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**ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

ADB	African Development Bank
CAS	Country Assistance Strategy
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CGA	Country Gender Assessment
DRSTP	Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe
ECVM	Enquête sur les Conditions de Vie des Ménages (Households Living Standards Survey)
EFA	Education for All
FP	Family Planning
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GPHC	General Population and Housing Census
HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Country
HPI	Higher Polytechnic Institute
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labor Organization
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NIS	National Institute of Statistics
NSPR	National Strategy for Poverty Reduction
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
SAP	Structural Adjustment Program
SEAPEU	Survey of the Economically Active Population, Employment and Unemployment
SEU	Survey of Employment and Unemployment
STD	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
STP	Sao Tome and Principe
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNPF	United Nations Population Fund
WOSTEP	Women's Organization of Sao Tome and Principe

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**SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE  
COUNTRY GENDER ASSESSMENT**

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This report is the outcome of broad consultations in Sao Tome and Principe (STP) with various members of central and local Government, civil society, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and donors which culminated into a two-day national workshop with wide participation. The process was client-driven, and the issues raised and recommendations made were through national dialogue among stakeholders.

We would like to thank Her Excellency the Prime Minister, Ms. Maria das Neves for her commitment and support in opening and closing the workshop with a powerful message to promote Gender Equality. We would also like to acknowledge the critical role and contribution of Ms. Alda Bandeira who organized the workshop, ensuring broad representation from Government and civil society and provided a background report on the main gender issues in the country and the main recommendations of the workshop. We also acknowledge the important contribution of the gender focal points at the Ministry of Planning and Finance and their dedication to promoting gender issues within the Ministry and Government. Among the donor community in Sao Tome and Principe, we recognize the efforts of the United Nations family, especially the United Nations Population Fund and the contributions of Ms. Victoria D'Alva.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Sao Tome and Principe has a distinctive gender profile characterized by a dichotomy between the officially accepted gender equality laws and policies and the actual gender associated socio-economic status. Gender equality is emphasized in the national Constitution and reiterated across the various laws and legislation. Sao Tome and Principe is a signatory of all international conventions that promote gender equality and combat discrimination (CEDAW, MDGs, etc.). However, in practice, the outcome of such policies and laws are at best, mixed and at worst contradictory. On the positive side, there does not appear to be any gender gaps in access to education and health; the difference in poverty levels between male and female headed households is minimal; several women occupy high decision-making positions at the national level; there is gender equality before the law and an official discourse that espouses gender equality. On the negative side, while the difference in poverty levels between female and male headed households is small, the average income for female-headed households is lower than that of male-headed households. Women's participation in decision making at the local levels is marginal. Moreover, there is increasing evidence to indicate that domestic violence rates against women and children are high. Cultural attitudes seem to relegate women to more traditional roles, such as household and child care; while confining their access to economic opportunities primarily to (self) employment in the informal sector.

2. Sao Tome and Principe is one of the poorest countries in the world, with a per capita income of US\$340. Over half the population lives in poverty and 15 percent live in extreme poverty. A high proportion (one third) of households are headed by women who are mostly either single or living in 'free union'. These women are also four times more likely as men to be illiterate. On the whole, female-headed households tend to be larger, poorer and with lower per capita consumption than male-headed households.

3. Although women benefited from the Land Reforms in 1992, through which a third of the country's small farmers acquired deeds to their land, their access to productive resources remains limited. Even among female land owners, lack of financial resources necessary to purchase inputs and to fully utilize their land, is compounded by limited access to credit. While there are some informal credit schemes, especially among fishing communities, knowledge and experience with formal credit schemes remain minimal. A study by IFAD in 1999 found a considerable demand for credit among women from the farming and fishing communities.

4. Women's access to the labor market is limited. Women constitute the largest segment of the economically inactive population. Among those who are economically active, women are twice less likely to be employed than men; specifically, a quarter of women in the labor force are unemployed compared to ten percent of men. While the economically active female population is on the average younger than its male counterpart, on the whole, men tend to enter the labor force earlier and leave later than women. Lastly, employed women tend to be concentrated in the informal sector, mainly in commerce and services, while men are likely to be employed as public or private sector salaried workers.

5. In terms of human development indicators, there are no gender disparities in access to education and health services. The disparities are more regional and between urban and

rural populations. Enrollment ratios for boys and girls are equal at the primary and secondary levels. While there are gaps in literacy rates between men and women in older age groups, the gap is rapidly closing in younger generations. There is however, an issue in terms of retention in school, where a slightly larger proportion of girls than boys drops out. It is therefore imperative to pay special consideration to this gap when designing and implementing interventions in education, so that the specific needs of boys and girls are addressed while maintaining the gender balance in outcomes.

6. HIV/AIDS prevalence is still relatively low in Sao Tome and Principe, but recent data shows that this is quickly changing. Awareness about transmittal methods is very low – only 11 percent of women aged 15 to 49 years were able to correctly identify transmission methods. Condom use is also very low (less than one percent). Sexual activity begins early and there is a culture of multiple sexual partners in the tradition of ‘de facto’ unions. There is also a high rate of sexually transmitted diseases. This combination provides a fertile setting for the rapid spread of the disease, and it is therefore critical to begin to meet prevention, treatment and infection control needs of the entire population.

7. Information on violence against women is limited in Sao Tome and Principe, but some evidence suggests that the most common form of violence in the country is physical violence within the family, where the victims are frequently women and children. It is important to note, that while the law protects all citizens against any form of violence, enforcement of the law is weak, given the limited capacity of the police force in terms of training and facilities (vehicles, radios, etc.). Cultural attitudes of male domination are often cited as the root causes explaining such violence. However, further research is required to measure the extent, characteristics and root causes of this problem.

8. In terms of power and decision-making, women have a significant share at the highest levels of the Government. Currently, women hold the posts of Prime Minister, Governor of the Central Bank, President of the Supreme Court and Minister of Justice among other important posts. In recent cabinet formations, women headed the Ministries of Planning and Finance, Health, Foreign Affairs, Education and Culture, and held several senior presidential advisory positions.

9. Despite good representation at the highest political level, the share of women in the political process and decision-making is very limited at the lower levels. While women were Speaker of the National Parliament in 1991 and 1994, no woman has held this position in the past decade. Moreover, currently only five out of 55 parliamentarians are women, which is below the average for Sub-Saharan African countries. A major barrier for greater female participation in decision-making is the heavy burden of domestic chores borne by women, especially among the economically disadvantaged. This is further exacerbated by socio-cultural preconceptions regarding appropriate social roles for men and women. Hence, while there is a clear commitment towards gender equality at the higher levels of government, more effort is needed to expand opportunities for women’s participation in decision-making at the district and local levels that would address the constraints to their participation and raise awareness among the population.

10. The major gender concern in Sao Tome and Principe stems from the social reality of ‘de facto’ unions. These unions leave women and children vulnerable to poverty,

exclusion and disease, especially HIV/AIDS. The reality is that men and women have multiple partners. Children born under a 'de facto' union stay with the mother and hence, a father may have children born to several women and women may have children from several men. The burden of caring for the children falls disproportionately on women. Moreover, although the law recognizes these unions, the roles and responsibilities of partners are not well defined as in the case with married couples; unwed women are not protected with legal rights such as child support or inheritance rights, which a married woman enjoys. Hence, in the case of separation or death, a woman must start a legal process to claim child support or inheritance; it is a lengthy and costly process where women are not likely to gain much. Moreover, several women may be claiming support and/or inheritance from one man, which also limits their likelihood of receiving benefits. This leads to social disintegration of which children and women are severely disadvantaged. Therefore, it is critical that policies are developed to protect women and children in 'de facto' unions, with clearly defined rights and responsibilities.

11. The absence of a coherent national policy or systematic strategies to integrate a Gender and Development perspective means that activities intended to encourage the participation of both men and women in the development process continue to evolve haphazardly. Moreover, the actual impact of specific interventions remains unknown.

12. A national workshop was held in January 2004 in Sao Tome and Principe to discuss gender issues and the main recommendations were to (i) adopt an integrated national approach to gender issues by developing a body of gender-sensitive policies that would provide for access to information, awareness-raising and legislative reform; (ii) strengthen institutional capacity to integrate gender issues into development policies, programs and projects; (iii) establish advocacy, social mobilization, information, education and communication programs on gender and development issues; and (iv) update existing legislation and adopt new legislation regarding issues such as sexual harassment and trafficking of individuals.

13. World Bank support may include: (i) supporting the development of an action plan for the implementation of the workshop recommendations, defining priorities, tasks and responsibilities; (ii) strengthening the institutional capacity for integrating gender issues and for implementation of laws that protect women; (iii) research and data collection on the specific conditions of women and identify the constraints hindering their participation in decision-making and access to the labor market and productive resources; (iv) promoting collaboration between the Government, civil society and communities to raise awareness on gender issues and combat cultural attitudes against women; and (v) establishing credit schemes and income-generating activities for women.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

14. The objective of the Country Gender Assessment (CGA) for Sao Tome and Principe is to analyze the gender dimensions of development and to identify gender-responsive policies and actions that enhance the effectiveness of development assistance and contribute to overall well-being, poverty reduction and economic growth. The CGA attempts to respond to locally identified needs and priorities so as to assist government policymakers working in partnership with civil society groups and the donor community. It also attempts to document progress towards addressing gender imbalances, to examine the policy implications of specific barriers; and to identify priority areas for further analytical work, including: policy design, advisory services, partnerships and project activities. The assessment provides the basis for integrating gender issues into policy dialogue and assistance programs.

15. During the 29-year period since independence, political discourse in Sao Tome and Principe has emphasized the importance of improving the lives of citizens, including an effort to increase participation of women in the development process, so as to create a more equitable society. With support from international donors, the Government launched several initiatives to mainstream gender issues into policies, programs and projects. The country has been represented at almost every major international event on gender and has adopted all the relevant international conventions. However, the challenge remains in translating the theory into practice through the creation of coherent and functional mechanisms for effective implementation.

16. The CGA was country-led and prepared in a participatory process that included consultations with a wide range of institutions operating in the country, including government ministries and agencies at the central and local levels, civil society representatives, local gender experts, UN agencies and other donors. Such consultations culminated in a high profile two-day national workshop, with opening and closing remarks by the Prime Minister and 55 participants (see Annexes for list of participants and Prime Minister's speech). The seminar provided an opportunity to raise awareness about gender issues, and reconfirm the commitment of the Government and civil society to gender issues, with a possible objective of producing a comprehensive National Gender and Development Policy. The main recommendations of the workshop are:

- Adopt an integrated national approach to gender issues by developing a body of gender-sensitive policies that would provide for access to information, awareness-raising and legislative reform.
- Support institutional capacity for integrating gender issues into development policies, programs and projects by strengthening the existing Office of Women and Children, making it a Gender Cabinet reporting directly to the Prime Minister, or by creating a new, high-level body with the authority to create, modify and oversee policies on gender, with focal points in every Ministry or equivalent Institution.
- Establish advocacy, social mobilization, information, education and communication programs on gender and development issues.

- Update existing legislation (the Penal Code, the Family Law) and adopt new legislation regarding issues such as sexual harassment and trafficking of individuals.
- In the area of professional training, expand training opportunities for school leavers of both sexes entering the job market for the first time.

17. This CGA-report covers three main areas: (i) background information on the country, (ii) a gender profile, and (iii) an analysis of the policy and institutional context. It concludes with a set of recommendations to guide the development policy dialogue and program assistance and to inform future development interventions by the World Bank. Chapter two describes the objectives and methodology of the CGA, followed by an overview of the National Context in chapter three. Chapter four provides a gender profile in terms of demographics, poverty, economic activity, including access to markets and productive resources, human development outcomes, the decision-making process and the legal framework. Chapter five examines the policy and institutional context and Chapter six concludes with a summary and recommendations. Annex one provides a compilation of gender-disaggregated data tables on selected indicators. Annexes two to five include the Prime Minister's opening and closing speeches, the program and the list of participants at the Gender Workshop. Annex six gives some basic indicators.

## **2. OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY**

18. In September 2001 the World Bank Board of Directors endorsed a Gender Mainstreaming Strategy with the aim of integrating gender-responsive actions more effectively into the World Bank's development assistance. The Bank's strategy is intended to foster country-led specific activities for changing gender patterns that are costly to growth, poverty reduction, and human well-being. It rests on a process that involves working with countries to prepare Country Gender Assessments (CGAs).

19. The purpose of the Sao Tome and Principe Country Gender Assessment is to create an analytical tool to analyze the main gender issues; develop a body of proposals and recommendations covering a range of interventions specifically addressing gender issues; and, to establish dialogue and coordination between representatives of the public sector and civil society, with a view to developing a National Gender Strategy and Action Plan.

20. The preparation of the CGA included two stages. The first comprised a review of all available documentation and data related to gender issues. The second consisted of consultations with government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), members of civil society and donors. These consultations led to a two-day workshop with participation by representatives of various Ministries, as well as other government agencies, district councils, civil society members and NGOs. The purpose of this workshop was to obtain input from the participants in the form of a body of proposals for plans and initiatives covering areas considered of high priority, with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of development programs and projects. The CGA is by its nature an ongoing activity rather than a defined product, and there is therefore no final date fixed.

### 3. NATIONAL CONTEXT

21. Situated on the equator off the West African coast, the Republic of Sao Tome and Principe faces challenges and opportunities common to many small island states. According to the 2001 National Census, the total population in both islands is estimated to 137,599, of which women make up 50.4 percent. The Sao Tomean population is relatively young where 42 percent of the people are under the age of 15.

22. After 500 years of colonization, Sao Tome and Principe gained its independence from Portugal in 1975 and established a socialist one-party system until 1990 when a new democratic constitution was adopted and a multiparty system of government introduced. The socialist period was marked by central planning, large public enterprises with an oversized work force. There was a serious lack of skilled personnel and most of the Government labor force was unskilled. The 1990s was marked with political instability, frequent changes in government and successive governments failing to deliver on its programs.

23. With a GDP per capita of US\$340 in 2003, Sao Tome and Principe is one of the world's most impoverished countries. According to the 2001 poverty profile, 54 percent of the population lives below the poverty line, and about 15 percent are classified as extremely poor.<sup>1</sup> Agriculture (including livestock and fishing) is the island nation's main activity. The country is dependent on cocoa exports, and the lack of diversification has been an obstacle to growth. With a debt-to-GDP ratio of over 640 percent in 2000, Sao Tome and Principe became eligible for Highly Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) debt relief and is expected to reach its completion point by end of 2004. Structural and institutional reforms launched in 1998 have seen GDP growth increase from one percent in 1997 to 4.1 percent in 2002 and reached 6% in 2003. Services constitute the largest share of GDP, comprising 63 percent, followed by agriculture (20 percent) and industry (17 percent). Sao Tome and Principe is potentially at the cusp of a major economic change, with production of offshore oil expected to start in 2007-8 (see Annex 6).

24. The country faces major development challenges, related in part to its status as a small island economy. These include high vulnerability to external shocks (cocoa prices); the inability to exploit economies of scale in the provision of infrastructure, services and economic activities; a limited export base; low human capacity; and a weak private sector. The public sector is characterized by weak institutional capacity, an inadequate legal and regulatory framework and limited financial resources, making the functioning of the economy and the management of public resources difficult.

25. Up to the mid-1980s, Sao Tome and Principe enjoyed some of the best social indicators in Africa. However, with the economic crisis in the late 1980s and 1990s, social services deteriorated and human development outcomes worsened. Latest data indicate that 15 percent of children under the age of five are underweight, 29 percent are stunted and 4 percent are wasted. Fifty three infants in 1000 die before reaching their first birthday

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<sup>1</sup> The survey that defined the poverty line in Sao Tome and Principe determined the poverty line to be US\$294/year, which covers the barest minimum in food and non-food expenses. For more, see "Poverty Profile in São Tomé and Príncipe", produced in 2001 with technical support from ILO, funded by UNDP and AfDB.

and 95 in 1000 die before age five. Maternal mortality is estimated to be 122 per 100,000 live births. Malaria is the primary cause of morbidity and death in the country, affecting over 80 percent of the population. In education, while access is universal, retention is a serious issue. Seventy eight percent of children who enter the first year of school reach the fourth year. Almost one third of primary school students repeats a year and more than 30 percent drop out before reaching sixth grade. There are also serious structural constraints in organization and management of the sector.

26. Several studies conducted during the 1990s<sup>2</sup> found the following groups to be the most vulnerable groups of society:

- Agricultural workers from the old plantations;
- Public servants in the lowest grades and those in equivalent positions in the private sector;
- Fishermen and “palayes”.<sup>3</sup>

Other groups were later also identified as vulnerable, namely:

- Female heads of households who are also single mothers;
- The elderly who are sick and receive no support from family members ;
- The unemployed and those seeking professional re-training;
- Residents of shanty towns on the outskirts of urban centers;
- Small-scale artisans who do not have their own workshops.

27. Faced with the challenges outlined above, the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) adopted by the Government in December 2002 emphasizes the need to: (i) stimulate economic growth, by promoting broad-based private sector activities in the agricultural sector and tourism; (ii) create an opportunity to increase and diversify income; (iii) develop access to basic social services notably in education and health; and (iv) reform public institutions, build capacity and promote good governance. The Bank’s Country Assistance Strategy (CAS) aims to assist the country in: (i) sustaining strong economic growth to raise incomes and reduce poverty; and (ii) broadening access to social services and improving their quality.

28. The Gender and Development approach is very new to Sao Tome and Principe. It is poorly understood, and sometimes wrongly equated with “women’s issues”. Research conducted in 2002, from a small sample group, found that 7 percent of interviewees had never heard of ‘gender’ and 16 percent had never heard of ‘gender relations’. However,

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<sup>2</sup> Demeocq, M. and Mathonnat, J. (1991), *Poverty and Adjustment in Sao Tome and Principe*, UNDP, New York

<sup>3</sup> Fishing is categorized as rural because it consists essentially of low-tech subsistence activities. The men do the fishing itself, but it is women, known as “palayes” who sell the catch. Selling fish involves a range of activities related to preservation, namely salting and smoking, both of which are also largely carried out by women.

over 90 percent said they did not believe there could be sustainable development without improving conditions for women and their position within society.<sup>4</sup>

29. Successive governments have explicitly expressed in their programs the political will to promote actions leading to the elimination of the disparities that still exist between the sexes. However, for lack of a policy defining specific objectives, together with the strategies necessary to achieve them, initiatives have been undertaken in a haphazard fashion that makes it impossible to evaluate outcomes or to develop proposals for new initiatives designed to achieve outcomes of a higher quality.

30. Sao Tome and Principe does not have a national strategy to address gender issues, and no institution is specifically charged with monitoring or evaluating gender-related initiatives. In addition to the existence of an Office for Women and the Family, which has yet to undertake any significant action due to the absence of any clear definition of its objectives and a lack of human and financial resources, a National Commission on Gender and Population was created within the Ministry of Planning and Finance to coordinate gender-related initiatives. However, the latter has not been functional owing to a lack of clear guidelines for its operation.

31. Within the UN system, UNICEF and especially the UNFPA, have been the organizations that have provided the greatest amount of support to Sao Tome and Principe in its efforts to integrate a gender perspective into the various sectors of national life, in particular health, education and economic planning. There are also some initiatives undertaken by national and foreign NGOs. However, the impact of these initiatives has not been measured due to weak monitoring and evaluation systems.

#### 4. GENDER PROFILE

32. This chapter examines the gender situation in Sao Tome and Principe, describing the demographic structure, household status and its association with poverty, economic activity and access to markets and productive resources, as well as human development outcomes, the decision making process, and the law.

##### 4.1 Population and Demographics

33. Fifty four percent of the total population in Sao Tome and Principe live in urban areas. Women head a third of all households with more urban households headed by women than rural households (respectively 36 percent and 29 percent). The urbanized central region has the highest proportion of female-headed households, followed by the northern region and the south. At 19 percent of households, the region of Principe has the lowest occurrence of female-headship.

34. Female-headed households have been increasing in many sub-Saharan African countries during the past decade (table 1). To a large extent this may be due to the

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<sup>4</sup> Sao Tome Ministry of Planning and Finance (2003), *Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices of Decision-makers concerning the Integration of Gender into the Process of Development (Conhecimento Atitudes e Práticas dos Decidores (as) Sobre a Integração do Género no Processo de Desenvolvimento de São Tomé e Príncipe)*, UNFPA, Sao Tome and Principe.

conflicts in the African sub-continent. However, Sao Tome and Principe ranks the highest amongst most countries in the region, without having experienced violent conflict in its recent history. There are indications that the lack of strong social cohesion in Sao Tome has created a society where a large number of women finds themselves abandoned to head large families and households without the assistance of a man.

**Table 1 Sub-Saharan Africa: Population living in female headed households**

<b>% of population living in female Headed Households</b>				
	<b>Year</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Burkina Faso	1994	4.5	1998	4.3
Burundi			1998	21.9
Cameroon	1996	11.1	2001	18.4
Côte d'Ivoire			1998	11.3
Ethiopia	1998	16.5	2000	19.2
Gambia	1992	7.8	1998	12.8
Ghana			1998	28.5
Guinea			1994	10.4
Kenya	1994	20.5	1997	23.9
Madagascar	1999	13.4	2001	15.1
Malawi			1997	21.7
Mauritania	1995		2000	17.4
Mozambique			1996	17.6
Nigeria	1992	10.4	1996	10.6
Sao Tome and Principe			2000	32.1
South Africa	1993	30.7		
Tanzania	1993	9.9		
Uganda			1999	22.7
Zambia	1996	16.6	1998	18.8

Data sources: Africa Region Standardized Files.

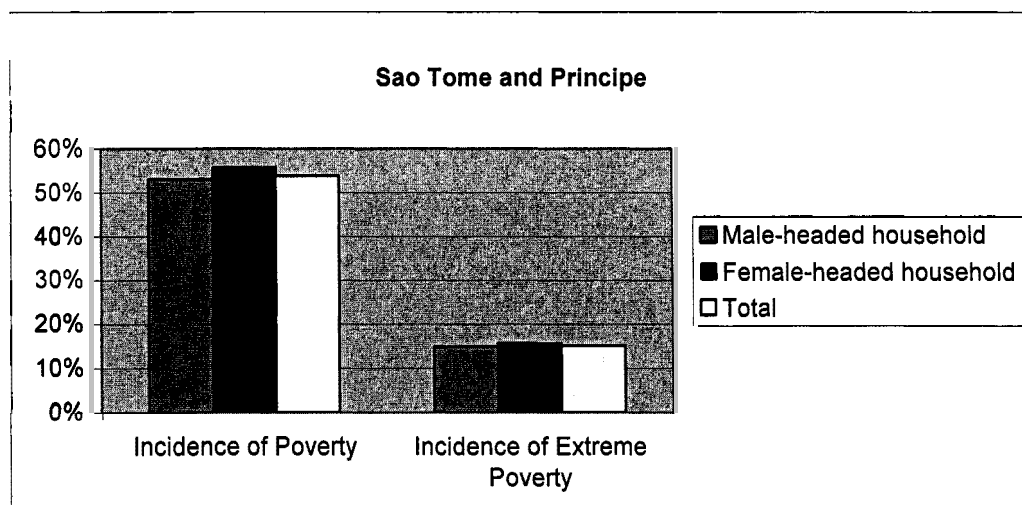
35. Female household heads tend to be older (48 years) than male heads (42 years). They are mostly single (48 percent); 22 percent are divorced or seperated, 6 percent are widowed and 24 percent are living in 'de facto union'. The majority of male household heads (67 percent) lives in a 'free union', 8 percent are married, 20 percent are single and 4 percent are divorced or seperated.

36. One fifth (21%) of Household heads is illiterate with large gender disparities: female household heads are four times more likely to be illiterate than male. Moreover, illiteracy rates increase with the age of the household head, reaching 58 percent at ages 65-69 and 63 percent for those 70 years old or older.

## 4.2 Gender and Poverty<sup>5</sup>

37. Over half (53%) of the population in Sao Tome and Principe live in poverty and 15 percent live in extreme poverty.<sup>6</sup> Gender disparities in poverty are small; disaggregated data show a slightly higher percentage (56 percent) of female-headed than of male-headed households (53 percent) live in poverty and in extreme poverty (16 percent versus 15 percent).

**Figure 1 Incidence of Poverty by Sex of Head of Household, 2001**



Source: National Institute of Statistics, Profile of Poverty in Sao Tome and Principe: Govt., ILO and UNDP, 2001

38. Poverty levels are associated more by place of residence and region than by sex of household head. About 65 percent of residents of rural areas are poor, compared with 45 percent of urban residents and 22 percent of residents of rural areas are extremely poor, compared with 10 percent of urban residents. The situation is extremely serious in districts such as Caué in the south of Sao Tome island where 82 percent of the population lives in poverty and 44 percent in extreme poverty, and in Lemba in the north of the island where over three-quarters of the population live in poverty and about a third live in extreme poverty. Principe island is in an intermediate position with 60 percent of its population living in poverty and about 19 percent in extreme poverty. Poverty is least in the central region of Sao Tome (Agua Grande and Mezochi districts), but even there, more than 46 percent of households are poor.

<sup>5</sup> This chapter is based on information from UNDP, ILO (2001), *Poverty Profile of the Republic of Sao Tome and Principe*, ILO, Sao Tome, which used data from the Living Standards Measurement Surveys (Enquête sur les Conditions de Vie des Ménages) conducted in 2000. The comparison of poverty rates by gender is based on the differences between female- and male-headed households and not on individual differences by gender.

<sup>6</sup> The Poverty Profile determined the poverty lines at 2.638,62 dobras, and the extreme poverty line at 1,319,31 dobras.

39. Female-headed households tend to have lower average per capita consumption levels than those headed by men (Table 2). At the national level, female-headed per capita household consumption is about 10 percent lower than that of male-headed households. However, urban/rural disparities are more pronounced than the gender differences. Male- and female-headed rural households together have an average per capita consumption level about 25 percent lower than the average urban household. Female-headed rural households are at a particular disadvantage: their average per capita household consumption is about 12 percent lower than that of male-headed rural households and about 22 percent lower than their urban female-headed households. In other words, of all households in Sao Tome and Principe, rural households headed by women are the poorest and have the lowest average levels of consumption.

**Table 2 Average Per Capita Household Consumption by Sex of Household Head (millions of Dobras)**

Sex of Household Head	Urban	Rural	Total
Male	4.7	3.5	4.1
Female	4.0	3.1	3.7
Total	4.4	3.4	3.9

Source: National Institute of Statistics, Profile of Poverty in Sao Tome and Principe: Govt., ILO and UNDP, 2001

40. Gender-differentiated patterns of place of residence, region, and household structure may all be significant factors associated with poverty and exclusion in Sao Tome and Principe. Hence, an integrated approach should be taken to combating poverty, that takes into consideration both socioeconomic and regional inequalities. While targeting for specific projects may appropriately focus on society's most vulnerable groups, policy formulation and program development to address gender issues at the national level should address the complex relationships between the various factors considered here.

### **4.3 Gender, Economic Activity and Access to Markets**

41. The economically active population in Sao Tome and Principe constitutes over a third (38%) of the total population. They tend to be relatively young and increasingly living in urban areas. 60 percent are male and 40 percent female. Men enter the labor force earlier and stay longer than women. Economically active women tend to be on average younger than men. Gender gaps in economic activity differ according to location. Gender gaps in economic activity tend to be higher in rural areas than in urban areas, where in rural areas, the proportion of economically active women (36 percent) is almost half of economically active men (64 percent) whereas in urban areas, the gender gap is smaller: 42 percent for women and 58 percent for men.

42. Eighty four percent of the economically active population are employed. Women are less likely to be employed than men. There are 100 employed women for every 184 employed men, whereas in the total population, the ratio is approximately 100 women to every 98 men. Moreover, although unemployment affects both men and women, it is a more serious problem among the female population. For every 100 unemployed women, there are 60 unemployed men. This disproportion suggests the existence of discrimination



in access to employment. The imbalance becomes even more evident if we consider that among the economically active population, there are 100 women for every 153 men.

**Table 3 Distribution of economically active population by employment status, 2001**

	Total %	Men %	Women %
Active Pop. Employed	84.3	90.3	75
Active Pop. Unemployed	15.7	9.7	25
Total Active Pop.	100	100	100

Source: National Institute of Statistics (NIS)

43. The economically inactive population, defined as those individuals of both sexes who cannot be considered economically active (children, those not employed outside the home, students and retirees), totals 45,971, of which 64 percent are women. Of this population, the largest single category consists of students (44 percent) followed by those not employed outside the home - predominantly women homemakers. Some 55.6 percent of the inactive population lives in urban areas, with a breakdown of 36.2 percent male and 63.8 percent female; the remaining 44.4 percent, of whom 36.6 percent is male and 63.4 percent female, lives in rural areas.

### **Box 1. The Power Role of Women *palayes***

#### **Women *palayes* or fish saleswomen play a powerful role within the fishing economy.**

Women play an important role in the fishing sector in Sao Tome and Principe. It is estimated that about 23 000 people, or about 17% of the population of Sao Tome and Principe, are in one way or another involved in fishery activity. The artisanal fishing fleet consists of about 1 500 small boats with oars and 300 boats with outboard motors. A semi-industrial fishing sector also exists. A September 1999 IFAD study produced some interesting findings.

The roles of men and women are very distinct in the fishing communities:

- Men do the fishing and fix the fishing gear and boat.
- Women take over when the fish is unloaded from the boats, buying it directly from the fishermen. They transport and market the catch, and in some cases transform it into dried or salted fish. The fish saleswomen are called *palayes*, and are often the wives of the fishermen.

There is also a notable gender pattern in terms of responsibility for household food security:

- The fishermen are responsible for providing fish for family consumption.
- The women are responsible for providing complementary food items such as vegetables, rice, palm oil and salt.

In addition to generating income, women *palayes* may also raise pigs and poultry, selling or bartering any surplus meat, chickens or eggs. They sometimes also cultivate banana trees or other small crops for home consumption.

The *palayes* are a particularly interesting and powerful group within the fishing community. Their livelihood is of course closely linked to that of the fishermen. When the fishermen cannot go out fishing the usual four or five times a month because of bad weather, or because temperatures in the ocean are too low at night, the *palayes'* activities also suffer. To a large extent, depending on their ability to cultivate customers among fishermen, the *palayes'* income can be relatively good. Some *palayes* also engage in the trading of palm wine, palm oil and *agua ardente*.

The more successful *palayes* may also serve another financial function for the fishermen – that of informal moneylenders. Fishermen report that they often borrow money from successful women fish traders, for the purchase of fishing gear. In turn, they commit to paying the *palaye* back in fresh fish. In other words, the fishermen become dependent on a *palaye*, much as farmers sometimes become dependent on traders, frequently to their financial disadvantage. It is also the *palayes* who represent the fishing households in the commonly conducted barter with the farmers on the island.

The *palayes* further enhance their power and profit margin through *palayes* associations, which reduces their operating costs through the shared use of fish-drying sheds and the bulk purchase of salt. Four main *palayes* associations are members of the national association of fishermen. Any development initiative in these traditional fishing communities will need to take account of the women *palayes* as a social and economic force. Formal credit for fishermen may find itself competing with the *palayes'* informal lending activities.

**Adapted from:**

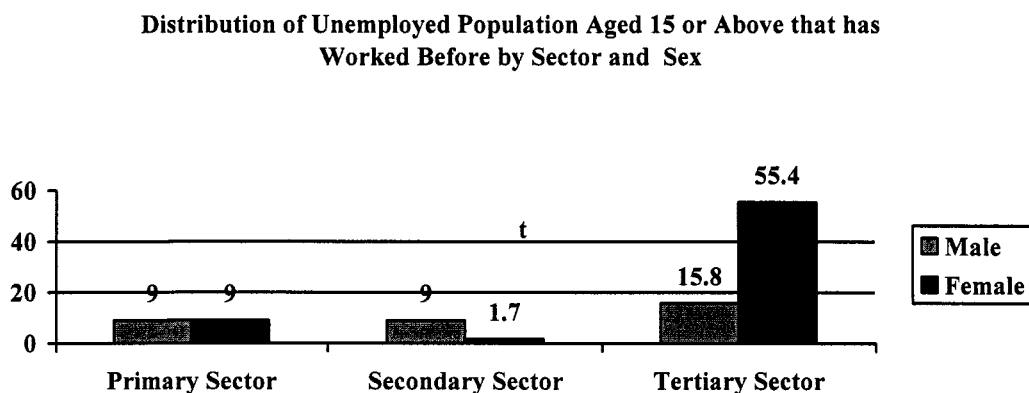
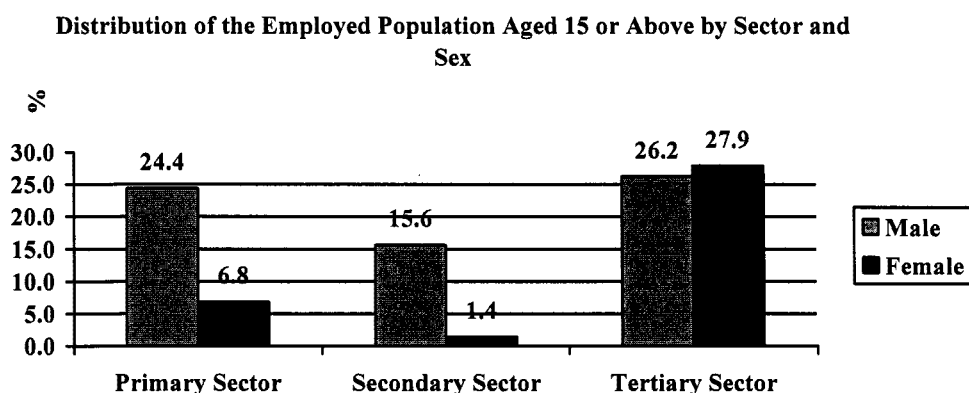
IFAD. 1999. *Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe: Participatory Smallholder Agriculture and Artisanal Fisheries Development Programme*, Inception Paper, Appendix

**Source:** <http://www.ifad.org/gender/learning/sector/agriculture/26.htm>

### Employment by sector

44. The primary sector (agriculture, cattle raising, forestry and fishing) contributes 27 percent to GDP and the secondary sector, mainly construction, contributes some 10 percent of GDP. The tertiary sector, which includes public administration, transportation, and financial and commercial activities, makes the most significant GDP contribution: approximately 57 percent for the last three years. It is the most important in terms of employment, providing 54 percent of jobs. It is also the sector with the highest unemployment rate, due essentially to the ongoing reforms in the realm of public service and to the instability of small businesses. Over 71 percent of unemployed people looking for work had previously been employed in the tertiary sector. The burden of unemployment in the tertiary sector falls disproportionately on women: unemployed women from this sector alone constitute 55 percent of all unemployed individuals, while unemployed men from this sector account for less than 16 percent.

**Figure 2 Distribution of Employment and Unemployment by Sector and Sex**



45. The distribution of employment by economic activity shows Agriculture and Fishing absorbs 31 percent of employment, followed by services (including education, health and other) with 22 percent of the employed population, commerce 20 percent,

Construction 10 percent, Public Administration 8 percent, Industry and Energy 7 percent, and Transportation and Communication 2 percent.

46. Commerce constitutes the major economic activity among women accounting for 42 percent of total female employment, but only 9 percent of male employment. Moreover more than a quarter (26 percent) of female employment is in services (education, health, other) making it the second largest sector for women, compared to 19 percent for men. Agriculture and Fishing which is the dominant sector for men, absorbing 38 percent of total male employment also employs 20 percent of women. There are no gender differences in employment in the public administration where the share of both male and female employment is 8 percent.

47. Men are likely to be employed as public or private sector salaried workers or as independent workers (95 percent), while women are likely to be employed as independent workers (47 percent) and as salaried workers. Males were, in fact, 57 percent of independent workers, 63 percent of public sector salaried workers and 74 percent of private sector salaried workers.

#### **4.4 Gender and Access to Productive Resources**

48. Land has always been very precious in Sao Tome and Principe, but owing to the structure of agricultural production during the colonial era, over 90 percent of the land belonged to the companies that produced cocoa and coffee. After 1975, there was no real change in this situation inasmuch as the nationalization of land on September 30 meant only that ownership of land was transferred from Portuguese companies to the State; the social conditions of rural workers did not improve. One of the changes that was most comprehensive and had the greatest social impact, was the Land Reform carried out with the technical and financial support of the World Bank. The land distribution process was based on provisions of the Portuguese Civil Code, which is still in effect in the country, as well as on specific land legislation which provided for:

- Nationalization of plantations (1975);
- The separation of the State and the economy (1987);
- Definition of legal and regulatory frameworks for ownership and use of land (1992).

49. The land legislation treats men and women with complete equality. The process has made possible the distribution of 24,000 hectares of land, which comprise roughly half of the country's agricultural land. Approximately 65 percent was granted to small farmers in plots normally less than 10 ha in size, and the remaining 35 percent was allocated for mid-sized farms of between 10 and 50 hectares. The distribution of small plots has benefited over 7,000 households, or 35,000 people: roughly a quarter of the population of Sao Tome and Principe, or half of the rural population. Of the total number of small farmers who have acquired deeds to their land, about one third are women, who have the same rights and privileges as men. It should be noted however, that in some other countries where land ownership has been made available to women as well as men, in practice women may not obtain the same returns to land as men. This can be due to a variety of factors, such as the fact that female-headed households typically have fewer

adults available to work the land, women's restricted mobility and/or access to markets, and social norms that limit the types of agricultural production in which women can engage. Research is needed to learn more about the practical results of land reform for rural women in Sao Tome and Principe.

50. In 1999, IFAD conducted a socio-economic analysis among women in farming and fish-trading activities and found a considerable demand for credit among women.<sup>7</sup> The report also noted that while a considerable amount of market transactions among female farmers and *Palayes* were based on barter, these women needed cash for transportation, plants, seeds, farm equipment and social services (health and education). According to the report, there are traditional saving and informal credit schemes usually among family members. *Palayes* also play an important role as informal lenders to fishermen. The report also noted that there was little knowledge of formal credit schemes.

#### **4.5 Gender and human development outcomes**

51. While there are serious concerns over the deterioration in quality and reach of education and health provision, there are no serious gender disparities at the primary levels of education and health provision in Sao Tome and Principe. This is particularly true for the younger cohorts, and in many ways constitutes an important success for the country. In fact, in some areas, girls have recently had higher net enrollment ratios than boys in primary school in Sao Tome and Principe. However, as measures are undertaken to improve the very poor quality of social service, attention needs to be maintained on the gender-specific needs of boys and girls and men and women in policies and program that aim to improve the delivery of social services and human development outcomes.

##### ***Education***

52. Education was given high priority since independence, and considerable progress has been made by adopting the principle of free education and access for all children of school age. The Educational System established under Decree-Law no. 53/88 includes four subsystems: General Education, Technical and Professional Training, Teacher Training and Adult Education. Although it suffers from significant limitations, General Education is the subsystem that has witnessed the greatest advances. It consists of:

- Pre-school education, which includes daycare centers (in the rural areas) for children from 0-6 years of age, and kindergartens (in the urban areas) for children from 3-5 years of age;
- Basic education, comprising 6 years of compulsory free schooling, divided as follows:
  - Primary Education – Grades 1 through 4
  - Basic Secondary Education – Grades 5 and 6
- Secondary Education, comprising:

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<sup>7</sup> IFAD (1999) Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe: Participatory Smallholder Agriculture and Artisanal Fisheries Development Programme, Inception Paper, Appendix I, Participatory Socio-Economic Analysis. Rome.

- 1<sup>st</sup> cycle – grades 7 through 9
- 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle – grades 10 and 11; this cycle is intended to prepare students for University education.

53. Confronting a series of problems ranging from classrooms in deteriorating condition and inadequate supply, to deficits in both the number and quality of teachers, particularly at the secondary level, the educational system, in practice, is far from that prescribed by law. Nonetheless, a relatively high proportion (88 percent) of the population aged 6 years old or older has received some schooling. The proportion is higher for men than women (94 percent versus 83 percent) and among the urban population (95 percent for males and 85 percent of females) than the rural population (91 percent of males and 80 percent for females).

54. Seventy nine percent of the population is literate, with the generations from the colonial period having much lower literacy rates than those after independence. While illiteracy rates are relatively low compared to many neighboring countries in the African continent, there are large gender disparities. The national illiteracy rate is 21 percent, and the rate for women (26 percent) is almost twice as high as for men. There are important geographical differences with the northern districts having the lowest literacy rate: 80 percent for males and 75 percent for females, followed by the south (82 percent and 68 percent respectively), and Principe (80 percent and 68 percent). The more urbanized central districts have the highest literacy rates: 88 percent for males and 78 percent for females.

55. Overall, literacy rates for women are lower than for men in all wealth quintiles, in all regions of the country, and in both rural and urban areas. However, the gender-difference in literacy level decreases steadily by age group, with women in the 15-24 age group very close to men's literacy level, as shown in Table 4.

**Table 4 Adult Literacy Rates by Sex and Age Group, Sao Tome and Principe, 2000**

Age group	Literacy rates		
	Men	Wom en	Total
15-24	95.0	91.8	93.3
25-34	97.7	90.9	93.9
35-44	92.4	70.4	80.5
45-54	92.2	48.1	67.3
55-64	76.1	26.0	48.8
65+	23.3	19.4	34.9

*Source: Multi- Indicator Cluster Survey, UNICEF, 2004*

56. The gross enrollment ratio at the primary level is 147.7 percent. While there are small gender differences – a slightly higher ratio for boys (148.7 percent) than for girls (135.9 percent), the disparities are larger between urban and rural areas and among districts than by gender. The net enrollment ratio is 87 percent, with 90 percent in the urban areas and 83 percent in the rural areas. The gender differences in net enrollment ratios are very

small and mostly in rural areas: 90.4 percent for boys and 89.6 percent for girls in urban areas, compared to 84.4 percent for boys and 80.8 percent for girls in rural areas. Similarly, the gross and net enrollment ratios at the secondary level for 2000/2001 were 112 percent and 78 percent, respectively, with no gender disparities, but large disparities by region and rural-urban area.

57. In general, urban areas have higher enrollment ratios than rural areas, with girls having higher ratios than boys in urban areas and lower ratios than boys in rural areas. In the northern and southern districts and in rural areas, where students tend to drop-out of school earlier, the gross enrollment ratios are lower than 100. This contrasts with the central districts and Principe, as well as urban areas, where gross enrollment ratios are over 100. The central districts have the highest net enrollment ratio (81 percent) with slightly more girls (83) than boys (78 percent) followed by the region of Principe (78 percent), with 79 percent for boys and 77 percent for girls and the southern districts, 72 percent.

58. More than half of the total population 6 years old or older has completed primary school (grades 1-4); about a third completed the four years of secondary school (grades 5-8); over 9 percent completed Pre-university/Preparatory (grades 9-12) - 11 percent of males and 8 percent of females, and only 0.15 percent completed Higher education - 0.2 percent of males and 0.1 percent of females. But there are important differences between the districts. The northern districts have the highest attainment rates followed by the central districts. The southern districts and Principe have the lowest rates, with no one having attained higher education. The urban areas have lower proportions for primary level attainment than the rural areas but higher secondary and preparatory attainment for both males and females. In both urban and rural areas, a slightly higher proportion of females than males has attained the primary level but their attainment compared to males drops as the level of schooling increases.

59. The age specific attendance rate decreases progressively as children get older. Even at six years of age, not all children attend school: seven percent in the southern districts and 12 percent in Principe are not enrolled. The rates also indicate that children drop-out of school early, particularly in rural areas. By age 11, about 10 percent of children drop out of school, and by age 18, two out of three are not enrolled. Girls tend to drop out earlier than boys: at 18, only 34 percent of boys and 30 percent of girls are still in school. Households' lack of means is the most important reason for children not attending – or dropping out of – school. This penalization of poor families has effects that are more adverse for school attendance of girls than boys among those in extreme poverty.<sup>8</sup>

### ***Health***

60. The health sector is regulated by the National Health Development Plan and the Health Charter with the following objectives: (i) promotion and protection of health and the fight against disease; (ii) provision of quality care equally available to everyone; (iii) improved organization and functioning of the sector (via stronger institutions). This includes: (a) the promotion and protection of women's and children's health (reproductive health), including attention to childhood illnesses and to the fight against malnutrition; (b) Encouraging healthy habits and lifestyles via information, education and communication

<sup>8</sup> UNDP, ILO (2001), *Poverty Profile of the Republic of Sao Tome and Principe*, ILO, Sao Tome

(IEC); and (c) The fight against endemic diseases, in particular malaria, HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis.

61. The location of existing basic health care facilities provides coverage for between 65 percent and 85 percent of the population, allowing for travel times not exceeding 30 minutes to one hour. However, short office hours and the lack of in-patient facilities in several districts limit access and endanger the quality of care. As a result, patients are referred to other, more specialized facilities, in particular the Central Hospital, which is primarily intended to provide secondary and tertiary care rather than primary care, as has often been the case. Over 60 percent of patients treated there should have been cared for at the district level. The number of health structures is not in proportion to the size of the population in a given district, especially in Água Grande District. The problem is compounded by the fact that the district's health facilities also have to attend a considerable number of people from other districts, attracted by better conditions for diagnosis, human and technical resources, and transportation services, and due to limited office hours and lack of in-patient facilities in their home districts.

62. Despite the Government's efforts to improve the quality of health services, some districts and health units still suffer from a lack of qualified staff, adequate physical plant, and funding. In other districts, although conditions are satisfactory at present, the emergence of new health conditions and problems, as well as an increase in demand, may pose a threat to quality of care in the future. An additional problem is that the surgical unit of the Central Maternity Hospital is not operational and the staff there lacks motivation. There is no information on access or use of health facilities by gender.

63. Reproductive health services are provided in every district at health centers or health posts, as well as at the Central Maternity Hospital. The Reproductive Health Program's target population is essentially women and children, who have been able to obtain a satisfactory level of coverage via the program, which is not the case with other health programs.

64. The Ministry of Health has been working to improve coverage for men under this program, particularly for youth and adolescents. Providing adequate coverage for men is very important, for two reasons. First, experience in a number of countries has shown that reproductive health programs for women tend to be much more effective if men are involved (for example, in the areas of contraception and the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases). Second, health initiatives in developing countries frequently concentrate on providing health services for women and children while neglecting male health needs. Mainstreaming gender issues into development requires that gender issues relevant to men, as well as women, be addressed; in the area of reproductive health, for example, men as well as women may be ill-informed about contraception and the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, and may be more resistant to adopting healthier behaviors due to traditional male socialization patterns.

65. The National Program to combat Malaria primarily targets pregnant women and children. However, given that malaria constitutes one of the country's main public health problems, care is provided equally for both men and women. Since 1994, malaria accounted for an average of 10 percent of cases of illness involving fever. In 1997, 80



percent of all deaths were in children under five. In 1998, malaria accounted for 59 percent of deaths from disease in children under five, and for 46 percent of deaths from disease in the population as a whole. In the same year, 54 percent of hospital admissions, and four of every ten deaths, were due to malaria. The socio-economic costs of the illness are huge, leading to absenteeism from school and work that affects production levels and productivity, and interferes with learning and with the population's purchasing power.

66. In 2003, the campaign to combat malaria was re-launched with the adoption of the National Strategic Plan, which aimed to eliminate the disease within ten years. Some of Sao Tome and Principe's partners have agreed to make available financial resources for pilot programs in selected localities, to include: better provision for case management; use of treated mosquito nets; spraying; monitoring of epidemiological phenomena; review of treatment protocols. The extent to which the program is widely adopted will depend on the results of the pilot programs.

### ***HIV/AIDS***

67. The prevalence of HIV/AIDS infection in Sao Tome and Principe is not yet well known. Only now is a process underway to formulate and adopt a National Strategy to Combat HIV/AIDS. A gendered approach to this strategy is anticipated. A study on the prevalence of HIV-positive cases carried out in 2001 revealed a rate of 0.4 percent, with 0.6 percent of cases inconclusive. Data collected from surveys conducted among pregnant women, in turn indicated that prevalence had increased from 0.7 percent in 1989 to 5 percent in 1996. According to the same survey, sexual transmission is the main route of infection in Sao Tome and Principe, accounting for 90 percent of cases, followed by blood transfusions (5 percent - 6 cases) and mother-to-child transmission (2 cases). Of the 124 cases reported by April 2003, 65 cases (just over half of the total) occurred among men and 59 among women. In eleven cases, the individuals were aged 20-29 years, and in 88 cases (71 percent) 30-49 years. The Agua Grande District, where the capital of the country is located, was the most severely affected.

68. The limited data available on sexually transmitted diseases indicate that rates are increasing. Approximately 20 percent of pregnant women examined in 2000 had a genital infection of some type. Using a projection of 25 to 50 cases of infection resulting from each case of established disease (Ministry of Health figures), it is likely that between 3,100 and 6,200 individuals are HIV-positive. There is no national system for monitoring the epidemiology of HIV/AIDS. The only site with the facilities to test for HIV is the Blood Bank of the Central Hospital. Likewise, there are no studies providing information on whether men or women are more vulnerable to infection. However, data gathered from pregnant women showed a prevalence of 0.7 percent in 1989, increasing to 5.4 percent by 1996. In 2001 a study of the sero-prevalence of HIV and Hepatitis B (HBV) with a sample of 2,313 persons, found a rate of prevalence of 1.0 percent HIV and 59.6 percent HBV.

69. Further education concerning methods of transmission and prevention is needed. According to data provided by the UNICEF Multi-Cluster Indicator Survey of 2000, only 11 percent of women aged 15 to 49 years were able to correctly identify the three main methods to prevent HIV transmission, 25 percent were able to correctly identify three erroneous conceptions regarding transmission, and only 24 percent knew of a facility

where they could be tested for AIDS (6 percent had actually been tested). Education appears to be an important factor in knowledge about AIDS. The percentages of women with adequate knowledge about HIV transmission and where they could be tested for HIV increased significantly with level of education.

70. Since 1987, the year the first case was discovered, the Ministry of Health has undertaken a number of initiatives (which have been largely ineffective) to make information available and increase awareness of HIV/AIDS. These include, among others, the creation of the National Committee to Monitor and Combat AIDS, by decree no.24/89 of December 26, the creation of a serology laboratory for anti-HIV antibody detection, and the creation of a reproductive health center in 2001. Another initiative undertaken is the Program for Sex Education in Schools, begun in 1988, as well as the creation of two counseling centers for youth, in the National College and in the town of Trindade. Other actions have been implemented jointly with several NGOs serving youth, with the support and sponsorship of some international partners.

71. Key risk factors identified in Sao Tome and Principe by the Ministry of Health include: (i) rate of condom use under 1 percent (PNDS, 2001); (ii) high level of sexually transmitted infections (STI); (iii) multiple sexual partners; (iv) early initiation of sexual activity; (v) sexual violence against women; (vi) clandestine abortions in inadequate health and safety conditions; (vii) re-use of syringes in the provision of unqualified home nursing services; and (viii) cultural practices such as 'sangria' (bleeding).

72. Recent discussions on strategy, with the involvement of the public sector, civil society and international partners, have focused on reducing the risk of infection, and on conditions increasing vulnerability to infection, improving living conditions that place individuals at risk, and diminishing the impact of the epidemic. Multi-sectoral involvement will be encouraged by the creation of a National Inter-ministerial Commission of Response to STDs/HIV/AIDS.

#### **4.6 Gender and Decision Making**

73. Women in Sao Tome and Principe have held important decision-making positions at the highest level of Government. Since October 2002, the Prime Minister is a woman. Women held ministerial positions not only in the Ministries of Health and Education, but also as Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Planning and Finance and Justice and Public Administration. Moreover, the Governor of the Central Bank is a woman as is the President of the Supreme Court. Women also head some strategic sectors such as Customs and Social Communication, among others and occupy some executive positions at various levels in a number of sectors. Nonetheless, the lack of a gender policy providing systematic guidelines governing access of women to decision-making positions, women's participation varies from year to year and from one term of office to another.

Table 5 shows changes over time in women's participation in the main decision-making positions.

**Table 5 Women's Participation in Political Office**

Positions	1987			1991			1994			2002/2003		
	Total	Women	%	Total	Women	%	Total	Women	%	Total	Women	%
President of the Assembly	1	1	100	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
Parliamentary Leaders	1	0	0	3	1	33	3	1	33	4	0	0
Ambassadors	5	1	20	5	0	0	5	0	0	5	1	20
Presidents of Trade Unions	1	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0
Presidents of District Chambers	7	0	0	7	0	0	7	1	14.3	7	1	14.3
Participation in Government	13	1	7.7	14	2	16.7	13	1	7.7	13	5	38.5
Participation in Parliament	55	7	12.7	55	3	5.4	55	5	9.1	55	5	9.1

Source: National Center for Administrative Reform and National Assembly

74. Despite the high representation at the highest level, there is room for greater participation at the local level. While in 1991 and 1994 women held the position of Parliamentary Leader, in the past decade no woman held this position. Moreover, out of the 55 parliamentary seats, women occupy only 5, representing just over 9 percent of parliamentary seats. This is lower than the average in sub-Saharan Africa. Moreover, in the first and only municipal and regional elections held in the country, only one woman was elected Chamber President, despite the election of various presidents from the Principe regional assembly to the six governmental assemblies and District Chambers.

75. The high participation at the senior government level indicates equal opportunity for women to participate at the highest level of decision-making, but this is not the case at the local level. A major barrier for great female participation in decision-making is due to the domestic chores, which constitute a heavy burden for women, especially among the economically disadvantaged. This is further exacerbated by preconceptions regarding appropriate social roles for men and women.

76. The fact that a third of households in Sao Tome and Principe is headed by women may suggest that women play an important role in decision-making at the domestic level. However, in male-headed households, social customs and practices continue to attribute superiority to men. Although as seen in box 1 above, in the fishermen communities, women play an important economic and social role.

77. Hence, while there may be a commitment on the part of the Government for great gender equality in decision-making, there is no system that would ensure gender equality. At the local level, greater effort is needed to raise awareness among the population and to identify and address the barriers to women's participation and a greater gender balance. This may address some of the urban/rural gender disparities observed in the analysis of poverty, economic activity and human development indicators. Further analysis would be

useful in analyzing the possible links between gender, decision-making at the local level and its association with urban/rural disparities in social outcomes.

#### 4.7 Gender and the law

78. The Constitution guarantees the general principle of equality in the following terms: “All citizens are equal before the law, enjoy the same rights and are subject to the same duties, without distinction of social origin, race, sex, religious creed or political belief.” Having recently undergone a process of revision, the Sao Tome and Principe Constitution in force since January 2003 continues to enshrine the general principle of equality between all citizens. Article 15 specifically mandates the equality of all citizens of both sexes: “Women have equal rights and duties as men, and are assured full participation in political, economic, social and cultural life.”

79. The same equality is proclaimed between spouses with regards to “civil and political status and the maintenance and education of children” (article 26). Part II of the Constitution is dedicated to fundamental rights such as the right to personal integrity, the right to choice of profession, the right to work and the right to vote, and these are accorded to “All”. Law number 2/77 (the Law of the Family) regulates marriage and legally recognizes *de facto* unions, and establishes a single system of inheritance, considered more favorable to women. It also decrees equality of rights and duties between spouses in matters of the administration of property and the education of children, among others. Thus, it establishes equal inheritance rights, both between spouses and between heirs, regardless of sex, and accords an equal degree of parental authority to both parents.

80. The Right to Work is spelled out in Laws 1/90 of May 8 (Social Security Law) and 6/92 of June 11 Regulation of Individual Working Conditions). The former identifies maternity as one of the eventualities covered by the general social security system, and provides for paid maternity leave of 60 days, or 75 days in the case of the birth of more than one child. The retirement age is lower for women (57) than for men (62). The latter law addresses the subject of workers in general, making specific reference to women school-leavers. It enunciates principles of equality between the sexes with regards to opportunities and treatment in access to work and employment, banning sex-based discrimination and guaranteeing women access to any work or position that does not involve risks to their reproductive function. This article also includes clauses relating to protection during pregnancy and the post-natal period (medical appointments, breast-feeding, leave etc) and to the prohibition of night work (with some exceptions).

81. Equally, the electoral legislation, the Law of Nationality (concerning the nationality of a woman married to a foreigner) and legislation relating to land, contain no provisions that discriminate against women or men. The various laws mentioned above apply to Sao Tomeans, and to Sao Tomean citizens and their dependents, without reference to sex. The land legislation in force, in accordance with the Constitution, allows female farmers to hold legal title to land.

82. Of the international conventions that the country is a signatory to, specific mention should be made of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Approved by the National Assembly and ratified in 1990, this

Convention acts as the point of reference for demands for women's rights in Sao Tome and Principe. CEDAW provides a definition of the concept of 'discrimination against women', establishes new rights, and sets out the obligations of the State, with the aim of achieving equality of the sexes in every area of socioeconomic life.

83. Sao Tome and Principe ratified certain ILO conventions that refer to the protection of women's rights in labor matters: Convention 100 on equal pay (1982) and Convention 111 on discrimination in employment and occupation (1992). Preparations are currently underway for promulgation of Convention 183, which revises the 1952 Convention on maternity protection. Moreover, Sao Tome and Principe is a signatory to the Millennium Declaration, and has already formulated the National Strategy for Poverty Reduction that incorporates the Millennium Development Goals. The report, which will provide data to be used as terms of reference on which to base the National Strategy for Development, is under preparation. The report will also be used to establish national targets in light of the Millennium Development Goals. However, although these Conventions have been ratified, no mechanisms have been created to facilitate or monitor their implementation within the country, and thus, the principles of these conventions have not yet been translated into practice. A certain amount of slackness in the enforcement of laws contributes to a climate of impunity. Moreover, a number of cultural taboos and traditions continue to impede progress by perpetuating phenomena such as early pregnancy, street children, domestic violence, child prostitution etc., that result in discrimination and exclusion.

#### *Violence against women*

84. Violence against women is a reality in societies and countries throughout the world, and occurs in all social classes. However, it is a particularly serious problem in poor countries where prevention and protection mechanisms do not exist or are very weak. In Sao Tome and Principe, the right to personal integrity is enshrined in article 22 of the Constitution, which states "the moral and physical integrity of individuals is inviolable." Hence, corporal offenses, mistreatment, slander, disrespect or lack of consideration are prohibited. Such behaviors are defined as crimes subject to legal censure and to civil and/or criminal sanction. The Penal Code condemns offenses against personal freedom or safety, and offenses against virtue (sexual crimes). It prohibits and punishes behavior that threatens the freedom, life, physical integrity or sexual freedom of any person; no specific reference is made to cases in which the victim is a woman.

85. A 2000 study commissioned by UNICEF states that the most common form of violence in Sao Tome and Principe is physical violence within the family, where the victims are frequently women and children, though it does not provide precise data on the number and type of cases. Police and judicial authorities are largely indifferent to the situation. Sexism rules, with men usually dominating family relations, primarily for economic reasons. Cultural grounds are often invoked to perpetuate male domination of women, meaning that both attitudes and behaviors are at the root of this problem.

### *Customs and Social Barriers*

86. Among the factors that constrain equal opportunity for women to participate in all areas of social and economic life, the following are particularly important:

- Sexist education and socialization: from an early age, girls are raised according to a very rigid division of work roles. They are taught to perform domestic chores, while boys are given “men’s work”, as it is called;
- Lower levels of schooling, cultural exposure and technical/professional qualification among women;
- The lack of self-esteem and women’s low self-image can cause women to undervalue their capabilities and those of other women. Often, they are unwilling to undertake nontraditional roles, due to lack of confidence in themselves, in their abilities and in those of other women;
- Discriminatory stereotypes suggest that man is superior to woman, and more intelligent and competent, and hence should be the one to make decisions;
- Lack of family cohesion and support.

87. Most of these barriers result from the mentality that determines certain behaviors and attitudes among society in general, in particular among women themselves. They also result from the lack of knowledge and tradition of collective action among women. If on the one hand the lack of information prevents them from demanding and fighting for their rights, the lack of organization prevents them from joining forces to analyze and seek for solutions to their problems.

88. The fact that only 3 percent of women are legally married, while most men and women live in de facto unions, coupled with the fact that the latter type of union is legally recognized but not regulated, means that the burden of providing for the family and educating the children often falls exclusively on the woman’s shoulders.

## **5. POLICY AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT**

89. Despite the political will expressed by the authorities immediately after independence to define policies that would promote equality of opportunities for both sexes, with particular attention to women’s integration into the process of development, a National Gender and Development Policy was never formulated, though several individual initiatives were undertaken.

90. Similarly, despite women’s increasing contribution to the development of the nation’s economic, political and social life, women are far from having the same recognition, resources and opportunities as men.

## 5.1 Mechanisms for implementing gender objectives

91. Immediately after independence, an organization called the Sao Tome and Principe Women's Organization (OMSTEP) was created. It aimed to promote the integration of women in all areas of national life by means of awareness-raising campaigns. Over the next 15 years, various initiatives, such as literacy campaigns, were undertaken with this aim in mind. Significant changes did take place, particularly in the area of legislation, with the adoption of a Political Constitution in which the principle of equality of all citizens without discrimination of any kind was established (successive revisions introduced no changes at this level), and with the passing of Laws 2/77 (Law of the Family) and 6/92 (Law of Individual Working Conditions).

92. With the country's democratization in the 1990s, a number of non-governmental organizations with various social and development goals, some of them related to better forms of economic integration for women, began to emerge. Until then, no public or private institution existed that addressed Gender and Development issues. The Office for Women and the Family has as its goal to study and analyze the condition of women in Sao Tome and Principe with a view to promoting equal rights and opportunities in all fields related to women and the family. However, because human and financial resources have not been available, this Office has not measured up to expectations, and there has been some uncertainty as to its appropriate role within the government structure.

93. Following the Beijing Conference, the Government in partnership with civil society (the latter including men and women representing a range of different points of view) organized the 1<sup>st</sup> National Women's Forum, where after much discussion and in the light of the Beijing objectives, the 'Sao Tomean Women's Platform of Action' was adopted. Once again, even though the Prime Minister approved this Platform in the form of an internal Resolution in November 1998, it was not implemented.

94. Moreover, based on the decisions of the Beijing Conference regarding the role of NGOs, some national NGOs concerned primarily with women's issues decided to create a Federation called the Sao Tomean Women's Forum. Its purpose was to act as a consultative agency on institutional issues relating to women and, among other initiatives, to contribute to implementation of the National Platform of Action. Yet again, however, a lack of adequately trained staff and of financial resources has prevented this institution from fulfilling its role.

95. In short, the absence of a coherent policy or systematic body of strategies designed to integrate the Gender and Development perspective means that activities intended to encourage the participation of both men and women in the development process continue to evolve haphazardly, and the actual impact of specific interventions remains unknown. The extent and nature of women's participation in decision-making processes has varied, but has not yet reached satisfactory levels. Political discourse on women's integration is very rarely translated into practice. In the process of preparing electoral lists, whether at national level for legislative elections or at local level for municipal elections, the political parties appoint women to few elective positions. Hence, their participation in the National,

Regional and Local Assemblies, is in most cases limited to standing in as substitutes for male office holders.

96. However, it is not uncommon for women faced with the possibility of being appointed to a position of responsibility, to decline in favor of a male colleague, claiming lack of availability. It is a fact that the burden of domestic life is largely shouldered by women, including well-qualified women. They are faced with constraints ranging from the absence or insufficiency of childcare facilities to the problems of coping with domestic tasks such as caring for clothing and preparing food.

97. All this notwithstanding, there has been some progress lately, particularly in the development of community organizations, suggesting the need for increasing capabilities and interventions at this level. As an example, the process of land distribution has been energized by the creation of small farmers' associations throughout the country, culminating in the creation of a National Federation of Small Farmers' Associations (FNAPA), which includes the Northern, Central and Southern Federations.

## **5.2 Progress to date and the challenges ahead**

98. The greatest progress made by the country in terms of gender and development issues is in the area of legislation, which unequivocally enshrines the principle of equality between the sexes and condemns all forms of discrimination. The existing regulations of the legal framework regarding women's rights are almost perfect. That is, officially, there exists a total equality of rights between men and women. No legal provision ascribes to women a position of inequality or inferiority in relation to men. This is a very different situation from that of some other countries, where by law women cannot work without their husbands' consent, can be forced to marry, and are not allowed to own land; in short, they are treated as a class of legally inferior citizens, throughout their lives.

99. Although in practice violations of the law are widespread, due to the lack of mechanisms providing protection, or allowing for monitoring and evaluation, measures established in different sectors have led to significant progress, namely:

### **In Health**

- A National Health Development Policy, a National Health Development Plan and a Health Charter have been developed;
- Maternal and Infant Health/Family Planning services are provided in 85 percent of health units;
- Health infrastructure coverage of the entire national territory;
- Satisfactory completion of the expanded Vaccination Program;
- Out-patient care is good, although some improvements are needed to yield optimum results;
- Various programs have been carried out by local and international NGOs; however, these organizations should work in closer partnership with the Ministry of Health.



### **In Education**

100. Despite well-known problems that require urgent attention, there is a commitment to providing the children of Sao Tome and Principe with the best possible conditions for education. Access and equality of opportunities may well be achieved, given the authorities' persistent diligence and political will.

### **In Agriculture**

101. The land reform enacted has benefited households headed by women as well as men. In addition, support has been provided to rural areas in the form of lines of credit, agricultural extension, training, and improvements in infrastructure and organization. As for the fishing sector, investments have been made in equipment for traditional and semi-industrial fishing. Some research and extension work has also been done.

### **The Challenges Ahead**

102. As can be seen from the country's recent development, whether in terms of Human Development Reports or the formulation of the National Policy for Poverty Reduction or, more recently, efforts to prepare the first report on the Millennium Development Goals, the size of the foreign debt (equivalent to six times the GDP) and the progressive reduction in the amount of foreign aid make it more urgent to conclude the HIPC initiative. These factors also mean that the scant resources available must be better employed to achieve significant improvements in education, health and infrastructure, as well as to overcome regional and gender inequalities.

103. On the one hand, the influx of oil revenues expected in the near future opens up some promising perspectives for the country. On the other hand, there is widespread concern among the population as a whole that the country must avoid repeating the mistakes made by other oil producing developing countries, particularly in Africa, which have failed to use their oil wealth to improve population's living conditions. For this reason, the country is currently in the process of creating mechanisms to encourage rational use of petroleum revenues in order to contribute to the modernization and development of the country. Hence, in order to reverse the current situation and move towards sustainable development, the country will have to surmount the following challenges:

- Continuing to introduce structural reforms to improve good governance, understood as a system that, by embodying principles such as human rights, political legitimacy and accountability, freedom of association and citizen participation, transparency, good public sector management and a fair legal system, contributes to a better functioning of the State, a higher quality of life for the citizenry and a better business climate.
- Reducing socioeconomic and regional inequalities, especially in rural areas.
- Re-structuring power relations by enabling women to actively participate in decision-making processes.
- Establishing a system that would ensure gender equality in decision making positions
- Raising the levels of education and training for women, to enable them to take advantage of the opportunities that are opening up.

- Implementing the Millennium Development Goals, the National Strategy for Poverty Reduction, the EFA (Education For All) plan of action, and the National Strategic Plan for Education and Training.
- Ensuring quality inclusive education for all, the biggest challenge to be surmounted being implementation of the Integrated Reform of Education and the Educational System.
- Expanding coverage of the Social Security system to include workers in the informal sector, 64 percent of whom are women; and improving coordination between social protection policies and the National Strategy for Poverty Reduction and Growth.

## 6. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 6.1 Summary of Main Issues

104. Sao Tome and Principe has a distinctive gender profile, unlike its neighboring African countries and comparable island states. Gender equality is emphasized in the Constitution and reiterated across the various laws and legislation. Sao Tome and Principe is also a signatory to all international conventions that promote gender equality and combat discrimination (CEDAW, MDGs, etc.). In practice, the results are mixed.

105. The regional and urban/rural disparities in Sao Tome and Principe are much more pronounced than gender disparities. Where gender disparities exist, they are concentrated in rural areas and in the poorer districts.

106. A third of all households are headed by women who are mostly either single or living in 'free union' and are four times more likely as men to be illiterate. Female-headed households tend to be larger, poorer and with lower per capita consumption as male-headed households.

107. Women's access to the labor market is limited. Men enter the labor force earlier and leave later than women. However, on average, the economically active female population is younger than its male counterpart. Women constitute the largest segment of the economically inactive population and among those who are economically active, women are twice less likely to be employed than men. A quarter of women in the labor force are unemployed compared to 10 percent of men. Employed women tend to be concentrated in the informal sector, mainly in commerce and services, while men are likely to be employed as public or private sector salaried workers.

108. Although women benefited from the Land Reforms in 1992, through which a third of the country's small farmers acquired deeds to their land, their access to productive resources is limited. Even among female land owners, poverty and limited access to credit constraint their ability to purchase inputs and to fully utilize their land. While there are some informal credit schemes, especially among the fishing communities, there is little knowledge and experience with formal credit schemes. A study by IFAD in 1999 found a considerable demand for credit among women from the farming and fishing communities.

109. In terms of human development indicators, there are no gender disparities in access to education and health services. The disparities are mainly regional and between urban and rural populations. Enrollment ratios for boys and girls are equal at the primary level and secondary levels. While there are gaps in literacy rates between men and women in the older age groups, the gap is rapidly closing with the newer generations. There is however, an issue in terms of retention in school, where a slightly larger proportion of girls than boys drops out.

110. HIV/AIDS is still relatively low in Sao Tome and Principe, but some data show that it is increasing. Awareness about transmittal methods is very low – only 11% of women aged 15 to 49 years were able to correctly identify transmission methods. Condom use is also very low (less than 1%). Sexual activity begins early and there is a culture of multiple sexual partners in the tradition of 'de facto' unions. There is also a high rate of sexually transmitted diseases. This combination provides a fertile setting for the rapid spread of the disease, and it is therefore critical to raise awareness among both men and women to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS.

111. Information on violence against women is limited in Sao Tome and Principe, but some evidence suggests that the most common form of violence in Sao Tome and Principe is physical violence within the family where the victims are frequently women and children. While cultural attitudes of male domination are presented as the root cause explaining such violence, further research is required in this area to measure its extent, characteristics and root causes.

112. In terms of power and decision-making, women have a significant share at the highest levels of the government. Currently, women hold the posts of Prime Minister, the Governor of the Central Bank, the President of the Supreme Court and the Minister of Justice among other important posts. In recent cabinet formations, women headed the Ministries of Planning and Finance, Health, Foreign Affairs, Education and Culture, and held several senior presidential advisory positions.

113. Despite good representation at the highest political level, the share of women in the political process and decision-making is very limited at the lower levels. While women were Speaker of the National Parliament in 1991 and 1994, no woman has held this position in the past decade. Moreover, currently only five out of 55 parliamentarians are women, which is below the average for Sub-Saharan African countries. A major barrier for greater female participation in decision-making is the heavy burden of domestic chores borne by women, especially among the economically disadvantaged. This is further exacerbated by socio-cultural preconceptions regarding appropriate social roles for men and women. Hence, while there is a clear commitment towards gender equality at the higher levels of government, more effort is needed to expand opportunities for women's participation in decision-making at the district and local levels through clearly defined policies that would address the constraints to their participation and raise awareness among the population.

114. The major gender concern in Sao Tome and Principe stems from the social reality of 'de facto' unions. These unions leave women vulnerable to poverty, exclusion and HIV/AIDS with limited protection from the law. The reality is that men have multiple

female partners. Children born under a 'de facto' union stay with the mother and hence, a father may have children born to several women. The burden of caring for the children falls disproportionately on women. Moreover, although the law recognizes these unions, unwed women are not protected with legal rights such as child support or inheritance rights, which a married woman enjoys. Hence, in the case of separation or death, a woman must start a legal process to claim child support or inheritance - this is a lengthy and costly process where women are less likely to gain much. Moreover, several women may be claiming support and/or inheritance from one man, which also limits their likelihood of receiving benefits. This leads to social disintegration of which children and women are severely disadvantaged.

115. The absence of a coherent national policy or systematic body of strategies designed to integrate a Gender and Development perspective means that activities intended to encourage the participation of both men and women in the development process continue to evolve haphazardly, and the actual impact of specific interventions remains unknown.

## **6.2 Workshop Recommendations**

116. The two-day seminar that brought together representatives of the Government, various government agencies, and national and international NGOs, resulted in development of a body of proposals for interventions designed to eliminate the main barriers to real equality of men and women in terms of opportunities and participation in the process of development.

117. After a wide-ranging debate which analyzed the experience of ongoing initiatives undertaken by the Government, donors and civil society, the following proposals were made for inclusion in the National Gender Strategy currently being developed, with a view to increasing the effectiveness of interventions designed to reduce poverty, increase growth and promote the well-being of the population:

118. *Gender approach:*

- Ensure a well-integrated national approach to gender issues by formulating a comprehensive policy on gender that includes dissemination of information, awareness-raising and legislative reform.
- Provide for continuity of actions promoting gender equality and equity.
- Create a structure responsible for gender issues in one of two ways: either by strengthening and re-structuring the existing Office of Women and the Family and converting it into a Gender Bureau under the direct authority of the Prime Minister; or by creating a new, high level body with powers of intervention, control and coordination of sectoral policies on gender; in either case, with Focal Points in each Ministry or equivalent institution);
- Formulate strategies for advocacy, for social mobilization (coordinating specific projects with Social Communication, with artists and cultural groups), and for Information, Education and Communication projects, with a view to increasing information on and awareness of gender issues;
- Make legislative changes as needed to update existing legislation (the Penal Code, the Law of the Family), and adopt new legislation regarding issues such as sexual harassment and trafficking of individuals;

- Create a court to deal specifically with family-related issues;
- Collect, analyze and disseminate gender-specific data at all levels;
- Improve the functioning of the agency responsible for integrating gender issues into development policies, programs and projects;
- Conduct research on the subject of girls who are currently not in the school system to ascertain the extent and causes of dropout;

119. *Education and Training:*

- Create support mechanisms for teachers and other educators already in retirement, to enable them to continue contributing to the educational and training system by giving classes to boys and girls without access to formal education;
- Pay special attention to professional training designed to expand opportunities for young people entering the job market for the first time;
- Hold a National Education Forum, with participants from the public and private sectors, civil society, parents, educators, education officials and donors. The forum should focus on problems concerning the education system in Sao Tome and Principe and all participants should be involved in the process of proposing solutions to problems;
- Speed the process of approving a National Education Strategy, at the same time ensuring that due attention is paid to gender issues in education;
- Formulate and adopt a national policy for staff training, paying particular attention to gender issues;
- Build integrated schools in every District in the country to comply with the legal requirement of compulsory schooling;

120. *Health:*

- Provide gender-awareness training for staff in the Health sector;
- Promote greater investment in training and specialization for the nation's technicians, particularly for those providing services to women, youth and adolescents, and improve the stocks of support and diagnostic equipment;
- Create facilities to offer improved services for men, in particular young men and adolescents, within the framework of the Reproductive Health program;
- Increase efforts to implement the National Strategies to Combat Malaria and HIV/AIDS;
- Improve the functioning of some units of the Dr. Ayres Menezes Hospital, namely Maternity, Pediatrics and Emergency;
- Reorganize health sector infrastructures in accordance with the Health Charter;
- Create mechanisms for user contributions towards health costs, adjusted to individuals' socio-economic situations.
- Enable the Health Information System to provide data disaggregated by sex;
- Establish a follow-up and evaluation system for programs and projects;
- Conduct studies on more effective and efficient technologies for using wood, charcoal and other traditional energy sources so as to reduce women's domestic work burden.

121. *Access to resources:*

- Promote research to evaluate the impact of development programs and projects already concluded or underway;
- Conduct studies with a view to identifying ways to increase work opportunities and job stability in the tertiary sector;
- Collect data, using well-defined indicators to measure the impact of the aforementioned actions and on the ways in which both women and men have benefited;
- Provide credit to fishermen and ‘palayes’ to enable them to improve their means of subsistence;
- Conduct research and propose measures to transfer labor activities from the informal to the formal sector.

122. *Social Protection:*

- Regulating common-law marriages (article 20 of the Law of the Family) so that they may cease to constitute an obstacle to the granting of pensions to widows;
- Expand Social Security coverage to include the informal sector;
- Conduct studies with a view to including a health care component in the Social Security system;
- Improve coordination between social protection policies and the National Strategy for Poverty Reduction.
- Conduct studies to identify reforms needed to achieve equality between men and women.

### 6.3 Options for World Bank Interventions

123. The Bank’s Country Assistance Strategy (CAS) aims to support the Government's objectives at: (a) sustaining strong economic growth to raise incomes and reduce poverty; and (b) broadening access to social services and improving their quality. While these objectives would benefit the whole population, both men and women, attention must be given to the specific development needs of men and women. A gendered approach is necessary when designing poverty interventions, or promoting access to productive resources and/or credit. While the gender disparities are very small in terms of human development outcomes, interventions to broaden access to social services and improving their quality must take account of the specific conditions of women and girls, to ensure that the current gender balance is maintained. Specific areas for possible World Bank support to promote greater gender equality in Sao Tome and Principe are classified below under five main areas: (i) Support development of an action plan for the implementation of the workshop recommendations; (ii) Strengthen institutional capacity; (iii) Research and data collection; (iv) Promote collaboration between government, civil society and communities to raise awareness on gender issues; and (v) establish credit schemes and income-generating activities.

124. *Development of an action plan for workshop recommendations.* IDA provided technical assistance and financed the national workshop on gender to raise awareness and promote dialogue among stakeholders on identifying the main gender issues in the country which led to the set of recommendations mentioned above. IDA could continue its support

by assisting the Government develop an action plan for the implementation of the workshop recommendations, identifying the key priority areas, defining the tasks and the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders.

125. ***Strengthen institutional capacity.*** IDA could support institutions and strengthen their capacity to play a functional role in addressing gender issues and promoting gender awareness at all levels of government, civil society and community. This could include support to implement the international conventions for the promotion of gender equality to which Sao Tome and Principe is signatory. This could also include training on gender for focal points in each Ministry. Focus at the district and local level institutions would be critical in ensuring a wide-spread understanding of gender issues and addressing constraints to gender equality

126. ***Research and Data collection.*** Data from recent surveys allowed for some analysis and information on the situation of men and women in the various aspects of economic and social life in Sao Tome and Principe. Greater research is required, for example, to identify the specific conditions of female-headed households, the barriers and constraints to women's access to the labor market and productive resources, and for greater participation in decision-making. Women contribute to Sao Tome and Principe's economy largely through production in the informal sector – for instance, the marketplace sale of agricultural surplus and of refined fish products as well as through the provision of small services – and research is needed to understand these production patterns and their response to macroeconomic adjustment. Areas such as violence against women are still not researched sufficiently. Gender differences in the urban/rural divide would be an important priority area to research.

127. ***Advocacy and awareness-raising.*** IDA could support efforts to promote greater collaboration within the Government and between the Government, civil society and communities to raise awareness on gender issues at the local level and combat cultural attitudes that assign a lower status for women and hinder their full participation in the social and economic development of the country. This could be through support to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community groups working on gender issues, training of community leaders, youth groups on gender issues. It could also be through support to the revision of the school curriculum to ensure gender-sensitive content.

128. ***Access to resources and credit.*** Current IDA support to promote economic growth in Sao Tome and Principe has a positive impact on expanding the economy and generating greater opportunities for the population in general. In addition, IDA could support credit schemes that support the most vulnerable populations, especially female-headed households in rural areas. This could be done in collaboration with partners who have had experience in this area in Sao Tome and Principe, e.g. UNDP, IFAD, etc.

129. ***Prioritize Support.*** While the above areas may be equally important, it would be important to prioritize World Bank support in line with an action plan and within the overall context of the PRSP and the CAS. Moreover, current on-going World Bank activities in Sao Tome and Principe could already begin to incorporate some of these recommendations and options. For example, under the recently approved Social Sector

Support Project, special consideration is given to the situation of men and women in the context of basic education and health services.



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## Annex 1. Tables

Table 1: Distribution of the economically active population by residence and sex

Residence	Men %	Women %	Total %
Urban	58	42	100
Rural	63.6	36.4	100
Average	60.4	39.6	100

Source: Sao Tome National Institute of Statistics (NIS), 2002

Table 2: Distribution of the economically active population by employment status

	Total %	Men %	Women %
Active Pop. Employed	84.3	90.3	75
Active Pop. Unemployed	15.7	9.7	25
Total Active Pop.	100	100	100

Source: Sao Tome National Institute of Statistics (NIS), 2002

Table 3: Rates of Economic Activity, Unemployment and Employment

SEU-1987			
	Economic Activity Rate (%)	Unemployment Rate (%)	Employment Rate (%)
Total	31.5	21.5	
Men	44.3	12.1	
Women	26.7	35.2	
SEAPEU-2001			
Total	37.9	15.7	32.0
Men	46.2	9.7	41.7
Women	29.8	24.9	22.4
Urban	38.4	16.6	32.0
Rural	37.4	14.7	31.9
GPHC-2002			
Total	38.7	17.9	31.8
Men	44.6	12.3	39.1
Women	32.9	25.3	24.6
Urban	37.4	18.5	30.5
Rural	40.1	17.2	33.2

Source: SEU 1987, SEAPEU 2002 and GPHC 2001

Table 4: Distribution of the economically inactive population by residency and Sex

Residence	Men %	Women %	Total %
Urban	36.2	63.8	100
Rural	36.6	63.4	100
Total	36.3	63.7	100

Source: : Sao Tome National Institute of Statistics (NIS), 2002

Table 5: Distribution of heads of households by district

Region/ District	Sex of head of household		
	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
Água-Grande	64.0	36.0	100
Mé-Zochi	65.9	34.1	100
Cantagalo	71.4	28.6	100
Cauê	81.2	18.8	100
Lemba	75.3	24.7	100
Lobata	68.7	31.3	100
Príncipe	77.5	22.5	100
Total	68.0	32.0	100

Source: Sao Tome National Institute of Statistics (NIS), 2002

Table 6: Per Capita Household Consumption and Sex of Head of Household in dobras

Sex of Household Head	Urban	Rural	Total
Male	4669726	3465737	4096452
Female	4031921	3133137	3673768
Total	4440832	3369361	3957926

Source: National Institute of Statistics, Profile of Poverty in Sao Tome and Principe: Govt., ILO and UNDP, 2001

Table 6a: Poverty and Sex of Head of Household

Category	Incidence of Poverty	Incidence of Extreme Poverty
Male-headed household	53.0%	14.9%
Female-headed household	55.7%	15.6%
Total	53.8%	15.1%

Source: National Institute of Statistics, Profile of Poverty in Sao Tome and Principe: Govt., ILO and UNDP, 2001

Table 7: Poverty Levels by Geographic Region

	Population in situation of poverty (%)	Population in situation of extreme poverty (%)
<b>NATIONAL TOTAL</b>	<b>53.8</b>	<b>15.1</b>
District/Region		
<b>North Region</b>	<b>70.6</b>	<b>26.7</b>
Lembá	76.6	29.6
Lobato	66.4	24.7
<b>Central Region</b>	<b>46.4</b>	<b>10.8</b>
Água Grande	39.4	7.4
Mé-Zochi	59.8	16.7
<b>South Region</b>	<b>65.1</b>	<b>19.3</b>
Cantagalo	58.6	9.9
Cauê	82.2	43.9
<b>Príncipe Region</b>	<b>60.1</b>	<b>18.8</b>
Gender		
<b>Men</b>	<b>52.9</b>	<b>14.9</b>
<b>Women</b>	<b>55.7</b>	<b>15.6</b>

Source: ICV, 2000

Table 8: Primary Education and Visits to the PMI

Indicator	Year			
	1986/87	1987/1988	1988/1989	1989/1990
Crude Primary Education Rate	154.2	148.7	140.4	131.4
Number of visits to the PMI	1987	1988	1989	1990
	-	47,439	41,902	33,415

Source: Ministry of Health, Statistical Bulletin – M. Demeocq and J. Mathonnat, "Poverty and Adjustment in Sao Tome and Principe", CERDI, 1991

Table 9: Inequalities in Access to Health Services, Sanitation and Energy (2000)

	Coverage of health services (%)	Coverage of drinking water services (%)	Coverage of sewerage services (%)	Coverage of electricity services (%)
<b>NATIONAL TOTAL</b>	<b>79.6</b>	<b>73.8</b>	<b>30.3</b>	<b>52.4</b>
<b>District/Region</b>				
North Region	70.3	83.1	23.3	41.8
Lemba	68.5	97.1	28.3	49.4
Lobata	72.1	72.2	19.6	36.1
Central Region	79.8	73.3	35.6	62.0
Água Grande	74.7	90.2	44.9	68.6
Mé-Zochi	89.3	50.1	22.8	52.9
South Region	76.1	77.3	21.1	34.0
Cantagalo	74.8	83.0	18.7	39.1
Caué	78.3	66.9	25.3	24.3
Príncipe Region	94.8	44.4	23.0	35.9
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	81.8			
Female	77.8			

Source: ICV, 2000

Table 10: Primary Education (Grades 1 through 4) - Frequencies by sex and district

District	2000/2001				2002/2003			
	MF	M	F	%F	MF	M	F	%F
Água Grande	8938	4534	4404	49,3	8755	4555	4200	48,0
Mezochi	5483	2911	2572	46,9	5510	2886	2624	47,6
Lobata	2354	1230	1124	47,7	2388	1243	1145	47,9
Lembá	1605	844	761	47,4	1827	944	883	48,3
Cantagalo	2003	1051	952	47,5	1984	1044	940	47,4
Caué	962	528	434	45,1	1049	551	498	47,5
Principe	919	477	442	48,1	978	480	498	50,9
National Total	22264	11575	10689	48,0	22491	11703	10788	48,0

Source: Ministry of Education and Culture

Table 11: Grades 5 through 8 – Frequencies by sex

District	2000/2001				2002/2003			
	MF	M	F	%F	MF	M	F	%F
Água Grande	8938	4534	4404	49.3	8755	4555	4200	48.0
Mezochi	5483	2911	2572	46.9	5510	2886	2624	47.6
Lobata	2354	1230	1124	47.7	2388	1243	1145	47.9
Lemba	1605	844	761	47.4	1827	944	883	48.3
Cantagalo	2003	1051	952	47.5	1984	1044	940	47.4
Caue	962	528	434	45.1	1049	551	498	47.5
Principe	919	477	442	48.1	978	480	498	50.9
National Total	22264	11575	10689	48.0	22491	11703	10788	48.0

Source: Ministry of Education and Culture

Table 12: Pre-University Education (Grades 9 through 11) – Frequencies by sex

Classe	2001/2002				2002/2003			
	MF	M	F	%F	MF	M	F	%F
9 <sup>a</sup>	2147	1022	1125	52,4	1358	654	694	51,1
10 <sup>a</sup>	550	291	259	47,2	440	251	189	43,0
11 <sup>a</sup>	734	450	284	38,7	814	441	373	45,8
Total	3431	1763	1668	48,6	2612	1346	1256	48,1

Source: Ministry of Education and Culture, 2003

Table 13: Higher Education (ISP) – Frequencies by sex

School year	M	F	MF	%F
2000/2001	116	64	180	35,6%
2002/2003	191	126	317	39,7%

Source: Ministry of Education and Culture, 2003

Table 14: Net enrollment in primary education by region\*

	Male	Female	Total
National	67.9	69.1	68.5
North	67.0	67.8	67.4
Central	68.4	69.4	68.9
South	70.8	68.6	69.8
Principe	61.8	69.7	65.7

\*These estimates take ages 7 to 12 years old as the official age for primary education

Source: Ministry of Education and Culture, 2003

Table 15: Net enrollment in lower secondary education by region\*

	Male	Female	Total
National	34.9	35.9	35.4
North	22.3	26.4	24.3
Central	38.7	38.6	38.6
South**	11.1	6.1	9.0
Principe	44.3	47.6	45.6

\*These estimates take ages 12 to 16 years old as the official age for lower secondary education.

\*\*The limited number of children in lower secondary education in this region does not allow the conclusion that there are important gender differences in lower secondary enrollment.

Source: Ministry of Education and Culture, 2003

Table 16: Net enrollment in upper secondary education by region\*

	Male	Female	Total
National	9.0	6.8	7.9
North**	6.0	3.5	4.8
Central	9.4	8.0	8.7
South**	7.1	0.0	2.9
Principe**	12.1	4.4	8.9

\*These estimates take ages 15 to 17 years old as the official age for upper secondary education.

\*\* The limited number of children in upper secondary education in this region does not allow the conclusion that there are important gender differences in upper secondary enrollment.

Source: Multi- Indicator Cluster Survey, UNICEF, 2004

Table 17: Net enrollment in primary school by wealth quintile: North region\*

	Male	Female	Total
Poorest	66.7	66.7	66.7
Second	59.7	68.8	64.3
Third	75.9	72.2	74.4
Fourth	62.9	66.7	64.6
Richest**	73.7	61.9	67.5

\*These estimates take ages 7 to 12 years old as the official age for primary education.

\*\*The limited number of children when disaggregated by gender and wealth quintile does not allow the conclusion that there are important gender differences in primary school enrollment

Source: Multi- Indicator Cluster Survey, UNICEF, 2004

Table 18: Net enrollment in primary school by wealth quintile: South region\*

	Male**	Female**	Total
Poorest	60.0	16.7	47.6
Second	68.0	72.0	70.0
Third	75.0	70.0	72.7
Fourth	100.0	100.0	100.0
Richest	75.0	66.7	72.7

\*These estimates take ages 7 to 12 years old as the official age for primary education.

\*\*The limited number of children when disaggregated by gender and wealth quintile does not allow the conclusion that there are important gender differences in primary school enrollment.

Source: Multi- Indicator Cluster Survey, UNICEF, 2004

Table 19: Net enrollment in primary school by wealth quintile: Principe region:

	Male**	Female**	Total
Poorest	75.0	25.0	58.3
Second	52.2	80.8	67.4
Third	57.1	55.6	56.3
Fourth	60.0	60.0	60.0
Richest	76.9	85.6	80.8

\*These estimates take ages 7 to 12 years old as the official age for primary education.

\*\*The limited number of children when disaggregated by gender and wealth quintile does not allow the conclusion that there are important gender differences in primary school enrollment.

Source: Multi- Indicator Cluster Survey, UNICEF, 2004

Table 20: Literacy Rates, Adults aged 15 to 24 years

Literacy rates: adults aged 15 to 24 years	1991	1999	2001
Total (MF)	93,9%	80,7%	94%
Men	95,8%	81,6%	94,7%
Women	92,0%	79,8%	93,4%

Source: Ministry of Education and Culture

Table 21: Adult Literacy Rates by Sex and Age Group, Sao Tome and Principe, 2000

Age group	Literacy rates		
	Men	Women	Total
15-24	95.0	91.8	93.3
25-34	97.7	90.9	93.9
35-44	92.4	70.4	80.5
45-54	92.2	48.1	67.3
55-64	76.1	26.0	48.8
65+	23.3	19.4	34.9

Source: Multi- Indicator Cluster Survey, UNICEF, 2004



Table 22: Public Health Institutions per Number of Inhabitants

Districts	Male	Female	Hospitals	Health Centers	Health Posts	Community Posts
ÁGUA GRANDE	24,931	26,690	1	2	5	0
MÉ-ZOCHI	17,065	17,407	0	1	6	3
CANTAGALO	6,643	6,545	0	1	4	10
CAUÊ	3,129	2,670	0	1	2	4
LEMBÁ	5,538	5,182	0	1	2	18
LOBATA	7,743	7,418	0	1	3	12
R. PRÍNCIPE	3,086	2,891	1	1	1	4
TOTAL	68,135	68,803	2	8	23	51

Source: Ministry of Health, 2001

Table 23: Family Planning Coverage

Year	Água Grande	Mé-Zochi	Lobata	Cantagalo	Lemba	Cauê	Pague	Births in Health Centers
1999	25.6%	12.2%	14.1%	15.1%	18.2%	11.2%	29.6%	52%
2000	25%	14%	12.8%	16.6%	19.8%	12.5%	29.2%	58%
2001	24.7%	19.2%	19.2%	20%	24.8%	22.6%	30.1%	68%
2002	34%	21%	20.8%	24.8%	27.2%	25.2%	38.8%	75%

Source: Ministry of Health, 2001

Table 24: Pre-natal Care

Year	Água Grande	Mé-Zochi	Lobata	Cantagalo	Lemba	Cauê	Pague
1999	70.4%	59.7%	42.1%	75.1%	78.4%	75%	49.3%
2000	65.4%	70.1%	63.8%	78%	87.1%	75.6%	52.7%
2001	91.3%	72.4%	66.7%	83.6%	86.8%	117.8%	98%
2002	95.6%	82%	82.8%	91.7%	94%	94.2%	73%

Source: Ministry of Health, 2001

Table 25: Post-natal Care

Year	A. Grande	Mé-Zochi	Lobata	Cantagalo	Lemba	Cauê	Pague
1999	49.2%	22.7%	21.8%	23%	25%	26.9%	40.5%
2000	48.2%	22.6%	23.5%	32.7%	26.4%	28.8%	45.9%
2001	46.9%	39.6%	26.3%	45.6%	34.3%	27.3%	62.1%
2002	111.2%	53%	53.3%	76.7%	83.8%	64.2%	105.7%

Source: Ministry of Health, 2001

Table 26: Infant Health - 1<sup>st</sup> visit

Year	A.Grande	M. Zochi	Lobata	Cantagalo	Lemba	Cauê	Pague
1999	90.1%	69.2%	54.4%	85.6%	76.4%	85.5%	72.5%
2000	82%	87.4%	71.1%	97.9%	102.1%	88.1%	66.4%
2001	91.3%	72.4%	66.7%	83.6%	86.8%	117.8%	98%
2002	109%	84.2%	83.1%	96.8%	124.7%	88.1%	100%

Source: Ministry of Health

Table 27: Women's Participation in Political Office

Positions	1987			1991			1994			2002/2003		
	Total	Women	%	Total	Women	%	Total	Women	%	Total	Women	%
President of the Assembly	1	1	100	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
Parliamentary Leaders	1	0	0	3	1	33	3	1	33	4	0	0
Ambassadors	5	1	20	5	0	0	5	0	0	5	1	20
Presidents of Trade Unions	1	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0
Presidents of District Chambers	7	0	0	7	0	0	7	1	14.3	7	1	14.3

Source: National Center for Administrative Reform

Table 28: Women's Participation in Government

Year	Total	Men	Women	% of Women
1987	13	12	1	7.7
1991	14	12	2	16.7
1994	13	12	1	7.7
2002	13	8	5	38.5
2003	13	10	3	30

Source: National Center for Administrative Reform

Table 29: Women's Participation in Parliament

	1991		1994		1999		2002	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Total number of deputies	55	100	55	100	55	100	55	100
Female deputies	7	12.7	3	5.4	5	9	5	9
Alternate female deputies	-	-	5	9	9	16.3	10	18

Source: National Assembly

## **Annex 2. Prime Minister's Opening Speech at Gender Workshop**

Most Excellent Members of the Government,  
Distinguished guests,  
Your Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is with great pleasure that I preside over the opening of this Gender Evaluation Seminar for São Tomé e Príncipe.

I greet you all, renewing my wishes that 2004 be a year of achievements conducive to the improvement of our condition of citizens of a world one wishes to be fairer, with more solidarity and more favorable to the actualization of a fuller citizenship for all.

This seminar is one of our country's first events in 2004 and may be a sign of a different year for a large part of our population who, to this day, suffer various forms of discrimination.

For this reason, I ask that your conclusions be written into our collective agenda for the year ahead.

Your Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am particularly pleased to take the floor in the opening session because this is about highlighting the role women must take on in our development process, regardless of the realm in question.

Actually, the collective undertaking of developing São Tomé e Príncipe cannot leave reserved areas of participation as a result of gender.

Despite undeniable advances in terms of women's rights, a reality illustrated by my presence as Head of Government at this event, we believe it is a matter of consensus that such advances do not permit any slackening on our part with regard to gender issues.

Your Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The struggle for equal rights, duties, privileges and responsibilities between men and women is a struggle of our times, a necessity and an imperative for any and every society that aims to ensure a sustained development within a democratic framework, where freedom is one of everybody's shared values.

The road ahead is still very long.

We must pay close attention to the issues which arise from women's growing participation in every sphere of life, so that we may have a society that is fairer, freer, more egalitarian and, as a result, more developed.

Combating every form of discrimination has come to constitute a growing concern on the part of the Government.

Efforts in this direction have been made, and the Government feels particularly comforted and expresses its unequivocal support to this initiative, which seeks to evaluate the gender situation in

São Tomé e Príncipe and recommends the most adequate measures to confront the problems identified.

To carry out this grandiose work, we would like to be able to count on the contributions and initiatives of civil society so that we may all converge onto our objective.

Your Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Not long ago, to speak of equal rights, privileges and responsibilities between men and women was considered feministic and therefore understood as uncalled-for or inconvenient.

We live in a world that is undergoing deep changes. World Bank bodies charged with studying, evaluating and pointing to routes that may facilitate the efforts of developing countries have arrived at the conclusion that the discrimination and inequalities of which women are the victims limit, distort and retard the march to development. This means they must be removed as rapidly as possible.

In this context, we must recognize and thank the World Bank's valuable contribution to this collective effort.

Given that the gender issue cuts across the whole of the action of government, I cannot but express my unequivocal support for this initiative that aims to study, evaluate and give clues towards an integrated approach that may free up the transformative and creative potential that will result from an adequate treatment of this question.

Our country's rich history, the true mosaic of cultures we are today, the absence of any structured or institutionalized forms of discrimination of an ethnic, racial, religious or other nature, position us in a privileged situation to carry through in a successful and exemplary fashion this orientation that emanates from the international bodies responsible for evaluating, monitoring and following up the world's development efforts.

Your Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

In September 2000 in New York, rich and poor countries committed themselves to working together to reduce poverty and hunger in the world. This joint effort pre-supposes concrete actions on the part both of richer countries and of less developed ones.

São Tomé e Príncipe and its Government are a part of this struggle, having defined a National Poverty Reduction Strategy.

We must recognize, however, that in countries such as ours where poverty affects such a large percentage of the population, the incidence of discrimination and inequalities is more serious.

Studies carried out in this field show that the more isolated or distant a region, the greater the incidence of poverty. In parallel to this, discrimination and inequality tend to be more serious, substantially worsening these populations' access to the basic goods they need for the improvement of their living conditions.

This vicious cycle must be broken with adequate policies and investments that create the conditions of access to these goods and services, so as to increase the number of opportunities available to women and youngsters, especially girls.

Hence, we make a commitment to do everything to ensure that the results and recommendations of the report that comes out of this seminar be duly articulated with the Plan of Action of the National Poverty Reduction Strategy, so that we may achieve as rapidly and effectively as possible the reduction of poverty and the elimination of discrimination, with a view to sustainable development.

At the same time, for this process to be successful it is essential that, as well as the demonstrated political will for the introduction of the necessary changes, one structures and organizes the action around at least three fundamental axes:

A reform of institutions so as to ensure equality from the legal point of view;

An economic development that encourages greater participation of women;

Measures that confront the inequalities in the distribution of resources.

Dear participants,

Your cooperation is precious inasmuch as each of you will bring your contribution for the enrichment of the debate around what may later be integrated into a strategy whose aim is equality between the sexes in our country.

We are perfectly aware that it will not be an easy task, for we are dealing with deep-rooted habits and attitudes that will need to change.

But times are of change. And women have, above all, History as their witness: only by fighting with perseverance has it been possible to change a world built on paradigms that designated an inferior role for women.

Only the struggle has allowed women to increase their spaces of intervention and affirmation with a view to actual human gender equality.

In conclusion, I would like to wish you success in your work, in the hope that this seminar will be a space for exchanges and enrichment about such a complex and difficult issue, but one on which we can triumph if we all want to. And because I am sure we all want to, I am sure we can.

Let us all get to work.

Thus, I declare open the Seminar on “Evaluation of the Gender Situation in São Tomé e Príncipe”.

I thank you all very much.

### **Annex 3. Prime Minister's Closing Remarks at Gender Workshop**

Most Excellent Madam, the World Bank Consultant for the gender issue,  
Illustrious participants,  
Dear guests,  
Your Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

And so we reach the end of our work, considering that another stage has been achieved in this long road ahead of us.

We believe that the goals underpinning this event have been reached.

As was said during the Opening Ceremony, the Seminar aimed to evaluate the gender situation in São Tomé e Príncipe and identify the most adequate measures to face up to the problems at hand.

We are very much aware that the job that lies ahead is colossal. However, in a way the task will have been made easier since we know which tracks to go along.

From the content of the presentations it is possible to confirm that the gender evaluation of São Tomé e Príncipe offers one the general dimension of the problem.

At the economic level:

The activities carried out by women are essentially of survival, of greater instability and worse remuneration.

At the political level:

Women's political representation is scarce and subject to oscillation.

The factors conditioning their political participation are individual, such as the upbringing of children, the management of domestic activities and insufficient education for political and public life. But these also result from the organization of political life dominated by an essentially male set of party activities.

At the social level:

Women are the element of cohesion and continuity in the family unit, and most of the time all the duties of the home fall on their shoulders.

It is crystal clear that the relationship between the male and female system produces relations of domination that, at the outset, place women on a secondary plane. This is reflected in inequalities in access to the labor market, to education, resources, income and social and political participation.

In our view, the justification for this situation rests mainly in ideological conceptions about sexual stratification and the respective roles.

Above all, one must take into account the fact that the visibility of the gender issue is influenced by the degree of development and specificity of the political, economic, social and cultural context.

To sum up, in all the contributions presented, the need to recognize the importance of women in the process of development was made evident.

It is necessary to emphasize that the changes we advocate in favor of the affirmation of women in São Tomé e Príncipe can only take place in an environment of political and economic stability.

We must urgently part with a whole series of consolidated habits, prejudices, routines and bad behaviors.

Your Excellencies,

The contribution of the family and civil society is truly important in the formation of a new mentality in which women cease to be considered the weaker, and therefore less favored and affronted sex.

The family as an anticipatory and primary socializing agent plays a crucial role in this process of social learning. Equally, schools and other institutions (such as churches) may come to have much influence in the implementation of an education geared to gender equality.

Hence, re-thinking gender roles in education will be a necessary condition for the emergence of an awareness of difference in equality.

Still on the question of schooling, it is necessary to develop a differential pedagogy that values the social meaning of learning and that allows for the management of differences within a group. It is necessary to introduce new guidelines for teaching practices in line with this differential pedagogy that some authors call “gender pedagogy”.

Equally, children constitute interesting sources of information for identifying representations associated with gender, assuming these influence children’s personal and social development.

Dear participants,

The poverty associated with the phenomenon of globalization has lately made us get to know new forms of being in society that in no way contribute to the good image of our young women and force us to coexist with scenes that are highly degrading to the human person.

So as to reduce the inequalities present in our social universe, one must urgently define gender policies that see to the introduction of specific programs in support of women's social and professional integration.

At a legal level, lawmakers should from now on take into account the gender dimension in every sphere of activity and consider difference no longer as a factor of discrimination but of value-adding.

Hence, there arises the need to legally identify certain formerly unknown outrageous behaviors now in existence in our country and toughen up punishment for certain crimes.

Your Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We renew our commitment to do everything possible to ensure that the results and recommendations of this seminar be duly articulated with the Plan of Action of the National Poverty Reduction Strategy. We are convinced that this goal also constitutes an indispensable condition for the country's development.

We wish to thank all those who made themselves available to make a contribution and to emphasize our pledge as a Government to the implementation of a gender strategy in São Tomé e Príncipe.

A word of esteem goes to the World Bank, which guided the holding of this seminar. Our acknowledgement is extensive to the National Consultant and to the speakers for the diligence and professionalism they demonstrated.

Thus, I declare closed the Seminar on "Evaluation of the Gender Situation in São Tomé e Príncipe".

Thank you very much.



#### **Annex 4. Gender Workshop Program**

##### **Day 1            06 January 2004**

- 8.30 am            **Arrival of guests**
- 8.40 am            **Arrival of representatives of Official Organizations**
- 8.40 am            **Arrival of Her Excellency the Prime Minister and Head of Government**
- 9.00 am            **Presentation by the consultant of the Seminar's objectives**
- 9.20 am            **Speech by Dr. Maria do Carmo Trovoada, Governor of the Central Bank and President of the Saotomean Women's Forum**
- 9.35 am            **Opening speech by Her Excellency the Prime Minister and Head of Government, Dr. Maria das Neves**
- 9.55 am            **Close of Opening Session**
- 10.00 am           **Start of Plenary Session – Methodological orientation**
- 10.05 am           **Presentation of Politico-Institutional themes:**  
 Legal Framework  
 Participation in Decision-making Centers
- Debate**
- 11.35 am           **Coffee break**
- 11.50 am           **Presentation of Education themes:**  
 Gender equality in schooling and the barriers to girls' involvement with school  
 Evaluation of Higher Education potential in Sao Tome and Principe
- Debate**
- 1.20 pm            **Lunch**
- 3.00 pm            **Second Plenary Session – Presentation of Health themes:**  
 Institutional Context  
 Reproductive Health
- Debate**
- 4.30 pm            **Coffee break**

4.45 pm Presentation of themes on the Economy:  
The Sao Tome and Principe Production System and the opportunities for  
men's and women's participation  
Socio-economic roles and participation in the market and domestic  
economies

**Debate**

6.15 pm – Close

**Day 2      07 January 2004**

8.30 am      **Group discussions**

Group 1      Politico-Institutional context  
Group 2      Education  
Group 3      Health  
Group 4      Economy

10.30 am      **Third Plenary Session** – Presentation of group work summaries

**Debate**

4.00 pm      **Closing Session**  
Presentation of Conclusions and Recommendations  
Words of thanks from the participants' spokesperson  
Words of thanks from the consultant  
Final speech by Dr. Elsa Teixeira Pinto, Secretary of State for  
Administrative Reform

### Annex 5. Gender Workshop List of Participants

№	NAMES	INSTITUTIONS	PRESENCES
1	GUILHERME NETO	PRESID. DA REPÚBLICA	2 days
2	ANA PAULA ALVIM	MNEC	2 days
3	SÓNIA SEQUEIRA	MNEC	2 days + rapporteur
4	FRANCISCO FERNANDES	MNEC	1 day
5	FILIFE MONIZ	MPF-DPE	1 day
6	MARIA ODETE AGUIAR	MPF-DPE	2days
7	ILÍDIO MENEZES	MPF-DPE	2 days
8	ARMELINDA PEREIRA	MPF-INE	2 days
9	LEONEL MÁRIO D'ALVA	MPF-DLP	2 days + facilitator
10	AGOSTINHO SOUSA	MEC	2 days
11	MARIA DE FÁTIMA DAIO	MEC	2 days
12	HORÁCIO SANTIAGO	MIN.JUSTIÇA	2 days
13	FILOMENA FERNANDES	MIN.JUSTI-PIC	2 days
14	CAMÉLIA BARROS	MIN. SAÚDE	2 days
15	MARIA CRISTO CARVALHO	MIN. IND.COMÉRCIO E T.	2 days
16	ABENILDE PIRES SANTOS	MIN. IND. COMÉRCIO E T	1 day
17	ARISTIDES BARROS	MIN. IND. COMÉRCIO E T.	2 days + rapporteur
18	OLAVIO ANÍBAL	MIN. AGRICULTURA DRP	2 days
19	ARGENTINO PIRES SANTOS	MIN. AGRICULTURA DRP	1 day
20	HELDER PINTO	MIN. AGRICULTURA DRP	1 day
21	LÍGIA BARROS	MIN. RECURSOS N. E A	2 days
22	TEOTÓNIO MENEZES	COMUNIC. SOCIAL	2 days
23	COSTA NETO	COMUNIC.SOCIAL	2 days
24	SÍLVIO ANDRÉ NETO DIAS	MIN TRAB.ES.	2 days
25	CRISTINA DIAS	MICONDO	2 days
26	JOÃO SOUSA P. TAVARES	MICONDO	2 days
27	ALDA VERA CRUZ	GAB.MULHER	2 days+ facilitator
28	MARIA CUSTÓDIA TINY	GAB.MULHER	2 days
29	MARIA DO ROSÁRIO BARROS	FORUM-MULHE	2 days+ facilitator
30	ESTER WILL	FORUM-MULHE	2 days+ rapporteur
31	EURÍDICE VAZ	FORUM-MULHE	2 days+ rapporteur
32	FERNANDO VARELA	FONG-STP	2 days
33	EMÍDIO DOS SANTOS PEREIRA	AJSTE	2 days
34	FERNANDO PONTES	SINEP	2 days
35	CARLOS TINY	MÃE SANTOME	2 days+ facilitator
36	MANUEL SACRAMENTO	UPDE	2 days
37	JOSÉ ADRIANO DAS NEVES	UPDE	2 days
38	BENEDITO DIAS	UPDE	2 days
39	ANA MARIA AMADO TORRES	AMESTP	2 days
40	CLYONDES CARVALHO	ISP	2 days
41	YOLANDA AGUIAR		1 day
42	IVETE SOARES SALVADOR	SPRS	2 days
43	TEODORICO CAMPOS	FNAPA	2 days
44	COSME RITA	CCIAS	2 days

Nº	NAMES	INSTITUTIONS	PRESENCES
45	FERNANDO PONTES	SINEP	2 days
46	EMÍDIO PEREIRA	AJSTE	2 days
47	ALDA BOA MORTE	UGT-STP	2 days
48	ALBERTO LOLA	CÂM-LOBATA	2 days
49	AILSÁ VARELA AMARAL	PTS	2 days
50	AGREPINA SOARES RAMOS	PTS	2 days
51	HERMÍNIO RODRIGUES	STE	2 days
52	HOMERO BANDEIRA	JORNAL PARVO	2 days
53	CORA PINTO	AMEP-STP	2 days
54	MA. SACRAMENTO QUARESMA	UPDE	1 day
55	PAULA NAZARÉ F. BARROS	ONTSTEP	1 day

## Annex 6. Country at a Glance

	Sao Tomé and Príncipe	Sub- Saharan Africa	Low- income		
<b>POVERTY and SOCIAL</b>					
<b>2002</b>					
Population, mid-year (millions)	0.15	688	2,495		
GNI per capita (Atlas method, US\$)	290	450	430		
GNI (Atlas method, US\$ billions)	0.04	306	1,072		
<b>Average annual growth, 1996-02</b>					
Population (%)	2.2	2.4	1.9		
Labor force (%)	..	2.5	2.3		
<b>Most recent estimate (latest year available, 1996-02)</b>					
Poverty (% of population below national poverty line)	..	..	..		
Urban population (% of total population)	48	33	30		
Life expectancy at birth (years)	66	46	59		
Infant mortality (per 1,000 live births)	53	105	81		
Child malnutrition (% of children under 5)	..	..	..		
Access to an improved water source (% of population)	..	58	76		
Illiteracy (% of population age 15+)	..	37	37		
Gross primary enrollment (% of school-age population)	..	86	95		
Male	..	92	103		
Female	..	80	87		
<b>KEY ECONOMIC RATIOS and LONG-TERM TRENDS</b>					
	1982	1992	2001	2002	
GDP (US\$ billions)	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	
Gross domestic investment/GDP	16.8	38.8	49.9	44.0	
Exports of goods and services/GDP	22.7	22.4	38.1	37.5	
Gross domestic savings/GDP	-11.3	-28.1	2.0	-14	
Gross national savings/GDP	-11.0	-29.3	8.2	6.6	
Current account balance/GDP	-47.4	..	-45.6	..	
Interest payments/GDP	0.8	18	4.0	5.2	
Total debt/GDP	72.0	417.0	665.8	725.5	
Total debt service/exports	19.0	24.5	212	32.5	
Present value of debt/GDP	..	..	213.1	..	
Present value of debt/exports	..	..	529.1	..	
	1982-92	1992-02	2001	2002	2002-06
<i>(average annual growth)</i>					
GDP	1.8	2.1	3.0	3.0	..
GDP per capita	-1.1	-0.2	0.9	0.9	..

**Development diamond\***

Life expectancy

GNI per capita

Gross primary enrollment

Access to improved water source

— Sao Tome and Principe

- - - Low-income group

**Economic ratios\***

Trade

Domestic savings

Investment

Indebtedness

— Sao Tome and Principe

- - - Low-income group

	1982	1992	2001	2002
<b>STRUCTURE of the ECONOMY</b>				
<i>(% of GDP)</i>				
Agriculture	27.6	26.4	20.0	20.0
Industry	17.9	19.6	17.0	17.0
Manufacturing	..	6.4	4.2	4.1
Services	54.5	53.9	63.0	63.0
Private consumption	77.1	96.6	68.5	77.0
General government consumption	34.2	31.5	29.5	24.4
Imports of goods and services	50.8	89.3	86.1	82.9
	1982-92	1992-02	2001	2002
<i>(average annual growth)</i>				
Agriculture	4.6	3.1	2.7	3.1
Industry	0.9	2.1	4.2	4.3
Manufacturing	0.5	1.8	2.7	3.0
Services	0.7	1.5	2.8	2.5
Private consumption	28.2	-7.1	38.0	11.0
General government consumption	-17.0	7.2	-6.4	2.8
Gross domestic investment	0.6	7.7	18.2	0.3
Imports of goods and services	3.1	14	23.8	7.1

**Growth of investment and GDP (%)**

80

40

0

-20

97 98 99 00 01 02

— GDI

— GDP

**Growth of exports and imports (%)**

40

20

0

-20

-40

97 98 99 00 01 02

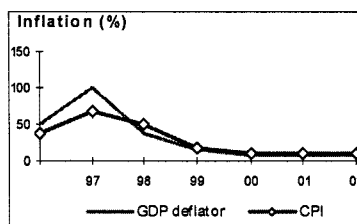
— Exports

— Imports

## Sao Tome and Principe

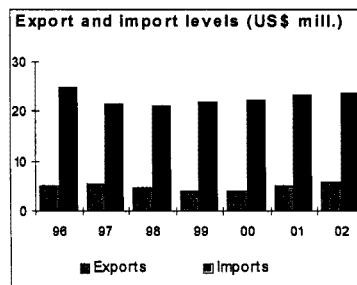
## PRICES and GOVERNMENT FINANCE

	1982	1992	2001	2002
<b>Domestic prices</b>				
<i>(% change)</i>				
Consumer prices	..	27.3	9.8	9.8
Implicit GDP deflator	..	26.0	8.6	6.8
<b>Government finance</b>				
<i>(% of GDP, includes current grants)</i>				
Current revenue	..	20.2	27.1	29.8
Current budget balance	..	-10.0	-11	2.9
Overall surplus/deficit	..	-50.8	-49.2	-45.5



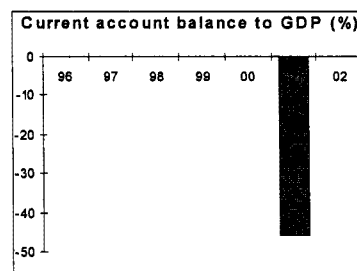
## TRADE

	1982	1992	2001	2002
<i>(US\$ millions)</i>				
Total exports (fob)	..	5	5	6
Cocoa	..	4	3	4
Copra	..	0	..	..
Manufactures	..	..	..	..
Total imports (cif)	..	28	23	24
Food	..	6	5	6
Fuel and energy	..	3	4	3
Capital goods	..	9	13	14
Export price index (1995=100)	..	73	50	55
Import price index (1995=100)	..	91	84	87
Terms of trade (1995=100)	..	80	59	63



## BALANCE of PAYMENTS

	1982	1992	2001	2002
<i>(US\$ millions)</i>				
Exports of goods and services	11	10	18	19
Imports of goods and services	37	41	40	43
Resource balance	-26	-30	-23	-23
Net income	0	-5	-4	-4
Net current transfers	0	4	8	8
Current account balance	-25	..	-21	..
Financing items (net)	22	..	27	..
Changes in net reserves	2	0	-5	-3
<b>Memo:</b>				
Reserves including gold (US\$ millions)	..	..	18	21
Conversion rate (DEC, local/US\$)	410	320.0	8,842.1	9,088.3



## EXTERNAL DEBT and RESOURCE FLOWS

	1982	1992	2001	2002
<i>(US\$ millions)</i>				
Total debt outstanding and disbursed	38	190	313	364
IBRD	0	0	0	0
IDA	0	34	61	66
Total debt service	2	3	4	6
IBRD	0	0	0	0
IDA	0	0	0	0
Composition of net resource flows				
Official grants	4	23	14	..
Official creditors	8	23	7	28
Private creditors	0	0	0	0
Foreign direct investment	0	0	6	..
Portfolio equity	0	0	0	..
World Bank program				
Commitments	0	27	0	0
Disbursements	0	6	5	1
Principal repayments	0	0	0	0

