

PRAYING FOR THE WORLD ONE COUNTRY AT A TIME

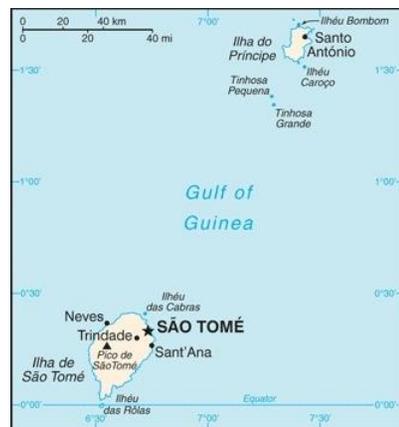
“God so loved the world...” shouldn't we?

Sao Tome & Principe

Information compiled by Ai Elgersma

July 4, 2021

Source: CIA World Factbook; Britannica.com



CAPITAL: Sao Tome

LOCATION: Central Africa, islands in the Gulf of Guinea, just north of the Equator, west of Gabon

Population: 213,948

Overview: Sao Tome and Principe consists of two main islands—Sao Tome and Principe—and several rocky islets. Portugal discovered and colonized the uninhabited islands in the late 15th century, setting up a sugar-based economy that gave way to coffee and cocoa in the 19th century - all grown with African plantation slave labor, a form of which lingered into the 20th century. While independence was achieved in 1975, democratic reforms were not instituted until the late 1980s. The country held its first free elections in 1991, but frequent internal wrangling between the various political parties precipitated repeated changes in leadership and four failed, non-violent coup attempts.

Residents of the country are mostly descendants of slaves, contract laborers from Angola, Mozambique, Cabo Verde and their descendants.

Economy: Sao Tome and Principe's economy has historically been dependent on agriculture. It is endowed with excellent conditions for tropical agriculture. The growing season is long, the volcanic soils are fertile, and there is no lack of water. However, large areas of plantation land have been poorly maintained since independence. Cocoa, despite decreasing production, still accounts for almost all foreign exchange earnings. The country is reputed to be the recipient of one of the highest amounts of foreign aid per capita in the world, but this has not prevented large deficits.

Despite some improvements in education and access to healthcare, Sao Tome and Principe has much to do to decrease its high poverty rate, create jobs, and increase its economic growth. Its youthful age structure – more than 60% of the population is under the age of 25 – and high fertility rate ensure future population growth.

Religion: Catholic 55.7%, Adventist 4.1%, Assembly of God 3.4%, New Apostolic 2.9%, Mana 2.3%, Universal Kingdom of God 2%, Jehovah's Witness 1.2%, other 6.2%, none 21.2%, unspecified 1%

Natural Resources and Environment: The country's climate is basically maritime and tropical, but with a wide range of microclimates. The original vegetation of the islands was luxuriant tropical rainforest with a gradual transition from lowland forest to mist forest. Although, much of the original vegetation was destroyed by plantations; the raining is only in the south and west. The flora and fauna include many rare and endemic species, reflecting the isolation of the islands from the Africa mainland.

Prayers of Thanksgiving and petition:

- Sao Tome and Principe is a beautiful Africa country with tropical climate, rainforest, and abundant freshwater from the high volcanic mountains.
- While literacy and primary school attendance have improved in recent years, Sao Tome still struggles to improve its educational quality and to increase its secondary school completion rate
- Sao Tome and Principe's environment is suffering from deforestation and illegal logging, soil erosion and exhaustion. The country has inadequate sewage treatment in cities which further degrades the freshwater supply