At the opposite extreme is the Southeast Region, with only 79.2%. In 2019, about 80% of the population had access to electricity through connection to the general system (INE, MICS6 2019), Chart 7.2.

Figure 7.2: Percentage of household members with access to electricity, by Districts, 2019



Source: INE: MICS 2019

As for fuels, STP is found to have low levels of primary access to clean fuels and technologies for cooking, heating and lighting. According to the MICS 2019, only 3% of the total population has access, with predominance in urban areas (4%). On the other hand, according to EMAE, only 5% of the energy produced in the country is generated through clean sources (hydro) and 95% through the use of diesel. Besides being an unsustainable mode of production for the state-owned company, which carries out its activity in a scenario of constant deficit, diesel has environmental implications that have deserved special attention from the Government. This situation is aggravated by the large deficit in collection, due to the difficulties families have in paying their consumption bill, which leads the company to accumulate enormous losses.

In this context, the Government has been working with partners to reverse the existing situation and to make alternative energy sources more available in the country. For example, with WB support, STP is implementing a USD 28 million project to rehabilitate the country's electricity sector for the period 2017 to 2024. The project aims to increase the production capacity of the Contador River Plant, located in the Northern Region, from 1.4 MW to 3 MW. This increase falls under the policy of energy transition to clean energy (hydropower), with positive impacts on the stabilization of the energy supply in the country. Another aspect of the project is the capacity building of EMAE, in the management, IT, commercial and losses components. It also aims to strengthen the capacity of the regulator, especially in terms of methodologies for setting tariffs.

International financial flows to support research, clean energy development and renewable energy production, including in hybrid systems, were USD 370,000 in 2017, having decreased to USD 10,000 in 2017 (OECD; IRENA).

In sum, the installed capacity of renewable energy generation in STP has experienced little fluctuation in the period between 2015 and 2018, having maintained, on average, around 12 Watts per capita, according to World Population Prospects data.

SDG 8



PROMOVER O CRESCIMENTO ECONÔMICO SUSTENTADO, INCLUSIVO E SUSTENTÁVEL, EMPREGO PLENO E PRODUTIVO E TRABALHO DECENTE PARA TODOS

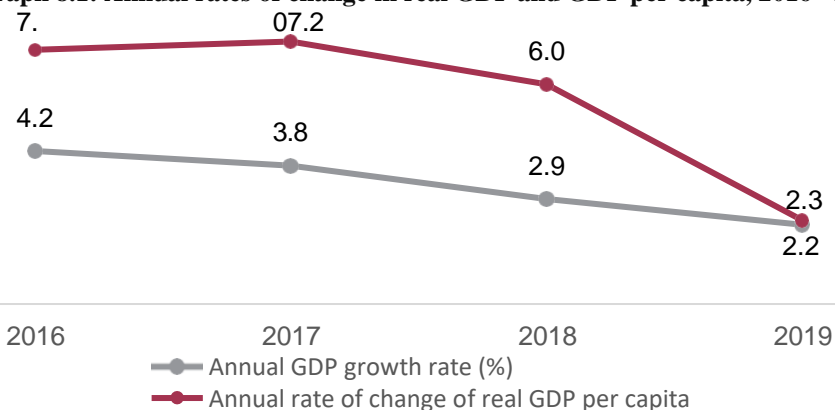
STP is a country with a small economy and extremely vulnerable to external shocks, extreme weather events and climate change. The economy is fragile, with scarce resources, a poorly diversified productive sector, essentially informal, and determined fundamentally by tourism and the practice of agriculture, which is responsible for the employment of more than 70%, in rural areas. To aggravate the situation, the COVID-19 pandemic triggered a socio-economic crisis that has been affecting the lives of the populations and the normal functioning of the institutions.

The country is dependent on ODA and FDI, mainly linked to oil exploration activities. According to the data II Business Census 2020, published by INE, in 2019 the country had 1,008 active enterprises that generated 10,019 jobs and a turnover of 5,350,916,998 Dobras. Most of the companies are in the Trade; Repair, Auto and Motorcycle sectors, accounting for 62.3% of the total; in the Accommodation and Catering sectors, (9.6%); and Manufacturing, (8%). The agricultural sector has only 17 active companies, representing 1.7% of the total. Regarding the spatial distribution of active enterprises, about 84% are in urban areas and two thirds of the total (63.5%) are in Água Grande District, 13.7% in Mé Zochi District and 6.6% in ARP. Cantagalo is the District with the least weight, with only 3.2% of the total. About two thirds of the top management of the enterprises are men, against only 33.3% of women. Most of the enterprises are informal (63.5%), that is, they do not have organized accounting, but they play an important role in generating employment and income for families. However, they have little contribution to the economy as a whole, which shows the need to work on formalizing these enterprises.

Imports play an important role in the country's economy, with an average annual value between 2013 and 2019 of about 3.150.418 thousand Dobras, according to INE data, and represented, in that same period, about 38% of the GDP (BCSTP). As for exports, it is very small, having covered, on average, during the period, only 7.5% of imports, which shows that the country's trade balance is very deficient. Cocoa is the main export product of the country, representing about 87% of the total value in 2015, decreasing to 53% in 2020, mainly due to the drought and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2021, cocoa exports accounted for about 80% of total export earnings. In recent years, palm oil is another product that has been gaining some importance in the export structure, having occupied the second position in 2020, with 30% of the total value.

Regarding the SDG target of sustaining economic growth per capita according to national circumstances and, in particular, an annual growth of at least 7% of GDP in less developed countries, according to data from the National Accounts (INE), the country is still far from achieving it. GDP has had a downward trajectory, in the period from 2016 to 2019, and the level of growth has been very low in view of the need to have sustainable economic growth per capita. In this period, there has been a slowdown in the country's economy from 4.2% in 2016 to 2.2% in 2019.

Graph 8.1: Annual rates of change in real GDP and GDP per capita, 2016 - 2019



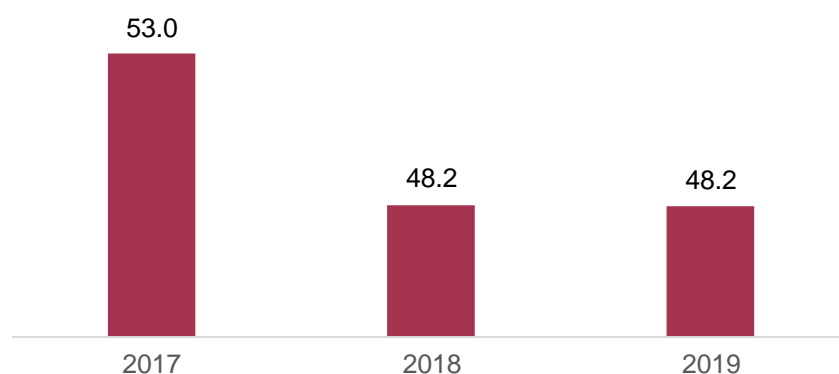
Source: INE, National Accounts

The variability observed in total GDP was also noted in the evolution of the growth rate of GDP per capita for the period, with the trajectory of the annual variation of GDP per capita following the same trend, rising from 7% in 2016 to 2.3% in 2019, which represents USD 1,785 and USD 2075 per person, respectively.

Notwithstanding this scenario, thanks to advances achieved by the country in key indicators such as education, health and life expectancy, STP is in the process of transitioning to a lower middle income country with maturation anticipated for 2024.

As already mentioned, the STP market is small, the economy is not very diversified, productivity is low, agriculture is subsistence and there is little innovation. There is little investment in the country's productive sectors, and with high levels of under-consumption. In 2017, on average, 27% of the population worked in the primary sector, mainly in agriculture and fishing, and 12% in the secondary sector (manufacturing). According to the INE, the annual rate of change in GDP per person employed rose from 53% in 2017 to 48.2% in 2019. This deceleration, in this indicator, shows the need for the country to continue working towards stimulating the economy, an important condition for generating employment and decent work.

Graph 8.2: Annual rate of change in GDP per person employed, 2017 - 2019



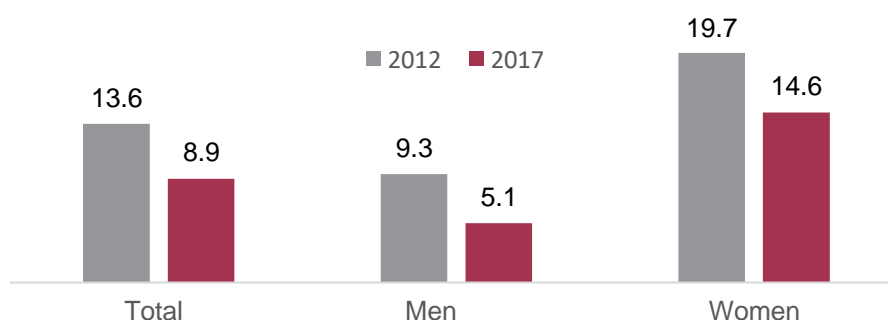
Source: INE, National Accounts

Informality, as already mentioned, is high in the country, especially in the primary sector. The formal sector employs less than a third (31.7%) of the working population, which means that most of STP's population works in the informal sector. The share of informal employment in the non-agricultural sector reached 45% in 2017 (INE, IOF 2017).

The reduction in economic growth is strongly expressed in the labor market, restricting opportunities to access employment and, consequently, labor income. In 2017, STP recorded an unemployment rate of 8.9%, with a positive evolution compared to the rate indicated by the 2012 Census, of 13.6%. Women and young people are the most affected by the unemployment phenomenon in the country and face greater restrictions in accessing the labor market, compared to men. This trend is aggravated in periods of low economic growth and reduced employment opportunities.

The unemployment rate in women in 2017 was about three times higher than men, while in young people this rate was 21.3%, compared to 7.7% in the population aged 25 to 44 years and 3.1% in the population aged 45 to 64 years (INE, IOF 2017).

Chart 8.3: Unemployment rate, by gender, 2017



Source: Census 2012 and IOF, 2017 (INE)

The unemployment rates among men, although remaining lower than those recorded for women, follow the same trend, corroborating the restrictions in access to the labor market as an effect of low economic growth. The unemployment rate is also higher among individuals with an average level of education.

In 2017, more than a fifth (22.6 per cent) of young people, i.e. the population aged between 15 and 24, were outside the education system and the labor market, with women accounting for almost twice as many as men (around 30 per cent). The main causes for not going to school, among young people neither studying nor working, are repetition or school dropout, for boys (34.6%), and early pregnancy, for girls (16.7%) (INE, IOF 2017).

As for child labor, there are still such bad practices in STP. For example, in 2017, the proportion of children aged between 5 and 17 years working (Child labor¹⁸) was 10.5%, which corresponds to 4,961 children, the majority being female (12.1%). Regarding age, the highest percentage was found in the age group of 5 to 11 years (13.4%), i.e. 2,723 children, followed by the age of 12 to 14 years (10.3%) (INE, MICS 2019).

Table 8.1: Proportion and number of children aged 5-17 in child labor by sex and age, 2019

	2019	
	%	N O.
Total	10,5	4 961
Male	8,9	2 476
Female	12,1	2 484
Age		
0 5 - 11	13,4	2 737
12 - 14	10,3	1 229
15 - 17	2,9	994

Source: INE, MICS 2019

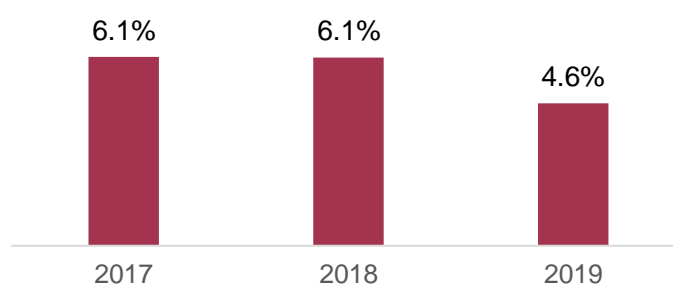
The Government is aware of the problem of child labor in the country and is doing everything possible to end this practice in all its forms by 2025. Although there is still no specific definition of child labor in the national legislation, the law prevents any individual under the age of 18 (minor) from being involved in any work that is considered heavy, unhealthy or dangerous. Additionally and in defense of children's rights, the State of Sao Tome has ratified the main conventions and protocols on the protection and promotion of the Rights of the Child, such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Government has made efforts to implement the principles outlined in these instruments, having drafted the National Child Protection Policy (2016). The country has been a member of the ILO since 1982 and has ratified the ILO's three conventions related to forced labor, minimum age of work and the prohibition of the worst forms of child labor.

In terms of accidents at work, according to the SNPCB, in 2019 around 1.41% of workers suffered fatal and non-fatal accidents at work, higher levels than those recorded in 2018 (1.04%). Men were the most affected (Chart 8.4, in annex).

Tourism is considered a strategic sector for the development of STP and the country has favorable conditions for its development. However, major investment is needed in the sector in order to qualify the country as an important destination, which is very attractive, with year-round sunshine, beautiful beaches and a very particular way of welcoming visitors. Portugal has been the main market sending tourists to STP, with around 50%, followed by Angola and France. However, the weight of tourism in the country's economy is very residual and tending to decrease. In 2016, the contribution of tourism to the economy of STP was only 6.1%, having decreased to 4.6% in 2019. With the COVID-19 pandemic, the sector was paralyzed, with resorts closing their doors, due to the restrictive travel measures imposed by the Government to cope with the spread of the virus causing the disease, which had an immediate impact on employment and the entire economy.

¹⁸ For comparability, participation in hazardous occupations or hazardous working conditions are not included. Therefore, only data from the MICS6 2019 is used.

Graph 8.5: Tourism as a percentage of GDP, 2017 - 2019



Source: INE, National Accounts

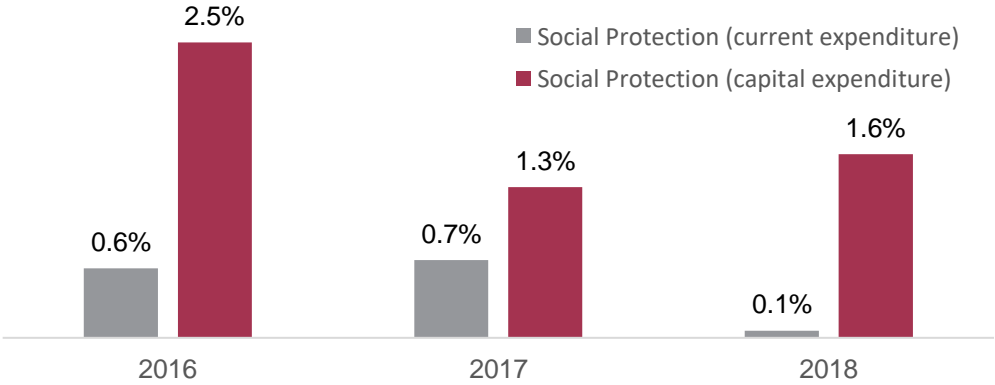
In terms of policies to promote sustainable tourism, which creates jobs and promotes culture and local products, STP has developed and is implementing the Strategic and Marketing Plan for Tourism in STP (2018), which defines the entire policy for the sector, especially in terms of promoting the sun and beach tourism product, associated with culture, and, as an alternative product, nautical tourism. There is a project that identified 10 farmsteads that should be targets for recovery and maintenance and, subsequently, be explored by private companies as tourist attractions. STP also created a tourism fund, hoping that with its operation, the country may have resources to adequately promote the sector, especially in terms of inspection and training. With regard to jobs in sustainable tourism-related branches of activity, in total tourism employment, only 4.6% of people work in transport or in hotels and restaurants, when in trade this level is 8.4% and in education it is 6.8% (INE, IOF 2017).

In terms of the capacity of national financial institutions to encourage the expansion of access to banking, insurance and financial services for all, the country has made important steps forward, but challenges remain. According to the IMF's Financial Development Index, which evaluates countries based on the depth, access and efficiency of their financial markets and institutions, STP's financial system is still considered deficient. The number of banks is insufficient to cover the needs of the population, which makes cash the most used means of payment in the country, at 73% (BCSTP). Regarding the availability of bank branches and ATMs, in 2018 the country had 25 branches per 100,000 adults and 28 per 100,000. However, they are poorly distributed at the level of the territory, with most being located in the Água Grande Region, which makes access to these important transaction instruments unequal. According to data from the BCSTP Financial Inclusion Survey (2018), about 38% of adults had a bank account, with 15% of accounts belonging to women. About a quarter had formal savings, 12% used internet banking (*Internet banking*) and 7% had access to formal credit (and only 15% of women). Regarding Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, around 82% did not have a bank account, which shows that the availability of banking services to users is still insufficient.

At the level of commitments and disbursements under the Aid for Trade Initiative, according to data from the Secretary of State for Trade, in 2019, STP had Dobras 8 million available for this purpose.

Regarding the overall strategy for youth employment and implementation of the ILO Global Jobs Pact, STP has developed and adopted a national youth employment strategy, containing the main policies for the sector. However, the allocation of resources has not yet been sufficient to implement the said Pact and the national strategy. According to data from DGT and INE, total expenditure of public funds for social protection and employment programs, as a proportion of national budgets and GDP, represented in 2016 around 0.6% of current expenditure and 2.5% of capital expenditure, having reduced in 2018 to 0.1% and 1.6%, respectively. The Government will continue to make efforts to improve the situation.

Figure 8.6: Total expenditure of public funds on social protection and employment programs as a proportion of national budgets and GDP, 2016 - 2018



Source: Direção do Tesouro and INE (National Accounts)

SDG 9



CONSTRUIR INFRAESTRUTURA RESILIENTE, PROMOVER A INDUSTRIALIZAÇÃO INCLUSIVA E SUSTENTÁVEL, E FOMENTAR A INOVAÇÃO

Investments in building infrastructure, innovation and industry are the main drivers of economic growth and development. These are dimensions of one of the 3Ps (Prosperity) of the 2030 Agenda, where resilient infrastructure, inclusive and sustainable industrialization and technological advancement come in. Technological advancements are also central and the Government is committed to finding permanent solutions to economic and environmental challenges, generation of new jobs, as well as promotion of energy efficiency.

In order to achieve the different goals of this SDG, the country has been working on the creation of adequate conditions to attract sustainable investments for the different areas and for all the Districts. However, there is still much work to be done, since national industry is still incipient, the investment in innovation is recent and the infrastructure in general lacks modernization, expansion and construction of new industries, introduction and strengthening of information and communication technologies. There are many constraints at the level of port and airport infrastructures, in terms of quality, which condition the development of the country, since it imports more than 90% of the products it needs. Therefore, these constraints greatly affect the transport of cargo and passengers in the country.

In terms of **air transport**, the country needs significant improvements, in terms of investments in the modernization, expansion and security of existing airports (ARP and on the island of São Tomé). Between 2017 and 2019, an average of 113,000 passengers per year were transported, with a peak in 2018 of around 124,000. By 2020, with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a considerable decrease, by about 60%.

In terms of **maritime transport**, the country has three ports, all with no capacity to receive large vessels, two of which are in the capital and the third on the island of Príncipe, managed by the state-owned Empresa Nacional de Administração dos Portos (ENAPORT). The main vessels that dock at the Port of São Tomé are of the multi-service type (solid bulk, general cargo, etc.) and container transport. As far as cargo transport is concerned, the country does not have a deep-water port, which forces long-haul ships to anchor in the open sea, further increasing the price of products. There is no regular maritime transport service that connects the ARP and the African continent. In order to minimize these constraints, ENAPOR has been making some investments with a view to improving efficiency and safety of port operations, decrease production and marketing costs (internal/external). In 2017, ENAPOR invested 1.2 million Euros in the requalification and expansion of the Container Storage Park in the southern part of the Port of Ana Chaves, but still insufficient for the real needs.

In terms of evolution, this sector followed the same trend as the air sector, but was not affected by the aforementioned Pandemic, according to ENAPORT data. Maritime transport is the main means used to supply the market, having transported to the country about 163,400 tons of goods in 2017 and 187,700 tons in 2020.

Table 9.1: Passenger and freight transport, by type of transport, 2017 - 2020

	2017	2018	2019	2020
Air Transport				
Passengers carried (No.)	109 721	124 164	106 385	42 963
Loads (Kg)	200 107	250 215	193 894	213 547
Maritime Transport				
Passengers carried (No.)	501	2 122	1 103	41
Loads (Kg)	163 390 675	164 735 751	162 343 993	187 679 288

Source: National Institute of Civil Aviation and ENAPOR, 2021

The situation on the island of Príncipe is more difficult, as it has no ports or international airports, and all supplies come from São Tomé, which makes products and services more expensive, as connections are irregular and expensive.

As mentioned above, the manufacturing industry in the country is still incipient and the data from the National Accounts (INE) show that the added value of the manufacturing industry, as a percentage of GDP, has been decreasing over the years, from 1.588 Dobras per person in 2015 to 1.449 in 2017. In the opposite direction has evolved the added value in manufacturing *per capita*, going from 1.25, in 2015, to 1.42 in 2017.

Table 9.2: Value added of manufacturing as a share of GDP and per capita, 2015 - 2017

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Value added of the manufacturing industry as a percentage of GDP	1 414	1563	1 588	1486	1 449
Value added in manufacturing per capita= VA/population	1,32	1,25	1,25	1,36	1,42

Source: INE, National Accounts, 2021

Regarding the proportion of micro enterprises with loans taken out or benefiting from credit lines, in 2017, just over 80% of Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) did not have a bank account and found it very difficult to get a bank credit due to the tight requirements of banks.

With regard to CO2 emissions, every year the country produces 22,000 tons of waste, with a tendency to increase every year. With regard to carbon dioxide, there is an increase in CO2 emissions from the energy industry sectors, the largest emitter, with approximately 48%, followed by transport, with 43%, and finally, residential, with only 9%. The rural exodus accelerates the country's urbanization process, in a disorganized manner, aggravating poverty, especially in urban areas, with the consequent degradation of the quality of life of the population and the environment¹⁹. According to the OECD, in 2015, STP received about USD 3.1 million in ODA and other official flows for infrastructure, with this amount set to reach USD 8.6 million in 2019.

The ICT sector also suffers from many constraints, mainly related to the smallness of the national market and the low purchasing power of the population. There are only two operators in the sector, with great asymmetry between them, since the incumbent operator has a market share of more than 80%, which hinders competition to the detriment of the population. The market lacks a modern legal framework for effective regulation and has a deficit in terms of trained human resources. However, in recent years the country has made significant investments in the ICT sector, with a view to expanding and making available more and better services to the population.

The investment in electronic communication increased from 45,562,221 thousand Dobras, in 2017, to 51,220,821, in 2019, according to data from the General Regulatory Authority (AGER). In terms of revenue, approximately 335 million Dobras were collected in 2018 with regard to traffic processed, compared to 364 million in 2017. The decrease was due, fundamentally, to the economic difficulties of the populations. In 2020, the country had about 174,203 thousand mobile subscribers, representing 83%, in terms of penetration. In that year, the number of fixed internet subscribers was 1,707, an increase of 15.4% compared to 2017. However, the penetration rate is still residual, at around 0.8% year-on-year.

According to AGER estimates, the percentage of the population covered by a mobile network was 93% in 2020, with 191,178 thousand people covered with the 3G network, which represents an increase of around 4% compared to 2017.

¹⁹ Government of DRSTP / UNDP. *National report in preparation for the Third International Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Apia, Samoa 2014*. July 2013

SDG 10



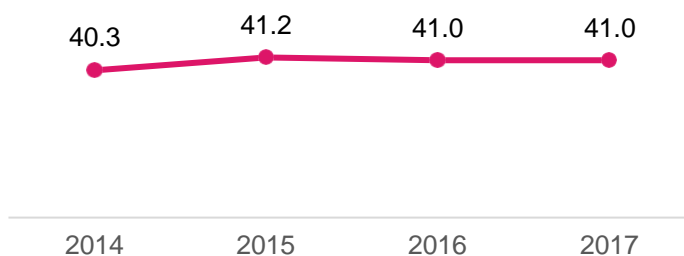
REDUZIR A DESIGUALDADE DENTRO DOS PAÍSES E ENTRE ELES

STP has had a lot of inequality over the years, as attested by the Gini Coefficient, commonly used to measure inequality in income distribution. Between 2010 and 2017 there was a worsening of inequality in income distribution in STP, with this indicator increasing from 32.9% to 40.8%, (INE: IOF 2017; WB). This result is indicative of high levels of inequalities prevailing in the country, which manifest themselves in various forms and in various sectors. For example, the country is still faced with much inequality in relation to gender, where women have less access to the labor market, are more occupied in domestic chores, have less access to internet, low levels of political participation, compared to men.

There are also high levels of disparities relative to regions, which manifest themselves, for example, in terms of access to water, sanitation, ICT, employment. Another important aspect, highlighted in the 2018 Human Rights report, has to do with the protection of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people, which is not provided for in the law. Therefore, there are many challenges and the Government, aware of this situation, which prevents the country from having harmonious and sustainable growth that involves everyone, has defined, as one of the strategic axes in the NSDP of STP 2020-2024, "*Social inclusion and protection and reducing social inequalities and regional asymmetries, including the improvement of living conditions and social inclusion, education and vocational training of excellence and an integrated health and social protection system*". Several actions have been developed in order to face structural issues and implement strategies on different fronts, in a transversal way, not only at the level of income generation, but also in terms of access to opportunities, aiming at reducing inequalities in the country.

STP has a law prohibiting discrimination against persons with disabilities. However, it lacks an obligation to create appropriate access conditions for persons with disabilities to buildings, transport or other services and places that are difficult for them to move around. In some classrooms, conditions have already been created for hearing and visually impaired students to attend classes, and the Government will continue its policy of more and greater inclusion. The share of labor in GDP, including remuneration and social protection transfers from 2014 to 2017, has virtually remained stationary at around 41% per annum. According to data from the SDG Global Database, the proportion of people in STP living in households with an income below 50% of the median income in 2017 was 17.0%, higher than the level recorded in 2010, which was 8%.

Graph 10.1: Share of labor in GDP, including compensation and social protection transfers, 2014 - 2017



Source: Global SDG Database

As for the total flow of resources for development, according to the OECD, STP received USD 23 million in 2015, with this amount increasing to USD 50 million in 2019.

SDG 11



TORNAR AS CIDADES E OS ASSENTAMENTOS HUMANOS INCLUSIVOS, SEGUROS, RESILIENTES E SUSTENTÁVEIS

Santomean cities still face many challenges, especially in terms of urbanization itself. In STP, Municipalism was implemented in 1992, but is still in the process of affirmation. The municipalities (Districts) are autonomous by law, but in practice they depend almost 100% on transfers from the State Budget and there is no clear strategy for their development.

The cities in STP have grown in a disorganized manner, due to the lack of an adequate urbanization policy. Sanitation problems persist, with an emphasis on sewage treatment, solid waste, rainwater drainage and access to quality electricity, among others. The availability of drinking water for the population is limited. Even in the country's capital, Sao Tome, the water supply system is deficient. In terms of urban infrastructure, roads are in need of improvement and there is a large housing deficit. This situation is aggravated by the population exodus from rural areas towards the cities, mainly in search of better living conditions. Unfortunately, the country still lacks a coherent policy for urban settlements, with security and citizen protection mechanisms involving public authorities and communities, which makes the situation difficult with regard to harmonious land use planning.

According to information from the Global SDG Database, in 2018, about 86% of STP's population lived in urban areas, in non-classical or substandard housing.

In addition to the conditions of habitability, there are still constraints associated with access to safe, accessible, sustainable and affordable transport systems for all, improving road safety, through the expansion of the public transport network, with special attention to the needs of people in vulnerable situations, women, children, people with disabilities and the elderly. Despite the lack of data to assess the situation, the Government of STP, aware of the challenges facing the sector, has been carrying out, with the support of partners, a series of actions to reverse the situation. With the WB, it is implementing a transport project worth USD 29 million for the period 2019-2024, aimed at the infrastructure and rehabilitation of the marginal road to the North, as well as building the capacity of the company responsible for road management and maintenance (GIMES).

In STP, the numbers of deceased persons, missing persons and those directly affected due to disasters, as described in SDG 1, are negligible, despite an increase in the two islands. The proportion of deceased persons, missing persons and directly affected persons, due to disasters, increased from 0.18 per 1000 inhabitants in 2017 to 0.28 in 2019, according to the SNPCB.

Table 11.1: Number of people killed, people missing and people directly affected due to disasters, per 1000 population, 2017 - 2019

	2017	2018	2019
Sao Tome and Principe	0,181	0,284	0,278
Autonomous Region of Príncipe	0,0	2,210	2,280

Source: SNPCB

Regarding the municipal solid waste regularly collected and with adequate final discharge in the total municipal solid waste generated, by cities, in STP there is still no practice of solid waste collection and treatment. The collection is very poor and there are no adequate mechanisms for its treatment. Normally, it is an activity of the responsibility of the municipalities, but the waste is deposited in dumps (nature) and burnt in the open air, which has constituted a serious environmental problem, with impacts at the health level of the population.

According to data from the National Plan for Integrated Management of Urban Solid Waste - STP, 2010-2015, in 2010 the country produced

21,336 tons of Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) and the expectation is that this figure will increase from 24,874 tons in 2015 to 28,269 tons in 2020. At the District level, according to the same source, more than a third of MSW was produced in Água Grande District and a quarter (25%) in Mé-Zochi District. At the opposite extreme are the Districts of Caué and Lobata, with only 4% in each of those periods, as shown in Table 11.2, in annex.



ENSURING SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION PATTERNS

STP, due to its characteristics, geographical location and poor human intervention, has been greatly affected by climate change, with consequences in terms of environmental deterioration. Therefore, a new political approach is required, but also changes in citizens' attitudes regarding the way they produce and consume for the benefit of the environment and not to mortgage future generations. Indeed, the country has adopted a set of policies that promote resource efficiency, waste prevention and management and innovation in production processes and service provision.

With adoption of the 2030 Agenda, STP developed its own strategy in 2015, called STP's Transformation Agenda on the Horizon - 2030, in which it incorporated sustainable consumption and production into national action plans, either as a priority, or a target in national policies. Additionally, in 2017, it produced several important strategic documents:

- NDP 2017-2021;
- Blue Economy Transition Strategy;
- Agricultural and Rural Development and Fisheries Policy Charter;
- Sustainable consumption policies at regional level and aligned with sustainable development;
- Plan for sustainable consumption and production actions incorporated as a priority in the district policies in accordance with sustainable development;
- Lower Energy Cost Development Plan for STP 2018;
- National Forestry Development Plan;
- National Strategy and National Action Plan for Adaptation to Climate Change.

As for the goal of substantially reducing waste production through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse, the country already has some legislation regulating waste management, however, insufficient, according to the Plan for Solid Urban Waste Management (PGRSU) 2018-2023. The waste collection and treatment system is very deficient, as already noted in SDG 11, and occurs only in the urban environment and the existence of containers is limited to the main cities, such as the capital, so that much of the waste is deposited on the ground. Furthermore, the waste is not classified and is indiscriminately deposited in the different rubbish dumps around the country and burnt in the open air. This situation creates a serious problem in terms of public health, mainly due to the presence of hazardous waste, but also due to the level of CO₂ emissions into the atmosphere, as well as other local pollutant gases. The country has not yet been able to adequately measure the production of waste as well as the level of recycling. In order to overcome the situation, the Government is working on the installation of incinerators, capable of incinerating hazardous waste from hospitals, health centers and from the spraying process. Besides the need for more financial and technical means, it is necessary and urgent that the country moves forward in the effective implementation of the National Plan for Integrated Management of Solid Urban Waste.

Regarding international multilateral agreements on hazardous waste and other chemicals, in the field of environment, STP has been complying with the commitments and obligations in reporting as required by the different agreements and conventions. For example, according to data from the SDG Global Database, in 2020, the country has complied with 20% of the Basel Convention; 33% of the Minamata Convention; fully the commitments of the Montreal Protocol; 82.8% of the Rotterdam Convention and 62.5% of the Stockholm Convention.

At the level of public procurement and the various sustainable action plans drawn up, STP has been implementing various policy measures in order to encourage best practices. Law No. 8/2009, which approves the Regulation on Tendering and Public Procurement, provides for various measures in this regard. On the other hand, the Strategic Marketing Plan for Tourism Development in STP, 2018 - 2025, contains all the country's policies and strategies related to sustainable tourism, with follow-up and evaluation mechanisms.

SDG 13



TOMAR MEDIDAS URGENTES PARA COMBATER A MUDANÇA DO CLIMA E SEUS IMPACTOS

STP, due to its location in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean and on the Equator, is a very vulnerable country from an environmental point of view, affected by rising sea levels, floods, droughts, with negative impacts, especially on coastal areas.

By ratifying in 1999 the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992) and in 2008 the Kyoto Protocol (1997), STP has demonstrated its firm commitment to combating climate change and its harmful effects on humanity. The signing of the Paris Agreement in 2015 is a further expression of the country's concern and continued commitment to deal with climate change and address its consequences, both at the level of SIDS, of which STP is part, and at the general level of the entire Planet, the well-being and survival of human beings.

Climate Change is already having visible effects in STP. The accelerated rate of sea level rise is already causing severe coastal degradation and salinization. There is an increased incidence of flash floods, reduced rainfall and hence river flows, more intense extreme weather winds and a highly variable climate. Such impacts could undermine development initiatives aimed at alleviating poverty and enabling sustainable development and building a more resilient nation as envisaged in the STP 2030 Vision. Despite its low growth rate, STP has taken actions to mitigate the many social, economic and environmental constraints, arising from Climate Change, and implement commitments to the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC). Although the GHG emission rate is very low, the country considers mitigation, adaptation and mainstreaming of climate change in all national activities as an opportunity to re-design its development, in a sustainable way.

Resolutely committed to addressing the environmental issue that is currently facing the country and the world as a development challenge, the country has equipped itself with a legal framework that allows it to protect itself from the main consequences of climate change. This process involved, in the first place, the adoption of the Basic Law on the Environment (Law no. 10/99, of 15 April), which defines the bases of the policy for sustainable development, which was followed by a legislative package consisting of the following legislation Law on the Conservation of Fauna, Flora and Protected Areas - Law no. 11/1999; Law on Forests - Law no. 5/2001; Law on the Obô National Park of Sao Tome and Principe Park - Laws no. 6 and 7/ 2006; Law on Fisheries and Fish Resources - Law no. 9/2001; Law on Sea Turtles - Law no. 6/2014; Hunting Law - Law n° 01/2016; Regulation on Environmental Impact Assessment - Regulation n° 37/1999; Decree on the Extraction of Inerts in Coastal Areas and Rivers - Law n° 35/1999; Decree on the Management of Urban Solid Waste - Decree n° 36/1999; Framework Law on Water Resources - Law n° 07/2018.

From an institutional point of view, the country created, in 2007, through Presidential Decree No. 2/2007, the DGA, the structure of the ministry that oversees the sector, as the body responsible for the execution and coordination of all Government policies and strategies in matters of the environment, namely having as its mission the implementation of all environmental Conventions. It also created, in July 2012, through Decree No. 13/2012, the National Committee for Climate Change (CNMC), which aims to concert, manage, train and raise awareness among the various Santomean agents in matters related to Climate Change, including policies and measures that promote or result in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, as well as measures that reduce the vulnerability of the economy and populations of STP, adapting them to the adverse impacts of climate change.

As noted in SDGs 1 and 11, the number of deceased persons, missing persons and persons directly affected due to disasters per 100,000 inhabitants is low in both Sao Tome and Principe, notwithstanding the upward trend between 2017 and 2019.

The country adopted its Risk Profile in line with the Sendai Framework and the results²⁰ were disaggregated by different sectors using the same categories of indicators as in the said Framework: direct economic losses (C1); agricultural sector (C2); productive assets and services sector (C3); housing sector (C4); critical infrastructure and transport (C5).

According to the results, annually on average, there is a direct economic loss of 2.1 million USD, representing about 0.14% of the total value of exposure in the current climate, with a higher incidence in the services, housing and transport sectors. There are also annual losses in agricultural production (C2), on average around 1.2 million USD, due to the effect of climate.

Livestock is also an affected sector, particularly livestock living in drought-affected areas, at about 14% of total livestock. On an annual average, the areas affected by the floods produce about 1.42% of the national GDP, which corresponds to about USD 5 million per year. Under current climatic conditions, on average 23,000 people (12% of the Santomean population, 2016) are affected annually by droughts and this is not expected to change in the future on São Tomé Island.

²⁰ STP: Disaster Risk Profile. Available at: https://www.preventionweb.net/files/63271_reportsaotomeptfinalcompressed.pdf

Flooding has had considerable impacts in STP and, although there is no record of climate-related deaths and missing persons and disasters, it has affected on average about 700 people per year, about 0.36% of the total population. According to available data²¹, between 1970 and 2015, the temperature in STP increased by about 1°C. Climate projections indicate an increase of 1.5°C up to 3°C in the medium term (2050-2074) and 2°C up to 4.5°C in the long term (2071-2095).

Aware of the fragility of ecosystems and the vulnerabilities that characterize it, STP has been implementing various policy measures, with support from its partners, in order to mitigate the effects of climate change. The Government is working, with WB support, on the regional infrastructure project linked to erosion and resilience to climate change, in which the country is one of the beneficiaries. This is an important project with a budget of USD 15 million for the period 2018-2023, aimed at the most vulnerable fishing communities of the two islands that make up the country, but with a focus on coastal areas (6 beaches), since whenever there are floods (sea invasion), it takes with it the fishermen's canoes and destroys homes in the communities. This project aims to create resilience by empowering fishermen in the different risk zones, providing navigation tools, such as life rafts, in order to avoid the loss of life of fishermen with the occurrence of storms. There is work underway in places considered vulnerable, where settlements are being built. For example, the Roça Sundy Community Sustainable Resettlement Project "Promised Land", where around 500 people, approximately 130 families, residents of Roça Sundy are participating in voluntary resettlement in Promised Land, in a sustainable and participative project, a pioneering initiative in the Island of Príncipe. This project is innovative because it involves a participatory decision-making process, where the voice of the community to be resettled is heard during all phases of the process, and where dialogue between the parties encourages agreement between them.

Another important aspect of this initiative is the focus on the sustainable urbanization of the resettlement, which pays attention to the sustainability needs of the community and promotes resilient infrastructures and public spaces and facilities appropriate to the socio-economic reality of Príncipe. The purpose is to improve the living conditions of the Roça Sundy community, respecting human rights aspects, applying special care to minimize the impact on environmental and ecological issues of the project, respecting the unique ecosystem of Príncipe.

STP has been integrating mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning measures in school curricula. Therefore, the country is creating the conditions to integrate this theme in school curricula for primary and secondary education, there is already a manual for this purpose and a pilot experience has already been conducted in secondary education, under the subject "Environmental Education". Initiatives are underway to integrate this theme in the pedagogical training of teachers in Higher Education.

As for the ARP, internationally known as the "Galapagos of Africa", the island of Príncipe has an exceptional biodiversity, both terrestrial and marine, with a great wealth of endemic species. For example, the humid forest situated in the south of Príncipe Island, maintains its originality and in it unique species are represented. Likewise, the fauna in Príncipe Island is particularly rich in endemic species, many of which are in danger of extinction, such as monkeys, turtles, various birds, etc. However, the ARP is, also, highly vulnerable to flooding, with areas representing average annual losses of about 0.80% of the national GDP, which corresponds to about 2.8 million USD per year.

²¹ www.preventionweb.net/resilient-africawww.unisdr.org

In order to mitigate the effects of climate change, the regional government drew up its Sustainable Development Plan - "Príncipe 2030" 2030, which contemplates actions aimed at climate change resilience. It has set as a goal, by 2022, to develop and implement a disaster risk management plan, to include mapping of risk zones, early warning and response systems and teams, adaptation and monitoring. These actions are aligned with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction by local government.

Also at the level of the ARP, the Sustainable Development Plan - "Príncipe 2030" incorporates a strand focused on education and environmental awareness for waste management and preservation of terrestrial and marine ecosystems, with civic participation, especially of young people. This axis proposes actions linked to global citizenship education; education for sustainable development (including on climate change), where they are included in national education policies; curricula; teacher education; and student assessment. These actions aim to create awareness around the problematic of climate change, its impacts and mitigation measures. In order to reduce the environmental impacts, derived from deforestation for planting, the PVR, through the Directorate of Forestry, implemented a reforestation program in 2017, which consisted of planting 5,000 trees per year, and has been running to date. Another aspect worth highlighting has to do with the restoration of mangroves that are extremely important due to their functions as nurseries for the reproduction of various marine species, coastal protection against strong winds and cyclones, soil stabilization against erosion, bio-filtration of pollutants, etc. Unfortunately, they had been disappearing due to misuse. In this context, the Directorate of Forests, in partnership with the Association of Friends of the Reserve of Príncipe Island, has been creating nurseries with a view to planting mangroves in degraded areas, since it is a little known species in the region and the results are very positive. Plastic has also been a serious problem for the environment at the ARP level. Hence, an in-depth work was done, which included a campaign on the collection of plastic by the population, who, in exchange, received a thermos for every three plastics. Additionally, the mangrove nurseries, which were made using plastics, were replaced by dry bamboo during the decomposition phase and the results have been very positive. Also noteworthy is the glass bottle recycling project, whose process culminates in its transformation into jewelry. This project has been very important from the environmental point of view, but it has also contributed to the generation of income for the families involved.

Within the scope of the Third National Communication, STP listed the actions it has been developing to strengthen institutional, systemic and individual capacity to implement adaptation, mitigation and technology transfer and development actions, so that it can achieve sustainable, resilient and low carbon development. These measures will be supported by a technology transfer strategy appropriate to national circumstances. To this end, the country made a diagnosis of its needs, in terms of technology transfer, and, based on the results, defined a set of actions to be implemented. In the needs assessment, the country identified two types of technologies: (1) greenhouse gas mitigation technologies and (2) adaptation technologies. To benefit from the transfer of technologies, the Energy and Transport, Agriculture and Forestry sectors were considered, as they are traditionally the largest emitters of greenhouse gases.

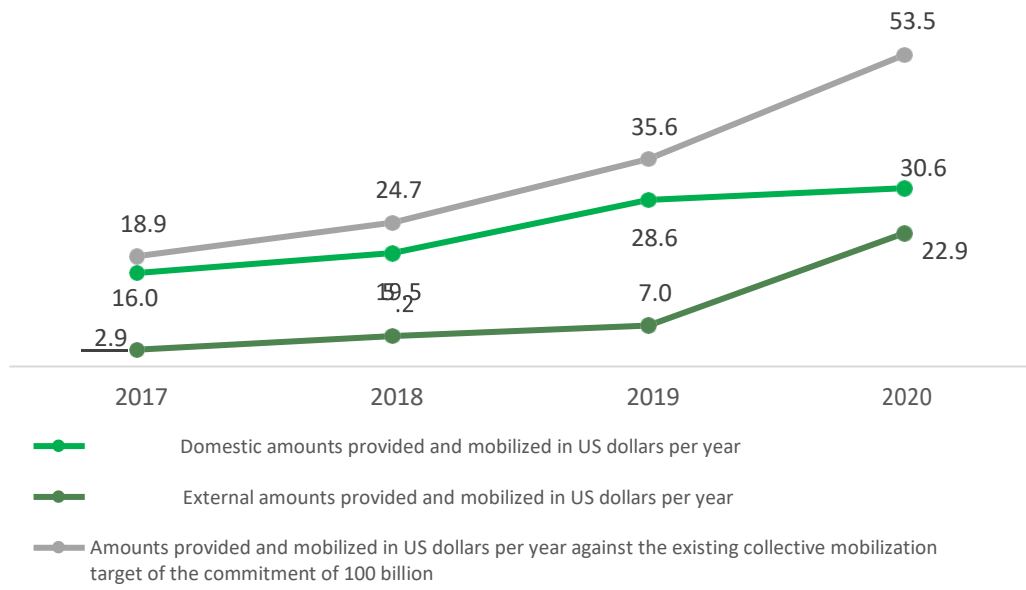
In terms of financial resources, in 2020, the country benefited from USD 53.5 million, out of the USD 100 billion provided and mobilized per year, within the scope of the implementation of target 13.a²², which represents an increase of over 180% compared to the amounts received by the country in 2017. As for domestic resources provided and mobilized, the amounts increased from USD 16 million in 2017 to USD 30.6 million in 2020; the external amounts provided and mobilized this year were USD 22.9 million (DDP, 2021).

According to information from MNECC and ENPAB 2015-2020, STP has benefited, within the framework of international cooperation, from the implementation of projects for technical and institutional capacity building in environmental protection and conservation. The following projects stand out: UNDP - Joint Project on Environmental Institutions and Legislation in Africa; European Union - ECOFAC Project, on forest ecosystems in Central Africa; Germany - GTZ Project; Japanese Government and UNDP

- Project on Adaptation to Climate Change in the Interior (AAP); GEF/BM - Project on Adaptation to Climate Change in the Coastal Zones of São Tomé; GEF/IDA - Project on an integrated ecosystem approach to the integration and conservation of Biodiversity in the Buffer Zone; GEF/UNDP - Projects on the promotion of Sustainable Environment and Climate Resilience and the strengthening of Climate Information and Early Warning Systems in West and Central Africa.

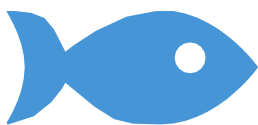
²² Implement the commitment made by developed countries in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change [UNFCCC] to jointly mobilise USD 100 billion per year, starting in 2020, from a variety of sources, to meet the needs of developing countries, in the context of meaningful mitigation actions and transparent implementation; and operationalise the Green Climate Fund by capitalising it as soon as possible.

Graph 13.1: Amount mobilized (Million USD) for the USD 100 billion commitment, 2017 - 2020



Source: Directorate of Public Debt (DDP), 2021

SDG 14



CONSERVAÇÃO E USO SUSTENTÁVEL DOS OCEANOS, DOS MARES E DOS RECURSOS MARINHOS PARA O DESENVOLVIMENTO SUSTENTÁVEL

STP, despite being a country of small territorial dimensions (1,001 km²), has a maritime area of relative importance, with a continental platform of about 1,500 km² and an EEZ of 160,000 km², clearly the greatest natural wealth of the country. This wealth represents an important source of food for the country's population, the generation of many jobs and income, particularly for coastal communities.

STP is a country with a broad tradition of fish consumption, with an average of 23.6 kg/hab/year, a value that is well above the world average (17 kg per capita) and the other African countries that have an average of 8.3 kg per capita. According to data from the Directorate General of Fisheries, this consumption represents 70% of the animal protein ingested by the population, while the world average is only 15% (Third National Communication, 2019). The artisanal fishing sector (predominant) absorbs 25% of the country's labor force, consisting of men who work in catching activities and women (palaiês) who practice selling, mainly in markets. About 3,051 artisanal fishermen operate in the 44 landing sites, 29 of which are located in São Tomé (Third National Communication, 2019). Therefore, the sea is a strategic resource for the development of STP, so it is urgent to promote a paradigm shift in order to transform it into one of the main anchors of development, diversification and specialization of the São Toméan economy in the coming decades. It is strategic to boost STP's development from the sea through a holistic, ambitious and sustainable approach.

The status of demersal and pelagic stocks in STP territorial waters is largely unknown. The authorities do not conduct regular fisheries research, mainly due to lack of funding and research resources, and little data is available on catches by the national fleet or other factors that would allow reliable stock assessments²³. Demersal or groundfish consist of Serranidae (Cherne, Whiting, Cod and Sootfish), Holocentridae (Khaki), Scianidae (Corvina), Litjanidae (Deepwater Red, Earth Red and Pargo), Sparidae (Blood Red, Sun Red, Malagueta) and Moreidae (Moray) and some sharks and rays. The large pelagic vertebrates consist of, among others, Istiophoridae (Andala fish), Xipiididae (Smoke fish), Scombridae (Olêdê, Judeu and Olho Grosso) as well as large tunas, which are migratory species. As for the small pelagic vertebrates, the Clupeidae (Sardines), Scombridae (small tunas, Fulufulu, Mackerel, Sawfish), Carangidae (Bonito, Olho-grosso, Sêlê, Corcovado, Carapau, Osso-mole), Mugilidae (Tainhas), Gobiidae (peixinho), Exocetidae (Voador) and Moreidae (Maxipombo) stand out²⁴.

Fishing contributed on average 6.5% of GDP between 2013 and 2017²⁵, far short of its real potential. However, fishing activity has been highly affected by overfishing. This trend is mainly due to fishing and the abandonment of traditional fishing techniques in favor of unsustainable practices, such as the use of explosives, the use of nets with inappropriate mesh sizes and underwater fishing (Third National Communication, 2019), coupled with weak governance of the sector. To address overexploitation of marine resources, STP should improve data collection, introduce co-management of fishing facilities with fishing communities, and finally consider implementing a catch reconstruction program. The first priority is to improve the Government's capacity to collect data on the number of fishing boats and the volumes and types of species being caught. Data collection should be undertaken in collaboration with the fishing community to raise awareness on the importance of sectoral governance and enforcement of fishing licenses. Co-management of the landing infrastructure will help reduce post-catch losses and relieve pressure on fish stocks. Once these two priorities have been addressed, the Government will be better able to decide whether a catch reconstruction program is justified.²⁶

In order to promote sustainable fishing and combat illegal fishing, one of the main threats to the sustainable exploitation of marine

²³ WB. Country Economic Memorandum for STP: Summary Report. Available at <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/656351570563734606/pdf/Turning-Smallness-into-Uniqueness-Six-Key-Challenges-to-Unlock-Sao-Tome-and-Principe-Growth-s-Potential-Summary-Report.pdf>

²⁴ DRSTP. Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment / Directorate General of Environment. National Report on the State of Biodiversity of STP. September 2007

²⁵ WB. Country Economic Memorandum to STP : Summary Report . Available at [At https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/656351570563734606/pdf/Turning-Smallness-into-Uniqueness-Six-Key-Challenges-to-Unlock-Sao-Tome-and-Principe-Growth-s-Potential-Summary-Report.pdf](https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/656351570563734606/pdf/Turning-Smallness-into-Uniqueness-Six-Key-Challenges-to-Unlock-Sao-Tome-and-Principe-Growth-s-Potential-Summary-Report.pdf)

²⁶ WB. Country Economic Memorandum for STP: Summary Report. Available at <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/656351570563734606/pdf/Turning-Smallness-into-Uniqueness-Six-Key-Challenges-to-Unlock-Sao-Tome-and-Principe-Growth-s-Potential-Summary-Report.pdf>

resources, and in line with the international community, STP has adhered to the International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (1 April 1966), the Regional Convention on Fisheries Cooperation between African States bordering the Atlantic Ocean (FAO, 5 July 1991), the Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (22 November 2009) and the International Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (FAO, 2001). In addition, STP is an integral part of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tuna (ICCAT). In terms of fisheries control, there is the Multinational Operations Centre, based in Gabon, which also covers STP and Equatorial Guinea. The countries are networked with this Centre, which monitors all fishing boats in the said territorial waters. In the case of STP, there is a list identifying the vessels that are allowed to fish in the country's territorial waters. STP also maintains cooperation with Portugal, which has deployed a vessel to patrol and combat illegal fishing in its seas, always having on board the presence of a national fisheries inspector to help in case of need. However, the country should create the conditions to have its own means, namely the acquisition of a patrol boat, with all the conditions to face the practice of illegal fishing in the country, with gains for its economy.

It should also be noted that STP is a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. In terms of national legislation, the country approved, in November 2021, a new Fisheries Law, which aims to combat illegal fishing in the waters of the archipelago and promote the sustainable development of the fisheries sector. This new law allows the National Coast Guard to board and inspect vessels suspected of illegal fishing without having fisheries inspectors on board, a condition that was imposed by the previous fisheries legislation (2001). The country also has Law No. 6/2014 of 11 April, which adopts the legal framework prohibiting the capture and marketing of Sea Turtles and their products.

At policy level, STP developed and has been implementing the Blue Economy Transition Strategy (2019), given the importance of activities linked to the sea and oceans for the strategic and sustainable development of the country.

³² WB. Country Economic Memorandum for STP: Summary Report. Available at <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/656351570563734606/pdf/Turning-Smallness-into-Uniqueness-Six-Key-Challenges-to-Unlock-Sao-Tome-and-Principe-Growth-s-Potential-Summary-Report.pdf>

SDG 15



PROTEGER, RECUPERAR E PROMOVER O USO SUSTENTÁVEL DOS ECOSISTEMAS TERRESTRE, GERIR DE FORMA SUSTENTÁVEL AS FLORESTAS, COMBATER A DESERTIFICAÇÃO, DETER E REVERTER A DEGRADAÇÃO DA TERRA E DETER A PERDA DE BIODIVERSIDADE

STP, due to its climatological and orographic characteristics, is characterized by being very rich in terms of dense forests, with disparate climates depending on the region, relief and altitude. According to data from the General Directorate of Forests, in 2017, about 30% of the territory was covered by forest area. The main forest ecosystems found on the islands of STP are divided into forest ecosystems **of the low-altitude region**, which comprises mangroves, shrub and herbaceous savannah, shade forest and secondary forest, and forest **ecosystems of the high-altitude region**, which comprises high-altitude forest situated between 1,000 and 1,800m, high-altitude forest situated between 1,800 and 2,000m and fog forest (above 1,800m).

Unfortunately, in recent years, there has been much degradation of forests, especially those located in the lower regions. This is mainly due to the implementation of the policy of privatization of agricultural enterprises, which started in 1991, of timber exploitation and forest conversion activities. It is also due to the **Land Distribution Program**, started in 1993, in which the Government distributed about 27,121 ha of land to the populations, being 10,362 ha destined to family agriculture and 7,759 ha to medium agricultural companies. Despite the positive economic effects for the populations, this program had negative impacts at the environmental level, with the unrestrained and illegal felling of trees. This situation has persisted over time and has spread to many regions of the country, with serious impacts on the environment, especially at climate level, with rising temperatures, but also on the level of humidity, soil fertility and wildlife, which has been altered.

In STP the proportion of important sites for terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity covered by protected areas, by ecosystem type, had a tenuous evolution from 0.03% in 2017 to 0.04% in 2019, according to DGA data.

Table 15.1: Proportion of important sites for terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity covered by protected areas, by ecosystem type, 2017 - 2019

	2017	2018	2019
Forest area	90 650	90 623	90 595
Proportion	0,03%	0,03%	0,04%

Source: Ministry of Agriculture, 2021

Because of the environmental degradation that has been occurring and given the need to ensure the conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biodiversity, to improve their capacity to provide benefits that are essential for sustainable development, STP has adopted a set of measures, namely, the establishment in 2006, of the **National System of Protected Areas**, through the creation of the Obô Natural Parks of STP. In addition, legislation was passed with a view to the conservation of fauna, flora and protected areas, forests, which created the Obô National Park of STP and the Príncipe Park and regulated hunting. Currently, STP has four important mountain biodiversity sites covered by protected areas: Obô National Park (20,000 ha); Príncipe National Park (8,500 ha); Tinhosas Islands Integral Reserve (15 ha); and Rolas Islet Reserve (6 ha).

The country has made efforts to meet the stipulated target of *"Take urgent and significant measures to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of endangered species."*

Recognized as an example of harmony between human activities and nature, in 2012 the island of Príncipe was designated a BIOSPHERE World Reserve by UNESCO. In fact, the relationship between biodiversity, climate change and the livelihood of the population represent a reference example in terms of resilience, adaptation and sustainable coexistence with nature. Since its nomination as a BIOSPHERE World Reserve, nature-based tourism has increased significantly, with the realization of structuring investments, and has been gaining more and more importance in the national and international panorama, especially by offering an ecological tourism product, using ecological trails etc.

The country has made efforts to maintain this classification, with the creation of nature reserve zones and twenty-seven rare bird species, 895 species of higher plants, of which 134 are endemic, 63 bird species (25 endemic), 16 reptiles (seven endemic) and nine amphibians (all endemic) have already been registered in STP. Around 30% of the resident species (spread across five genera) are endemic to the islands, according to data from the Third National Communication. However, according to data State of STP Biodiversity Report (2014) and ENPAB 2015-2020 Red Lists Index (2014), about 15% of endemic species are still vulnerable; 12.2% are near threatened and 7.4% are species of little concern.

Additionally, STP has made significant financial efforts towards preserving its environment and biodiversity. Between 2009 and 2017 the country invested in these sectors around 282 million Dobras, about 11.5 million Euro, according to data from the Blue Economy Transition Strategy, 2019.

SDG 16



PROMOVER SOCIEDADES PACÍFICAS E INCLUSIVAS PARA O DESENVOLVIMENTO SUSTENTÁVEL, PROPORCIONAR O ACESSO À JUSTIÇA PARA TODOS E CONSTRUIR INSTITUIÇÕES EFICAZES, RESPONSÁVEIS E INCLUSIVAS EM TODOS OS NÍVEIS

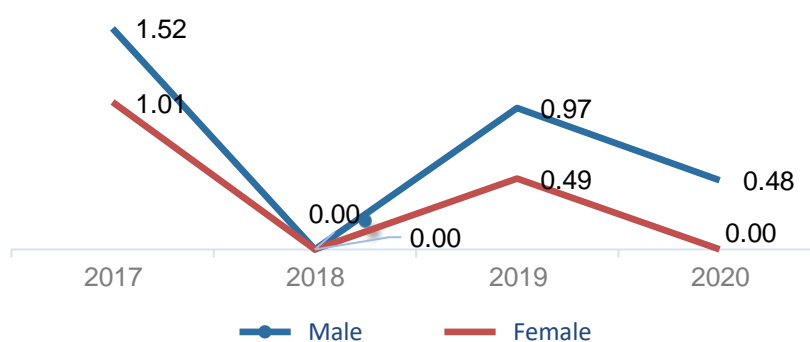
SDG 16 focuses on promoting peaceful and inclusive societies, improving access to justice for citizens and building effective and accountable institutions at all levels. To this end, several dimensions are taken into account, such as situations of intentional homicide, deaths caused by conflict, children subjected to physical or psychological punishment, human trafficking, sexual violence (including against minors), provisional detainees (or without a judge's sentence), corruption in public administration, satisfaction of the population with the services provided, collective participation in political decisions and public access to information.

In terms of governance, STP has had some political instability throughout its history as an independent country, which has been a handicap in its development process and as such, it has been working through various partnerships to reverse this situation. In 2014²⁷ joined the 7+ Group, a voluntary association of countries in a situation of conflict or emerging from it, committed to a genuine process of transition to resilience and sustainable development, and to this end subscribed to the Charter of values and principles of this group, consisting of twenty countries²⁸. The country became bound to the international agreement called *New Deal*, which has five objectives: inclusive politics; security; justice; economic foundations, revenues and services. These goals serve as a basis for dialogue with donors and are the foundation for building resilience and achieving the SDGs.

The levels of mortality from assault can act as barometers of the degree of risk or the potential for serious litigation to which the population is subjected and, as such, give an indication of the violence in the country. Fortunately, STP is considered a safe country, with a very calm population, although in recent years there has been some crime, especially urban crime, associated with youth. The level of this criminality is not worrying, but the Government has been introducing policy measures, especially at the prevention level, in order to achieve the goal of significantly reducing all forms of violence and the related mortality rates in all places.

In 2017, the number of victims of felony homicide was only 1.52 deaths per 100,000 men and 1.01 for 100,000 women (Graph 16.1). In 2020, there was a threefold reduction in men (0.48 deaths per 100,000 inhabitants) and in women practically no cases were recorded.

Figure 16.1: Number of victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 population, by sex, 2017 -2020



Source: National Police; Judicial Police, 2021

The growth of the economy of STP has not been sufficient to generate decent jobs for the population and to tackle the poverty levels that still exist. The lack of quality employment opportunities in rural areas, the precarious situation of the fields, the low income from family farming, has led to much social exclusion and rural exodus, especially of young people towards

²⁷ New Deal - g7+ Fragility Assessment final report, Sao Tome and Principe, 2017

²⁸ Afghanistan, Haiti, Liberia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Timor-Leste, as founding countries, joined by Burundi, Chad, Comoros, Ivory Coast, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Somalia, Togo, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Central African Republic, Sao Tome and Principe and Yemen.

the cities, with all the ensuing consequences, especially in terms of delinquency. Therefore, many have resorted to illicit means, such as theft, robbery, acts of corruption and even murder to satisfy their needs.

Psychological violence was the most practiced in STP, peaking in 2018 at around 18%. It then followed a downward trajectory, until reaching the minimum value in 2021, at around 10%. In second position appears physical violence, whose maximum value was found in 2020 (16%), as for sexual violence, the levels are residual.

Table 16.1: Proportion of population subjected to physical, psychological or sexual violence in the last 12 months, 2017 - 2021

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Physical violence	11,9	10,6	11,2	16,0	8,5
Psychological violence	14,1	17,8	16,1	11,1	10,2
Sexual violence	0,3	0,2	0,4	0,6	0,6

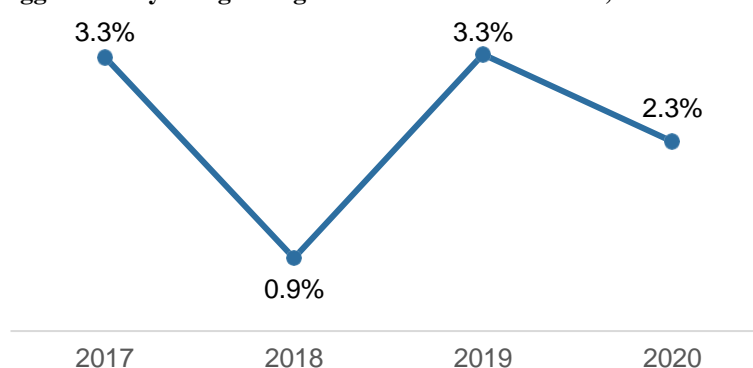
Source: CACVD

Regarding drugs, the country is considered only a route for trafficking. However, there are already signs of cocaine consumption, which although not alarming, has deserved some attention from the authorities. Therefore, the country has been investing in the training of public security personnel in order to better deal with this situation.

Also in the area of security, some joint actions have been undertaken by the National Police (PN) and the Judiciary Police (PJ) to raise awareness, with seizures of white weapons and the arrest of people driving under the influence of alcohol. However, the Government is aware that much more needs to be done, and is working with its development partners to that end. For example, it is necessary to equip the Investigation Laboratory of the PJ, in order to facilitate the production of evidence in cases of sexual violation, in which, currently, the semen is sent abroad for analysis and the evidence does not always arrive in time for the judgement of the cases. Specialized training is needed for police officers, especially to act against drug trafficking.

It is part of the concerns of the Government of STP to end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence and torture against children and has taken legislative action towards the achievement of this sustainable development goal. Additionally, administrative data from the CACVD shows that levels of violence among children aged 1 to 17 years by caregivers and/or guardians and/or guardian, have decreased from 3.3% in 2017 to 2.3% in 2019.

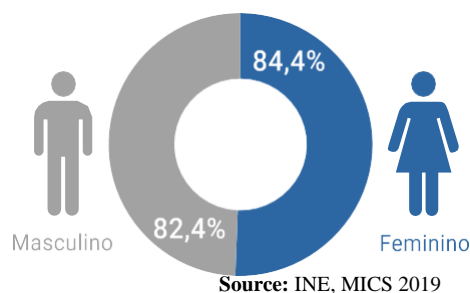
Graph 16.2: Proportion of children aged 1 to 17 years who have experienced any physical punishment and/or psychological aggression by caregivers/guardians in the last month, 2017 - 2020



Source: CACVD

However, at the household level, which is where the indicator for Agenda 2030 is measured, the MICS 2019 data reveals information that inspires some concern on the part of the authorities. According to this source, 83.5% of children in the age group 1 to 14 years, have experienced any physical punishment or psychological aggression by their guardian, with a slight incidence in girls.

Graph 16.3: Percentage of children aged 1-14 years who have experienced any violent method of discipline, 2019



In terms of promoting the Rule of Law at national and international level and ensuring equal access to justice for all, the Constitution of the DRSTP guarantees equal access to justice for all citizens and it is the function of the State to promote democratic Rule of Law. However, conditions are still not ideal, for example, in the face of the occurrence of GBV crimes, sexual abuse of minors, among others. The problem of prison overcrowding also stands out, with the risks it brings to the physical integrity of the prisoners themselves. According to data from the SDG Global Database, the proportion of prisoners in pre-trial detention, in the total number of prisoners, increased from 7.7% in 2015 to 36.7% in 2018.

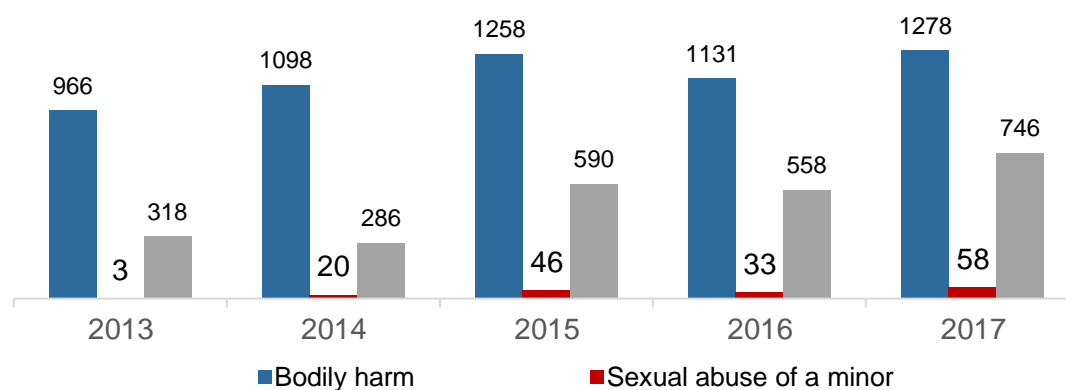
According to the data provided by the Prison Service, the proportion of remand prisoners in 2021 was 21.2% of the total number of prisoners, the majority of whom were male (95.5%). Despite the improvement in the facilities where remand prisoners are held, this proportion is high, taking into account the low capacity and somehow reveals some slowness at the level of justice, since they are people awaiting trial. Therefore, efforts should be made in order to create the best conditions, but mainly to speed up the processes.

The Government has worked with traditional partners and CSOs in addressing these issues. For example, the Social Integration Services in the National Prison provide psychological monitoring of prisoners and involve them in activities that may facilitate their reintegration into society. Lectures and awareness-raising campaigns have been developed with a view to changing behavior in view of the different elections in the country (Legislative, Municipal and Presidential).

The national authorities have been working to create the best conditions in terms of access, but also in raising awareness, so that the population seeks and benefits from all existing services. The Government intends to build a new prison in São Tomé that has the ideal conditions in terms of security and hygiene, and to rehabilitate the prison facilities on Príncipe Island. Therefore,

According to PN data, 2017 was the year in which the highest levels of violence were recorded in the country, with 1,278 cases of bodily harm, 746 of domestic violence and 58 of sexual abuse of minors. Compared to the previous year, there was an evolution of about 13%, 38% and 76%, respectively (Table below).

Graph 16.4: Number of victims of violence in the last 12 months who reported to the competent authorities or other officially recognized conflict resolution bodies, 2013 -2017

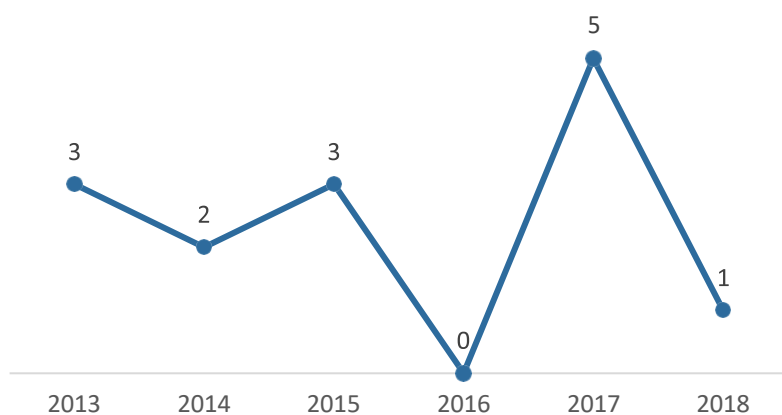


Source: STP NP

The levels of GBV in the country deserve special attention from the authorities, since the number of victims, usually women/girls (sexual abuse and exploitation of minors, teenage pregnancy), is increasing.

In terms of weapons seized, found or handed in, whose origin or illicit context has been detected or established by a competent authority, in accordance with international instruments, the figures are derisory, in line with the tranquility with which the country lives.

Figure 16.5: Number of seized small arms and light weapons not registered and traced, according to international standards and legal instruments, 2013 - 2018



Source: STP NP

The country does not have information that enables it to gauge the proportion of people who have had at least one contact with a public official and who have paid a bribe or from whom a bribe has been requested by public officials in the last 12 months. However, the issue of corruption has gained much prominence in recent years, at the level of Santomean society, especially in terms of public debates, so that it is urgent to create effective mechanisms to control and combat it. Unfortunately, the country still has little information to quantify the phenomenon and to know objectively where it stands in relation to the goal of substantially reducing corruption and bribery in all its forms. However, data obtained from international sources give an idea of the situation in the country. Transparency International places STP in 64th position in 2019 in the Corruption Perception Index, which corresponds to 46 points. On the other hand, according to the Global Corruption Barometer - Africa 2019, in STP about 55% of the population thinks that the government is doing badly, against 30% who have the opposite opinion; 16% of public service users paid bribes in the last 12 months, and the perception of the population is that there has been an increase in corruption in the country (56%).

For the Ibrahim Index of African Governance 2020, in terms of anti-corruption measures, STP has a score of 59.6, out of a possible 100, ranking 15 out of 54. Anti-corruption mechanisms in the country had a score of 12.5, occupying the 47th position. The absence of corruption in State institutions appears with a score of 76.9, with the country occupying the 4th position. As for the absence of corruption in the public and private sectors, they have scores of 78.3 and 60, with the country occupying the 3rd and 7th positions, respectively. At the level of public procurement procedures, the country had a score of 25, occupying the 26th position.

With regard to the goal of developing effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels, according to data from the SDG Database, in 2015 the primary government expenditure as a proportion of the original approved budget was 85.5%, having decreased to 73.5% in 2019.

At the level of registration, under national law, every child has the right to civil registration and to a name. Regarding legal identity for all, including birth registration, this has been a major challenge and STP has been able to overcome it, thanks to policy measures that have been implemented over the years. Today most children are born in hospitals and are registered before leaving those facilities. There are few cases of late registration and when there are, children are normally registered when they start school.

Regarding the registration of deaths, the same is done at the central level and no one is buried without having the register. However, the COVID 19 pandemic created many challenges and the services started to work in shifts and there was a need to create minimum conditions, such as the acquisition of special clothes, in order to protect the staff and avoid contagion. With the start of the school year, the situation has worsened due to the need for registration documents. However, the country has managed to provide answers, thanks to the various policy measures that have been implemented over the years, in 2014, about 95% of children under 5 years, birth was declared as being registered with the civil authority, having increased to 98.6% in 2019 and without significant differences regarding gender, means of residence and age (Table 16.2 in annex).

Despite the levels obtained in terms of registrations, a major challenge facing the country is the completion of the computerization of the civil registration system in order to make the process faster and more transparent, thus allowing the generation of statistical data. Currently, only in the maternity services and in the central registries can the registration be done directly in the system.

For STP, the governments represent the people and as such should be regularly scrutinized by them, so that they can better defend the public interest and consequently improve transparency in government action. Precisely because of this, the DRSTP

Constitution has provisions on Freedom of the press (Article 30), freedom of expression and information (Article 29). In addition, the Public Transparency System of the country, is based on the Access to Information Law, (Law No. 9.871/2012) which aims to promote state transparency and ensure that all citizens have access to public information. The country also has a Supreme Press Council, which functions as the High Authority for Media Regulation, as an external body of the National Assembly. Created through Law 4/96, it aims to ensure freedom of the press and the observance of the principles of democratic press and freedom of expression through the media. In addition, the country has an Association of Journalists. Therefore, in STP there are constitutional and legal guarantees so that Freedom of Press reigns and access to public information is guaranteed to all. STP has a Human Rights institution, but it has not yet been accredited.

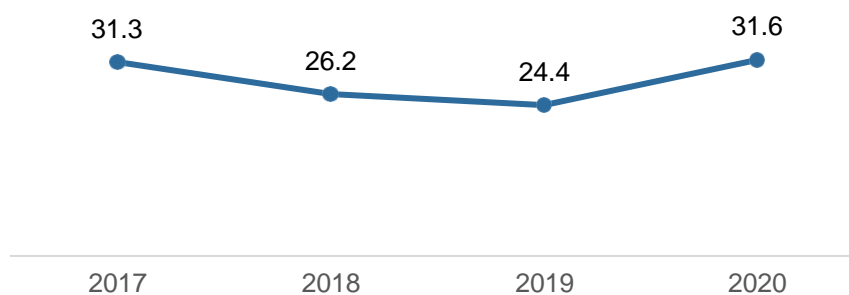
5. MEANS OF IMPLEMENTING THE SDG IN STP

5.1 Mobilization of internal and external funding

SDG financing estimates in STP up to 2030 are not available, as no initial prioritization of global SDG targets against national sustainable development priorities was done, followed by the respective budgeting. However, the budgets of the NDP 2017-2021 and the STP NSDP 2020-2024, five-year implementation plans of the STP 2030 Transformation Agenda, whose implementation contributes to the achievement of the SDGs, show that resource requirements are considerable. Resource mobilization for the financing of these planning instruments is done through three main categories of financing, namely domestic resources, external resources and alternative financing.

In 2017, total government revenue as a proportion of GDP was 31.3%, roughly the same proportion (31.6%) recorded in 2020²⁹.

Graph 17.1: Total government revenue as a proportion of GDP, 2017 - 2020



Source: DCP; DO; INE, 2021

The percentage of the State budget financed by domestically collected taxes, relative to GDP, increased from 38.5% in 2015 to 49.2% in 2019. Regarding the structure of total Government revenue broken down by source, in 2017 about 46% came from current revenues, 43% through grants and 11% from financing, with the majority (80%), coming from external source, as illustrated in the following Table.

In 2020, there was an increase in current revenues, by four p.p., and a decrease in donations, by about 10 p.p., compared to 2017. Loans increased in 2020, driven by external resources.

Table 17.1: Total State Revenue Structure (%), broken down by source, 2017 - 2020

	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total revenue	100	100	100	100
Current revenue	45,8	60,4	63,7	49,3
Donations	42,9	31,7	26,2	33,1
Funding	11,3	7,9	10,0	17,6
internal	19,6	25,5	38,3	14,8
external	80,4	74,5	61,7	85,2

Source: DCP; DO; INE, 2021

The Government has mobilized external resources from loans and grants with multilateral partners. In 2018, STP received USD 212.2 million in loans and grants, with about one fifth (21%) received from multilateral partners and 79% from bilateral partners. In the list of multilateral donors, IDA and BADEA stand out, accounting for more than half of the total (53.8%). The most important bilateral partners were Portugal (61.9 million USD), Angola (35.3 million USD) and Nigeria.

²⁹ Provisional data

Table 17.2: External grants and loans (Million USD), by multilateral and bilateral partners, 2018

	Multilateral Donors	Bilateral Donors
Total (Million USD)	44,0	163,6
ADB/ADF	6,9	
Belgium		0,8
IDA	11,9	
Portugal		61,9
FIDA	5,8	
Angola		30,6
OPEC	1,9	
Italy		24,3
EIB	-	
China		10
BADEA	11,8	
Nigeria		30
IMF	5,7	
Equatorial Guinea		1,7
Brazil		4,3

Source: DDP/ TOFE

STP received between 2015 and 2019 about USD 57.6 million from financial and technical assistance (including North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation), with the highest level (USD 18.2 million) in 2019 (OECD).

To address the emergency situation caused by the pandemic of COVID-19, STP received unprecedented financial support from development partners, which helped to finance the country's large budgetary and external financing needs. Thus, in April 2020, the country received emergency financial assistance from the IMF of about USD 12 million which represents about 3% of GDP (IMF, 2020).

ODA represented about 32% of GNI in 2002, but fell sharply to about 12.3% in 2019. In 2020, ODA is expected to increase to meet the country's response needs to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As for FDI, levels could be better if the business environment in the country were more attractive. STP's ranking in the *Doing Business 2020* Index (WB)³⁶ shows this. Out of 190 countries, STP was ranked 170th. This ranking is the result, among many other things, of a lot of bureaucracy in public administration, slow decision-making, weak capacity to execute contracts, solve insolvencies and difficulties in accessing credit. In order to overcome the obstacles that still exist in the country, the Government has been working on policies with a view to creating favorable conditions for attracting FDI, which is fundamental for leveraging and boosting the country's economy and achieving sustained development.

It should be noted that the business environment has been improving, thanks to the reforms implemented in recent years, but the challenges are still enormous. STP is investing, with the support of its partners, in strategic sectors such as energy, water, infrastructure, tourism, and in legislation so as to facilitate and protect more and more investors, in facilitating the creation of companies, among others, with the aim of creating a more and more favorable business environment for FDI.

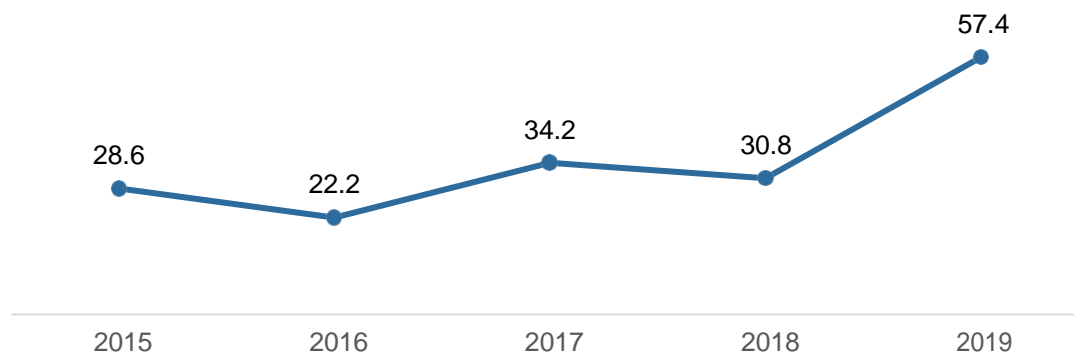
FDI experienced strong growth with the onset of oil-related activities, peaking in 2010 at about USD 50.6 million, or about 25.7% of GDP (BCSTP; WB³⁷). From 2015 to this part there has been a fluctuation at the level

³⁶ Doing Business 2020 Report, 2020: <https://www.doingbusiness.org/en/reports/global-reports/doing-business-2020>

³⁷ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.KLT.DINV.CD.WD?locations=ST>

of FDI will reach its peak in 2019, with about USD 57 million, an evolution of more than double the 2015 figure, as shown in the following graph.

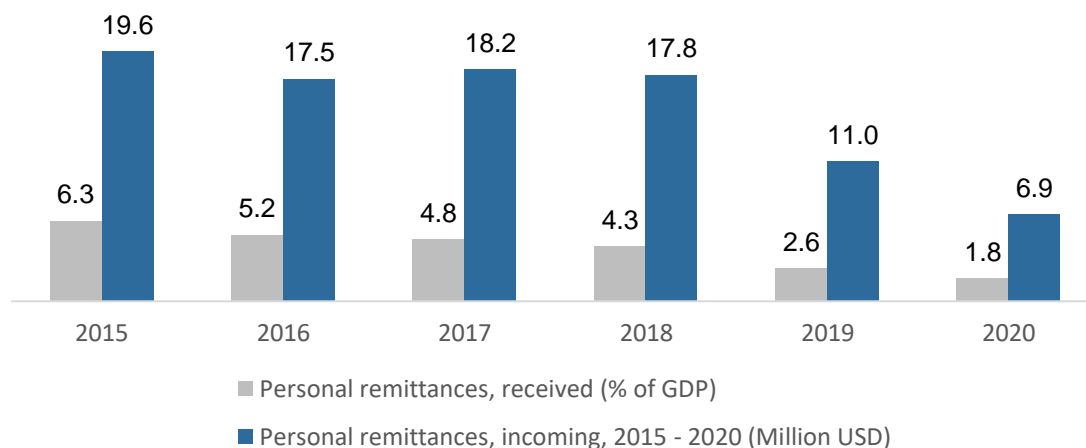
Graph 17.2: Foreign Direct Investment (Million USD), 2015 - 2019



Source: Global SDG Database: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/UNSDG/IndDatabasePage>

Regarding remittances, they are of strategic importance for the development of STP, as they constitute the second largest source of income for many families, after work, important for the promotion of their well-being. According to INE (IOF 2017), remittances contribute 40% of total income in female-headed households. International remittances to STP totaled an amount of about USD 19.6 million in 2015, representing about 6.3 per cent of GDP (Chart 17.3). Until 2018, there were no significant changes, but already from 2019 the situation changed, with a reduction of about 38% in the amount and 40% relative to GDP. In 2020, due to the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the reduction was much more expressive, with the country receiving only USD 6.9 million, about two thirds less than the 2015 levels, representing 1.8% of GDP.

Graph 17.3: Personal remittances received in USD Millions and as a % of GDP, 2015 - 2020)



Source: World Bank and BCSTP

In the field of South-South cooperation, STP maintains cooperation relations with several countries, namely the CEEAC and CPLP countries, taking the form of friendship treaties, agreements and joint cooperation commissions. This allows the country to establish and strengthen trade relations, train staff in various areas, receive assistance, among other benefits.

STP has had in place since 1998 a statistical legislation (Law No. 5/1998 of 3 December 1998) incorporating Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics as well as the African Statistical Charter. STP has developed a National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) for the period 2018 and 2021, which is the main medium-term planning instrument for the activity

official statistics of the country and which is being implemented by the official statistics producing bodies of the National Statistical System (NSS), with funding from the State and from the FTPs, namely the WB.

According to the Partner Report on Support to Statistics (PRESS) 2020, in 2018, STP received about USD 2.2 million to strengthen its statistical capacity. STP, through its NSS, has already conducted four General Population and Housing Censuses, the last one in 2012 and is currently preparing its next one to be conducted in 2023. With regard to birth registration, levels exceed 90% and practically all deaths that occur in the country are registered

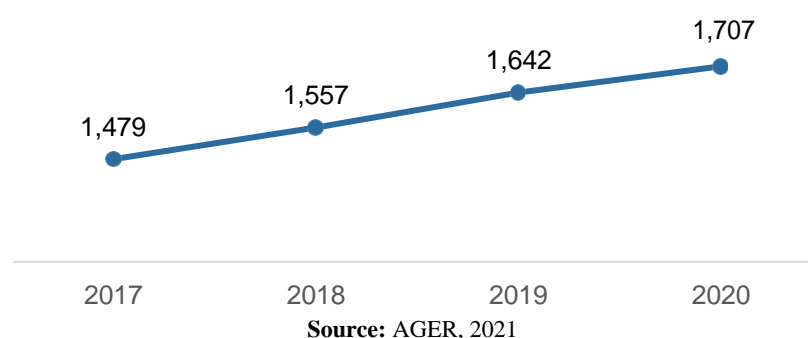
5.2 Innovative financing mechanisms for sustainable development

In this Decade of Action (2020-2030) for sustainable development, STP is committed to exploring innovative SDG financing mechanisms, such as the Green Climate *Fund* and the Global *Environment Fund*, including through the development of programs and projects that may be eligible for funding under these mechanisms. The Green Climate Fund (GCFF) is currently the main source of funding for programs and projects on the issue of climate change in developing countries, whether for adaptation or mitigation actions. STP already has its GCF Country Program, prepared in 2019, containing the list of project priorities and intervention areas for GCF investment in the country, with a total budget of USD 237.838 million. Energy, food security, forestry and biodiversity conservation, coastal zone and waste are the eligible sectors for GCF funding in STP.

In addition, the country will continue to rely on the support of its traditional partners, such as the UN, WB, ADB, IMF, among others. STP, aware of the importance of private resources in supporting the implementation of development program policies, has provided for PPPs in the STP 2030 Transformation Agenda as a source of mobilizing financing for the development of structuring projects, namely the expansion of São Tomé's international airport. In 2018, the country adopted a law on PPPs (Law no. 06/2018), defining the general rules applicable to the intervention of the State in the determination, design, preparation, tendering, adjudication, amendment, supervision and overall monitoring of PPPs. It also establishes principles, purposes, allocation of responsibilities, assumptions and risk sharing in PPPs, among other matters.

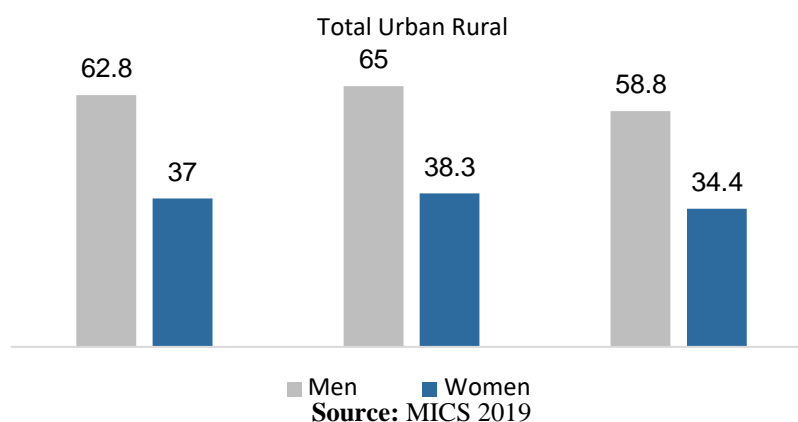
In addition, it is important that the country develops a partnership in the technological area. Technology transfer seems to be very slow, with no support or defined strategy. However, there is no doubt that technology, particularly ICT, has a very positive effect on growth and, collaterally, leads to the reduction of poverty and social exclusion. As the following Graph illustrates, in 2017, the country had only 1,479 fixed internet subscribers, rising to 1,707 in 2020, with a very residual penetration rate (AGER).

Graph 17.4: Number of o of fixed broadband internet subscriptions, 2017 -2020



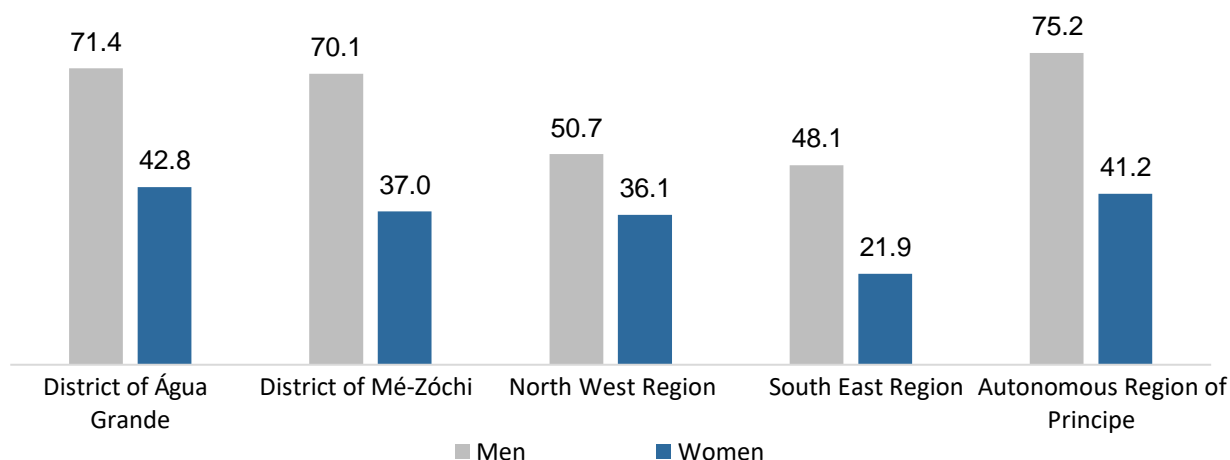
According to official data, in terms of internet use in STP, the levels are not expressive and there is a great inequality with regard to gender. In 2019, about two-thirds of men (63%) used the internet in the country and only 37% of women had this privilege. The levels of use are higher in the urban environment, in both sexes, as illustrated in the Graph, below.

Graph 17.5: Percentage of men and women aged 15-49 who used the internet, by means of residence, 2019



The ARP and the Districts of Água Grande and Mé-Zóchi have the highest internet usage rates in the country, with levels above 70% for men and around 40% for women. The situation is more critical in the Northwest and Southeast Regions.

Figure 17.6: Proportion of individuals (Men and Women) who use the Internet, according to Districts, 2019



5.3 Challenges in mobilizing finance

The main challenges that STP is expected to face to boost and improve financial resource mobilization, both internal and external, for financing the SDGs are:

- Strengthening good governance at all levels and increasingly promoting the rule of law, one of the conditions for sustainable development;
- Implementation of rational economic and social policies that meet the real and most pressing needs of the Santomeans, with priority for the most vulnerable;
- Implementation of structural infrastructures to increase economic growth, job creation and poverty reduction;
- Improved strategic management of development and public finances;

- Acceleration of the necessary reforms to broaden the tax base by shifting to a progressive taxation regime and creating conditions to encourage the formalization of companies operating in the informal sector;
- Improving the business climate so as to stimulate domestic and foreign private investment (FDI) flows;
- Reinforcement of PPPs for the development of structuring national projects;
- Implementation of an efficient mechanism for the identification, mobilization, coordination and management of development aid;
- Creating the necessary conditions for the mobilization of public and private savings;
- Promoting financial inclusion and access to credit, especially for micro, small and medium enterprises.

6. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

The first VNR of STP that will be presented this year (2022) at the HLPF was stopped through a participatory and inclusive approach of stakeholders in the implementation of the SDGs in the national context.

Immediately after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, STP drafted the main strategic planning instruments for national development in recent years, which took into account the two main agendas, global and continental: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 2063 Agenda - The Africa We Want. In addition to these instruments, sectoral plans and strategies have been developed in line with the SDGs.

After six years since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, STP decided to prepare this Report in order to, within the framework of mutual accountability and transparency, report to its citizens, other stakeholders and the international community on the actions taken, the progress achieved, the constraints and challenges and the next steps to be taken to improve the implementation of the SDGs by 2030.

This voluntary national assessment has shown that, despite the numerous constraints that the country has been facing, remarkable progress has been achieved, particularly in health and education indicators, where the country has already achieved some of the targets. The assessment, on the other hand, has shown that considerable efforts still need to be made, namely to combat poverty and extreme poverty, social inequalities affecting the most vulnerable, disadvantaged or at-risk social groups.

Among the various challenges, one of the most prominent concerns the mobilization of resources for financing sustainable development in STP. Financing sustainable development in SIDS, of which STP, within the framework of a revitalized Global Partnership for the realization of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, will necessarily always depend on the particular attention that the international community, particularly the rich countries, give to the reality of these countries, which are subject to unique vulnerabilities of various kinds, including vulnerability to environmental threats and effects of climate change, exposure to frequent disasters caused by natural phenomena, absence or limitation of natural resources, limited resources and export bases, the smallness of the market, susceptible to external economic shocks.

The Government of STP reaffirms its commitment to the implementation of the SDGs, as assumed before the international community, and, fundamentally, as an inescapable condition for the country to achieve the development it has aspired for its citizens by 2030. Thus, the next steps that STP intends to take to improve progress in the implementation of the SDGs by 2030 are as follows:

a. Creation and operationalization of an institutional mechanism for coordination of SDG implementation

It will be an inter-ministerial and multi-sectoral structure, under the joint political leadership of MNEC and MPFEA, the technical coordination of DNP and composed of representatives of all development actors: Government (from central to local level), National Assembly, NSA, TFP (namely, UN agencies in the country), CSOs, Private Sector, Universities and Researchers. The political leadership of the SDG implementation institutional set-up aims at strengthening the consistency and coherence of public policies for sustainable development in STP, with the perspective of identifying at a high level the national priorities of the 2030 Agenda and agreeing with all stakeholders on a roadmap to improve and accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in STP. It should encourage all development actors to adhere to collective decisions to successfully implement the Agenda.

b. Strengthening national ownership of the SDGs

National ownership of the SDGs will be strengthened by carrying out more awareness, training and dissemination campaigns and actions on the SDGs, in partnership with the other development actors/interested parties (ARP, District Governments, Media, CSOs, Universities, community leaders). To this end, a Communication and Awareness Plan on the SDGs will be developed and implemented. Furthermore, since voluntary national evaluation is a key mechanism for accountability and monitoring and evaluation of SDG implementation in STP, this Report should be widely disseminated to increase national ownership. In fact, this Report is an initial assessment of SDG implementation actions in STP.

c. Capacity building on SDGs

Capacity building actions will be carried out for those responsible (institutions/human resources) for the coordination and implementation of planning instruments, at all levels (central, regional and local), that favor sustainable development. In particular, the capacities of development actors in prioritization, mainstreaming, monitoring and evaluation of SDG implementation will be strengthened. To this end, STP expects to rely on the support of international cooperation, notably the UNS in the country.

d. Analysis of the degree of alignment and integration of the SDGs in the national planning framework

In fact, although the main national planning instruments and some sectoral strategies and plans refer to their alignment with the SDGs, it is not at all clear what the degree of that alignment is. Therefore, the analysis will be done through the available methodological approaches (RIA), and it should fall on all existing planning instruments (national strategies and plans, sectoral plans, regional and district plans), so a comprehensive survey will be done with all sectoral ministries of the central government, the government of the APR and local governments. This exercise will allow testing the coherence of these instruments with the SDGs.

e. Prioritization and integration of SDG targets in national planning instruments

The 2030 Agenda requires the contextualization and prioritization of the SDGs. In fact, without doing so, it is illusory to expect that the country will implement all SDGs. Thus, using the RIA tool and the prioritization matrix, developed by UNDP, STP will proceed to prioritize SDG targets, taking into account the country's level of development, national priorities and available resources. Prioritization will necessarily be a participatory and inclusive exercise of all stakeholders. For this purpose, STP wishes to count on the support of the UNS, through UNDP. A report of the prioritization of prioritized SDGs and targets will be prepared and widely disseminated. Alignment and integration of the prioritized targets will be ensured throughout the planning / programming / budgeting / monitoring / evaluation chain, at national and local levels. This will be done by reviewing existing planning instruments and developing new ones, or for new validity.

f. Promoting localization of SDGs at the ARP and District levels

Ownership and mainstreaming of the SDGs by development actors at the regional and local levels of the country is crucial for the full understanding of the 2030 Agenda as well as for the effective implementation of the SDGs. The process can only be carried out in close partnership with representatives of the government of the ARP, the Districts and CSOs, as they are closer to the citizens and better positioned to raise awareness on the importance of the SDGs and their relevance to local communities. In this regard, the central government will promote with the government of the PRC and district governments the integration of priority targets in the planning instruments of these administrations (regional and district plans), in alignment with the national planning instruments.

g. Budgeting for SDGs and priority targets and developing a strategy to mobilize new partnerships and resources for their financing

Based on the SDG prioritization report, the total cost of resources required (internal and external) for the implementation of the SDGs and priority targets will be estimated, as well as the development of strategy for strengthening and mobilizing new partnerships and resources. The budgeting of the SDGs will serve for STP to define the critical path to achieve the set targets, identify the resources required and finally assess the cost of these needs. In addition, the budgeting work should enable the country to refine the funding framework for the STP 2030 Transformation Agenda itself. Based on the estimated costs, resources will be mobilized to accelerate progress towards achieving the SDGs through the development and implementation of a strategy in concert and with the support of the STPs.

h. Establishment of a national framework of indicators for monitoring and evaluating the SDGs

The SDG-oriented approach of the 2030 Agenda requires the establishment of a national SDG monitoring indicator framework that translates the global ambitions to the national context and that will guide the country's public action in the implementation of the SDGs. This framework will result from the compilation of indicators of the SDG priority targets and aligned to national priorities.

i. Capacity building of NSS

Preceded by an assessment of the current state of the NSS and the implementation of the NSDS 2018-2021, the Government will move forward with the preparation of a new NSDS in order to capitalize on the gains made so far and strengthen the capacities of the NSS, particularly through the provision of more resources (human, financial and material), so that it can produce and disseminate, in a timely manner, in quantity, quality and with the level of disaggregation recommended by the UN, according to the national reality, the indicators for measuring the prioritized targets of the SDGs. To this end, STP wishes to continue relying on support from international cooperation partners for capacity building of the NSS, in line with the commitments made by peers under the *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (AAAA)* and the 2030 Agenda towards developing countries, particularly SIDS.

j. Dissemination of SDG data

Through the creation of a national statistical platform for monitoring the SDGs, which will serve as a repository of compiled information, with the objective of informing citizens and institutions, both national and international, on the progress made by STP to achieve the SDGs and to contribute to the appropriation, by society, of the sustainable development challenges, giving them access to sustainable development indicators and the results of the policies implemented by the State of Sao Tome and Principe. This platform could be hosted on the INE website.

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ANNEXES

LIST OF TABLES AND CHARTS BY SDG



Table 1.1: Poverty profile of the population of STP, according to some socio-economic characteristics of households, 2010 - 2017 (%)

Features	2010 - FGT poverty rates (%)			2017 - FGT poverty rates (%)		
	P0	P1	P2	P02	P13	P24
1. total	66,2	24,8	12,0	66,7	30	17,3
Men	63,4	23,3	11,2	66,7	29,7	17,1
Women	71,3	27,2	13,4	66,5	29,8	17,2
2. Household typology						
Unipersonal	12,1	2,4	0,9	22,2	10	6,1
Couple	26,1	4,5	1,4	40,2	18,4	11,3
Couple with Children	65,4	22,8	10,4	68,1	29,7	16,6
Nuclear Mono parental	67,3	24,5	12	69,8	30,3	17,2
Mono parental Extended	80,8	33,8	17,2	74,1	37	23,4
Extended Family	67,5	26,7	13,5	67,9	31,2	18,4
3. Employment situation						
Assets Occupied	65	82	23,5	58,6	24,7	13,6
Unemployed (BIT)	69,2	4	29,7	64,6	29,8	17,9
Inactive	68,6	9	27,7	68,5	32,9	20,2
Unemployed (discouraged)	80,1	4,9	37,5	72,9	34,5	20,4
4. Socio-economic groups						
Public Sector	56,6	20,1	9	44,9	16,9	9,1
Formal private sector	48,4	17	7,5	50,4	20,4	11,3
Independent Agricultural Private Sector	68,4	25,7	12,6	69,8	30	16,4
Independent of the Private Sector no agricultural	67,7	24,1	11,3	60,4	26	14,4
Unemployed	74,8	33,7	18,5	64,6	29,8	17,9
Inactive	68,6	27,7	14,3	69,5	33,2	20,3
5. Quintile of household living standard						
poorest 20%	100	62	39,2	100	76,1	58,9
2nd quintile	100	40,2	16,4	100	53,3	28,7
3rd quintile	100	20,2	4,5	100	32,5	11,1
4th quintile	31,4	1,5	0,1	59,6	6,4	0,9
richest 20%	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: INE, IOF 2010 and 2017

Table 1.2: Dependency ratio by "poor" and "non-poor" status, 2017

	Non-poor	Poor
Children from 0 to 14 years	1,07	1,97
Adults aged 15 to 64 years	1,83	2,19
Elderly aged 65 and over	0,13	0,13
Household size	3,2	4,7

Source: INE, IOF 2017

Table 1.3: Percentage distribution of the household population according to the time to go to the water source for domestic consumption, obtain water and return, 2019

	Percentage using basic water services improved		
	Water on site	Up to 30 minutes	Total
Total	39,8	49,4	89,2
Urban	43,9	47,2	91,1
Rural	31,5	53,8	85,3
Region			
District of Água Grande	50,7	39,4	90,1
Mé-Zóchi District	37,6	54,4	92
Region Northwest	36,8	56,7	93,5
Southern Region East	22	56,3	78,3
Autonomous Region of Príncipe	41	39,3	80,3
Education of head of household			
Pre-school / None	27,7	61,8	89,5
Basic	32	55,5	87,5
Secondary	47,9	42,5	90,4
Superior	76,5	20,1	96,6
Doesn't know/Missing	35,9	55,4	91,3
Index of economic well-being			
Poorest	17,1	66,8	83,9
According to	19,5	68,7	88,2
Medium	31,6	55,9	87,5
Room	48,6	39,7	88,3
The richest	82,2	15,9	98,1

Source: INE, MICS 2014 and 2019

Table 1.4: Percentage distribution of household population according to main source of improved water for consumption, 2019

	Accommodation	Backyard	Neighbor	Fountain	Other	Total
Total	6,3	27,9	12,0	48,9	4,9	100
Urban	8,1	31,4	13,4	45,2	1,9	100
Rural	2,6	20,9	9,2	56,5	10,8	100
Region						
District of Água Grande	10,9	37,7	11,8	37,9	1,7	100
Mé-Zóchi District	4	29,2	14,8	45,3	6,7	100
Region Northwest	3,2	25,4	9,5	60,5	1,4	100
Southern Region East	3,4	9,6	13,5	64,3	9,2	100
Autonomous Region of Príncipe	7,9	15,9	4,9	43,9	27,4	100

Source: INE, MICS 2014 and 2019

Table 1.5: Percentage distribution of the household population according to the type of sanitation facility used, 2019

	Type of sanitation facility used by the household							
	Flush toilet connected to:				Improved ventilated latrine	Pit latrine with slab	% using improved sanitation	Open defecation
	System sewage	Septic tank	Latrine with pit	Local desconh acid				
Total	16,5	7,1	0,7	0,1	20,3	5,3	50	45,5
Urban	18,4	8,2	0,6	0,1	19,9	5,4	52,6	42,7
Rural	12,8	4,9	0,9	0,1	21,1	5,3	45,1	51,1
Region								
District of Água Grande	21,8	10,1	0,9	0,2	24,8	5,2	63	29,6
Mé-Zóchi District	22,1	3,9	0,8	0	16,2	3,9	46,9	51,3
Region Northwest	12,7	2,8	0,3	0	14,8	7,9	38,5	58,3
Southern Region East	2,1	10,3	0,9	0,1	24,5	2,9	40,8	56,4
Autonomous Region of Príncipe	11,6	14,1	0,7	0,2	22,6	9,1	58,3	34,5
Education of head of household								
Pre-school / None	11,2	3,3	2	0,1	15,7	3,6	35,9	57,1
Basic	10	4,6	0,5	0	17,9	5,7	38,7	56,5
Secondary	22,9	8,5	1	0,1	24,7	5,5	62,7	33,3
Superior	40,9	25	0	0,9	23,6	2,3	92,7	6,2
Doesn't know/Missing	23,3	10,2	0	0	14,8	6,6	54,9	43,3
Index of economic well-being								
Poorest	3	0,5	0,6	0	5,9	2,7	12,7	80,2
According to	4,5	2,4	0,1	0,1	10,9	3,6	21,6	73,4
Medium	6,9	4,7	1	0	25,8	7,9	46,3	48,2
Room	22,3	8,6	0,8	0	34,3	9,7	75,7	21,3
The richest	46	19,5	0,8	0,4	24,8	2,8	94,3	4,2

Source: INE, MICS 2019

Table 1.6: Percentage of households by selected housing characteristic, by area of residence or region, 2019

	Means of residence			Region				
	Total	Urban	Rural	Water District Great	District of Mé-Zóchi	Northern Region West	Southern Region This	Autonomous Region of the Príncipe
Electricity	100	100	100	100	100	99,9	100	100,1
Yes, connected to the general system	79,7	81,5	76,1	83,9	79,2	77,2	71,9	83,6
Yes, off system (Generator/isolated)	0,9	0,3	2,1	0,4	0,6	0,4	3,6	0,5
No	19,4	18,2	21,8	15,6	20,2	22,3	24,5	16
Fuel used for cooking	99,9	100	100	100	99,8	100	100	99,9
Clean fuel and technology	3,2	4,4	1	6,1	2,4	1,3	0,3	2,2
Other fuels	95	94,1	96,8	92,5	96	96,8	96,7	96,3
Does not cook inside the household	1,7	1,5	2,2	1,4	1,4	1,9	3	1,4
Doesn't know/Missing		0	0,1	0	0,1	0	0	0
Internet access at home	100	100	100,1	100	100	100	100	99,9
Yes	44,3	49,4	34,5	60,8	36,5	33,7	26,1	62,3
No	55,5	50,6	65	39,2	63	66	73,8	37,4
% of household members with access to electricity	83,1	83,8	81,8	85,3	83,4	81,0	79,2	88,5

Source: INE, MICS 2019

Table 3.1: Percentage of births attended by skilled health personnel, 2014 - 2019

	2014	2019
Percentage of birth attended by a skilled attendant	92,5	96,8

Source: INE, MICS 2014 and 2019

Table 3.2: Maternal mortality rate, 2009 - 2014

	2009	2014
Live births	100	74

Source: INE, IDS 2009 MICS 2014

Table 3.3: Percentage distribution of women aged 15-49 years with a live birth in the last two years, in a health facility, 2014 - 2019

	Delivery in a health facility (%)	
	2014	2019
Total	90,9	95,4
Urban	93,9	95,0
Rural	85,1	96,2
Region		
District of Água Grande		94,1
Mé-Zóchi District	93,0	97,1
Region Northwest	90,9	95,5
Southern Region East	76,8	94,8
Autonomous Region of Príncipe	94,7	97,8
Education		
Pre-school / None	75,5	94,7
Basic	88,3	92,5
Secondary	95,8	97,4
Superior	100,0	100,0
Age at birth		
Under 20 years old	93,7	97,7
20-34	91,5	95,1
35-49	84,9	94,2
Index of economic well-being		
Poorest	81,9	94,1
According to	90,0	94,1
Medium	91,3	97,7
Room	93,5	96,1
The richest	99,6	95,5

Source: INE, MICS 2014 and 2019

Table 3.4: Mortality rate attributed to circulatory system diseases, cancer, diabetes and chronic respiratory diseases, by sex, 2017 - 2020

	2017	2018	2019	2020
No. of deaths from cardiovascular diseases	0,37	0,42	0,43	0,37
Male	0,24	0,27	0,34	0,29
Female	0,51	0,57	0,54	0,46
No. of cancer deaths	0,13	0,13	0,14	0,18
Male	0,13	0,13	0,15	0,23
Female	0,14	0,13	0,14	0,12
No. of deaths with diabetes	0,05	0,04	0,02	0,06
Male	0,03	0,03	0,02	0,08
Female	0,06	0,05	0,03	0,04
No. of deaths from respiratory diseases	0,02	0,01	0,12	0,09
Male	0	0,01	0,11	0,02
Female	0,04	0,01	0,14	0,05

Source: Dr. Ayres de Menezes Hospital, 2021

Table 3.5: Percentage of women and men aged 15-49 who had at least one alcoholic drink at any time in the last month, 2014 - 2019

	Women		Men	
	2014	2019	2014	2019
Total	53,2	52,0	67,1	61,8
15-19	24,0	18,9	29,5	28,9
20-24	49,2	45,8	65,5	60,2
25-29	64,5	62,0	80,3	77,7
30-34	66,1	67,8	89,8	82,4
35-39	68,5	65,7	81,5	85,8
40-44	64,8	69,2	87,8	72,9
45-49	65,8	68,8	86,0	61,0

Source: INE, MICS 2014 and 2019

Table 3.6: Percentage of women aged 15-49 who are married or in a consensual union, with satisfied family planning needs and use of modern contraceptive methods, 2014 - 2019

	2014	2019
Total	55,4	60,0
Urban	52,8	59,7
Rural	60,4	60,4
District of Água Grande		60,0
Mé-Zóchi District		56,9
Region Northwest	62,1	60,6
Southern Region East	60,3	64,9
Central Eastern Region	51,3	57,6
Autonomous Region of Príncipe	73,0	53,7

Source: INE, MICS 2014 and 2019

Table 3.7: Percentage of women aged 15-49 currently married or in a consensual union who use (or whose partner/spouse uses) a contraceptive method, 2019

	2014	2019
Total	37,4	49,7
Female Condom	0,6	0,0
Male Condom	5,1	2,1
Pill	14,8	18,0
Implant	2,5	2,3
Injectable	11,6	20,9
IUD	2,1	1,9
Male Sterilization	0,1	0,1
Female Sterilization	0,6	0,3
Another	0,0	4,1

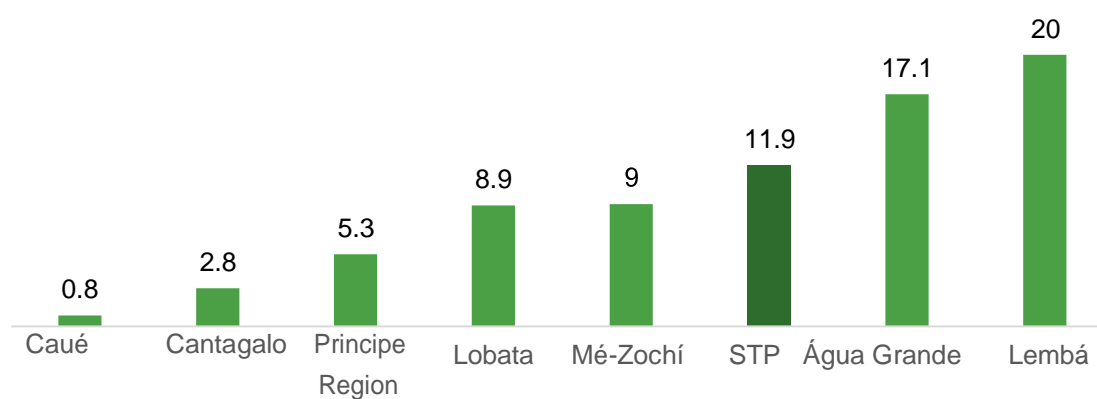
Source: INE, MICS 2014 and 2019

Table 3.8: Density and distribution of health professionals by District, 2017 - 2019

	2017	2018	2019
District of Água Grande	0,21	0,15	0,23
Mé-Zóchi District	0,28	0,23	0,26
District of Cantagalo	0,49	0,43	0,43
Lembá District	0,55	1,10	0,45
District of Lobata	0,46	0,39	0,43
District of Caué	0,91	0,90	0,96
Autonomous Region of Príncipe	1,28	1,26	1,27
STP	0,38	0,32	0,36

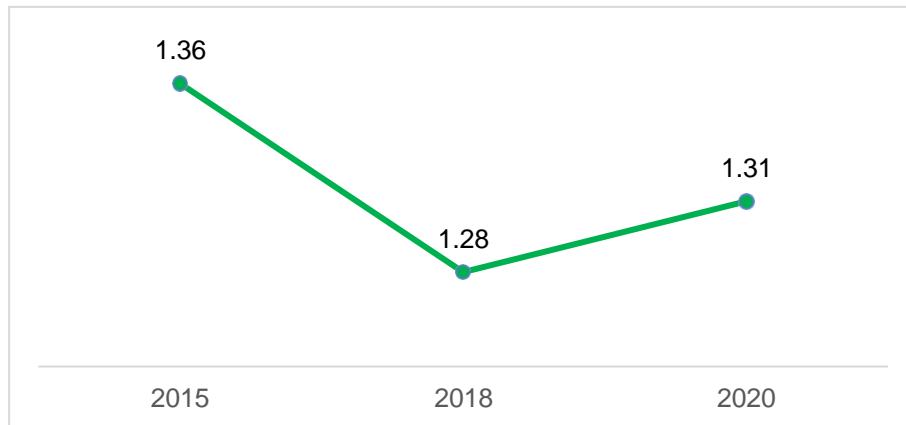
Source: MS and INE

Graph 3.7: Malaria incidence rate per 1 000 population, by region, 2019



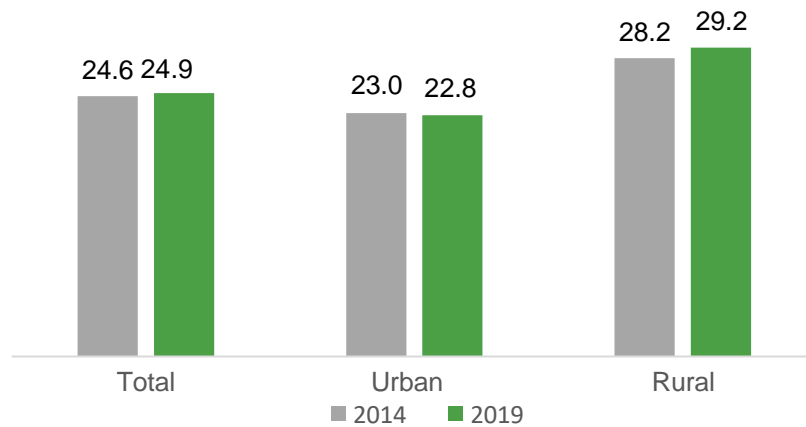
Source: HBS Malaria Study Program Report, 2019

Graph 3.8: Hepatitis B incidence rate per 100,000 population, 2015 - 2020



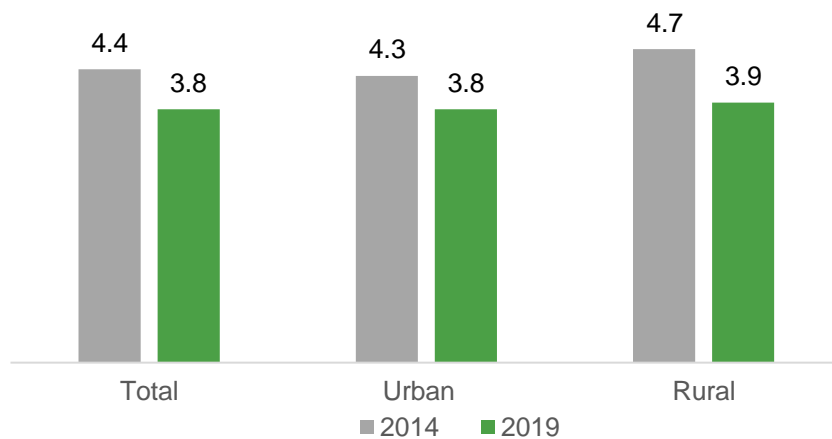
Source: Based on serosurveys at city, subnational or national level. World Health Organization (WHO).

Figure 3.11: Percentage of women who had children before the age of 18, by means of residence, 2014 - 2019



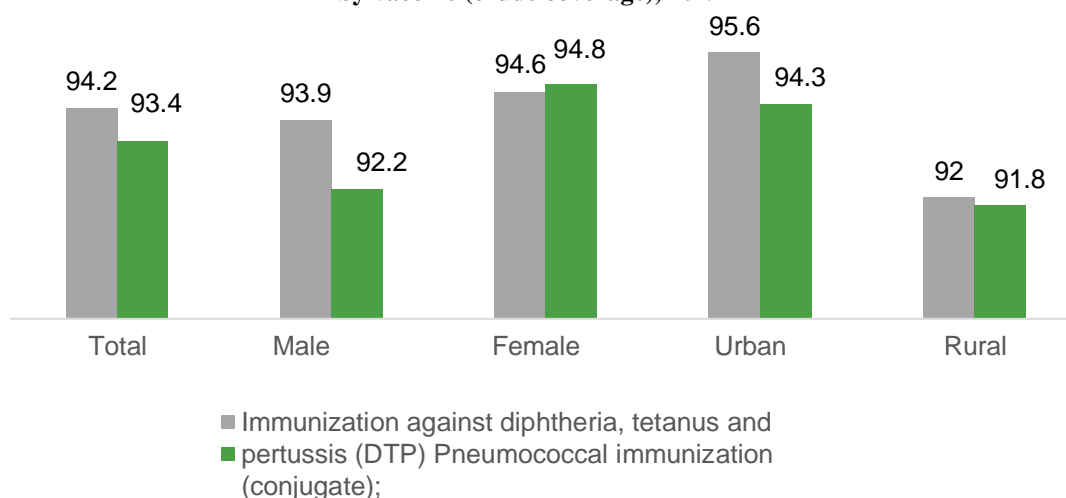
Source: INE, MICS 2014 and 2019

Figure 3.12: Total fertility rate expressed per woman aged 15-49, by means of residence, 2014 - 2019



Source: INE, MICS 2014 and 2019

Figure 3.13: Percentage of children aged 12-23 months currently vaccinated against preventable childhood diseases by vaccine (crude coverage), 2019



Source: INE, MICS 2019



Table 4.1: Percentage of children aged 7 to 14 years who demonstrate fundamental reading skills by successfully completing three fundamental reading tasks, by sex, 2019

	Total	Male	Female
Total	38,4	34,9	42,0
Urban	37,9	33,5	42,8
Rural	39,3	37,9	40,6
Regions			
District of Água Grande	42,9	39,1	47,0
Mé-Zóchi District	47,8	45,3	50,2
Region Northwest	27,1	22,3	32,4
Southern Region East	31,6	28,9	34,3
Autonomous Region of Príncipe	47,1	48,4	45,8
School attendance			
Early childhood education	27,8	36,9	20,4
Basic	32,4	29,0	36,0
1st Class	3,9	3,6	4,1
2nd Class	11,7	12,1	11,3
3rd Class	28,9	28,7	29,1
4th Class	32,6	22,6	45,7
5th Class	38,6	31,6	46,7
6th Class	68,3	74,3	63,7
Lower secondary	71,1	67,8	74,4
7th Class	63,5	59,9	68,7
8th Class	79,1	88,3	73,7
9th Class	96,8	93,5	97,8
10th Class	100,0	100,0	on
12th Class	100,0	100,0	on

Source: INE, MICS 2014 and 2019

Table 4.2: Percentage of children aged 7 to 14 years who demonstrate basic numeracy skills by successfully completing three basic numeracy tasks, by sex, 2019

	Total	Male	Female
Total	35,8	35,5	36,1
Urban	34,2	34,2	34,2
Rural	39,1	38,4	39,7
Regions			
District of Água Grande	38,5	41,9	34,9
Mé-Zóchi District	42,4	36,3	48,3
Region Northwest	27,0	24,9	29,3
Southern Region East	35,8	39,5	32,2
Autonomous Region of Príncipe	34,4	33,1	35,6
School attendance			
Early childhood education	14,8	7,8	20,4
Basic	31,9	32,7	31,1
1st Class	4,1	4,9	3,3
2nd Class	11,7	14,4	8,7
3rd Class	24,3	27,3	21,1
4th Class	43,6	42,2	45,4
5th Class	40,7	40,5	40,9
6th Class	56,2	57,1	55,5
Lower secondary	56,3	51,2	61,4
7th Class	45,2	41,3	50,8
8th Class	70,9	78,9	66,2
9th Class	90,1	93,5	89,1
10th Class	100,0	100,0	
12th Class	0,0	0,0	
Out of school	26,2	33,1	12,7

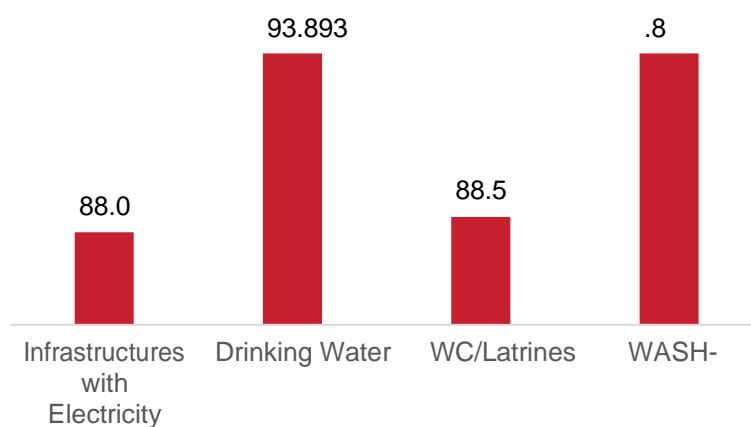
Source: INE, MICS 2019

Table 4.4: Percentage distribution of children under the official age of entry into basic school at the beginning of the school year, by attendance at education and attendance at an early childhood education or basic education program (adjusted net attendance rate), 2014 - 2019

	Frequency rate net		Percentage of children who in 2019:			
	2014	2019	Participating in an early childhood education program	Attending primary school	Not participating in an early childhood education or basic education program	Total
Total	57,9	74,1	63,8	10,2	25,9	100
Male	59,0	69,9	61,4	8,5	30,1	100
Female	57,0	78,2	66,2	11,9	21,8	100
Urban		73,9	63,9	10,0	26,1	100
Rural		74,5	63,7	10,8	25,5	100

Source: INE, MICS 2014 and 2019

Graph 4.2: Proportion of schools with access to some essential commodities (electricity, drinking water, toilets/latrines, 2017



Graph 4.3: Proportion of teachers with pedagogical training, by educational levels, 2017

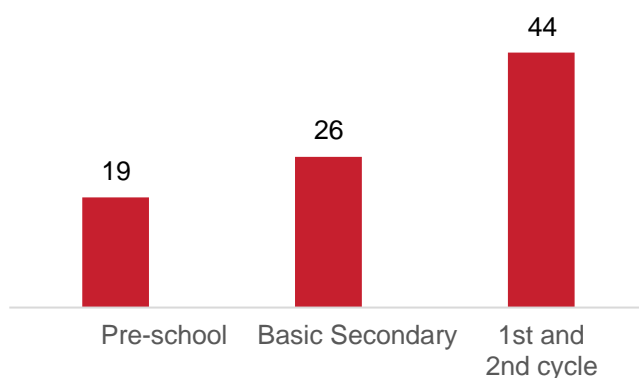


Table 5.2: Proportion of women and girls already 15 years and older experiencing physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the past 12 months, by age, 2017 - 2021

Age	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
15-19	12,6	11,6	12,3	14,5	10,8
20-24	20,5	19,2	18,1	21,7	21,0
25-29	23,1	22,2	20,9	18,7	18,9
30-34	16,4	19,2	18,6	15,2	14,9
35-39	11,5	11,6	13,9	15,2	15,5
40-44	7,7	7,8	7,6	7,6	8,1
45-49	3,1	2,6	3,9	3,9	5,1
50-54	2,3	2,8	1,8	0,7	2,4
55-59	2,1	1,7	1,6	2,3	1,7
60-64	0,8	0,2	0,8	0,2	0,7
65-69	0,0	0,7	0,3	0,0	0,3
70+	0,0	0,5	0,3	0,0	0,7

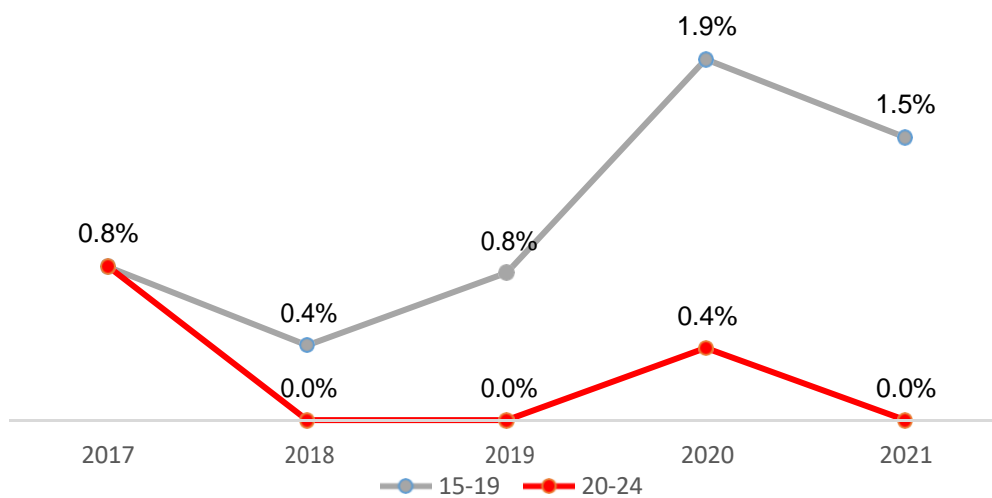
Source: CACVD, 2021

Table 5.3: Percentage of women aged 20-24 who married or entered a civil partnership for the first time before the age of 15 and 18, 2014 - 2019

	2014		2019	
	% married before 15 years	% married before 18	% married before 15 years	% married before 18
Total	5,8	32,2	5,4	28,0
Urban	9,3	43,1	4,1	25,7
Rural	5,1	29,7	7,9	32,7
District of Água Grande			5,7	24,3
Mé-Zóchi District			5,8	22,8
Central Eastern Region	4,4	27,7		
Region Northwest	7,5	40,4	5,2	36,6
Southern Region East	9,5	41,8	3,9	28,5
Autonomous Region of Príncipe	9,3	43,1	6,4	47,1
Poorest	8,9	43,8	6,6	45,0
According to	8,7	41,1	5,9	28,8
Medium	5,6	35,2	5,2	32,5
Room	4,2	27,7	5,9	20,6
The richest	1,9	15,9	3,0	11,0

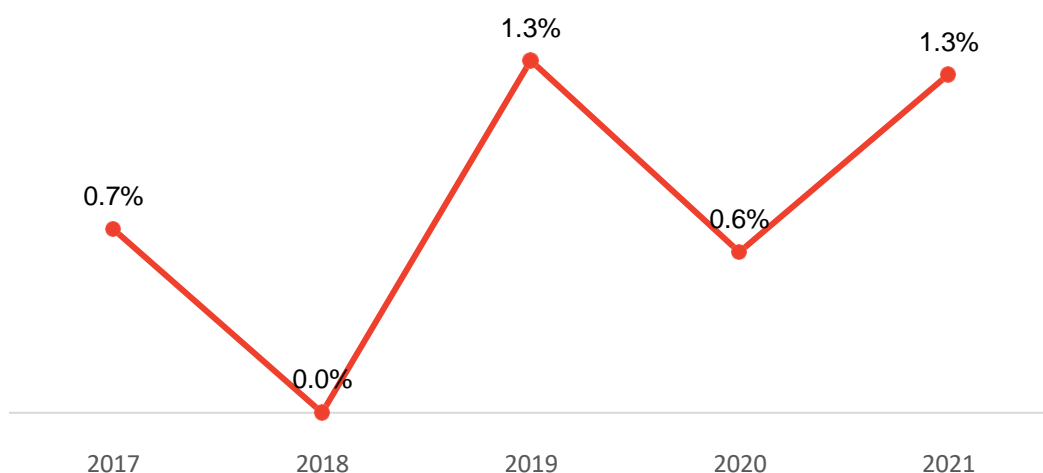
Source: INE, MICS 2014 and 2019

Figure 5.2: Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older who experienced sexual violence in the last 12 months inflicted by someone other than an intimate partner, by age group, Água Grande District, 2017 - 2021



Source: CACVD, 2021

Figure 5.3: Proportion of women and girls aged 15-19 years who experienced sexual violence inflicted by someone other than an intimate partner in the last 12 months, by age group, Mé-Zóchi District, 2017 - 2021



Source: CACVD, 2021



Table 6.1: Percentage of household members using an improved drinking water source located on the premises, available when needed, 2014 - 2019

	2014	2019
Total	93,9	97,5
Urban	98,0	99,0
Rural	85,8	94,4
Region		
District of Água Grande		99,1
Mé-Zóchi District		98,2
Central Eastern Region	95,8	
Region Northwest	90,7	99,0
Southern Region East	94,5	93,9
Autonomous Region of Príncipe	73,9	83,5
Index of economic well-being		
Poorest	90,9	95,1
According to	92,0	97,8
Medium	91,6	96,6
Room	95,3	98,2
The richest	99,7	99,7

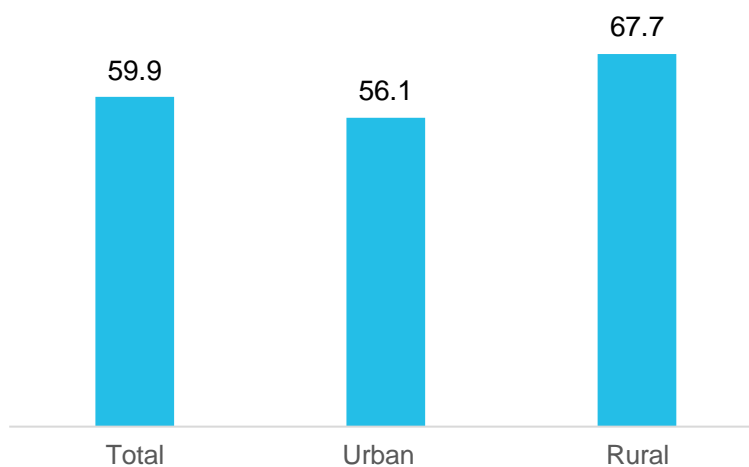
Source: INE, MICS 2014 and 2019

Table 6.2: Percentage of users of improved, non-shared toilet facilities, 2014 - 2019

	2014	2019
Total	40,9	44,7
Urban	46,2	47,0
Rural	30,2	39,9
Region		
District of Água Grande		56,3
Mé-Zóchi District		40,1
Central Eastern Region	46,5	
Region Northwest	25,2	34,5
Southern Region East	31,6	37,8
Autonomous Region of Príncipe	51,1	55,3
Education of head of household		
Pre-school / None	30,0	31,6
Basic	33,0	33,9
Secondary	51,4	55,9
Superior	84,7	86,3
Doesn't know/Missing	41,5	54,9
Index of economic well-being		
Poorest	7,5	9,6
According to	18,1	17,1
Medium	31,1	38,6
Room	58,6	68,3
The richest	89,0	89,8

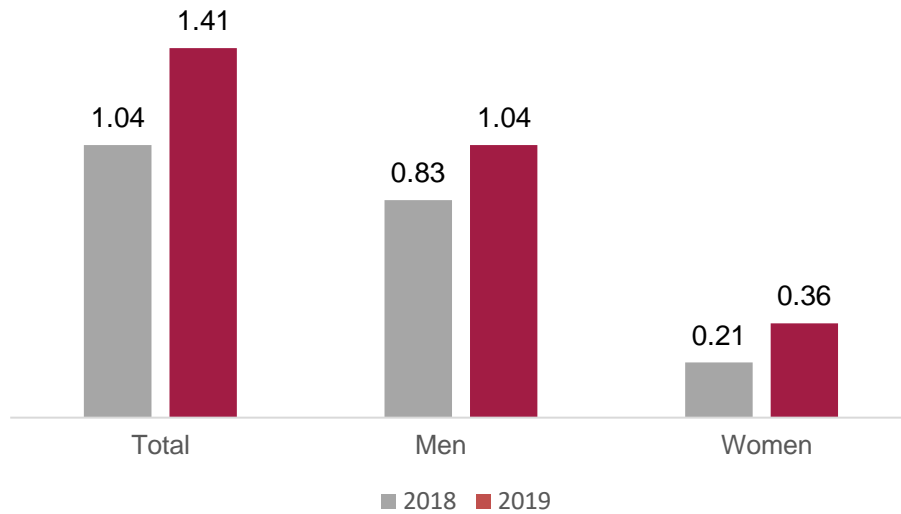
Source: INE, MICS 2014 and 2019

Chart 6.1: Percentage of household members without improved drinking water on premises, by means of residence, 2019



Source: INE, MICS 2019

Graph 8.4: Percentage of fatal and non-fatal accidents at work, by gender and migration status, 2018 - 2019



Source: SNPCB, 2021

Table 11.2: Municipal Solid Waste generated in STP, by Districts (Ton/year), 2010 - 2020

	2010	2015	2020
Big Water	7 948	9 093	10 306
Mé-Zochi	5 378	6 238	7 070
Cantagalo	2 031	2 370	2 687
Caué	843	1 028	1 166
Lembá	1 639	1 896	2 149
Lobata	2 326	2 799	3 173
Pagué (Ilha do Prince)	914	1 092	1 238
Visitors (INE ST, 2006)	257	358	480
Total	21 336	24 874	28 269

Source: National Plan for Integrated Management of Solid Urban Waste - STP, 2010



Table 16.2: Percentage of children under 5 years whose birth was declared as registered with the civil authority, 2014 - 2019

	2014	2019
Total	95,2	98,6
Male	95,5	98,8
Female	94,9	98,4
Means of residence		
Urban	96,4	98,6
Rural	93,0	98,5
Age		
0-11	94,5	98,7
12-23	94,9	98,5
24-35	95,4	97,8
36-47	95,9	99,8
48-59	95,2	98,3

Source: INE, MICS 2014 and 2019

Table 17. 3: Data availability for 1st VNR of STP

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
1.1.1	2.1.1	3.1.1	4.1.1	5.1.1	6.1.1	7.1.1	8.1.1	9.1.1	10.1.1	11.1.1	12.1.1	13.1.1	14.1.1	15.1.1	16.1.1	17.1.1
1.2.1	2.1.2	3.1.2	4.1.2	5.2.1	6.2.1	7.1.2	8.2.1	9.1.2	10.2.1	11.2.1	12.2.1	13.1.2	14.2.1	15.1.2	16.1.2	17.1.2
1.2.2	2.2.1	3.2.1	4.2.1	5.2.2	6.3.1	7.2.1	8.3.1	9.2.1	10.3.1	11.3.1	12.2.2	13.1.3	14.3.1	15.2.1	16.1.3	17.2.1
1.3.1	2.2.2	3.2.2	4.2.2	5.3.1	6.3.2	7.3.1	8.4.1	9.2.2	10.4.1	11.3.2	12.3.1	13.2.1	14.4.1	15.3.1	16.1.4	17.3.1
1.4.1	2.2.3	3.3.1	4.3.1	5.3.2	6.4.1	7.a.1	8.4.2	9.3.1	10.4.2	11.4.1	12.4.1	13.2.2	14.5.1	15.4.1	16.2.1	17.3.2
1.4.2	2.3.1	3.3.2	4.4.1	5.4.1	6.4.2	7.b.1	8.5.1	9.3.2	10.5.1	11.5.1	12.4.2	13.3.1	14.6.1	15.4.2	16.2.2	17.4.1
1.5.1	2.3.2	3.3.3	4.5.1	5.5.1	6.5.1		8.5.2	9.4.1	10.6.1	11.5.2	12.5.1	13.a.1	14.7.1	15.5.1	16.2.3	17.5.1
1.5.2	2.4.1	3.3.4	4.6.1	5.5.2	6.5.2		8.6.1	9.5.1	10.7.1	11.6.1	12.6.1	13.b.1	14.a.1	15.6.1	16.3.1	17.6.1
1.5.3	2.5.1	3.3.5	4.7.1	5.6.1	6.6.1		8.7.1	9.5.2	10.7.2	11.6.2	12.7.1		14.b.1	15.7.1	16.3.2	17.7.1
1.5.4	2.5.2	3.4.1	4.a.1	5.6.2	6.a.1		8.8.1	9.a.1	10.7.3	11.7.1	12.8.1		14.c.1	15.8.1	16.3.3	17.8.1
1.a.1	2.a.1	3.4.2	4.b.1	5.a.1	6.b.1		8.8.2	9.b.1	10.7.4	11.7.2	12.a.1			15.9.1	16.4.1	17.9.1
1.a.2	2.a.2	3.5.1	4.c.1	5.a.2			8.9.1	9.c.1	10.a.1	11.a.1	12.b.1			15.a.1	16.4.2	17.10.1
1.b.1	2.b.1	3.5.2		5.b.1			8.10.1		10.b.1	11.b.1	12.c.1			15.b.1	16.5.1	17.11.1
	2.c.1	3.6.1		5.c.1			8.10.2		10.c.1	11.b.2				15.c.1	16.5.2	17.12.1
		3.7.1					8.a.1								16.6.1	17.13.1
		3.7.2					8.b.1								16.6.2	17.14.1
		3.8.1													16.7.1	17.15.1
		3.8.2													16.7.2	17.16.1
		3.9.1													16.8.1	17.17.1
		3.9.2													16.9.1	17.18.1
		3.9.3													16.10.1	17.18.2
		3.a.1													16.10.2	17.18.3
		3.b.1													16.a.1	17.19.1
		3.b.2													16.b.1	17.19.2
		3.b.3														
		3.c.1														
		3.d.1														
		3.d.2														

Caption:

 Data available  No data  Not applicable



OBJETIVOS

DE DESENVOLVIMENTO
SUSTENTÁVEL