

**EXECUTIVE
BOARD
MEETING**

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June 4, 2019

To: Members of the Executive Board

From: The Secretary

Subject: **Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe—Request for a Three-Year Arrangement Under the Extended Credit Facility**

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DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE

REQUEST FOR A THREE-YEAR ARRANGEMENT UNDER THE EXTENDED CREDIT FACILITY

June 4, 2019

KEY ISSUES

Context. São Tomé and Príncipe is a fragile, small island-state, with limited resources and capacity. The last Extended Credit Facility (ECF) arrangement expired at end-2018 amid parliamentary elections and emerging large internal and external imbalances, driven by expansionary fiscal policy and political uncertainties. Growth slowed, inflation accelerated, foreign reserves declined sharply, and some critical structural reforms were delayed. Higher and more inclusive growth is needed to reduce poverty and unemployment and generate future employment opportunities for the large youth population.

A new ECF arrangement. The new authorities who took office following the elections request a new three-year arrangement with SDR 13,320,000 to support their reforms. The program aims to alleviate balance of payment pressures, restore fiscal and external sustainability over the medium term, promote sustainable and inclusive growth, and provide positive signals to stakeholders. Main policy recommendations include:

- *Fiscal policy.* Tighten the domestic primary deficit (DPD) by over 2 percentage points of GDP in 2019 and bring it down further to about 1 percent of GDP over the medium term through revenue mobilization, particularly by expediting the introduction of a VAT. Borrow only on concessional terms and at a measured pace to reduce debt vulnerability. Strengthen public financial management to avoid arrears accumulation and improve public expenditure efficiency.
- *Monetary and financial policy.* Tighten monetary policy to help stem reserve loss and implement the strategy for reducing non-performing loans and measures to improve financial supervision and inclusion.
- *Structural reforms.* Reform state-owned enterprises, particularly the public utility company EMAE, to contain fiscal contingent liabilities. Implement the tourism development strategy and empower women economically to promote inclusive growth.

Risks: Main risks include spending pressure and political fragility. On the upside, timely implementation of large infrastructure projects could accelerate growth. The risks are mitigated by frontloaded actions, including prior actions.

Approved By
David Owen (AFR) and
Kevin Fletcher (SPR)

Discussions were held in São Tomé during March 20 to April 4, 2019. The staff team included Xiangming Li (head), Lisa Kolovich, Gabriel Srour, Torsten Wezel, and Yunhui Zhao (all AFR). María Inés Canales Munoz/Vicky Pilouzoue (AFR) provided administrative support, and Yun Liu; Marwa Ibrahim, Weronika Synak (AFR) provided research support (all from headquarters). Kelvio Carvalho da Silveira (OED) joined the mission. The mission met with the President Evaristo Carvalho; Prime Minister Jorge Bom Jesus; Minister of Planning, Finance, and the Blue Economy Osvaldo Vaz; Minister of Foreign Affairs Elsa Pinto; Minister of Infrastructure Osvaldo Abreu; Governor of the Central Bank Américo Soares De Barros; President of the National Assembly Delfim Neves; President of the Príncipe Autonomous Region José Cassandra; the Parliamentary Economic Commission; other government officials; representatives of the private sector including banks; and development partners.

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CONTEXT

1. São Tomé and Príncipe is a fragile, small island-state with limited resources and capacity. The economy has a very narrow production base and depends heavily on imports and foreign aid. Exports of goods amount to only four percent of GDP. While offshore oil exploration continues, no commercial production is expected in the near term. Tourism, agriculture, and fisheries have potential for growth but require better infrastructure and private-led investment. While tourism grew significantly in recent years, local value-added of the sector is very low due to high import content.

2. The latest Ex-Post Peer Reviewed Assessment found that progress under the 2012-15 and 2015-18 ECF arrangements was limited due to low capacity and policy slippages (Annex I). Overspending, particularly during election years, and large losses by the state-owned utility company EMAE kept public debt high, while a narrow tax base and poor tax administration kept revenue low. The Quantitative Performance Criteria (QPC) on the domestic primary balance (DPD) was missed in six out of seven completed reviews. Growth, averaging four percent during 2012-18, was insufficient to significantly reduce poverty and unemployment, which is disproportionately high for the country's large youth population. Some progress was made on structural reforms; notably, an automatic fuel pricing mechanism, EMAE reform plans, and a tourism strategy were adopted, albeit with delays. A number of other structural reforms however, including the VAT, are pending. Because of low capacity and fragility, some reforms required more than one program cycle to complete. The eventual implementation of some benchmarks of the 2012-15 program during 2015-18 are cases in point. The fragility also requires prioritization and limiting conditionality.

3. Large imbalances emerged in 2018, an election year. Growth slowed to 2.7 percent and inflation accelerated to 9.0 percent, while public overspending significantly raised the fiscal deficit and public debt, contributing to a loss of international reserves of 1.3 months of prospective imports.

4. A new coalition government took office in December 2018 following parliamentary elections. As was often the case in the past, the new government replaced most senior civil servants across public institutions. During 2001-2014, the country saw ten different coalition governments, and a majority government completed its term for the first time in 2014-2018. Frequent government turnovers hindered reforms and growth and contributed to the fragility.

5. The authorities' reform program seeks to restore macroeconomic stability and unlock growth potential. An immediate challenge will be to tighten fiscal and monetary policy to address the external and internal imbalances and to broaden the tax base, including through the introduction of a VAT. The impact of these contractionary policies will be mitigated by the launch of foreign-supported projects, structural reforms to promote inclusive growth, and a World Bank supported program to protect the most vulnerable.

RECENT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

6. Economic growth slowed, and inflation accelerated in 2018. Real growth in 2018 fell by more than one percentage point to 2.7 percent, reflecting lower external inflows, election-related disruptions, and severe power outages in the last quarter due to breakdowns of aging generators. Inflation rose to 9.0 percent at end-2018, up from 7.7 percent at end-2017, driven by higher international oil prices and shortages of local produce affected by changing weather patterns.

7. The fiscal position deteriorated significantly in 2018 (Text Table 1). Domestic revenue was about ½ percent of GDP higher than projected, with tax arrears collection and higher import tax revenue from rising international oil prices partially offset by a fall in direct tax revenue due to the economic slowdown. However, overspending amounted to almost 3.5 percent of GDP, due to unbudgeted increases in personnel and capital spending and failure to cut utility consumption as planned. As a result, the DPD reached 4.1 percent of GDP, 2.8 percent of GDP above the target. Furthermore, some public entities outside the central government were allowed to spend off-budget, effectively loosening the fiscal stance further and raising the public debt by an additional ¾ percent of GDP. Domestic financing and arrears increased accordingly to finance the overspending and to replace €3 million in undisbursed EU budget support because of delays in reform.

Text Table 1. Fiscal Performance 2018
(Percent of GDP)

	2017	2018	
	Actual	5th Rev	Actual
I. Revenue (ex. oil and grants)	13.8	12.5	13.2
Tax revenue	12.7	11.8	12.5
Import taxes	4.8	4.9	5.5
Profit taxes	1.8	1.8	1.1
Personal income taxes	3.0	1.1	2.8
Consumption taxes	1.7	2.5	1.8
Other taxes	1.5	1.4	1.3
Nontax revenue	1.7	2.9	3.0
of which: oil revenue	0.6	2.1	2.4
II. Domestic primary expenditure (ex. capitalization)	16.1	13.9	17.3
Current expenditure	15.8	14.1	16.4
Personnel costs	8.3	7.7	9.1
Interest due	0.5	0.5	0.4
Goods and services	3.1	2.2	3.0
Transfers	2.9	3.0	3.1
Other current expenditure	0.9	0.7	0.8
Capital spending fin. by the Treasury and HIPC-eligible	0.9	0.3	1.5
of which: Capitalization of BIRD	...	...	0.2
III. Domestic primary balance (=I-II) ^{1,2}	-2.4	-1.3	-4.1
Off-budget expenditure	...	...	0.7
Domestic primary balance (incl. off-budget exp.) ^{1,2}	-2.4	-1.3	-4.8
Program target	-2.0	-1.3	-1.3
Memorandum items			
Net change in domestic arrears	0.1	-0.7	0.9
Net bank credit (ex. National Oil Account)	1.3	0.7	2.4

Sources: São Tomé and Príncipe authorities' data and IMF staff estimates.

¹ Excludes oil related revenues, grants, interest earned, scheduled interest payments, capitalization of BIRD, and foreign-financed capital outlays.

² Includes carve out from EU budget support financed investment in 2017 and unidentified spending as measured from financing in 2018.

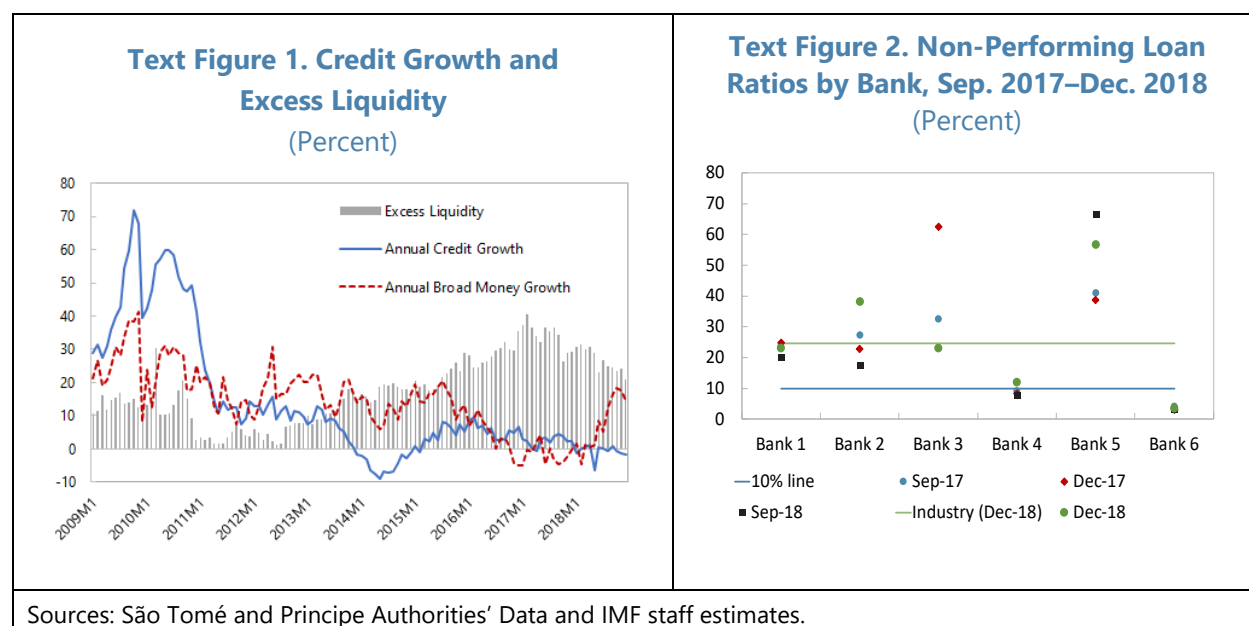
8. Gross international reserves (GIR) fell sharply. The current account deficit narrowed by more than two percentage points to 11.5 percent in 2018, reflecting lower imports due to lower FDI and project loans. Nonetheless, foreign outflows outpaced inflows because of the fiscal expansion, large public outlays, notably for the new central bank building, and the cost of issuing the new redenominated bills.¹ This brought GIR (excluding the oil fund) down by \$16.3 million (1.3 months of prospective imports)

¹ About \$4 million was paid for a new central bank building in 2018. The redenomination of the dobra cost \$1.7 million in 2018 and \$1.1 million in 2017.

to 2.8 months of imports at end-2018, below the IMF LIC reserve adequacy metric of 3.8 months of imports.² Completion of the central bank building is expected to cost approximately an additional \$4.5 million.

9. Credit to the economy contracted. Lending fell by 1.6 percent in 2018, as banks were hesitant to lend while the economy was slowing, and non-performing loans remained high at about 25 percent. A malfunctioning judiciary system has made the banking system ineffective in providing intermediation, as collection on defaulted loans remains difficult. Payment delays by government entities have further impaired suppliers' loan servicing. Banks' balance sheets are also constrained by loan exposures to state-owned enterprises, particularly to loss-making EMAE. Meanwhile, banks' excess liquidity declined in 2018, driven by higher government borrowing, but is still elevated (Text Figures 1 and 2).

10. The banking sector remained unprofitable due to high credit risk and elevated operational costs. Profitability improved but remained negative. Furthermore, the recently-concluded asset quality review (AQR) found widespread loan misclassification, requiring additional provisioning and re-capitalization by some banks, although system-wide capital is adequate at 31 percent of risk-weighted assets.



² The inclusion of the country's oil fund would raise GIR to 4.4 months of imports, and a €25 million credit line with the Bank of Portugal also provides some buffer.

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE IN 2018

11. Performance under the program of 2015-18 unraveled in the fall of 2018, and the last review was not completed. While all end-June performance criteria (PC) and indicative targets were met, except the net international reserves (NIR) PC target (MEFP Table 1), performance deteriorated subsequently. The end-2018 indicative targets for DPD, net bank financing of the central government, and NIR were missed by large margins due to public overspending.

12. Structural reforms were delayed (MEFP Table 2). A VAT law was submitted to parliament in May 2018 but not approved, and the EMAE Management Improvement Plan (MIP) was prepared but not adopted. The new government intends to review the VAT law and resubmit to parliament by June 2019. The submission of a monthly monitoring table of tax payments was uneven. After a delay, EMAE's least cost energy-production plan was adopted in early 2019, partially completing a structural benchmark. The re-formulated benchmark on the completion of the inception report on the asset quality review (AQR) report was met, and the final report was completed in April 2019 instead of the initial target of end-2017. Meanwhile, the tourism development strategy was launched. The authorities pointed out that the delays in implementing reforms partly reflected their development partners' lengthy procedures.

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK AND RISKS

13. The economy is projected to recover gradually from last year's slowdown. GDP growth is projected to rise slightly to 3 percent in 2019 and reach 4.5 percent over the medium term, as externally-financed projects start after a long preparation period and reforms at EMAE enable more reliable and cheaper power supply. With feasibility studies now completed, road construction supported by the World Bank will begin later this year, and a Chinese grant-financed airport expansion will start early next year.³ Inflation is projected to decline to 6 percent by end-2019 and ease to 3 percent in the medium term, reflecting the recovery of local food production from bad weather, expected lower oil prices and energy costs, and fiscal and monetary tightening.

14. São Tomé and Príncipe is classified in debt distress due to long-standing external arrears, but the debt level is sustainable over the medium term under the program. The risk to this baseline under the program is significant, and the large arrears of EMAE to its supplier also reflect the severe liquidity constraints of the public sector. The authorities have been in discussions with Angola, Brazil, and Equatorial Guinea to regularize the outstanding external arrears, and with Nigeria over a disputed loan. The government's arrears to ENCO due to past oil price subsidies were regularized in 2016. Debt sustainability analysis (DSA) shows that the external and total public and publicly guaranteed (PPG) debts (the latter including EMAE's arrears to the oil supplier), are

³ The World Bank road project is financed by \$29 million in grants. The EIB is working with the Dutch government on a Road Rehabilitation and Coastal Protection project with €12.5 million in concessional loans from the EIB and a €12.5 million grant from the Netherlands. The airport expansion focuses on extending the runway and improving the safety of the airport, with the size of the project still to be defined.

sustainable in the medium term under the program. All external PPG debt ratios remain well below the high-risk thresholds throughout the baseline scenario. The present value (PV) of the total PPG-debt-to-GDP ratio also falls below the benchmark under the baseline scenario over the long term, provided the country continues to contract loans only at concessional terms at a measured pace, implements EMAE's planned reforms, and formalize the large arrears from EMAE to ENCO. Quantitative indicators alone would place the country's external PPG debt at moderate risk and total PPG debt at high risk of debt distress. The authorities are committed to ensuring that the arrears between EMAE and its supplier ENCO will be regularized to reduce further debt distress risk (MEFP ¶ 36) and noted furthermore that large projects such as the airport expansion will be financed by non-debt-creating sources such as grants.

15. The outlook is subject to important risks. Limited tax administration capacity could hinder revenue collection and reduce gains from planned revenue-enhancing measures. Policy slippages and additional public outlays could put further pressures on international reserves. Delayed EMAE reform could prolong the power shortage; raise arrears accumulation; and elevate energy supply, debt, and balance of payments vulnerabilities, including through EMAE's arrears to its oil supplier ENCO and ENCO's associated arrears to its parent company Sonangol. Political instability and low capacity could delay reforms and project implementation as well as the associated external official inflows. In addition, the implementation of the VAT could slow down the decline of inflation, which will be reassessed once the VAT introduction plan is firmed up. On the upside, implementing externally-financed projects such as the airport expansion and road rehabilitation on schedule could spur higher growth than expected (Annex II). Maintaining strong policies can help mitigate the risks.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

The three-year program seeks to restore macroeconomic stability and unlock growth potential. Fiscal consolidation supported by monetary tightening will address pressure on foreign reserves and restore fiscal and external sustainability over the medium term. Structural reforms aim to mobilize revenue, enhance control over public spending, reduce contingent liabilities from SOEs, improve financial stability, and promote sustainable and inclusive growth to reduce poverty, including through empowering women economically. A floor on pro-poor spending, along with a World Bank social protection program, will protect the most vulnerable. The Fund-supported program will also play a catalytic role and provide positive signals to stakeholders.

A. Address Balance of Payments Pressures and Restore Fiscal Sustainability

16. Fiscal adjustment is critical to addressing balance of payments pressures and ensuring sustainability (Text Table 2). The programmed adjustment aims to bring the DPD down from 4.1 to 1.8 percent of GDP in 2019 (MEFP ¶14), which, combined with IMF disbursements, is expected to lead to a reduction of domestic borrowing relative to 2018 by 2.8 percent of GDP (\$13.5 million). Revenue measures, including an oil tax surcharge, a reduction in tax allowances, and an increase in sales tax on telecommunication in anticipation of the VAT introduction, would raise around one percent of

GDP and offset lower import tax revenue due in part to declining oil prices.⁴ Expenditure savings are achieved from broadly maintaining the freeze in the overall wage bill, rationalizing utility consumption as previously planned, and cutting non-priority capital expenditure, which accounted for over one percent of GDP in 2018. To avoid a reemergence of demand pressures on foreign reserves and to ensure the DPD target is met, discretionary spending will be held back until expected resources become available, while off-budget expenditures will be prevented, which represent an additional $\frac{3}{4}$ percent of GDP consolidation. The DPD target will be tightened if budget support is not disbursed to limit domestic borrowing. Preliminary data for the first quarter of 2019 suggest that developments so far are consistent with the program.

Text Table 2. Financial Operations of the Central Government, 2018–2020
(Percent of GDP)

	2018	2019	2020
	Prel.	Prog.	Prog.
Total revenue (ex. payment to ENCO and oil revenue)	13.2	13.6	14.1
Tax revenue	12.5	12.8	13.5
Import taxes	5.5	5.8	5.8
<i>of which:</i> oil surcharge to pay ENCO debt	...	0.1	0.3
Other taxes	7.0	7.0	7.8
Nontax revenue	3.0	1.5	1.5
<i>of which:</i> oil revenue	2.4	0.6	0.6
Total domestic primary expenditure (ex. capitalization)	17.3	15.5	15.6
Current expenditure	16.4	15.8	15.6
Personnel costs	9.1	8.5	8.4
Interest due	0.4	0.6	0.6
Goods and services	3.0	2.6	2.5
Transfers	3.1	3.2	3.4
Other current expenditure	0.8	0.8	0.8
Capital spending fin. by the Treasury and HIPC-eligible	1.5	0.3	0.6
<i>Of which:</i> capitalization of BIRD	0.2	0.0	0.0
Domestic primary balance¹	-4.1	-1.8	-1.5

Sources: São Tomé and Príncipe authorities' data and IMF staff estimates and projections.

¹ Exclude oil related revenues and a fraction of the oil surcharge for ENCO debt repayment, grants, interest earned, scheduled interest payments, capitalization of BIRD, and foreign-financed capital outlays.

17. Revenue mobilization and fiscal consolidation will continue over the medium term to entrench fiscal and external sustainability and help raise social spending and investment (Table 2). The DPD gradually falls to about $\frac{1}{2}$ percent of GDP by the end of the program through a

⁴ Oil prices are expected to decline by about seven percent on average in 2019.

combination of revenue mobilization and expenditure restraint. The planned introduction of a VAT next year together with tax administration reforms are expected to broaden the tax base and help raise tax revenue by about two percentage points over the medium term (MEFP ¶21). Adopting the VAT law and launching a public communication campaign to explain it are both end-June 2019 structural benchmarks. Personnel costs and spending on goods and services will be restrained, while social and domestically-financed capital spending will be gradually expanded. A five-year, \$10 million social protection program supported by the World Bank will further help mitigate the impact of consolidation on the poor (Annex III). The pace of fiscal consolidation during these years will be revisited if reserve pressures or available budgetary support changes. New external borrowing will be limited to concessional loans capped at three percent of GDP annually to allow a steady decline in public debt, as shown in the DSA.

18. The government plans to introduce the VAT early next year to achieve a revenue gain of two percent of GDP over the medium term. Preparations for the introduction of the VAT have taken longer than expected, due to the country's limited capacity and the authorities' concerns about the potential impact on the economy and vulnerable citizens. However, the authorities are committed to accelerate work towards the transition and meet next year's schedule. Priorities include launching an educational campaign, hiring and training personnel to help implement the VAT and strengthen tax administration, and implementing a new IT system, while the final design and realignment of other taxes with the VAT are finalized. The impact of the VAT on the poor is likely to be limited as most rely on subsistence agriculture and the informal sector. However, further efforts will be made to lessen the impact, including by allowing lower rates on a small set of items.

19. Other fiscal structural reforms aim to strengthen tax administration and public financial management (PFM). Priorities include adopting modern compliance risk management practices, including audit programs that exploit information from third parties and better monitoring of large taxpayers to ensure timely tax payments; strengthening budget forecasts, execution, and cash management to prevent arrears accumulation; and ensuring reconciliation of budget execution data with financing (MEFP ¶18-20, 22). The government is committed to not accumulating new arrears and will use treasury bill issuances to cover current payments as needed and clear previous arrears. It will also strengthen the enforcement of public procurement laws and regulations to ensure efficiency of public spending, including by public entities, and reduce vulnerabilities to corruption.

20. The government continues to implement the main recommendations of the Debt Management Performance Assessment (DeMPA). Ongoing efforts include a medium-term debt management strategy, a debt database, and training on debt management, including treasury bill issuance. Efforts to regularize post-HIPC arrears also continue (MEFP ¶36 & 37). The authorities continue to make efforts to facilitate the private sector to settle arrears to external private creditors, stemming from the past imposition of exchange controls.

B. Tighten Monetary Policy and Enhance Central Bank Management to Support the Peg

21. Monetary policy will continue to be anchored by the peg to the euro. The pegged exchange rate (introduced in 2010) has helped contain inflation in this small-island economy that depends extensively on imports. The authorities recognized that the most important tools to safeguard the peg are sound fiscal policies, structural reforms to boost exports and reduce energy imports, and timely implementation of externally funded projects.

22. Tighter monetary policy will complement fiscal consolidation to rebuild adequate foreign reserves. Currently, market term deposit rates average 3.5 percent, well below inflation, and banks' excess reserves at the central bank are not remunerated. Monetary policy will be tightened to help raise deposit rates, encourage *dobra* savings, ease demand for foreign reserves, and contain inflation (MEFP ¶23). Initial steps include issuing central bank certificates of deposit of at least D50 million (end-October 2019, structural benchmark), supported by the IMF Monetary and Capital Markets Department technical assistance. Given the weak lending channel, the tightening is likely to have a limited impact on lending, while the associated reduction of banks' excess liquidity should promote trading in the dormant interbank market and strengthen the monetary transmission mechanism. Nevertheless, the potential costs of draining liquidity call for a gradual approach, with recalibration based on the observed effectiveness of the new monetary instruments.

23. Internal control, independence, and oversight will be strengthened to ensure the efficient and effective operation of the Central Bank of São Tomé and Príncipe (BCSTP) (MEFP ¶33). In line with the safeguards assessment, the Central Bank (Organic) Law will be revised to strengthen central bank independence, provide for a governance structure for independent oversight of central bank operations, and improve financial reporting and bank resolution, with the financial institutions law also revised accordingly (submission to parliament of both laws is an end-December 2019 structural benchmark). Capacity in internal audit will also be strengthened, and a risk-based approach to audit planning will be adopted.

C. Safeguard Financial Stability

24. The authorities are committed to implementing the AQR recommendations and other measures to safeguard banking sector soundness (MEFP ¶28–29). Implementation of the AQR recommendations (end-September 2019 structural benchmark; Annex IV) will include additional provisions from loan reclassifications, updated collateral valuation, and an increase in capital—provided by private bank owners—where necessary. The BCSTP will also consider running stress tests on a regular basis to better assess the adequacy of banks' buffers under severely adverse conditions (MEFP ¶28). Capacity to identify and correct regulatory infractions will also be strengthened, partly by undertaking more frequent on-site inspections supported by appropriate staffing, better training, and improving the enforcement mechanism (MEFP ¶29). Other ongoing reforms include new

regulations on risk management and asset management and the World Bank-supported update of the credit registry.

25. Efforts towards resolution of legacy non-performing loans (NPL) will be stepped up (MEFP ¶130). To bring about a meaningful reduction in the NPL ratio, the BCSTP will give guidance to banks for more rapid write-offs of defaulted loans, improve the efficiency of the judicial loan enforcement process, and reinvigorate the project of arbitration tribunals for out-of-court settlements.

26. The authorities will speed up the resolution of the two failed banks (MEFP ¶131). The liquidation of Banco Equador is expected to be concluded this year, and if asset recovery is insufficient, the central bank advancement for paying off small depositors (€1.7 million or 0.5 percent GDP) will be absorbed by the budget.⁵ Voluntary liquidation is being discussed with the shareholders of Banco Privado (BPSTP) in accordance with the law as the bank's license was withdrawn over governance concerns and repeated non-compliance with BCSTP directives. Liquidation through the court system is the next step.

27. Several projects have been initiated to improve access to finance by small and medium enterprises and promote financial inclusion (MEFP ¶132). The authorities adopted a microfinance law in September 2018 and completed a survey on financial inclusion. With World Bank assistance, a collateral registry is being developed to facilitate lending to small firms (MEFP ¶132 and end-June 2020 structural benchmark). Work is also under way to publish a national financial inclusion strategy by end-2019.

D. Accelerate Structural Reforms for Sustainable and Inclusive Growth

28. Comprehensive reforms in the energy sector are critical to support growth (Annex V). The high cost and unreliability of the electricity supply hinders economic activity and undermines competitiveness. Despite some improvements in collections and involuntary cuts in production in the last quarter, EMAE's large losses (about \$16 million) did not abate in 2018, partly reflecting higher international oil prices. Comprehensive reforms are underway with World Bank support to rehabilitate the energy sector, reduce the cost of energy, and achieve cost recovery over the medium term. Such reforms would also help boost international reserves in the medium- to long-term, including by reducing fuel imports. In the meantime, the authorities are implementing various short-term measures to contain EMAE's losses, including reducing commercial losses by installing pre-paid and smart meters and enforcing payment discipline for large consumers, reducing energy consumption by 10 percent within 12 months by switching to LED lightbulbs—to be financed by the World Bank—and implementing the tariff reforms (MEFP ¶142). These measures are expected to reduce EMAE's losses by $\frac{3}{4}$ percent of GDP within 12 months.

⁵ The liquidation cost, largely in the form of payouts to small non-connected depositors, has so far not exceeded 0.3 percent of GDP. With expected asset recovery, net fiscal cost, which will be excluded from the domestic primary deficit target, is expected to be minimal and not included in the baseline macro-framework.

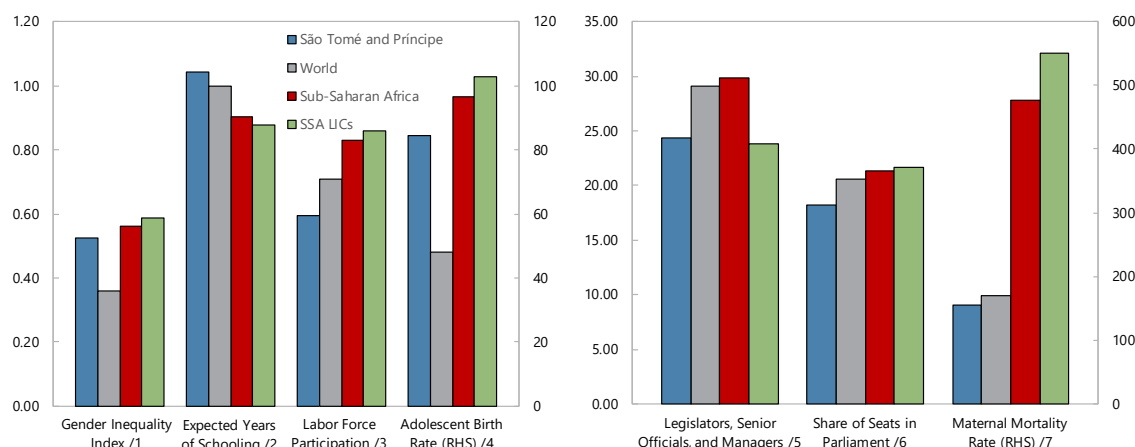
29. Regulatory and other structural reforms will be undertaken to promote private sector-led growth (MEFP ¶39-41). In particular, key recommendations of the Tourism Development Strategy will be implemented (end-June 2020 structural benchmark), including publication of a codified procedure for the approval of private investments, which will increase transparency, strengthen confidence, and reduce vulnerabilities to corruption. Efforts will continue to develop a payment system with the capability of processing international credit cards, which would stimulate tourist spending. Better infrastructure will support local agriculture and fishing and facilitate business creation. A tourism school will be established to develop local capacity and help fill demand locally.

30. The authorities recognize the need to improve the business environment. Though the World Bank's 2019 Doing Business survey shows some improvement from the 2018 scores, the country's overall score is 45.1 compared to the sub-Saharan regional average of 51.6. Data from the 2017 Worldwide Governance Indicators survey show that São Tomé and Príncipe is below the regional average for Government Effectiveness and Regulatory Quality.

31. The country has made progress on some of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) including Zero Hunger, Good Health and Well-Being, Climate Action, and Life Below Water. However, indicators on Quality Education, Gender Equality, and Clean Water and Sanitation show fewer signs of improvement. In partnership with UN agencies, the authorities held a steering committee meeting to further develop strategies for achieving the SDG targets (MEFP ¶38).

32. The authorities are preparing a national action plan to promote women's economic empowerment and financial inclusion with broad consultation with stakeholders (MEFP ¶38 and end-December 2019 structural benchmark). Though gender gaps in education have been closed and gender equality is enshrined in the legal framework, gender gaps in wages, labor force participation, and access to finance remain, and the enforcement of laws and regulations on gender equality needs be strengthened (Text Figure 3.). Participants at a conference in June 2019, to be co-organized by the authorities and the United Nations, will draft an initial outline of the action plan, with the goal to finalize it by December 2019. Thereafter, the authorities together with other stakeholders will monitor progress over time.

Text Figure 3. Selected Gender Inequality Measures



Sources: UNDP, Human Development Reports; and IMF staff calculations.

Note: Data may not be available for all countries. Latest available data (2015-2018) were used to construct this presentation.

1/ Gender Inequality Index (GII), developed by the UNDP, measures gender inequalities in three areas: reproductive health, female empowerment, and economic status.

2/ Ratio between the expected years of schooling for girls and the expected years of schooling for boys.

3/ Ratio between the female labor force participation rate and the male labor force participation rate.

4/ Births per 1,000 women ages 15-19.

5/ Percent of total legislators, senior officials, and managers who are female.

6/ Percent of total seats occupied by women in the country's parliament.

7/ Measured in deaths per 100,000 live births.

PROGRAM MODALITIES

33. The authorities have requested a three-year arrangement under the ECF. The arrangement provides access to PRGT funds at 90 percent of the quota (SDR 13,320,000) to cover protracted balance of payments needs, part of which are related to budget financing gaps, and to support the government's strong reforms, including on the VAT, PFM, the electricity sector, enhancing social protection, and increasing women's economic empowerment. As revenue mobilization will take time to yield results, additional resources are needed for social protection and priority public investment. The gap is projected to close during the program period as reforms are implemented. The IMF-supported program will comprise six reviews, with disbursements phased evenly throughout the arrangement (Table 9). The disbursements would be made available to be used as indirect budget support and would be deposited at the Treasury's account at the BCSTP and then withdrawn, as needed, to finance the budget. A memorandum of understanding has been established between the central bank and the government on their respective roles and obligations.

34. The program is subject to important downside risks. Particularly, limited tax administration capacity could hinder revenue collection, and pressure on spending could heighten. In addition, weak capacity could constrain program implementation, which in turn could delay external financing.

35. To mitigate the risks, program performance will be monitored through semi-annual program reviews based on quantitative performance criteria, indicative targets, and structural

benchmarks (MEFP Tables 3 and 4). In light of the fragility, conditionality is prioritized and selective. Critical unmet structural benchmarks under the 2015–18 ECF arrangement, such as implementing a VAT and strengthening central bank governance, were re-phased. Other benchmarks target containing EMAE's large losses, improving monetary operations and financial sector oversight, empowering women economically, and promoting inclusive growth. Prior actions for program approval include (i) the adoption of a 2019 budget and legislation supporting revenue measures that is consistent with the macro-framework and (ii) the adoption of a management improvement plan and least cost energy-production plan for EMAE.

36. Continued, hands-on capacity development is essential to build capacity and address fragility and risk. Technical assistance in the near term will focus on tax administration, in preparation for the introduction of the VAT; public financial management to avert further expenditure slippages and accumulation of arrears; monetary policy implementation to design appropriate instruments to reduce excess liquidity; and implementation of the recommendations of the safeguards assessment (Annex VI).

37. Staff consider that the capacity to repay the IMF is adequate (Table 8). Requisite financing assurances exist, and the program is fully financed as there are firm commitments in place for financing over the next 12 months and good prospects thereafter. Repayments to the IMF will remain below 0.7 percent of exports of goods and services during the program period and peak at 2 percent of exports of goods and services in 2027. The program would play a catalytic role and would stimulate some donors' support (Text Table 3).

Text Table 3. IMF Disbursement and Official Inflows

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2019-22
Proposed IMF program					
in million SDR	3.8	3.8	3.8	1.9	13.3
in million USD	5.3	5.3	5.3	2.7	18.6
Official external inflow (in million dollars) 1/					
Total	42.8	45.1	45.2	45.2	178.3
Grants	36.2	38.5	37.6	36.9	149.3
Budget support grants	8.4	8.5	8.5	8.5	33.9
European Union (EU)	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.5	13.9
World Bank	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	20.0
Project grants (excluding HIPC)	27.8	30.0	29.2	28.4	115.4
Concessional loans	6.6	6.6	7.6	8.2	29.1

1/ Including from the World Bank, African Development Bank, EU, and European Investment Bank.

38. The authorities are also requesting a one-year extension of the temporary approval for the retention of the measures that give rise to exchange restrictions and a multiple currency practice subject to IMF jurisdiction under Article VIII, Sections 2(a) and 3, respectively. These exchange measures include: (i) an exchange restriction arising under Articles 3(g) and 18 of the Investment Code of 2016 due to limitations on the transferability of net income from investments;

and (ii) an exchange restriction arising from limitations on the availability of foreign exchange for payments of current international transactions, due to the rationing of foreign exchange by BCSTP. The latter exchange restriction also gives rise to a multiple currency practice as it has resulted in the channeling of transactions to the parallel market where the exchange rate is at a spread of more than two percent from the exchange rate in the formal market.⁶ The IMF Executive Board granted a one-year approval until July 2019, because they are temporary, non-discriminatory, and needed for balance of payments reasons.

39. An update safeguards assessment of the BCSTP is underway and will be completed by the first review. Initial findings indicate slow progress in implementing recommendations from the previous assessment. Key recommendations include strengthening the central bank law, improving financial reporting practices, and establishing a governance structure that provides for independent oversight of central bank operations.

40. Economic data need to improve further, although they are broadly adequate for program monitoring. Work is ongoing to implement the enhanced General Data Dissemination System (e-GDDS), a welcome step in fostering greater data accessibility and identifying priority areas for data quality improvements. More efforts are needed to enhance macroeconomic statistics, particularly leading indicators of economic activity and tourism data (MEFP ¶139).

STAFF APPRAISAL

41. São Tomé and Príncipe's economy is facing serious challenges over the near and medium term. Recent growth has been too slow to reduce poverty, and large fiscal and external imbalances that emerged in 2018 threaten macroeconomic stability. An inefficient energy sector continues to accumulate debt and hinder businesses; tax revenue is too low to meet social development needs; and a vulnerable banking sector is impeding the financing of private investment. Addressing these challenges requires immediate and sustained macroeconomic policy adjustments centered around fiscal consolidation and comprehensive structural reforms to mobilize revenue, reduce debt, improve financial stability, and unlock growth potential.

42. The authorities are committed to tightening fiscal and monetary policy to address immediate balance of payment pressures. The DPD will be appropriately reduced by more than two percent of GDP in 2019 through revenue measures and expenditure rationalization and borrowing by autonomous public entities for non-budgeted spending will be prevented. Monetary policy will also be tightened as needed to encourage *dobra* savings, taking into account the costs to the central bank.

43. Fiscal consolidation over the medium term will continue to entrench fiscal and external sustainability. The DPD is targeted to fall to about one percent of GDP over the medium term

⁶ Anecdotal evidence suggests that exchange rate spreads between the formal and informal rates are around four percent for euros and around ten percent for US dollars.

through a combination of revenue mobilization and expenditure restraint, while social and domestically-financed capital spending are gradually expanded. The impact of these policies is mitigated by measures to protect the most vulnerable and the planned launch of large foreign-supported projects.

44. Domestic revenue mobilization is critical to enable higher social spending and investment. The planned introduction of a VAT next year, together with tax administration reforms, will broaden the tax base and help raise tax revenue by about two percentage points over the medium term. However, preparations for the transition, especially the educational campaign, hiring and training dedicated personnel, implementation of a new IT system, and tax realignment, should be accelerated to meet this schedule.

45. PFM needs to be strengthened to prevent arrears accumulation. The government is committed to not accumulating new arrears and will issue treasury bills to cover current payments as needed and to clear previous arrears. The planned strengthening of public procurement and supervisory procedures to ensure strict enforcement of procurement laws and prevent large commitments by autonomous public entities will also be important.

46. Given that São Tomé and Príncipe is in debt distress, it is essential that public investment is financed only by revenues, grants, and concessional loans. The authorities are committed to eschewing non-concessional loans, including for large infrastructure projects, and to limiting contracting of external concessional loans to less than three percent of GDP per year. Work should continue to implement recommendations under the DeMPA and finalize the medium-term debt management strategy. Efforts to resolve external arrears and disputed debts with creditors should also continue.

47. Rehabilitating the energy sector is a priority. The high cost of energy is hindering growth, and EMAE's recurrent losses pose a serious fiscal risk. In this context, the comprehensive World Bank-supported reform strategy to rehabilitate the sector and achieve cost recovery over the medium term should be implemented without further delay. Implementation of these reforms will also help reduce oil imports and the external imbalance.

48. The AQR recommendations on provisioning and recapitalization need to be implemented to strengthen banking sector soundness. Additional provisions stemming from loan reclassifications and updated collateral valuation need to be enforced and adequate capital cushions replenished where necessary. Staffing and capacity at BCSTP need to be strengthened to ensure effective supervision and enforcement. Ongoing work to upgrade the regulations on risk management and the credit registry is welcome.

49. Further efforts are needed to reduce the high level of NPLs. The BCSTP should give guidance to banks for more rapid write-offs of defaulted loans. To assist loan recovery, concerted efforts are required to reform the legal system and establish arbitration tribunals for out-of-court settlement. The recommendations of the safeguards assessment should be implemented without further delay.

50. Reforms to the business environment and greater gender equality are essential to promoting inclusive growth and reducing poverty. The planned infrastructure projects, including road rehabilitation and airport expansion, will support key sectors such as tourism, agriculture, and fisheries. Implementation of the recently adopted tourism development strategy would help promote this sector and create jobs. A codified procedure for the approval of private investments should be published to increase transparency, and a payment system capable of processing international credit cards is needed to facilitate local tourism activity. Adoption of a national action plan by end-2019 will help promote women's economic empowerment and financial inclusion.

51. Staff supports the authorities' request for a new three-year arrangement under the ECF, with access level of 90 percent of quota. Staff also supports the authorities' request for a one-year extension of the temporary approval for the retention of measures resulting in exchange restrictions and a multiple currency practice subject to IMF jurisdiction under Article VIII, Sections 2(a) and 3 because these measures are temporary, non-discriminatory and needed for balance of payments reasons.

Proposed Decisions

The following draft decisions, which may be each adopted by a majority of the votes cast, are proposed for adoption by the Executive Board:

Decision 1. The Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe - Request for Approval of

Exchange Restrictions and Multiple Currency Practice Under Article VIII, Sections 2(a) and 3

1. The Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe maintains the following exchange measures:

(i) an exchange restriction arising under Articles 3(g) and 18 of the Investment Code of 2016 due to limitations on the transferability of net income from investments; and (ii) an exchange restriction and multiple currency practice arising from limitations on the availability of foreign exchange for payments of current international transactions, due to the rationing of foreign exchange by the Central Bank of the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe.

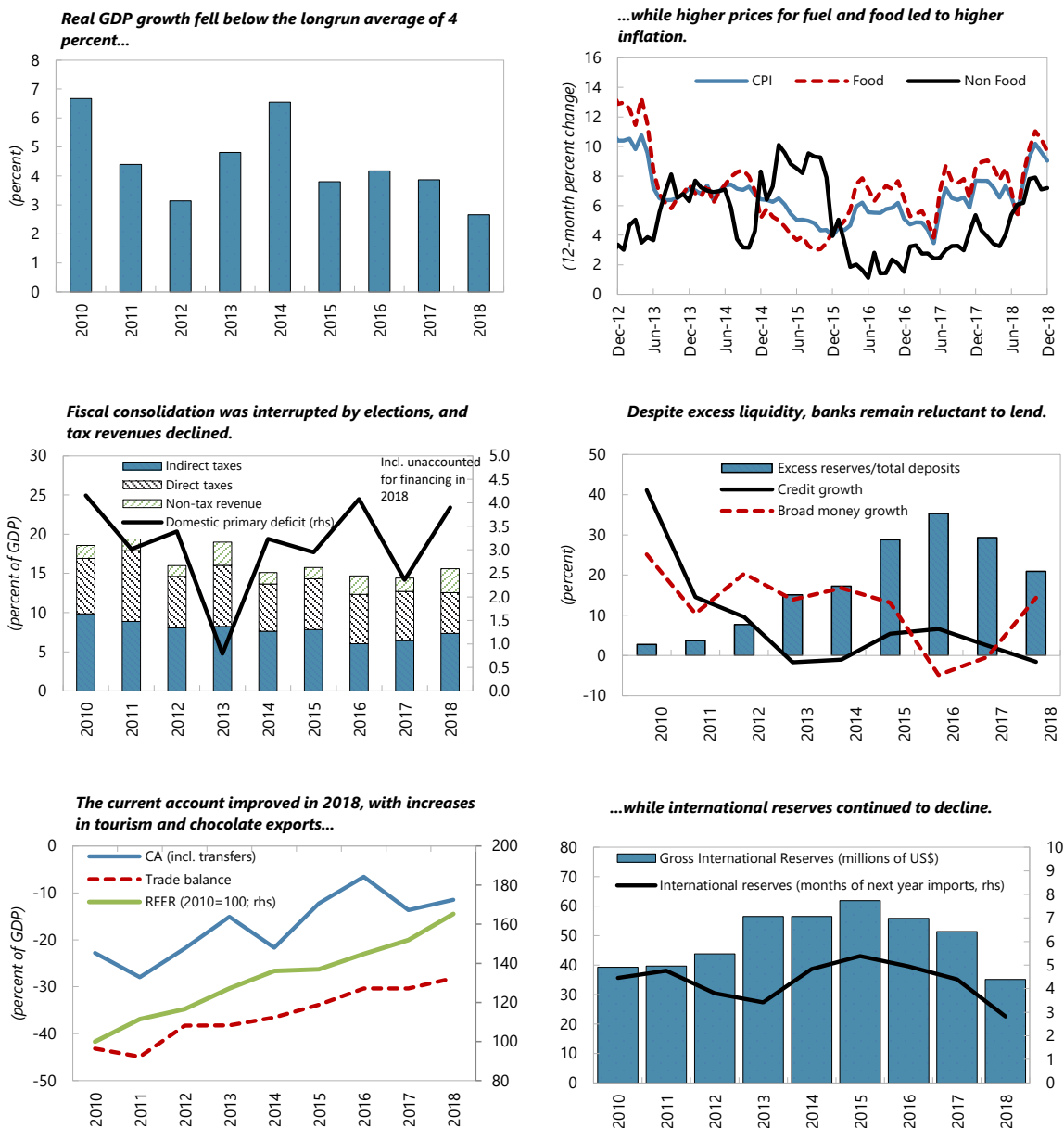
2. In the circumstances of the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe, the Fund grants approval of the retention of these exchange measures for a period of twelve months from the date of this decision.

Decision 2. Request for an arrangement under the Extended Credit Facility

1. The Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe has requested a three-year arrangement under the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility in a total amount equivalent to SDR 13,320,000.

2. The Fund approves the arrangement set forth in EBS/19/45 (6/4/19) and decides that the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe may request the first disbursement under the arrangement, on the condition that the information provided by the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe on the implementation of the measures referred to as prior actions in Table 4 in the Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies attached to the letter dated May 31, 2019 from the Minister of Finance,

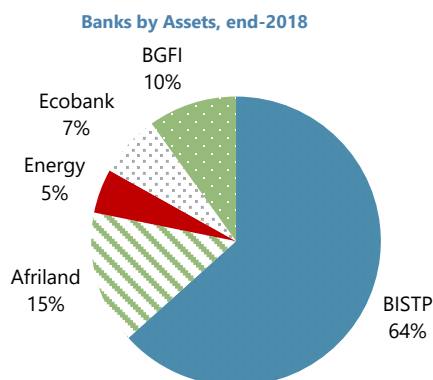
Commerce and the Blue Economy and the Governor of the Central Bank of the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe, is accurate (EBS/19/45).

Figure 1. Recent Macroeconomic Developments, 2010–2018

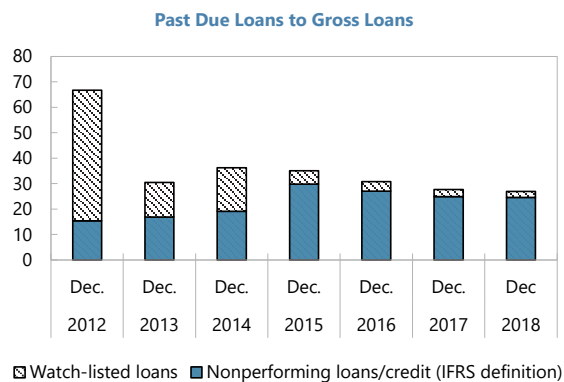
Sources: São Tomé and Príncipe authorities; and IMF staff estimates.

Figure 2. Financial Sector Developments, 2011–2018¹

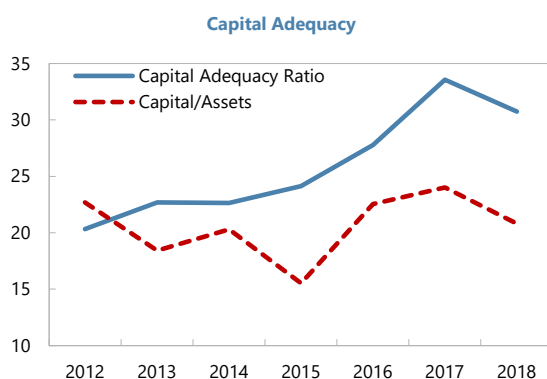
The largest bank has almost two-thirds of the total assets in a highly-concentrated banking system.



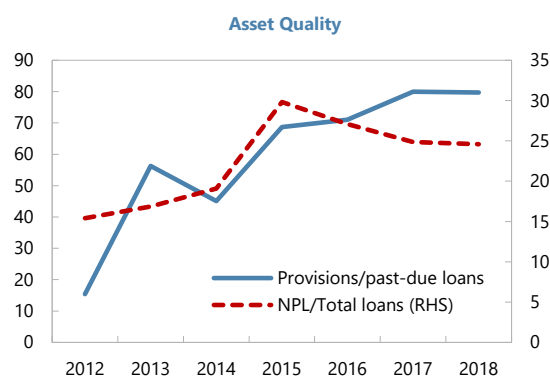
Past due loans show little change since end-2017, while watch listed loans declined slightly.



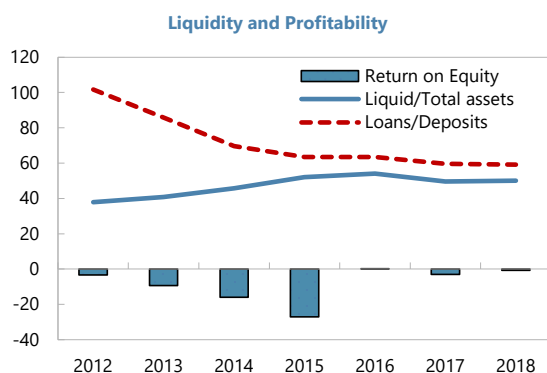
Capital ratios have fallen but remain well above the regulatory requirements.



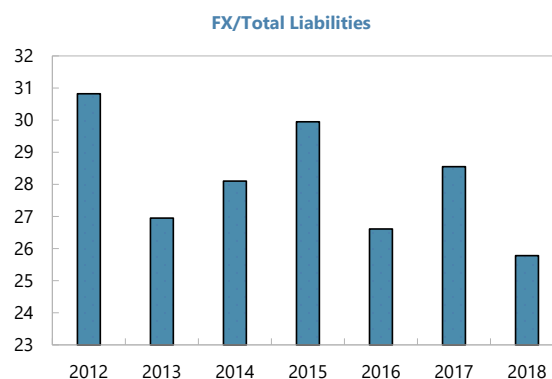
The NPL reduction strategy has reached a plateau, but provisioning remains high.



Profitability is weak but much better than in previous years.



Foreign currency liabilities have been volatile and declined recently.



Sources: São Tomé and Príncipe authorities' data and IMF staff estimates and projections.

¹ Excluding Banco Equador (beginning December 2016) and BPSTP (beginning June 2018).

Table 1. Selected Economic Indicators, 2015–2022
(Annual change in percent, unless otherwise indicated)

	2015	2016	2017	2018		2019	2020	2021	2022
	Actual	Actual	Actual	5th Rev	Est.	Proj.	Proj.	Proj.	Proj.
National income and prices									
GDP at constant prices	3.8	4.2	3.9	4.0	2.7	3.0	3.5	4.0	4.5
GDP deflator	5.1	5.1	2.0	3.9	4.7	3.7	3.5	3.0	3.0
Consumer prices									
End of period	4.0	5.1	7.7	6.0	9.0	6.0	5.0	4.0	3.0
Period average	5.3	5.4	5.7	6.8	8.2	7.4	5.5	4.5	3.5
External trade									
Exports of goods and nonfactor services	3.3	7.3	-10.8	5.4	12.5	9.5	8.7	14.6	10.2
Imports of goods and nonfactor services	-18.8	-0.6	4.5	13.1	2.4	5.9	4.8	4.5	5.4
Exchange rate (new dobras per US\$; end of period) ¹	22.4	23.4	20.5	...	20.2	...	...	...	...
Real effective exchange rate (period average, depreciation = -)	0.6	5.7	4.9	...	8.7	...	...	...	...
Money and credit									
Base money	37.5	5.0	-9.6	9.3	0.8	-0.2	2.6	7.1	7.6
Broad money (M3)	13.1	-4.8	-0.4	12.6	14.3	0.3	7.1	7.1	7.6
Credit to the economy	5.4	6.6	2.5	5.8	-1.6	-6.5	0.6	6.6	7.1
Velocity (GDP to broad money; end of period)	2.5	2.9	3.0	3.1	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
Central bank reference interest rate (percent)	10.0	10.0	9.0	...	9.0	...	...	...	...
Average bank lending rate (percent)	23.3	19.6	19.6	...	19.9	...	...	...	...
Government finance (in percent of GDP)									
Total revenue, grants, and oil signature bonuses	28.0	28.2	24.9	27.5	23.7	23.4	23.9	23.7	23.4
Of which: tax revenue	14.3	12.3	12.7	11.8	12.5	12.8	13.5	14.1	14.4
Nontax revenue	1.5	2.3	1.7	2.9	3.0	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.7
Grants	11.4	13.5	10.5	12.8	8.2	9.1	8.9	8.0	7.3
Total expenditure and net lending	34.2	32.4	27.6	27.2	25.6	24.0	24.0	23.3	23.0
Personnel costs	8.9	8.9	8.3	7.7	9.1	8.5	8.4	8.4	8.4
Interest due	0.8	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.5
Nonwage noninterest current expenditure	8.5	8.0	6.9	5.9	6.9	6.6	6.7	6.7	7.0
Treasury funded capital expenditures	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.1	1.4	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.3
Donor funded capital expenditures	14.7	14.2	11.0	12.8	7.7	7.9	7.8	7.2	6.6
HIPC Initiative-related capital expenditure	0.6	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.2
Domestic primary balance ²	-2.9	-4.1	-2.4	-1.3	-4.1	-1.8	-1.5	-0.8	-0.6
Net domestic borrowing	-0.5	2.8	1.8	0.8	3.4	0.6	1.0	0.4	0.3
Overall balance (commitment basis)	-6.3	-4.2	-2.7	0.3	-1.9	-0.6	-0.1	0.4	0.5
Public Debt ³	75.8	79.0	75.8	58.5	79.0	65.4	67.5	67.5	60.2
External sector									
Current account balance (percent of GDP)									
Including official transfers	-12.2	-6.6	-13.7	-6.8	-11.5	-11.3	-10.8	-9.3	-8.4
Excluding official transfers	-24.8	-20.5	-24.8	-6.8	-20.0	-20.4	-19.6	-17.3	-15.7
PV of external debt (percent of GDP)	39.7	31.5	26.6	26.9	27.1	25.6	24.0	20.9	21.0
External debt service (percent of exports) ⁴	3.8	3.3	3.8	4.6	4.2	5.2	5.5	4.9	4.7
Export of goods and non-factor services (US\$ millions)	90.0	96.6	86.1	111.5	96.8	106.0	115.3	132.1	145.5
Gross international reserves ⁵									
Millions of U.S. dollars	61.9	55.9	51.4	58.2	35.1	34.9	38.8	44.2	49.6
Months of imports of goods and nonfactor services ⁶	5.4	4.9	4.4	4.4	2.8	2.7	3.0	3.3	3.6
National Oil Account (US\$ millions)	10.3	11.5	11.3	11.4	19.5	18.3	17.8	17.8	18.3
Memorandum Item									
Gross Domestic Product									
Millions of new dobra	7,031	7,698	8,154	9,222	8,763	9,360	10,027	10,740	11,560
Millions of U.S. dollars	318.3	347.5	369.5	466.1	415.1	437.1	472.4	509.6	551.7
Per capita (in U.S. dollars)	1,570	1,673	1,738	2,143	1,909	1,966	2,079	2,196	2,328
Unemployment rate (percent)	13.4	13.4	13.5	11.7	...	...	...	...	...

Sources: São Tomé and Príncipe authorities' data and IMF staff estimates and projections.

¹ Central Bank (BCSTP) mid-point rate.

² Excludes oil related revenues, grants, interest earned, scheduled interest payments, and foreign-financed capital outlay.

³ Excludes EMAE arrears to ENCO, arrears to non-Paris Club countries, and a US\$ 30 million Nigerian loan in dispute.

⁴ Percent of exports of goods and nonfactor services.

⁵ Gross international reserves exclude the National Oil Account and commercial banks' foreign currency deposits at the BCSTP in order to meet reserve requirements, for new licensing, and for meeting capital requirements.

⁶ Imports of goods and nonfactor services, excluding imports of investment goods and technical assistance.

Table 2a. Financial Operations of the Central Government, 2015–2023
(Millions of new dobra)

	2015	2016	2017	2018		2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
	Actual	Actual	Actual	5th Rev	Prel.	Proj.	Proj.	Proj.	Proj.	Proj.
Total revenue and grants ¹	1965	2168	2034	2537	2081	2187	2394	2546	2710	2914
Total revenue	1108	1130	1174	1353	1365	1339	1506	1682	1867	2075
Tax revenue	1006	949	1036	1084	1099	1199	1357	1511	1666	1841
Import taxes	455	371	388	451	486	540	577	618	666	714
<i>of which: oil surcharge for budget spending</i>	...	...	...	...	...	40	28	43	48	54
<i>oil surcharge to pay ENCO</i>	...	...	...	...	...	10	32	21	21	21
Other taxes	550	578	647	633	613	659	779	893	1000	1127
Nontax revenue	102	181	138	269	266	140	149	171	201	234
<i>of which: oil revenue</i>	0	74	51	198	212	54	63	72	81	81
Grants	804	1038	860	1184	715	848	888	863	843	839
Project grants	610	891	594	908	557	595	637	614	595	574
Nonproject grants ²	61	81	198	192	125	181	180	179	178	191
HIPC Initiative-related grants	133	65	67	83	33	72	71	70	69	74
Total expenditure	2405	2494	2253	2508	2243	2242	2401	2504	2653	2823
<i>Of which: domestic primary expenditure</i>	1315	1370	1316	1279	1536	1447	1566	1674	1830	2004
Current expenditure	1274	1334	1287	1303	1436	1476	1566	1678	1825	1977
Personnel costs	623	684	681	706	798	794	837	897	965	1035
Interest due	54	34	43	50	34	60	58	56	55	55
<i>of which: covered by HIPC grants</i>	...	...	...	...	...	3	2	1	5	...
Goods and services	239	249	253	205	260	243	250	263	293	314
Transfers	248	282	234	278	273	302	338	372	415	470
Other current expenditure	110	84	76	64	71	78	83	89	96	103
Capital expenditure	1087	1141	952	1191	795	749	813	811	808	817
Financed by the Treasury	51	50	58	12	122	14	35	37	40	52
<i>of which: Capitalization of BIRD</i>	...	0	0	0	21	0	0	0	0	3
Financed by external sources	1036	1090	894	1179	673	736	778	774	768	765
HIPC Initiative-related capital expenditure	44	19	15	14	12	17	22	15	20	29
Domestic primary balance ³	-207	-314	-193	-124	-362	-172	-154	-85	-65	-31
Overall fiscal balance (commitment basis)	-440	-326	-219	29	-162	-55	-7	42	57	91
Net change in domestic arrears	-82	0	6	-66	76	-24	-66	-78	-73	-23
Float and statistical discrepancies	10	0	-53	0	-24	0	0	0	0	0
Overall fiscal balance (cash basis)	-524	-30	-215	-37	-111	-79	-73	-36	-16	67
Financing	524	30	215	37	111	79	73	36	16	-67
Net external	576	62	103	123	67	-1	-11	7	14	13
Disbursements ⁴	742	143	160	200	116	141	141	159	173	190
Program financing (loans) ⁵	20	32	37	37	16	...	...	...	...	...
Scheduled amortization	-187	-112	-94	-114	-65	-141	-151	-152	-159	-178
<i>of which: covered by HIPC grants</i>	...	...	...	...	...	-70	-69	-69	-64	...
Net domestic	-51	-32	112	-86	44	80	84	29	2	-80
Net bank credit to the government	-51	-32	112	-86	44	90	115	50	23	-59
Banking system credit (net, excluding National Oil Account) ⁵	-42	-5	103	66	210	61	101	47	29	-55
Banking system credit (gross, excluding National Oil Account)	-33	218	103	221	286	346	447	494	523	468
<i>Of which: central bank on-lending of Fund resources</i>	...	...	...	...	...	113	112	111	55	0
<i>Of which: Privatisation account</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Amortization of domestic debt	...	...	...	-155	0	-286	-346	-447	-494	-523
National Oil Account	-10	-27	9	-152	-167	29	15	3	-6	-5
Nonbank financing	0	0	0	0	0	-10	-32	-21	-21	-21
Financing gap	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Financing gap without IMF program	...	...	...	...	...	220	292	290	234	...
<i>Of which: budget support</i>	...	...	...	...	...	107	180	179	178	...
IMF loan	...	...	...	...	...	113	112	111	55	...
Memorandum items										
EMAE loss	261	310	361	...	335	...	...	...	...	...

Sources: São Tomé and Príncipe authorities' data and IMF staff estimates and projections.

¹ Revenue is measured on a cash basis.

² The central bank shows receipt of \$5 mln in budget support from the World Bank at the very end of 2016, whereas the treasury accounts for them in 2017 when they received them.

³ Excludes oil related revenues and a fraction of the oil surcharge for ENCO debt repayment, grants, interest earned, scheduled interest payments, foreign-financed capital outlays, and capitalization of regional organizations per definition in TMU.

⁴ Includes loan from Angola in 2016 and 2017.

⁵ Includes use of IMF program support.

Table 2b. Financial Operations of the Central Government, 2015–2023
(In percent of GDP)

	2015	2016	2017	2018		2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
	Actual	Actual	Actual	5th Rev	Actual	Proj.	Proj.	Proj.	Proj.	Proj.
Total revenue and grants ¹	28.0	28.2	24.9	27.5	23.7	23.4	23.9	23.7	23.4	23.5
Total revenue	15.8	14.7	14.4	14.7	15.6	14.3	15.0	15.7	16.2	16.7
Tax revenue	14.3	12.3	12.7	11.8	12.5	12.8	13.5	14.1	14.4	14.9
Import taxes	6.5	4.8	4.8	4.9	5.5	5.8	5.8	5.8	5.8	5.8
<i>of which: oil surcharge for budget spending</i>	...	...	...	...	...	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.4
<i>oil surcharge to pay ENCO</i>	...	...	...	...	...	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2
Other taxes	7.8	7.5	7.9	6.9	7.0	7.0	7.8	8.3	8.7	9.1
Nontax revenue	1.5	2.3	1.7	2.9	3.0	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.9
<i>of which: oil revenue</i>	0.0	1.0	0.6	2.1	2.4	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.7
Grants	11.4	13.5	10.5	12.8	8.2	9.1	8.9	8.0	7.3	6.8
Project grants	8.7	11.6	7.3	9.9	6.4	6.4	6.4	5.7	5.1	4.6
Nonproject grants ²	0.9	1.1	2.4	2.1	1.4	1.9	1.8	1.7	1.5	1.5
HIPC Initiative-related grants	1.9	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.4	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.6
Total expenditure	34.2	32.4	27.6	27.2	25.6	24.0	24.0	23.3	23.0	22.8
<i>Of which: Domestic primary expenditure</i>	18.7	17.8	16.1	13.9	17.5	15.5	15.6	15.6	15.8	16.2
Current expenditure	18.1	17.3	15.8	14.1	16.4	15.8	15.6	15.6	15.8	16.0
Personnel costs	8.9	8.9	8.3	7.7	9.1	8.5	8.4	8.4	8.4	8.4
Interest due	0.8	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.4
Goods and services	3.4	3.2	3.1	2.2	3.0	2.6	2.5	2.4	2.5	2.5
Transfers	3.5	3.7	2.9	3.0	3.1	3.2	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.8
Other current expenditure	1.6	1.1	0.9	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8
Capital expenditure	15.5	14.8	11.7	12.9	9.1	8.0	8.1	7.6	7.0	6.6
Financed by the Treasury	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.1	1.4	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4
<i>of which: Capitalization of BIRD</i>	...	...	...	...	0.2	...	...	...	...	...
Financed by external sources	14.7	14.2	11.0	12.8	7.7	7.9	7.8	7.2	6.6	6.2
HIPC Initiative-related capital expenditure	0.6	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.2
Domestic primary balance ³	-2.9	-4.1	-2.4	-1.3	-4.1	-1.8	-1.5	-0.8	-0.6	-0.2
Overall fiscal balance (commitment basis)	-6.3	-4.2	-2.7	0.3	-1.9	-0.6	-0.1	0.4	0.5	0.7
Net change in domestic arrears	-1.2	0.0	0.1	-0.7	0.9	-0.3	-0.7	-0.7	-0.6	-0.2
Float and statistical discrepancies	0.1	0.0	-0.7	0.0	-0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Overall fiscal balance (cash basis)	-7.5	-0.4	-2.6	-0.4	-1.3	-0.8	-0.7	-0.3	-0.1	0.5
Financing	7.5	0.4	2.6	0.4	1.3	0.8	0.7	0.3	0.1	-0.5
Net external	8.2	0.8	1.3	1.3	0.8	0.0	-0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Disbursements ⁴	10.6	1.9	2.0	2.2	1.3	1.5	1.4	1.5	1.5	1.5
Program financing (loans) ⁵	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.2	...	...	...	...	...
Scheduled amortization	-2.7	-1.5	-1.2	-1.2	-0.7	-1.5	-1.5	-1.4	-1.4	-1.4
Net domestic	-0.7	-0.4	1.4	-0.9	0.5	0.9	0.8	0.3	0.0	-0.6
Net bank credit to the government	-0.7	-0.4	1.4	-0.9	0.5	1.0	1.2	0.5	0.2	-0.5
Banking system credit (net, excluding National Oil Account) ⁵	-0.6	-0.1	1.3	0.7	2.4	0.6	1.0	0.4	0.3	-0.4
National Oil Account	-0.1	-0.3	0.1	-1.7	-1.9	0.3	0.1	0.0	-0.1	0.0
Nonbank financing	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-0.1	-0.3	-0.2	-0.2	-0.2
Financing gap	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Financing gap without IMF program	...	...	...	...	...	2.4	2.9	2.7	2.0	...
<i>Of which: budget support</i>	...	...	...	...	...	1.1	1.8	1.7	1.5	...
IMF loan	...	...	...	...	...	1.2	1.1	1.0	0.5	...
Memorandum items										
EMAE loss	3.7	4.0	4.4	...	3.8	...	...	...	...	...

Sources: São Tomé and Príncipe authorities' data and IMF staff estimates and projections.

¹ Revenue is measured on a cash basis.

² The central bank shows receipt of \$5 mln in budget support from the World Bank at the very end of 2016, whereas the treasury accounts for them in 2017 when they received them.

³ Excludes oil related revenues and a fraction of the oil surcharge for ENCO debt repayment, grants, interest earned, scheduled interest payments, foreign-financed capital outlays, and capitalization of regional organizations per definition in TMU.

⁴ Includes loan from Angola in 2016 and 2017.

⁵ Includes use of IMF program support.

Table 3. Summary Accounts of the Central Bank, 2015–2020
(Millions of new dobra)

	2015	2016	2017	2018		2019	2020
	Actual	Actual	Actual	5th Rev	Actual	Proj.	Proj.
Net foreign assets	1,903	1,775	1,474	1,590	1,416	1,401	1,420
Claims on nonresidents	2,243	2,144	1,840	1,958	1,798	1,797	1,806
Official foreign reserves	1,864	1,752	1,442	1,588	1,352	1,356	1,418
Other foreign assets	379	392	398	370	446	441	388
Liabilities to nonresidents	-341	-368	-366	-368	-382	-396	-385
Short-term liabilities to nonresidents	-120	-144	-158	-175	-169	-185	-176
Other foreign liabilities	-221	-224	-208	-193	-213	-211	-209
Net domestic assets	-341	-135	9	31	80	92	111
Net domestic credit	130	259	172	93	133	118	241
Claims on other depository corporations	128	198	195	195	195	145	145
Net claims on central government	-113	-69	-157	-244	-201	-60	63
Claims on central government	266	446	260	371	310	421	531
<i>Of which: use of SDRs/PRGF</i>	196	180	211	83	147	259	369
Liabilities to central government	-380	-515	-417	-615	-511	-482	-468
Ordinary deposits of central government	-11	-33	-41	-262	-20	-20	-20
Counterpart funds	-120	-82	-60	-60	-65	-65	-65
Foreign currency deposits	-249	-400	-316	-293	-426	-397	-383
<i>Of which: National oil account</i>	-230	-271	-234	-224	-419	-390	-376
Claims on other sectors	115	131	135	142	139	33	33
Other items (net)	-470	-394	-163	-62	-53	-26	-130
Base money (M0)	1,562	1,640	1,484	1,621	1,496	1,493	1,531
Currency issued	315	309	324	354	393	463	505
Bank reserves	1,247	1,332	1,160	1,267	1,103	1,030	1,026
<i>Of which: domestic currency</i>	980	1,183	1,013	1,107	947	870	866
<i>Of which: foreign currency</i>	266	149	147	160	157	160	160
Memorandum items:							
Gross international reserves (US\$ millions) ¹	61.9	55.9	51.4	58.2	35.1	34.9	38.8
Months of imports of goods and nonfactor services ²	5.4	4.9	4.4	4.7	2.8	2.7	3.0
Net international reserves (US\$ millions) ³	56.5	49.7	43.8	49.3	27.3	26.2	30.5
Months of imports of goods and nonfactor services ²	4.9	4.4	3.7	3.7	2.2	2.1	2.4
National Oil Account (US\$ millions)	10.3	11.5	11.3	11.4	19.5	18.3	17.8
Commercial banks reserves in foreign currency (US\$ millions)	11.9	6.3	7.1	8.2	7.3	7.5	7.5
Guaranteed deposits (US\$ millions)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Base money (annual percent change)	37.5	5.0	-9.6	9.3	0.8	-0.2	2.6

Sources: São Tomé and Príncipe authorities' data and IMF staff estimates and projections.

¹ Gross international reserves exclude the National Oil Account and commercial banks' foreign currency deposits at the BCSTP in order to meet reserve requirements, for new licensing, and for meeting capital requirements.

² Imports of goods and nonfactor services excluding imports of investment goods and technical assistance.

³ Net international reserves exclude the National Oil Account and commercial banks' foreign currency deposits at the BCSTP in order to meet reserve requirements, for new licensing, and for meeting capital requirements.

Table 4. Monetary Survey, 2015–2020
(Millions of new dobra)

	2015	2016	2017	2018		2019	2020
	Actual	Actual	Actual	5th Rev	Actual	Proj.	Proj.
Net foreign assets	2,527	2,105	1,582	1,709	1,636	1,577	1,599
Net foreign assets of the BCSTP	1,903	1,775	1,474	1,590	1,416	1,401	1,420
Net foreign assets of other depository corporations	624	330	108	119	220	176	179
Net domestic assets	301	586	1,099	1,310	1,429	1,497	1,693
Net domestic credit	1,680	1,779	1,972	2,011	2,228	2,178	2,303
Net claims on central government	-303	-336	-196	-283	94	182	295
Claims on central government	275	483	687	798	977	1,036	1,135
Liabilities to central government	-578	-819	-883	-1,081	-883	-854	-840
Budgetary deposits	-11	-33	-41	-262	-20	-20	-20
Counterpart funds	-120	-82	-60	-60	-65	-65	-65
Foreign currency deposits	-448	-704	-782	-759	-798	-769	-755
Of which: National Oil Account	-230	-271	-234	-224	-419	-390	-376
Claims on other sectors	1,984	2,115	2,168	2,293	2,134	1,995	2,008
Of which: claims in foreign currency	609	515	442	468	395	389	391
(Millions of \$US)	27	22	21	24	18	18	19
Other items (net)	-1,379	-1,193	-873	-700	-799	-680	-609
Broad money (M3)	2,828	2,691	2,681	3,019	3,066	3,074	3,293
Local currency liabilities included in broad money (M2)	1,894	1,898	1,966	2,213	2,325	2,331	2,497
Money (M1)	1,431	1,522	1,578	1,777	1,849	1,854	1,986
Currency outside depository corporations	247	259	295	323	314	297	318
Transferable deposits in dobra	1,184	1,264	1,283	1,454	1,535	1,558	1,669
Other deposits in dobra	463	375	388	436	476	477	511
Foreign currency deposits	934	794	716	806	741	743	795
Memorandum items:							
Velocity (ratio of GDP to M3; end of period)	2.5	2.9	3.0	3.1	3.0	3.0	3.0
Money multiplier (M3/M0)	1.8	1.6	1.8	1.9	2.0	2.1	2.2
Base money (12-month growth rate)	37.5	5.0	-9.6	9.3	0.8	-0.2	2.6
Claims on other resident sectors (12-month growth rate)	5.4	6.6	2.5	5.8	-1.6	-6.5	0.6
M3 (12-month growth rate)	13.1	-4.8	-0.4	12.6	14.3	0.3	7.1
Eurorization ratio	35.9	32.3	27.1	28.5	26.2	24.0	23.8

Sources: São Tomé and Príncipe authorities' data and IMF staff estimates and projections.

Table 5. Financial Soundness Indicators, December 2012–December 2018¹
(Percent)

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2018	2018	2018
	Dec.	Dec.	Dec.	Dec.	Dec.	Dec.	Mar.	Jun.	Sep.	Dec.
Capital Adequacy										
Regulatory capital to risk-weighted assets	20.3	22.7	22.6	24.1	27.8	33.6	34.9	31.9	31.2	30.7
Percentage of banks (out of total number) with regulatory capital to risk-weighted assets										
... greater or equal to 10 percent	87.5	75.0	75.0	85.7	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
... between 6 and 10 percent	0.0	12.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
... below 6 percent minimum	12.5	12.5	25.0	14.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Capital (net worth) to assets	22.7	18.4	20.3	15.5	22.5	24.0	23.8	22.3	21.4	20.8
Deposits with banks below 6 percent capital to assets										
... (in millions of dobras)	83.2	59.0	325.1	455.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
... (percent of deposits)	4.6	2.9	13.7	17.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
... (percent of GDP)	1.7	1.1	5.1	6.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Asset quality										
Foreign exchange loans to total loans	57.9	53.9	46.5	42.1	27.5	17.2	16.5	14.3	9.9	9.7
Past-due loans to gross loans	66.7	30.4	36.2	35.0	30.7	27.6	28.3	26.6	23.4	26.9
Nonperforming loans/credit (IFRS definition)	15.4	16.9	19.1	29.8	27.0	24.9	25.4	22.0	17.9	24.6
Watch-listed loans	51.3	13.6	17.2	5.2	3.7	2.8	2.9	4.6	5.5	2.3
Provision as percent of past-due loans	15.4	56.3	45.1	68.7	71.2	80.0	80.8	80.8	73.9	79.7
Earnings and profitability										
Return on assets	-0.8	-2.1	-3.2	-5.2	0.0	-0.6	0.4	0.4	0.7	-0.1
Return on equity	-3.3	-9.3	-15.9	-27.1	0.2	-3.0	1.8	1.9	3.5	-0.8
Expense (w/ amortization & provisions)/income	117.8	471.1	164.5	215.9	108.6	112.8	92.0	96.6	92.0	106.7
Liquidity										
Liquid assets/total assets	37.8	40.8	45.8	52.0	54.0	49.7	50.8	47.2	50.0	50.1
Liquid assets/short term liabilities	61.5	39.6	72.7	72.5	84.6	69.1	68.2	62.4	66.4	66.3
Loan/total liabilities	64.7	56.3	47.3	47.1	47.0	53.1	50.2	55.6	50.9	51.6
Foreign exchange liabilities/total liabilities	30.8	27.0	28.1	30.0	26.6	28.6	27.8	26.6	25.1	25.8
Loan/deposits	101.7	85.8	69.6	63.5	63.5	59.7	57.3	63.8	58.2	59.1
Sensitivity to market risk										
Foreign exchange liabilities to shareholders funds	105.0	119.3	110.3	162.8	91.5	90.5	88.7	88.5	92.2	98.2

Sources: São Tomé and Príncipe authorities' data and IMF staff estimates.

Note: Beginning June 2013, data are based on improved methodology and not strictly comparable with earlier data.

¹ Excluding Banco Equador (beginning December 2016) and BPSTP (beginning June 2018).

Table 6a. Balance of Payments, 2015–2022
(Millions of U.S. dollars)

	2015	2016	2017	2018		2019	2020	2021	2022
	Actual	Actual	Actual	5th Rev	Est.	Proj.	Proj.	Proj.	Proj.
Trade balance	-107.6	-105.5	-112.1	-141.3	-116.8	-118.9	-124.9	-131.3	-139.5
Exports, f.o.b.	11.3	13.6	15.6	14.0	16.0	18.2	19.4	20.1	20.7
Cocoa	7.9	8.6	8.6	11.3	8.2	11.2	11.8	12.3	12.7
Re-export	2.2	3.2	4.7	5.1	6.8	5.8	6.1	6.2	6.0
Imports, f.o.b.	-118.9	-119.1	-127.7	-155.3	-132.9	-137.1	-144.3	-151.4	-160.1
Food	-34.3	-36.1	-31.6	-38.4	-31.1	-32.6	-34.3	-36.1	-38.8
Petroleum products	-31.3	-21.7	-27.6	-39.2	-33.6	-33.2	-33.5	-33.1	-33.4
Non-oil investment goods	-27.9	-31.2	-33.5	-42.4	-31.3	-32.7	-35.9	-39.6	-42.1
Oil sector related investment goods	-15.9	-12.7	-21.3	-25.9	-23.0	-25.3	-27.9	-31.7	-35.3
Other	-9.6	-17.4	-13.7	-9.4	-13.8	-13.3	-12.6	-10.9	-10.6
Services and income (net)	10.6	18.2	3.8	29.1	17.5	14.1	15.8	25.5	33.9
Exports of nonfactor services	78.7	82.9	70.5	97.4	80.8	87.9	95.9	112.0	124.8
Of which : travel and tourism	62.1	68.8	59.9	81.4	70.8	77.4	84.8	100.2	112.4
Imports of nonfactor services	-67.1	-65.7	-65.6	-63.1	-65.1	-72.5	-75.4	-78.2	-81.8
Factor services (net)	-1.0	1.0	-1.1	-5.2	1.7	-1.3	-4.7	-8.3	-9.2
Of which: oil related	0.0	0.0	-1.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Private transfers (net)	18.1	15.9	16.7	19.1	16.3	15.9	16.3	17.5	18.8
Official transfers (net)	40.0	48.5	41.1	61.3	35.4	39.6	41.8	41.0	40.2
Of which : project grants (excluding HIPC grants)	27.6	40.2	26.9	45.9	26.4	27.8	30.0	29.2	28.4
HIPC Initiative-related grants	6.0	2.9	3.0	4.2	1.6	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.3
Current account balance									
Including official transfers	-38.9	-22.9	-50.5	-31.7	-47.7	-49.4	-50.9	-47.3	-46.5
Excluding official transfers	-78.9	-71.4	-91.5	-93.0	-83.1	-88.9	-92.7	-88.3	-86.8
Capital and financial account balance	59.7	-5.2	74.9	36.9	27.9	43.9	49.6	48.4	51.3
Capital transfer	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Financial account	63.4	-5.2	74.9	36.9	27.9	43.9	49.6	48.4	51.3
Foreign Direct Investment	25.8	20.7	41.4	50.0	28.1	31.1	34.2	38.6	42.8
Petroleum related investment	24.2	19.3	32.3	39.3	24.2	26.6	29.4	33.4	37.2
Portfolio Investment (net)	0.3	0.6	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Oil signature bonuses	2.4	3.3	2.3	10.0	10.0	2.5	3.0	3.4	3.9
Other investment (net)	31.3	-29.9	30.6	-13.1	-10.3	10.3	12.4	6.4	4.6
Assets	9.5	-19.5	2.2	-9.5	-9.5	-9.7	-9.9	-10.1	-10.3
Public sector (net)	26.1	8.2	8.6	3.5	5.3	6.7	5.8	6.6	6.9
Project loans	33.6	6.4	7.2	10.1	5.5	6.6	6.6	7.6	8.2
Program loans	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Amortization	-7.5	1.8	1.4	-6.0	-0.2	0.1	-0.8	-0.9	-1.3
Of which : HIPC Initiative-related grants	-6.1	-2.9	-2.5	-3.3	1.4	-3.3	-3.3	-3.3	-3.1
Private sector (net)	-4.3	-18.6	19.8	-7.1	-6.1	13.3	16.5	9.8	7.9
Commercial banks	9.7	13.8	8.8	-0.8	-5.0	2.2	0.0	0.1	0.1
Short-term private capital	-14.0	-32.3	10.9	-6.3	-1.1	11.0	16.6	9.7	7.9
Errors and omissions	27.7	23.6	-35.1	0.0	11.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Overall balance	18.5	-4.6	-10.6	4.4	-8.2	-5.5	-1.3	1.1	4.7
Financing	-18.5	4.6	10.6	-4.4	8.2	0.2	-4.0	-6.4	-7.4
Change in official reserves, excl. NOA (increase= -)	-18.2	5.0	6.6	-5.7	15.9	-0.6	-4.3	-6.0	-6.3
Use of Fund resources (net)	0.0	0.9	2.8	1.4	0.5	-0.3	-0.3	-0.4	-0.6
Purchases	0.9	1.8	2.8	1.8	0.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Repurchases (incl. MDRI repayment)	-0.9	-0.9	0.0	-0.4	-0.4	-0.3	-0.3	-0.4	-0.6
National Oil Account (increase = -)	-0.4	-1.3	0.2	-0.1	-8.2	1.2	0.5	0.0	-0.5
Financing Gap	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-5.3	-5.3	-5.3	-2.7
Proposed IMF program	...	...	...	...	...	5.3	5.3	5.3	2.7
Memorandum items:									
Current account balance (percent of GDP)									
Including official transfers	-12.2	-6.6	-13.7	-20.0	-11.5	-11.3	-10.8	-9.3	-8.4
Excluding official transfers	-24.8	-20.5	-24.8	-6.8	-20.0	-20.4	-19.6	-17.3	-15.7
Debt service ratio (percent of exports) ¹	3.8	3.3	3.8	4.6	4.2	5.2	5.5	4.9	4.7
Gross international reserves ²									
Millions of U.S. dollars	61.9	55.9	51.4	58.2	35.1	34.9	38.8	44.2	49.6
Months of imports of goods and nonfactor services ³	5.4	4.9	4.4	4.4	2.8	2.7	3.0	3.3	3.6

Sources: São Tomé and Príncipe authorities' data and IMF staff estimates and projections.

¹ Percent of exports of goods and nonfactor services.

² Gross international reserves exclude the National Oil Account and commercial banks' foreign currency deposits at the BCSTP in order to meet reserve requirements, for new licensing, and for meeting capital requirements.

³ Imports of goods and nonfactor services excluding imports of investment goods and technical assistance.

Table 6b. Balance of Payments, 2015–2022
(In percent of GDP)

	2015	2016	2017	2018		2019	2020	2021	2022
	Actual	Actual	Actual	5th Rev	Est.	Proj.	Proj.	Proj.	Proj.
Trade balance	-33.8	-30.3	-30.3	-30.3	-28.1	-27.2	-26.4	-25.8	-25.3
Exports, f.o.b.	3.6	3.9	4.2	3.0	3.9	4.2	4.1	4.0	3.7
Cocoa	2.5	2.5	2.3	2.4	2.0	2.6	2.5	2.4	2.3
Re-export	0.7	0.9	1.3	1.1	1.6	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.1
Imports, f.o.b.	-37.4	-34.3	-34.6	-33.3	-32.0	-31.4	-30.5	-29.7	-29.0
Food	-10.8	-10.4	-8.5	-8.2	-7.5	-7.5	-7.3	-7.1	-7.0
Petroleum products	-9.8	-6.2	-7.5	-8.4	-8.1	-7.6	-7.1	-6.5	-6.0
Non-oil investment goods	-8.8	-9.0	-9.1	-9.1	-7.5	-7.5	-7.6	-7.8	-7.6
Oil sector related investment goods	-5.0	-3.7	-5.8	-5.6	-5.5	-5.8	-5.9	-6.2	-6.4
Other	-3.0	-5.0	-3.7	-2.0	-3.3	-3.0	-2.7	-2.1	-1.9
Services and income (net)	3.3	5.2	1.0	6.2	4.2	3.2	3.4	5.0	6.1
Exports of nonfactor services	24.7	23.9	19.1	20.9	19.5	20.1	20.3	22.0	22.6
Of which: travel and tourism	19.5	19.8	16.2	17.5	17.1	17.7	18.0	19.7	20.4
Imports of nonfactor services	-21.1	-18.9	-17.7	-13.5	-15.7	-16.6	-16.0	-15.3	-14.8
Factor services (net)	-0.3	0.3	-0.3	-1.1	0.4	-0.3	-1.0	-1.6	-1.7
Of which: oil related	0.0	0.0	-0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Private transfers (net)	5.7	4.6	4.5	4.1	3.9	3.6	3.5	3.4	3.4
Official transfers (net)	12.6	14.0	11.1	13.2	8.5	9.1	8.9	8.0	7.3
Of which: project grants (excluding HIPC grants)	8.7	11.6	7.3	9.9	6.4	6.4	6.4	5.7	5.1
HIPC Initiative-related grants	1.9	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.4	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.6
Current account balance	-12.2	-6.6	-13.7	-6.8	-11.5	-11.3	-10.8	-9.3	-8.4
Including official transfers	-12.2	-6.6	-13.7	-6.8	-11.5	-11.3	-10.8	-9.3	-8.4
Excluding official transfers	-24.8	-20.5	-24.8	-20.0	-20.0	-20.4	-19.6	-17.3	-15.7
Capital and financial account balance	18.8	-1.5	20.3	7.9	6.7	10.0	10.5	9.5	9.3
Capital transfer	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Financial account	19.9	-1.5	20.3	7.9	6.7	10.0	10.5	9.5	9.3
Foreign Direct Investment	8.1	6.0	11.2	10.7	6.8	7.1	7.2	7.6	7.8
Petroleum related investment	7.6	5.6	8.7	8.4	5.8	6.1	6.2	6.6	6.7
Portfolio Investment (net)	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Oil signature bonuses	0.8	1.0	0.6	2.1	2.4	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.7
Other investment (net)	9.8	-8.6	8.3	-2.8	-2.5	2.4	2.6	1.3	0.8
Assets	3.0	-5.6	0.6	-2.0	-2.3	-2.2	-2.1	-2.0	-1.9
Public sector (net)	8.2	2.4	2.3	0.8	1.3	1.5	1.2	1.3	1.3
Project loans	10.6	1.9	2.0	2.2	1.3	1.5	1.4	1.5	1.5
Program loans	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Amortization	-2.4	0.5	0.4	-1.3	0.0	0.0	-0.2	-0.2	-0.2
Of which: HIPC Initiative-related grants	-1.9	-0.8	-0.7	-0.7	0.3	-0.7	-0.7	-0.6	-0.6
Private sector (net)	-1.4	-5.3	5.4	-1.5	-1.5	3.0	3.5	1.9	1.4
Commercial banks	3.0	4.0	2.4	-0.2	-1.2	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
Short-term private capital	-4.4	-9.3	3.0	-1.4	-0.3	2.5	3.5	1.9	1.4
Errors and omissions	8.7	6.8	-9.5	0.0	2.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Overall balance	5.8	-1.3	-2.9	0.9	-2.0	-1.3	-0.3	0.2	0.9
Financing	-5.8	1.3	2.9	-0.9	2.0	0.0	-0.9	-1.3	-1.3
Change in official reserves, excl. NOA (increase = -)	-5.7	1.4	1.8	-1.2	3.8	-0.1	-0.9	-1.2	-1.1
Use of Fund resources (net)	0.0	0.3	0.8	0.3	0.1	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1
Purchases	0.3	0.5	0.8	0.4	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Repurchases (incl. MDRI repayment)	-0.3	-0.3	0.0	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1
National Oil Account (increase = -)	-0.1	-0.4	0.1	0.0	-2.0	0.3	0.1	0.0	-0.1
Financing Gap	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-1.2	-1.1	-1.0	-0.5
Proposed IMF program	...	...	...	...	...	1.2	1.1	1.0	0.5
Memorandum items:									
Debt service ratio (percent of exports) ¹	3.8	3.3	3.8	4.6	4.2	5.2	5.5	4.9	4.7
Gross international reserves ²									
Millions of U.S. dollars	61.9	55.9	51.4	58.2	35.1	34.9	38.8	44.2	49.6
Months of imports of goods and nonfactor services ³	5.4	4.9	4.4	4.4	2.8	2.7	3.0	3.3	3.6

Sources: São Tomé and Príncipe authorities' data and IMF staff estimates and projections.

¹ Percent of exports of goods and nonfactor services.

² Gross international reserves exclude the National Oil Account and commercial banks' foreign currency deposits at the BCSTP in order to meet reserve requirements, for new licensing, and for meeting capital requirements.

³ Imports of goods and nonfactor services excluding imports of investment goods and technical assistance.

Table 7. External Financing Requirements and Sources, 2015–2022
(Millions of U.S. dollars)

	2015	2016	2017	2018		2019	2020	2021	2022
	Actual	Actual	Prel.	5th Rev	Proj.	Proj.	Proj.	Proj.	Proj.
Gross financing requirements	-105.6	-64.6	-86.4	-105.7	-67.7	-89.8	-98.1	-95.6	-95.0
Current account, excluding official transfers	-78.9	-71.4	-91.5	-93.0	-83.1	-88.9	-92.7	-88.3	-86.8
Exports, f.o.b.	11.3	13.6	15.6	14.0	16.0	18.2	19.4	20.1	20.7
Imports, f.o.b.	-118.9	-119.1	-127.7	-155.3	-132.9	-137.1	-144.3	-151.4	-160.1
Services and income (net)	10.6	18.2	3.8	29.1	17.5	14.1	15.8	25.5	33.9
Private transfers	18.1	15.9	16.7	19.1	16.3	15.9	16.3	17.5	18.8
Financial account	-8.5	1.8	-1.4	-7.0	-0.6	-0.3	-1.1	-1.4	-1.9
Scheduled amortization	-7.5	1.8	1.4	-6.0	-0.2	0.1	-0.8	-0.9	-1.3
IMF repayments	-0.9	-0.9	0.0	-0.4	-0.4	-0.3	-0.3	-0.4	-0.6
Change in external reserves (-ve = increase)	-18.2	5.0	6.6	-5.7	15.9	-0.6	-4.3	-6.0	-6.3
Available funding	135.5	65.6	82.6	106.5	67.7	84.5	92.8	90.3	92.3
National Oil Fund (net)	2.0	2.1	2.5	9.9	1.9	3.7	3.5	3.4	3.4
Oil signature bonuses	2.4	3.3	2.3	10.0	10.0	2.5	3.0	3.4	3.9
Saving (-ve = accumulation of oil reserve fund)	-0.4	-1.3	0.2	-0.1	-8.2	1.2	0.5	0.0	-0.5
Expected disbursements	73.6	54.9	48.3	71.4	40.9	46.2	48.5	48.5	48.5
Multilateral HIPC interim assistance	6.0	2.9	3.0	4.2	1.6	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.3
Grants	34.0	45.6	38.0	57.1	33.8	36.2	38.5	37.6	36.9
Concessional loans	33.6	6.4	7.2	10.1	5.5	6.6	6.6	7.6	8.2
Project loans	33.6	6.4	7.2	10.1	5.5	6.6	6.6	7.6	8.2
Program loans	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Private sector (net)	58.9	6.8	29.0	23.3	24.1	34.6	40.8	38.4	40.5
IMF	0.9	1.8	2.8	1.8	0.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Financing gap	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-5.3	-5.3	-5.3	-2.7
Exceptional financing	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Residual financing gap	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-5.3	-5.3	-5.3	-2.7
Proposed IMF program	...	...	...	...	...	5.3	5.3	5.3	2.7

Sources: São Tomé and Príncipe authorities' data and IMF staff estimates and projections.

Table 8. Indicators of Capacity to Repay the Fund, 2019–2033
(as of April 30, 2019)

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
Fund obligations based on existing credit (millions of SDRs)															
Principal	0.22	0.26	0.41	0.60	0.75	0.76	0.76	0.57	0.38	0.13	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Charges and interest	0.06	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08
Fund obligations based on existing and prospective credit (millions of SDRs)															
Principal	0.22	0.26	0.41	0.60	0.75	0.95	1.71	2.28	2.85	2.79	2.47	1.71	0.95	0.19	0.00
Charges and interest	0.06	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08
Total obligations based on existing and prospective credit															
Millions of SDRs	0.28	0.34	0.49	0.68	0.83	1.03	1.79	2.36	2.93	2.87	2.55	1.79	1.03	0.27	0.08
Millions of U.S. dollars	0.39	0.48	0.69	0.97	1.19	1.48	2.57	3.38	4.20	4.11	3.66	2.57	1.48	0.39	0.11
Percent of exports of goods and services	0.37	0.41	0.53	0.67	0.76	0.89	1.44	1.78	2.06	1.89	1.57	1.03	0.55	0.14	0.04
Percent of debt service ¹	7.04	7.50	10.71	14.05	15.61	13.19	23.83	32.37	41.02	41.22	37.00	24.91	14.48	3.85	1.15
Percent of quota	1.89	2.30	3.31	4.59	5.61	6.96	12.09	15.95	19.80	19.39	17.23	12.09	6.96	1.82	0.54
Percent of gross international reserves ²	1.12	1.23	1.57	1.95	2.29	2.67	4.36	5.79	7.27	7.21	6.49	4.63	2.72	0.73	0.22
Outstanding Fund credit															
Millions of SDRs	8.4	12.0	15.4	16.7	15.9	15.0	13.2	11.0	8.1	5.3	2.9	1.1	0.2	0.0	0.0
Millions of U.S. dollars	11.8	16.8	21.7	23.7	22.8	21.4	19.0	15.7	11.6	7.6	4.1	1.6	0.3	0.0	0.0
Percent of exports of goods and services	11.1	14.6	16.5	16.3	14.6	12.9	10.7	8.3	5.7	3.5	1.8	0.7	0.1	0.0	0.0
Percent of debt service ¹	211.6	263.8	335.6	344.0	299.0	191.5	176.3	150.3	113.5	76.4	41.4	15.9	2.7	0.0	0.0
Percent of quota	56.9	80.8	103.7	112.5	107.4	101.0	89.5	74.1	54.8	35.9	19.3	7.7	1.3	0.0	0.0
Percent of gross international reserves ²	33.7	43.3	49.1	47.8	44.0	38.8	32.3	26.9	20.1	13.4	7.3	3.0	0.5	0.0	0.0
Memorandum items:															
Exports of goods and services (millions of U.S. dollars)	106.0	115.3	132.1	145.5	156.4	166.5	178.0	190.4	203.6	217.8	233.0	249.2	266.6	285.2	305.2
Debt service (millions of U.S. dollars)	5.6	6.4	6.5	6.9	7.6	11.2	10.8	10.5	10.2	10.0	9.9	10.3	10.2	10.1	10.0
Quota (millions of SDRs)	14.8	14.8	14.8	14.8	14.8	14.8	14.8	14.8	14.8	14.8	14.8	14.8	14.8	14.8	14.8
Gross international reserves ²	34.9	38.8	44.2	49.6	51.9	55.2	58.8	58.4	57.8	57.0	56.3	55.4	54.4	53.3	52.1
GDP (millions of U.S. dollars)	437	472	510	552	594	641	689	739	792	849	910	976	1046	1122	1203

Sources: São Tomé and Príncipe authorities' data and IMF staff estimates and projections.

¹ After HIPC and MDRI debt relief. Including IMF repurchases and repayments in total debt service.

² Gross international reserves excludes the National Oil Account and commercial banks' foreign currency deposits at the BCSTP in order to meet reserve requirements, for new licensing, and for meeting capital requirements.

Table 9. Schedule of Disbursements Under an ECF Arrangement, 2019–2022

Availability Date¹	Disbursement conditions	SDR Amount	Percent of Quota
06/17/19	Board approval of arrangement.	1,902,857	12.86
10/15/19	Observance of continuous and end-June 2019 PCs and completion of the first review.	1,902,857	12.86
04/15/20	Observance of continuous and end-December 2019 PCs and completion of the second review.	1,902,857	12.86
10/15/20	Observance of continuous and end-June 2020 PCs and completion of the third review.	1,902,857	12.86
04/15/21	Observance of continuous and end-December 2020 PCs and completion of the fourth review.	1,902,857	12.86
10/15/21	Observance of continuous and end-June 2021 PCs and completion of the fifth review.	1,902,857	12.86
04/15/22	Observance of continuous and end-December 2021 PCs and completion of the sixth review.	1,902,858	12.86
	Total	13,320,000	90.0

Source: International Monetary Fund.

¹ Based on Board approval upon completion of each review.

Annex I. Ex-Post Peer Reviewed Assessment (EPA)

A. Overview

1. São Tomé and Príncipe became an IMF member in 1977, when it gained independence from Portugal. The country has had a series of Fund-supported programs. The most recent Ex-Post Assessment (EPA) of Longer-Term Program Engagement (SM/12/129) was completed in June 2012, covering three lending arrangements and one staff-monitored program during 2000-2011.

2. The country is fragile in several aspects. Low capacity and political instability have impeded reform implementation; smallness, insularity, a lack of natural resources, and high vulnerability to external shocks constrained economic development. Between 2001-2014, there were ten different coalition governments. For the first time during 2014-2018, a majority government completed one full term. A new coalition government took office in December 2018 following the election in October 2018 and might face challenges similar to those faced by previous coalition governments.

3. This report reviews two arrangements with São Tomé and Príncipe since 2012.

- An Extended Credit Facility (ECF) arrangement (2012-15) was approved in July 2012 (SDR 2.6 million, 35 percent of quota) with two reviews completed.
- An ECF arrangement (2015-18) was approved in July 2015 (SDR 4.4 million, 60 percent of quota). The program completed five out of six reviews and expired at end-2018, shortly after a new coalition government took office.

B. Program Objectives

4. The 2012-15 ECF arrangement focused on maintaining macroeconomic stability and accelerating structural reforms. The program aimed to strengthen public finances, monetary policy, banking supervision, and anti-money laundering. Oil production was expected to begin in 2015 but did not materialize due to high extraction costs.

5. The 2015-18 ECF arrangement's overall objective was to address high debt vulnerability while also creating conditions for sustained growth. It sought to strengthen domestic revenue mobilization; improve public debt and public financial management, including addressing government arrears issues; enhance financial stability; and improve the business environment.

C. Program Performance

6. The 2012-15 ECF arrangement achieved limited progress. It went off track when a loan contracted in March 2014 failed to meet the required concessionality; subsequently, fiscal policy slipped in the run-up to the 2014 election. The quantitative performance criteria (QPC) on domestic primary balance (DPD)¹ was missed at both reviews, reflecting poor revenue performance (Table 1, Figure 1) from a lack of progress in tax administration, including expanding the number of tax-payers. While some progress was observed in public financial management and a domestic treasury bills market was introduced (Table 3), other structural reforms were delayed, including arrears regularization among the Treasury, the oil supplier ENCO, and the state-owned utility company EMAE, and the implementation of a new Consumer Price Index (CPI) and the public information management system.

7. Progress under the 2015-18 ECF arrangement was also limited. During 2015-18, central government debt (the focus of the ECF) declined by eight percentage points of GDP; however, total public debt (including arrears of EMAE to its suppliers) in percent of GDP stayed broadly unchanged due to the large arrears accumulated by EMAE. The economic base remained narrow, inflation increased, and international reserves declined, with the loss accelerating to 1.3 months of imports in 2018.

8. Failure to implement fiscal consolidation and declining external inflows contributed to the reserve loss. Particularly during the election years of 2016 and 2018, fiscal targets were exceeded by over two percent of GDP. The QPC on DPD was missed in four out of five reviews, reflecting poor revenue collection, which declined from 14.1 to 11.8 percent of GDP during 2014- 2018. Key contributing factors included a narrow tax base that relied heavily on import taxes, little progress in tax administration, and poor collection of income taxes during elections. During this period, a decline in world oil prices significantly reduced tax revenue from imports. Though fiscal policies served as the primary tool given the fixed exchange rate regime, implementation of effective instruments for monetary policy could have incentivized the holding of domestic currency deposits and alleviated pressure on foreign exchange reserves.

9. Some progress was made on the structural front, albeit with delays (Table 4). In particular, the government's arrears to ENCO on oil price subsidies were regularized; an automatic price mechanism, a plan to reform EMAE, a comprehensive NPL strategy, and a new CPI were adopted; and a new Bank Resolution Law was submitted to the National Assembly. However, some key reforms including the adoption of a VAT and tax administration reforms are pending.² Though the management improvement plan and least cost electricity production plan for EMAE were prepared, their adoption was delayed by the election. In addition, an Asset Quality Review (AQR) of

¹ It excludes grants from revenue and, hence, focuses on domestic revenue mobilization. Investment financed by external project loans and grants was also excluded to reduce the potential for mis-reporting caused by weak capacity to monitor these highly volatile activities. Debt limits were used to manage debt vulnerability.

² A VAT law was submitted to the parliament in July 2018 but needs to be resubmitted by the new government.

the banking system was completed in April 2019, a substantial delay from the initial expected completion date of December 2017. Even though the economy grew steadily at three to four percent annually, it was insufficient to generate enough employment for the rapidly growing young population.

10. Low capacity, the small size, and dependence on external financing also contributed to delays in reform implementation. For example, it took the authorities some time to obtain funding to conduct the AQR. Subsequently, the authorities also faced challenges in procuring consultants because of the project's small size.

D. Program Design

11. Because the country is a low-income, fragile state, a three-year ECF arrangement was the most appropriate instrument. While the size of the 2012-15 program appeared to be adequate, a bigger 2015-18 program could have been beneficial in light of significantly lower external inflows than initially expected. Some key assumptions, such as on growth, impacts of tax administrative measures, and external inflows, could have been more conservative.

12. Some features of the program design contributed to more expansive underlying fiscal policy. Specifically, the program allowed for a carve-out from the DPD target of investments linked to EU budget grant conditionality and additional equivalent amount of domestic borrowing to finance the DPD. In 2017 such carve-outs accounted for about 1.2 percent of GDP. In addition, the program allowed for domestic borrowing when external inflows fell short for up to \$3 million (close to one percent of GDP). In 2017, this adjustor was fully utilized.

E. Lessons Learned

13. Program targets should be ambitious but realistic, while recognizing structural reforms require time and persistence in a fragile environment. For instance, the projections of revenue impacts from tax measures could have been more conservative in retrospect. This is because major reforms require change management and take time to generate results. Some may require more than one program cycle to complete, particularly in an environment of low capacity, fragility, and susceptibility to external shocks. The eventual implementation of some benchmarks of the 2012-15 ECF arrangement during 2015-18, such as a new Consumer Price Index and the public information management system (SAFEe), are cases in point.

14. Fiscal targets should be designed to mitigate the impact of large fluctuations in external inflows on foreign reserves under a pegged exchange rate. Mobilizing revenue, including by broadening the tax base through a VAT and strengthening revenue administration, will be vital to meeting the fiscal target and buttressing the peg. In addition, external inflow projections should be conservative; when considering carve-outs from budget support, the potential impact from the attendant domestic borrowing should be fully taken into account, and domestic borrowing must be limited in the face of persistent shortfalls in external inflows.

15. Program design should account for political fragility candidly and explicitly. Both programs showed that the government tended to overspend and under-collect taxes in election years. Timing of the review, prior actions, performance criteria, and benchmarks should be set to mitigate the risk of slippages. In addition, reforms should be prioritized, and the program needs to be adjusted to account for changing conditions.

16. Development and use of monetary policy tools are important for supporting the peg. As illustrated by the recent large reserve loss, tightening monetary policy could help stem and reverse reserve losses through stimulating savings and demand for domestic currency.

17. Future programs should further emphasize promoting sustainable, inclusive growth in coordination with other partners. In a country with a young and rapidly growing population, accelerated growth is needed to make a dent on poverty. Given large gender gaps in labor force participation, promoting female entrepreneurship and economic opportunities could be low-hanging fruit in this regard; furthermore, this could help build support for the overall program by supporting inclusive growth in a fragile environment. Because gender equality, as well as other key structural reforms, such as promoting tourism and addressing energy sector issues, fall outside the IMF's core areas of expertise, closer collaboration with development partners is essential.

18. Sustained engagement and hands-on technical assistance (TA) are critical for structural reforms. As noted in the EPA of 2012, the successful 2005-08 program coincided with the presence of a resident representative and other long-term advisors, indicating that close policy dialogue, particularly through a resident representative or long-term advisors, is critical to responding promptly to evolving needs. Most TA missions, which provided valuable diagnostics and recommendations, are short. Thus, they need to be complemented with sustained follow-up and hands-on support, particularly by longer-term advisors, in a country with very low capacity to ensure implementation. For example, a peripatetic expert who visited the country for up to a few months each time was crucial in helping the authorities prepare a draft VAT law and start the preparation for its eventual implementation.

19. Authorities' views: In a fixed exchange rate regime, the effectiveness of monetary policy is limited, which requires the authorities to have a conservative and coordinated fiscal policy to ensure the sustainability of the exchange rate regime as a nominal anchor of monetary policy. Notwithstanding the value of short-term TA missions as a source of diagnosis and recommendations, practical and extended hands-on support by advisors with relevant expertise is essential. In particular, TA by experts with experience of monetary policy under a fixed exchange rate is critical to program implementation.

Annex I. Table 1. Quantitative Performance Criteria for the Three-Year ECF Arrangement, 2012–2015

Description	Status of Conditionality			
	R1	R2	Next Prog. Request	
	Board Date	Jun-13	Dec-13	Jul-15
	Test Date	Dec-12	Jun-13	Dec-14
Floor on domestic primary balance				
Ceiling on changes in net bank financing of the central government (at program exchange rate)				
Floor on net international reserves of the central bank				
Ceiling on central government's outstanding external payment arrears (stock)				
Ceiling on the contracting or guaranteeing of new nonconcessional external debt with original maturity of more than one year by the central government or the BCSTP				
Ceiling on the outstanding stock of external debt with original maturity of up to and including one year owed or guaranteed by the central government or the BCSTP				

Met
Not met

Annex I. Table 2. Quantitative Performance Criteria for the Three-Year ECF Arrangement, 2015–2018

Description	Status of Conditionality						
	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5		
	Board/obs. Date	Jun-16	Dec-16	Dec-17 (Combined)	Dec-17 (Combined)	Jul-18	Jun-19
	Test Date	Dec-15	Jun-16	Dec-16	Jun-17	Dec-17	Jun-18
Floor on domestic primary balance							
Ceiling on changes in net bank financing of the central government (at program exchange rate)							
Floor on net international reserves of the central bank							
Ceiling on central government's outstanding external payment arrears (stock)							
Ceiling on the contracting or guaranteeing of new nonconcessional external debt with original maturity of more than one year by the central government or the BCSTP							
Ceiling on the outstanding stock of external debt with original maturity of up to and including one year owed or guaranteed by the central government or the BCSTP							

Met
Not met

Annex I. Table 3. Structural Benchmarks Under the Three-Year ECF Arrangement, 2012–2015

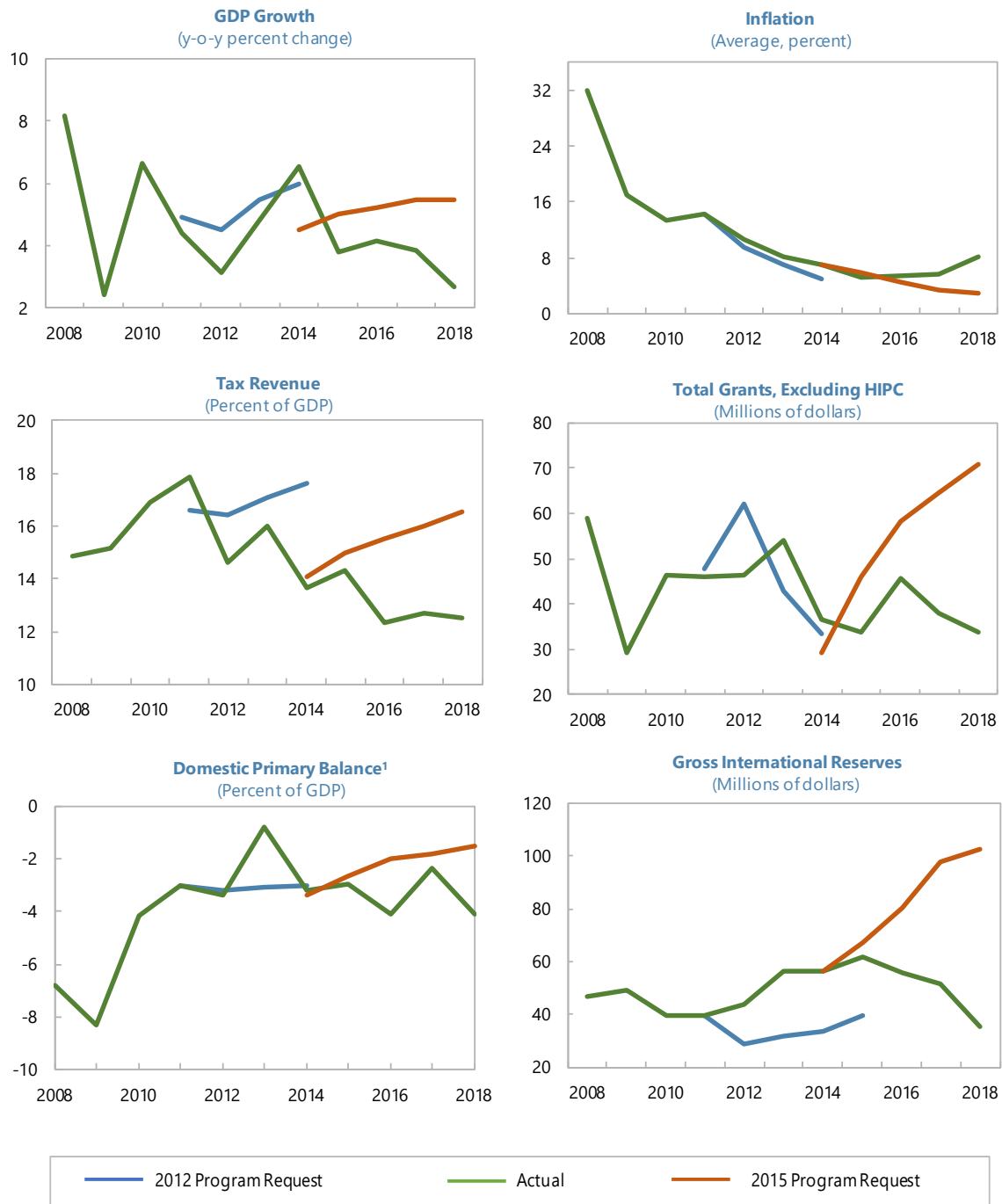
Category	Description	Status of Conditionality			
			R1	R2	Next Prog. Request
		Test Date	Dec-12	Jun-13	Dec-14
		Board/obs. Date	Jun-13	Dec-13	Jul-15
Program Request	Develop a reform strategy plan to modernize tax administration in line with FAD recommendations.				
	Strengthen external control, by preparing the general government accounts for 2012 and sending them to the Court of Audit.				
	Strengthen internal control, by reconciling and certifying the cross-arrears between ENCO, EMAE, and the Treasury, and agreeing on a strategy to address these and to prevent future accumulation of arrears between these entities.				
	Improve liquidity management, by setting up a framework for forecasting liquidity, international reserves, and government accounts to identify the level of excess or deficit in liquidity.				
	Strengthen banking supervision and regulation, by – Completing the on-site supervision process for remaining two commercial banks.				
	Strengthen banking supervision and regulation, by – Completing the on-site supervision process for the largest commercial bank.				
	Strengthen banking supervision and regulation, by – Completing the on-site supervision process for two commercial banks.				
	Strengthening AML/CFT, by submitting to parliament appropriate draft amendments to the AML/CFT law.				
R1	Customs administration: Complete the second phase of ASYCUDA WORLD implementation, by Activating all the functionalities and the establishing a fully computerized procedure.				
	Tax administration: Improve taxpayer management and compliance with tax obligations, by Enhancing the security of the Taxpayer Registry, creating a dedicated large taxpayer unit, and creating a single taxpayer computerized file system.				
	Strengthen internal control, by finalizing a plan to clear over time EMAE's arrears to ENCO and to avoid a recurrence in the future of the problem of cross-arrears.				
	CPI statistics: Improve consumer price index statistics, by Reweighting the CPI components and introducing new goods and services to the CPI basket.				
	Expand the tax base by launching the "Operation Taxpayer Inclusion" project and: Registering 500 new tax payers from the date of the program's launch.				
	Expand the tax base by launching the "Operation Taxpayer Inclusion" project and: Registering 800 new tax payers from the date of the program's launch.				
	Undertake preparatory arrangements for the installation of a One-Stop-Shop for foreign trade by: Eliminating hardcopy documents and introducing electronic signing and approval				
	Undertake preparatory arrangements for the installation of a One-Stop-Shop for foreign trade by: Establishing the connectivity and management of customs/Tax NIF.				
	Strengthen internal control by Eliminating all arrears between the Treasury and EMAE.				
	Strengthen banking supervision and regulation by: Preparing a revised draft Central Banking Law that strengthens autonomy of the central bank in line with international standards, including in the resolution of problem banks.				
	Strengthen banking supervision and regulation by: Ensuring that all commercial banks publish audited financial accounts for 2013, or applying penalties for non-compliance.				
	Strengthen banking supervision and regulation by: Ensuring that all commercial banks that are open to the public have a capital-to-risk-weighted-asset ratio of at least 12 percent.				

	Met
	Not met
	Partially met
	Implement with delay
	To be confirmed
	Prior Actions

Annex I. Table 4. Structural Benchmarks Under the Three-Year ECF Arrangement, 2015–2018

Category	Description	Status of Conditionality					
			R1	R2	R3 & R4 Combined	R5	
		Test Date	Dec-15	Jun-16	Dec-16 & Jun-17	Dec-17	Jun-18
		Board/Obs. Date	Jun-16	Dec-16	Dec-17	Jul-18	Mar-19
Program Request	Prepare, in consultation with ENCO and EMAE, and submit to the Fund, a comprehensive plan with a clear timeline to regularize all arrears outstanding and prevent the accumulations of new ones.						
	Adopt a plan to reform EMAE (state-owned electricity and water utilities company) to ensure full cost-recovery.						
	Adopt an automatic fuel price adjustment mechanism that allows timely pass-through of import costs with a view to its gradual introduction in 2016. (Prior action at 2nd review)						
	Complete detailed assessment of compliance with Basel Core Principles.						
	Prepare and submit to staff a comprehensive strategy to help banks deal with high NPLs on their balance sheets.						
	Submit to the National Assembly a new Bank Resolution Law.						
	Publish revised national accounts series through 2013.						
	Start monthly compilation of the new re-weighted and expanded CPI series.						
	Develop and submit to the National Assembly a National Export Diversification Strategy						
R1	Submit to the National Assembly a new VAT law.						
	Introduce legislation to transfer the execution for collection of tax arrears from fiscal court judge to the tax administration.						
	Complete a public investment management assessment (PIMA) and submit to staff a reform plan to strengthen public investment management practices.						
	Establish an Audit Board policy for BCSTP that specifies a role similar to a conventional audit committee, with responsibilities for oversight of internal and external audit mechanisms, and financial reporting.						
R2	Submit the draft public private partnership (PPP) law to the National Assembly.						
	Complete an independent detailed asset quality review (AQR) of banks.						
	Complete assessment of regulation and supervision in lieu of a full assessment of compliance with Basel Core Principles.						
R3 & R4	Adopt a 2018 budget that is consistent with the program parameters.						
	Adopt financial management plan and least cost energy-production plan for EMAE.						
	Adopt measures to contain EMAE's loss in the near term.						
R5	Submit monthly monitoring table of tax payments by top 10 taxpayers during June-October 2018.						
	Require the external consultant to complete an inception report for asset quality review of banks.						
	Issue a resolution to incorporate expenditure measures in the 2018 budget in line with the						
	Collect tax arrears owed by Rosema and other large taxpayers (Dobras 38 million).						
	Collect tax liabilities accumulated in 2018 from large taxpayers (Dobra 60 million)						

	Met
	Not met
	Implement with delay
	To be confirmed
	Prior Actions

Annex I. Figure 1. Program Indicators, 2008–2018

Sources: STP authorities and IMF staff calculations.

¹ 2018 includes financing unaccounted for.

Annex II. Risk Assessment Matrix 2019¹

Source of Risks	Relative Likelihood	Time Horizon	Potential Impact	Policy Response
Domestic risks				
Fiscal policy slippages	Medium	ST	High. Additional public spending and poor revenue collection could put further pressures on international reserves and inflation.	Concrete measures are identified for meeting 2019 fiscal targets including prior actions to safeguard consolidation and reform.
Political risk	Medium	ST, MT	High. Political fragility and could disrupt policy continuity, deter private investments, as well as delay reforms and project implementation.	Improve governance, codify procedure for the approval of private investments, and institutionalize key reform agenda.
Limited implementation capacity	High	ST, MT	Medium. It could affect tax collection and spending controls, as well as slow down structural reforms (e.g., EMAE reform) and project implementation.	Continued hands-on technical assistance.
Continued weakness in banking sector	Medium	ST, MT	Low. Continued high NPLs could further stall already anemic credit growth, and insufficient banking regulation could overlook financial stability risks.	Structural benchmarks for implementing measures to reduce vulnerabilities and upgrading banking regulation.
External risks				
Delays in donor disbursements	Medium	ST, MT	High. The country heavily depends on external support, and delayed disbursements would undermine growth and exacerbate loss of international reserves.	Appointment of the Treasury to coordinate externally financed projects to avoid delay.
Sharp tightening of global financial conditions. This causes higher debt service and refinancing risks; stress on leveraged firms, households, and vulnerable sovereigns; capital account pressures; and a broad-based downturn. The tightening could be a result of: • Market expectation of tighter U.S. monetary policy triggered by strong wage growth and higher-than-expected inflation. • Sustained rise in risk premium in reaction to concerns about debt levels in some euro area countries; a disorderly Brexit; or idiosyncratic policy missteps in large emerging markets.	Low	ST	Low. It could lead to lower availability of concessional lending and higher interest payments for new loans.	Mobilize fiscal revenues and continue fiscal consolidation to reduce the external financing needs. Diversify the financing sources.
	Low	ST		
Weaker-than-expected global growth. The global growth slowdown could be synchronized as weakening outlooks in the U.S., Europe and China feed off each other and impact on earnings, asset prices and credit performance. • U.S.: Confidence wanes against a backdrop of a long expansion with stretched asset valuations, rising leverage, and unwinding of the fiscal stimulus, leading to abrupt closure of the output gap	Medium	ST, MT	Low. The economic linkages between São Tomé and Príncipe and the U.S. are weak, hence the potential impact would be low.	Implement the tourism development strategy, improve agricultural productivity, and gradually reduce the reliance on external grants.

¹ Source: IMF staff assessment.

The Risk Assessment Matrix (RAM) shows events that could materially alter the baseline path (the scenario most likely to materialize in the view of IMF staff). The relative likelihood is the staff's subjective assessment of the risks surrounding the baseline ("low" is meant to indicate a probability below 10 percent, "medium" a probability between 10 and 30 percent, and "high" a probability between 30 and 50 percent). The RAM reflects staff views on the source of risks and overall level of concern as of the time of discussions with the authorities. Non-mutually exclusive risks may interact and materialize jointly. "Short term (ST)" and "medium term (MT)" are meant to indicate that the risk could materialize within 1 year and 3 years, respectively.

<p>rather than a smooth landing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Europe: In the near term, weak foreign demand makes euro area businesses delay investment, while faltering confidence reduces private consumption. Adverse financial market reaction to debt sustainability concerns further dampens growth. A disorderly Brexit could cause market disruption with negative spillovers. In the medium term, disregard for the common fiscal rules and rising sovereign yields for high-debt countries test the euro area policy framework, with adverse impact on confidence and growth. • China: In the short term, intensification of trade tensions and/or a housing market downturn prompt a slowdown, which is not fully offset by policy easing. Deleveraging is delayed and financial stresses, including capital outflow and exchange rate pressures, emerge. In the medium term, insufficient progress in deleveraging and rebalancing reduces growth and raises the probability of a larger disruptive adjustment. There would be negative spillovers on the global economy through trade volumes, commodity prices, and financial markets. 	<p>High</p>	<p>ST, MT</p>	<p>Low. Weakness in external demand could dampen the country's exports, especially its tourism industry, leading to lower real GDP growth and slower reserves accumulation.</p> <p>Low. China's support, all in grants so far, is unlikely to be affected given that the amount involved is very low and the diplomatic relationship between China and São Tomé and Príncipe was recently renewed.</p>	
<p>Intensification of security risks in parts of Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, and/or the Middle East cause regional socio-economic and political disruptions, with potential global spillovers.</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>ST, MT</p>	<p>Low. This risk could negatively affect the overall growth of the African continent, potentially reducing the demand for São Toméan exports and the tourist arrivals to this country. However, the security situation of this country and neighboring countries has been quite stable, and African tourists constitute a relatively small portion of its total exports, so the impact is likely to be low.</p>	<p>Continue to maintain a stable and secure environment, and to diversify the tourist base.</p>
<p>Large swings in energy prices. Risks to prices are broadly balanced, reflecting offsetting—but large and uncertain—supply and demand shocks. In the near term, uncertainty surrounding the shocks translates to elevated price volatility, complicating economic management and adversely affecting investment in the energy sector. As shocks materialize, they may cause large and persistent price swings. While, on aggregate, higher oil prices would harm global growth, they would benefit oil exporters.</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>ST, MT</p>	<p>Medium. The impact of <i>lower</i> energy prices is mixed: On the one hand, the country is an oil importer, so lower oil prices tends to improve its current account; On the other hand, oil import tax is an important source for the country's fiscal revenue, so lower oil prices would dampen its customs revenue and impose further fiscal pressure. Accordingly, the higher <i>volatility</i> in energy prices would have a medium impact on managing the customs revenue as well as implementing the fiscal budget.</p>	<p>Improve the efficiency of electricity generation to reduce oil imports. Mobilize fiscal revenues and diversify its revenue sources.</p>

Annex III. Safeguarding Social Spending and Analyzing Policy Impacts on Inclusive Growth

1. **IMF staff will coordinate with development partners and other international organizations that focus on inclusive growth.** For example, staff are planning, together with the UN and the authorities, a two-day workshop in June to begin outlining the key components for a national action plan on boosting female economic empowerment and participation and financial inclusion. In July, a one-day high-level event will feature panel discussions with experts on gender equality to further refine and inform the national action plan.
2. **Several planned development projects are set to begin in 2019 with the aim of protecting the country's most vulnerable and promoting economic development.** The World Bank recently approved a five-year, \$10 million poverty reduction project with two key components: a cash transfer program and skills development initiatives. The emphasis of the first year will be on enhancing government capacity and institutions for the social safety net system and skills development sectors. The project will also develop a targeting system to properly identify the poorest households in the selected municipalities and a proper payment mechanism for delivery of cash transfers. Both are expected to enhance efficiency and transparency. Cash transfers will be complemented by skills development initiatives to promote a sustainable graduation out of poverty.
3. **The project will help scale up conditional cash transfers, behavioral change activities, and training in entrepreneurial skills and tourism in the country.** It is expected that 2570 households will be provided with cash transfers (equivalent to 91 percent of all households in extreme poverty) at a cost of approximately \$1 million annually (representing 0.28 percent of the country's GDP in 2016), which the government would likely be able to maintain moving forward. Reaching all poor households in São Tomé and Príncipe would require an investment of \$7.2 million per year (2.0 percent of the country's GDP), which is within international standards for expenditures on social assistance.
4. **In addition, the project will support the establishment of a hospitality and tourism school to support labor skills development and entrepreneurship training in secondary education.** The proposed project is expected to increase employability of beneficiaries, provide sustainable opportunities for economic gain, and reduce poverty in the short- and longer-term particularly among the extreme poor.
5. **The International Labour Organization announced plans to spend \$1 million for youth employment projects in São Tomé and Príncipe.** One focus of the project is on self-employment. Female youth unemployment stood at 33 percent in 2017, more than double the male rate.

Annex IV. Findings and Implications of the Asset Quality Review

1. **A comprehensive Asset Quality Review (AQR) of banks' exposures was concluded in March 2019.** Supported by the World Bank, the AQR by Deloitte assessed the classification and valuation of a sample of loan exposures as of end-June 2018. More specifically, the AQR analyzed whether exposures were misclassified as performing when there was evidence of impairment in line with specific criteria and how much additional provisioning was required in such cases. The number of sampled loans ranged from 21 to 57 clients per bank, covering between 55 and 88 percent of total loans. The review also assessed the value of samples of collateral (mostly real estate) obtained by the banks in lieu of loan repayment, and it applied default probabilities to banks' exposure to central government and public sector entities (both securities and direct loans) to calculate expected losses deemed to require additional provisioning (although by regulation no such provision is necessary).
2. **The results of the AQR point to widespread loan misclassification and overvalued collateral.** The AQR found that close to 30 percent of performing loans (35 percent of loan amounts) were misclassified, with the highest share of any one bank at 90 percent (existing NPLs, however, were adequately provisioned overall). Banks' clients were assessed against their capacity to service the loans from operations and, where deemed not possible, the value of the underlying collateral. In cases of attested non-viability, specific provisioning rates were then applied for different cases of operational difficulties, in many cases leading to sizable provisioning gaps to be closed with additional provisions (overall about two-thirds of net loan amounts plus provisions on accrued interest). Similarly, the properties ceded to banks were assessed by directly applying different discount factors and, alternatively, by way of local expert judgment. The two methods led to broadly similar valuations requiring large haircuts and thus provisions of about half of book value. Moreover, in the case of one bank, a questionable large exposure to a related party was flagged as requiring a full provision.
3. **As a result of the additional provisions that reduce the net asset value, banks' regulatory capital is set to drop considerably, likely requiring replenishment in some cases.** Using data from June 2018, the AQR calculated that if all the recommended provisions were recognized, the system-wide capital adequacy ratio for non-risk-weighted assets would fall by almost eight percentage points, from 21.2 percent to 13.5 percent, and some banks would likely require recapitalization.
4. **The AQR findings also point to the need for strengthening BCSTP's supervisory process and banks' control mechanisms.** As a consequence of the deficiencies encountered, the AQR recommends an increase in staffing at BCSTP's supervision department. Evident understaffing may have contributed to the widespread infractions of prudential regulation, with on-site inspections occurring rather infrequently (prior to the AQR two banks had not had an inspection for four years). In addition to hiring more supervisors, the AQR calls for capacity building, notably towards better planning of supervisory action. Furthermore, the AQR recommends improving the enforcement of current regulation by way of better monitoring of banks' credit operations, which

will require additional resources, as well as imposing additional requirements for banks' internal control systems and governance.

5. Ongoing reform efforts, supported by IMF technical assistance, aim at remedying the shortcomings found by the AQR. A multi-year TA project on implementing risk-based supervision at the BCSTP includes (i) developing a bank rating system to improve off-site monitoring and (ii) new regulation on risk management requirements for banks. However, for these measures to have an impact, the ability of supervisors to identify misclassifications and enforce remedial action needs to be strengthened. The TA project also foresees additional capacity building for BCSTP staff and its understaffing needs to be tackled.

Annex V. Reforms at EMAE and the Energy Sector

1. EMAE has been registering large losses and accumulating arrears with suppliers. After an expansion of the electricity network, the loss surged to about 4 of GDP annually during 2016-18, compared to an average of 1.5 percent of GDP in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). The losses mainly reflect very high technical and commercial losses (totaling 34 percent of the energy produced). Meanwhile, the collection rate (89 percent in 2017), including from public institutions, is suboptimal. The losses have been predominantly financed by accumulating arrears to the domestic oil company ENCO,¹ which reached about 20 percent of GDP at end-2018.

Annex V. Table 1. Energy Sector Selected Indicators

Parameter	EMAE 2017 figures	Comparator
Electricity access rate (%)	59	43 ¹
Electricity customers	40,772	
Installed capacity	29.9 MW with only 15 MW guaranteed	
Energy mix (%)	94.5 diesel, remaining hydroelectric	
Average cost of service	\$0.27/kWh	\$0.21/kWh ²
Average tariff	\$0.23/kWh	\$0.15/kWh ²
Average transmission and distribution losses (%)	34 (23 being commercial losses)	15 ³
Bill collection rate (%)	89	93 ²

Notes:

¹ Weighted average across SSA.

² Median value across 39 SSA countries.

³ Weighted average value across 39 SSA countries.

Sources: Tracking SDG7: The Energy Progress Report <https://trackingsdg7.esmap.org/results>. World Bank, Washington, DC.; Kojima, Masami; Trimble, Chris. 2016. Making Power Affordable for Africa and Viable for Its Utilities. World Bank, Washington, DC. © World Bank. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/25091> License: CC BY 3.0 IGO.

2. The World Bank Power Sector Recovery Project supports a long-term structural improvement of EMAE and the whole energy sector in São Tomé and Príncipe. The project has four main components covering the energy supply chain from generation to distribution: (i) improving the physical infrastructure, including rehabilitating and expanding the main hydropower plant, rehabilitating the electricity grid, and installing meters; (ii) developing sectoral planning, particularly the Least Cost Development Plan; (iii) establishing regulatory frameworks and strengthening the capacity of the regulator AGER, including a tariff study; and (iv) implementing a Management Improvement Plan (MIP) of EMAE. The goal is to achieve cost recovery over the

¹ Majority owned by Sonangol, an Angolan state-owned company.

medium-term by reducing production costs and distribution losses, as well as by protecting revenue through improving billing and collection and reducing commercial losses. In addition, the project will review tariffs in accordance with a new production cost structure and set in place the regulatory framework to align the tariff to cost of services. Addressing operational inefficiencies (mainly non-technical losses) could reduce losses to below one percent of GDP.

3. The project is expected to yield the following medium-term results:

- Rehabilitating and expanding the capacity of the only operating hydropower plant on the island, Contador HPP, by end-2021 to 3.2 MW to reduce overall generation cost.
- Focusing on identifying resources for the timely development of the recently approved Least Cost Development Plan that identified as a priority the development of 8.8 MW of dual-fueled thermal units heavy fuel oil (HFO) or liquified natural gas (LNG) and about 2MW of a photovoltaic solar plant, while mobilizing partnerships to study and develop existing hydropower potential.
- Improving collections, particularly from large consumers through the installation of advanced metering infrastructure, adopting modern billing practices, procuring and installing a state-of-the-art management information system (MIS), and linking cost of services to payment through tariff reform.
- Improving operational efficiency of EMAE by implementing a new organizational structure in the Commercial Direction and redefining the functions of the Finance Direction and Management support units. This would include selection of personnel according to the competences of each position in the new organizational structure.
- Reducing commercial losses by establishing a dedicated loss-reduction unit within the company with explicit annual performance targets, holding key managers responsible for achieving annual loss reduction targets.
- Implement demand-side management (DSM) measures to suppress peak electricity demand and lower overall electricity consumption. This could include (i) a program to “swap” incandescent light bulbs for LED light bulbs for residential consumers and (ii) a National Energy Efficiency Program within Public Administration to reduce energy consumption.
- Continuing to implement the communication campaign to ensure social acceptance of the reform and behavioral change of customers to strengthen payment discipline and reduce electricity theft.

4. More specifically, the following targets can be achieved, with a strong government commitment:

Annex V. Table 2. Medium-Term Targets				
Year	2019	2020	2021	2022
Commercial Losses (percent)	23	19	17	15
Conditions	Baseline	MIP ¹ and sensitization campaign	MIP and sensitization and RPP ²	MIP plus sensitization and RPP plus network reinforcement
Technical Losses (percent)	11	10	10	10
Conditions	Baseline	Upgrade work started	Upgrade completed	Improved planning/operation of network
Revenue Collection (percent)	89	92	95	95
Conditions	MIP implemented, new organization and public sensitization.	Management performance objective	Management performance objective	Management performance objective
¹ MIP: Management Improvement Plan.				
² RPP: Revenue Protection Program.				

5. A study on the tariff structure has been completed and the draft report is being discussed with the government. This World Bank-financed study confirmed that the current tariff structure has two interrelated deficiencies: (i) the system's average tariffs are low when compared with costs of service and when compared with other insular systems, and (ii) the tariff structure is inefficient—there are high cross-subsidies across customer groups. Over time, the new tariff structure for non-individual consumer categories should be aligned with the cost of supply and indexed to the cost of fuel. Potential cross-category subsidies have been carefully crafted to maintain a social tariff to the poorest customers. For individual customers, the tariffs have been benchmarked to the willingness-to-pay and affordability assessment from a household energy survey that was completed in 2018. A tariff increase will also need to be aligned with improvements in quality of service to avoid an increase in theft and nonpayment or loss of clients to self-generation. The current average tariff in São Tomé and Príncipe is already higher than the average tariff in SSA while a 10 percent increase in tariffs is estimated to generate less than \$1 million in net fiscal gains in the current context.

6. The impact of the Bank's project on EMAE's balance is estimated in the table below (this simulation is based on current tariff structure):

Annex V. Table 3. Energy Sector Operations, Baseline 2016-2022

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
	Actual	Actual	Proj.	Proj.	Proj.	Proj.	Proj.
Energy Produced (MWH)	105,756	109,072	109,072	109,072	109,072	109,072	124,672
<i>EMAE-diesel</i>	95,254	100,453	100,453	100,453	100,453	100,453	100,453
<i>EMAE-hydro</i>	5,800	5,045	5,045	5,045	5,045	5,045	20,645
<i>Private</i>	4702	3,574	3,574	3,574	3,574	3,574	3,574
Cons/loss at the central (in % of total energy)	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Energy Injected in the Grid (MWH)	101,796	105,112	105,112	105,112	105,112	105,112	120,146
<i>Total Losses (in MWh in % of energy injected)</i>	38	34	34	34	29	27	25
<i>Technical losses</i>	13	11	11	11	10	10%	10%
<i>Non-technical losses</i>	25	23	23	23	19	17	15
Delivered to Clients (MWH) and Invoiced	63,528	68,955	68,955	68,955	74,701	76,803	90,190
Paid (MWH)	52,675	61,232	61,232	63,439	68,725	70,659	82,975
Collection rate (%)	83	89	89	92	92	92	92
Revenues (mln USD)	12	14	14	15	16	16	19
Average price (USD per kWh)	0.24	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23
Cost (mln USD)	26.9	30	30	30	30	30	30
Average cost (USD per kWh)	0.25	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.24
Profit/loss (mln USD)	-14.5	-16.6	-15.6	-15.0	-14.0	-14.0	-11.0

As can be seen in this model, without a drastic change of cost of production or an in-depth tariff revision (or a combination thereof), EMAE losses will continue to accumulate in the short to medium term. Immediate actions are therefore needed to reduce the fiscal burden from the energy sector.

Priority Measures for Turnaround:

- Accelerating the implementation of the Management Improvement Plan (MIP) to reduce non-technical losses and improve payment. This should include measures to prevent the leakage and theft of diesel for power generation. Commercial losses should be reduced by four percentage points in the first year of its implementation (2020) and two percentage points per year subsequently.
- Urgently implement DSM measures to suppress peak electricity demand and lower overall electricity consumption. To the extent peak demand can be reliably reduced, a DSM program can provide “Nega-Watts” that function as a type of negative-capacity. According to the demand study, 68 percent of the evening demand peak load is related to residential consumption, for which lighting requirements are about 70 percent of consumption. Currently, lighting requirements are now mainly met by inefficient incandescent lighting (74 percent of households use incandescent bulbs) or moderately efficient CFL bulbs (29 percent of households). If EMAE or the government were to undertake a DSM program that “swapped” incandescent light bulbs for LED light bulbs for residential consumers (around three bulbs per account), a significant reduction in peak electricity demand as well as overall demand may be achieved. The peak demand reduction alone can reduce the annual demand by 10 percent, a

figure close to the annual demand growth. This campaign would also reduce individual customer's bills and the risk of arrears from residential customers. This approach should be coupled with a prohibition (or tax) on incandescent bulbs. All government agencies should also be directed to ensure efficient use of energy in their offices, such as reducing the use of air conditioners and full implementation of an LED light bulbs program in the administrations.

- Switching from an expensive energy mix dominated by diesel generation to a more affordable mix, consisting of hydropower, solar energy, HFO or LNG, depending on market trends, as recommended in the Least Cost Development Plan (LCDP). The elimination of diesel would also stop its theft (estimated at ten percent of the total annual volume of diesel used for generation). At this stage the main option available would be to secure an independent power project (IPP) for an HFO/LNG dual plant (which would take up to 18 months) and a 2 MW solar photovoltaic plant.

Short term policy actions required:

Objective 1: Reduce commercial losses by four (six) percentage points and improve the collection rate by three (six) percentage points by June 2020 (June 2021) to lower commercial losses below 15 percent and raise collection rate to 95 percent by June 2021. This will be achieved by:

- a. Approving and implementing the MIP. Signing a performance contract with the CEO of EMAE and setting in place by September 2019 a dedicated team at EMAE to implement measures and achieve the above objectives.
- b. Reduce theft of diesel by half by June 2020 to lower the loss to below five percent.
- c. Arrears clearance plans are agreed with large private consumers, small and medium enterprises, as well as residential consumers. Government defines essential (non-disconnectable) and non-essential (disconnectable) consumption facilities. Services are cut off due to non-payment to be implemented by October 2019. In the meantime, a communication package is launched to explain that collective action is needed to improve electricity services.
- d. Modernize billing and install pre-paid and smart meters. EMAE installs 1200 prepayment meters to all facilities categorized as disconnectable by the government by June-2020. Continue to disconnect non-essential consumption for nonpayment.
- e. Government establishes a mechanism with EMAE to cap consumption and ensure timely bills payment by public entities, including by cutting EMAE's services and direct transfers from Treasury to pay EMAE to be implemented by June 2019.

Objective 2: Reduce peak energy consumption by ten percent within 12 months and facilitate the phase-out of incandescent bulbs within two years. Expected result within 12 months is a reduction in demand by ten percent. Hence this is equivalent to a slight net reduction in demand growth given annual growth is currently seven percent per annum. This is achieved through:

- a. Government will roll out a program to replace incandescent/fluorescent with LED program, which can be implemented within nine months. The \$1 million program will be funded by the World Bank.
- b. Government will pass a law that bans the importation of incandescent/fluorescent lamps within the two-year timeframe. Conduct outreach to stakeholders such as light importers, raising awareness and helping them access LED suppliers.

Objective 3: Set the stage for a tariff reform through (i) establishing a mechanism and (ii) implementing the first tariff reform once the prepaid meters are in place for the large consumers (planned within 12 months).

- a. The preliminary tariff analysis has been completed and identified the need for an in-depth tariff reform to be led by the regulator AGER aiming. In order to gradually achieve a cost-reflective tariff structure, the Government needs to immediately enforce through a decree the proposed adjustments regarding (i) tariff structure definition, (ii) customer category definition, (iii) social tariffs adjustments, and (iv) agreed timeline to achieve full cost-recovery structure. A draft decree has been submitted to the Government, and it should be approved by September 2019.
- b. The first tariff increase to be implemented once meters in place for large consumers, currently estimated at 12 months.

In sum below are the short-term targets and actions

	Baseline	June 2020	Target June 2021
Reducing commercial loss to	23 percent	19 percent	17 percent
Reducing technical loss to	11 percent	10 percent	
Raising bill collection rate	89 percent	93 percent	95 percent
Reduce diesel loss	10 percent	5 percent	

Actions to be taken	Target date
1 Signing contract with EMAE CEO and establish a dedicated team implemented to achieve the objective	Sep-19
2 Approve a decree to adjust the tariffs	Sep-19
3 Develop arrears clearance plan with customers and cut off nonpaying costumers	Oct-19
4 Install 1200 prepayment meters to all disconnectable users and continue to disconnect non-paying customers	Jun-20
5 Implement a LED program and stop importing incandescent and fluorescent lights	Mar-20
6 First tariff adjustment to be implemented	Jun-20

7. These measures would have the following impact on EMAE's accounts, assuming that the cost of production is reduced from \$0.27 per kWh in 2019 to \$0.19 per kWh in 2022 as per the results of the LCDP:

Annex V. Table 4. Energy Sector Operations							
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
	Actual	Actual	Proj.	Proj.	Proj.	Proj.	Proj.
Energy Produced (MWH)	105,756	109,072	109,072	109,072	109,072	109,072	124,672
<i>EMAE-diesel</i>	95,254	100,453	100,453	100,453	100,453	100,453	100,453
<i>EMAE-hydro</i>	5,800	5,045	5,045	5,045	5,045	5,045	20,645
<i>Private</i>	4702	3,574	3,574	3,574	3,574	3,574	3,574
Cons/loss at the central (in % of total energy produced)	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Energy Injected in the Grid (MWH)	101,796	105,112	105,112	105,112	105,112	105,112	120,146
<i>Total Losses in MWh (in % of energy injected)</i>	38	34	34	30	27	25	23
<i>Technical losses</i>	13	11	11	11	10	10	10
<i>Non-technical losses</i>	25	23	23	19	17	15	13
Delivered to clients (MWH) and Invoiced	63,528	68,955	68,955	73,159	76,803	78,905	92,593
Paid (MWH)	52,675	61,232	61,232	67,307	70,659	72,593	85,186
<i>Collection rate (%)</i>	83	89	89	92	92	92	92
Revenue (mlnUSD)	12.4	14.1	14.1	15.5	16.2	16.7	19.6
Average price (USD per kWh)	0.24	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23
Cost (mln USD)	26.9	29.9	29.9	27.3.9	25.1	22.9	23.2
Average cost (USD per kWh)	0.25	0.27	0.27	0.25	0.23	0.21	0.19
Profit/loss (mln USD)	-14.5	-16.6	-15.6	-11.8	-8.9	-6.2	-4.5

The arrears structure by customers reflected in EMAE annual accounts in 2017 is as follows, and a corresponding schedule of arrears could be agreed with the largest customers to improve EMAE's financials in the next three years.

Annex V. Table 5. Arrears Owed to EMAE in New Dobras		
Description	12/31/2017	% of total
Central government	26,913,947	11.6
Autonomous state institution	21,279,696	9.2
District government	35,836,675	15.4
Regional administration	9,452,297	4.1
ENASA (airport authorities)	20,933,678	9.0
Other public enterprises	2,302,392	1.0
Industrial clients	4,795,408	2.1
Commercial clients	22,838,199	9.8
Individual clients	75,323,745	32.4
Diplomatic missions	1,367,430	0.6
Telecommunication sector	6,030,842	2.6
Financial Sector	2,584,663	1.1
Airlines	228,416	0.1
Private organization	1,956,955	0.8
EMAE workers	131,460	0.1
Other entities	591,668	0.3
Clients creditors	-396,208	-0.2
TOTAL	232,171,263	100
Public clients	117,045,605	43
Private companies	39,801,913	25
Individual customers	75,323,745	32
TOTAL	232,171,263	100

Annex VI. Technical Assistance Priorities

1. CD activities in recent years reflected actual demand from the authorities and were fully in line with the reform priorities identified in the context of Article IV consultations and program reviews. The IMF has provided São Tomé and Príncipe with substantial technical assistance (TA) focused on: revenue administration and tax policy; PFM reform; banking resolution; and macroeconomic statistics.

Key achievements include:

- Implementation of an automatic fuel price adjustment mechanism
- Measures to strengthen PFM
- Drafting of a VAT law and preparation towards the introduction of the VAT
- Approval of a banking resolution law
- Adoption of risk-based supervision
- Introduction of an interbank market

2. However, limited human capacity has slowed implementation of reforms. The TA activities that were most effective are those that were accompanied by hands-on support and close follow-ups.

3. The top priority reforms going forward are:

- Maintain fiscal and debt sustainability and reduce the risk of debt distress through fiscal consolidation and improved public financial management, including at SOEs.
- Enhance revenue mobilization, notably by introducing a VAT regime, to create fiscal space for social and capital spending.
- Improve monetary policy and central bank operations
- Strengthen financial stability and intermediation by reducing NPLs, enhancing banking regulation and supervision, and improving the bank resolution framework.
- Improve quality and timeliness of economic statistics.

4. Accordingly, the capacity development (CD) strategy for São Tomé and Príncipe focuses on the following areas in order of priority for the next three years and the main objectives sought.

Priorities	Objectives
Tax Policy and Revenue Administration	Transition to VAT regime Strengthen the operational capacity of the tax administration Implement a medium-term modernization process of the tax administration
Public Financial Management	Improve budget preparation and forecasting Improve budget execution and control of arrears Strengthen capital spending framework Introduce MTEF
Financial Sector Regulation and Supervision	Implement NPL reduction strategy Enhance credit and liquidity risk assessment
Expenditure Policy	Rationalize current expenditure and improve public spending efficiency Create fiscal space
Monetary policy and central bank operations	Develop monetary policy instruments; Strengthening the central bank law and financial institutions law and establishing a governance structure that provides for independent oversight of central bank operations.
Financial Crisis Management	Improve resolution frameworks Support ongoing bank liquidation
Debt Management	Improve debt and cash flow management Foster interbank market development
Financial & Fiscal Law Reform	Strengthen financial sector legal and regulatory framework
Systemic Risk Analysis	Implement stress testing
Compilation of Statistics	Improve macroeconomic data (specifically, Improve GDP and CPI series Improve quarterly BOP and IIP statistics Improve monetary and government finance statistics)

Authorities' Views

5. Experience shows that technical assistance (TA) provided by long-term experts has been more effective because it not only produces the diagnosis of the problems but also supports the implementation of the actions. In other words, long-term experts can facilitate the full cycle of TA from diagnosis to implementation of recommendations.

6. **The effectiveness of TA** could be improved through mobilization of Portuguese-speaking experts to facilitate interaction because they are more likely to perceive the core of the problem and are better positioned to enhance the capabilities of local technicians.
7. **In particular, TA that includes on-the-job training** has also been shown to be quite effective in the context of Banking Supervision and Statistics.

Three-Year Arrangement Under the Extended Credit Facility

Attached hereto is a letter dated May 31, 2019 (the “Letter”), with its attached Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies (the “MEFP”) and Technical Memorandum of Understanding (the “TMU”), from the Minister of Finance, Commerce and the Blue Economy and the Governor of the Central Bank of São Tomé and Príncipe requesting from the International Monetary Fund, as Trustee of the Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust (the “Trustee”), a three-year arrangement under the Extended Credit Facility (“ECF”), and setting forth:

- (a) the objectives and policies of the program that the authorities of Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe intend to pursue during the three-year period of the arrangement;
- (b) the objectives, policies and measures that the authorities of Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe intend to pursue during the first year of the arrangement; and
- (c) understandings of Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe with the Trustee regarding reviews that will be made of progress in realizing the objectives of the program and of the policies and measures that the authorities of Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe will pursue during the second and third years of the arrangement.

To support these objectives and policies, the Trustee grants the requested three-year arrangement in accordance with the following provisions, and subject to the provisions applying to assistance under the Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust (the “PRG Trust”).

1. (a) For a period of three years from the date of approval of this arrangement, Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe will have the right to obtain disbursements from the Trustee in a total amount equivalent to SDR 13,320,000, subject to the availability of resources in the PRG Trust.

(b) Disbursements under this arrangement shall not exceed the equivalent of SDR 5,708,571 during the first 12 months of the arrangement, and the equivalent of SDR 9,514,285 during the first 24 months of the arrangement.

2. During the period of the arrangement:

(a) the first disbursement, in an amount equivalent to SDR 1,902,857, will be available upon approval of the arrangement, at the request of Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe;

(b) the second disbursement, in an amount equivalent to SDR 1,902,857, will be available on or after October 15, 2019 at the request of Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe and subject to paragraphs 4 and 5 below, and

(c) the third disbursement, in an amount equivalent to SDR 1,902,857, will be available on or after April 15, 2020, at the request of Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe and subject to paragraphs 4 and 5 below;

3. The right of Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe to request further disbursements during the second and third years of this arrangement shall be subject to such phasing and conditions as shall be determined in the context of reviews under the ECF arrangement for Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe.

4. Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe will not request:

The second and third disbursements under this arrangement specified in paragraphs 2(b) and 2(c) above, respectively:

(a) if the Managing Director of the Trustee finds that, with respect to the second disbursement, the data as of June 30, 2019, and with respect to the third disbursement, the data as of December 31, 2019, indicate that:

(i) the floor on domestic primary balance, or (ii) the ceiling on changes in net bank financing of the central government, or (iii) the floor on net international reserves of the central bank,

as set out in Table 3 of the MEFP and further specified in the TMU was not observed; or

(b) until the Trustee has determined that, with respect to the second disbursement, the first program review, and with respect to the third disbursement, the second program review, referred to in paragraph 45 of the MEFP has been completed.

5. Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe will not request a disbursement under this arrangement if at any time during the period of this arrangement:

(a) the ceiling on the accumulation of central government's new external payment arrears, or

(b) the ceiling on the contracting or guaranteeing of new nonconcessional external debt by the central government or the BCSTP as set out in Table 3 of the MEFP and further specified in the TMU, is not observed, or

(c) Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe:

(i) imposes or intensifies restrictions on the making of payments and transfers for current international transactions, or (ii) introduces or modifies multiple currency practices, or (iii) concludes bilateral payments agreements that are inconsistent with Article VIII, or (iv) imposes or intensifies import restrictions for balance of payments reasons.

6. The Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe will not request a disbursement under this Arrangement until the Trustee has determined that a financing assurances review has been completed, for as long as the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe, by virtue of its imposition of exchange controls, has outstanding non-sovereign external payment arrears

7. When Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe is prevented from requesting disbursements under this arrangement because of paragraphs 4, 5 and 6 above, such disbursements may be made available only after consultation has taken place between the Trustee and Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe and understandings have been reached regarding the circumstances in which Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe may request the disbursements.

8. Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe will provide the Trustee with such information as the Trustee requests in connection with the progress of Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe in implementing the policies and reaching the objectives of the program supported by this arrangement.

9. During the period of this arrangement, Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe shall remain in close consultation with the Trustee. In accordance with the Letter, Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe shall consult with the Trustee on the adoption of any measures that may be appropriate at the initiative of the government or whenever the Managing Director of the Trustee requests such a consultation. Moreover, after the period of this arrangement and while Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe has outstanding financial obligations to the Trustee arising from loan disbursements under this arrangement, Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe will consult with the Trustee from time to time, at the initiative of the government or whenever the Managing Director of the Trustee requests consultation on Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe's economic and financial policies. These consultations may include correspondence and visits of officials of the Trustee to Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe or of representatives of Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe to the Trustee.

Appendix I. Letter of Intent

São Tomé, May 31, 2019

Madame Christine Lagarde
Managing Director
International Monetary Fund
700 19th Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20431
USA

Dear Madame Lagarde:

A new government led by Prime Minister Jorge Bom Jesus took office in December 2018 in the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe following parliamentary elections. It intends to continue strengthening the relationship with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to implement far-reaching economic reforms to unleash the country's growth potential.

A three-year arrangement under the Extended Credit Facility (ECF) was approved by the IMF Executive Board in July 2015 and expired at end-2018. The program's objective was to promote sustainable growth and poverty reduction. The last review was not completed due to the interruption of the elections and the associated slippages in policy implementation.

Economic conditions are challenging as noted in the attached Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies (MEFP). In 2018, reserve loss reached about \$16.3 million, end-year inflation picked up to 9 percent, and real growth slowed to 2.7 percent from the average of 4 percent in the past few years.

The new government requests a new three-year ECF arrangement to support our medium-term economic reform program for 2019 to 2022. The key objective is to generate sustainable, higher, and more inclusive growth to create jobs, significantly reduce poverty, and improve the living standards of our population. To this end, the government is committed to enhancing macroeconomic stability, which is key to economic development and growth. The government also requests that the IMF Executive Board extend its approval of the measures resulting in exchange restrictions and a Multiple Currency Practice by one year.

Fiscal consolidation and monetary tightening will be implemented to address the external and internal imbalances as evidenced by the large reserves loss and acceleration of inflation in 2018. Fiscal consolidation is fundamental to manage excess domestic demand under a pegged exchange rate. To ensure adequate resources for boosting growth and providing public services, including social protection, health, education, and maintenance of public infrastructure, it is important to mobilize domestic revenue efficiently and equitably by expanding the revenue base, particularly by introducing a value added tax (VAT) and enforcing tax laws. It is equally important to rationalize public expenditure so that state employment will not crowd out private economic

activities. The government is also committed to expediting the reform of state-owned enterprises, particularly the utility company (EMAE) to cut losses and improve services, which is essential to contain fiscal risks and improve the business environment. Monetary policy tightening will also be important to reduce balance of payments pressures. These actions will also help support the removal of exchange restrictions over the medium term. The government also views the economic empowerment of women as essential to promoting inclusive growth.

To help achieve the objectives of this program, the government requests access of SDR 13,320,000 (90 percent of quota) including the first disbursement of SDR 1,902,857 upon approval of the arrangement by the IMF Executive Board. To monitor progress in implementing our reform agenda, the program includes a set of periodic and continuous performance criteria, indicative targets, prior actions, and structural benchmarks outlined in the MEFP and the Technical Memorandum of Understanding (TMU). As a sign of our commitment to the program, we have completed the prior actions for the approval of the ECF arrangement.

The government believes that the policies contained in the attached MEFP are adequate to achieve the objectives of the program, but it will take further measures that may become appropriate for this purpose. We will consult the IMF in advance on the adoption of these measures and revisions to the policies contained in the MEFP, in accordance with IMF policies on such consultations. We will also consult in advance with IMF staff on the terms of possible external borrowing to ensure that such borrowing does not jeopardize debt sustainability and is in line with the IMF's debt limits policy. Furthermore, we are committed to not (i) introducing or intensifying any exchange restrictions (ii) introducing or imposing import restrictions, (iii) introducing or modifying multiple currency practices, or (iv) concluding bilateral payment agreements in violation of Article VIII of the Articles of Agreements, which are continuous performance criteria under the ECF arrangement.

In line with its commitment to transparency and accountability, the government authorizes the IMF to publish this letter, its attachments, and related staff report, including placement of these on the IMF website in accordance with IMF procedures, following the IMF Executive Board's approval of the request.

Sincerely yours,

/s/

Mr. Osvaldo Vaz,
Minister of Finance, Commerce and the Blue
Economy

/s/

Mr. Américo Soares De Barros,
Governor of the Central Bank of São Tomé
and Príncipe

Attachments

1. Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies (MEFP)
2. Technical Memorandum of Understanding (TMU)

Attachment I. Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies for 2019

INTRODUCTION

1. **This Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies (MEFP) outlines the main objectives of the government of São Tomé and Príncipe's economic reform program for the period June 2019–June 2022,** for which the government is seeking support from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) through a new three-year arrangement under the Extended Credit Facility (ECF). The new ECF arrangement succeeds the one that was approved by the IMF Executive Board in July 2015 and expired at end-2018 with the last review not completed. The program aims to lay the foundation for stronger, more inclusive growth, and to catalyze financial support from bilateral and multilateral partners. The three-year ECF arrangement addresses the immediate pressure on the balance of payments through fiscal consolidation while stressing social protection and supporting women's empowerment and participation in the formal labor market.
2. **This MEFP also reviews recent economic developments and performance.** Furthermore, it assesses the economic outlook and risks and presents macroeconomic policies for 2019 and beyond.

RECENT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS AND OUTLOOK

3. **The economy faces pressing constraints, as international reserves fell sharply, growth slowed, and inflation rose in 2018.** Foreign exchange reserves declined by \$16.3 million, mainly driven by declining foreign inflows and higher fiscal spending. This is despite significant growth in tourist receipts, which rose by about 18 percent. Consequently, gross international reserves (GIR) at end-2018 reached about \$35 million (2.8 months of imports),¹ falling below the IMF low-income country reserve adequacy metric of 3.8 months of imports. The declining foreign inflows, along with the disruption from parliamentary elections and energy shortages, contributed to a slowdown of real GDP growth of more than one percentage point to 2.7 percent. Year-on-year inflation accelerated to 9.0 percent in December 2018 and 9.2 percent in February 2019, driven mostly by higher prices for fuel and locally-produced vegetables and fish. Credit to the economy contracted by 1.6 percent in 2018 because banks were hesitant to lend as economic activities slowed, and non-performing loans (NPLs) remained high due to a poorly functioning judiciary system and banks' slow write-off processes.

¹ When computing reserve coverage in month of imports, imports of investment goods and technical assistance, which are largely externally financed, are excluded from the base of imports of goods and nonfactor services.

4. Expansive fiscal policy contributed to pressure on foreign exchange reserves.

Domestic primary deficit (DPD) reached over 4 percent of GDP, exceeding the last program's indicative target of 1.3 percent of GDP significantly. The underlying position was even more expansive and reached almost 5 percent of GDP when borrowing by autonomous budgetary entities approved by the Ministry of Finance is included. Direct taxes fell sharply with the economic slowdown and possible election-related collection disruptions. The revenue shortfall was partially offset by a successful tax arrears collection, higher oil import tax revenue from higher international oil prices, and cuts in domestic spending. Delayed disbursement of EU budget support (€3 million) further increased domestic debt and arrears.

5. The banking sector suffers from challenging lending conditions, elevated operational costs, and additional provisioning uncovered by the asset quality review (AQR) and supervision by the BCSTP.

Provisioning on NPLs and the cost-to-income ratio are high even though they have fallen over the last four years. With growth of credit to the economy negative, the market dominance of the large partially state-owned bank could contribute to losses at smaller banks. The recently-concluded AQR found evidence of widespread loan misclassification. The resulting additional provisioning will likely require re-capitalization in some cases. Macro-financial linkages loom large as payment delays by government entities have impaired suppliers' loan servicing, collection of defaulted loans remains difficult, and lending is likely to remain slow due to the weak economy and banks' balance sheet constraints.

6. Total public and publicly guaranteed (PPG) debt, which includes debt from EMAE and borrowings by central public entities (such as parliament and courts), remained high at 89 percent of GDP (US\$360.2 million). During 2015-18, EMAE's continued arrears accumulation to its fuel supplier ENCO² offset the debt reduction effect from real economic growth, government's repayment of past oil price subsidies debt using yields from higher domestic than import prices, and limited new external loan disbursement. EMAE's arrears rose by US\$49 million during this period, from 13 percent of GDP in 2015 to 22 percent of GDP in 2018.

7. The country remains in debt distress due to prolonged unsettled external arrears.

The significant arrears of EMAE to its supplier also reflect the severe liquidity constraints of the public sector. In total, unsettled external arrears stood at 2.4 percent of 2018 GDP (US\$10.7 million), which are owed to Angola (US\$4.8 million), Brazil (US\$4.3 million), and Equatorial Guinea (US\$1.7 million). We have been actively following up with our creditor countries and letters were sent out in February 2019. An agreement with the Brazilian government was reached, pending ratification by the Brazilian Senate. Quantitative indicators alone under the new DSA framework would place the country's PPG external debt at moderate risk of distress and total PPG debt, which includes the state-owned utility company EMAE's arrears to its supplier, at high risk of distress. As we are committed to borrowing at only concessional terms at a measured pace, to financing large projects such as the airport expansion and rehabilitation by grants, and

² ENCO is the country's only oil supplier, which is majority-owned by an Angolan state-owned company. EMAE's arrears to ENCO have increased substantially since 2016 due to an expansion of electricity distribution network.

revamping EMAE to eliminate its large losses, our debt-to-GDP ratio is expected to continue to decline.

8. As the government is committed to implementing far-reaching reforms, the outlook is promising over the medium-term. The economy is projected to recover gradually from election-related disruptions. Real GDP growth is projected at 3 percent in 2019, slightly higher than 2.7 percent in 2018. As power supply recovers and externally-financed projects are implemented, we expect growth to increase to 3.5 percent in 2020, 4 percent in 2021, and 4.5 percent beyond. External inflows (including FDI), which were disrupted by election-related uncertainties, are expected to rebound to pre-election levels. Preparations for an airport expansion with grants from China and road construction supported by the World Bank are at an advanced stage and could start this year or early next year. Down the road, these projects could boost both tourism and agri-business. Inflation is projected to decrease to 6 percent by end-2019, driven by fiscal consolidation and monetary tightening, and to gradually ease to 3 percent in the medium term with significant fiscal consolidation. The VAT may increase fiscal revenue by 2 percent of GDP eventually. After two years of preparation, we expect to implement EMAE reforms late this year, reducing losses and oil imports over time. Increased, reliable, lower-cost electricity would also promote economic activity.

PAST PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

9. Progress under the last program supported by the ECF was limited. Although the central government debt (targeted under the ECF) declined by 8 percent of GDP during 2015-18, total public debt remains broadly unchanged in percent of GDP³ mainly due to the continued arrears accumulation from EMAE to ENCO. The economic base also remains narrow. Inflation increased, and international reserves declined. The limited progress reflects low capacity and policy slippages. Fiscal consolidation was interrupted by elections, and the DPD exceeded the targets by over 2 percent of GDP during the election years of 2016 and 2018. Furthermore, tax revenue declined from 14.5 to 12.5 percent of GDP during 2014-18 in part due to high reliance on import taxes and low tax compliance.

10. The sixth review was disrupted by the elections and was not completed. Almost all end-June performance criteria and indicative targets for the last test date were met with the exception of the net international reserves target. However, the end-2018 indicative targets for DPD, net bank financing of the central government, and net international reserves were all missed by large margins.

11. Some progress was made on the structural fronts, albeit with delays. For instance, we adopted an automatic fuel price mechanism, a comprehensive NPL strategy, and a new

³ Including the state-owned utility company EMAE's arrears to its oil supplier ENCO, which is the country's only oil supplier and majority-owned by an Angolan state-owned company (excluding the central government's arrears to EMAE in the consolidation).

consumer price index. The least cost electricity production plan for EMAE was adopted in April 2019 compared with the initial target of June 2018. An Asset Quality Review (AQR) of the banking system was completed in April 2019, a substantial delay from the initial expected completion date of December 2017. Some key reforms, including the adoption of a VAT and the central banking law and tax administration reforms and the adoption of management improvement plan of EMAE, are still pending.

POLICY OBJECTIVES FOR 2019–2022

To address the recent acceleration of inflation and significant loss of reserves, we will pursue fiscal consolidation, which is the key instrument for reining in domestic demand under a pegged exchange rate, complemented by tighter monetary policy. We will also strengthen supervision to enhance financial stability and remove structural bottlenecks. These policies will help maintain macro stability, which is key to supporting sustainable and inclusive growth. Over the medium term, we will continue to implement structural reform to expand economic base, reduce reliance on oil imports via electricity sector reforms, and promote progress on meeting key Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

A. Fiscal Policy

12. As in the last ECF, the arrangement will target the DPD, which excludes grants from the revenue side. Thus, the focus is squarely on the country's revenue mobilization efforts. In addition, the government will limit domestic borrowing in line with the borrowing ceiling established under the program (measured by the change in the net banking credit to government, a performance criterion). We will no longer allow borrowing by public entities with the ministry of finance's approval, and if such borrowing occurs, it will be included as part of the DPD and net banking credit to government.

13. Revenue mobilization and expenditure rationalization are both required. Over the medium-term, continued revenue mobilization and spending containment will help safeguard the peg and reduce the debt burden, while gradually raising social and capital spending. In particular, the World Bank is supporting our social program with a five-year, \$10 million project, which includes a conditional cash transfer subcomponent (\$3.5 million) and is expected to reach 91 percent of extremely poor households.

14. Effective in July 2019, on the revenue side, the 2019 budget will target a DPD of 1.8 percent of GDP, or D172 million. On the revenue side, the government will adopt an oil price surcharge sufficient to generate about D50 million; raise the sales tax on telecommunications from 5 to 10 percent (D11 million annually); and suspend the deduction in Article 74 (D15 million). Meanwhile, we have signed a new agreement with the EU on commercial fishing in our waters, which will yield €7 million in licensing fees over 2019–23. We will take steps to ensure that nationals working at international organizations (and oil companies) operating in our country pay income tax dues (D4.2 million) in accordance with the law. In addition, tax

arrears of at least D8 million will be collected by end-May and a total of D17 million are collected by end of the year.

15. On the expenditure side, specific measures include:

- If the end-2019 DPD exceeds the target, the first D100 million will be used to pay down arrears, and the remainder could be considered to pay the thirteenth month bonus, up to a maximum of D20 million in total.
- Using attrition of overall government staff to mitigate the cost of hiring the 25 individuals selected last year to modernize our tax administration, which over the medium term is expected to improve revenue collection to more than offsetting the costs.
- Implementing the plan to reduce electricity and water consumption at public institutions developed last year, particularly instructing EMAE to cut off supply to entities exceeding their allocation.
- Containing the increase in transfers to close to 10 percent. In this regard, the government will not approve borrowing by public entities to offset lower transfers from Treasury.
- Executing domestic primary expenditure cautiously to match available revenues and limit it to D1447 million. More specifically, the government will be guided by the following breakdown:

	End-December 2019 (millions of new dobras)
Total domestic primary expenditure	1447
Total primary current exp.	1416
Personnel costs	794
Goods and services	243
Transfers	302
Other	78
Treasury-financed capital exp.	14
HIPC-related social expenditure	17

16. A government decree will be issued to align the budget with the above parameters and relevant legislation will be passed to implement the revenue measures (prior action).

17. Over the medium term we will continue fiscal consolidation to bring our domestic primary expenditures in line with domestic revenues. Continued revenue mobilization would achieve tax revenue gains of 2 percent of GDP by 2022 as the benefits of the VAT gradually take hold and further tax arrears are collected. Furthermore, we will maintain or reinforce revenue measures introduced this year as needed to achieve our revenue and fiscal objectives if the VAT

takes a longer time to take effect than expected. At the same time, we will contain the wage bill and expenditures on goods and services while slowly raising priority social and capital spending. We will also review and rationalize the government employment to support containment of wage bill while providing space for private sector development.

18. Recommendations on strengthening tax administration by the IMF will be implemented. Priorities include: (i) reorganization of the *Direção dos Impostos* to improve management and strategic planning focused on tax compliance; (ii) adoption of modern compliance risk management practices, including audit programs that exploit information from third parties; and (iii) overhaul of current performance monitoring framework including key performance indicators and rewards program.

19. Furthermore, tax collection, especially that of large taxpayers, will be closely monitored to ensure timely tax payments. Monthly reports on tax payments and outstanding tax arrears will be prepared and shared with the IMF mission. The authorities will stand ready to apply legal and administrative procedures to ensure payments are made.

20. The government will redouble its efforts to put in place a proper computerized information management system by the end of 2019. We are looking for support as the earlier AfDB-supported project has stalled. The system will have key functionalities, such as automatic notification of taxpayers in default, extraction of statistical data, surveillance, and oversight support.

21. The government aims to introduce the VAT by 2020. We plan to submit to Parliament a VAT bill, in consultation with the IMF, before end-June 2019 (*structural benchmark*) to aim for a revenue gain of 2 percent of GDP over time and will endeavor to have the bill approved by parliament by July 2019. It is estimated that this would require a rate of 15 percent. In the meantime, we will continue our other efforts to prepare for the introduction of the VAT, including immediately launching a publicity campaign; providing adequate space, equipment, and training for the 25 newly-hired staff; implementing the new IT system; and setting up four taxpayer centers. Training will also cover local tax administrators including those from Príncipe. In addition, the authorities will seek agreements with banks to receive VAT payments. The authorities will decide by end-June 2019 on the design of the VAT. In particular, we will determine the threshold (e.g. targeting the largest taxpayers (about 50 or 100) or with a broader base (around 320 taxpayers)). The government will also determine whether e-invoicing would be paper-based or automated. In either case, procedures will be established to submit information electronically to the Tax Administration to have full control of all numbered invoices circulating in the economy. Meanwhile the authorities will review other taxes, especially customs duties, and will submit related legislation for the harmonization of these taxes with the new VAT law.

22. The government is committed to continuing public management reforms and reducing government arrears. Specific reforms include:

- a. Improve the macro-fiscal framework projections (revenues and expenditures), and in particular, have realistic revenue forecasts;
- b. Establish formal processes to coordinate the work of various Ministry of Finance departments and assess the possibility of introducing an institutional role—such as a Permanent Secretary—to coordinate technically the budget process;
- c. Strengthen cash management and internal capacities at the Treasury Department. For this purpose, we will develop and update regularly a monthly financing plan to guide the issuance of new treasury bills, consistent with the annual budget and financing plan;
- d. Strengthen expenditure control and prevent the accumulation of arrears and improve the arrears clearance plan. Treasury will be the sole public entity in the central government allowed to contract loans. The government is committed to not accumulating new arrears and will use treasury bill issuance to cover payments if needed. Furthermore, it will dedicate all additional resources available to pay down domestic arrears to EMAE and CST; and
- e. Enhance fiscal reporting and improve consistency of fiscal data from above and below the line. The treasury will reconcile the financing data with the BCSTP on a monthly basis. Monthly TOFE will be provided to the IMF by the 21th of the following month.
- f. Enhance the enforcement of the procurement laws to improve the efficiency of public expenditure and reduce vulnerabilities to corruption. The procurement law was adopted in 2009 and broadly in line with the World Bank's recommendations. It is being updated with the support of the World Bank to address sustainable and e-procurement, environmental, social, and hygiene issues, framework contracts, and the complaint mechanism.

B. Monetary Policy and Foreign Exchange Reserves

23. We will implement a set of measures to increase foreign reserves. Continued fiscal consolidation will help control inflation and build a higher reserves buffer, which will be complemented by tightening monetary policy to encourage more *dobra* savings and to reduce pressure on foreign exchange reserves. Given the ineffective lending channel, the adverse effect of the policy on the macroeconomy is expected to be limited. The Monetary Policy Committee decided to implement open market operations (OMOs) through liquidity-absorbing operations (Article 9 of NAP 018/2014-OMO). In consultation with the IMF and its monetary policy technical assistance experts, the BCSTP will start issuing certificates of deposit in the second half of 2019 (*structural benchmark*) and will calibrate and adjust the size, frequency, and interest rate of this instrument based on assessment of pressures on the foreign exchange and inflation. Other

measures to help stabilize reserves include limiting public spending that requires foreign exchange and attracting diaspora capital inflows.

24. Medium-term structural reforms will also help boost reserves. As detailed in the section on structural reforms, ongoing plans to expand the economy base (centered around tourism, agriculture and fisheries) and efforts to reduce reliance on oil imports via electricity sector reforms will both generate and save reserves.

25. Future oil exploration rights within the administrative areas will also generate needed foreign exchange for the country through attendant social programs, even though the associated signing bonuses are not considered for the calculation of the program target on reserves. The recent sale of one exploration block added US\$2.5 million oil signature bonus to the National Oil Account in 2019.

26. Over the medium term, we will promote interbank market and secondary trading. Currently, there is no secondary market for the T-bills. Interest in T-bills remains strong, as the issuance in March 2019, like those before it, was oversubscribed.

27. The Central Bank is committed to sound governance and transparency. As noted in the subsequent section, we will implement the recommendations of safeguard assessment to strengthen the governance of the central bank. In addition, we undertook an audit in early 2019 regarding costs of constructing a new central bank building and the issuance of the newly redenominated dobra banknotes.⁴

C. Financial Sector Policy

28. We are committed to implementing measures to address issues found in the AQR, while taking additional measures to safeguard banking sector soundness. The loan reclassification, additional loan loss provisions and other adjustments recommended by the AQR will be enforced by September 2019 to the extent they are consistent with the current banking regulations. The BCSTP will also require banks that subsequently become under-capitalized to swiftly restore an adequate capital cushion. We will also consider adopting risk assessment and stress testing methodologies to better assess and inform about the adequacy of banks' buffer under severely adverse conditions.

29. Measures to strengthen banking supervision are clearly needed, while several reforms are already underway. The findings of the AQR shed light on shortcomings in identifying or correcting misclassified exposures and other regulatory infractions to which relatively infrequent on-site inspections due to understaffing may have contributed. We will establish more effective supervision that identifies growing risks and non-compliance with regulations early on through more intensive off-site monitoring and on-site inspections. To

⁴ On January 1, 2018, we successfully redenominated the currency, removing three digits, and introduced a note of greater face value.

safeguard an effective supervisory process, we will therefore need to increase staffing and capacity at BCSTP's supervision department and strengthen enforcement mechanisms. Revisiting the bank resolution framework adopted in 2015 and clarifying out-of-court resolution mechanisms would be helpful for efficient resolution of insolvent banks or banks with other structural weaknesses. Risk-based supervision continues to be implemented with IMF technical assistance (TA). In particular, we are committed to implementing a bank rating model to support effective on- and off-site supervision, upgrading banking regulation to align with effective on- and off-site supervisions as recommended by IMF TA, and train staff on its effective enforcement (structural benchmark). Moreover, new regulations on banks' risk management and asset management are being implemented.

30. Efforts towards more effective resolution of legacy NPLs continue to be made.

There is evidence that the default rate of newly-issued bank loans has fallen. However, the reduction in the NPL ratio has only been marginal, as banks are unwilling to write off even long-defaulted but fully-provisioned loans. To accelerate the reduction in the NPL ratio, we plan to prepare guidance for banks to more rapidly write-off defaulted loans. With the conclusion of the AQR, we enter the next phase of our NPL resolution strategy aimed at reducing the NPL stock in addition to measures already adopted toward prevention of NPLs. Still-needed reforms include improving the efficiency of the judicial loan enforcement process and reinvigorating the project to establish arbitration tribunals for out-of-court settlement.

31. We will make every effort to facilitate the swift liquidation of the two banks whose licenses have been revoked, one for insolvency and one for governance problems.

The liquidation of Banco Equador is proceeding with the conclusion of the remaining assets sale expected this year. The resolution of Banco Privado (BPSTP) is more complex as the bank's license was withdrawn over governance concerns and repeated non-compliance with BCSTP directives instead of insolvency. Resolution options include liquidation through the court system or an out-of-court agreement with the banks' shareholders on voluntary liquidation. In any case, we are committed to liquidating BPSTP as swiftly and cost-efficiently as possible.

32. Access to finance by SMEs, and financial inclusion more generally, is difficult but several remedial projects have been initiated.

Banks are often unwilling to lend to small firms for lack of collateral and other safeguards. The exception is partly state-owned Banco Internacional de Sao Tome e Principe (BISTP) that has established an inclusive credit line with preferential loan rates and reduced fees. With World Bank assistance, we are creating the legal framework for a collateral registry, which is expected to be operational by 2020. The registry would allow SMEs to pledge real estate and movable collateral and thus attain access to bank financing more easily. As part of our action plan for financial sector development, the microfinance law was adopted in September 2018, and approval is underway for regulations related to the licensing and exercise of microfinance, microcredit risk management, and adequacy of own funds and solvency ratio. We have also conducted surveys on financial inclusion issues from the supply and demand side. After discussion of the survey findings with stakeholders, the government will develop a national financial inclusion strategy to be published

by end-2019. Lastly, the government will review the high cost of using ATMs, which has been a longstanding issue, with the aim of reducing the costs and promoting financial inclusion.

33. We will complete the implementation of the remaining recommendations from the last safeguards assessment and review the staffing structure. The Central Bank (Organic) Law will be revised to improve auditing, oversight, and resolution in line with the recommendations of the safeguards assessment. The financial institutions law is being revised to align with the proposed changes to the organic law regarding oversight and resolution. These two laws will be submitted to the Parliament by end-2019 (*structural benchmark*). Physical space constraints have led to difficulties in adding staff to the Internal Audit Department. The completion of a new central bank headquarters, expected by end-2019, will allow for the eventual recruitment of relevant staff. Given other staffing needs, including those in supervision, we will review the overall staffing structure to ensure efficiency.

34. The central bank is also working on other medium-term financial sector reforms, particularly expediting the implementation of a new payment system. These initiatives are in line with our Financial Sector Development Implementation Plan (FSDIP). With AfDB support, a provider has been selected for the upgrade of the payment system capable of supporting international credit cards to boost tourism and buttress foreign exchange reserves. The available funding for this project falls short of the financing need, and we are exploring different options, including support from bilateral partners and the private sector. In addition, the establishment of a corporate balance sheet repository is in progress with the technical support of Bank of Portugal and the World Bank (funding is pending).

D. External Sector Policies

Exchange Restrictions

35. The IMF Executive Board granted temporary approval of foreign exchange restrictions.⁵ The one-year approval expires in July 2019. Given the current balance of payment issues, we will request extending the approval for another year. Efforts to boost reserves noted above will also help prepare for the eventual removal of the restrictions.

⁵ These exchange measures include: (i) an exchange restriction arising under Articles 3(g) and 18 of the Investment Code of 2016 due to limitations on the transferability of net income from investments; and (ii) an exchange restriction arising from limitations on the availability of foreign exchange for payments of current international transactions, due to the rationing of foreign exchange by BCSTP. The latter exchange restriction also gives rise to a multiple currency practice as it has resulted in the channeling of transactions to the parallel market where the exchange rate is at a spread of more than 2 percent from the exchange rate in the formal market. These measures were approved by the IMF Board in July 2018 for twelve months because they are temporary, non-discriminatory and needed for balance of payments reasons.

External Debt

36. Given the high debt level, we will continue to borrow cautiously. We will borrow only at concessional terms and at a measured pace to ensure the present value of total public and publicly guaranteed debt ratio to GDP falls below the high-risk debt distress threshold by 2024 (Borrowing Plan). Contracting of new loans will be limited to 3 percent of GDP. We also strive to keep external debt disbursements to not exceed 1.5 percent of GDP. These parameters will be adjusted according to the development of debt vulnerability and can be eased once the debt vulnerability decreases. Continued EMAE reform will reduce fiscal liabilities. To reduce further debt distress risk, we are committed to ensure that by end-2020 EMAE's current stock of arrears to ENCO as of end-2018 are formalized with explicit terms of repayment. An action plan for reaching such an agreement or a draft agreement will be developed by end-September 2019. We will also continue to engage actively with bilateral creditors to regularize post-HIPC arrears.

37. The government is implementing measures to strengthen debt management. Some main recommendations of the Debt Management Performance Assessment (DeMPA), which was completed with the support of the World Bank in November 2016 are being implemented, including a draft medium-term debt management strategy. With the help of the World Bank, a debt database is being established, which is critical for improving debt service projections, conducting risk analyses, and reporting more detailed information on the debt stock. Training of officials on debt management, including T-Bill issuance and risk management, is planned with the help of the World Bank and the AfDB. The government will develop and publish an annual schedule of T-Bill issuance that aligns with cash flow forecasts and borrowing plans.

Borrowing Plan 2019- 2021
(For Investment, Millions of U.S Dollars)

New public debt contracted or	2019	
	Volume 1/	Present value
Sources of debt financing	13.1	8.5
Concessional debt of which 2/	13.1	8.5
Non-concessional debt of which 2/	0.0	0.0
Semi-concessional debt 3/	0.0	0.0
Commercial terms 4/	0.0	0.0
Uses of debt financing	13.1	8.5
<i>Memorandum items</i>		
Indicative projections		
2020	14.2	9.2
2021	15.3	9.9

1/ Contracting and guaranteeing of new debt. The present value of debt is calculated using the terms of individual loans and applying the 5 percent program discount rate.

2/ Debt with a grant element that exceeds a minimum threshold of 35 percent.

3/ Debt with a positive grant element below the minimum grant element.

4/ Debt without a positive grant element. For commercial debt, the present value would be defined as the nominal/face value.

E. The Implementation of Other Structural Reforms

Development Planning

38. We chose to focus on five Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These are: eradication of poverty; decent work and economic growth; industry, innovation and infrastructure; life below water; and justice and equity. We are making progress on each of these goals, and São Tomé and Príncipe ranks tenth out of 51 African countries on overall performance on the SDG targets. However, poverty remains high, a large share of school-aged children is estimated to be working, and infrastructure remains inadequate. In March 2019, we held a steering committee meeting with UN agencies to discuss strategies and progress on meeting the SDGs. In addition, we are committed to gender equality, which is another SDG. In addition, we plan to host, in coordination with the IMF and other development partners, a workshop on promoting women's economic empowerment in June and an international conference in July,

which will help prepare an action plan to increase female entrepreneurship, participation in the formal economy, and financial inclusion by end-2019 (*Structural Benchmark*).

Business Climate to Promote Tourism

39. The government will redouble the effort to implement the tourism strategy, with the following specific actions as a structural benchmark:

- Publish a clearly-codified procedure for the approval of investment to facilitate investment in tourism.
- Publish quarterly tourist arrival data, which will be agreed upon by relevant agencies (e.g. Border Control, BCSTP, Tourism, INE), within two months the period ending.
- Expand the annual BCSTP tourist survey on expenses to include information about overall visit and experience satisfaction. This will be completed with the cooperation among BCSTP, Ministry of Tourism, and INE. With the World Bank support, the Tourism Directorate did a first round of exit survey at the airport in 2016.

40. Other near-term actions are underway to improve the payment system, train workers, enhance coordination, reduce transportation costs, and facilitate licensing. As noted previously, we will expedite the development of a payment system with the capability of processing international credit cards to not only stimulate the tourism sector but also boost international reserves. With the support of the World Bank, we will establish a tourism school to develop local capacity. To enhance coordination and planning efforts, we will also create a high-level commission on tourism with all relevant ministries, the Principe government, and business associations. In addition, we will aim to improve the port of Principe, which will help reduce the cost of imports (currently on average 20 percent higher than in São Tomé) and ensure a steady supply of goods. Finally, we will integrate tourism licensing requests in the GUEnet portal (online portal for starting a business). With support from the World Bank, the platform has been developed, and the validation will be completed by September 2019 to increase transparency on tourism licensing procedures.

41. Over the medium term, we will work to develop fisheries and eco-agriculture to expand the local supply chain to the tourism sector. This holds great potential to promote inclusive and sustainable growth and reduce poverty, as about 15 percent of the population directly or indirectly relies on fishing for their livelihood (currently mostly using small-scale vessels) and 75 percent depend on subsistence agriculture. We will support local agriculture and fishing by improving and expanding infrastructure across the country, including in Principe. This includes projects focused on roads, green houses, fishing docks, and irrigation systems as well as those geared towards improving the management of the agricultural cooperatives to incentivize production. We are actively looking for funding to conduct a new agricultural survey to guide policy making, as the latest survey was conducted in 1991.

42. Implementation of the Least Cost Production Plans and Management Improvement Plan (MIP) is underway. Helping EMAE to achieve cost recovery is crucial for ensuring the country's energy safety, as EMAE has not been able to pay most of its bills for fuel supply. The continuation of the current situation could eventually endanger the country's oil supply. As discussed elsewhere, stable, low cost, and increased power supply are key to robust growth. Specifically, we will implement the measures listed below at the specified time frame. The measures will reduce commercial loss by 4 percent and peak consumption by 10 percent, improve billings, and implement tariff reform.

Objective 1: Reduce commercial losses by 4 (6) percentage points and improve collection rate by 3 (6) percentage points by June 2020 (June 2021) to lower commercial losses below 15 percent and raise the collection rate to 95 percent by June 2021. This will be achieved by:

- a. Approving and implementing the MIP. Signing a performance contract with the CEO of EMAE and setting in place by September 2019 a dedicated team at EMAE to implement measures and achieve the above objectives.
- b. Reduce theft of diesel by half by June 2020 to lower the loss to below five percent.
- c. Arrears clearance plans are agreed with large private consumers, small medium enterprises, as well as residential consumer. Government defines essential (non-disconnectable) and non-essential (disconnectable) consumption facilities. Services are cut off due to non-payment to be implemented by October 2019. In the meantime, communication package is launched to explain that collective action is needed to improve electricity services.
- d. Modernize billing and install pre-paid and smart meters. EMAE installs 1200 prepayment meters to all facilities categorized as disconnectable by government by June-2020. Continue to disconnect non-essential consumption for nonpayment.
- e. Government establishes a mechanism with EMAE to cap consumption and ensure timely bills payment by public entities, including by cutting EMAE's services and direct transfers from Treasury to pay EMAE to be implemented by June 2019.

Objective 2: Reduce peak energy consumption by 10 percent within 12 months and facilitate the phase-out of incandescent bulbs within two years. Expected result within 12 months is a reduction in demand by 10 percent. Hence this is equivalent to a slight net reduction in demand growth given annual growth is currently seven percent per annum. This is achieved through:

- a. Government will roll out a program to replace incandescent/fluorescent with LED program, which can be implemented within nine months. The \$1 million program will be funded by the World Bank.
- b. Government will pass a law that bans the importation of incandescent/fluorescent lamps within a two-year timeframe. Conduct outreach to stakeholders such as light importers, raising awareness and helping them access LED suppliers.

Objective 3: set the stage for a tariff reform through (i) establishing a mechanism and (ii) implementing the first tariff reform once the prepaid meters are in place for the large consumers (planned within 12 months).

- a. The preliminary tariff analysis has been completed and identified the need for an in-depth tariff reform to be led by the regulator AGER aiming. In order to gradually achieved cost-reflective tariff structure, the government needs to immediately enforce through a decree the proposed adjustments regarding (i) tariff structure definition, (ii) customer category definition, (iii) social tariffs adjustments, and (iv) agreed timeline to achieve full cost-recovery structure. A draft decree has been submitted to the government, and it should be approved by September 2019.
- b. The first tariff increase is to be implemented once meters are in place for large consumers, currently estimated at 12 months.

In sum below are the short-term targets and actions (*structural benchmarks*)

	Baseline	June 2020	Target
			June 2021
Reducing commercial loss to	23 percent	19 percent	17 percent
Reducing technical loss to	11 percent	10 percent	
Raising bill collection rate	89 percent	93 percent	95 percent
Reduce diesel loss	10 percent	5 percent	

Actions to be taken		Target date
1	Signing contract with EMAE CEO and establish a dedicated team implemented to achieve the objective	Sep-19
2	Approve a decree to adjust the tariffs	Sep-19
3	Develop arrears clearance plan with customers and cut off nonpaying costumers.	Oct-19
4	Install 1200 prepayment meters to all disconnectable users and continue to disconnect non-paying customers	Jun-20
5	Implement a LED program and stop importing incandescent and fluorescent lights	Mar-20
6	First tariff adjustment to be implemented	Jun-20

Improve Economic Statistics

43. We are continuing to improve economic data. An IMF mission in March 2019 helped us to implement the enhanced General Data Dissemination System (e-GDDS) to foster greater data accessibility and identify priority areas for data quality improvements. We have committed to publishing data essential for surveillance through a National Summary Data Page (NSDP) by May 5, 2019 using Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange (SDMX) for machine-to-machine data transfer.

Capacity Development

44. We will continue to build our capacity with the support of international institutions. Given limited staff capacity, on-the-job training has been particularly important. Therefore, we will seek to complement short-term technical assistance with that provided by long-term or peripatetic experts, who not only produces the diagnosis of the problems but also supports the implementation of the recommendations. In addition, we will also request Portuguese speaking experts to facilitate interactions, expedite the identification of the core of the problems, and help the transfer of knowledge.

PROGRAM MONITORING

45. The program will be monitored on a semi-annual basis, through quantitative performance criteria and indicative targets (Table 3) and structural benchmarks (Table 4). Quantitative targets set for end-June 2019 and end-December 2019, while those for end-September 2019, end-March 2020, and end-June 2020 are indicative targets. The first review should be completed on or after October 15, 2019, and the second review should be completed on or after April 15, 2020.

Table 1. Performance Criteria and Indicative Targets for 2018
Under the Previous ECF Arrangement
(Millions of new dobras, cumulative from beginning of year, unless otherwise specified)

	2018						
	June				December		
	Performance Criteria ¹				Indicative Target ¹		
	4th review w/adjusts	Prel.	Status		5th revieww/adjusts	Prel.	Status
Performance Criteria:							
Floor on domestic primary balance (as defined in the TMU) ²	-90	-90	-43	Met	-124	-124	-362 Not met
Ceiling on changes in net bank financing of the central government (at program exchange rate) ^{3, 4, 5}	75	86	10	Met	70	9	219 Not met
Floor on net international reserves of the central bank (US\$ millions) ^{2, 4}	52	51	39	Not met	50	47	27 Not met
Ceiling on the accumulation of central government's new external payment arrears (US\$ millions) ^{5, 6, 7, 8}	0	...	0	Met	0	...	0 Met
Ceiling on the contracting or guaranteeing of new nonconcessional external debt by the central government or the BCSTP (US\$ millions) ^{5, 6, 7, 8, 9}	0	...	0	Met	0	...	0 Met
Indicative Targets:							
Ceiling on change of central government's new domestic arrears	0	...	-17	Met	0	...	76 Not met
Floor on pro-poor expenditures	289	...	302	Met	551	...	690 Met
Floor on tax revenue	535	...	556	Met	1,084	...	1,099 Met
Memorandum items:							
Ceiling on dobra base money (stock) ¹⁰	1,578	...	1,224	...	1,499	...	1,339 ...
New concessional external debt contracted or guaranteed with original maturity of more than one year by the central government or the BCSTP (US\$ millions) ^{5, 7, 8, 11}	17	...	0	...	17	...	0 ...
Transfer from NOA to the budget (US\$ millions)	1.5	...	2.1	...	2.2	...	2.1 ...
Net external debt service payments ¹²	68	...	43	...	79	...	87 ...
Official external program support ¹²	85	...	19	...	179	...	144 ...
Budget support grants ¹³	66	...	0	...	142	...	125 ...
Treasury-funded capital expenditure	13	...	6	...	12	...	14 ...

Sources: São Tomé and Príncipe authorities; and IMF staff estimates and projections.

¹ Performance at the June 2018 test date is assessed on the sixth review.

² The floor will be adjusted upward or downward according to definitions in the TMU.

³ The ceiling will be adjusted downward or upward according to definitions in the TMU.

⁴ Excluding the National Oil Account (NOA) at the Central Bank.

⁵ The term "central government" is defined as in ¶ 5 of the TMU, which excludes the operations of state-owned enterprises.

⁶ This criterion will be assessed as a continuous performance criterion.

⁷ The term "external" is defined on the basis of the residency of the creditor per paragraph 5 of the Guidelines on Public Debt Conditionality in Fund Arrangements, adopted by Decision No. 15688 of the Executive Board (Dec. 5, 2014).

⁸ This performance criterion or memorandum item applies not only to debt as defined in paragraph 8 of the Guidelines on Public Debt Conditionality in Fund Arrangements, adopted by Decision No. 15688 of the Executive Board (Dec. 5, 2014), but also to commitments contracted or guaranteed for which value has not been received. For further details on the definition of debt and external arrears refer to the TMU, ¶¶ 6 and 13.

⁹ Only applies to debt with a grant element of less than 35 percent. For further details refer to the TMU, ¶ 17.

¹⁰ Changed to a memorandum item.

¹¹ Only applies to debt with a grant element of at least 35 percent.

¹² As defined in the TMU, valued at the program exchange rate, excludes HIPC-related amortization.

¹³ The expected WB budget support in 2018 is \$6 million of which \$1 million will be treated as project grants and excluded from the DPD if it is spent on facilities for the tax administration.

Table 2. Structural Benchmarks Under ECF Arrangement, 2018
Under the Previous ECF Arrangement

Policy Objectives and Measures	Timing	Macro Rationale	TA involved	Status
Strengthening Public Finances				
Submit to the National Assembly a new VAT law.	End-June 2018	To support the introduction of VAT	FAD/LEG	Met.
Adopt financial management plan and least cost energy-production plan for EMAE.	End-September 2018	To contain fiscal risk	With World Bank support	Not met.
Submit monthly monitoring table of tax payments by top 10 taxpayers during June-October 2018.	End-November 2018	To mobilize domestic revenue	No TA involved	Not met.
Enhancing Monetary Policy and Financial Stability				
Require the external consultant to complete an inception report for asset quality review of banks.	End-September 2018	To support financial sector stability and growth	With World Bank support	Met.
Facilitating Business Activities				
Develop and submit to the National Assembly a National Export Diversification Strategy document.	End-June 2018	To promote economic diversification and employment opportunities	With World Bank support	Met.

Table 3. Performance Criteria and Indicative Targets for 2019–2020
(Millions of new dobras, cumulative from beginning of year, unless otherwise specified)

	2019			2020	
	June	September	December	March	June
	Performance Criteria ¹	Indicative Target ¹	Performance Criteria ¹	Indicative Target	Indicative Target
	Proposed	Proposed	Proposed	Proposed	Proposed
Performance Criteria:					
Floor on domestic primary balance (as defined in the TMU) ²	-65	-96	-172	-29	-58
Ceiling on changes in net bank financing of the central government (at program exchange rate) ^{3, 4, 5}	16	64	66	10	15
Floor on net international reserves of the central bank (US\$ millions) ^{2, 4}	25	27	27	28	30
Ceiling on the accumulation of central government's new external payment arrears (US\$ millions) ^{5, 6, 7, 8}	0	0	0	0	0
Ceiling on the contracting or guaranteeing of new nonconcessional external debt by the central government or the BCSTP (US\$ millions) ^{5, 6, 7, 8, 9}	0	0	0	0	0
Not to (i) introduce or intensify any exchange restrictions (ii) introduce or impose import restrictions, (iii) introduce or modify multiple currency practices, or (iv) conclude bilateral payment agreements in violation of Article VIII of the Articles of Agreements			Continuous		
Indicative Targets:					
Ceiling on change of central government's new domestic arrears	0	0	0	0	0
Floor on pro-poor expenditures	292	438	584	155	310
Floor on tax revenue	588	912	1170	334	667
New concessional external debt contracted or guaranteed with original maturity of more than one year by the central government or the BCSTP (US\$ millions) ^{5, 7, 8, 10}	13	13	13	14	14
Memorandum items:					
Ceiling on dobra base money (stock)	1,640	1,484	1,496	1,493	1,531
Transfer from NOA to the budget (US\$ millions)	1.9	2.8	3.9	3.7	3.7
Net external debt service payments ¹¹	58	87	116	33	67
Official external program support ¹¹	129	129	293	0	129
IMF program disbursement	56	56	111	0	56
Budget support grants	74	74	182	0	74
Domestic arrears clearance (-, exclude debt payment to ENCO)	-12	-18	-24	-17	-33
Treasury-funded capital expenditure	5	9	14	6	13

Sources: São Tomé and Príncipe authorities; and IMF staff estimates and projections.

¹ Performance at the June 2019 test date is assessed on the first

² The floor will be adjusted upward or downward according to definitions in the TMU.

³ The ceiling will be adjusted downward or upward according to definitions in the TMU.

⁴ Excluding the National Oil Account (NOA) at the Central Bank.

⁵ The term "central government" is defined as in ¶ 5 of the TMU, which excludes the operations of state-owned enterprises.

⁶ This criterion will be assessed as a continuous performance criterion.

⁷ The term "external" is defined on the basis of the residency of the creditor per paragraph 5 of the Guidelines on Public Debt Conditionality in Fund Arrangements, adopted by Decision No. 15688 of the Executive Board (Dec. 5, 2014).

⁸ This performance criterion or memorandum item applies not only to debt as defined in paragraph 8 of the Guidelines on Public Debt Conditionality in Fund Arrangements, adopted by Decision No. 15688 of the Executive Board (Dec. 5, 2014), but also to commitments contracted or guaranteed for which value has not been received. For further details on the definition of debt and external arrears refer to the TMU, ¶¶ 6 and 13.

⁹ Only applies to debt with a grant element of less than 35 percent. For further details refer to the TMU, ¶ 17.

¹⁰ Only applies to debt with a grant element of at least 35 percent.

¹¹ As defined in the TMU, valued at the program exchange rate, excludes HIPC-related amortization.

**Table 4. Prior Actions and Structural Benchmarks
Under ECF Arrangement**

Policy Objectives and Measures	Timing	Macro Rationale	TA involved
Prior Actions			
Adopt a government decree to align 2019 budget to be consistent with the program and necessary legislation to introducing revenue measures agreed (¶14-15)		To demonstrate commitment to fiscal consolidation	No TA involved
Government adopt Management Improvement Plan and Least Cost Energy-production Plan for EMAE recommended by World Bank		To contain fiscal risk	With World Bank support
Strengthening Public Finances			
Adopt a VAT law in line with the IMF recommendation (¶121)	End-June 2019	To support the introduction of VAT	FAD/LEG
Launch a public communication campaign to explain the VAT to the public recommended by the World Bank	End-June 2019	To support the introduction of VAT	With World Bank support
Implement key measures of Management Improvement Plan and Least Cost Energy-production Plan for EMAE (¶142)	Continuous	To contain fiscal risk	With World Bank support
Enhancing Monetary Policy and Financial Stability			
Tighten monetary policy by issuing central bank certificate of deposits of at least D50 million to maintain stock of reserves (¶23)	End-October 2019	Support the peg	MCM
Implement recommendations of the Asset Quality Review of banks including asset reclassification and provisioning; require banks that have inadequate capital as a result to recapitalize. (¶28)	End-September 2019	To support financial sector stability and growth	With World Bank support
Submit to Parliament an amended BCSTP Law to strengthen autonomy and governance of BCSTP and a revised financial institutions law, in consultation with IMF Staff (¶33)	End-December 2019	To strengthen financial supervision and improve governance and oversight	MCM/LEG
Implement a bank rating model to support effective on- and off-site supervision (¶29) ; upgrade banking regulation to align with effective on- and off-site supervisions as recommended by IMF TA and train staff on its effective enforcement	End-June 2020	To better detect infractions of prudential regulation and enforce remedial measures.	IMF Afritac Central
Establish registry of real estate and movable collateral	End-June 2020	To facilitate access to finance, particularly for small-and medium-sized	With World Bank Support
Facilitating Business Activities			
Submit to the IMF the national strategy on women's economic empowerment and financial inclusion (¶38)	End-December 2019	To promote economic participation and gender equality	TBD
Implement recommendations of the Tourism Development Strategy as specified in (¶39)	End-June 2020	To promote economic growth and employment opportunities	With World Bank support

Attachment II. Technical Memorandum of Understanding, April 2019

1. **This Technical Memorandum of Understanding (TMU) contains definitions and adjuster mechanisms that clarify the measurement of quantitative performance criteria and indicative targets in Table 3**, which are attached to the Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies for 2019-22. Unless otherwise specified, all quantitative performance criteria and indicative targets will be evaluated in terms of cumulative flows from the beginning of each calendar year.
2. **The program exchange rate** for the purposes of this TMU¹ will be the rates at end-2018, specifically 21.6925 new dobras per U.S. dollar, 24.5 new dobras per euro, and 29.17221 new dobras per SDR.

PROVISION OF DATA TO THE FUND

3. **Data with respect to all variables subject to performance criteria and indicative targets will be provided to Fund staff on the frequency described below** (¶26) with a lag of no more than four weeks for data on net international reserves of the Central Bank of São Tomé and Príncipe (BCSTP) and six weeks for other data. The authorities will transmit promptly to Fund staff any data revisions. For variables that are relevant for assessing performance against program objectives but are not specifically defined in this memorandum, the authorities will consult with Fund staff as needed on the appropriate way of measuring and reporting. Performance criteria included in the program are defined below, specifically (i) the floor on domestic primary balance; (ii) the ceiling on changes in net bank financing of the central government; (iii) the floor on net international reserves of the central bank; (iv) the ceiling on central government's outstanding external payments arrears; and (v) the ceiling on the contracting or guaranteeing of new non- concessional external debt by the central government or the BCSTP.

DEFINITIONS

4. **For the purposes of this TMU, external and domestic** shall be defined on a residency basis.
5. **Central government is defined for the purposes of this TMU** to comprise all governmental departments, offices, establishments, and other bodies that are agencies or instruments of the central authority of São Tomé and Príncipe. The central government does not include the operations of state-owned enterprises.
6. **Debt is defined as in paragraph 8 of the Guidelines on Public Debt Conditionality in Fund Arrangements, adopted by Decision No. 15688 of the Executive Board (Dec. 5, 2014).** "Debt will be understood to mean a current, i.e., not contingent, liability, created under a contractual agreement through the provision of value in the form of assets (including currency) or services, and

¹Data refer to the mid-point exchange rates published on the BCSTP's webpage for the last day of 2018.

which requires the obligor to make one or more payments in the form of assets (including currency) or services at some future point(s) in time; these payments will discharge the principal and/or interest liabilities incurred under the contract.”

7. Government domestic revenue (excluding oil revenue) comprises all tax and non-tax revenue of the government (in domestic and foreign currencies), excluding: (1) foreign grants, (2) the receipts from the local sale of in-kind grants (e.g., crude oil received from Nigeria, food aid, etc.), and (3) any gross inflows to the government on account of oil signature bonus receipts and accrued interest on the National Oil Account (NOA). Revenue will be measured on a cash basis as reported in the table of government financial operations prepared by the Directorate of Budget and the Directorate of Treasury in the Ministry of Finance, Commerce and the Blue Economy (MOF).

8. Domestic primary expenditure comprises all government spending assessed on a commitment basis (*base comprometido*), excluding (1) capital expenditure financed with external concessional loans and project grants, (2) the cost assumed by the budget to pay off small depositors following the liquidation of banco Equador, and (3) scheduled interest payments. Reporting of government domestic expenditure will be based on the state budget execution prepared every month by the Directorate of Budget and the Directorate of Treasury in the MOF. All capital expenditures financed by budget support grants (including EU's) are treated as part of domestic primary spending, with no exception.

Official External Program Support			
	2019	2020 H1	Currency Unit
Projected budgetary support grants			
World Bank	5	0	million US dollars
European Union	3	3	million euros
IMF ECF program	3.8	1.9	million SDR

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

9. Performance criterion on the floor on domestic primary balance. This performance criterion refers to the difference between government domestic revenue (including oil tax surcharge and excluding oil revenue) and domestic primary expenditure. Planned payment of (price differential) debt to ENCO (¶122) are deducted from the oil surcharge revenue. To control spending, MoF will not approve borrowing by any public entity in the central government other than Treasury (MEFP ¶15,22d). Accordingly, for the purpose of program monitoring, borrowing by any public entity other than Treasury recorded in the monetary survey as loans to the central government will be added as additional expenditure to the DPD. For reference, the domestic primary balance for

end 2019 based on hypothetical outturns would be -173.7 million new dobras, broken down as follows:

Domestic Primary Balance (2019, millions of new dobras)	
I. Total revenue and grants (=1+2+3)	2154.4
I.A of which domestic revenue (=I-2.1-3=1+2-2.1)	1270.3
1. Tax revenue	1187.8
1.1 of which: oil surcharge	50.0
2. Nontax revenue	134.6
2.1 of which: oil revenue	52.0
3. Grants	832.1
II. Total expenditure (=4+5+6)	2157.3
II.A of which: domestic primary expenditure (=4-4.2+5.1+6)	1384.0
4. Current expenditure	1398.6
4.1 Personnel costs	752.6
4.2 Interest due	50.3
4.3 Goods and services	243.0
4.4 Transfers	279.5
4.5 Other current expenditure	73.1
5. Capital expenditure	737.0
5.1 Financed by the Treasury	13.8
5.2 Financed by external sources	723.1
6. HIPC Initiative-related social expenditure	21.8
III. Domestic primary balance (= I.A-II.A+IV-V)	-173.7
Memorandum items	
IV. Planned payment to ENCO (reduction = -)	-10.0
V. Borrowing by other entities	50.0

10. Performance criterion on the ceiling on changes in net bank financing of the central government (NCG). This performance criterion refers to the increase (decrease) of net bank financing of the central government, which equals the stock of all outstanding claims on the central government held by the BCSTP and by other depository corporations (ODCs), less the stock of all deposits held by the central government with the BCSTP and with ODCs, plus the increase, if any (with the approval of the ministry of finance) of ODC's credit to the public entities. The balance of the National Oil Account (NOA), deposits from project grants and project loans, contingent

liabilities, and social security operations are not included in NCG. All foreign exchange-denominated accounts will be converted to new dobras at the program exchange rate. The relevant data are reported monthly by the BCSTP to the IMF staff. Currently, the Treasury has no deposits in the central bank. For reference, at end-2018, outstanding net bank financing of the central government (excluding NOA) was 231 million new dobras, as follows:

Net Bank Financing (millions of new dobras)			
		2017	2018
I	Net credit to government by the BCSTP (=I.1-I.2)	93	231
I.1	BCSTP credit, including use of IMF resources:	260	310
I.2	Government deposits with the BCSTP (excluding NOA)	167	79
	Treasury dobra-denominated accounts	23	7
	Treasury foreign currency-denominated accounts	84	7
	Counterpart deposits	60	65
II	Net credit to government by ODCs	427	667
II.1	ODC's credit to the government	427	667
II.2	Central government deposits with ODCs ^{1/}	0	0
III	Net bank financing of the government (excluding NOA) (=I-II)	334	436
IV	Changes during 2018 in net bank financing of the central government (NCG)		102

Note: 1/ No deposits in ODCs that were under the central government (Treasury) control in 2017 and 2018.

11. Performance criterion on the floor on net international reserves (NIR) of the BCSTP.

The NIR of the BCSTP are defined for program-monitoring purposes as short-term (i.e., original maturities of one year or less), tradable foreign assets of the BCSTP minus short-term external liabilities, including liabilities to the IMF. All short-term foreign assets that are not fully convertible external assets nor readily available to and controlled by the BCSTP (i.e., they are pledged or otherwise encumbered external assets, including but not limited to the HIPC umbrella SDR account and assets used as collateral or guarantees for third-party liabilities) will be excluded from the definition of NIR. Securities whose market value on the last day of the year differs by over 20 percent from their original nominal issue price will be assessed at their market value as reported by the BCSTP's Markets Department. The balance of (1) NOA at the BCSTP, (2) banks' deposits related to capital or licensing requirements, and (3) banks' reserves denominated in foreign currency are excluded from the program definition of NIR. All values are to be converted to U.S. dollars at the actual mid-point market exchange rates prevailing at the test date. For reference, at end 2018 NIR was 609 million new dobras (or \$28 million, using the exchange rate of 21.6925 new dobras per U.S. dollar), calculated as follows:

		End 2018
I	Gross international reserves	934
	Cash	25
	Demand deposits	81
	Term deposits (incl. banks' deposits in foreign currency)	138
	Securities other than shares	677
	Portuguese Treasury Bond I	98
	Portuguese Treasury Bond II	243
	Portuguese Treasury Bond III	123
	US Treasury Bill I	107
	US Treasury Bill II	107
	Accrued interest on securities	8
	Reserve position in the Fund	0
	SDR holdings	6
II	Foreign exchange liability	325
	Short-term bilateral liabilities	21
	Liabilities to the IMF	147
	Banks' reserves denominated in foreign currency	157
	Banks' guaranteed deposits denominated in foreign currency	0
III	Net international reserves (NIR) (=I - II)	609
IV	Net other foreign assets	235
	Other foreign assets	446
	Medium and long-term liabilities (including SDR allocation)	211
IV	Net foreign assets (III+IV)	844
	Memorandum item: National Oil Account (NOA)	419

12. Performance criterion on the ceiling on the contracting or guaranteeing of new nonconcessional external debt by the central government or the BCSTP. This continuous performance criterion covers the contracting or guaranteeing of new external debt of any maturity (including overdraft positions but excluding short-term import-related and supplier credits) by the central government and/or the BCSTP. Debt is considered nonconcessional if it includes a grant element less than 35 percent. The grant element is the difference between the nominal value of the debt and its net present value, expressed as a percentage of the nominal value. The net present value of the debt at the date on which it is contracted is calculated by discounting the stream of debt service payments at the time of the contracting. The discount rate used for this purpose is 5 percent. For program purposes, a debt is considered contracted on the signature date of the contract, unless it is specified in the contract that it becomes effective upon ratification by the parliament. In the latter case, the debt is considered contracted upon ratification by parliament.

This performance criterion does not apply to IMF resources. Debt being rescheduled or restructured is excluded from this ceiling to the extent that such non-concessional debt is used for debt management operations that improve the overall public debt profile. Medium- and long-term debt will be reported by the Debt Management Department of the MOF (as appropriate), measured in U.S. dollars at the prevailing exchange rates published by the BCSTP. The government should consult with IMF staff before contracting or guaranteeing new debt obligations.

13. Performance criterion on the ceiling on the accumulation of central government's new external payment arrears. This is a continuous performance criterion. New central government external payment arrears consist of external debt service obligations (principal and interest) that have not been paid at the time they are due, as specified in the contractual agreement, subject to any applicable grace period. This performance criterion does not apply to arrears resulting from the nonpayment of debt service for which a clearance framework has been signed by the debtor and creditor before the relevant payment comes due or for which the government has sought rescheduling or restructuring as of March 2019.

INDICATIVE TARGETS

14. Ceiling on change of central government's new domestic arrears is set on the difference between expenditure on a commitment basis and cash payments (amounts past due after 40 days and unpaid).

15. Within domestic primary expenditure, the floor on pro-poor expenditure refers to the floor on government outlays recorded in the budget that have a direct effect on reducing poverty, as agreed with the IMF and World Bank staffs. These expenditures, which include both current and capital outlays, are defined as follows:

- a. **Pro-poor current spending:** These cover the following functional classifications and expenditure categories (by budget code) as described in the matrix below:

Code	Economic classification of current expenditure	Education	Health	Social Security and Assistance	Housing and Community Services	Culture and Sport	Fuel and Energy	Agriculture and Fisheries
310000	Personnel Expenses	x	x					
331210	Specialty Durable Goods	x	x					
331290	Other Durable Goods	x	x					
331120	Fuels and Lubricants ¹	x	x					
331130	Foodstuffs, Food ¹ and Accommodation	x	x					
331140	Specialized Current Consumable Materials (Specific to Each Sector)	x	x					
331190	Other Consumer Non Durable Goods	x	x					
332110	Water and Energy Services	x	x					
332120	Communication Services	x	x					
332130	Health services	x	x					
332220	Maintenance and Conservation Services	x	x					
353900	Other Miscellaneous Current Expenses	x	x	x				
352200	Transfers to non-profit institutions (private)		x	x				
352310	Retirement Pension and Veterans		x	x				
352320	Family Benefit		x	x				
352330	Scholarships	x						
352390	Other Current Transfers to Families		x	x				
353100	Unemployment Fund		x	x				
Code	Economic classification of capital expenditure							
411110	Feasibility Study and Technical Assistance	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
411120	Procurement and Construction of Real Estate	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
411200	Rehabilitation Works and Facilities	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
411300	Means and Equipments of Transportation	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
411400	Machinery and Equipment	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
411900	Other Fixed Capital Goods	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
412000	Stocks	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Source: Diário da República de São Tomé e Príncipe No. 21 - May 7, 2008, pages 12-13.
¹ Expenditures on fuels and lubricants (combustíveis e lubrificantes) that are affected for administrative purposes are excluded. Likewise, food (alimentação) and clothing and shoes (roupas e calçados) supplied to administrative staff are excluded.

- b. **Pro-poor treasury-funded capital spending:** This covers projects that are deemed to have a direct impact on alleviating poverty in the following sectors: education, health, social safety nets, agriculture and fisheries, rural development, youth and sports, provision of potable water, and electrification.

16. Floor on tax revenue is set on tax revenue that includes direct and indirect taxes as well as recovery of tax arrears and additional collection efforts.

17. New concessional external debt contracted or guaranteed by the central government or the BCSTP measures such debt with a grant element of at least 35 percent, and the limits on this debt are cumulative from the end of the previous calendar year.

MEMORANDUM ITEMS

18. Net external debt service payments by the central government are defined as debt service due less the accumulation of any new external payment arrears, as defined under the performance criterion on the ceiling on central government's outstanding external payment arrears.

19. Official external program support is defined as budget support grants and budget support loans, including disbursements from the IMF under the ECF arrangement and in-kind aid when the products are sold by the government and the receipts are used to finance a budgeted spending item, and other exceptional financing provided by foreign official entities and incorporated into the budget.

20. Treasury-funded capital expenditure is classified as part of domestic primary expenditure and covers public investment projects that are not directly financed by project grants and concessional project loans or that have to be partially co-financed with government resources. It includes spending on new construction, rehabilitation, and maintenance. Expenditure on wages and salaries and the purchase of goods and services related to the projects will not be classified as capital expenditure.

21. Ceiling on base money is set on the sum of currency issued—which consists of currency outside depository corporations and cash in vaults—and bank reserves denominated in new dobras. Bank reserves refer to reserves of commercial banks (in new dobras) held with the central bank and include reserves in excess of the reserve requirements.

22. Planned payment of debt to ENCO is the targeted amount to be deducted from the oil surcharge to pay back debt to ENCO during the year as discussed in paragraph 9. Higher than planned payments are not excluded from the revenue and will be included in domestic debt service. The planned annual payment is D10, D32 million in 2019 and 2020, respectively, half of which will be paid during the first semester.

23. Arrear clearance is measured as changes in the stock of government arrears to domestic suppliers as defined in paragraph 15.

USE OF ADJUSTERS

24. The performance criterion on the domestic primary balance will have one adjuster. The floor on the domestic primary balance will be adjusted upward for the shortfall of budgetary grants and downward if the government receives more than projected budget support grants and privatization receipts in 2019 and 2020; the adjustment down will be capped at 50 million new dobras (a little over ½ percent of 2018 GDP) for 2019 and 35 million new dobras for the first semester of 2020.² For program purpose, the projected privatization proceeds are 0 in 2019 and 2020.

25. The performance criteria on net bank financing of the central government and net international reserves of the central bank will be subject to the following adjusters based on deviations calculated cumulatively from end-December 2018 or end-December 2019, as appropriate (MEFP Attachment I, Table 3):

- **Adjusters on ceilings on changes in net bank financing of the central government (NCG):** Quarterly differences between actual and projected receipts of budget transfers from the NOA, budgetary support grant, net external debt service payments, and domestic arrears will be converted to new dobras at the program exchange rate and aggregated from end-

² Grants and related expenditures to cover the cost of the elections will be excluded from the measurements of the domestic primary deficit.

December 2018 or end-December 2019, as appropriate, to the test date. The ceilings will be adjusted:

- (i) downward (upward) by cumulative deviations downward (upward) of actual from projected net external debt service payments (exclude HPIC),
- (ii) downward (upward) by deviation upward (downward) in budget transfers from the NOA,
- (iii) downward by deviation upward of budgetary support grants in excess of 50 million new dobras.
- (iv) downward (upward) by deviation upward (downward) of domestic arrears.

The combined application of all adjusters at any test date is capped at the equivalent of US\$3 million at the program exchange rate.

- **Adjusters for the floor on net international reserves (NIR) of the BCSTP:** Quarterly differences between actual and projected receipts of budget transfers from the NOA, official external program support, net external debt service payments, and domestic arrears in new dobras, will be converted to U.S. dollars at the program exchange rate and aggregated from end-December 2016 or end-December 2017, as appropriate, to the test date. The floor will be adjusted upward (downward):

- (i) by the cumulative deviation downward (upward) of actual from projected net external debt service payments of the central government;
- (ii) by deviations upward (downward) for budget transfers from the NOA, and
- (iii) by deviations upward (downward) of official external program support. Budget support loans in 2017 and 2018 are projected to be 0.

The combined application of all adjusters at any test date is capped at the equivalent of US\$3 million at the program exchange rate.

DATA REPORTING

26. The following information will be provided to the IMF staff for the purpose of monitoring the program.

- 1) **Fiscal Data:** The Directorate of Treasury and Directorate of Budget at the MOF will provide the following information to IMF staff, within six weeks after the end of each month or quarter, except for the public investment program (PIP), which will be provided three months after each quarter:
 - Monthly data on central government operations for revenues, expenditure, and financing, including detailed description of net earmarked resources (*recursos consignados*), on commitment (*compromisso*) and cash payments (*caixa*);

- Monthly data on net credit to the government by the BCSTP, recorded account by account in a format fully compatible with the monetary accounts of the BCSTP;
- Monthly detailed data on tax and nontax revenues;
- Monthly detailed data on domestically financed capital expenditure on commitment (*compromisso*) and cash payments (*caixa*);
- Monthly data on domestic arrears by type and by creditor;
- Quarterly data on implicit arrears to ENCO on account of fuel retail prices eventually not covering import costs, distribution margins and applicable taxes;
- Quarterly data on EMAE's arrears to ENCO;
- Monthly data on official external program support (non-project);
- Quarterly data on the execution of the public investment program (PIP) by project and sources of financing;
- Quarterly data on the execution of Treasury-funded capital expenditure by project type, amount, timetable of execution, and progress of execution;
- Quarterly data on project grant and loan disbursement (HIPC and non-HIPC);
- Quarterly data on bilateral HIPC debt relief;
- Quarterly information on the latest outstanding petroleum price structures and submission of new pricing structures (within a week of becoming available).
- Quarterly pro-poor expenditure.

2) **Monetary Data:** The BCSTP will provide the IMF staff, within three weeks from the end of each month, the monetary accounts of the BCSTP. Other monetary data will be provided within six weeks after the end of each month for monthly data, within two months after the end of each quarter for quarterly data, and within two months after the end of the year for annual data. The BCSTP will provide the following information to IMF staff:

- Daily data on exchange rates, to be posted on the central bank's web site;
- Daily data on interest rates, to be posted on the central bank's web site;
- Daily liquidity management table, including base money (in new dobras) and currency in circulation, to be posted on the central bank's web site;
- Daily net international reserve position, to be posted on the central bank's web site;

- Monthly balance sheet data of BCSTP (in IMF report form 1SR, with requested memorandum items);
- Monthly consolidated balance sheet data of other depository corporations (in IMF report form 2SR);
- Monthly consolidated depository corporations survey (in IMF survey 3SG);
- Monthly central bank foreign exchange balance (*Orçamento cambial*);
- Quarterly table on bank prudential ratios and financial soundness indicators;
- Quarterly data on the BCSTP's financial position (profit and loss statement, deficit, budget execution, etc.).

3) **External Debt Data:** The Directorate of Treasury at the MOF will provide the IMF staff, within two months after the end of each month the following information:

- Monthly data on amortization and interest on external debt by creditor; paid, scheduled, in arrears, and subject to debt relief or rescheduled;
- Quarterly data on disbursements for foreign-financed projects and program support loans;
- Annual data on future borrowing plans.

4) **National Accounts and Trade Statistics:** The following data will be provided to the IMF staff:

- Monthly consumer price index data provided by the National Institute of Statistics within one month after the end of each month;
- Monthly data on imports (value of imports, import taxes collected, and arrears) and commodity export values, provided by the Customs Directorate at the MOF, within two months after the end of each month;
- Monthly data on petroleum shipments and consumption (volumes and c.i.f. prices, by product), provided by the Customs Directorate.