



SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE

2024 IFRC Network Mid-Year Report, January – June

22 April 2025

IN SUPPORT OF THE SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE RED CROSS



5

National Society
branches



5

National Society
local units



200

National Society
volunteers



32

National Society
staff

PEOPLE REACHED

Climate and
environment



22,000

Disasters
and crises



22,000

Health and
wellbeing



22,000

Values, power
and inclusion



22,000

Data not available at time of publication

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

in Swiss francs (CHF)

Country	Funding Requirement	1.2M
IFRC Secretariat	Longer-term Funding Requirement	532,000
	Funding	Not reported
	Expenditure	Not reported
HNS other funding sources	Funding Requirement	686,000
	Funding	33,000

Sao Tome and Principe Red Cross

Overview

Funding	62,000
Expenditure	41,000

Funding Sources

IFRC Secretariat	12,000
Participating National Societies	17,000
HNS other funding sources	33,000

Appeal number xxxxxxxxxx

*Information on data scope and limitations is available on the back page

OVERALL PROGRESS

Context

The Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe is an island country with a population of 224,472, located in the Gulf of Guinea, off the western equatorial coast of Central Africa. It consists of two main islands, São Tomé and Príncipe, along with several smaller islets. The islands are situated between 225 and 250 km from Gabon. The country gained independence in 1975 and, two years later, was divided into seven sanitary districts—six on São Tomé Island (Água Grande, Cantagalo, Caué, Lembá, Lobata, and Mé-Zóchi) and one on Príncipe Island (Pagué).

According to a 2019 report by the World Food Program, the country's GDP per capita was around USD 2,001. Recent World Bank estimates show that about one-third of the population lives on less than 1.90 dollar a day, and more than two-thirds are considered poor. Over the past decade, the country has made significant progress in reducing maternal and infant mortality, improving maternal health, and combating malnutrition. This progress is largely attributed to increased skilled birth attendance. Life expectancy at birth is 64 years. Additionally, São Tomé and Príncipe have made remarkable efforts in reducing malaria incidence to record lows and in decreasing HIV/AIDS prevalence.

São Tomé and Príncipe has made excellent progress in the education sector, particularly primary education, and is close to achieving a primary completion rate of 97%. There is not yet the desired universal coverage of secondary education, although the authorities are committed to extending it across the country.

With a combination of equatorial and tropical climates and high rainfall, the archipelago enjoys a relatively secure food and forestry environment. However, this contrasts with the challenges of an unhealthy urban environment. The country relies heavily on food imports, as no cereal crops are grown locally, making food availability unpredictable. Additionally, São Tomé and Príncipe lacks deep-water ports, and bad weather complicates landings at the country's short airstrip. The islands are also vulnerable to natural hazards such as floods and landslides, which disrupt crop development, damage infrastructure, and limit access to roads.

In the wake of torrential rains and floods in late 2021 and early 2022, many people's livelihoods were destroyed, and bridges were either damaged or completely washed away. The floods also caused widespread power outages and fuel shortages for several days, highlighting the country's vulnerability to such natural disasters and the significant impact it can have on infrastructure and daily life.

Key achievements

Climate and environment

The National Society monitored weather forecasts and participated in monthly climate watches for Central Africa, coordinated by the Centre for Climate Application and Forecasting. It engaged in climate-focused webinars, attended the Disaster Risk Reduction conference in Malabo and involved volunteers, especially youth, in climate actions like tree planting. Additionally, the Society conducted its annual Climate, Values, and Trust internal survey.

Disasters and crises

The National Society plans to develop an early warning system, contingency plans, and conduct evacuation simulation exercises, while advocating with the National Council for Disaster Preparedness (CONPREC) for improved disaster response.

Health and wellbeing

In 2023, the São Tomé and Príncipe Red Cross provided first aid and support across a range of activities, with the help of volunteers from youth committees in all districts. Additionally, it supported the Auto de Floripes regional cultural street event and carried out preventive health campaigns, educating thousands of students on disease prevention and behavioural change. The National Society also conducted health visits to elderly residents at the Palmar home, ensuring ongoing care and support.

Migration and displacement

São Tomé and Príncipe experience migration flows primarily from Cape Verde, Angola, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, and Portugal, while about 20% of its population emigrates, mainly to Portugal, Angola, Gabon, Cape Verde, and Equatorial Guinea. The country also faces significant internal migration, with rural populations moving to urban centres in search of better living conditions, driven by extreme poverty. While the São Tomé and Príncipe Red Cross does not have specific programmes for migrants and displaced people, it addresses their needs through its broader strategic initiatives.

Values, power and inclusion

The São Tomé and Príncipe Red Cross has been providing vital support to the elderly through a dedicated welcome centre, where volunteers offer daily companionship and mental well-being support. Additionally, the National Society operates a social centre, providing older individuals with a safe space to socialize, access basic amenities, and spend their days in a peaceful environment.

Enabling Local Actors

The São Tomé and Príncipe Red Cross has been strengthening its decentralized structures and expanding its presence across districts while actively engaging with other National Societies to scale up the Pan-African initiative Zero Hunger, which includes elements from three other initiatives. The National Society has maintained its readiness for emergencies, focusing on flood season preparedness, response teams, and peer-to-peer/SOL support missions. In 2023, it produced 24 radio programmes to promote its work, reaching 90% of the population. Additionally, the São Tomé and Príncipe Red Cross worked to reinforce its auxiliary role and mandate, emphasizing effective risk management with a zero-tolerance policy for fraud and increased training for staff and volunteers. The National Society also prioritized the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, streamlined administrative processes, and developed risk registers for all programmes to improve their effectiveness and management.



Volunteers from the Red Cross of São Tomé and Príncipe carry out an awareness campaign to fight against the spread of Dengue Fever in March 2023, at a school in Água Grande (Photo: IFRC)

IFRC NETWORK ACTION

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



Climate and environment

Progress by the National Society against objectives

São Tomé and Príncipe are vulnerable to hydro-meteorological hazards, which are exacerbated by climate change and compounded by environmental degradation. Floods are a natural hazard in São Tomé and Príncipe and have a considerable impact on the country, affecting more than 200 people each year. The people most at risk are concentrated on the main, most populous island of São Tomé, where the local economy is highly vulnerable to flooding. The rainy season in São Tomé and Príncipe lasts nine months each year on average, from September to May, with floods mostly occurring in the north.

The National Society monitored seasonal and weekly weather forecasts and participates in monthly climate watches for Central Africa, produced by the Centre for Climate Application and Forecasting in Central Africa. It also took part in several climate-focused webinars and attended the Disaster Risk Reduction conference in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea. Additionally, the National Society's volunteers, particularly youth, engaged in climate actions such as tree planting and maintenance, and conducted the annual 'Climate, Values, and Trust' internal survey.

The National Society aims to improve food security by diversifying agricultural production, reducing its reliance on food imports and strengthening resilience to natural hazards such as floods and landslides. Efforts will focus on infrastructure development, particularly rebuilding bridges and improving road access, while also tackling urban environmental issues and improving access to basic services like power and water. Additionally, the government is committed to enhancing disaster preparedness and response capabilities to mitigate the impact of future natural disasters.

IFRC network joint support

The IFRC supported the National Society with seasonal and weekly weather forecasts, as well as monthly climate watches for Central Africa, produced by the Centre for Climate Application and Forecasting in Central Africa. It supported the National Society's participation in several climate-focused webinars.



Disasters and crises

For real-time information on emergencies, see [IFRC GO page São Tomé and Príncipe](#)

Progress by the National Society against objectives

São Tomé and Príncipe have been increasingly affected by climate change, resulting in more frequent and intense heavy rains and storms, which have led to widespread flooding. These extreme weather events, including rising river levels, have caused significant damage across the country, particularly in areas near streams and rivers. In recent years, storms have resulted in fatalities, displacement and damage to infrastructure, prompting the government to declare a state of disaster and request international assistance. Vulnerable regions, such as Lembá and Me-Zóchi, have been severely impacted by multiple waves of flooding, exacerbating the challenges faced by local communities, especially those in poorer socioeconomic conditions. The capital, Neves, has also been heavily affected by these recurring floods.

The National Society will focus on developing a early warning plan, a contingency plan and simulation exercises in evacuation and assistance. Advocacy with the National Council for Disaster Preparedness (CONPREC), the national body responsible for civil protection and disaster reduction, will also be crucial. The São Tomé and Príncipe Red Cross

will establish a permanent disaster response team, along with more trained volunteers to provide backup in case of emergency. It will also develop an early warning plan, a contingency plan and simulation exercises in evacuation and assistance. However, the National Society has not reported any related activities for the reporting period.

IFRC network joint support

The IFRC provided technical and financial support to the National Society in online training on DREF evolution and new templates. It also supported the National Society's participation in the Disaster Management Officers forum for Central African countries and the monthly meetings of the community of practitioners on cash transfer assistance. Additionally, the IFRC offered technical support to the National Society in preparing narrative and financial reports for the 2022 DREF Floods response in São Tomé and Príncipe.



Health and wellbeing

Progress by the National Society against objectives

In 2023, the Sao Tome and Príncipe Red Cross provided first aid and assistance across various activities throughout the country, with the support of volunteers from youth committees in all districts. The National Society played an active role in cultural and sporting events, offering first aid services to large crowds, including during traditional year-end beach festivities at Conchas, Sete Ondas, Moro Peixe and Lagoa Azul. It also supported the population during the February 3rd commemorative walk to the Fernão Dias area, where along with first aid services, young people were also trained in basic first aid and ambulance use.

Additionally, the National Society offered support during the Auto de Floripes, a regional cultural street event. In terms of preventive health, the National Society carried out sensitization campaigns on disease prevention and behavioural change, reaching thousands of students aged 7 to 14 in basic schools. It also conducted curative health visits to elderly residents at the Palmar home, providing ongoing care and support.

IFRC network joint support

The IFRC provided technical and financial support to the National Society in strengthening its preparedness for community-based health and first aid, ensuring a rapid response to epidemics and pandemics.

The **Japanese Red Cross** provided technical and financial support to the National Society in ongoing training on epidemic preparedness and response in communities.



Migration and displacement

Progress by the National Society against objectives

Sao Tome and Príncipe receive migration flows mainly from Cape Verde, Angola, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, and Portugal. Emigrants from São Tomé and Príncipe, instead, are about 20% of the population, and their main destinations are also Portugal, Angola, Gabon, Cape Verde, and Equatorial Guinea. The country also grapples with internal migration, particularly from rural regions to urban centres. Addressing this necessitates investment in food security and rural development. The phenomenon of rural exodus is a significant challenge for Sao Tome and Príncipe, driven by the rural population's pursuit of better living conditions amid extreme poverty. The migration to urban areas not only affects rural regions but also poses problems for urban areas.

The São Tomé and Príncipe Red Cross does not carry out activities specifically targeting vulnerable migrants and displaced people. Instead, it addresses their needs through its primary programmes reflected in the other strategic priorities of this report.

IFRC network joint support

The IFRC provided technical and financial support to the National Society in its activities.



Values, power and inclusion

Progress by the National Society against objectives

São Tomé and Príncipe experience inequality and the social exclusion of marginalized groups. There is a need for further investment in initiatives, including those that support socio-cultural integration, advocacy, and awareness-raising through networks for civil society, women, and young people. Pensions and social protection schemes in the country still do not meet the basic needs of the active population, particularly in terms of pensions for retired people and older workers.

The São Tomé and Príncipe Red Cross has been supporting the elderly for nearly 20 years. The National Society operates a dedicated welcome centre for older individuals, where volunteers provide daily companionship, comfort, and hope to members of the community. This centre plays a vital role in supporting the mental well-being of the elderly, as friendship and conversation are essential for their overall health. In addition to the welcome centre, the National Society runs a social centre that is open every day, offering a safe space for older people to socialize. Visitors to the centre have access to basic amenities such as food and washrooms, allowing them to spend their days in a peaceful and supportive environment.

IFRC network joint support

The IFRC provided technical and financial support to the centre in providing water, sanitation and hygiene kits to all residents.

ENABLING LOCAL ACTORS



Strategic and operational coordination

IFRC membership coordination

IFRC membership coordination involves working with member National Societies to assess the humanitarian context, humanitarian situations and needs; agreeing on common priorities; jointly developing common strategies to address issues such as obtaining greater humanitarian access, acceptance and space; mobilizing funding and other resources; clarifying consistent public messaging; and monitoring progress. This also means ensuring that strategies and programmes in support of people in need, incorporate clarity of humanitarian action, links with development assistance, and efforts to reinforce National Societies in their respective countries, including through their auxiliary role.

IFRC network partners in São Tomé and Príncipe include the **Netherlands Red Cross, British Red Cross and Japanese Red Cross Society**.

Movement coordination

The São Tomé and Príncipe Red Cross ensures regular exchanges with the IFRC, the International Committee of the Red Cross and participating National Societies, for the alignment of support and action between Movement partners. In times of emergencies, closer coordination is organized. This is carried out in line with the Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation ([SMCC](#)) principles, and the newly adopted [Seville Agreement 2.0](#).

The ICRC provides support to São Tomé and the Príncipe Red Cross from its Yaounde delegation. The ICRC's Yaoundé delegation promotes international humanitarian law, helps people displaced by violence, [restores family links](#), visits detainees and fosters the development of the region's National Societies.

External coordination

The São Tomé and Príncipe Red Cross continues to reinforce its decentralized structures and expand its presence across the districts. It is also engaging with participating National Societies to scale up the [Pan-African initiative Zero Hunger](#), which incorporates components from three other Pan-African initiatives. Additionally, the National Society maintains its readiness to respond to emergencies, with a focus on flood season preparedness, response teams, and peer-to-peer/SOL support missions.



National Society development

Progress by the National Society against objectives

In 2023, the National Society carried out several activities aimed at promoting its work. This included the creation and production of 24 radio programmes, which highlighted its activities and provided commentary on current affairs each week. These programmes reached approximately 90% of the population.

IFRC network joint support

The IFRC supported the National Society with planning and participation in the 10th RC/RC Pan-African Conference, as well as support for a smooth General Assembly and the updating of key policies. The IFRC also provided support to the National Society for conducting trainings and assessments.

It also assisted the São Tomé and Príncipe Red Cross in developing a National Society development plan and enhancing financial sustainability. This included assisting with core cost calculation policies, developing proposals for financial and risk management capacity and providing finance training. Assistance was also provided on initiatives to further volunteer and branch development, ensuring the sustainability and growth of the Red Cross movement in São Tomé and Príncipe.

The **Japanese Red Cross** provided support to the National Society by assisting the IFRC in strengthening response preparedness through community-based health and first aid, as well as ensuring a rapid response to epidemics and pandemics. This included continuous training on epidemic preparedness and response at the community level.



Humanitarian diplomacy

Progress by the National Society against objectives

The São Tomé and Príncipe Red Cross worked towards strengthening its auxiliary role and mandate. The National Society engaged with key partners and ambassadors. This included visits to government ministries, embassies and UN agencies.

The IFRC provided support to the National Society in its partnership meetings.



Accountability and agility (cross-cutting)

Progress by the National Society against objectives

In 2023, the National Society focused on reinforcing its auxiliary role and expanding its mandate. The National Society worked to ensure effective risk management, implementing a zero-tolerance policy for fraud and increasing training on key policies for both staff and volunteers. Efforts were also made to streamline administrative processes and reduce overdue reports.

Additionally, the National Society prioritized the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, providing ongoing training and support for new staff onboarding. It also emphasized the development of risk registers for all programmes and operations to enhance their effectiveness and overall management.

IFRC Network joint support

The IFRC provided support to the National Society in ensuring risk management, a zero-tolerance policy for fraud and increasing training on key policies for its staff and volunteers. It also assisted in streamlining administrative processes and reducing overdue reports. Additionally, the IFRC continues to support the National Society in risk management by assisting with the development of risk registers for all programmes and operations.



The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)

is the world's largest humanitarian network, with 191 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and around 16 million volunteers. Our volunteers are present in communities before, during and after a crisis or disaster. We work in the most hard to reach and complex settings in the world, saving lives and promoting human dignity. We support communities to become stronger and more resilient places where people can live safe and healthy lives, and have opportunities to thrive.

DATA SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

- **Timeframe and alignment:** The reporting timeframe for this overview is covering the period from 1 January to 30 June 2024. However, due to the diversity of the IFRC and differences in fiscal years, this coverage may not fully align for some National Societies. Mid-year reporting data may have been based on estimations, with plans to submit more robust numbers at the annual reporting stage.
- **Financial overview:** This overview consolidates data reported by the National Society and its IFRC network partners, as well as data extracted from IFRC's financial systems. All reported figures should include the administrative and operational costs of the different entities. The financial data with a light grey background is solely reported by the National Society, including the funding sources. Financial reporting is often times estimated depending on availability of financial figures, closing of financial periods, and may be incomplete. "Not reported" could sometimes mean "not applicable".
- **Missing data and breakdowns:** National Societies have diverse data collection systems and processes that may not align with the standardized indicators. Data may not be available for some indicators, for some National Societies. This may lead to inconsistencies across different reporting tools as well as potential under or over-estimation of the efforts led by all.
- **Reporting bias:** The data informing this Federation-wide overview is self-reported by each National Society (or its designated support entity) and which is the owner and gatekeeper, and responsible for accuracy and updating. IFRC tries to triangulate the data provided by the National Societies with previous data and other data in the public domain.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- [IFRC São Tomé and Príncipe 2024 Financial Report](#)
- [IFRC network country plan](#)
- [Subscribe for updates](#)
- [Live Disaster Response Emergency Fund \(DREF\) data](#)
- Operational information: [IFRC GO platform](#)
- National Society data: [IFRC Federation-wide Databank and Reporting System](#)
- [IFRC Evaluation and Research Databank](#)

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