



ANNUAL REPORT 2023





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chocolate connoisseurs worldwide.

Sao Tome and Principe produces some of the finest chocolate in the world, renowned for its exceptional quality and rich flavor profiles. The country's cocoa beans, grown in its rich and fertile landscapes, benefit from ideal climatic conditions and traditional farming methods. Country's chocolate production, certified as biological, is characterized by a commitment to sustainable practices and craftsmanship, ensuring that each chocolate product embodies the essence of the islands. With its unique terroir and dedication to excellence, STP chocolate stands as a testament to the country's culinary heritage and is celebrated by

FOREWORD

This report provides an overview of the key results, with human stories that show how development actions have changed the lives of people for the better. It shows progress made to the fulfillment of the promise made by the United Nations (UN) member states in 2015 to leave no one behind in the achievement of the SDGs. The UN partnered closely with the Government, development partners, civil society and private sector to advance our common goals, and thanks to your continued support and trust we have been able to do so. I would like to mention in particular the partnership with the associations for people with special needs and the Government to develop a draft national strategy for greater inclusion across the various sectors.

2023 has been the first year of implementation of the CF, and I am glad to see that the country programs of individual UN agencies have been approved by their respective Executive Boards and are now aligned with the focus of the CF and its timeframe till 2027.

The inclusive sustainable development trajectory of the country has had strong headwinds with rising prices worldwide and hampering economic growth but the commitment to an inclusive, sustainable and prosperous society has been unwavering. In 2023, Sao Tome and Principe (STP) took on the presidency of the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries which adopted Youth and Sustainability as their main theme for 2023/4. As UN, we support the efforts of the Government to create more opportunities for youth to participate in the civil, political, socio-economic and cultural life in STP. We are proud that the Government has partnered with the UN and the African Development Bank (AfDB) for the first International Conference on innovative financing for Biodiversity Conservation that took place on the island of Principe, the first UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve. Climate financing will be a continued focus of our work in 2024. We look forward to the continued partnership for the acceleration of the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in STP, our north star that guides our actions.



Eric Overvest United Nations Resident Coordinator Sao Tome and Principe





PRESENCE OF UNITED NATIONS IN SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE

The UN in Sao Tome and Principe is committed to supporting the country's national development priorities and progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in an integrated manner, with a strong emphasis on leaving no one behind. The new United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (CF) has been strategically designed around this principle, mobilizing collective expertise to accelerate SDG progress. Through enhanced capacities and a reconfigured UN system involving both resident and non-resident agencies, efforts aim to address the country's unique development challenges, particularly its vulnerabilities as a small, insular state

heavily reliant on imports. By leveraging its presence and recognized role as a key development actor, the UN facilitates partnerships, upholds international norms and standards, and advocates for the principles of leaving no one behind, human rights, and gender transformative approaches. In addition to the 8 resident agencies in STP, 10 UN agencies which have signed the CF are actively supporting STP from one of the countries in the region, a strong increase from the previous CF, and thus, greater access of STP to the specialized expertise of the UN. Also WB and the AfDB co-signed the framework, underscoring their joint commitment to the results of the UN framework.



● IN-COUNTRY PRESENCE

















NON-COUNTRY PRESENCE























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

The UN places partnership at the center of all aspects of its work. During 2023, we worked closely with the Government of Sao Tome and Principe, local authorities, international organizations, private sector, and civil society to support the key transitions towards accelerating the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda. These partnerships are essential for leveraging resources and knowledge for sustainable development. Thanks to the generous support from the international community, the UN has been able to support the priority needs of the country in social, economic, environmental development and governance. In 2023, the UN initiated a significant partnership with the Government of Sao

Tome and Principe to host the first International Conference on Innovative Financing for Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Development in Sao Tome and Principe. This collaborative effort underscores our commitment to mobilizing resources and expertise towards preserving the rich biodiversity of the country. The core resources of UN agencies constitute a substantial portion of the funds spent in 2023, followed by the global funds (GEF, Global Fund to fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and GAVI). Detailed information regarding contributions by partner can be found below.

Source of Funding of the UN STP in 2023

PARTNERS	TOTAL AMOUNT (USD)
Core resources from the UN agencies	\$5,356,144
Global Environment Facility (GEF)	\$2,318,123
Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria	\$2,052,687
Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI)	\$1,204,172
World Bank	\$997,161
European Union	\$962,240
WHO Fund for Outbreak and Crisis Response	\$652,213
Green Climate Fund (GCF)	\$437,000
UN Joint SDG Fund	\$319,891
UNICEF Education thematic fund	\$304,489
National Determined Contribution Partnership Global Coalition	\$300,000
United States of America	\$200,664
African Development Bank	\$177,249
Portugal	\$155,674
Sao Tome and Principe (National Petroleum Agency)	\$109,965
Akelius Foundation	\$101,890
Global Partnership for Education	\$59,033
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	\$58,112
French Development Agency (AFD)	\$52,891
Bloomberg Family Foundation	\$19,000
China International Center for Economic and Technical Exchanges (CICETE)	\$2,300
TOTAL	\$15,840,898



COUNTRY PARTNERS













ENTITIES PARTNERS















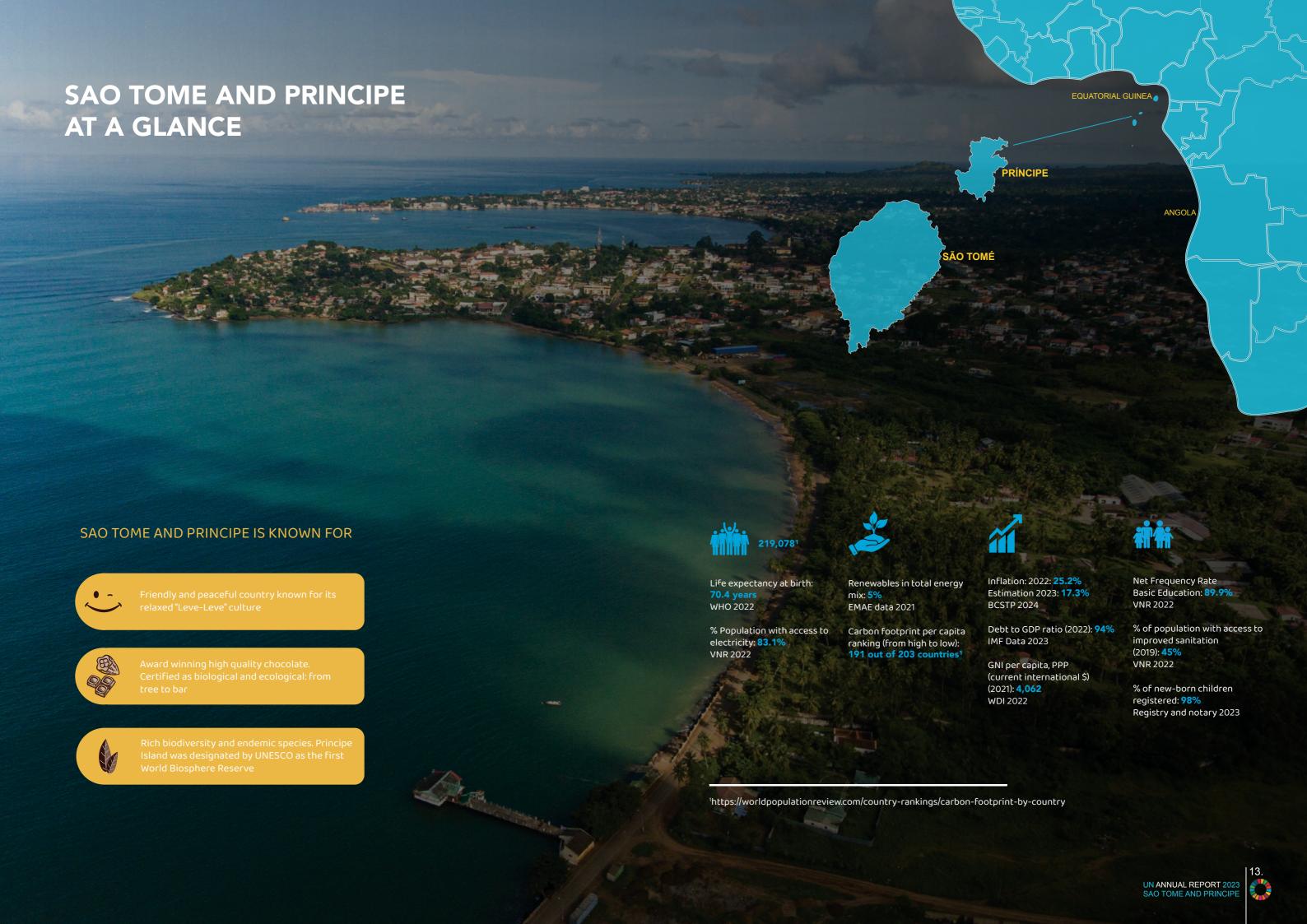






Bloomberg Philanthropies







Sao Tome and Principe (STP) has experienced significant economic growth over the past two decades, with a sixfold increase in GDP between 2002 and 2022. This growth, although from a modest starting point, has been characterized by fluctuations driven by changes in Official Development Assistance (ODA) and sporadic oil revenues. These financial injections facilitated investments in critical social infrastructure, particularly in the health and education sectors, leading to improved human development outcomes and positioning the country for graduation from Least Developed Country (LDC) status by the end of 2024. As of 2022, STP's Human Development Index (HDI) has

surpassed the Sub-Saharan African average and its level of HDI compares with that of Cabo Verde and Equatorial Guinea.

After many years of growth, 2023 brought economic recession with a negative 0.3 % economic growth, while inflation remained high and a protracted external reserves crisis. The lack of an IMF approved credit program hampered external resource mobilization, affecting the implementation of the government budget and the central bank's ability to meet financial needs. Structural factors, including supply constraints in the agricultural and fisheries sectors, contributed to high

inflation, which was exacerbated by the introduction of the value-added tax (VAT) in May 2023. This has heavily impacted on the purchasing power of the population. Despite these setbacks, recovery efforts are underway, with the Central Bank forecasting a GDP recovery of 2.9% in 2024, supported by growth in key sectors such as energy and basic industries. By the end of 2023, new generators were installed in the capital city of Sao Tome which has restored more reliable energy supply, putting an end to the frequent power cuts

In August 2023, the country assumed the 2-year presidency of the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries and presented Youth and Sustainability as the central theme of its Presidency. The mobility pact of Portuguese speaking countries, that entered in force in 2022, provides for safe orderly and regular migration flows. In 2023, a large increase in visa demands for Portugal led to many youth opting for pursuing opportunities abroad. In the same year, STP set a new record of tourist arrivals, with 35,817 international tourists, above the pre-pandemic numbers of 2019.



UN SUPPORT TO NATIONAL PRIORITIES

The Cooperation Framework is the UN's five-year plan that guides and directs the collaboration between the Government of São Tomé and Príncipe and the United Nations in order to accelerate progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Agenda 2063 of the African Union. This framework has been aligned with the priorities of the Government of Sao Tome and Principe and its plan for the period 2022-2026.

The UN is focusing on 4 key priority areas to which all agencies contribute in a coherent and coordinated way. Each of the priority areas is linked to the pillars of the 2030 Agenda: People, Planet, Prosperity and Partnerships.

Each of the priority areas has a strategic result to which the UN as a whole contributes and works together to bring about the transformational change that is required to reduce inequalities, create jobs and invests in a sustainable environment in which no one is left behind.





TERRA PROMETIDA PROMISED LAND The promised land for the Sundy Roça community in agreement was signed with the private company Here Principe Island became a reality at the end of 2023, with Be Dragons (HBD) and has been a successful the completion of 133 houses that allowed the partnership with the local Government of the community of around 700 people to permanently Autonomous Region of Principe Island. Housed in resettle from the dilapidated old slave quarters of the dilapidated colonial structures that lacked basic amenities, the community faced serious challenges, former cocoa plantation to decent housing. Fully consistent with the environmental obligations of the exacerbated by precarious livelihoods and insecure World's first UNESCO Biosphere, the houses were built land tenure. The Terra Prometida project is a beacon of preserving the ecological integrity and sustainability inclusive development, using participatory and following continuous community consultation decision-making and innovative construction practices to ensure not only improved living conditions but also based on voluntary resettlement. Families were able to choose the type of house that most suited their needs. environmental protection. This transformative project started in 2018 when an UN ANNUAL REPORT 2023 SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE

O1S OUTCOME

Inclusive Social Systems

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

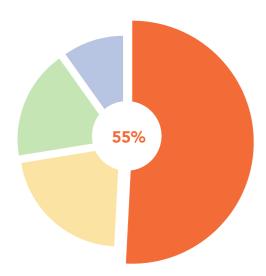












USD \$8.052,006



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

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

Quality health system for universal health coverage

The UN has contributed to progress in the areas of institutional strengthening in health through governance actions, expanding access to better quality health facilities, improved WASH and regulation of the pharmaceutical sector. The main results include: the Ministry of Health's leadership of the Partners Platform, with UN support, which is fully operational; the preparations for improved WASH and the installation of solar panels on all district health centres, at the same time, progress was made in the areas of institutional strengthening in health through governance actions, expanding access to better quality health services and training health workers for the sustainability of health actions.

In 2023, significant milestones were reached to move forward with the creation of a regulatory agency for medicines and technologies and with strengthening the country's capacity to act in public health emergencies, maintaining control of the COVID-19 pandemic and with surveillance actions to control the dengue outbreak in the country. The UN also supported resource mobilization for the health and education sector and advocated for a holistic approach to Social Protection, integrating targeted support to health, nutrition and education needs of the most vulnerable population to social protection services.

Quality learning results

The UN's focus to achieve quality learning outcomes has targeted active community engagement for behavioral changes and developing market-oriented skills for the LNOB populations. The UN has supported the Ministry of Education for effective coordination of the Local Group of Education Partners, in support of the Education Policy Charter 2019-2023 of STP, ensuring synergies, stronger resource mobilization and enhanced coordination practices involving partners, and civil society. Notable achievements concern improvements in pre-school education, reaching over 90% of kids, and itinerant access, the integration of digital blended learning approaches, and the enhancement of pedagogical practices and literacy and

ienhancement of pedagogical practices and literacy and numeracy skills.

Furthermore, the UN's contributions have strengthened the education system comprehensively. This includes producing learning outcome evidence and studies to inform education policies, implementing Minimum School Standards to enhance management practices, multisectoral work for more inclusive and disability-friendly access to learning and promoting the importance of education for future life. Additionally, concerted efforts have been directed towards reducing the number of out-of-school pupils through the development of life skills training programs in rural and urban communities across the country.





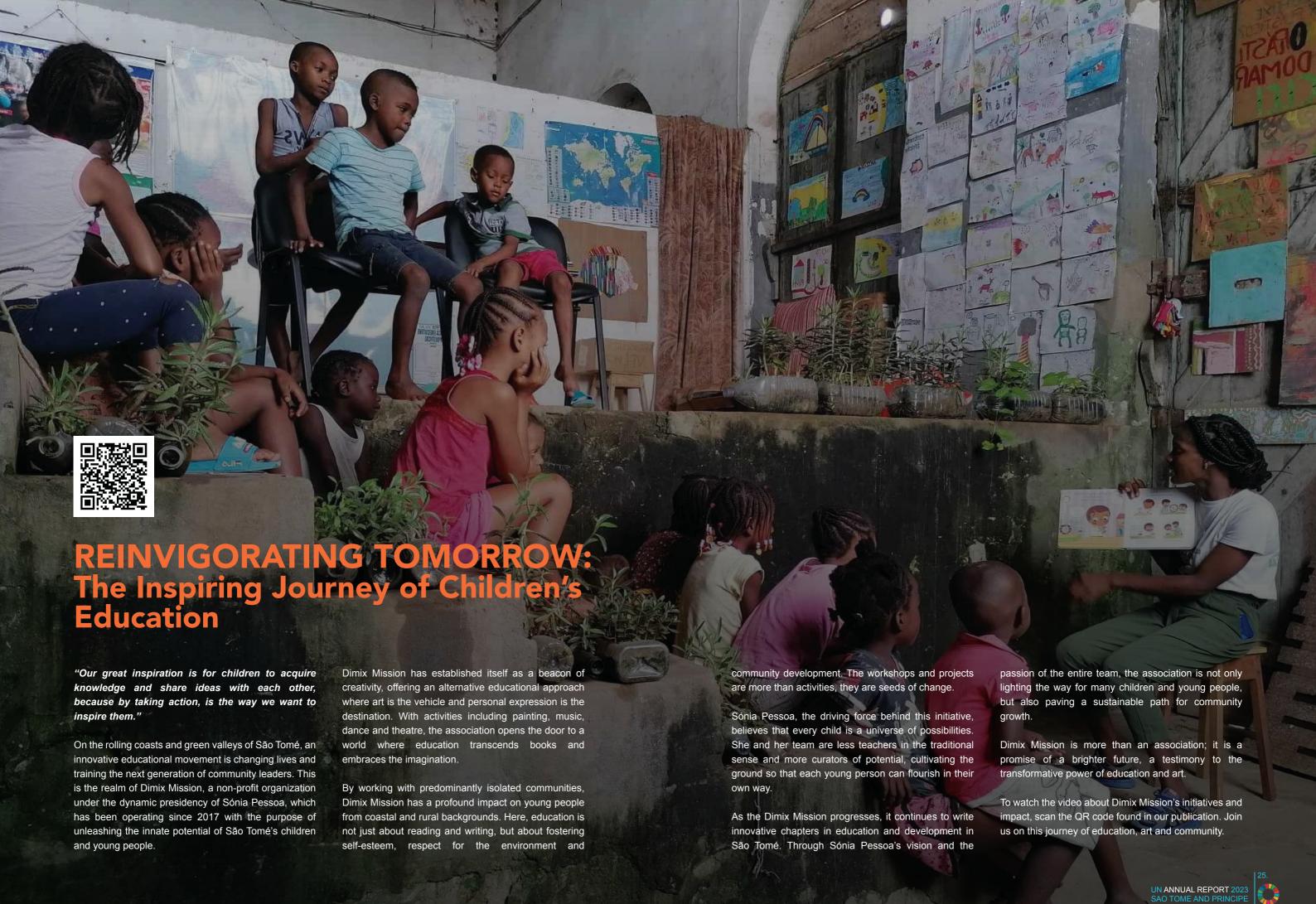
Integrated social protection system

With the support of the UN, the National Social Protection Strategy was reviewed and it was officially adopted by the Council of Ministers, constituting a guiding document that will improve governance in the field of Social Protection. Also, the Law on the Single Social Registry for the non-contributive social protection system was adopted in March 2023 to which the UN has provided a major contribution. The UN trained the social protection workers in the two poorest districts of the country (Caué and Lembá) to monitor the support to the most vulnerable population with a focus on parental education to prevent cases of gender-based violence and violence against children. Integrated policy advice by UN system supported the revision of the social protection strategy, ensuring a more cohesive, child-sensitive and well-integrated system for protection from the adverse impacts of risks and vulnerabilities. With UN support, the National Statistics Institute issued the first statistical bulletin on Social Protection with detailed data on social protection coverage and financial flows, disaggregated by gender, which is an important tool to monitor the implementation of the Social Protection law. The bulletin shows that coverage of the contributory social protection scheme went up from 30.1 per cent in 2019 to 34.8 per cent in 2021.

<u>Prevention of and response to violence, especially against women and children</u>

The UN supported the development of multisectoral Violence against Children (VAC) case management and referral procedures with the engagement of Government, civil society and communities, providing training and strengthening coordination mechanisms, thereby improving the functioning of the child protection system. Service delivery was enhanced through the creation of child-friendly spaces in justice and health services and continued partnerships with CSOs enabled integrated support to child victims of sexual violence. Social workers were trained in psychosocial support and data and case management, to further strengthen the response to violence against children. An ongoing Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) study on violence in homes and schools will inform prevention and response interventions. 20% of adolescents and young people aged between 15 and 24 years are engaged in the youth platform of U-Report.







Climate Action

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



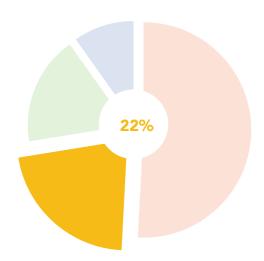












USD \$3.422,923



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

- Measuring and integrating Climate Change into policies and programs
- Protect, fund and manage land and marine biodiversity
- Disaster Risk Preparedness, early warning systems and response
- Renewable energy and energy efficiency

Measuring and integrating climate change into policies and programs

With support from the UN, the country has made significant strides in strengthening national capacities in climate governance while fostering awareness and deepening knowledge regarding climate issues. These advancements have been achieved through a multifaceted approach:

- i. The UN provided dedicated support to ensure the active participation of high-ranking national officials in key international climate negotiations, including COP28 and the Africa Climate Summit in 2023. Through facilitated networking opportunities, the UN connected national technical experts and decision-makers, enhancing their engagement and influence on global climate agendas.
- ii. Robust training initiatives and technical assistance were provided to enhance knowledge on climate issues and bolster negotiation capacities among the country's technicians at international climate forums, but also awareness raising of youth on environmental issues.
- iii. The hosting of the inaugural Lusophone Cluster meeting within the country, attended by representatives from all Lusophone countries and other development partners, played a pivotal role in raising awareness among decision-makers and society at large on Climate Transparency.
- iv. The UN conducted dialogues with experts to disseminate knowledge and awareness on innovative environmental financing tools to high-level government officials, technicians, and civil society.

The UN made a major contribution to the generation of accurate meteorological data in support of the National Meteorological Institute (INM). The weather and climate data products and forecasts have been tailored to local needs, with long-term, medium, and short-term projections.

Furthermore, through specialized equipment and capacity development training for INM staff members, UN's specialized expertise has been mobilized in marine science and weather forecasting, and local leadership been strengthened. The climate data will play an important role in providing evidence for climate change. Furthermore, the UN facilitated the commencement of the country's first evidence-based National Adaptation Plan for Climate Change (NAP), laying a foundation for comprehensive climate resilience and adaptation strategies.

At the local level, the UN supported the establishment of 20 tree nurseries to reinforce forest cover and mangrove ecosystems. Additionally, support was extended for the submission of a proposal to the Green Climate Fund focusing on irrigation and integrated water management, aimed at adapting to the impacts of climate change on rainfall patterns."

<u>Protect, fund and manage the land and marine</u> <u>biodiversity</u>

The UN has been instrumental in advocating for enhanced leadership within the country to access innovative biodiversity financing mechanisms. The activation of the Issue Based Coalition of the regional support facility facilitated the engagement of top-tier expertise from various UN agencies in organizing the International Conference on Biodiversity Funding, with active involvement from civil society and the private sector. Furthermore, the UN has contributed significantly to biodiversity conservation efforts through multifaceted interventions:

- I. Improvements in the environmental regulatory framework have been achieved, including the updating of the 1999 Environmental Law and Environmental Impact Assessment Law, the approval of the Decree Law establishing High Conservation Value Forest Areas, and the drafting of National Park Management Plans.
- II. A pivotal milestone in 2023 was the establishment, by presidential decree, of the country's first Conservation Trust Fund.
- III. Innovative alternative income-generating activities for charcoal-producing communities have been developed across both islands, benefiting a total of 1092 individuals, with 45% of beneficiaries being female

One of the notable achievements of the year was the successful facilitation of negotiations between the largest coconut oil producer and the Government. This landmark agreement aims to mitigate traditional charcoal production, the second-largest cause of deforestation in the country. The initiative will lead to the production and distribution of green charcoal derived from coconut waste, effectively reducing illegal logging and improving the health and livelihoods of charcoal producers, thus contributing to global environmental objectives. Moreover, the UN's interventions have strengthened national capacities in reporting and decision-making processes. This was achieved through the engagement of dedicated Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) and gender specialists, ensuring the mainstreaming of gender perspectives and the collection and analysis of relevant data. Lastly, the UN's support has facilitated evidence-based policymaking by conducting a comprehensive market study aimed at promoting an innovative value chain for bio-inputs and organic vegetables, thereby fostering sustainable agricultural practices and economic development.

<u>Disaster risk preparedness, early warning systems</u> <u>and response</u>

Through collaborative efforts with the UN, significant strides were taken to bolster the capacities of key national institutions in Sao Tome and Principe for disaster risk preparedness, early warning systems, and response mechanisms, particularly in light of climate vulnerabilities. A comprehensive training initiative utilizing the CityRAP tool successfully engaged 44 stakeholders, including representatives from all district and regional authorities. This training program aimed to enhance the country's ability to anticipate and mitigate the impacts of climate-related disasters, ultimately safeguarding the most vulnerable populations. By empowering stakeholders with essential knowledge and skills, the UN facilitated the formulation of robust disaster risk management strategies, fostering a coordinated and proactive approach to addressing the distinctive challenges encountered by Small Island Developing States (SIDS) such as STP. These efforts underscore a concerted commitment to fortify the nation's resilience against climate-induced hazards, thereby safeguarding lives, livelihoods, and critical infrastructure amidst the evolving environmental landscape.



Renewable energy and energy efficiency

In collaboration with the AfDB, the WB and the private sector, the UN has made significant contributions to fostering an enabling environment and mitigating investment risks in renewable energy and energy efficiency. These efforts encompass various strategic initiatives:

- I. Launch of a joint program, financed by the private sector, and executed by the UN, aimed at deploying solar rooftop solutions in healthcare and educational institutions.
- II. Elaboration of minimum energy performance standards for electric appliances and delivering tailored training programs to support their effective implementation.
- III. Crafting of guidelines for the design, installation, and management of small hydropower plants, coupled with specialized training initiatives to ensure adherence to best practices.
- IV. Launch of a complimentary online training platform offering instruction in sustainable energy solutions tailored specifically for island communities, available in Portuguese.
- V. Finalization of feasibility studies for Ocean Thermal Technology to de-risk investments
- VI. Introducing an online energy information system tailored for the country, providing accessible and comprehensive data to stakeholders in the energy sector.







Green and Blue Growth

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





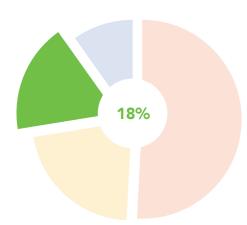












USD \$2.806,700



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

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

<u>Increased productivity and commercialization of green and blue economy local products</u>

In 2023, the UN organization made significant progress in supporting the government of STP to enhance institutional capacities for designing policies and implementing programs aimed at increasing productivity and commercializing local products from the green and blue economy. Key achievements include the initiation of a transformation unit for agricultural products, with rehabilitation work 30% complete, and the construction of 32 fish processing units specifically for women groups. An irrigation and drainage system was established in the Uba Budo community, benefiting 61 smallholder farmers, and incorporating solar panels to boost green agriculture practices. Training in soil-cement construction was provided to 15 youths in Uba Budo, fostering local cooperative development. Efforts to distribute organic local products to educational establishments reached

local products to educational establishments reached 47 institutions, benefiting approximately 6606 children, thereby promoting healthier food options, and supporting small producers. Over 1100 farmers received training in good production practices, and nearly 952 producers were trained in biodiversity conservation. Agricultural inputs were provided for 1492 producers and improved land tenure security for 179 people, enhancing sown areas. UN support was extended to other 28 producer organizations, improving agricultural production, processing, and marketing. And, an Integrated Rural Development Programme (PDRI) was drafted, aligning with national and global development goals, and resources were distributed to farming communities to support sustainable agriculture and biodiversity conservation. The establishment of the Arbitration Center laid the groundwork for improved commercial dispute resolution. Finally, a digital platform for job openings was launched, enhancing national employment services.

Access of entrepreneurs to financial and non-financial business services

The preparation for training activities in partnership with Cabo Verde for women "agriculture-entrepreneurs" as part of the promotion of local value chains is ongoing, showing promise for future development. Business Development Services were successfully established to

deliver quality services to the entrepreneurial population in an inclusive and sustained manner. This achievement is particularly beneficial for youth, women, and the directorate of entrepreneurship. The UN also enhanced the participation and engagement of the country's youth in international events, raising their visibility, exposure, and knowledge.

Blue Economy governance

The UN successfully supported the development of the Blue Economy Transition Strategy and Investment Plan, which is a significant step towards creating a sustainable blue economy, with 21M USD of priority investments. A study on the contribution of blue economy to the national economy was carried out, showing its importance to economic growth. Additionally, the UN established an intersectoral platform that integrates education, entrepreneurship, and employment within the blue economy, aiming to streamline efforts and resources in this sector. To enhance technical skills and knowledge among institutional actors in the green and blue economy, the UN developed three knowledge products focusing on nutrition, particularly school gardens, cooperatives, and agricultural and livestock micro-projects. This initiative aimed to disseminate critical information and best practices to relevant stakeholders, thereby improving their capacity to support the blue economy.

Furthermore, the UN's efforts to increase youth opportunities and engagement in socio-economic development yielded positive results. Over 400 youths, with 38% female representation, were empowered across the six districts of Sao Tome Island. This empowerment was achieved through a national youth dialogue led by the Institute of Youth with UN support, which laid a strong foundation for youth activism and participation as active agents of change in environmental issues.







Transparent & Accountable Institutions

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



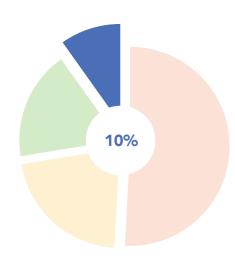












USD \$1.559,269



For outcome 4, the UN has focused on 3 priorities:

- Access to Justice
- Transparency, Accountability and Control mechanisms
- Statistical capacities for disaggregated data collection and analysis

Access to Justice

At the government's request, the United Nations provided strategic assessment support for the justice and security sector, in collaboration with the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). Subsequently, a joint UN programmatic framework for the justice and security sector was established, outlining priority actions informed by extensive consultations with both governmental non-governmental entities, including modernization of judiciary system, an integrated case management system, enhancing internal security capabilities, maritime security, forensic capacity and gender/child-sensitive justice. The UN also supported resource mobilization around this framework including the successful preparation of a funding proposal to the Peace Building Fund. The UN supported the Government's high level engagement in the Peace Building Commission meeting on STP on January 15, focusing on the country's efforts in justice and security sector to consolidate stability.

Additionally, the UN facilitated the consultative process for STP's presentation of its first progress report to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), as well as the fifth and sixth reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC). These actions underscore STP's dedication to meeting international obligations and advancing the rights of women and children. Moreover, UN advocacy played a pivotal role in the successful ratification of conventions concerning displaced persons and refugees/stateless persons. In a joint initiative with the AfDB and in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce, the arbitration court building was officially inaugurated. This facility aims to offer a pivotal dispute resolution mechanism for the private sector, enhanced by judiciary personnel trainings at the Arbitration Court. At the district level, the UN's support for the construction of a new courthouse in Caué district, a region marked by its low socio-economic indicators and limited access to justice has made Registry and Notary services fully operational in 2023.



<u>Transparency, Accountability and Control</u> mechanisms

With the support of the UN, the operational patrol capacities of the Coast Guard were enhanced through the development of Maritime Law Enforcement (MLE) skills training. This training focused on the elaboration of ship inspection sheets for technical unit assessment, facilitating an increase in MLE's patrol capabilities and thereby ensuring more effective operational activities to combat maritime crimes. Furthermore, in collaboration with stakeholders engaged in the Action State at Sea in Sao Tome and Principe, a draft of the Harmonized Standard Operational Procedures (HSOP) was developed. This draft focuses on establishing a coordination mechanism for sea interventions upon the detection of maritime incidents. Additionally, the UN supported the revision of the country's penal code and criminal procedures codes, informed recommendations from a comprehensive study and assessment of STP's legislative framework. This is deemed an essential condition for the country to effectively prosecute and adjudicate maritime offenders. The completion of this revision, scheduled for 2024, grants the country universal jurisdiction, thereby positioning it as a leading country in the ECCAS region in terms of maritime security and legal framework.

<u>Statistical capacities for disaggregated data</u> collection and analysis

In 2023, the United Nations propelled the child rights agenda forward through comprehensive support aimed at evidence generation and policy-level advocacy on child protection with key decision-makers and stakeholders. This support included the facilitation of strategic reflections and the dissemination of pivotal data on the state of child welfare, alongside initiatives for child-friendly budgeting with specific child-related allocations and investments across sectors. The UN's efforts were instrumental in fortifying the mechanisms for data collection and analysis concerning child protection. This was achieved through the development of operational procedures that clearly delineate roles and responsibilities, thereby enhancing coordination among pivotal institutions and stakeholders. The UN's contribution also strengthened data collection and analysis on child protection. This entailed the establishment of comprehensive operational procedures that defined the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved, aiming to improve inter-agency coordination and stakeholder engagement.





UNITED IN ACTION: JOINT UN ADVOCACY, COHERENCE AND EFFICIENCY

2023 has been the first year of implementation of the new Cooperation Framework. Under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator, the UN agencies have come together to focus on some of the key development challenges of the country. With increasing pressure on the most disadvantaged due to the surge in cost of living, the UN has advocated jointly for the expansion of social protection. It has also worked together to advance gender equality within the United Nations system. A Gender Theme Group composed of all UN agencies was set up end of 2022 which has done a thorough analysis of the way gender is integrated in programs and operations, recommendations to improve gender analysis, inclusion and reporting. The group also mobilized the expertise for enhanced capacity building. During 2023, deliberate efforts have been made to include gender, where possible, in all public speeches and as a standing item on all Heads of agencies meetings. A standardized set of indicators for all UN offices has been applied to its work, which has led to a more consistent approach to gender.

The new Cooperation Framework has also been the start of a new online platform in which all activities of the UN, planned and implemented, are reflected with real-time data. This provides transparency to all stakeholders and is a major shift from previous reporting tools. It can be accessed through the UN SDG Data portal:

https://uninfo.org/location/60/unct-overview

SDGs have been the north star of the UN team, and the newly signed CF reflects the areas where SDG implementation is to be accelerated based on the national SDG report that was presented in 2022 to ECOSOC.



SDG Pencil initiative

Once upon a time, there was an SDG pencil created in STP. But these were no ordinary pencils, each one hid a seed that, once planted, would grow and flourish. In the hands of someone full of imagination, it wrote many beautiful stories and drew many characters! It lived a long and prosperous life, but, like all pencils, there came a time when it was too small to write with. At that moment, it was seeded in a pot and turned into a plant!

By transforming learning tools into instruments of change, these pencils become a powerful symbol of how we can transform the future through simple but meaningful actions. These pencils have helped children in Sao Tome and Principe not only to learn about the SDGs in an interactive and practical way but are also encouraging them to become stewards of our planet. This action goes far beyond the simple act of planting, it's a living lesson in sustainability, caring for our planet and the importance of each individual contribution to a better world. Each plant that grows from these pencils is a tangible reminder that even the smallest acts can blossom into significant changes.





SDG Color Run

Sao Tome and Principe hosted a unique event that brought together sport, digital connectivity and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Color Run 4G & SDGs, an innovative initiative, was the result of a strategic collaboration between the private sector telecommunications company CST and the United Nations in Sao Tome and Principe. The run through the capital city passed by the stands of various SDG goals. Once a particular SDG milestone along the run was reached, the runner was sprayed with the color of the respective SDG, and at the end a rainbow of colors symbolized the interconnectedness of the SDGs. The partnership highlighted the importance of digital connectivity as one of the transformative areas for achieving the SDGs. In an era where technology plays a vital role in sustainable development, promoting digital connectivity becomes essential to boosting access to information, education and economic opportunities. The Color Run 4G & SDGs was not only a celebration of vibrant colors, but also an appeal to the importance of sport and health. By promoting sport, the event emphasized the relevance of SDG 3 (Health and Well-being) and its positive impact on quality of life. The event provided a unique experience for participants, but also played a crucial role in spreading knowledge about the Sustainable Development Goals. Through educational and informative initiatives during the 4G & SDG Color Run, the partnership between CST and the United Nations contributed to raising awareness among participants about pressing issues such as poverty eradication, climate change, renewable energy and life on the water.



UN Podcast

ONU POD is the engaging UN podcast, that has put the spotlight on key development issues and given a platform for those whose voices are not always heard. It has emerged as a dynamic tool to disseminate informed messages on sustainable development and human rights and a unique platform for leaders and citizens to share their perspectives on key issues, but also highlight what the UN can do. During 2023, 6 episodes were broadcast. Designed as a short 7-10 minute interview, the issues focused on the fight against Domestic Violence, protection of Children's Rights, Inclusion of People with Disabilities, CPLP Presidency of STP, Biodiversity Protection and fair global community. The first episode featured the Resident Coordinator of the UN, who outlined the focus of the new Cooperation Framework in building a Sustainable and Inclusive Development in São Tomé and Principle without compromising the well-being of future

Several Ministers also starred in the power interviews to highlight their commitment to development. In a special episode, ONU POD made room for younger voices, with children celebrating Childhood and Children's Rights and expressing their aspirations.

This inspiring touch provided a unique perspective on the challenges faced by children in Sao Tome and Principe. Another inspiring special episode focused on People with Disabilities in which ONU POD listened to the voices of the disability community. The number of followers of ONU POD has steadily grown and the podcast will continue in 2024 to be a valuable source of information, connecting the people of Sao Tome and Principe to UN initiatives in an engaging and accessible way. This is just the beginning of an exciting journey towards inclusive dialogue and the promotion of lasting sustainable development.

s Nações Unidas né e Príncipe







Success story on the promise to **Leave No One Behind**

Beacon of Resilience and Inspiration

In the verdant islands of Sao Tome and Principe, where the air is filled with the scent of cocoa and the sound of waves caressing the shore, Alex dos Anjos emerged as a beacon of hope and a symbol of indomitable spirit. Born with a physical disability in a community where access to resources and support could easily become a roadblock to dreams, Alex's story is one of resilience, determination, and groundbreaking achievement.

From an early age, Alex refused to be defined by limitations. Instead, he chose to carve a path defined by his strengths, his passion, and an unvielding drive to go beyond what was expected of him. It was on the running track that Alex found his calling. With each stride, he not only challenged his own boundaries but also the perceptions of those around him, demonstrating that potential is not dictated by physical condition but by the power of the human spirit. Alex's journey to the Paralympics was more than a personal triumph; it was a milestone for Sao Tome and Principe, shining a spotlight on the island nation at an international level. Representing his country, Alex brought home not just medals but a message of inclusion, resilience, and the importance of giving everyone a fair chance to pursue their dreams.

The United Nations, committed to the principle of leaving no one behind, has recognized the imperative of disability inclusion. In Sao Tome and Principe, this commitment has translated into a collaborative effort with various stakeholders to develop the National Disability Inclusion Strategy. Set to be launched in 2024, the upcoming launch of the National Disability Inclusion Strategy is seen as a new chapter that is being written for Alex and the estimated 10% of Sao Tome and Principe's population living with disabilities. This comprehensive strategy aims to dismantle the barriers to inclusion, ensuring access to education, healthcare, employment, and public life for all, regardless of physical ability.

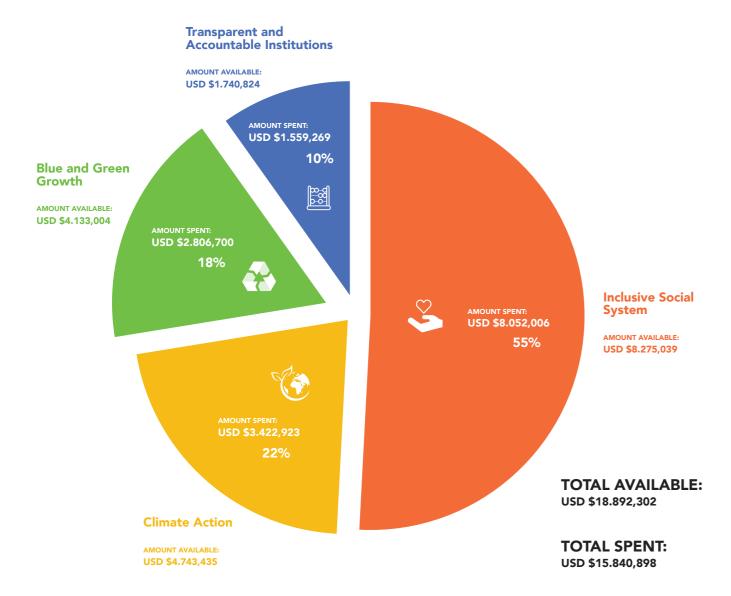
Alex has become an advocate for disability rights. inspired by the collaborative effort behind the strategy. "It's not just about ramps and wide doorways; it's about respect, opportunities, and making sure we're not left behind," he explains. Alex's engagement with local disabled associations and his involvement in awareness campaigns have made him a recognizable face in the movement for inclusivity. For Alex, the strategy has already begun to make a difference. "It's like the world is finally opening up to us," he shares, his voice a mix of awe and excitement.

The promise of the National Disability Inclusion Strategy is not just in its policy prescriptions but in the stories of empowerment and community transformation it fosters. Alex's journey from isolation to active participation in shaping a more inclusive society embodies the essence of the United Nations' commitment to "leave no one behind."

As Sao Tome and Principe looks forward to the launch of the National Disability Inclusion Strategy, Alex stands as a testament to the power of perseverance, the importance of representation, and the endless possibilities that await when we commit to making the world a place where no one is left behind. His legacy is a reminder that with the right support and determination, every individual has the potential to make an indelible mark on the world, changing perceptions and inspiring others to reach for the stars.



Disbursement of UN programme by thematic areas



Disbursement by UN Agency in 2023 programmatic resources only

UN Agency	TOTAL AMOUNT (USD)
UNDP - United Nations Development Program	\$4,617,354
WHO - World Health Organization	\$2,929,107
FAO - The Food and Agriculture Organization	\$2,519,154
UNICEF - United Nations International Children's Fund	\$2,353,263
UNFPA - United Nations Fund for Population	\$900,623
IFAD - International Fund for Agricultural Development	\$864,000
WFP - World Food Program	\$530,949
UNIDO – United Nations Industrial Development Organization	\$377,000
UNODC - United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime	\$243,000
ILO - International Labor organization	\$189,307
UNEP - United Nations Environment Programme	\$110,000
UN-Habitat - United Nations Human Settlements Programme	\$79,500
OHCHR - Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Ri	ghts \$73,391
UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organizat	ion \$33,950
WMO - World Meteorological Organization	\$15,300
TOTAL	\$15,840,898





The focus areas of the UN assistance in 2024 will have a strong emphasis on the key transitions for accelerating the SDGs in STP, through integrated policy advice, joint advocacy and resource mobilization. The key transitions concern food security, digitalization, quality education, climate change adaptation, renewable energies and biodiversity conservation, social protection and decent jobs.

In 2024, the UN will mobilize high level expertise to support the country in its roadmap for innovative financing, leverage partnerships and support the Government's leadership in organizing the first International Conference on Innovative Financing for Biodiversity in Principe island, UNESCO Biosphere, and the implementation of its roadmap.

The consolidation of the long-term stability of the country requires strong partnerships between Government, UN and international community to justice and security sector reform. The UN supports through the catalytic funding to priority Government needs, through potential Peace Building Fund allocation in 2024, but also in leveraging partnerships and promoting resource mobilization from development partners.

The energy sector represents one of the main accelerators for sustainable development and the UN continues to prioritize its support to an enhanced regulatory framework for renewable energies, pilot experiences which can be scaled-up, de-risking for investments in renewables and coordination of development partners.

In addition to the above key transitions, the UN wishes to give a voice to people left behind and their specific needs, such as the people with disabilities, the elderly and the poorest. This means that the social protection system covers the needs of these most vulnerable population groups, provides social security, health services and offers opportunities in education and in professional training. But also, the youth will be engaged, to inspire them to remain actively involved in the development of their country, to develop their skills, to promote healthy life styles and the benefits of sports.

The UN will also scale up its assistance to statistical capacity building of the National Institute for Statistics, in support of the population and habitat census that will be carried out in 2024, the production of disaggregated SDG data and the development of the tourism satellite account.

The UN in STP is ready to build on past achievements of its first year of implementation of the Cooperation Framework and to accelerate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. Through strategic partnerships, advocacy, project management and the mobilization of high-level expertise, we remain committed to supporting the Government and people in realizing their vision for a sustainable and prosperous future



ACRONYMS



AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
AFDB	African Development Bank
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Womer
CF	Cooperation Framework of the UN
COVID	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CLTS	Community-Led Total Sanitation
COMPRAN	Project on Commercialization, Agricultural productivity and nutrition
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DHIS	District Health Information Software
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
FAO	The Food and Agriculture Organization
GAVI	Global Alliance for Vaccine and Immunization
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNI	Gross National Income
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HDI	Human Development Index
HPV	Human Papilloma Virus
ILO	International Labor Organization
INE	National Institute of Statistics
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IWMP	Integrated Water Management Program
LNOB	Leave No One Behind
MPTF	Multi-Partner Trust Fund
MRV	Measuring, Reporting, Verification
NDC	Nationally Determined Contributions
NFMS	National Forest Monitoring System
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
RCO	United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population
-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNV	United Nations Volunteers Programme
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Program
WHO	World Health Organization Programme





